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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

*Public Works* DEPARTMENT

|          |       |               |
|----------|-------|---------------|
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| Dated    | 31-7- | 1874<br>—195— |

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,  
31st July 1874.*

Read the following :—

No. 737. From the District Engineer, Malabar, dated 9th July 1874, No. 78.  
ABSTRACT.—Report on the demolition of the old Dutch Tower at Cochin.

No. 738. ORDER THEREON, 31st July 1874, No. 2,093.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 52.

His Excellency the Governor in Council is satisfied both as to the necessity of the work and as to the care and skill with which it was carried out by the District Engineer and Range Officer assisted by the Master Attendant. The materials may be sold and the ground cleared.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,  
*Secretary to Government.*

To the District Engineer, Malabar.  
„ Marine Department.  
„ Officiating Controller of Public Works Accounts.

Exd. E. C. Shunker.  
Spare Copies

No. 97.

Cochin & W. C. Canal Range

Cochin 6<sup>th</sup> July 1844.

From,

The Executive Engineer

Cochin & W. C. C. Range.

To,

The District Engineer

Malabar.

~~Dear Sir,~~

In continuation of mine No. 96. dated 4<sup>th</sup> Instant, I beg to inform you that the Northern half of the Tower has been taken down to day successfully exactly in conformity with your instructions. The huge masonry lays on its own ground. After the mast joists and flooring of deck are collected, there is nothing left of any value with the exception of about 40 granite stones in an archway on the Eastern face, the stone laterite and brick is rubbish and could never be made any use of by this Department in building, but I may be able to dispose of it by public auction to advantage. I beg your instruction on the subject. I may add for your information that so rotten was the wall in places near the top and down through them it is singular how they stood in their position, and it is a blessing that the danger

is removed without loss of life.

I have &c.  
Signed J. B. Harris  
Executive Engineer  
D. P. M.

1 True Copy.  
W. H. Harrison  
District Engineer Malabar.

Copy of letter  
from the Engineer  
to the Engineer  
Cochin District  
22<sup>nd</sup> July 1874  
240-2093-31-7-74  
\* 111-42228/74  
W. H. Harrison

Enclosed letter from  
the District Engineer  
Malabar to the  
Chief Engineer  
Cochin District  
28 October 9.  
25 October 9.  
25 July 1874.

43. Malabar District Engineer's Office.  
Calicut 8<sup>th</sup> January 1874.  
From The District Engineer,  
Malabar.

To  
The Inspecting Engineer,  
for Civil & Military Buildings,  
Madras.

Sir,  
With reference to the Plan  
and Estimate submitted from this  
Office for converting the Old Dutch  
Tower at Cochin into a Marine  
Office, I have the honor to report that  
I inspected the building on the 2<sup>nd</sup>  
instant and am of opinion that it  
would be unsafe to patch it up  
in the manner proposed. It may  
be true that the old work is crumbling  
and falling to decay in so un-  
takeable a manner as not to war-  
rant the undertaking of the new  
improvements, alterations & additions.  
Cracks are observable in every direction,  
the walls are bulging outwards in  
several places, small trees are very  
soundly and deeply rooted in all sides  
of the old work, and in portions  
where the plaster, which is about  
an

much in thickness, is displaced;  
the worst form of laterite stone is dis-  
cernible on which the salt air acts  
immediately and very injuriously.  
The old walls are thick and that in  
my opinion is all that can be said  
in their favor, both workmanship  
and materials being bad. The flag-  
staff by its vibration in heavy winds  
may I think have had something  
to do with the cracking of the walls,  
but far more is attributable to decay  
and to the growth of small trees.  
Captain Bailey proposed burning  
out the "shrubs" but I do not think  
that the root of the evil would be  
at all reached by this process, and  
I would advocate the removal of  
the walls through which the trees  
have sprung, if it is decided to  
reconstruct the Tower as proposed.  
I deem it my duty to bring the sub-  
ject to your notice, after seeing  
the work, that if you think it  
advisable you may inspect it in  
person.

Yours &c  
J. W. Harrington

(True Copy) Distt. Eng. Malakas  
J. W. Harrington

Distt. Eng. Malakas.

No 70 Malabar Distt. Eng. Office  
Camp Cochin 29<sup>th</sup> June 1874

From

The District Engineer,  
Malabar

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month, copy of which I enclose.  
I will report further on the matter  
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In a letter from  
the District En-  
gineer Malabar  
to the Chief  
Engineer P. W.  
Departt: No 40  
29 June/74

P. W. 4020/74

person. I  
June 18th  
J. W. Harrington  
(True Copy) Dist. Eng. Malabar.  
W. Harrington  
Dist. Eng. Malabar

No 40 Malabar Dist. Eng. Office  
Camp Cochin 29 June 1874

From  
The District Engineer,  
Malabar.  
To  
The Chief Engineer,  
P. W. Departt.,  
Madras.

