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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
25th May 1875.*

Read the following papers —

No 444 From Lieutenant-Colonel J F FISCHER, R E, District Engineer, Madura, to Colonel G W WALKER, R E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madura, 17th April 1875, No 218.

ADVERTISING to G O, of the 13th November 1874, No 3,910, I have the honor, with much regret, to report that up to this date I have been unable to obtain the detailed information regarding the tanks of this district which are situated above the line of the railway passing through it, owing to the paucity of officers and subordinates attached to the district, and the Chief Engineer for Irrigation having declined to allow me to employ any temporary establishment for the purpose, I am constrained to apply to the Government for the necessary assistance

2 The information we are expected to supply is contained in the return of the memorandum of the 14th December 1874, No 1,040, from the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, but not received here till the 2nd March 1874, and comprizes the following heads. —

1. Points at which drainage surplus crosses the line of Railway
- 2 Area of catchment basins, very often not to be found in any Atlas sheets
3. Estimated maximum flood discharge
- 4 Intended maximum depth or surplus weir
5. Length of surplus weir required.
- 6 Lengths of existing weirs or calingulahs.
- 7 Additional length required
- Levels required 8 Height of banks and dam stones *
- 9 Areas of all tanks
- 10 Capacity when full

There are several other items of information called for in columns 13 and 14 in a general sort of way, but which all require to be collected, and with such an establishment as is allowed for this district I beg very respectfully to submit that it is impossible to do the work properly in the short time allowed us I have only one young officer with me and two upper subordinates, and one of these is employed entirely in a zemindary sub-division through which the railway does not pass For

The Paumben Overseer is on special duties and cannot be otherwise employed an area of nearly 9,000 square miles of country I have only six Overseers allowed me The circumstances connected with

Soobroya Iyer, the seventh man, have been specially reported to Government in letter of the 20th March 1875, No 5,229, and no additional man can be entertained as per G. O, of the 24th February 1875, No 529 In other districts containing not more than 7,000 square miles of country ten or twelve Overseers are allowed as well as an extra hand for emergencies; in order to avoid appearing before the Government as failing in attending to their instructions from negligence, I am compelled to represent the circumstances in which I am placed, and to solicit further assistance as I find I cannot spare the time in so large an area to do the work myself.

3. And here I would beg to remark that if District Engineers, who are supposed to be the local heads of the department and to possess some knowledge, experience, and

judgment in directing its operations in a district, are to employ themselves in attending to work which can be easily managed by any qualified Maistry or Surveyor, the cost to the State for the work thus obtained will be out of all proportion to its value. Nearly 20 years ago, in Bellary, with the aid of the Sub-Overscers we then had I managed to put the tanks of that large district into such repair in three years that the irrigated area under them was more than doubled in about five years, and now I am quite ready to do the same if I have the proper means afforded me, even though it is implied I am not sufficiently acquainted with these duties. I do not complain however of this, but I would crave very respectfully to submit, for the consideration of the Government, that considering the high standard of the education given at Woolwich to the officers of the Royal Engineer Corps, it can be a matter of no surprise if the young officers prefer remaining at the head-quarter of the Sappers in India when they find there is nothing provided for them to do but the common work of Surveyors, road and tank maistries, and that therefore it can be a matter of no surprise that the cost of establishments so far exceeds the nature of work turned out, as these, instead of being directed to carry out works of real utility and improvement, are employed on the most ordinary work no matter how highly paid.

4 As the tanks of this district are in the most wretched order no such thing as an efficient waste weir is to be seen, and the bunds are worn down so as to make one wonder in what manner the so-called repair allotments have been expended in former years. I am the more anxious to have the work attended to soon for though no accidents to roads or railway have yet occurred, yet considering their miserable state it cannot be long before some of them are damaged, and I trust then the Government will be pleased to allow me some increase of establishments, particularly as in other districts through which a railway passes, Special Assistant Engineers have been allowed, and if I had 300 a month sanctioned for two or three months I could get all this work easily done.

5 In conclusion, I would respectfully deprecate its being considered I am acting in any spirit of insubordination in applying to the Government for assistance. I have only done so from sheer necessity, and from the importance attached by themselves to the duty, and from a desire to avoid its being again represented to them that I act in opposition to their orders and instructions when from the circumstances of this district, and the late period at which orders were sent to us, it is quite out of my power to give the information called for with such minute detail, and as to getting it from Atlas sheets it would indeed be doing the work twice over, as a Surveyor properly instructed could when once in the field prepare estimates and obtain all the necessary information on the spot.

