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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public Works DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	273	(W)	Press
B.P. No.			Mis.
Dated	31-1-		1876.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
31st January 1876*

Read the following papers —

No 573	From the District Engineer, Malabar, dated 28th Nov 1875, No. 133
No 574	From do do " 29th " " No 134
No 575	From do. do. " 3rd Dec " No. 135
No 576	From do. do. " 22nd Jan 1876, No. 167

No 577 ORDER THEREON, 31st January 1876, No 273

ESTABLISHMENT, No 40

It appears from the above correspondence that a sum of Rupees 1,000, which was improperly and unnecessarily

retained in the house of the Cantonment Overseer at Cannanore, over two nights, instead of being lodged at the Police station, or spent during the intermediate day, was stolen from the bed-room in which he and another Overseer were sleeping, under circumstances which lead to a suspicion of their having been drugged. That Rupees 905-13-0 of that amount were recovered two days after by the Police at Chalatte, 4 or 5 miles distant, and that a certain Ramooney has been convicted of the robbery and sentenced to 4½ years' imprisonment and a fine of Rupees 1,000, payable to the Public Works Department, or in lieu thereof to 3½ years' additional imprisonment.

2. The circumstances of this case show that it is essential that all Police Superintendents and District Engineers should come to a proper understanding on the subject of the temporary custody of monies belonging to the Public Works Department, and the latter officers will be required to report within the current official year whether they have taken measures for ensuring that there shall be no misunderstanding of the orders of Government, which require disbursing officers of the Public Works Department to deposit, and Police officers to receive, with the conditions prescribed in G O, 31st March 1873, No 994, for safe custody, in Police stations, all considerable sums of money which they are not likely to pay away in the course of the day.

3. The attention of the District Engineer, Malabar, is called to the orders of Government which discourage the transmission of voluminous enclosures, and require that reports for the information of Government should contain in themselves all that is necessary to make them fully acquainted with the subjects under report.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. W. WALKER, Major-General, R E.,
Secretary to Government

To all District Engineers
To the Judicial Department
" Controller of Public Works Accounts

Ford. A. Raitt
Spare Copies

N^o 133

Malabar District Engineer's Office
Camp Cannanore 28 November 1875

From
The Offg District Engineer
Malabar

To
The Secretary to Government
Department Public Works
Madras

Sir
I have the honor to forward to you copy of a letter N^o 276 dated 27th Instant with accompaniments as per margin from the Assistant Engineer in charge of the Cannanore Range reporting the robbery of the Cantonment Overseer's cash chest containing a sum of Rupees nineteen hundred.

The Assistant Engineer's report fully explains the circumstances under which is large a sum of money was drawn from the Treasury and retained in the hands of the Overseer, and I have myself seen and examined the labour rolls and petty Bills and find the Assistant Engineer's statement substantially correct and the indent of the Overseer I find to be for the said sum viz: Rs 1900. The Assistant Engineer in his letter above cited explains how payments are

- (1) Letter N^o 55 dated 27 Nov 1875 from Overseer Government to the Cannanore Range Officer
- (2) List of Cantonment Overseer's unpaid Bills for November 1875.
- (3) Memo of Labor Rolls roughly calculated
- (4) Memo of Cash as drawn from Treasury

made by him for all materials and Bills above Rupees Twenty. the Labours and Petty Bills paid monthly cannot be paid in Cheques and therefore the Cash must be drawn in a lump sum and each individual is paid in the Range Office by the Overseer in presence of the Assistant Engineer. the works on pay day have to be stopped and artificers and labourers lose their wages on that day and to save loss of time and loss of wages to work people and confusion in the keeping of muster Rolls, accounts &c. it has been found unsafe and in fact impracticable to make payments more frequently during the month. this arrangement also has worked safe and well and appears to satisfy the work people better than more frequent payments so that the withdrawal of so large a sum as Rs 1900 at one time from the Treasury was unavoidable being required for immediate disbursement as stated by the Asst Engineer.

I arrived here at midday on the 25th and spent the afternoon in the Range Office at District Office work and looking at some of

of the Cantonment works in execution on my way home to my quarters having arranged to go round the works early next morning. on the 26th next morning I inspected the following works carefully in detail with the Assistant Engineer viz.

- (1) 43rd Cantonment
- (2) Royal Artillery Guard Room
- (3) 10th 6th Cantonment
- (4) 10th Bath
- (5) 43rd Hospital Guard Room
- (6) Repainting Godown in Fort
- (7) Flagstaff
- (8) Lining tiles 25th Regiment & whitewash
- (9) Rebuilding 43rd Hospital Railings

I found Overseer Gorman on his works early with Overseer Lafrenais who has been posted to relieve him as he has obtained 3 months privilege leave. I have had no complaints and I could not avoid expressing my approbation on the spot (a thing I seldom do) with the careful and business like manner in which most of the works were carried out, it was late in the day when I gave up inspection and I again spent the afternoon in the Range Office at work. I arranged with the Asst Engineer to devote my early morning in the 27th to Office work at my own

own quarters and posted a Dawb into the Salug for the afternoon of that day. Shortly after the arrival of my Tappal about 4 1/2 past 7 o'clock on the 27th morning, the Asst Engineer rode into the Portico of my Bungalow and came into my room as I was reading some papers reporting to me at once the theft of the Oversee's Cash Chest containing the large sum of Rupees nine-hundred. I could scarcely credit the report but on looking at the Assistant Engineer I found him distressed and at once realized the fact. I proceeded to the place immediately and made all the search and enquiry I could. I found Overseer Gorman and Lafrenais there with the Inspector of Police and several Constables. After a careful examination of the house and having ordered a sketch to be made of it I went round the Compound and well but could find no trace. I proceeded to the beach about 500 yards west and there made search along the coast with Brigadier General Cadell, the Assistant Engineer, Inspector of Police and several Constables. I had little hope of finding the money but I expected to find

find some trace of the heavy Cash Chest in which it is said to have been deposited but no trace could be found.

