

(1) Number of pages _____

(2) Date of repair _____

(3) Initials of the Referencer _____

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public Works

DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.

B.P. No.

Press

Mis.

Dated

10 - 6 - 1955

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 219. Read the following letter 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, 4th May 1875, No. 399 :—

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of G. O. of the 20th April 1875, No. 1,118, and to request you will be good enough to submit the following explanations to the Government.

- 1 Comparative Statement.
- 1 Estimate.
- 1 Service Register, with two enclosures.

2. I regret the Government should consider me to blame for altering the dimensions of the Racquet Court as given by the Consulting Architect, which is what I presume is meant by the allegation in paragraph 2 of the above Government Order, but as this entailed no extra cost but effected a considerable saving, I did not think it was likely to be objected to, if a Racquet Court 72×42 as originally estimated for were to cost Rupees 4,200, then a Court 71×36 at the same rates would cost only Rs. 3,580, and the Government could not have been put to any additional expense. The suggestion to alter the dimensions was made by Captain Pole, R.E., one of the best players in India, who said it was wasting money to make a larger Court, and at a meeting of the Racquet Court Committee, at which Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts was present, this was assented to by all the members on my putting this question directly to them.

3. The original estimate as sanctioned in G. O. of the 8th December 1873, No. 2,962,* was for Rupees 4,200, and this was sent to you with my letter of the 11th

* G. O., 7th February, No. 303. January 1875, No. 4,177. I regret to say I find that in my letter of the 26th December 1874, No. 4,132, there is a clerical error to the effect that the estimate for Rs. 4,700 did not include land compensation.

4. Now, as regards the preparation of the revised estimate for Rupees 7,410, I have to observe Colonel Roberts has misrepresented the facts in paragraph 18 of his letter to the Government. When I found the provisions of the original estimate were so utterly inadequate, I ordered, verbally, the Sub-Engineer in charge of the Madura Range to prepare a revised estimate and comparative statement; this was on the 8th December 1874, and on the 24th idem he sent me the accompanying comparative statement (A), with his letter No. 758 of that date, in compliance, as he admits "with my verbal instructions;" as he was all along in communication with Colonel Roberts, it is but natural to suppose the fiction about my personal instructions to the Overseer is his own concoction, and Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts does not hesitate to adopt such a proceeding without giving any authority for the same, and in paragraph 15 of this same letter objects to my accepting the mere *ipse dixit* of the Palace Overseer; further, in his letter of the 22nd December 1874, No. 754, the Sub-Engineer asked for orders what he was to do pending the submission of the revised estimate, as the grant would lapse. As the Government are aware by G. O. of the 29th April 1875, No. 1,191, what steps Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts was taking to promote their interests whilst here on leave, it is unnecessary for me to add any further comments.

5. When I received the comparative statement now sent, revising the estimate to Rupees 4,700, I saw at once the whole thing was a farce, and scratched it out with my pencil, sent for the Palace Overseer, and made out the revised one for Rupees 7,410, which includes Rupees 500 for land compensation; deducting this the cost is Rupees

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
10th June 1875.*

6,900, and Mr. Chisholm's approximate estimate for the work was Rupees 6,100; how it came to pass that the original estimate for Rupees 4,200 was submitted to Government I am unable to explain, the more so as I found in the records of this Office an estimate for Rupees 9,500 for a similar structure at Bangalore on the standard plan; the papers connected with this fact were duly communicated to Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts in this office letter of the 22nd February 1875, No. 4,827, who has very significantly ignored these altogether, and, though requested to return them for record here to the office to which they belong, he has taken no further notice of this matter when returning all the other papers; and there is absolutely nothing to show why similar work and materials at Madura should cost 100 per cent. less. Mr. Chisholm has lately been here, and I laid the whole facts and circumstances of the matter before him, and he has promised to explain the same to the Government before going to England, as he was perfectly satisfied with the estimate as revised by me.

6. Now, as to the matter of rates, I beg to transmit an original estimate (B) prepared by Lieutenant Greer, and countersigned by Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts, containing items for similar work; the rate for cut-stone work allowed in this is Rupees 1-7-4 a cubic foot as actual cost, yet it is objected that my rate of Rupees 1-4-0 "is monstrous," and that the Assistant Engineer in charge of the Railway could do this for Rupees 16 a cubic yard or 9 annas a cubic foot, whilst I wanted Rupees 33-12-0, and it had been shown to the Government that the actual cost was really Rupees 40, agreeing with the rate allowed in the Bangalore Racquet Court estimate for the same work according to the standard plan; it would thus appear that "some gross mismanagement, or some other causes," were at work in Madura before I had anything to do with the works here, but after the receipt of G. O. of the 29th April 1875, No. 1,191, it would be unbecoming in me to notice the matter further; if I had not had experience of very similar practices elsewhere, I should not have believed it possible that any Officer holding Her Majesty's Commission could have stooped to such proceedings.

