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# MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

## Government of Madras

*Public Works* DEPARTMENT

|          |       |     |       |
|----------|-------|-----|-------|
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Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,  
25th January 1876.*

Read the following papers —

No 423 From Major J N HUNTER, R E, District Engineer, Salem, to Major-General G W WALKER, R E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Salem, 30th December 1875, No 189

I HAVE the honor to bring to your notice that I have this day received the following telegram from the Officer Commanding Royal Artillery, Bombay —

“Joseph Wilkinson gave himself up here as deserter from Public Works Department, Madras, states that he left on eighth instant; description and instructions required”

2 I was not aware of Taluq Overseer and Serjeant Wilkinson's desertion from his taluq (Namkul) till the receipt of the above telegram. The officer in charge, Salem Range, has now been instructed to proceed at once to Namkul and to institute inquiries as to the exact date of the Serjeant's departure, and whether he had any Government cash, &c, in his charge

3 The result of the inquiry will be communicated to you shortly

No 424 From the same Officer, dated Camp at Tripatore, 10th January 1876, No 196

In continuation of my letter, No 189, dated 30th December 1875, I have the honor to submit the accompanying copies of correspondence, from which it would appear that the cause of Serjeant Wilkinson's desertion cannot be ascertained, nor can the Taluq Writer or any one give any information in the matter. Supervisor

Mr Hiscox, in his report, states that he was not at all aware of Serjeant Wilkinson's desertion until his own return to duty after the Christmas holidays. Mr. Hiscox was in the Namkul taluq until the 22nd December 1875, but was ignorant of the Overseer's absence, as they were both in camp in opposite directions

2 Serjeant Wilkinson, during the past two years in the department, has borne an excellent character, and given every satisfaction both to myself and his immediate superiors. I very much regret his present inexplicable conduct

3 All Government properties that were in the custody of the Overseer were found safe, with the exception of a cash balance of Rupees 16-9-10.

From R E NORFOLK, Esq, Executive Engineer, Salem Range, to Major J N HUNTER, R E, District Engineer, Salem, dated Sunkerrydroog, 2nd January 1876, No 214.

With reference to your No 947, of the 30th ultimo, I have the honor to inform you that I have secured Serjeant Wilkinson's cash and cash-book, and have sealed up his office at Namkul, in which are the records and instruments, &c, the building is in charge of the Police till the return of Mr Hiscox

2 The cash-book shows a balance of Rupees 16-9-10 on the 30th November 1875, and the book is signed by the Overseer after closing the accounts on that date. No subsequent entries have been made in the cash-book

3 In the cash-box is found three cheques, amounting in the aggregate to Rupees 600, forwarded to the Overseer by Mr Hiscox with memorandum, dated 4th December 1875, which apparently was sent him for expenditure in December 1875

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25th January 1876*

4 The cash balance of Rupees 16-9-10 is not forthcoming The key of the cash-chest was with the Overseer's writer, and he can give no information regarding this balance

5 I cannot ascertain the cause of Serjeant Wilkinson's very extraordinary conduct, nor can I understand why Mr Hiscox did not report his absence, unless he was not aware of it, and until I am able to obtain from Mr Hiscox all the information he can give in the matter, I cannot say more than that, from inquiries, Serjeant Wilkinson appears to have gone to Moonchavady on the 8th, and left the taluq the same evening, telling his servants he was going to Salem to see you, and would be back in two or three days

From the same Officer, dated Salem, 7th January 1876, No 218

In reply to your letter, No 953, of 5th instant, I have the honor to forward herewith Mr Supervisor Hiscox's report on Serjeant Wilkinson's desertion from the department

2 The key of the cash-chest appears to have been sent to the writer as the accompanying letter\* will show

\* Marked A

3 The Writer stated he was doing nothing during the twenty-three days, but supposing the Overseer to have got leave privately that he could return after the holidays He also gives as his reasons for not reporting the Overseer's absence his disinclination and backwardness to report against his "superior officer," the lad evidently did not know he was doing wrong, he implicitly obeyed the Overseer's orders not to mention he had gone away quietly

From Mr W H HISCOX, Supervisor, Department of Public Works, to R E NORFOLK, Esq, Executive Engineer, Salem Range, dated Camp at Salem, 6th January 1876, No 501

I have the honor to report the absence of Taluq Overseer Serjeant J Wilkinson from the Namkul taluq

2 I last saw him at Namkul on the evening of the 7th December 1875, when he told me that he was going on a tour through his taluq, *via* Moonchavady, Kolarum, Veyloor, &c I also started off shortly afterwards in an opposite direction, *viz*, by Valupatty, Mogunoor, &c, with the intention of meeting him at Veyloor He, however, did not visit Veyloor On my return to Namkul, on the 17th morning, I made inquiries as to his whereabouts, when one of his lascars and a Contractor, by name Sunkur Reddy, told me that he was either at Kolarum or Thathongarpett I was anxious to speak to him about the slow progress of his works, and to examine his cash chest A few days only intervened between the date of my return and the commencement of the Christmas holidays

