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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 3697	Press ~~Mis.~~
398-99	
Dated 19 11	1869.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 19th November 1869.

No. 398. Read the following letter from the Superintending Engineer, 6th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Tanjore, 9th October 1869, No. 782:—

I HAVE the honour to inform you that I have lately made a tour through a great part of the Trichinopoly District, and I regret to report that I found the roads in the Trichinopoly Range in far worse order than in the neighbouring Ranges; in fact, the limit of the Trichinopoly Range was easily discernible from the rough and neglected condition of the roads in the Trichinopoly Talook, compared with their condition in the neighbouring talooks. This was the case on five main roads; the two others I have not seen lately. As I have frequently called the attention of the Executive Engineer to the state of the roads in his Range, and to the manner in which the repairs were executed, and there has been no improvement, I am obliged, though with great reluctance, to report the matter to Government.

Letter, No. 725, of 23rd September, to Executive Engineer.
1 Memorandum on Dindigul road.
Letters, Nos. 106 and 107, of 28th September, from Executive Engineer.

2. From the enclosed copies of the correspondence, which has passed between the Executive Engineer and myself, you will observe that I attribute the neglected condition of the roads to the fact that the most obvious and simple rules relative to the maintenance of a road are systematically neglected; to the want of inspection and check on the part of the Executive Engineer; and to the fact of his making long and hurried journeys, when he does march, which prevents him from exercising proper supervision, or from affording instruction to his subordinates.

Paragraph 5 of No. 725.

3. From my memorandum No. 1 on a portion of the Dindigul road it will be observed how this road has been neglected; and from the Executive Engineer's letter, No. 107, it appears that for seven months this road had not been inspected, though the extreme limit of the Range by this road is only seventeen miles from Trichinopoly; and, when the Executive Engineer did inspect the road in August, he took no steps to repair it farther than to ask the neighbouring Range Officer, who is a Native, to prepare a survey and estimate for him.

4. I have not deemed it necessary to comment here upon the Executive Engineer's replies, as my remarks regarding them are given on the margin of the letters. I would only observe, with reference to paragraph 11 of No. 106, that the distances from which metal, gravel, etc., have to be conveyed in Ranges Nos. 1 and 4, do not vary much; and, that while the road in No. 1 has been allowed to be obliterated in one portion, and money has been wasted by improper repairs in others, in No. 4 Range not only has a good surface been maintained, but improvements have been carried out by forming roads, dams, and cutting deep side-trenches, etc., etc., from the maintenance allowance; and the same has been done on the Madura road in No. 4 Range: I cannot, therefore, regard the allowances as too small, if properly husbanded and laid out. Any amount of money may be spent on a road without improving it, if drainage is neglected and earth is placed over the metal as in the 16th mile on the Dindigul road.

5. I regret to be obliged to state that the Executive Engineer appears to regard his office as a mere medium of communication between me and the Overseers, and that he seldom, if ever, prepares an estimate himself, and certainly never checks those which pass through his office; or if he does, he must be utterly ignorant of engineering in all its branches; requisitions out of the ordinary routine, or which require the smallest labour or consideration, are complied with only after long delays; and when complied with, have usually to be returned owing to the crudeness of the designs or the inaccuracy or insufficiency of the information afforded.

No. 399.

ORDER THEREON, 19th November 1869, No. 3,697.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 43.

IN this letter the Superintending Engineer of the 6th Division brings to the notice of the Government the general neglect of his works by Captain Vertue, Executive Engineer in charge of the Trichinopoly Range.

2. He reports that the roads in Captain Vertue's charge have been allowed to get into such disrepair that the limits of the Range are easily known by the condition of the roads as compared with those in the adjacent Ranges. In support of this general statement he points out that the existing state of things is owing to the most obvious rules for the maintenance of roads being systematically neglected; to the want of inspection and check on the part of Captain Vertue; and to his making long and hurried journeys which prevent his exercising a proper supervision over the works, or instructing his subordinates in the mode of carrying them out.

3. The Superintending Engineer mentions that the Dindigul road, although its farthest limit from Trichinopoly is only seventeen miles, had not been inspected for seven consecutive months.

4. He goes on to show that there is nothing peculiar to the Range under Captain Vertue's charge that should have caused the roads to get so much out of order; and he compares these roads with those in No. 4 Range. He shows that, in the latter case, a good surface has been maintained and that other improvements have been effected; while in the case of Captain Vertue's roads, portions have been obliterated, and money has been wasted by improper expenditure.

5. The Superintending Engineer then complains of the generally inefficient manner in which Captain Vertue habitually performs his duties, and of the little attention paid by him to his professional work.

