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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public Works

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1327	Press	<i>Original</i>
B.P. No.		Mis.	
Dated	18-5-	1874	195

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
13th May 1874.*

No. 381. Read the following letter from Colonel F. J. MOBERLY, R.E., District Engineer, Chingleput, to Colonel G. W. WALKER, R.E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Guindy, 15th April 1874, No. 196:—

In reply to G. O., No. 674, dated 13th March 1874, I have the honour to

1 Copy of letter from Captain Smith, R.E., No. 2,413, dated 27th March 1874. enclose copy of report from Captain A. C. Smith, R. E., Executive Engineer, Mount Range. The system of so-called

contractors very justly found fault with by Government in No. 271 of 4th February 1874, has taken deep root around Madras, and is most difficult to eradicate.

2. In reply to my suggestions, Mr. Harrington said that he had not time with other pressing work to organize a departmental agency, which he thought would cause a complete stoppage of supply from other sources and consequently of the barrack flooring, the estimate rate for which he thought insufficient, and I fear expressed his opinion too openly.

3. I started a quarry establishment myself early in December to test his opinion. Captain Smith does not consider the Maistry in charge competent for the post, and states that the stone will probably cost Rupees 35 per square as against Rupees 30 paid formerly to Contractors. We have now further to compete with suppliers for the Carnatic Railway which passes almost over our quarry in Palaveram, and for the Tramway in Madras.

4. This was all in view in November last. I cannot understand how the Inspecting Engineer came to his conclusion, or Mr. Harrington held out such hopes. He did nothing towards improving a supply notoriously insufficient at the time. I endeavoured to procure stone from Sholingur by rail, but the only tenderer asks Rupees 40 per square.

5. I have called for a comparative estimate showing the probable additional cost for completing the work, and will submit it to Government as speedily as possible. The work will be pushed on meantime.

6. We have had great difficulty in procuring fairly good wood for beams specially, and the delay in obtaining them threw us back over the whole roofing. The difficulty is not, I believe, peculiar to the department. I am informed that the import of timber generally has been small, and what has been brought is green unseasoned wood.

7. I would urge, as I have more than once before, the importance, I believe even economically, of keeping a good stock. If the Public Works Stores laid in a stock to season and worked it at moderate rates, I am under the impression that many District Officers would gladly employ the workshops.

From Captain A. C. SMITH, R.E., Executive Engineer, Mount Range, to Colonel F. J. MOBERLY, R.E., District Engineer, Chingleput, dated Saint Thomas' Mount, 27th March 1874, No. 2,413.

With reference to your No. 3,428, forwarding Government Order, No. 674, of 13th March 1874, to me for report, I have the honour to state as follows.

2. In paragraph 2 of this Government Order it is stated that "in this official year, under date 17th November, the Inspecting Engineer for Buildings reported to the Chief Engineer that he

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
18th May 1874.*

saw no reason why all the buildings should not be completed before its conclusion, and stated that the Executive Engineer had hopes of effecting the same."

3. Now the then Executive Engineer must have been very sanguine about it, as I think my figures further on, coupled with what I now say, will show.

4. The reliance placed upon the so-called suppliers has been the great cause of expectations of speedy completion, and this reliance is at first (until one get used to the ways of so-called suppliers) only natural; if a lot of men all declare that by such and such a time they will deliver so and so, one is inclined to believe them, but unless they are tied down by written agreements they never do, and if when so tied down they failed and are fined no good ensues, except perhaps the same man will not try again. These so-called suppliers have cheated the Executive Engineer and Overseer into the belief that they would send in large supplies, but they have failed.

5. I think I have shown how such "expectations which have not been realized" arose; I will now endeavour to show how such realizations never came about.

6. The heaviest items on the work are wood and stone. But though the supply of the former was very slow and meagre, and by throwing men out of work perpetually enhanced the rates, yet it would not alone have delayed the completion very much.

7. It is therefore the stone-work which has and will still further delay completion, and it is in this item that I will show how impossible it would have been under the circumstances to have completed the work within this official year.

8. Soon after I took charge of the range somewhere about 5th December I received orders from you to start the Palaveram quarry, and on the 8th December I opened one at the nearer hill; that quarry has been at work ever since, and though not quite satisfactory in its result will serve to give reliable data for rates of works both in time and expense, and from the quarry accounts I gather that it takes 81 men to produce from the rough hill and to convey to the barrack work site one square of flooring stone in one day at a cost of Rupees 37. (Of the working of this quarry I will submit another report.)

9. I never had 81 men at work, and my average (from nominal rolls) is 36 men per day, and I found it most difficult to get even this amount of labour; in fact, now nearly all have deserted the work for railway.

10. Now the rate of expense, even allowing for the infancy of the quarry and for the fact, that all tools, shed, smiths, etc., had to be paid for greatly exceeds the estimated amount, hence the unwillingness of the so-called suppliers to supply, and though I am greatly against raising rates, for a rate once raised is never again reduced, I am certain that allowed in the estimate is not sufficient, and therefore the suppliers would not fulfil their promises of large supply.

