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nos 107w. 11.1.83.

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107w  
no 400w. 11.2.84.

des. 4/84.

400w.

No. 1945 Way 9<sup>th</sup> Aug

Recorded.

W.  
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Mlu 6601

Govt. of (1884) Madras.

REVENUE.



20 d.c.

Issued

Recd. 8/8/84

Encl.

G.O., 21st July 1884,  
Nos. 877, 877A.

No. 1945 Way 9-8-84

JULY.

### Steam Launch

of the Salt Department. — Despatch from the Secretary of State forwarding a report relating to the departure from the instructions furnished with regard to the —, communicated to the Board of Revenue, and a copy forwarded to the Government of India.

248.18/8 con 11/8

1073/8

with order.

123x16-104  
The Hon. H. E. Sullivan

21ST JULY 1884, Nos. 877, 877A, REVENUE.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

READ—the following despatch from the Right Hon. the EARL OF KIMBERLEY, Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, to His Excellency the Right Honorable the Governor in Council, Fort St. George, dated India Office, London, 5th June 1884, No. 12, Public Works :—

I have received your letter in the Public Works Department, No. 4-400 W., dated 14th February last, forwarding a report by Mr. Bliss, Commissioner of Salt Revenue in your Presidency, on the steam launch supplied for the use of his department, and requesting that inquiry may be made as to the reason for the departure from the instructions furnished in the enclosure to your letter in the Public Works Department, No. 4-107 W., dated 11th January 1883, which are pointed out by Mr. Bliss.

2. I enclose, for your information, a copy of a report by Major-General Hyde, R.E., Inspector-General of Railway Stores, under whose supervision the launch was provided, from which it will be seen that the instructions were acted on as far as was possible, and that every care was taken to meet the requirements set forth in the enclosure to your letter of the 11th January 1883, No. 4-107 W., Public Works, and to secure a good serviceable boat at a moderate price.

3. It is to be regretted that certain instructions, which it was intended to send when the launch was supplied, and which have now been forwarded by General Hyde, were not transmitted in the first instance. Had this been done, it is believed that the misunderstanding which has unfortunately arisen would have been avoided.

ENCLOSURE.

*Report by Major-General H. Hyde, R.E., Inspector-General of Railway Stores.*

The despatch of 11th January 1883, No. 4-107, requested "that if a steam launch of the description mentioned by Mr. Bliss can be procured, it may at once be forwarded."

Following this is a memorandum of instructions sent to Calcutta for the building of a steam launch.

In a letter from the Deputy Director of Indian Marine sent with the above despatch, it was shown that it was impracticable to construct the vessel specified in that memorandum in anything like the dimensions given, and other particulars were suggested. Mr. Bliss criticises this letter from the Deputy Director, and then asks for a boat from England and recommends resort to Mr. White, and gives the following conditions as required by him :—

- (a) To be propelled by a screw or by twin-screws.
- (b) Draught, 21 inches. Though salt boats drawing \* 2½ feet have not been stopped for plying save once by proceedings that will not occur again.
- (c) He then forwards a catalogue, and specifies in it a particular launch that will suit his purpose, the particulars of which are as follow :—

Length, 21 feet.  
Beam, 4 feet 9 inches.  
Draught, 1 foot 9 inches.  
Approximate speed, 8 miles.  
Horse-power, three.  
Light propeller.  
Carvel built.  
Teak or mahogany.  
Copper sheathing to the water-line.

- (d) And Mr. Bliss gives as essential—

That the draft not to exceed 21 inches.

Do. boiler fit for salt water.

Do. method of propulsion and the length (up to 25 feet) are not material.

And he desires to keep down expense.

\* If this was not written for guidance, why was it written ?