7. In regard to land compensation and change of site, I have to refer you to my letter of the 8th March 1875, No. 5,007, forwarding a letter from the Collector, in which that officer complains that his views had not been properly considered, and as I find this has not been done even up to the present time I request you will be so good as to submit them with this letter to the Government. Copy of letter in G. O., 20th May 1874, No. 1,342, was not sent to the Collector.

8. Finally, I would crave to submit a few remarks in regard to the Palace Overseer, who has been so recklessly stigmatized as exceeding every estimate by extravagant rates. I beg to send his service register (C), a copy of a letter addressed to you on his behalf by Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts, and the testimonial given him by Lieutenant Greer, R.E., from which it will be quite apparent how very uncalled for these remarks are, or that during four years both these officers had utterly neglected to exercise any proper check and supervision over the works they had entrusted him to execute, and as the Assistant Engineer in charge of the Railways was here almost all this time, and could have done the work so much cheaper as now alleged, it is to be regretted these officers did not avail themselves of his services in behalf, and in the interests, of the Government they were serving. He, the Overseer, first brought to my notice the utter inadequacy of the original estimate for the Racquet Court, when the Range Officer deliberately proposed to go on with the work and send in the revised

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
10th June 1875.*

estimate a year or two hence, a very common practice with him both in Madura and in Tinnevely, as Mr. Rundall informed me when lately here; and I trust then the Government will be pleased to exonerate this subordinate from the unmerited censure passed on him, as he only acted in obedience to my orders after I had said I would not allow this system of revised estimates to go on when it was quite evident the original estimates were wrong as soon as the work was put in hand.

9. I request you will be good enough to return to me all the original documents which accompany this letter when no longer required by the Government, and give me final orders as regards the Racquet Court estimate.

P.S.—In paragraph 13 of his letter, Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts admits the specification was prepared after the plan and estimate was sanctioned this is incorrect, I believe; the plan, Mr. Chisholm's, and specification were sent here in March 1874, but the estimate was sanctioned in December 1873, for the standard plan see paragraph 5.

2. In paragraph 16 Lieutenant-Colonel Roberts says the rates for cut-stone are Rupees 13-8-0 and Rupees 33-12-0 a cubic yard for similar work, but this is incorrect, one is for cut-stone and the other is for face dressed stone, as particularly provided by Mr. Chisholm in his specification.

No. 220.

ORDER THEREON, 10th June 1875, No. 1,632.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 25-A.

THE honorable the Governor in Council declines to modify his Order No. 1,118, of 20th April, and desires that the revised

estimate sanctioned therein shall be carried out to completion.

2. The Range Officer, it would appear from Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer's letter, was no party to the increase of rates demanded by his subordinate, whom he will be left to supervise in the execution of the work according to those approved by the Superintending Engineer.

3. It was not the alteration of dimensions of the Court to which the Honorable the Governor in Council took exception in paragraph 2 of the Government Order above quoted, as assumed by Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer; but, as stated in that order in so many words, the alterations in the Consulting Architect's designs and specifications.

4. Lieutenant-Colonel Fischer's remarks at the close of paragraph 6 of his letter are utterly unwarrantable. The Government have frequently had to notice similar impropriety in the tone of this officer's correspondence, and it is expected that he will refrain from all discourtesy in his official communications.

(True Extract.)

Major, R.E.,

Offg. Joint Secretary to Government.

To the District Engineer, Madura.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies

399 District Engineer's Office
Madras 4 May 1875

From
Lieut Colonel J. Fischer Esq
District Engineer, Madras

To
Colonel L. W. Walker Esq
Secretary to Government.

Enclosures 3

1 Comparative
statement.

1 Estimate

1 Service
register with
2 enclosures

Sir
I have the honor to acknow-
ledge receipt of L/O, of the
20 April 1875, No 1118, and to
request you will be good enough
to submit the following expla-
nations to the Government.

