

Pension Dept
1898

gd. 807. m
25-10-1898.

Pension (1898) Department.

CURRENT No. 853

Sp. 807. Min
25-10-1898

From

Head Res 1597 + VC Dept.
No 4294 P 21-10-98 P
Order 25 Oct 1898 No. 807

The Govt of India
Finance & Commerce Dept.

Recorded.

2. Copy of G.O. Pension 808
4. Dec 97 with a comment
to the Govt of India

No. 4294 P.

Indt-46.

Copy with copy of G.O. 808 4 Dec 97
to the Govt of India 2 VC Dept
The system has already been adopted here

19.12.98 *Dated 5 Oct 98.*
Received 12 Nov do
Registered 12 Nov do

918
4-12-97

Pension

Enclosures

Spare copies.

SUBJECT.

Forwarding a copy of Resolu-
-tion of the G. of I. No 4294 P. 21 Oct
98 recommending to all Local Govts
and Administrations the adoption
of the system of identification
by finger impressions, for the
identification of pensioners
in the Civil Servt in British
India generally.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

No. 4294-P.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.

RESOLUTION.

Simla, the 1st October 1898.

READ—

Letters in the Finance and Commerce Department to the Comptroller and Auditor General, No. 5862-P., and to the Government of Bengal, No. 5863-P., dated 20th December 1895, proposing the experimental introduction into Lower Bengal, for the purpose of identifying Government pensioners of Sir William Herschel's system of identification by finger impressions.

Letter from the Comptroller and Auditor General, No. 2053, dated 12th January 1898, reporting upon the working of the system for one year in Lower Bengal, and suggesting the general introduction of the system for the purpose of identifying Government pensioners.

OBSERVATIONS.—The system of identification by finger impressions had already been in use in Bengal to some extent in connection with the registration of documents and the identification of criminals, when, in December 1895, the Government of India proposed that, with the concurrence of the Local Government, it should be introduced as an experimental measure throughout that province for the purpose of identifying Government pensioners. The Government of Bengal accepted this suggestion, and rules were framed and the system actually introduced at all treasuries in the province in November 1896. The Government of India have now received the reports of a full year's working, and are gratified to find that the system has already achieved such a measure of success as justifies its extension to other provinces. It is found that, with the exercise of a little care, the system is easy to work, the chief difficulty experienced at first—that of obtaining distinct impressions—being one that disappears with practice; that in all but exceptional cases it is accepted by the payees without demur; and that it affords a sound and easily applied check against fraudulent personation. The reports show that at several places there is an inclination to abandon the check, on the ground that the pensioners are few and are locally known to the Treasury officials. This however indicates some misapprehension. The great value of the scheme lies in the fact that it secures a permanent record of identification, which is independent of the personal knowledge of individual Treasury officials. Whether these officials use the impression or do not use it as an actual means of identification, the record of the mark should be carefully preserved, because it is by this means alone that it can be discovered

whether, within a considerable period of time, there has been no change of identity.

RESOLUTION.—The Governor General in Council desires to recommend to all Local Governments and Administrations the adoption of this system as a permanent measure, for the identification of pensioners in the Civil Department in British India generally. Rules for the identification of such pensioners, which are in force in Bengal, are annexed, together with a copy of the letter from the Comptroller and Auditor General, dated 12th January 1898, read in the preamble, and its enclosure.

ORDER.—Ordered that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to all Local Governments and Administrations, to the Departments of the Government of India (except the Home Department), to all Heads of Departments subordinate to this Department, and to all Accountants General and Comptrollers.

Ordered, also, that a copy be forwarded to the Home Department, with reference to the endorsement from that Department, No. 288, dated 15th June 1898.

M. M. Munzate
Under-Secy. to the Govt. of India.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.

FINANCE AND COMMERCE DEPARTMENT.

Rules for the identification of pensioners by means of thumb-impressions.