11. Having thus given you their reasons for not turning out the work, I will now show you what had to be done. In order to make easy comparison, I have reduced all the work in stone on the barracks to one value as it were, viz., squares of flooring (i. e., 100 stones a foot square, at least 5 inches deep, with 2 inches depth of side trimmed neatly, and upper surface 3 line dressed).

12. I find that the total amount of work required in the estimate is 530 squares; of this amount from the commencement of the work on the 1st January 1863 until 30th November 1873, that is in a period of 2,159 days, only 290 squares were completed; therefore about the time of the Inspecting Engineer's visit there were 240 squares remaining to be completed, and this would take 80 men 240 days, or, in other words, eight months to complete, whereas the time allowed by the Inspecting Engineer was only 4½ months. But to do even this where were these 80 men constantly employed to come from? As I said above the suppliers were a delusion and only supplied from 2 to 2½ squares a month, and the greatest number of men I could get at the quarry was an average of 52 for one week, and as my quarry started suppliers all fell off and would do nothing; so I am now stranded with my quarry people producing barely half a square a day, thus making it 480 days before all the stone required is turned out at present rates of time, and at a cost of about 16 per cent. in excess of estimated rates.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
18th May 1874.*

13. When the Inspecting Engineer visited the work and made his report there was no quarry, and the stone was then coming in from suppliers at the rate of only 2 squares or so per month, and it had come in before his inspection at the rate of 290 squares in 2,159 days, or 4 ½ squares a month. How then any one could be sanguine enough to express a hope of completion in 4½ months, I am at a loss to know.

14. I have now reported that I hope to complete the work in six months, but if anything happens to delay the quarry work, or rather to prevent my extending it, this will not be the case, and it must be at an increased rate.

15. The suppliers are of course dead against the quarry, and I have no doubt that under-hand influence is brought to bear; however this will be treated of in my quarry report. I trust I have written enough how to show cause why the extraordinary "expectations" were "not realized."

No. 382.

ORDER THEREON, 18th May 1874, No. 1,327.

MILITARY WORKS, No. 21.

ORDERED to be recorded.

2. The Governor in Council is pleased to learn that steps have been taken to work independently of so-called contractors or suppliers of material in the Mount Range, and trusts that the Executive Officer will in time succeed in organizing a satisfactory system of carrying on the operations of the department.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government.

To the District Engineer, Chingleput.

Exd. E. C. Shunker.

Spare Copies

CHINGLEPUT DISTRICT ENGINEER'S OFFICE,

No. 196 Guindy, 15th April 1874.

From

THE DISTRICT ENGINEER,

Chingleput.

To

Colonel G. W. Walker R. E.
Secretary to Government P. W. Dep^{ty}

SIR,

In reply to G. O. N^o. 674 dated
13th March 1874, I have the honor to
Enclosure 13th March 1874, I have the honor to
1 Copy of letter enclose copy of report from Captain
from Captain A. L. Smith R. E. Executive Engineer
Smith R. E.
N^o. 2413 dated Mount Range. The system of so called
27th March 1874. contractors very justly found fault with
by Government in N^o. 271 of 4th February 1874
has taken deep root around Madras
and is most difficult to eradicate.

In reply to my suggestions,
Mr. Harrington said that he had not
time with other pressing work to organize
a Department agency, which he thought
would cause a complete stoppage of
supply from other sources and conse-
quently of the Barrack flooring.
The estimate rate for which he thought
insufficient and I fear expressed his
opinion too openly.

3
I started a quarry establishment myself early in December to test his opinion. Captain Smith does not consider the masonry in charge competent for the post and states that the stone will probably cost Rupees 35 per square as against Rupees 30 paid formerly to contractors. We have now further to compete with suppliers for the Carnatic railway which passes almost over our quarry in Pulaveram and for the tramway in Madras.

This was all in view in November last. I cannot understand how the Inspecting Engineer came to his conclusion or Mr. Harrington held out such hopes. He did nothing towards improving a supply notoriously insufficient at the time. I endeavored to procure stone from Sholingur by rail but the only tenderer asks Rs. 40 per square.

I have called for a comparative estimate showing the probable additional cost for completing the work and will submit it to Government as speedily as possible. The work will be pushed on meantime.

Me

2
We have had great difficulty in procuring fairly good wood for beams especially. and the delay in obtaining them threw us back over the whole roofing. The difficulty is not I believe peculiar to the Department. I am informed that the import of timber generally has been small - and what has been brought is green unseasoned wood.

I would urge, as I have more than once before, the importance, I believe even economically, of keeping a good stock. If the Public Works Stores laid in a stock to season and worked it at moderate rates I am under the impression that many District Officers would gladly employ the Workshops.

I have the honor to be
Sir
Yours most obediently
J. K. S. Collett
District Engineer - Ching.