I will now describe the situation of the house in which the theft took place - it is situated on the cantonment main Road in close proximity to the Post Office - close to the Road and opposite the Sav-riar's shop near the Cantonment Magistrate's house and opposite to the west about 300 yards is the Brigadier General's house; it is in one of the most conspicuous places in the Cantonment and at the spot where the Police Patrols meet and exchange the countergu - how a heavy chest 3 feet long by 1 foot 9 inches by 1 foot 9 inches with all the money in it 20 Rupees of the 1900 being in copper requiring at least 4 Coolies to carry it could have been taken out of the house and over the Road without detection is to me a mystery but it is still more mysterious how the chest could have been removed from Overseer Gorman's Cot through several doorways as may be seen from sketch plan whatever direction the thieves took without disturbing either Overseer Gorman or Lafrenais. I found Overseer Gorman perfectly sober

1796
From
Cannanore 27th Nov 1875

ginner
Range, Meals

ginner
but D P W

to forward / at
3/99 / ment Overseas
in the report on

in Nov 1900 R. p.
claim quite at
the money can

for making / only
two the system of
and in order
it that the
cash in hand
Department

in these are
in the

P. 91: 1875 28th Oct
from No 7661

The City: Meets: Aug:
Pencolar

The day: to Lord
P. B. W. C.
Pencolar

Heater 28th Oct 1875
Dec 21st Dec 1875

Snobs: 5
No 153

Reporting the history
of Cannanore Com.
of the present Overseas
Cash Chest - contain
-ing Rs 1900

EO No 273. 31.1.76

W. 375

Can-12-75

lin 3-12-75

In a letter from the District
Engineer Malabar to the Secy
to Government S.W. Mysore
No 133 of 28 Nov 1875

54/199/111
3/11/75
S.W. Mysore

Sketch plan of the
Cannanore Cantonment Area
S.W. Mysore

15
No 276
From
Cannanore 27th Nov 1875
The Assistant Engineer
Cannanore Range, Malabar

To
The District Engineer
of Malabar D. P. W.

Sir,
I have the honor to forward a
report received from the Cantonment Overseer.
I have ordered him to send in the report in
writing for record.

The loss reported therein viz 1900 Rs. is
a most serious matter, and I am quite at
a loss to understand how the money can
have been taken.

I beg to submit before making any
recommendation, the following report on the system of
payment in the Cantonment and in order
to explain how it came about that the
Overseer should have so much cash in hand.

There are at present in the Cantonment
the following works in progress —

48th Cantonment
Royal Artillery Guard Room
No. 1 Cantonment
No. 2 Bath
These are

large works. Besides these, there is the

1/3rd Hospital Guard room
Asphalting Work. Apothecaries G.
Ditto Godown in Fort

Flax stuff

Black's Count

Petty Repairs

Summing tiles. 25th West

& white washings

Reversing 43rd Hospital purchase

all these

works come into what is called the General Roll. All the labour being kept in one Roll by one Gomastah. The large works have each a Comceptillan except the Royal Artillery, Cantonment & Guard Room, which being close side by side have one Comceptillan between them. Every payment to every Contractor is made personally by myself to the Contractor himself by Cheque rather on my measurements or on measurements submitted by the Overseer & afterwards inspected by me.

The accounts of the works run from 20th to 20th of each month when they are closed, the Gomastah or Comceptillan makes up the Roll for the work & also the amount of petty bills under 20 Rs., which I do not, as a rule pay. And then the Overseer submits to me a requisition for Cash required, but the only cash he ever receives is for the sole purpose of paying labour & the very minor bills

submitted in the appendix the report and abstract of bills & costly rolls of the month for which money was drawn.

This month I was short of cash in the Chera's Treasury, and I gave the Overseer a Cheque for the whole amount, as I always do in the Cantonment, as the money is drawn at once and paid away then & there to the Coolies in Kottayam Treasury. The money arrived from Tellacherry on Thursday night 25th & it appears to have been the intention of the Overseer to have begun payment yesterday, but he was put late and the rolls were not quite ready so he did not make any payment but would have paid today, but last night the Cash Chest disappeared. The payments are always made by the Overseer's office, he came to my house this morning at 6.30, and I was at his house just about 7 A.M. and inspected his house and had the circumstances explained to me. One of his servants, 2 lascars & 2 coolies went to Tellacherry for the money. I of course ordered the arrest of all these men, and they are now in the custody of the Police. It appears that the 2 lascars did not sleep in the house last night but the servant did. He thinks that an entry was made through the bath room window, and the chest carried away through

Friday (26th)

bathroom door, as the door was found open this morning. I have had the chest under my charge when I relieved Overseer Willis. & it takes 2 men alone to carry it when empty and with all that money inside & 20 Rs of it Copper & there must have been 4 or 5

Overseer Lafornie who is to relieve him was sleeping in the same room. The two Overseers were sleeping on two Cots side by side and the Cash Chest at the head of Mr Gorman's bed but unchained. The lantern usually hanging at his door had been taken down & placed in the corner & a pair of his trousers had been thrown over the lantern and the trousers were completely burnt to a cinder except a small piece of the bottom of the leg. how two men could have slept with the fumes of the burning cloth close to them is most mysterious unless, as I am inclined to think they were drugged or stupefied by some means or other. The Overseers had two dogs within barked just as a sound heard. It was only last month or shortly after I came back here. I do not recollect the date exactly. I reminded Mr Gorman of the necessity of keeping his Cash Chest in the Police station as usual.