1. All applicants for service pensions with the exception of those hereinafter mentioned in rule 10, shall, at the time of preparation of their applications for pension, make, before the head of the office, in the first page of their application for pension in the space provided therein for the purpose, an impression of the ball of the thumb of the left hand.
2. An impression similar to that mentioned in rule 1 shall at the same time be taken on a slip of paper and shall be attached to the application for pension.
3. These impressions will be sent together with the pension papers to the officer reporting on the claim to pension and be forwarded by him to the authority who has to sanction the pension. They will thereafter be forwarded by the sanctioning authority to the officer who audits payments of the pension.
4. The impression given on the application for pension will serve in the auditing office as a permanent record of the impression, while that given on the separate slip will be pasted on the Disbursing Officer's half of the Permanent Pay Order.
5. In the case of non-service pensioners, the thumb-impression shall be made on the Descriptive Roll in presence of the officer preparing the roll.
6. In the case of non-service pensioners an impression shall also be taken, by the office preparing the Descriptive Roll, on a separate slip of paper, and this shall be sent together with the roll to the auditing officer.
7. In the case of non-service pensioners, the impression given on the Descriptive Roll will form the auditing officer's permanent record, and that given on the slip will be pasted on the Disbursing Officer's half of the Permanent Pay Order in the space provided therein for the purpose.
8. The impression given on the separate slip will, in the case of both service and non-service pensions payable at the Presidency town of Calcutta, be pasted against the appropriate number of the Register of Permanent Pay Orders.
9. On the first appearance of a pensioner on or after April 1st of each year the Disbursing Officer will, except in the cases of pensioners mentioned in rule 10, take an impression of the thumb of the pensioner's left hand on his pension bill, and besides identifying the pensioner from the other particulars given in the Disbursing Officer's half of the Permanent Pay Order or in the Audit Register (as the case may be), identify him from a comparison of the impression given on the bill with that pasted on the Permanent Pay Order or in the Audit Register, and in case of difference in the two impressions will refer the matter to the officer before whom the impression pasted in the Permanent Pay Order or in the Audit Register had been made.
10. Except Native Princes, European ladies, persons who have been gazetted officers and those specially exempted by Government (these exceptions being made on the ground that there can be no difficulty in future identification) all pensioners shall be liable to the operation of these rules.
11. Purdah ladies and illiterate pensioners shall give a thumb-impression on their bills before the person granting the life certificate, or in the case of illiterate pensioners who personally attend the paying office before the Disbursing Officer.
12. On the renewing of a Permanent Pay Order, the original impression shall be cut off from the old and attached to the new order.
13. Impressions should be taken in the following manner:—
A small quantity of ordinary printer's ink (which will be supplied by the Superintendent of Stationery, Calcutta), mixed with a very small quantity of sweet-oil, should be well rubbed with an India-rubber roller on a tin slab until a very thin even layer is formed. The ball of the thumb of the left hand of the pensioner, after being wiped, should be laid on the inked slab and rolled from side to side (not rubbed) until sufficiently inked (this can be learnt from experience) and then lightly and carefully rolled on the paper on which the print is to be taken in such a way that the pattern of the whole of the ball of the thumb from side to side is clearly impressed on it. It must be specially borne in mind that any side movement, either at the time of applying or removing the thumb, will cause a smudge and spoil the impression.
14. In the case of pensioners now on the pension list, Disbursing Officers will, on the next occasion on which each pension is paid and after careful identification of the pensioner, take his or her impression on the Permanent Pay Order or Audit Register.
15. A thumb-impression should also be taken in the Service-books of persons in service in the space for "Distinctive Marks." In all cases when an officer is sent for medical examination, the examining Medical Officer or Board should be asked to obtain the thumb-impression of the candidate for appointment, leave or pension on the medical certificate. This last impression should afterwards be verified with that in the Service-book by the head of the office.

*Same as in
Co. 1202
20.8.98*

No. 2053, dated 12th January 1898.

From—The Comptroller-General,

To—The Secretary to the Government of India, Finance and Commerce Department.

With reference to correspondence ending with your letter No. P.-3169 of 23rd July 1896, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a letter No. P.-794 of the 30th December 1897, from the Accountant-General, Bengal, reporting upon the working for one year of the system of identification of Government pensioners by means of thumb-impressions. The report seems to show that no real difficulty is felt in the working of the system, and that it is a safeguard against fraud. For these reasons and also because the system has been adopted in the case of Military pensioners, it seems to me that the system which was introduced only as an experimental measure, may be considered to have passed that stage and that the time has arrived for prescribing the general introduction of the scheme.

No. P.-794, dated 30th December 1897.

From—The Accountant-General, Bengal,

To—The Comptroller-General,

With reference to your endorsement No. 684, dated 14th August 1896, forwarding a copy of the orders of the Government of India for the introduction of Sir William Herschel's system of securing the identification of persons by means of thumb-impressions, for the purpose of identifying Government pensioners, with a copy of the rules approved by the Government of India for the purpose, and requesting me to submit a report after the system has been in force for a year, I have the honour to report as follows.