No 486

No 445. *Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL FISCHER, in the first paragraph of the foregoing letter, states that the Chief Engineer for Irrigation having declined to allow him to employ any temporary establishment for ascertaining the requirements of tanks affecting the railway, he is constrained to apply to the Government for the necessary assistance. This statement is certainly incorrect. The terms or conditions on which temporary survey

establishments for such work will be sanctioned are clearly laid down in Circular No. 62, dated 18th May 1874, and had these instructions been conformed to Colonel Fischer would have had his wants supplied at once.

2. On the 20th March last, the District Engineer applied for the sanction of a survey party for three months to enable him to furnish the requisite information in connection with the tanks affecting the line of railway in the Madura taluq, and he was thereupon informed* that much of the information necessary would be obtainable on inspection of the tanks, and that in those cases in which the services of a Surveyor might be needed the requisite sanction would be given on the names of the tanks, and the particulars in each case requiring to be ascertained, being reported.

3. In paragraph 2 of his letter Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer states that this office printed memorandum of the 14th December, No 1,040, was received by him on the 2nd March 1875, but in his letter, No 5,234, of the 20th March, it is said to have been received on the 27th February. On what date the memorandum was despatched is not known here, but from its docket it would seem to have been received from the Press in January. Inquiry will be made.

4. On the 2nd ultimo the District Engineer reported that, so far as he had been able to observe, the railway under construction through the Madura District for the last three or four years had never suffered any inconvenience or damage from the surplus of tank or other drainage. This information being indefinite, and definite information being required, he was referred to the memorandum, No. 1,040, which, when complied with, would give all the particulars needed.

5. Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer in reply to this office memorandum No. 335, reported that with his present staff he was unable to obtain the required information, and he asked that an Executive or Assistant Engineer might be sent to his assistance. He was informed that no doubt the incomplete state of the executive establishment of the district would be taken into account by Government should any shortcomings in the preparation of the half yearly statement of railway tanks be found, but that the District Engineer would be expected himself to devote a good deal of attention to the subject. Inquiry was made as to what could be done to help him, and what Colonel Walker said resulted in the memorandum to Colonel Fischer containing the following paragraph — "It is understood that an officer* is about to join the district and that another† will ere long be posted thereto."

* Major Law
† Mr Paynter

6. In a letter, as per margin, the District Engineer, still ignoring the requirements of Circular No. 62, recommended that a survey establishment asked for by Lieutenant Boddy should be sanctioned. From the papers it appeared that neither Lieute-

No 206, 16th April.
Two Surveyors, &c, for about three months

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
25th May 1875.*

nant Boddy nor Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer understood very clearly what had to be done, and an endeavour was made by subsidiary instructions* to make this more clear, if possible

* No 415, 26th April

7 Another letter received is dated 30th ultimo, No 371, and mentions that, as no special establishment had been sanctioned, it is impossible to complete the return of tanks in the time mentioned (that is, by the 30th June), and he had specially addressed Government on the subject. He adds that were a survey establishment sanctioned he would have the whole of the estimates ready for these works (tanks) in three or four months "as the matter is one of the simplest possible to be dealt with". This remark appears to show that the District Engineer does not even know how to set about the work to be done. He, it would seem, proposes to entertain a few Surveyors, turn them loose over the country without any detailed instructions, to do certainly a great deal of unnecessary work, and probably to leave undone a great deal that would be essential to the proper and economical treatment of the tanks. Paragraph 3 of his letter to Government confirms the impression that Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer does not comprehend what part of the work properly appertains to him and to his Range Officers, and what should be required of the Surveyors. How, for instance, in the case of any particular tank, are the latter to tell what the circumstances require them to do. They have no idea what a tank should be, they are no judges of any of the details which have to be determined, whether the bund should be high with a short weir and a considerable depth passing over it, or low with a long weir and a small depth of water. They cannot settle whether a survey or contours or any other particulars are necessary, and, in short, as has been pointed out in the Circular No 62, paragraph 7, all the work they are to do should be completely arranged for them before they are sent to do it.

8 Again, Colonel Fischer says, *vide* last paragraph, that it is impossible to complete the return in the time named. Had he read his instructions with ordinary care he would have seen (paragraph 6)

No 1,040

that nothing impossible was required of him, and that what he had to do was to take up these tanks in the order and in the manner pointed out, and to do as much as he could.

9 The District Engineer has, as has unfortunately been too often the case, left instructions unattended to, though, by complying with these, all reasonable requirements would have been provided, and he has wasted his time and that of others in stating what he could not do under conditions which it was entirely within his own power to obviate.

10 One sanction for a survey establishment has recently been given* to prevent the interests of Government suffering by

* No 455, dated 3rd May 1875

the District Engineer's continued inattention to orders, but it was necessary at the same time to inform him that no expenditure under that sanction would be passed until the rules had been complied with.