I must say that I have a very

13
good opinion of the Overseers, he does his work well & takes great pains with it, and the way all the Cantonment works have been pushed on is most creditable. He certainly has made unfortunate mistake in this matter, and a serious loss has occurred, but the way the robbery was committed is a perfect mystery to me, as it would, at least 4 men if not more, to carry the chest and how they could have got the chest out of the room, and altogether away without a sound being heard unless the servants & lascars had been in collusion, and unless the Overseers had been drugged, is a marvellous circumstance to me. As you yourself have inspected the house & grounds you will be fully able to understand the circumstances - I send a sketch of the house.

I have &c

Signed / A E Dobson Lt Col
Assistant Engineer
Malabar

True copy /

D. H. A. W.

Offg Dist Engineer
of Malabar

29
 List of Cantonment Overdue unpaid
 Bills for November 1875
Petty Bills

	R.	an.
Asphalting Fort Godown	6	15
43 Canton. Carting Tiles, Cuddapah states	19	8
43 Canton. Cuddapah states	4	10
Fixture 43. Gravel 3 carts	10	
Guard Room R. A. Tiles 16 carts	2	
Canton R. A. Tiles 16 carts	2	
43 Boats landing Tiles	23	12
Royal Artillery fixtures. Timber	1	14
43 20' 0" 0" 0" Timber	1	11 3
43 fixtures. Timber & Chumam	12	9
43 Hospital Guard room - Timber	4	15 4
43 0" 0" 0" Chumam	20	4
Camp. Luni Kiln	10	3 2
43 Hospital Guard room - Gravel & Tiles	5	4
43 fixtures. Timber	1	5
43 0" 0" 0" Stone	3	12 9
43 0" 0" 0" Timber	2	10
43 Hospital Guard room - sand	1	15 8
43 fixtures. sand		10
43 Market Court. sand	4	3 8
Asphalting Fort godown. sand		12 6
Royal Artillery Guard room. stone	15	3 2
Asphalting Fort godown - Chumam	5	10
43 fixtures. sand		5
43 0" 0" 0" Timber		5 7
Plunge Bath Royal Artillery. sand	10	4 2
Fixtures 43. sand		5 10
Royal Artillery Canton. sand		13 4
0" 0" 0" Guard room. sand	5	2 11
43 Canton. sand	6	10 8
Canton Royal Artillery. Chumam	7	6
Well Council stores. sand		9
	171	1 10

(Signed)

In a letter from the
 Off. District Engineer
 Madras, to the
 Secy. to Govt. of
 Madras, dated
 28 Nov 1875

Nov 1875

At Madras Office
 of the Engineer
 the Commr.
 Cantonment
 Begun's Creek
 Secy.

M. 1061/75

Cannanore
27th November 1875

/s/ A. E. Dobson R.E.
Asst. Engineer Malabar

Memo of
Cash as drawn from Treasury

23

Rp. 1505
1/10th " "
1/4 Rp. 175
1/8 Rp. 200
Copper 20
Total Rupees 1900.

Memo of Labor Bills roughly calculated.

Landing Cuddapah slabs	6	15	11
43 Canteen	272	9	7
Royal Artillery Guard room	109	10	6
Dismantling Old Canteen	55	7	7
Plunge Bath	196	8	10
Royal Artillery Canteen	37	13	12
General Roll for Petty Repairs	439	12	2
<u>Total</u>	1218	6	6
Petty Bills, as per annexed list	171	1	1
Work Establishment	144	15	4
<u>Total</u>	1534	6	6
Balance to Cover Contingencies	365	9	6
<u>Total Amount drawn for payment</u>	1900		

Cannanore
27th November 1875

/s/ A. E. Dobson R.E.
Asst. Engineer Malabar

Cannanore
27th November 1875

/s/ A. E. Dobson R.E.
Asst. Engineer Malabar

1 true copy
[Signature]
offg Dist. Engineer
Malabar

No 53

To.

The, Officer in Charge
of Cammame Range

Sir,

I very much regret to have to
report to you the robbery that took place
at my house last night of the Cash Chest.

he said
1 servant
1 horse
verbally to me

I received a cheque for Rupees 1900 -
from you upon the Kotnam Treasury, and
sent 2 horse and 3 coolies to cash the
same. The men when they were going asked
me for a gun and I loaded one in two
barrels and gave it to them. They returned
about 9 o'clock with the money in 5 bags
and placed the same in the Cash Chest in
my presence, and I locked it and put
away the key. The Chest was left at the
head of my cot, and I used it as a tray
to place any little thing that I may require
upon it. This morning when I was awakened
I found the back door open which I saw
shut the night previous, at 11 o'clock just
before I went to bed, and a quantity of
clothes missing, afterwards they were
found burnt to cinders. When I got up in
the morning I felt a heavy stupor sensation

sensation, as if I had no sleep. I fancy some
intoxicating fumes must have been used to
make us (Mr Laforne, and me) sleep soundly.
We did not take any liquor whatever the
day previous. The alarm which I usually
set to wake me at 5 1/2 o'clock in time for
muster passed off without in any way wa-
king Mr Laforne, and I had a slight
notice that I heard it. It seemed to me
like a dream. I immediately brought the
Inspector of Police up & showed him how matter
stood.

