Public Works (1899) Department.

Urgent

G.O., No. 1369 1365

DATED 29 May 1899.

[Despatch Abstract.]

Loan of an officer for duty in Ceylon

Ordered that the Ceylon Govt be informed that the services of Mr. C.S.T. Harris, the Consulting Surveyor can be spared on ~~specified~~ conditions, for a period of 2 or 3 weeks to advise the Govt as to the steps to be taken for the preservation or restoration of certain ruins at Anuradhapura.

=

Letter to the Ceylon Govt.

Indexed 31/5

[P. W. 2 2,000—29-3-99.]

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

P. W. DEPARTMENT.

READ the following:—

Endt. in the Public Dept. No. 1226 dated 8th May 1899, on letter from the Colonial Secretary, Colombo, dated 26th April 1899.

Circulated to

ORDER. No. 1364 W & 29.

Ordered that the following reply be sent to the Government of Ceylon.

2d

The Hon'ble the Colonial Secretary, Colombo.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter dated 26th April 1899, enquiring whether an Engineer officer of the P. W. Department of this Govt. could be spared to visit certain ruins at Anuradhapura in that Island, and to advise as to the steps which should

[P. W. 42-A. 1,000—2-3-99.]

[P. W. 43. 1,000—28 2-99.]

n taken for their preservation
restoration.

In reply I am to state
that Mr. Harris, the Consult-
ing Architect to the Govt., can
be spared for a period of 2 or 3
weeks. Mr Harris' transfer
requires the sanction of the
Govt. of India. This sanction
will be applied for, if his salary
d travelling allowances, as
cribed below, are defrayed by
Ceylon Govt. from the date
his departure from Madras
the date of his return

Salary. Rs. 1600 per mensem.

velling allowance

By rail. Double first class fare

By Sea. Passage money actually
paid for accommodation
on the following scale
1st class accommodation for himself
Lowest class accommodation for
3 Servants

By road. 8 as. per mile for journeys over 20 miles
6 Rs. per day for shorter journeys
or halts not exceeding 10 days
in one place

I have &c

W. H. Wells

26.5.99.

A.H.K.
26.5.99.

Public Works DEPARTMENT.

READ the following :—

Mr Harris' deputation to Ceylon.

Circulated to H.E. the Governor

FOR ORDERS

With reference to His Excellency's order on the above, I beg to point out that Mr Harris has a great deal of work in hand at present, & if he goes to Ceylon his report in these cases will involve a decided increase of work. He also seems therefore entitled to the deputation allowances of ½ of his salary (Rs 1600) as in Art. 96 (a) of the Civil Service Regulations x & the cost of his passage by the best mail steamer shall under Art. 806 (i) - During his absence to the Govt of India Civil Service Regulations he is chargeable with Art 806 (ii) (b), which

x & the Civil Service Regulations

This cannot be got by telegram if the first Mr Clayton accepts our proposal. A.H.

[P. W. 43.
1,000—28 2-19.]

Harris. transfer to
Foreign Service list of
British India.
I propose therefore to
inform the Ceylon Govt
that Mr Harris can be
spared for 2 or 3 years
in the current of the
Govt of India, provided
that Ceylon is willing
to keep him the salary
of the next higher grade
(Rs 1600 a month) & the
travelling allowance of
his rank, during his
absence.

W Beech
23.5.99

Secret
24/5/99.

Appd.
G.G.H
25.5.99

I do not think we
can ask Mr Harris
to take up the work
in addition to his
own without deputation
allowance. The
most allowance
- usually by Govt is Rs 200
per mensem -
Do we not
first sanction of
India to lending him
out of British India?

W Beech
22.5.99

W

The sanction, or rather
the "consent" of the Govt
of India is necessary. vide
C.S.R. 806 ii (6).
Mr. Harris can get the
difference between his
present salary and the

Ref. Rs 1600 – 1350 = Rs 250.

Ord. Cod 806(iv) (i).

R.S.

22 May 99.

Rpd.
R.H
25.5.99

Recd 29/5/99.

P. W. DEPARTMENT.

READ the following:—

Endorsement to the Public Department, No 1226 dated 8th May 1899 on letter from the Colonial Secretary Colombo, dated 26th April 1899.

Circulated to

ORDER.

Ordered that the following reply be sent to the Government of Ceylon.

C.S.E. No. 6 dated 5th.

2.

The Honble the Colonial Secretary,
Colombo.

Sir,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 26th April, 1899, enquiring whether an Engineer officer of the Public Works Department of this Government can be spared to visit certain ruins at Anuradhapura in that Island, and to advise as to the steps which should be taken for their preservation.

[P. W. 42-A.
1,000—2-3-99.]

we know or ascertain.