At first a ready-built launch was sought for to meet the wants, but, as one could not be found, a specification was prepared and tenders invited. The lowest tender received, however, was found to involve the outlay of £820, which was considered far beyond what had been sanctioned by the Government of Madras. It was then found that Mr. White had a steam launch, not exactly answering the detailed description sent home, but which would practically answer the requirements put forward by Mr. Bliss, and which was a great bargain, the price being £278, and the launch of the highest class and superior in every way to that asked for. The exceptions now taken by Mr. Bliss to this boat are as under, and it will be seen by a comparison of them with the extracts from instructions put in the margin for easy reference and with remarks by the Consulting Engineer on the detail of the launch supplied that these complaints and the whole tenor of Mr. Bliss' letter are hardly deserved by this department:—

| Instructions given in Madras Despatch of 11th January 1883 and in Mr. Bliss' List of Essentials.                                                                                                                           | Mr. Bliss' Complaints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Consulting Engineer's Remarks on the Details of the Launch supplied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
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| Draft must not exceed 21 inches, but it is shown by Mr. Bliss that the salt boats drawing 30 inches have only been prevented once in five years from plying for want of water, and that this is not likely to occur again. | But her draft is about 3' 2".<br>* * *<br>As regards draft, I find that by trimming ballast forward and getting her on an even keel, I can reduce that to about 2' 5", so that I do not anticipate her being often prevented from plying by want of water. | The draft was 2' 3" in this country with steam up, not 3' 2" as mentioned by Mr. Bliss.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Planking teak, carvel built, coppered to water-line.                                                                                                                                                                       | "She is entirely of wood, not teak."<br><br>"She is clinker, not carvel built."<br><br>"And not coppered."                                                                                                                                                 | This expression I do not understand, as I take "teak" to mean nothing otherwise than wood, and these small launches are always built of mahogany as being far preferable for such small craft.<br><br>These small things are always clinker built. I have never seen one carvel built.<br><br>There is no necessity for coppering such small vessels, adding to the expense. With such a light weight of boat, should her bottom at any time get dirty, three or four men can haul the vessel on the canal bank, and in less than one hour clean the whole thing and give her a coat of paint if necessary. Coppering such small craft causes them to leak very easily. |
| The boiler must be fit for use with salt water.                                                                                                                                                                            | The fire-box is too small to burn wood conveniently.<br><br>"The boiler is not suited for use with salt water."                                                                                                                                            | The size of boiler and consequently the size of fire-place is as large as it is possible to carry on the draft with the required speed.<br><br>There is no necessity for supplying the boiler with salt water. Her boiler ought to be supplied with fresh water; the engines being surface condensing, I am afraid the engine is not understood in this respect.<br>* * *<br>This vessel was specially chosen as suitable for salt water, having a surface condenser fitted enabling the boiler to be fed with fresh water.                                                                                                                                             |

| Instructions given in Madras Despatch of 11th January 1883 and in Mr. Bliss' List of Essentials.                                    | Mr. Bliss' Complaints.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Consulting Engineer's Remarks on the Details of the Launch supplied.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
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| Method of propulsion and the length (up to 25') are not material, but I would keep latter down as much as possible to save expense. | "She has a single propeller only," &c.<br><br>She is not built to order at all, but was bought second-hand (in good order and well built I admit) without the smallest regard to the duty for which she is required.<br><br>This is most clear from the fact that, being required only for service on smooth inland waters, she is a life-boat provided with water-tight air-cases to prevent her sinking if struck by a heavy sea. Of course these cases must have cost a good deal of money, while they are worse than useless, for they take up room. I would remove them, but they seem so much of the structure of the boat that I am apprehensive of doing harm by doing so. | Double propellers lead to complication without any additional advantage, and especially in this case, the vessel being fitted with double rudders.<br><br>The air-cases should be removed if in the way.<br><br>The whole thing came as near as possible to Mr. Bliss' conditions.                                             |
| Instructions given in memorandum of points to be attended to:—<br>Speed, 8 miles an hour.                                           | As for speed, I cannot get more than six miles an hour out of her in the comparatively open waters of the backwaters above Ennore. Still this is enough, and a welcome change from the one and a half miles or less per hour which was the old rate of progress against the wind.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | The speed, 7.875 miles, obtained in this country with 60 lb. of steam as being the amount of working pressure in India was so easily maintained that Mr. Bliss must have overloaded the launch when he can only obtain 6 miles. The rate obtained in this country with full power was 8.21 miles, and this was easily kept up. |

It will be thus seen that practically the only deviation from Mr. Bliss' specification has been clinker build, instead of carvel, and no copper.