I usually have a loaded revolver either
under my pillow or within arms reach, but
this night for the first time (as far as I
remember) it was not loaded when I had
money in the house. I took it to pieces to clean
about 6 or 7 o'clock & forgot to load it. On a
previous occasion I wanted to send the
Cash Chest for safe keep to the Police station
but the Police refused to give me a receipt
for a paid Cash Chest. I asked them
twice & tried to persuade them, but when I
found I could not get a receipt I was
compelled to keep it myself. The Police
are just now on the track, and if anything
else is known I will inform you of the same.

Shave &c
1 August J R Gorman
Commander of Prison
27th November 1875

1 true copy /
1 signed by E. Dobson Lt R E
Asst Engineer -

1 true copy /
J R Gorman
offg Dist Engineer
Malabar

From Lieut A E Doherty R E
Assistant Engineer
Cannamore Range

No 798
Mr. Oversee J. R. Forman
Honorary disbursed a Stand:
ing Order of the Dept.
of which he had been not
long before reminded
by the Range Officer,
is reduced to the 3rd Grade.
with effect from the 1st Dec.
December.

Lieut. Doherty will
supply The Supt. of Police
at Cannamore with 4: d
tract from the last form
of the Overseer's letter to
his address, to: 53 of
27th Nov; & ascertain
what truth there is in

enquiries

Cannamore
28 Nov 7 45 PM -

See

In a letter from the
Offy. District Engineer
prelating to the day
to Lord N. D. D. Doherty,
dated 28 Nov. 1875
No 135.

From Lieut A E Doherty R E

Cannamore Range
Honorary disbursed a Stand:
ing Order of the Dept.
of which he had been not
long before reminded
by the Range Officer,
is reduced to the 3rd Grade.
with effect from the 1st Dec.
December.

Mr. 7661/75

The statement made that the Police would not take charge of the Cash Chest, & validity for the reasons alleged to have been given by them for not doing so - He will take care that no such misunderstanding occurs in future; & satisfy himself personally that no money is allowed to remain in an Overseer's charge except when actually required for making payments - In the pres.

can't instance Mr. Gorman 28/11/95
appears to have been in possession of a very large sum of money for 2 nights and a day, without the slightest occasion; & without notice being taken of the fact either by the District Inspector or Range Officer, both present at the time and the latter at least personally answerable for his Subordinates proceedings -

G.M.W.
3.12.95

Malabar

Cannanore
28 Nov. 7.45 P.m. -

Sir

I think the punishment
awarded too severe -

I think we had better
delay disposing of the
case till we receive the
Police report. They have
recovered 900 Rs. and they
may be able to find out
how the robbery was effected

We ought also to know
if the Police actually refused
to take charge of the
cash chest. P.W.

31 Jan 76 B.N. 574

Cin 3-12-75

N.A

33

From Lieut A E Dobson R.E.
Assistant Engineer
Cannanore Range
Cannanore. 28/11/75

To

The District Engineer
Malabar

Sir,

I have the honor to report that I
have just seen the Inspector of Police, and
at present there is no clue to the Robbery
committed on Friday night. The Police think
they may have obtained a clue, but of course
they will not divulge it just now.

I have &c

Signed A E Dobson R.E.
Asst Engineer Malabar

N.B

From Lieut. A E Dobson R.E.
Asst. Engineer. Cannanore

To

The District Engineer
Malabar

Cannanore

28 Nov 75 Pm -

Sir

Sir,

I have the honor to report that since writing my report to you N.A. of today date which was written, about 2 P.M., that the police have succeeded in tracing out and finding ^{Rs. 905-13} in a man's compound, about 4 or 5 miles away from here, at Chalatte. There is little doubt about this being the same money that was stolen, and taken away. As there were bunnawanda in the bags in the bazaar's hand writing about work in the Cantonment and one of the bags was marked in ink "Canton" I am exceedingly glad to be able to report this and hope that some more money may yet be discovered. Mr. Lafum brought the report to me and I at once went to the Inspector's house and saw the money & bunnawanda myself.

I have &c
D. A. E. Dobson R.E.
Dist. Engineer & Malabar

A.C.

From Lieut A. E. Dobson R.E.
Dist. Engineer, Cannanore

To

The District Engineer
Malabar

Cannanore 28. 8 P.M.

Sir,

I have the honor to report that

I

35

I am compelled to go to Tellicherry tomorrow Monday the 29th to attend court in a case I have in the Court of the Tahsildar, as I am presenting a enquiry for sending in false cooly rolls. I hope to return tomorrow evening. I have given all necessary instructions in the robbery case, and as you are present in the station, all reports will now be made direct to you during my absence. The police will make all enquiries in their own way as the case appears to be very well managed.

I have &c
Signed A. E. Dobson R.E.
Dist. Engineer &c

(True copies)

J. D. Harris

offg. Dist. Engineer
Malabar

No 134.

Malabar Dist Surg's Office
Camp Cannanore 29 Novr 1876
27

From
The Offg. District Engineer,
Malabar

To
The Secretary to Government
P. H. Department
Madras

Sir,
In continuation of mine
N^o. 133 dated 28th Instant I have
the honor to enclose copies as per
margin of Communications
from the Assistant Engineer in
charge of the Laramie Range
regarding the Robbery of the
Carthage Oversee's Cash
and Chest. It will be seen from
his dated 28th. 7.45 P. M. that a
sum of Rupees 905-13-0 has been
found and as I have seen the
money &c. myself I have no doubt
about it being the Cash stolen
from the Overseer. I may here
state that after making all
possible search on Saturday
morning when the robbery took
place being ably assisted
by Brigadier General Cadell
and

Letter No. A. dated 28 Nov/75.
 " " B " 28 Nov/75 - 7.45 P.M.
 " " C " 28 Nov/75 - 8 P.M.