2. The system was brought into operation in November 1896 when the necessary materials were supplied to the Treasury Officers by the Superintendent of Stationery. The thumb-impressions of pensioners already on the list were taken in November 1895 and the succeeding months, under rule 14, in Audit registers at the Presidency Treasury and on Permanent Pay Orders in the mofussil treasuries. The impressions of new pensioners were taken, under rule 9, at the times of the first payments of the pensions and compared at the Presidency with the impressions given in the pension applications, and in the mofussil with the impression pasted on the Permanent Pay Order under rule 7.

3. Purdah ladies and illiterate pensioners were required to give their thumb-impressions on each monthly pension bill under rule 11; but most purdah ladies belong to the Nizamut, Oudh, and Mysore families, and as these have been exempted by Government under rule 10, only a few purdah ladies now give their impressions.

4. The system has worked well and generally no difficulty has been felt either in the taking of the thumb-impression by the Disbursing Officer or in the giving of it by the pensioner.

5. In some cases the impressions taken were not clear, but this was due to defects in the preparation of ink or the ball of the thumb being very smooth.

6. The system is very useful and effective as is proved by cases in which the impression given on the bill was found to differ from the permanent impression, and the latter was found on reference to the authority before whom it was taken to be the impression of the thumb of the right hand instead of the left.

7. I have the honour to enclose a précis of the reports received from the Collectors and Deputy Commissioners in Bengal on the working of the system at their treasuries. In these reports there is a general consensus of opinion that the system should be made permanent, being useful as a check against impersonation, although at some of the treasuries its usefulness has not been realised owing to the number of pensioners being small and the pensioners being known to the Disbursing Officers.

Champanun.—Pensioners are identified by comparing the thumb impression taken on the pension bill with the standard impression affixed to the Permanent Pay Order. The system has worked well; nothing has been found against it.

Monghyr.—The system will be a great help in suspicious cases when the Treasury Account Staff and the pensioners get accustomed to the mode of taking impressions; at present impressions are rarely free from smudges and blotches and the defects due to side movements and exertion of unequal pressure. The use of a magnifying glass is recommended.

Balasore.—The system has worked well.

Bogra.—The impressions are taken monthly on pension bills, and on comparison with the permanent impressions on the Permanent Pay Orders are found to agree. They are considered more useful in the case of illiterate pensioners, and are a means of securing the personal attendance of pensioners. The system has caused no inconvenience.

Satkira Sub-Division.—The system has worked satisfactorily. If the impression on the Permanent Pay Order is clear there will be no difficulty in the identification of an unknown pensioner by a new paying officer.

Puri.—The system is working well and its great advantage is to secure better identification.

Mymensing.—The system appears to be good, although of very little practical effect, in consequence of the smallness of the number of pensioners in the district and all of them being personally known to the Treasury Officer or the Sub-Treasury Officer.

Singbhum.—The system has not been tested owing to the pensioners being known to the Treasury Officer; it would be useful in large districts with large numbers of pensioners.

Malda.—The system has proved satisfactory. It should be extended generally to transactions with treasuries where the payees are illiterate or unknown to the Treasury Staff. As the impression can be discriminated from each other when compared closely an imposter would seldom give his impression for fear of detection by identification.

Pubna.—The system is advantageous inasmuch as it serves a useful check upon illiterate and other persons against fraud.

Dinajpur.—No case for identification by this means has yet arisen, the pensioners being known; but a case might arise in which the system would afford an additional safeguard against fraud.

Rungpur.—The system is followed with advantage, as it compels the pensioner to attend the Treasury every time to draw his pension; it makes an attempt at fraud impossible. It should therefore be made permanent.

Nudia.—Experience shows the system to be advantageous. It has worked satisfactorily without causing any inconvenience.

Furidpur.—The system is found advantageous as it is found a very good safeguard against false personation.

Noakhali.—The system is not of any special advantage owing to smallness of the number of pensioners except being an additional precaution. It may be much useful in big districts having large numbers of pensioners.

Bhagalpur.—The system was introduced on 1st April 1897, and as the impressions have not yet been repeated, there have been no opportunities for comparing them. Owing to a large number of payments being made on the 1st of the month the impressions are taken in a hurry and therefore in many cases are not full, conspicuous, and clear. Identification from other particulars is quicker and easier. The system may, however, be retained as an additional precaution; it may work better after two or three years. Identification from photos is considered to be the surest and quickest method of identification.