The reason of this was that the boat was bought as built, it being considered that she would meet the requirements, and on these two points her build was superior to that asked for by Mr. Bliss.

The slight excess of draught was weighed with the excellence and low price of the boat, and, looking to all that Mr. Bliss had written, it was quite evident that the draught would not prove any obstacle to her fully meeting the practical requirements of the service for which she was asked for in every other condition, viz., in speed, in handiness, and for service in salt water she would be superior to any boat available at anything like the price quoted.

As to the air-cases, the question of removing them was considered, but, as Mr. Bliss in his letter, 16th December 1882, objected to a steam canoe with 18" draught in these words, "I doubt if a steam canoe would be a safe craft in a gale of wind on open water like the Pulicat Lake," it was decided to leave the air-cases in; for (while the paragraph in Mr. Bliss' letter above quoted must have had some meaning and intention, or it would not have been sent to us), if the air-cases were found objectionable, they could easily be removed in India without injury to the boat.

The launch sent out is an excellent boat, and one better adapted for the service could not be procured. She is, as Mr. Bliss admits, of sufficiently light draught; she has greater speed than was asked for, though Mr. Bliss has not yet obtained this speed, which is not the fault of the boat, but of the engineer driving her. I timed her myself under the trial referred to by Mr. Hide, and her speed was 8.21.

She can steam nearly as fast astern as ahead and steer as well when going astern as ahead. She can turn in three boats, length and stop from full speed, dead, in the same distance. These qualities are due to the construction under the double-rudder system and are not found, or possible in ordinary launches, and they are qualities that make her particularly well adapted for service in close waters.

The air chambers made her, as a small boat, safe for navigation in the open water of the Pulicat Lake, and also safe if she knocked a hole in her bottom.

The last paragraph of Mr. Bliss' letter—in which he writes, "I have not yet, I may add, been informed of the cost of the launch; I can only hope that it will be moderate, but I have my doubts,"—exhibits the character of his complaints, which have little real foundation, for every care had been taken to meet his requirements and to secure a good, serviceable, and cheap boat. And further, if the agency had followed blindly the rather conflicting and in some parts unpractical conditions set forth in Mr. Bliss' letter, that agency would have done wrong, for it was clearly the duty of the agency, in the interests of the Government, to take advantage of the scientific knowledge available, to secure a good and cheap boat. This has been done, and Mr. Bliss has got a better launch than he could expect for the money.

17th April 1884.

(Signed) H. HYDE.

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16th May 1884.

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No. 1274 C.

Transferred to the Revenue Department with reference to the orders in that department quoted below:—

G.O., No. 173, dated 5th February 1884.  
 „ No. 459, „ 1st April 1884.

CHEPAUK,  
 17th July 1884.

(Signed) J. SHAW-STEWART, Col., R.E.,  
 Secretary to Govt., P.W.D.

To the Revenue Department.

ORDER—dated 21st July 1884, No. 877, Revenue.

Separate Revenue, No. 201.

Salt.

Communicated to the Board of Revenue with reference to paragraph 2 of their Proceedings, dated 15th January 1884, No. 110.

2. Copy of the despatch and its enclosure will be forwarded to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce, with reference to letter thence, dated 21st March 1884, No. 1528.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,  
 Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.  
 „ Public Works Department.

No. 877A.

Copy to the Government of India, Department of Finance and Commerce.

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,  
 Secretary to Government.

Exd J. Henricus.

70 Copies.

**Gobt. of (1884) Madras.**  
**REVENUE.**

*Issued*

*Recd.*

*Encl.*

G.O., 21st July 1884,  
Nos. 877, 877A.

**JULY.**

**Steam Launch**

of the Salt Department. — Despatch from the Secretary of State forwarding a report relating to the departure from the instructions furnished with regard to the —, communicated to the Board of Revenue, and a copy forwarded to the Government of India.

21st JULY 1884, Nos. 877, 877A, REVENUE.

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**REVENUE.**

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Nos. 877, 877A.**

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