2 I regret the Government
should consider me to blame
for altering the dimensions
of the Aqueduct Court as given
by the Consulting Architect
which is what I presume
is meant by the allegation in
para 2 of the above L/O.

but as this entailed no extra
cost, but effected a considerable
saving. I did not think it
was likely to be objected to -
if a Racquet Court 72×42 as
originally estimated for were to
cost Rupees 4200, then a Court
 71×36 at the same rates would
cost only 3580 Rupees and the
Government could not have been
put to any additional expense.
The suggestion to alter the dimen-
sions was made by Captain
Pole RC, one of the best players
in India, who said it was
wasting money to make a
larger Court and at a meeting
of the Racquet Court Committee,
at which Lieut-Colonel Roberts
was present this was assented
to by all the members on my putting
this question directly to them.
The original estimate as

2
No 76 February sanctioned in L.O. of the 8 December 1873
No 303

No 2962 was for Rupees 4200 and
this was sent to you with my
letter of the 11 January 1875 No 4177
I regret to say I find that in
my letter of the 26 December 1874
No 4132 there is a clerical error
to the effect that the estimate
for Rupees 4700 did not include
land compensation.

4. Now as regards the preparation
of the revised estimate for Rupees
7410 I have to observe Colonel
Roberts has misrepresented the
facts in para. 18 of his letter
to the Government. When I
found the provisions of the
original estimate were so
utterly inadequate I ordered
verbally the Sub Engineer in
charge of the Madurai Range
to prepare a revised estimate

and comparative statement; this
was on the 8 December 1874,
and on the 22 idem he sent
me the accompanying comparative
statement with his letter No 758 ^A
of that date, in compliance as
he admits "with my verbal
instructions"; as he was all along
in communication with Colonel
Roberts it is but natural to
suppose the fiction about my
personal instructions to the Overseer
is his own concoction, and
Sient Colonel Roberts does not
hesitate to adopt such a proceeding
without giving any authority
for the same and in para 15
of this same letter objects to my
accepting the meek ipse dixit
of the Palace Overseer; further in
his letter of the 22 December 1874
No 754 the Sub Engineer asked
for orders what he was to do

pending the submission of the
revised estimate as the grant would
lapse. As the Government are
aware by L.O. of the 29 April 1875
No 1191 what steps Sient Col Roberts
was taking to promote their
interests whilst here, on leave
it is unnecessary for me to add
any further comments.

5. When I received the
comparative statement now sent
revising the estimate to Rs 4700,
I saw at once the whole thing
was a farce, and scratched it
out with my pencil, sent for
the Palace Overseer and made
out the revised one for Rs 7410
which includes Rupees 500 for
land compensation deducting
this, the cost is Rupees 6900 and
Mr. Shisholun's approximate
estimate for the work was
Rupees 6100, how it came to pass

that the original estimate for
Rupees 4,200 was submitted to
Government I am unable to
explain, the more so as I found
in the records of this Office an
estimate for Rupees 9500 for a
similar structure at Bangalore ^{on the Bangalore plan.}
The papers connected with this
fact were duly communicated
to Genl Colonel Roberts in this
Office's letter of the 22nd February 1875
No 4827 who has very significantly
ignored them altogether and
though requested to return them
for record here to the Office to
which they belong he has
taken no further notice of this
matter when returning all the
other papers, & there is absolutely
nothing to show why similar
work and materials at Madras
should cost 100 per cent less. Mr
Whisham has lately been here

and I laid the whole facts and
circumstances of the matter before
him and he has promised to
explain the same to the Government
before going to England, as he
was perfectly satisfied with the
estimate as revised by me.
Now as to the matter
of rates I beg to transmit an
original estimate prepared by
Genl Lyett and countersigned
by Genl Colonel Roberts con-
taining items for ^{similar} work, the
rate for cut stone work allowed
is Rupees 1.7.4 a cubic
foot, as actual cost, yet it is
objected that my rate of Rs 1.4.
"is monstrous" and that the
Assistant Engineer in charge
of the Railway could do this
for Rupees 16 a cubic yard or
9 annas a cubic foot while
I wanted Rupees 33.12.0 and

It had been shown to the Govern-
ment that the actual cost was
really Rupees 40 agreeing with the
rate allowed in the Bangalore
Acquiescent Court estimate for the
same work ^{according to the Bangalore plan}. It would thus appear
that "some gross mis-management
or some other causes" were at work
in Madras before I had anything
to do with the works here, but
after the receipt of L.O. of the
29 April 1891 it would be
unbecoming in me to notice
the matter further, if I had
not had experience of very similar
practices elsewhere I should not
have believed it possible that
any Officer holding Her Majesty's
commission could have stooped
to such proceedings.