[illegible]

Copies of St. Albans
Journal reprints
on the robbery of
the Circumlocution
Department
Beverly East
Chas. A.

31st Jan'y 16 B.A. 574

lit. 7662/75:

No 280

Cannanore 30th Nov 1875

41

From

The Assistant Engineer
Cannanore Range, Malabar

To

The District Engineer
of Malabar. D P W

Sir

I have the honor to report that I have just sent the Inspector, and he informs me that, at present no further clue has been obtained either of the box or money, but he tells me that they have now got 7 men who were implicated in the robbery in custody, and that they have very good evidence against them. It appears that the head man who was chief in the whole robbery Ramony by name on the day previous to the robbery, had no money. Having it paid, drawn a deed to mortgage his property to the abttery Contractor, but the day after the robbery that he paid over Rs 50 to the toddy drawer & Rs 40 to the Contractor. The evidence against him is very strong if I hear any further news I will at once send you report. —

J

15th Dec 1875

The District Engineer

To

The Deputy to the District Engineer

Cannanore

Recd 29th Dec 1875

Encls. 1

Further reference to the robbery of the Cannanore Cantonment & the recovery of the money of the

No 574

Encls. No 273. 81 170

I have V²
Signed A E Dobson Lt Col
Asst. Engineer Mals

(True copy)

D. S. H. M.

offg Distt Engineer
Malabar

Ms. 2267/75

V² 281

From

43
Cannanore 1st December/75
The Assistant Engineer
Cannanore Range Mals.

To

The District Engineer
Malabar D P M.

Sir,

I have the honor to report, as follows for your information - As the Police appeared to have searched a great deal of ground and unsuccessfully, and as there are not many available for such work, it struck me that I ought to be able to, assist them in the search, so last evening I warned Messrs Gorman & Laferriere to order all the coolies to muster at my house. This they did this morning, and I then divided them into gangs according to their work, under their respective managers. I explained to them what I wanted them to do, and asked if they were willing to go in for the search telling them, that if they discovered anything that the gang in which the discovery was made would receive a reward, and the man of the gang who actually made the discovery would receive a larger reward. I also told them that if any man was unwilling to go

he said, they all to a man said they were
willing to assist, (I may mention that a great
many of my coolies & waiters have already
been assisting in the search without at all
being asked by me to do so) they immediately
went off at 7 a.m. with the two Overseers &
waiters, and I proceeded with you to the
jail to inspect the work there. On my return
from there at 10 a.m., and just as I was
sitting down to breakfast Mr. Laframais
came in breathless, and informed me that
the cash chest had been found at the bottom
of an old well about 1 1/2 miles from here. I
am just going to inspect it, and on my return
I will send you more particulars. I consider
this very satisfactory, and hope, as the Police
are accompanying my coolies, that more
discoveries may be made before the day is out.
I received an anonymous letter about the rob-
bery, which I have placed in the hands of
the police, as it contains what may prove
useful information.

10.30 A.M.

I have &c.
Signed A. E. Dobson &c.
Asst. Engineer, Malabar
True copy

[Signature]

Off. Dist. Engineer, Malabar

11/27/75

N^o 283. Cannanore 1st Dec 1875
3 p.m. -

From
The Assistant Engineer
Cannanore Range Malabar.

To,
The District Engineer
of Malabar D.P.W.

Sir,

In continuation of my letter N^o
281 of this day's date, I have the honor to
report that after writing the above letter,
I went down and inspected the chest, and
it is without doubt the Government cash chest
the padlock has also been found unharmed.
from the appearance of the box it appears
that they must have used the padlock, as
a turn screw and regularly screwed the screw
half off the box. if it had fortunately been
a little stronger, I doubt if the thieves could
have opened the box. I tried to lift it empty
as it was, and I could lift it, but I doubt
if I could have carried it far. A finger
ring has also been found, it was found near
the place where the box was discovered, but
we have not yet been able to identify the
owner. When the coolies came in from the
search, and I saw get a full report as to

where & how the box was found, I will send you full particulars -

Shave ye

Regd of Lt. E. Dobson Lt Col
Artillery Engineer Malabar

True copy /

To Sir

Offg. Dist. Engineer Malabar

No 135

Malabar Distt Engineer's Office
Camp Cannanore 3rd December 1875

From

The Offg District Engineer
Malabar

The Secretary to Government

In a letter from the Madras
Distt. Eng. Malabar
to the Secy. to Govt continuation
D.P.W., Madras, No. 135 dated 3rd Decr/75 to forward
no No 280,

M 7767/75

Copies of Lt. Dobson's reports bringing to a first
notice the recovery of the Cannanore kit, the
Cantonment Over, four keys
see's Cash Chest. - tion as