Secretly, I am to state that
Harris, the Consulting Archi-
to this Government, can be
for the duty for a period
or three weeks, provided
Salary and travelling allowances,
specified below, are defrayed
the Ceylon Government, from
date of his departure from
adras to the date of his
turn

Salary - By Per mensem
1,350, the pay of a Supdg Engineer
2nd class, temporary rank

elling Allowance - By Rail - double first class fare
By Sea - Passage money actually
paid for accommodation on
the following scale :-
1st class accommodation
for himself
lowest class accommoda-
tion for 3 servants.

By road. 8 as per mile for journeys over 20 miles
Charges. 6 Rs per day for shorter journeys
not exceeding 10 days
in one place.

W

A.C.R
20. 5. 99.

From the
Ceylon Govt for the
Service of an Engineer officer

P. W. DEPARTME

READ the following :—

Cendt with the Public Dept. No. 1226 dd
8th May 1899, or letter from the
Secretary, Colombo, 26th April

Circulated to His Excellency the Governor.

ORDER.

Ordered that the
following reply be sent
to the Govt of Ceylon.

H. E. No. 107

To

The Honble the Colonial
Secretary, Colombo.

Sir,

I am directed to
acknowledge the receipt
of your letter, dated 26th
April, 1899, enquiring whe-
ther an Engineer offr of
the P. W. Department of this
Govt. can be spared to
visit certain ruins at
Anuradhapura in that
Island

To save Time, let us tell them at once that we could let them have Mr. Harris' services for two or three weeks, - if they will pay his rail and sea, salary and reasonable travelling allce. I know the place well. June or July would be a good time to go.

A.G.G. 19.5.99

A.C. Enter C.S.'s salary & T. A. & send us fair charges
A.C.R
20. 5. 99.

[P. W. 42-A. 1,000—2-3-99.]

16.5.99 Rs 15

4

and and to advise
to the steps which should
be taken for their preserva-
tion or restoration.

In reply, I am to
request that with the
permission of His Excellency
the Lt. Governor, you will
be so good as to afford in-
formation as to the period
for which the services
of the Engineer Officer are
required, and the pay
it is proposed to grant him.

I have &c.

HH
18.5.99.

Mr Harris, the Civil Archi-
tect to this Govt, can be spared
for the duty for a period of
two or three weeks, provided
his salary and travelling
allowances, as specified be-
low, are defrayed by the Ce-
lon Govt from the date of his
departure from Madras to
the date of his return

Rs per mensem

Salary —
T. A — * Double 1st class fare
& mail

16.5.99.

Note. The enquiry should
handled at present, as it
is impossible to say
whether he can spare
an Officer without more
definite information.
Probably Mr Harris will
be the best person to go,
but he certainly could
not be spared for more
than a fortnight or 3 weeks

18.5.99.

AK
20.5.99

HH
* Please enter Salary & T. A
The latter C.A is now Rs 8 II

IV For orders

The Ceylon Govt: inquires whether an Engineer Officer of the P.W.D. can be spared, on such terms as the Govt: of Madras may consider fair, to visit certain ruins at Anuradhapura in that Island, & to advise as to the steps which should be taken for their preservation or restoration.

If an Officer can be lent to the Ceylon Govt: he will be on Foreign service of the first kind & the conditions to be complied with will be found in Art. 806 of the C.S.R. If the work is not will not last for more than six months no contribution for leave & pension will be required under Art 815. For orders

AK 15.5.99 Rw 17.5.99

Public Works (1899) Department.

CURRENT No. ~~4~~ 3789

From

The Colonial Secretary
Colombo

No.

Dated 26 April 99

Received 2 May "

Registered 3 90-5-99

Enclosures 2

Spare copies. -

~~Order~~ Govt & Co 122678 - 4 May 1899.

Transferred
to the Public Works Dept.
Abhayagiriya
for Chief Secretary

Cu
5-5-99

SUBJECT.

Forwarding copy of a letter addressed to the Secy of State for the Colonies by Lord Reay P.R.A.S. President of the Royal Asiatic Society, on the subject of the preservation of the Abhayagiriya and Mirisweteiya Dagobas at Anuradhapura, Ceylon and requesting to be informed whether an Engineer Officer of the P.W.D can be spared on such terms as the Govt of Madras may consider fair to visit the ruins referred to & to advise as to the steps which should be taken for their preservation or restoration.

O.S.14. O.L.S. 109
R2-915

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

acted the notice of the then Governor, Sir Arthur [illegible]

sanctioned

Copy referred to.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,
22 Albemarle Street, London, W.
18th May, 1898.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you the following copy of a Resolution agreed to at a Meeting of the Council of this Society held on the eighth February last.

