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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public works DEPARTMENT.

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1H

Proceedings of the Madras, Government, Public Works Department, 10th June 1869.

No. 198. Read the following Endorsement of the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, dated Coonoor, 20th May 1869, No. 34 —

Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel W. FAREWELL, Executive Engineer, to the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, dated Ootacamund, 18th May 1869, No. 37.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Lawrence Asylum sites were yesterday visited by a severe thunder storm, hail and ice, it is stated, fell in pieces about half a cubic inch in size; and, at about one o'clock, a terrific flash of lightning and crash of thunder instantly following it was observed, the lightning falling apparently immediately over the blocks of buildings known as "Servants' houses," and now occupied by Serjeants belonging to the Lawrence Asylum, and Overseers and Apprentices employed on the works. Shortly afterwards it was reported to Captain Hankin that European Head Constable Doyle and a native female servant had been knocked down by the lightning; Constable Doyle states that he felt as if he had a blow on the head, and became giddy and fell down, but soon got up all right again; the native female remained insensible for some little time, and is also all right again.

2 In the afternoon one of the Apprentices went to his room and found all his door-post splintered, the hinges being torn away from the door post and his room covered with splinters, and articles which he had placed near the door scattered about the room. The adjacent three rooms, which, together with the Apprentices' rooms, were fortunately empty, were then opened and examined; and it was found that the chimneys of these rooms, situated in the centre of the upper block of the quarters, had been struck by lightning, the lightning running down inside, splitting two rafters to bits and breaking the tiles, splitting the chimneys slightly here and there, leaving a mark about one-eighth of an inch in width, as left by the explosion of gun powder, and finally running down the door post of the Apprentices' room into the ground; the electric fluid also escaped into another room behind this one, splitting a door-frame into bits, and entering the ground at the corner of a leaden cistern used for bath purposes in this room. The whole of the occupants of the quarters state, that at the time of the electrical discharge they one and all felt as if they had been struck slightly on the head I visited the works this morning and inspected the damage done by the lightning.

3. The building struck is situated at the head of the brick field valley, some 500 yards distant from the hospital, the valley is not more than a couple of hundred yards at the outside in width at this point, and the buildings are built on excavated sites on a small spur or knoll running for a very short distance into the valley; these buildings are built at a lower elevation than any others on the sites, the hills rising high on each side of them.

4 As the hospital, further up at the actual head of the valley, as also the buildings noted, are unprovided with lightning conductors, I am preparing estimates for fitting conductors to them, which shall be submitted at an early date.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Farewell has been requested to supply the Hospital (Girls' quarters) and the Servants' quarters above reported on, emergently, with lightning conductors. The portion of the new Asylum occupied by the boys has already been fitted with them.

3. It is very remarkable that these, the lowest b uildings on the ground, should have been struck by lightning, while the Hospital higher up, and the tall chimney of a brick kiln, immediately opposite, escaped intact.

(Signed) G. W. WALKER, Colonel, R. E,
Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.

No. 199 ORDER THEREON, 10th June 1869, No. 1,884.

MILITARY WORKS, No. 11. ORDERED to be recorded.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the Superintending Engineer, 7th Division.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

No. 37

Executive Engineer's Office
Nellgherries
Ootacamund 18th May 1869. 34

From
Lieut Col. W. Farwell
Executive Engineer

To
Coll G. W. Walker R.E.
Superintg. 7th Div.
Coonoor

Sir

I have the honor to report that the Lawrence Asylum Kytie was yesterday visited by a severe thunder storm, hail and ice it is stated fell in pieces about half a Inch in size and at about one o'clock a terrific flash of lightning and crash of thunder instantly following it was observed the lightning falling apparently immediately over the block of Buildings known as Servants Houses and now occupied by Serjeants belonging to the Lawrence Asylum and bandsmen and apprentices employed on the works. Shortly afterwards it was reported to Captain Hankin that European Head Constable Doyle and a native female servant had been knocked down by the lightning; Constable Doyle states that he felt as if he had a blow on the head and became giddy and fell down, but soon got up all right again. the native female remained insensible for some little time and is also all right again.

2. In the afternoon one of the apprentices went to his room and found all his door post splintered, the hinges being torn away from the door post and his room covered with splinters, and articles which he had placed near the Door scattered about the room. The adjacent three rooms, which together with the apprentices rooms were fortunately empty, were then proved and examined, and it was found that the chimnies of these rooms situated in the Centre of the upper block of the quarters had been struck by lightning, the lightning running down inside, splitting two rafters to bits and breaking the tiles, splitting the chimnies slightly here and there, leaving a mark about ½ of Brick in width as left by the explosion of Gunpowder, and finally running down the Door post of the apprentices

rooms into the ground. The electric fluid also escaped into another room behind this one splitting a door frame into bits and entering the ground at the corner of a leaden Cistern used for bath purposes in this room. The whole of the occupants of the Quarters state that at the time of the Electrical discharge, they one and all felt as if they had been struck slightly on the head, Swelled the works this morning and inspected the damage done by the lightning.

3. The building struck is situated at the head of the Brickfield Valley some 500 yards distant from the Hospital, the valley is not more than a couple of hundred yards at the outside in width at this point, and the buildings are built on excavated sites on a small spur or knoll running for a very short distance into the valley, these buildings are built at a lower elevation than any of those on the sides, the hills rising high on each side of them.

4. As the Hospital further up at the actual head of the valley, as also the Lunatic Asylum are unprovided with Lightning Conductors, I am preparing Estimates for fitting Conductors to them which shall be submitted at an early date.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most Obed Servt
Edmund Wegner
Capt RE

No 34

Submitted for the information of Govt.

Lt Colonel Jervois has been requested to supply the Hospital (Girls' Quarters) and the Servants' Quarters above reported on, immediately, with lightning Conductors. The portion of the new Asylum occupied by the Boys, has already been fitted with them.

It is very remarkable that these, the lowest buildings on the ground, should have been struck by lightning; while the Hospital higher up, and the tall Chimney of a Brick Kiln immediately opposite, escaped intact.

Coonoor
20th May 1869

Lt Colonel
Supt Engr

P.R. 1869 Dept
Jun (1) No 2185.

The Clerk of the Peace
Middlesex Sessions

&

The Coroner for the
County

Dy 18 May 1869
Rd. 26

No 1884 - 10: June/69.
No. 57.

Reporting that the Lunatic
Asylum Wilson were
Visited by a severe
thunderstorm on the
17 May 1869 -

Letter an Order

c. 28 th May 1869 & 5 June

No 1884
Ordered & recorded

Forbes-Jersey
10: June/69

To the Sup[t] & Sup[ts] of Asylums

Dep[ts] 11/6/69.

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Cuc 2185

Govt. of {1869} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To The Superintending Engr. 1st Division

&c, &c, &c

Dated

Recd 9.11 Fna

G O. 10: June 1869, No 1884

Nos. 198-199.

Laurence Asylum Buildings

Letter Endorsement by the Civil Engr. reporting the damage done to the Laurence Asylum Buildings &c. Outcanneund, Cuddalore &c., by the occurrence of a severe thunder storm on the 17th May 69. recd.