7 In regard to land
compensation and change of
site I have to refer you to my

letter of the 8 March 1875 to 5007 forwarding
a letter from the collector in which
that Officer complains that his
views had not been properly
considered and as I find this
has not been done even up to
the present time. I request you
will be so good as to submit
them with this letter to the
Government. ^{Copy of letter with 20 May 1874}
^{10/342 was not sent to the collector.}
8 Finally I would crave
to submit a few remarks in
regard to the Palace Overseer
who has been so recklessly
stigmatized as exceeding every
estimate by exorbitant rates.
I beg to send his service register
a copy of a letter addressed to
you on his behalf by Lieut Colonel
Roberts and the testimonial
given him by Lieut Greer &c
from which it will be quite

[Faint handwritten notes in the left margin of the second page, including "The Palace Overseer" and "Lieut Colonel Roberts"]

apparent how very uncalled for these remarks are, or that during 4 years both these Officers had utterly neglected to exercise any proper check and supervision over the works they had entrusted him to execute - and as the Assistant Engineer in charge of the Railways was here almost all this time and could have done the work so much cheaper, as ~~was~~ alleged, it is to be regretted these Officers did not avail themselves of his services in behalf and in the interests of the Government they were serving. ^{The Manager} He first brought to my notice the utter inadequacy of the original estimate for the Racquet Court when the Range Officer deliberately proposed to go on with the work and send in the revised estimate a year or two hence, a very common

practice with him both in Madura and in Tirunelveli as Mr Stundall informed me when lately here, and I trust then the Government will feel pleased to exonerate this subordinate from the unmerited censure passed on him as he only acted in obedience to my orders after I had said I would not allow this system of ~~revised~~ revised estimates to go on when it was quite evident the original estimates were wrong as soon as the work was put in hand. I request you will be good enough to return to me all the original documents which accompany this letter when no longer required by the Government and give me final orders as regards the Racquet Court estimate.

J.

I have the honor to be

your most obedt servant.

Wm. T. Tucker
District Engineer

I. S. In para 13 of his letter Sent Colonel Roberts admits the specification was prepared after the plan and estimate were sanctioned, this is incorrect I believe; the plan, and specification were sent here in March 1874 but the estimate was sanctioned in December 1873. for the standard plan see para 5.

2) In para 16 Sent Colonel Roberts says the rates for cut stone are \$13.80 and \$33.12 a cubic yard for similar work but this is incorrect one is for cut stone and the other is for face dressed stone as particularly provided by Mr. Bliskholm in his specification.

Wt.

J. M. S.
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be con. to
unworn

140 20 Apr/75 No 538-539
 " 20 May/74 411-412
 " 7 Feb/74 137-138
 " 8 Dec/73 167-151
 " 29 Apr/75 688-689

P. W. 1875 Sept
 From No: 3056
 The District Engineer
 Madras

To
 The Secretary to
 Government
 Madras

Dated 4th May 1875
 Recd 8th May 1875

Enclosure
 No. 1632-106-75
 Submits his
 explanation on G.O. No
 1118 dated 20 April 75
 on the subject of the
 Pacyet Court

N 219.

Recd 16 Oct/75 5-75

P. W. Dept.

Proceedings of the Madras Government
 Read the following letter from the
 District Engineer Madras - J. L.
 May 1875 No 399.

Order thereon 1632 of 10 June 75

The Excellency the
 Governor in Council
 declines to modify his
 order No 1118 of 20th April
 & desires that the revised
 to be sanctioned thereon
 shall be carried into
 effect to completion -
 The Range Officer, it
 would appear from
 Lt Col. Fischers letter,
 was no party to the
 increase

MP

1632
 Lt Col. Fischer's language
 at the close of para 6th
 is invariable, as the
 is invariable.

increase of rates demand-
ed by his subordinate,
whom he will be left
to supervise in the ex-
ecution of the work ac-
cording to those ap-
proved by the Superin-
tending Engineer.

It was not the al-
teration of dimensions
of the fort to which His
Excellency the Governor
in Council took exception
in para 2 of the GO.
above quoted, as assumed
by Lt Col Fischer, but
as stated in so many
words, the alterations
in the Consulting Ar-
chitects designs &
Specifications ~~which~~
he

he took the liberty of
making & which were
any thing but improve-
ments as might have
been expected.

Comm

General Fischer's remarks
at the close of para 3 of his
letter are entirely unaccountable
The Government have frequently
been to notice similar im-
propriety in the tone of their
Officers communications and
it is expected that he will
relinquish all discourtesy
in his official communications

by 27/5

to DE Hudson with 3 Enclosures.
50 with 3 Enclosures depd
22nd 6-75

3056 ✓

Govt. of Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The M. S. S. S.
Madras

Recd.

Recd.

Encl.

G. O. No. 1132

Nos. 219-220

Packet Court Madras. —

Issuing orders on letter of
the District Engineer, sub-
mitting explanation on
G. O. No. 1110 of 20th April/75,
on the subject of the —

20th April 1875