Sir,  
I regret to have to report  
the almost total destruction of the old  
Cathedral Tower at this place. Two  
of the old buttresses fell at about  
5 1/2 yesterday afternoon, and I visited  
the work immediately - the whole of  
one side fell down, during the night  
and it is simply a question of time  
as to when the whole building will  
come down. The downfall is attributed  
to the age and decay, and  
I heard, but the opinion formed by me  
in January last and expressed in  
a letter to the then Inspecting Engi-  
neer for Civil and Military Build-  
ings in my letter of the 18th of that  
month, copy of which I enclose.  
I will report further on the matter  
in

in a day or two. I have of course  
warned the Master Attendant and  
the Tahsildar to keep all persons  
away from the immediate vicinity  
of the work, lest any accident should  
happen.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your most obedient servant  
W. Parryson  
District Engineer,  
Malabar

By M. 7074 Report  
The District Engineer  
Malabar  
Dated 29 June 74  
Recd 2 July  
No. 70  
Reporting the  
fall of the  
whale of the  
one side of the  
butch tower  
at Cochin  
In 1993-1000 July 74

G.O-2093-31-7-74

Recd to City 23 July 74

No. 78. Malabar District Engineer's Office  
Calicut 2 July 1874  
From The District Engineer,  
Malabar  
To The Chief Engineer,  
P.W.D. Department,  
Madras.

Sir,  
In continuation of my  
No. 70 of the 29th ultimo I have  
the honor to report as follows re-  
garding the measures taken by  
me for the demolition of the  
old Dutch tower at Cochin.  
As already telegraphed to you  
I deemed its condition so danger-  
ous that I determined to raze  
it to the ground by judicious  
blasting, and I am happy to  
say that this has been effected  
without any injury or accident  
whatever. I was at first in-  
formed that none but the  
worst description of powder  
could be procured in the ba-  
-gear, and to test its strength  
I caused a bag containing  
some

some six lbs to be placed under  
a beam and against the face  
of one of the tower walls; it  
exploded with merely a puff  
but with no report, and a dis-  
coloration of the wall was the  
only result. On examination of the  
so-called "powder" I found it to  
consist of sand and charcoal with  
a very small admixture of powder.  
After careful inquiries I found  
that English powder in casks  
could be purchased in one of the  
shops. I bought some accordingly  
and Mr. Harris the Lieutenant En-  
gineer drilled three or four holes  
under my personal supervision,  
loading them with charges ranging  
from two to four pounds, tamping  
them in the prescribed fashion  
and igniting them by fuses made  
on the spot from paper. I deemed  
it advisable to lay small charges  
on several accounts, the chief being  
1<sup>st</sup>. the uncertainty as to what  
effect they would have on a build-  
ing which was so evidently in a  
state of decay and had been al-  
ready

ready, cracked, and shaken.  
2<sup>nd</sup>. the very close proximity of so  
many houses which might be in-  
juriously affected either by the  
blow, or portions of the wall  
or by the vibration of the shock.  
3<sup>rd</sup>. by the extreme wetness of  
the walls, they being literally soak-  
ed through.  
4<sup>thly</sup> by the great difficulty ex-  
perienced in keeping people gen-  
erally away from the ruined  
building. This last was an also-  
lute task, which had to be per-  
formed often by myself as well  
as by Mr. Harris, and Captain  
Graves the Master Attendant on  
person. The theoretical rules  
were adhered to, as far as possi-  
ble in practice, but as already  
stated I would not allow, for  
the reasons stated, heavy charges  
to be fired - preferring to let the  
tower fall, as it were piecemeal  
to minimize the risk of any  
danger or accident. It is on  
this account that the work of  
demolition

demolition has been a somewhat  
protracted one, the last wall  
having fallen on the 6<sup>th</sup> Instant,  
blasting operations having been  
commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup>. The weather  
during the whole period was wet  
in the extreme, rain falling for  
hours together. Previous to any  
holes being drilled the top gal-  
lant, top mast, yard, rigging  
&c &c of the flag staff had  
been removed by the Master  
Attendant, and without any  
contrivance whatever. I may  
here state that Captain Grady  
was most attentive and energetic  
from first to last giving me  
every assistance in his power  
and placing his lascars and  
Syriang (a first rate set of men)  
most unreservedly at my disposal  
and they were of the great-  
est use and assistance. I trust  
that this may be favorably  
noticed by Government. Mr.  
Harris' exertions were great and  
commendable, and he deserves  
much

much credit for doing all that  
he did without the occurrence  
of any accident. The whole cost of de-  
molition will I trust be some-  
thing under Rupees (300) Three  
hundred, and some recovery  
will be effected (though not  
much) from the sale of the  
materials - with the exception  
of some planking and a few  
cut stones they are almost  
valueless - though the debris of  
the walls may be used for con-  
crete work and for repair  
of roads - I forward copy of  
letter from Mr Harris on this  
point and solicit your instruc-  
tions as to whether these materials  
should be sold outright, and  
the ground cleared.

The construction of a  
Master Attendant's office, and  
the erection of a flag staff will  
form the subjects of another  
communication. I trust that  
all I have done will meet with  
the

the approval of Government.  
 I could not but act on my own  
 responsibility, so imminent to  
 my thinking was the danger.  
 and should my proceedings be  
 approved, I shall be amply  
 repaid for a good deal of care  
 and anxiety.

I have the honor to be,  
 Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. Livingston

District Engineer,  
 Malabar.

1779 Jan 1874  
 The District Engineer  
 Malabar

To the Chief Engineer  
 P. W. Dept.  
 Madras

N<sup>o</sup> 78

dated 9<sup>th</sup> 3 Jan 1874  
 Recd 13 E. I.

Deposit on the  
 cancellation of  
 the old bullet  
 Tavernat  
 Cochin

G-0-2093-31-7-74

In the Order

His Excellency the Governor in Council  
 is satisfied both as to the necessity of the work  
 and as to the care and skill with which it was  
 carried out by the District Engineer and Range  
 officer assisted by the Master Attendant.  
 The materials may be sold, and  
 the ground cleared.

To the S. E. Malabar  
 District Engineer  
 Cochin  
 1874

2093

G. W.

737/31  
 16/1/74