No. 31 Jan'y 16 B.F. 575

the case was
doubt used or intended to be used in
opening the locks, as described by Lieut Dobson
R.S.; the Chest was found by a gang of
his own coolies at the bottom of an old

where & how the box was found, I will send you full particulars -

Yours &c

3. 11. 1875
Lieut. J. E. Dobson Lt Col
and Engineer. Mal

Malabar

No 135

Malabar Distt Engin's Office
Camp Coimbatore 3 December 1875

From

The Offg District Engineer
Malabar

To

The Secretary to Government
Public Works Department
Madras

Sir

I have the honor in continuation of mine No 134 dated 29th ultimo to forward copies of Reports dated 30th ultimo No 280, and 1st Instant Nos 281 and 283, respectively from Lieut. Dobson R.E. and to state that the Engineer's Cash Chest has been found as described in the reports above cited uninjured with the exception of the hinge to which the Pad Lock was attached having been wrenched off the box, the lock in the box and the Padlock are uninjured, the former it appears was not used, the latter is a first class Patent box when the Padlock was no attempt was made to pick it, the day previous to the discovery, four keys were found in the same direction as the Chest was found in and were no doubt used or intended to be used in opening the lock, as described by Lieut. Dobson R.E. the Chest was found by a gang of his own Coolies at the bottom of an old

old well but the Police were out with
them. from the beginning this was
the direction in which we prosecuted
the search and from the information
constantly supplied I had no doubt
about it being the place to find the
stolen property. When the ringleader
was brought in on Sunday evening
and when I came to see the money a
great gathering had assembled and
all the natives pointed out the man
to me and told me he was the
great thief of Cannanore to catch him
at once and confiscate his property to
Government they were ready to seize
him I found the excitement so great
I felt it prudent to retire and leave
the matter in the hands of the Police.
The search is still prosecuted, money
was found in abundance in houses
searched but it is difficult to identify
money, what has been found was
in bags written upon and with the
Overseer's memoranda there is no doubt
about it being the stolen property
and there is ample proof against several
concerned in the robbery - they are the
noted gang robbers of Cannanore.
I am still encouraged to hope that
the rest of the money or most of it
will be found in such a manner
as to identify it, though it is now
considered

considered doubtful and by the
Police also I have the honor to be
Sir,

Your most obedient servant

J. Harris
Offg. District Engineer
Malabar

10/1/01

Kannanur 17th December 1875 53

No. 307

From

The Assistant Engineer
Kannanur Range, Malabar

To

The District Engineer
of Malabar & P. W.

Sir,

Your endorsement No. 323 of 7th Decr.
1875, on Chief Engineer's Memorandum No. 798 of
3rd Idem.

I have the honor to state that I im-
mediately wrote to the Asst. Superintendent
of Police forwarding an extract of Overseer Gor-
man's letter. The answer was received a few days
ago just as I was starting on circuit. As the
last paragraph of the Asst. Superintendent,
appeared to require some explanation from
the Overseer, I called on the latter for an expla-
nation copies of the correspondence are enclosed.

Asst. Supt. 4th
letter No. 58 of
9th Decr 75.
Overseer Gorman's
letter No. 56 of 13th
Decr 75

I have the honor to point out that in the Chief
Engineer's Memo it is stated that "the Police
refused to take charge of the chest" - the police
did not refuse to take charge of the chest, but
refused to grant a receipt for it. When I took
over charge of the Cantonment Accounts lately
from Overseer Gorman & made payment ac-
cording to your orders, I myself asked for a
receipt, but was refused, this was December 3rd
but on my next sending the cash chest I ob-
tained

P. W. 1875 30 per

The Asst. Engineer

Malabar

No. 7987

The Deputy to Asst.

Malabar

Water 17th Decr 1875

No. 135

Respectfully the Secy

of the Cantonment

Overseer's Cash Chest

which are not done

440 No. 273. 31.1.76

Can 17-1-76

obtained one & have been furnished with a receipt on all subsequent occasions. It appears the Asst. Superintendent has now given orders that a receipt should be granted, but on the first occasion I did not get the receipt & neither should I have known where the chest was although I sent a Peon & Maistry & Coolies with it, unless you yourself had not gone & seen whether it was there, having said you would do so, as you were living near the Station. It would have been easy for the Peon & Co. to have gone off with the chest, saying the Police would not give a receipt. I hope now though that there will be no mistake about receipt, as I have been furnished with one every time since the first although I did not get on the first & although on that occasion a Constable was sent to ask the Inspector & the Inspector said it could not be granted without the orders of the Asst. Superintendent. I mention these facts (though well known to you as you were here at the time) for record.

I have the honor to state that I have always done my best to satisfy myself that the Overseers do not have more cash than necessary by frequently examining their Cash Books & cash as often as I can, whenever

I meet an Overseer I always examine both, and I have been most particular with regard to always issuing small cheques to the Overseers. With regard to the Cantonment the case is different, the Coolies are paid once a month, the money is drawn at once & paid away immediately and only just as much as drawn as required, with perhaps 100 or 200 Rs over for contingencies. The Chief Engineer remarks "that Mr Gorman was in possession of a very large sum of money for 2 nights & a day without the slightest occasion." I very respectfully beg to be allowed to make the following explanation. On examining Mr Gorman's cash book, I found he had Rs 1-1-1 in cash on the 24th, the day I issued the cheque. His Coolies had to be paid and all petty bills as explained in letter No 276 of 27th ult. he made an indent & the cheque was given to him personally. I do not know when he cashed it until any treasury pass book from the Taluk comes in. I do not know what coins he draws until his return comes & I was never informed by Mr Gorman that he had cashed it, & neither did I know that there was any order that he should report it to me, if he had done so, I would most certainly have ordered

ordered him to take the chest to the Police Station it has happened that some times I have sent the cheques to Mr. German from the district - where Mr. German made his great mistake & was most wrong, was not paying his coolies on the Friday morning, but he did not do so because he states that the rolls were not ready - but in that case he should not have drawn the money until he had wanted it. but I myself never knew that he had drawn it and I could never have believed that a man would keep such a sum of money in his house without taking every possible precaution. I respectfully urge that there was a necessity for the money, large as the sum was, but that the Overseer was most wrong in allowing it to remain in his house without taking any steps for its safe custody.

