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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public works DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1462	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.
134-125		
Dated	8. 7.	1873.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
8th July 1873.*

No. 131. Read the following letter from R. E. NORFOR, Esq., Officiating District Engineer, South Arcot, to Colonel G. W. WALKER, R.E., Chief Engineer, Public Works Department, dated Cuddalore, 13th June 1873, No. 44 :—

WITH reference to No. 43 of the 17th ultimo, from the Under Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, forwarding to me for inquiry and report

One Petition.

a petition from one Thumba Pillay, Earthwork Contractor on the Pelandorai Main Canal, I have the honour to inform you that this Contractor complained to me that his work had been taken away from him at the recommendation of the Anicut Overseer, A. Cooposawmy Moodelly, and the portion of channel allotted to him was taken in hand departmentally, and being executed by task work; that the work he had done was not properly measured up either by the Range Officer or the Overseer, or his accounts correctly adjusted, and that some Rupees 500 was still due to him; that he had outstanding advances on coolies who were working under him, and begged that if the work be given back to him he would complete his contract in as short a time as possible; he complained also that he had been thus unjustly treated because he refused to give the Overseer a share in the work, or a per-centage; in proof of this he produced a draft petition, written by the Overseer's writer at the instigation of the Overseer, contradicting everything he had previously written me against the Overseer and others, and stating that the charges he had made were untruths; this draft was given to him to write a fair copy from, with a promise that he would get back his work if he withdrew the complaint he had made.

2. This complaint I got at camp Periacoorchy, on my way to the anicut, and when I got there I took the opportunity of inquiring into it in the presence of the Range Officer and Overseer. The Overseer's writer admitted that the draft petition was in his handwriting, and the Overseer acknowledged that it was with his permission it was written. The Range Officer and the Overseer also admitted that there was a balance due to the Contractor, but that he had not done his work properly, and it was therefore withheld. The Range Officer said the contract was taken out of Thumba Pillay's hands because he had not a sufficient number of coolies on the work, and was not working quickly. The Contractor pleaded that the insufficiency of coolies was due to the difficulty he experienced at that particular season in procuring labour, others were also labouring under the same difficulty. He promised to bring a large gang of coolies if he was allowed again to set to work, and it was arranged that a fresh agreement should be drawn up, when he was to re-commence work; but this has not been done yet; the Contractor says he has been waiting upon the Overseer, the Overseer says the man has never been to him except at "inconvenient times;" the fact is the Overseer is unwilling to give him back the work, and though he was ordered to give him another trial he has been making all kinds of excuses.

3. I had received very good reports of this Overseer's work, but I must say I was not at all satisfied with what I saw; the whole of the coolies appeared to be in a state of open mutiny, and very great discontent prevailed throughout; nearly

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all the work was being done on the "task work system" instead of the old petty contract, which has always been in force in the range ever since I have been in this district. It was impossible for me to measure up each individual coolies work or check their accounts; this even the Range Officer does not attempt to go in for, but measures the work as a whole, and satisfies himself, I believe, only of the correctness of the total cubic contents of the work done; in fact the Overseer himself is to all intents and purposes the Contractor; he has separate and distinct accounts of his own with the coolies, having advanced them private funds. I find that in this way the petty contract system, which has always been the system in force in the district, is almost entirely relinquished in the 3rd Range for task work, a system, until very recently, I may say, unknown in the South Arcot District, but now in force only in the Virdachellum Range and that *very extensively*.

4. I found the channel being cut in a most irregular and unworkmanlike manner, and, in spite of Mr. Bell's repeated orders (I understand), the earth removed from the channel was being deposited on the edge of the channel, from whence, in many places, it was being washed into the canal again; in fact I am sorry to say that I was grievously disappointed with this Overseer's work after all I had heard. No proper system or method to be seen anywhere; the coolies employed on task work loudly complaining and threatening to strike.

5. Since Mr. Supervisor Hicken's arrival, I have apportioned the Chellambram Taluq as the sub-division of the range, and, as this ancient is in the sub-division, Mr. Hicken has been ordered to make Pelandorai his head-quarters, and to have also the immediate supervision of this work with the assistance of the extra Taluq Overseer in the sub-division of that taluq, who has also hitherto been employed on a portion of the canal.

6. Mr. Hicken will settle with the Contractor, Thumba Pillay, and if he brings, as he promises to do, a large gang of coolies on the work, he will get work in the canal.

No. 135.

ORDER THEREON, 8th July 1873, No. 1,762.

ESTABLISHMENT, No. 14.

It is remarked from the report on this petition that Overseer A. Coopoo-sawmy Moodelly, who is spoken so well acknowledged that his writer was allowed by him to draft a petition to the District Engineer revoking every statement made in a former petition inculcating them. That the same Overseer has made constant excuses for not carrying out the District Engineer's own orders to re-employ the petitioner. That he is to all intents and purposes the Contractor for his own works, and is in the habit of making advances to the coolies from his own funds, and keeping separate accounts with them. And that his work is laid out and executed in the most irregular and unworkmanlike manner, so that the District Engineer is grievously disappointed with him.