6. The Government have carefully considered Captain Vertue's explanations, but they are of opinion that these, so far from exonerating him from blame, seem to establish all the more clearly what the Superintending Engineer has, in the discharge of his duty, brought to notice.

7. It is admitted by Captain Vertue that the Dindigul road was not inspected by him for seven months. The plea that other Range Officers can absent themselves from their head-quarters for a considerable time, whilst he is seldom able to do so, would not be accepted by the Government even if the Range were a large one, and there were important works going on at Trichinopoly. As it is, however, the

distances are particularly short in Captain Vertue's Range, and there is no excess of work at Trichinopoly. There is clearly, therefore, no valid excuse on these accounts for the neglect of roads, each of which could be easily ridden over from head-quarters in a single day by an energetic officer; and, in the opinion of Government, the attempt to throw the blame of their extreme deterioration on the Overseer shows a singular want of a proper appreciation of his responsibilities on the part of Captain Vertue, who seems never to have taken the trouble to direct or supervise his subordinates' proceedings.

8. Captain Vertue urges that "the state of the roads is very much the same as when handed over to him." The Superintending Engineer does not admit this, and, considering that Captain Vertue gives reasons to show why the roads have been allowed to fall into disrepair, the Government are satisfied that Captain Oakes has good grounds for displeasure.

9. On the whole the Government are of opinion that Captain Vertue has failed in his duties, and they regret to observe that this is not the first time his conduct has been brought to their notice. They had hoped that the censure passed on him in their Proceedings, No. 2,954, of the 14th October 1864, would have induced him to exert himself to remove the impression they had taken of his general inefficiency as a departmental officer, but they now find that no improvement has taken place, and that the same inattention to his charge which characterized his conduct at Cannanore has been persevered in at Trichinopoly. The Government cannot overlook these repeated failures of duty, and Captain Vertue will, therefore, understand that this is the last occasion on which his disregard of the warning he has received will be leniently dealt with.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 6th Division.

Exd. F. R Bantleman.

Sub Engineers Office 6th

No 782 Canjore 9th October 1869

From

Captain R. F. Oakes R.E.

Superintending Engineer

6th Division

To

Colonel C. A. Orr R.E.

Secretary to Government

Public Works Department

Sir

I have the honor to inform you that

I have lately made a tour through

a great part of the Trichinopoly

District and regret to report

that I found the Roads in the

Trichinopoly Range in far worse

order than in the neighbouring Ranges on

the limit of the Trichinopoly Range was easily

discernible from the rough and neglected condition

of the Roads in the Trichinopoly Talug. compared

with their condition in the neighbouring Talugs.

This was the case on the Main Road & the

others I have not seen lately. As I have frequently called the attention of the Executive

Engineer to the state of the Roads in his Range

and to the manner in which the repairs were

executed and there has been no improvement

I am obliged though with great reluctance

to report the matter to Government.

2

2. From the enclosed copies of the correspondence which has passed between the Executive Engineer and myself you will observe that I attribute the neglected condition of the Road to the fact that the most obvious and simple rules relative to the maintenance of a Road are systematically neglected, to the want of inspection and check on the part of the Executive Engineer and to the fact of his making long and hurried Journeys, when he does inspect, which prevents him from exercising proper supervision or from affording instruction to his Subordinates.

3. From my Diary No I on a portion of the Dindigal Road it will be observed how this Road has been neglected and from the Executive Engineers letter No 107 it appears that for 7 months this Road had not been inspected, though the extreme limit of the Range by this Road is only 7 miles from Trichinopoly and where the Executive Engineer does inspect the Road in August he took no steps to repair it, preferring this to ask the neighbouring Range Officer, who is a Native, to prepare a Survey and Estimate for him.

4. I have not deemed it necessary to comment here upon the Executive Engineers replies to my remarks regarding them are given on the margin of the letters. I would only observe, with reference to para 11 of No 106 that the distances from which metal gravel &c have to be conveyed in Ranges 1 and 4 do not vary much and that while the Road in No 1 has been allowed to be obliterated in one portion and money has been wasted by improper repairs in others in No 4 Range not only has a good surface been maintained but improvements have been carried out by forming Road Dams and cutting deep side trenches &c from the maintenance allowance, and the same has been done on the Madura Road in No 4 Range, I cannot therefore regard the allowance as too small if properly husbanded and laid out. Any amount of money may be spent on a Road without improving it if drainage is neglected and earth is placed over the metal as in the 16th Mile on the Dindigal Road.