3 I left Namkul on the evening of the 22nd December, en route to Madras, *via* Sunkerrydroog, having received from the District Engineer privilege to avail myself of the holidays I returned to Namkul on the 4th January, and was then quite surprised to learn that Serjeant Wilkinson had given himself up as a deserter at Bombay, and that Overseer Rungasawmy Naidu of the Trichengode taluq had been at Namkul on the 1st January, and, under your orders, had taken away his cash-chest and some of the records It was only on the 5th January that I heard of his quitting Moonchavady on the 8th December last, and that he had instructed his lascars and writer not to mention his absence to any one, as he was going to Salem, and would be back again in a few days

4 I beg to state that I believe nobody at Namkul was aware of Serjeant Wilkinson having gone to Bombay, until Overseer Rungasawmy came down to Namkul on the 1st instant. His camp not having returned to Namkul prior to the Christmas holidays led me to suppose that he was really out inspecting his works It was the duty of the writer to have reported to me the Overseer's continued absence from the 8th to the 22nd December Had he done so, I should have made proper inquiries, and, having found it true, reported his absence to you

5 As I have not seen Serjeant Wilkinson's cash-chest and accounts since he deserted his post, I am unable to state whether all is correct or otherwise The cash-chest has, I learn, been

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,  
25th January 1876.*

examined by you, and that it was sent to Namkul to me yesterday with a memorandum, the particulars of which I am yet unacquainted with I shall return to Namkul this evening, examine the cash-chest and accounts and report all particulars without delay

6 I cannot account for this strange conduct on the part of Serjeant Wilkinson He gave me great satisfaction up to March 1875 I considered him a very hard-working man, and gave him every encouragement In April, I was transferred temporarily to the Tripatore range, during the period of my absence he discharged the duties of a sub-divisional officer pretty fairly On my return to Namkul from Tripatore he proceeded on two months' privilege leave, and since his return from leave, last October, he has not been working satisfactorily He had no proper house to live in at Namkul, and latterly he had no domestic servant to prepare his meals These inconveniences, coupled with his engagement to marry at Oossoor, were most probably the causes which aggravated his mind to that extent as to cause him to desert his appointment

(PRIVATE)

MOONCHAVADY, 8th December 1875

WRITER, I AM going into Salem (*quietly*), keep all my letters and bring them down on Saturday to Moonchavady, also bring down the old estimate book I have sent you my keys Instruct the lascars to bring down the letters Don't mention anything about my movements

(Signed) J WILKINSON,  
*Taluq Overseer*

(True Copy)  
(Signed) J N HUNTER, Major, R E,  
*District Engineer*

No 425

ORDER THEREON, 25th January 1876, No 194

ESTABLISHMENT, No 27

It is almost incredible that an Overseer should have been absent from his charge from the 8th to the 30th of a month

without the knowledge of any of his superior officers, and says little for the practical supervision of his Overseers by the extra officer, Mr Hiscox, and it has happened through the connivance of his Writer, whom even the Overseer himself, as is plainly seen from his own written instructions to the man, did not expect to keep silence longer than till the following Saturday, the 11th He will draw no pay for the period during which he did no work

2 Serjeant Wilkinson having borne a good character, and there being no departmental charge against him, the papers will be communicated to the Military Department, with a request that, if possible, it may be ascertained what led to the strange step taken by him.

(True Extract)

Major-General, R E,  
*Secretary to Government*

To the Military Department

„ District Engineer, Salem

„ Controller of Public Works Accounts

End S T Austin

Spare Copies

14215

Salem Range Office,  
Salem, 7<sup>th</sup> January 1876.

From

The Officer in charge of the  
Salem Range.

To

The District Engineer  
of Salem

Sir,

2 Enclosures

In reply to your letter No. 403 of 5<sup>th</sup>  
Instant, I have the honor to forward here-  
with Mr Supervisor Heaton's report on  
Sergeant Wickman's desertion from the  
Department.

\* marked A

2 The key of the Cash Chest  
appears to have been sent to the writer  
as the accompanying letter will show.

3 The writer stated he was doing  
nothing during the 23 days, but supposing  
the Overseer to have got leave privately  
that he could return after the holidays.  
He also gives as his reasons for not  
reporting the Overseer's absence, his  
disinclination and backwardness to  
report against his "superior Officer"; the  
lad evidently did not know he was

done

doing wrong, he implicitly obeyed the  
Overseer's order not to mention he had  
gone away quietly.