N. 2 or Mount Range Office
Saint Thomas Mount
No. 2413
27 March 1874

From,
The Executive Engineer
Mount Range

To,
The District Engineer
Chinglaput

Sir,
With reference to your No. 3428
forwarding Government Order No. 674 of
13 March 1874 to me for report, I have
the honor to state as follows.

In para 2 of this G. O. it is stated that
"in this official year under date 17
November the Inspecting Engineer for
Buildings reported to the Chief Engineer
that he saw no reason why all the
buildings should not be completed
before its conclusion and stated that
the Executive Engineer had hopes of
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Now the then Executive Engineer
must have been very sanguine about
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coupled with what I now say will
show.

Recd. W. H. 1874 Sept.
from 17 of 1874
No. 2260

The District Engineer
Chinglaput

The Secretary to Government
- went to the

Dated 15-3-74
Recd. 16 April 1874
No. 1

Reports on the same
of his not having been
able to complete the
New Royal Building
because of its
ground within the
C. E. year 1873/74
No. 10: 1873/74-79

The reliance placed upon the so-called suppliers has been the great cause of expectations of speedy completion, and this reliance is, at first (until one gets used to the ways of so-called suppliers) only natural; if a lot of men all declare that by such and such a time they will deliver so and so, one is inclined to believe them; but unless they are tied down by written agreements they never do and if when so tied down they failed and are fined no good comes except perhaps the same man will not try again. These so-called suppliers have cheated the Executive Engineer and Overseer into the belief that they would send in large supplies but they have failed.

I think I have shown how such expectations which have not been realised, arise. I will now endeavour to show how such realisations never came about.

The heaviest items on the work, are wood and stone. But though the supply of the former was

4
was very slow and meagre and by throwing men out of work perpetually, enhanced, the rates, yet it would not alone have delayed the completion very much.

It is therefore the stone work, the which has, and will still further delay completion and it is in this item that I will show how impossible it would have been under the circumstances to have completed the work within this official year.

30
I soon after took charge of the Range somewhere about 5th December and received orders from you to start the Pataneran quarry and on the 8th December I opened one at the nearer hill; that Quarry has been at work ever since and though not quite satisfactory in its result this will serve to give reliable data for rates of works both in time and to expense and from the quarry accounts I gather that it takes 81 men to produce from the rough hill and to carry

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one square of flooring stone in one day
at a cost of Rs. 37 of the working
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Now the rate of expense
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135 5
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about the time of the Inspecting
Engineer's visit there were 240 Squares
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or in other words eight months to
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by the Inspecting Engineer was only
4 1/2 months. But to do even this
where

C where were these 80 men constantly
employed to come from? as I said,
about the suppliers were a delusion and
only supplied from 2 to $2\frac{1}{2}$ Squares a
month! and the greatest number of men
I could get at the quarry was an average
of 52 for one week, and as my quarry
started, suppliers all fell off and would
do nothing; so I am now stranded with
my quarry people producing barely
 $\frac{1}{2}$ Sq^{re} a day thus making it 480 days
before all the stone required is turned
out, at present rates of time and at a
cost of about 16 per cent in excess of
estimated rates.

When the Inspecting Engineer
visited the work and made his report
there was no quarry and the stone was
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How then, any one could be sanguine
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I have now reported that
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The Suppliers are of course dead
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treated of in my quarry report I trust
I have written enough how to show
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were not realized.

I have &c
Signed / A. C. Smith Capt. R.E.
Executive Engineer.

/ True Copy /

Hubert
District Buyer Chief

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were not realized.

I have &c
Signed / A. C. Smith Capt. R.E.
Executive Engineer.

/ True Copy /

Hubert
District Buyer Chief

1327

175 July 1881

P. W. D.

Proceedings of the Madras Government,

Under date the

187

Read the following:—

The District Engineer
Chingleput } (H. Co. Dec. 1768 & 15th April 1774)

Ordered to be
recorded.

It is something
to find that the
former "Lainsey-aller"
mode of constructing
work at the Mount
is admitted by the
District Engineer
to be indefensible;
and that steps have
been taken to work
independently of so-
called contractors
or

The Governor in
Council is pleased to

1 M. 2260/74.
18. 7. 1881
2. 18. 11. 381

Wd
2/4

or suppliers of material in the Mount Range.

And His Excellency

the Governor in Council

trusts that the

Executive Officer

will in time succeed

in organizing a

satisfactory system

of carrying on the

operations of the

Department -

Green

To S. C. Chinglesput.
S. Capin des 18/5/74.

S. Capris des/18 28/5/74.

381-382.

2266

Gobt. of 1874 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

The Dist Ingr.
Chingleput.

Date:

Recd.

Encl. 1.

G. O. 18 May 1874. No. 1327

Nos. 380-381.

Barracks.

Letter from the D^r Ingr.
Chingleput reporting
the cause of the non
completion of the new
Royal Artillery Barracks
at St. Thomas' Mount
within the off^e year
1873-74 ~~and~~ the re-
marks of the remarks