2. And yet it cannot be gathered from any of the papers that any action has been taken with reference to these matters beyond dismissing the Overseer's

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writer, who evidently acted under compulsion of his master. His Excellency the Governor in Council has already had occasion in two recent orders to remark on Mr. Norfor's want of decision in dealing with his subordinates. District Engineers have full powers of appointment and dismissal of Overseers in their own districts, and the Chief Engineer is guided solely by their reports in regulating the promotion of these men. He will now be instructed to relegate A. Coopoo-sawmy Moodelly to the 3rd grade; and the Acting District Engineer of South Arcot is enjoined to assume to the full extent the responsibilities of his position, amongst which the proper supervision of subordinates is not the least.

3. The petitioner will be referred to the new Range Officer for satisfaction of his claims.

4. With reference to paragraph 3 of the District Engineer's letter; his attention is called to paragraph 2 of G. O., No. 1,501, of 6th June, enforcing Colonel Mullins' warning to local officers against laying undue stress upon the employment of any one particular agency for the execution of works.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,

Secretary to Government.

To the District Engineer, South Arcot.

.. Principal of the Civil Engineering College, through the Director of Public Instruction,

.. Petition Department.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies.

L.

The Secretary of D. P. W.

The most humble petition of Pennadam Shambapillay
Contractor of Palandoray Ameen of Tiruchellur Taluk
of South Arcot District.

Most respectfully sheweth.

That your honors petition
ventures to shew himself at your honor well known humanity
trusting to afford him a safe shelter from the injustice
and inequity of Ponnuramgundaly Head of Council and
Boppasawmy Gundaly Ameen and Shammubamudaly
written under him and Rungasawmy Pillay Master in the
project of Inan channel and that he fully believes that his sad
deplorable Condition will be taken into your honor's kind Consideration
& this will extricate him from his present plight.

Your honors petitioners Contracted
to work the $\frac{4}{11}$ mile of the project Inan Channel of
Palandoray Ameen. He in obedience to Conditions he
accepted, was performing the duties and regularly
receiving the money due to him monthly - after having
been Dr 8 rupees 15 per Cent by Government. Inasmuch
Ponnuramgundaly Head of Council and Boppasawmy Ameen
Ameen Ameen & Shammubamudaly written under him &
Rungasawmy Pillay Master these officers with a view
to deprive ^{Pottabur} (him) of his office & thus to enrich themselves
illegally removed him out of his employ without paying him
even the amount of Rs 500. due. On my Complaint
to District Engineer he has been pleased to endorse

to the Range officers who left the matter in Commence-
 above said officers. They were reported by employees
 to the District Incharge. Determining somehow or other
 to work with evil intention & deception told him (your
 honor's Petitioner) he would receive the amount still
 unpaid unless he inclined to sign his name in the
 Bill accepted by them alone — which bill is of Court
 to become a root of being committed to the Sessions
 Court. On bringing this bill & Complaint to the
 notice to the District Incharge. He & ten all
 was pleased to hold a strict enquiry into the matter
 & discharged the writer from his oath after having
 found him delinquent. Further enquired from
 Mudalyan & Pennuram Mudalyan & Ringasaway Pe-
 wor has he ordered to pay the Petitioner the amount
 of Rs 500. Your honor's Petitioner consequently
 prays your honor will be good enough as to
 issue a favorable order to the District Incharge
 for the Dishonesty of the amount of Rs 500
 & to punish them. For this act of charity
 benevolence the Petitioner shall ever pray to the
 Omnipotent gods for your honor's long life &
 prosperity.

Most humbly
 your honor's most obedient & humble
 servant
 2. 5-17/3

The Petitioner is referred to the
 Officer lately appointed at the
 charge of the Vindal chellam
 charge for satisfaction of
 his legitimate claim -
 (Vide G.O. No. of June 1903)
 G.M.

P.W. 34/4/73-

District Engineer's Office, S. Arcot,
Cuddalore 13th June 1873.

N^o 44

From

The Offg. District Engineer,
South Arcot.

To

Enclosure
1 Petition

The Chief Engineer,
P. W. D.

Sir,

With reference to N^o 43 of the 17th
Ultimo from the Under Secretary to Govt,
Public Works Department, forwarding to me
for enquiry and report a petition from one
Thumba Pillay, Earthwork Contractor on the
Palandoray Main Canal, I have the honour
to inform you that this Contractor complain-
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yet; the Contractor says he has been ~~meeting~~ ^{writing} upon the Overseer, the Overseer says the man has never been to him except at inconvenient times;—the fact is, the Overseer is unwilling to give him back the work, and though he was ordered to give him another trial he has been making all kinds of excuses.