I have seen  
Signed P. H. Corcoran  
District Engineer

(True copy)

J. L. Mueller Mayor, P.H.  
District Engineer

Mr 234/96.

On 25th Jan 76 B.S. 423

No 501.

Superior's Office, B.  
Camp Salem, 6th Jan 1876.

From

The Asst. Officer, D. I. W.  
Salem Range

To

The District Engineer,  
Salem Range.

Sir,

I have the honor to report  
the absence of Taluk Overseer Sergeant  
J. Wickham from the station Taluk  
2. I last saw him at station on  
the evening of the 7th December 1875  
when he told me that he was going on  
a tour through his Taluk, via Pooncha  
vady, Kolarum, Veyloor &c. I also  
started off shortly afterwards in an  
opposite direction viz. by Taliapatty,  
Kofanor, &c, with the intention of  
meeting him at Veyloor. He, however,  
did not visit Veyloor. On my return  
to station on the 17th morning, I  
made enquiries as to his whereabouts,  
when one of his lascar & a contractor  
by name Sunkir peady told me that  
he is as either at Kolarum or

Thuthingapett

Thathengarpet. I was anxious to speak  
to him about the slow progress of his works,  
and to examine his Cash Chest. A  
few days only intervened between the  
date of my return and the commence-  
ment of the Ninas Holidays.

3 I left Stantine on the eve-  
ning of the 22<sup>d</sup> December enroute  
to Madras via Sanyamerry, having  
received from the District  
Engineer privilege to avail myself  
of the Holiday. I returned to  
Stantine on the 1<sup>st</sup> January, and  
was then quite surprised to learn  
that Sergeant Wilkman had given  
himself up as a deserter at Poonoy.  
And that Overseer Annagawang  
Naidu of the Thachengode Taluk  
had been at Stantine on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
January, and, under your orders, had  
taken away his Cash Chest and  
some of the records. It was only on  
the 5<sup>th</sup> January that I heard of his  
quitting Moorchavay on the 8<sup>th</sup>  
December last, and that he had  
instructed his Lascars and writer  
not to mention his absence to any  
one, as he was going to Calcutta  
and would be back again in a few  
days.

days  
4. This is to state that I believe  
nobody at Stantine was aware of  
Sergeant Wilkman having gone to  
Poonoy, until Overseer Annagawang  
came down to Stantine on the 1<sup>st</sup>  
January. His camp not having returned  
to Stantine prior to the Ninas Holiday,  
led me to suppose that he was pre-  
occupied inspecting his works. It was  
the duty of the writer to have reported  
to me the Overseer's continued absence  
from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>d</sup> December.  
Had he done so, I should have made  
proper enquiries, and having found  
it true, reported his absence to you.  
5. As I have not seen Sergeant  
Wilkman's Cash Chest and accounts  
since he deserted his post, I am  
unable to state whether all is correct  
or otherwise. The Cash Chest has, I learn,  
been examined by you, and that it  
was sent to Stantine to me yesterday,  
with a Memorandum, the particulars  
of which I am yet unacquainted with.  
I shall return to Stantine this evening,  
examine the Cash Chest and accounts and  
report all particulars without delay.

2/2/20

1 True copy 1

1 Fine copy 1

Dec: 25<sup>th</sup> Jan: 76 B. N. 429

*Thru*

*To*

The District Engineer of  
Salem.

3 In the cash box is found  
3 cheques amounting in the aggregate  
to Rs. 600 forwarded to the Overseer by  
Mr. Krescor with Memo. dated 4<sup>th</sup>  
December 1875 which apparently was  
sent him for expenditure in December  
1875.

4. The Cash balance of 10/16. 9. 10  
is

is not forth coming - the Key of the Cash  
Sheet was with the Quartermaster's Writter and  
he can give no information regarding  
this balance.

5 I cannot ascertain the cause  
of Sergeant Wilkinson's very extraordinary  
conduct, nor can I understand and why Mr.  
Hiscox did not report his absence unless  
he was not aware of it; and until I  
am able to obtain from Mr. Hiscox  
all the information he can give in  
the matter, I cannot say more than that.  
From inquiries, Sergeant Wilkinson  
appears to have gone to Mooruch arady  
on the 8<sup>th</sup> and left the Valley the same  
evening telling his servants he was going  
to Salem to see you and would be back  
in two or three days.

I have &c

/Signed R. E. Porter

Executive Engineer

/True copy/

J. W. Keeler Major, R.E.,  
District Engineer.

Per 25<sup>th</sup> Jan 1876 B. 123

(Private)

Mooruch arady  
8<sup>th</sup> December 1875.

Writter.