OOTACAMUND,

(Signed)

JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Colonel, R E,

Chief Engineer for Irrigation

8th May 1875.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
25th May 1875.*

No 446

ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1875, No. 1,435.

IRRIGATION, No 54.

It is clear to the Government from the correspondence which has passed between the District Engineer, Madura, and the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, that Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer has from inattention to the rules contained in the Irrigation Circular No. 62, and to the instructions of the Memorandum No 1,040, of the 14th December, by his own neglect prevented himself from obtaining that assistance in the way of temporary establishment which he would otherwise have readily had granted to him. He will now conform strictly to those instructions, and he will transmit the return of railway tanks, which will be due immediately after the 30th June, with as much of the information, about as many of the tanks of that class, as he may have then obtained.

(True Extract)

Major, R E,

Offg. Joint Secretary to Government.

To the District Engineer, Madura.

„ Chief Engineer for Irrigation

Exd S T Austin

Spare Copies

Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation

Lieutenant Colonel Fischer, in the first para of the foregoing letter, states that the Chief Engineer for Irrigation having declined to allow him to employ any temporary establishment for ascertaining the requirements of tanks affecting the Railway, he is constrained to apply to the Government for the necessary assistance. This statement is certainly incorrect. The terms or conditions on which temporary survey establishments for such work will be sanctioned are clearly laid down in Circular No. 62, dated 18th May 1874, and had these instructions been conformed to Colonel Fischer would have had his wants supplied at once.

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Colonel Fischer states that this Office
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was received by him on the 2nd March 1875
but in his letter N^o 5234 of the 20th March
it is said to have been received on the
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of tank or other drainage. This informa-
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N^o 350 A. 7th April Memorandum N^o 1040 which, when
complied with, would give all the
particulars needed.

5. Sent Colonel Fischer in reply to
N^o 41. 5th April this Office Memo N^o 335 reported that
with his present staff he was unable
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N^o 384. 14th April He was informed that no doubt the
incomplete state of the Executive Establish-
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Major Law

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6 In a letter as per margin the N^o 206. 16th April District Engineer, still ignoring the requirements of Circular N^o 62, recommended that a survey establishment asked for 2 Surveyors &c. by Lieut Boddy should be sanctioned. From the papers it appeared that neither Lieut Boddy nor Lt Colonel Fischer understood very clearly what had to be done, and an endeavour was made by subsidiary instructions to make this more clear, if possible. N^o 415. 26th April

7 Another letter received is dated 30th Ultimo N^o 371 and mentions that,

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as no special establishment had been sanctioned, it is impossible to complete the return of tanks in the time mentioned (that is by the 30th June) he had specially addressed Govt. on the subject. He adds that were a survey establishment sanctioned he would have the whole of the estimates ready for these works (tanks) in 3 or 4 months "as the matter is one of the simplest possible to be dealt with". This remark appears to show that the District Engineer does not even know how to set about the work to be done. He, it would seem, proposes to entertain a few surveyors turn them loose over the country without any detailed instructions, to do certainly a great deal of unnecessary work and probably to have undone a great deal that would be essential to the proper and economical treatment of the tanks. Para 3 of his letter to Govt. confirms the impression

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Again

N^o 1040

13 11
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N^o 458 dated 3
May 1878

District

District Engineers continued inattention to orders, but it was necessary at the same time to inform him that no expenditure under that sanction would be passed until the rules had been complied with.

Madras Lt Col R C
Aotacamund }
8th May 1875 } Chief Eng^r for Irrigⁿ

To the Secretary to Government
P. W. D.

17 P. H. Dept
Proceedings of the Madras Government
following

May 1875

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P. W. 1875 Sept.

N. 486 No. 3217

From
The Chief Engineer
for Irrigation

To The Secretary to Govt.
P. W. D.

Colaba
8th Mo.

Dated 8th } May 1875
Received 13 }

Inclosures 4

G. O. No. 1435 of 25-5-75

Note on letters from the
Dist Engr, Madras reporting
that from want of proper
Survey Establishment
he has as yet been un-
able to obtain the informa-
tion regarding tanks
affecting Railways, called
for in G. O. of the 13th Nov 74.
W 3210.-

To

N. 445.

Cir: 17/5/75 R. 15 20/5/75
Ref: 6/6/74-5-75

P. B. Rept
Proceedings of the Madras Government
Read the following.

the Chief Engineer }
for Irrigation } (H. S. No. 486 of 8th May 1875)

G. O. No. 1435 dated 25th May 1875

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Government from the corres-
pondence which has passed
between the District Engineer
Madras and the Chief
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