3. I had received very good reports of this Overseer's work, but I must say I was not at all satisfied with what I saw, the whole of the Coolies appeared to be in a state of opening mutiny, and very great discontent prevailed throughout, nearly all the work was ~~being~~ ^{being} done on the "task work system," instead of the old petty Contract, which has always been in force in the Range ever since I have been in this District. It was impossible for me to measure up each individual Coolie's work, or check their accounts, this even the Range Officer does not attempt to go in for, but measures the work as a whole, and satisfies himself

92 3
I believe, only of the correctness of the total cubic contents of the work done, in fact, the Overseer himself is to all intents and purposes the contractor, he has separate and distinct accounts of his own with the coolies, having advanced them private funds. I find that in this way the petty contract system which has always been the system in force in the District is almost entirely relinquished, ^{in the 3rd Range} ~~for~~ task work, a system, until very recently, I may say, unknown in the South Arcot District, but now in force only in the Verdachellam Range and that very extensively.

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ously disappointed with this Overseer's work, after all I had heard. No proper system, or method to be seen anywhere: the coolies employed on task work loudly complaining and threatening to strike.

5. Since Mr. Supervisor Nicken's arrival I have apportioned the Chillamburum Talug as the Sub Division of the Range, and as this Annicut is in the Sub Division Mr. Nicken has been ordered to make Palandoray his head Quarters and to have also the immediate supervision of this work with the assistance of the Extra Talug Overseer in the Sub Division of that Talug, who has also hitherto been employed on a portion of the Canal.

6. Mr. Nicken will settle with the Contractor Shumba Pillay and if he brings, as he promises to do, a large gang of coolies on the work, he will get work in the Canal.

I.

1762 P.M.D.
Pres. of the Madras Port.

Read the following:-

the M.D. Secy. } H.E. No. 44 of 13 June 73
3117 South Arcot }

It is remarked from the Report on this petition that Overseer A. Coopoo saw my modelly who is spoken so well of in the District Engineer's letter recorded with G.O. No. 1217 of 20th April acknowledges that his writer was allowed by him to draft

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the Contractor Thumba Pillay and if he
brings, as he promises to do, a large gang of
coolies on the work, he will get work in the
canal.

I.

From Mr. Nicken's Office
Chillambrum
C. Nicken
C. Nicken
C. Nicken

10
I have the honor to
[Signature]

P.O. 1873 Dep't
Hingham
From No 3474.

The Off. Dist. Eng.
South Arcot

To The Chief Eng'r.
D. D. M.

Date 13th }
Recd 16th } June 1873

No 44

Enclosure.

Reporting upon a Peti-
tion received by Govt. from
Thumba Pillai Contractor
for earth work on the
Main Channel D.C.
andrai anicut.

No 134

No 1762-8th July 1873.

South Arcot 11th June 1873

1762 P.O.D.
Pres. of the Madras Port.

Read the following:-

From the Asst. Eng'r. }
South Arcot } H.C. No 44 of 13th June 1873

MR

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from the Report on
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saw my model who
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20 11 11
1-1
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2. And yet it cannot be gathered from any of the papers that any action has been taken with reference to these matters beyond dismissing the Overseer's writer who evidently acted under compulsion of his master. His Excellency

the Governor and Council
has already had occa-
sion in two recent
orders to remark on
Mr. Sanford's want of
decision in dealing
with his subordinates.
District Engineers
have full powers
of appointment and
dismissal of Overseers
in their own Districts,
and the Chief Engineer
is guided solely by
their reports in regu-
lating the promotion
of these men. He will
now be instructed
to

43
by A. H. Sanford
The Chief Engineer
writes that the
order of the 31st of
March 1874
3120 old book
the same date
to the same effect

132
to relegate A. Coopers.
Sammy Woodruff to
the 3rd grade; and the
Acting District Engi-
neer of South Arcot
is enjoined to assume
to the full extent the
responsibilities of
his position, amongst
which the proper su-
pervision of Sub-
ordinates is not
the least.

3. The Petitioner
will be referred to the
new Range Officer
for satisfaction of
his claims.

With

the ~~the~~ with reference to
the para 3 of the District
Engineer's letter his atten-
tion is called to para
2 of G. O. No. 1501 of
6th June enforcing
Colonel Mullins
warning to local
officers against laying
undue stress upon
the employment of
any one particular
agency for the execution
of works.

N: 134-35 G.M.M.

Jt. Engr. S. Achar
Pl. Civ. Eng. College
Director of P. Instruction
Pekham Dept.

Dated 17/7/73
Cor 24-6-13

17-11-31

33
C/2 3474 14
Govt. of 1873 Madras.
PUBLIC WORKS.

To The District Engineer
South Arcot

Dated

Recd.

Encl. /

G. O. 8th July 1873, No. 1762

Nos. 124 & 125

Ch. Sankararao, Grandly, Engineer.

Order in letter from the
Eng. South Arcot, reporting
petition from Earth work
contractor, Pelandorai Main
Road, praying that the work
taken away from him by the
Engineer may be given to him.
Orders issued for the payment
of the sum due for work
amounting to three lakhs
and six hundred rupees.