The Chief Engineer remarks that Distt. Engineer & Range Officer took no notice of the fact that the Overseer had the money as I remarked above. I was not aware he had it, neither were you, as you were with me inspecting works till nearly 10 A.M. on Thursday 25th and then again in the office from 11 till nearly 3 P.M. & Mr. German never appeared nor did he make any mention of the money at all. It seems that the Chief

Chief Engineer holds me personally responsible for the Overseer's proceedings. I beg most respectfully to protest against the personal responsibility for by Chap. IV Sec. "Subordinate agent para 4", it is laid down that a Subordinate agent entrusted with cash is personally responsible for the cash - as I have 3 more Overseers, one whose head quarters is 26 miles from here, at Badagara, another at Tellicherry, 14 miles from here & the 3rd head quarters here. If I am held "personally answerable for an Overseer's proceedings I might, if one of these Overseers were dishonest or sent in false vouchers & accounts &c., be held responsible for all the money and material lost or taken by him until he was found out, although all the accounts might be apparently correctly sent in & enregle or again as the Overseer takes their cash with them on circuit to make payments I might if the cash chest was lost, be held answerable for the loss although I might not be within miles of the place. I respectfully beg therefore that I may not be held personally responsible for a circumstance over which I had no control & I cannot think that the Chief Engineer could intend that an officer should be held "personally" responsible for a

ord a Subordinate's proceedings. in such a case
St. as this for, if an Overseer has money given
to him, by the same Chapter he is responsible
to his Range Officer not only for the
cash but also for the due & proper spending
of the money & that all his expenditure
was vouched for & correct. I beg therefore
that the Chief Engineer may be addressed,
& that you will kindly explain the
matter, and that the whole circumstances
of the case may be placed before him.

I have recd
from A. G. Dobson Esq. R.E.
Asst. Engineer, Malabar

To The Officer in charge of
Cannanore Range

Sir,
With reference to your endorsement
of 9th Dec 1875, I have the honor to inform
you that I did send to the Police Station
and ask them if they would give me a
receipt for a sealed Cash Chest, about the
20th July last, when I cashed a cheque for
900 Rs. I sent a Memo. by Lascar Jacob who
came back with the Memo and a verbal mess.
saying that the Police had no authority to
grant

grant receipts.

The Police do not deny that I sent
to them but simply state that there is no
record to show that I have done so. The
system (as appears from the letter) is to file
the accompanying Memo when the cash box
is lodged and also the Memo which is sent
to remove it. But in this case as no Memo
was lodged but a reference simply made
the Memo was unceremoniously returned.
I have no written record to show that I
had done so, but Lascar Jacob who went
with the Memo knows the circumstances
well & can bear witness to it. Besides the
fact there are several others who are aware
of the reply I got. When I got this answer
I naturally felt that although the Police would
not get still I was responsible for it so
I had nothing to show that the
Police had received it, and besides as it
was impossible for me to go to the Police Station
every time the box was sent there (having to
make several small payments every second
or third day) how was I to know, without
a receipt, whether it reached the Station or
not! The cash chest was always a great
source of uneasiness to me. The Police re-
fusing to grant me a receipt was a dis-
appointment

disappointment to me. I mention all this not
as a vindication but as an extenuation of my
conduct.

I have recd

Cannanore
13th Decr/75. 3
J. R. Gorman
Overseer D.P.W.

(True Copy)

Sd/- N. E. Dobson Lt. R. E.
Sd/- Engr. Malabar

1st 55
Sd/- Supd/- Office
Cannanore 9th December 1875.

From

Captain N. R. Agilvie
Sd/- Superintendent of Police

To

Cannanore
Lieut. N. Dobson R. E.

Sd/- Engineer Cannanore Range

Sir,

In reply to your letter No 421-
I have the honor to state that on 24th March 1874
Overseer Mr. Willis when depositing his Cash
Chest at N.I. Police Station Cannanore
applied for a receipt & under orders from
Lieut. Hodgson who was then Sd/-
Superintendent of Police Cannanore he
was told that no receipts had ever been
granted

granted and that no Departmental orders
had ever been issued to grant them &
that a D.P.W. Officer ought to remain
in charge of D.P.W. Cash Chest, vide G.O.
No 994 of 31st March 1873 therefore Inspector
refused to give any receipt on that occasion

The usual practice was for the D.P.W.
Overseer to send a memo requesting the
officer in charge of Police Station to receive
a sealed cash chest such memo being
placed on the Police Station File, and
another requesting that it might be given
up which would also be filed. Mr
Willis continued sending his cash chest
as long as he was in the Range & I cannot
find any record of Mr Gorman having
made any application to place his Cash
Chest in any of the Police Stations in
Cannanore.

I have recd

Sd/- N. R. Agilvie Captain
Sd/- Supt. of Police
North Malabar

(True Copy)

Sd/- N. E. Dobson Lt. R. E.
Sd/- Engr. Malabar

(True Copy)

Sd/- Engr. Malabar

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as a vindication but as an extenuation of my
conduct.

I have recd

Cannanore
13th Decr/75. 3
J. R. Gorman
Overseer D.P.W.

(True Copy)

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Lieut. N. Dobson R. E.