"RESOLVED that the Ceylon Government and the Colonial Office be approached on the subject of the preservation of the national monuments at Anuradhapura known by the names of Abhayagiriya and Miriswetiya Dagobas".

It may be as well that in asking your favourable consideration of the request contained in this Resolution I should shortly mention the facts on which the application of the Royal Asiatic Society is based. That application refers to two separate monuments and I will state the case of each in turn.

(1) The Abhayagiriya Dagoba.

This monument, as you are no doubt aware, is one of the most remarkable in the East. Almost vying in size with the Pyramids, and containing bricks sufficient, as has been estimated, to build a large English provincial town twice over, it may be reckoned among the chief buildings of the world. The Royal Asiatic Society is deeply impressed with the opinion that such a structure cannot be allowed to perish or become a mere pile of ruins through neglect without discredit to the Government both of this Country and the Colony.

In the year 1886, a large portion including one of the corners of the great square building (technically called the "tee") at the top of the hemispherical main structure, and which immediately supports the crowning pinnacle, fell down. The Government Agent of the Province noted the fact in his official diary, adding that after a few years' more rainy seasons, the whole of the tower (as he called it) would have disappeared. This

attracted

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Copy referred to.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,
22 Albemarle Street, London, W.
18th May, 1898.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you the following copy of a Resolution agreed to at a Meeting of the Council of this Society held on the eighth February last.

"RESOLVED that the Ceylon Government and the Colonial Office be approached on the subject of the preservation of the national monuments at Anuradhapura known by the names of Abhayagiriya and Miriswetiya Dagobas".

It may be as well that in asking your favourable consideration of the request contained in this Resolution I should shortly mention the facts on which the application of the Royal Asiatic Society is based. That application refers to two separate monuments and I will state the case of each in turn.

(1) The Abhayagiriya Dagoba.

This monument, as you are no doubt aware, is one of the most remarkable in the East. Almost vying in size with the Pyramids, and containing bricks sufficient, as has been estimated, to build a large English provincial town twice over, it may be reckoned among the chief buildings of the world. The Royal Asiatic Society is deeply impressed with the opinion that such a structure cannot be allowed to perish or become a mere pile of ruins through neglect without discredit to the Government both of this Country and the Colony.

In the year 1886, a large portion including one of the corners of the great square building (technically called the "tee") at the top of the hemispherical main structure, and which immediately supports the crowning pinnacle, fell down. The Government Agent of the Province noted the fact in his official diary, adding that after a few years' more rainy seasons, the whole of the tower (as he called it) would have disappeared. This

attracted

Indexed.

attracted the notice of the then Governor, Sir Arthur G[illegible]
(now Lord Stanmore) and after careful examination he sanctioned
a plan for securing the stability of the tee and pinnacle,
prepared by the Provincial Engineer, Mr. A. Murray. This plan
involved the restoration of the fallen corner, and at the same time
it was thought better to check the continual action of the rain
and the growth of vegetation by the restoration of those parts
of the surface of the tee and pinnacle which had become decayed.
This was a perfectly easy operation as there was no conjectural
restoration whatever, the general design being perfectly clear and
no attempt being made to restore decorative features no longer
plainly visible.

This work had been fully accomplished in 1890, when Sir A.
Gordon left Ceylon.

As might in any case have been expected, some slight settle-
ment took place in the new structure, and cracks - at first of no
great importance - took place in the platform which formed the
summit of the tee and the substructure of the pinnacle. Mr.
Murray recommended the filling of these cracks with asphalt, but
unfortunately he had been removed to another part and was no longer
Provincial Engineer of Anuradhapura. Personal and professional
jealousies and squabbles on which it is unnecessary to enter but
which had the effect of making it doubtful in whose charge the
dagoba was, and also whether Mr. Murray or others were right in
the contrary views they took as to the cause of settlement, led to
nothing whatever being done. The rain of successive wet seasons
entered the cracks year after year, and increased them, and finally
the whole of the west face gave way and is now a mass of ruin,
lying at the foot of the dagoba, the "bell" of which it has
seriously injured in its fall. It is perfectly clear that if
nothing is done to arrest the process, the other faces of the
dagoba including much of the old work, will eventually follow,
from the effect of rain lodging in the cracks; and when it has
lost the support afforded it by the tee, the pinnacle (in itself a
tower of no small magnitude) will no doubt itself fall. It is to
prevent this catastrophe that the Society appeals to Her Majesty's
Government to interpose and to use its powerful influence to induce
the Ceylon Government to undertake the work of restoration while
there

there is yet time to do so with success.

Against this course it has been urged:

(1) That the expense will be considerable.