I am going into Salem  
(quietly): keep all my letters and  
bring them down on Saturday to  
Mooruch arady; also bring down the  
old estimate book. I have sent  
you my keys. Instruct the lascars  
to bring down the letters - don't men-  
tion anything about my movements

/Signed J. Wilkinson  
Valley Overseer

/True copy/

J. W. Keeler Major, R.E.,  
District Engineer.

Enclo in letter No 196  
of 10<sup>th</sup> Jan'y 1876 from  
the District Engineer  
of Salem

A

1876  
4/1/1876

Pro. 25<sup>th</sup> Jan'y 76 B N 423

1876

From

District Engineer's Office,  
Camp Ship at one 10<sup>th</sup> Jan'y 1876

The District Engineer,  
Salem

To

The Chief Engineer,  
Public Works Department.

Sir,

In continuation of my letter No 196  
enclosures to 2 copies of letter 189 dated 30<sup>th</sup> December 1875, I have  
from Ex. Engr No 214 + 218 the honor to submit the accompanying  
1 Copy of letter from Supervisor in this copy would appear that the cause of  
1 Copy of private letter of Sergt Wilkinson to the  
Writer of 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 1875

Writer or any one give any information in  
the matter. Supervisor Mr. Fisher, in  
his report, states that he was not  
at all aware of Sergeant Wilkinson's  
desertion until his return to duty  
after the Christmas Holidays. Mr.  
Fisher was on the Steamboat Galop  
until the 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1875, but  
was ignorant of the Overseer's absence,  
as they were both in Camp in op-  
posite directions.

2 Sergeant

2. Sergeant Wilkinson, during  
the past 2 years in the Department,  
has borne an excellent character  
and given every satisfaction both  
to myself and his immediate super-  
iors. I very much regret his present  
inexplicable conduct.

3. All Government properties  
that were in the custody of the  
Overseer were found safe, with the  
exception of a cash balance of  
Rs 16-9-10.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most Obedt. Servant.

J. Wheeler Major, Rk,  
District Surgeon.

Dist. Engrs. Office, Salem,  
Salem, 30<sup>th</sup> December 1875

No 189

From

The District Engineer,  
Salem.

To The Chief Engineer  
D.P.W.

Sir,  
I have the honor to bring  
to your notice that I have this  
day received the following  
telegram from the Officer  
commanding R. A. Bombay.

" Joseph Wilkinson gave  
himself up here as deserter from  
Public Works Department, Madras,  
states that he left on eighth Instant,  
description and instructions required."

I was not aware of  
2 taking Overseer and Serjeant  
Wilkinson's desertion from his  
taking (Nambul) till the receipt  
of the above telegram. The Officer  
in charge Salem Range has  
now been instructed to proceed  
at once to Nambul and to  
institute enquiries as to the exact

Recd N. 189 28 176

To The District Engineer  
of Salem

No 294

D. P. W.

Dated 10<sup>th</sup> Dec 1875

G.O No 194 28 176

No 196

Forwarding copy of  
correspondence in the  
case of deserter  
Wilkinson's desertion  
from his duty.

B N 4234-

date of the Serjeant's departure &  
whether he had any Government  
Cash sea in his charge.

3 The result of the enquiry  
will be communicated to you  
shortly

I have the honour to be  
Sir,

Your most obedient servant

J. H. K. Major R.E.

District Engineer

G.O. No 294. 25-1-76

B. 7. 1423

8250

[illegible]

No. 194. 25 July 1863  
It is almost incredible  
that our Overseas should  
have been absent from  
his charge from the 8<sup>th</sup>  
to the 30<sup>th</sup> of month, ~~or~~  
without the knowledge  
of any of his superior  
Officers; and our  
little for the practical  
supervision of his Overseas  
seems by the Lt. Col. Officer,  
Mr. Stracox - and it has  
happened through the  
circumstance of his duties,  
where even the Overseas  
himself, as is plainly  
seen from his own writ-  
ten instructions to the  
men, did not expect  
to keep silence longer  
than till the following  
Saturday, the 11<sup>th</sup> - His  
services will be dispensed  
with -  
Sergeant Wilkinson is  
having borne a good  
character, and there  
being no Departmental

charge against him,  
The papers will be com-  
municated to the Mil-  
Dept, with a request  
that, if possible, it may  
be ascertained what  
lead to the strange step  
taken by him -

Yours  
15.1.76

N<sup>o</sup> 423 @ 425

Exp. 2-2-76  
Military Dept 15  
S. E. Balow 5  
Contr. P. & A. 5

4/25 1/

17-1-76

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294

Gobt. 11827 Address

PUBLIC

When for reference  
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6, 0. 26 July 194

425-425

Letter of Mr. Wilson. Dating  
Dear Sam Paul, when  
Mr. Paul's letter  
on letters from the  
indicating the deletion of