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that a D.P.W. Lascar ought to remain
in charge of D.P.W. Cash Chest, vide G.O.
No 994 of 31st March 1873 therefore Inspector
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Sd/- N. R. Agilvie Captain
Sd/- Supt. of Police
North Malabar

(True Copy)

Sd/- N. E. Dobson Lt. R. E.
Sd/- Engr. Malabar

(True Copy)

Sd/- Engr. Malabar

No 148.

Malabar District Engg's Office
Calicut 22nd December 1875
61

From The Offg. District Engineer,
Malabar.

To The Chief Engineer,
Department Public Works,
Madras.

Sir,
With reference to your Memo No. 798 dated 3rd Instant, I have the honor to forward copies of Document as per margin from which you will observe that the Police refused to give Oversee Gorman a receipt for the Cash Chest, but did not refuse to take the Chest in charge - here is where the misunderstanding occurred, as no receipt would be granted for the Cash Chest lodged by him in the Police Station. Oversee Gorman did not send the Chest, but took the responsibility on himself of keeping it, and did not report the circumstance to the Range Officer.

When I arrived in the Station on the 25th November, Oversee Gorman had only a balance in cash of Rs. 1.1.1 and a Cheque for Rs. 1900 was not cashed by him at the time nor was the

1. From St. John to the District Engineer No. 317 dated December 1875
2. From Oversee Gorman to the Dist. Engg. No. 58 dated December 1875
3. From Asst. Supt. of Police to the Dist. Engg. No. 58 dated December 1875

In a letter from the Dist. Engg. Malabar to the Chief Engg. M. P. W. Madras, 22nd Dec. 1875, No. 148

W. S. 29/1/75

Copies of correspondence - since relative to the circumstances of Oversee Gorman's Cash Chest not being placed in the Police Station

Sir,
Your most obedt. servant

J D Harris
Offg. District Engineer
Malabar

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sup/6
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the Range Officer made aware
when the Cash was received.
the necessity for the cash being
drawn is fully explained in
my N^o 133 dated 28th ultimo
being required for immediate
disbursement to the Artificers,
Cookhouse for all works in the
Cantonment as they are paid
monthly and the Overseer
should have paid it on Friday
the 26th as pointed out by the
Range Officer.

As for the Range Officer
being held personally responsible,
Lieut Dobson has very truly ex-
plained the case in his N^o 307
dated 17th Instant and as for my
part I have always found him
a most careful and zealous
Officer and most punctual
in every thing he does, no waste
ever occurs in his works, and
he maintains the strictest dis-
cipline amongst his subordinates
consistent with efficiency. This
unforeseen occurrence has caused
Lieut. Dobson great trouble and
anxiety and I truly believe that
he had taken all the precaution
in his power to prevent such
an accident.

I have the honour to be
Sir

Proceedings of the Madras Govt.
Under date the 31 Jan'y 76.
Read the following.

From the District Magistrate (N.R. No 133 of 28 Nov 75)
Do (— 134 of 29 do)
Do (— 135 of 3 Dec 75)
Do (— 167 of 22^d Jan'y 76)

It appears from the above correspondence that a sum of Rs. 1900 which was improperly and unnecessarily retained in the house of the Comptroller Over-see at Mannanore, over two nights, instead of being lodged at the Police Station, or spent during the intermediate

1901-1902
The District Magistrate
to the District Engineer
N.R. No 133 of 28 Nov 75
N.R. No 134 of 29 do
N.R. No 135 of 3 Dec 75
N.R. No 167 of 22^d Jan'y 76
N.R. No 133 of 28 Nov 75
N.R. No 134 of 29 do
N.R. No 135 of 3 Dec 75
N.R. No 167 of 22^d Jan'y 76

Explains the cir-
-cumstances of over-
-seeing the work done
in the District
Magistrate's office
Reference to the
No 273 of 11/11/75

day was stolen from the
bed room in which he
and another Overseer were
sleeping, under circum-
stances which lead to a
suspicion of their having
been damaged. That
Rs 905-13-0 of that amount
were recovered two days
after by the Police at
Chialatte, 4 or 5 miles
distant; and that a
certain Ramaswamy has
been convicted of the
robbery and sentenced
to 4 1/2 years imprison-
ment and a fine of Rs
1000 payable to the Public
Works Department, or
in lieu thereof to 3 1/2
years additional im-
prisonment. The Police

571
Officers appear therefore to
have retrieved the
error committed by
them in putting diffi-
culties in the way of the
lodgment of money by
the Overseer, for safe
custody, in the Police
Station. But it will be
well for all Police Super-
intendents and District
Engineers to come to a
proper understanding
on the subject; and the
latter Officers will be
required to report within
the current ^{off. year} whether they
have taken measures
for ensuring that there
shall be no misunder-
standing of the orders of
Government, which re-
quire disbursing

Officers of the Public Works
 Department to deposit,
 and Police Officers to re-
 ceive, for safe custody, with it
 in Police Stations, all
 considerable sums of
 money which they are
 not likely to pay away
 in the course of the day.

The attention of the
 District Engineer, Malabar,
 is called to the
 orders of Government
 which discourage the
 transmission of
 voluminous en-
 closures, and require that
 reports for the infor-
 mation of Government
 should contain in
 themselves all that

67
 is necessary to make
 them fully acquainted
 with the subjects under
 report - Encl.

St. Inge 130
 J. A. Dept 75
 Com. P. W. A.
 Office 17
 X. A. Dept 10-2-76

PUBLIC WORKS.

all Dist. Engs -

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July

31 Jan 1970 273

573-574

Robbery of the Cannanore
Cantonment Bankers Cash
-check. ——— Passing
orders on letters from the
Brit Esqrs Malabar
regarding the ———