The revenues of Ceylon were never in a more flourishing condition, and that a small portion of them should be devoted to the preservation and repair of a historical and architectural monument of the highest interest and value will not, the Royal Asiatic Society feels confident be thought by Her Majesty's Government an unreasonable appropriation of them.

(2) That the monument looks more picturesque in ruin than it would do if restored to the condition in which it existed in 1890.

That is a question of taste on which every one may have his own opinion; but what is important to remember is that the edifice cannot remain in its present condition and that if it be left in ruin, it means its surrender to increasing ruin. Not only must the other faces fall, as the cracks if left unattended to, widen, but the present slope of rubbish which has taken the place of the western face and which some seem to think beautiful, will year by year be washed down by the rains, eating deeper and deeper into the heart of the platform, till the pinnacle itself is undermined. There is no alternative between such restoration as will keep out the assaults of weather and rapidly progressive further destruction

(3) That the Dagoba is a Buddhist Shrine and ought not to be repaired or preserved by a Christian Government.

It might seem to many people that the Christian Government having taken possession of the monuments of a Buddhist nation, it would not be an ungraceful act towards its Buddhist subjects to keep them in repair. But that question need not be discussed; it is enough to point to the example of the Indian Government, which rather more than ten years ago spent some lacs of rupees on the restoration of Buddha Ghaya,- not because it was a Buddhist Shrine, but because it was a national monument of historical and architectural value.

The Society cannot but feel that it would by a lamentable thing if this great monument be allowed to perish, and if Sir Arthur Gordon's efforts to ensure its preservation were not only not continued but strengthened where signs of weakness were shown, but were actually allowed to become a cause of the more rapid destruction of the edifice.

II. I now turn to the Miriswetiya Dagoba.

This dagoba (which though of very considerable dimensions, is much smaller than the Abhayagiria) is believed to be the oldest in Ceylon, and is in many ways of peculiar interest. The fall of the pinnacle and of the tee had reduced it long ago to a mere conical mass of debris and earth overgrown with grass and shrubs. Sir William Gregory excavated one of its altars which was of great beauty, but the remainder continued hidden until 1887, when Sir A. Gordon determined on its excavation, and if possible, restoration. On clearing away the earth and rubbish, the three ambulatories were found quite perfect, retaining for the most part their original coating of chunam, together with a staircase of a character quite unique in Ceylon, while the walls of the "bell" of the dagoba were perfect up to a considerable height, (30 or 40 ft.) a height quite great enough to enable the curve of the bell to be exactly ascertained. There was a large gaol at Anuradhapura, and the prisoners were employed on the work of completing the bell as far as possible with the bricks gathered from the debris, and in making others when these ran short . The gaol at Anuradhapura has since been suppressed, and the Society is informed by recent letters from Ceylon, that the work is wholly abandoned and stands open to receive the rain. Of course this can only lead to the entire destruction not only of the new work of restoration but of the original work also, including the beautiful "chapels" which will be destroyed by the fall upon them of the brickwork, bulged outwards by the soaking and pressure of the water within. When it was determined to clear the structure from the earth and debris which covered it, it was with a view to its restoration and preservation, and the Society would respectfully submit that the measures taken with that view, should not by a change of policy be allowed to become active instruments of the destruction of so beautiful and unique a monument.

It is worth noting that one of the Siamese Princes gave a large sum,- about £1,500 the Society believes,, as a contribution towards the completion of the restoration.

In

In this instance too, the Society would earnestly request Her Majesty's Government to sanction and direct the completion of the work according to Mr. Alex. Murray's original plans for that purpose.

I have the honour to enclose some photographs of the present condition of the tee of the Abhayagiriya, which I request may at your convenience be returned to the Society.

I have, &c.,

(Sgd) REAY

President.

The Under Secretary of State

for the Colonies.

Colonial Secretary's Office,

Colombo, 26 April , 1899.

No.

Sir,

I am directed by His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor to forward to you the accompanying copy of a letter addressed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies by Lord Rea[y] G.C.S.I., President of the Royal Asiatic Society, on the subject of the preservation of the Abhayagiriya and Miriswetiya Dagobas at Anuradhapura in this Island and I am to ask you to be so good as to inform me, with the permission of His Excellency the Officer of the Depa[rtment] of Public Works can be spared, on such terms as th[e Government] of Madras may consider fair, to visit the ruins referred to and to advise as to the steps which should be taken for their preservation or restoration.

2. I am to state t[hat] a communication on the subject was addressed to t[he Government] of India and they have suggested that the application be made to your Government as the antiquities of the Madras Presidency have more in comm[on] with the antiquities of this Island than those of any other part of India.

I am, Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,

J R Cranford

for Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary

to the Government of Madras

Fort St. George,

Madras.

OWS. 1
3284/11

1331