5. I regret to be obliged to state that the Executive Engineer appears to regard his office as a mere medium of communication between me and the Overseers and that he seldom, if ever, prepares an estimate himself and certainly never checks those which pass through his office, or if he does he must be utterly ignorant of Engineering in all its branches requisitions one of the orders noted on which require the smallest Labour or consideration are complied with only after long delays and when complied with have usually

to

Public Works Department

No. 369

Proceedings of the Madras Government

Under date the 19th Nov. 1864.

Read the following

From The Supg Engineer 6th Div. P.W.D. No. 782 / 9th October 1864

No.

I am requested by the Council of Public Works to forward herewith a letter from Captain Vertue Executive Engineer 6th Division, as he has sent it to me for submission to Government, with a request that a certain sum may be placed at the disposal of Captain Vertue for work in the Ghat Division, which would be a great saving of time and labour to the Department.

I am, Sir,
Your most obedient Servant
(Signed) H. Dale Captain R.E.
Supg Engineer 6th Division

To
The Secretary to Govt
Public Works Department

Dated 23rd October 1864
Received 25th October 1864

No. 369

Captain Vertue reports the receipt of the sanctioned estimate for the Ghat roads in Dharmapuri Taluk, and the commencement of the work.

Copy forwarded to the Executive Engineer Salem for information.

By Order
(Signed) W. Blackburn
Secy to Govt

No. 369

Copy forwarded to the Superintending Engineer of the Southern Circle for information.

By Order
(Signed) W. Blackburn
Secy to Govt

In letter the Superintending Engineer of the Southern Circle reports, at the general request of the works by Captain Vertue Executive Engineer in charge of the Trichinopoly range.

He reports that the road in Captain Vertue's charge have been allowed to get into such disrepair that the limits of the range are scarcely known by the

Condition of the roads as compared with those in the adjacent ranges.

In support of this general statement, he points out that the existing state of things is owing to the most obvious rules for the maintenance of roads being systematically neglected & the want of inspection and check on the part of Captain Vertue — and to his making long and hurried journeys which prevent him exercising a proper supervision over the works & instructing his subordinates in the mode of carrying them out.

The Superintendg

(12)

Engineer that the Dingle road although the shortest limit from Victoria to only 17 miles, has not been inspected for seven consecutive months.

He states that there is nothing peculiar in the Range under Captain Vertue's charge that should have caused the roads to get so much out of order, and he compares these roads with those in No 4. Range.

He states that in the latter case a good surface has been maintained & other improvements have been effected,

while on the case

of Captain Vertue's trials portions have been obliterated and money has been wasted by improper expenditure.

The Superintending Engineer then considers of the generally unsufficient manner in which Capt. Vertue habitually performs his duties, and of the little attention paid by him to his professional work.

The Government have carefully considered Captain Vertue's explanation but they are of opinion that these, so far from exonerating him from blame, serve to establish

(13)

all the more clearly which the Superintending Engineer in the discharge of his duty brought to their notice.

It is admitted by Captain Vertue that the Drutgul Road was not inspected by him for seven months. He pleads that other urgent duties prevented him from doing so, and that he was occupied by the Government work of the Bridge and there were a large number of important works going on at Trichinopoly on the Cauvery the duties of which in particular devolved on Captain Vertue, and there is no

Excess of work at Trichinopoly. There is clearly therefore no valid Excuse on these accounts for the neglect of roads each of which could be easily ridden over from head Quarters in a single day by an Energetic Officer, and in the opinion of Govern. ment the attempt to throw the blame of these Extreme deficiencies on the Superior Officers of Engineer Department for appreciation of their responsibilities on the part of Captain Vertue has entirely failed to shew that he has taken due trouble to direct or supervise his proceedings.

Captain Vertue urges that the state of the roads was very much the same as when he took charge of the Division. The Government are of opinion that Captain Vertue has failed in the duties, and they expect to observe that in future the first duty of his Department has been brought to their notice

(12)

They have kept their proceedings pursued in the Proceedings of the 29th of the 14th October 1864; would have induced him to quit himself & remove the impression they had of his general efficiency as a departmental officer, but they were fired that no improvement has taken place, and that the case is one to this charge which characterized his conduct at Canterbury has persevered in at the present time. The Government cannot overlook their repeated

(12)

failures of duty, and Captain Vertue will therefore understand that this is the last occasion on which his disregard of the warning he has received will be leniently dealt with.

W.

To The Inspr. Engineer 6th Dist. with five Enclosures

Dept. 20/11/69.

Cuey310

Dept. of {1869} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To The Superintending Engr.
6th Division

Dated

Rect.

G. O. 19-Nov. 1869, No. 3697

Nos. 398-399

Ans. Passing orders on the letter
of the Supdg Engr. of the 6th Div.
forwarding for the General Reports
by Captn Orme &c Exg.
Incharge of the Trichy Range.