Burdwan.—Since the introduction of the system no instance of fraud has taken place and hence its usefulness has not yet been practically brought into operation. The system is good and will facilitate detection of fraud and false personation. Owing to want of experience distinct impressions have not been obtained in all cases.

Birbhum.—Thumb impressions of illiterate pensioners are taken every month. All the pensioners in the District being known to the Treasury Officer no malpractice or irregularity has been brought to light by this system.

Bankura.—The system is proved by all means the most effective, in addition to identification from personal marks which in some instances are very vague or not very accurate.

Khulna.—The pensioners being all known their identification by thumb-impressions appears to be superfluous.

Jessore.—The system has worked well; the method is easy. All the pensioners are known, but as a check against false impersonation and for identification in doubtful cases the system may be continued.

Jalpaiguri.—The pensioners are all known; but the system is useful and may be continued.

Darjeeling.—The system works well.

Hazaribagh.—Thumb-impressions were taken on each occasion of payment. Difficulty is felt in comparing the impressions for want of knowledge of the principles on which to compare. The use of a magnifying glass is recommended.

Hooghly.—The system is appreciated; but in some cases the impressions become indistinct owing to defect in the preparation of ink.

Saseeram Sub-Division, Cox's Bazar Sub-Division.—The system has worked well and may be continued. The impressions are regularly taken.

Lohardugga.—The system has worked well and is useful as an additional method of securing the identification of pensioners.

Manbhoom.—The system is working well; but it was not introduced in the Gobind-pore Sub-Treasury owing to the number of pensioners being only 3 or 4.

Tippera.—No particular benefit is derived by the introduction of the system as the pensioners are known to the Treasury Officer, their number being small. The system will do good in places where the number of pensioners is large.

Gaya.—The system is gradually being appreciated; it is likely to check fraud.

Mosafferpur.—The taking of the thumb-impression was confined to the case of illiterate pensioners. The system is expected to work as satisfactorily as in the Registration Department.

Durbhunga.—No advantage has yet been obtained from the introduction of the system. However, as experience is gained, very great advantage will accrue from it.

Palamow.—The number of pensioners is small and the pensioners are all known to the Treasury Officer; so the advantages of the system are not clearly manifest. It will do much good in the identification of new pensioners.

24-Pergunnahs.—The system has worked satisfactorily. The impressions were at first badly taken; but the defect has since been remedied. The use of a magnifying glass is needed.

Backergunge.—The number of pensioners is small and the pensioners are all known to the Treasury Officer. The impressions were at first badly taken; but improvement has since been made.

Sonthal Pergunnahs.—The system is a safeguard against fraud; it has worked well without any inconvenience to the pensioners who approve of and like it as a check against their being misrepresented.

Purnea.—The system has worked well. The impressions of all illiterate pensioners are invariably taken on pension bills, except one female Political pensioner who is exempted from personal appearance.

Chittagong.—The system has worked fairly well; the only difficulty being that illiterate pensioners do not easily acquire the delicacy of touch essential for a good impression. Upper class pensioners feel it inconvenient to soil their thumbs by being called upon to give thumb-impressions.

Midnapore.—New pensioners are identified by known persons or from the other particulars contained in the Permanent Pay Order. The system is not considered to be of material advantage in the case of pensioners who are natives of the District, but in the case of others it is likely to be useful.

Murshedabad.—The impressions were taken of all service pensioners, of male Political pensioners, and of such female Political pensioners as appear in public. Purdah females of the Nizamut family at first gave their impressions before the Nawab Bahadur of Murshedabad; but they have since been exempted by Government from giving the impression. Some of the impressions at first taken on the Collector's halves of Permanent Pay Orders were not sufficiently clear and distinct, but the defect has been rectified. Pensioners who appear personally are well known and their identification by the other particulars in the Permanent Pay Order is sufficient. Nizamut female pensioners are under the supervision of the Nawab Bahadur who grants them life certificates. Thumb-impressions are, however, additional safeguard, and as the taking of them entails little trouble the system should be continued.

Cuttack.—Thumb-impressions are taken monthly on the pension bills of purdah ladies and illiterate pensioners. Difficulty is experienced in obtaining the impressions of some of the old and infirm pensioners. In one case the impression taken on the first appearance of the pensioner was found to differ from that affixed to the Permanent Pay Order. On enquiry the latter was found to be the impression of the right hand. The system is calculated to discourage fraud, and as no difficulty is experienced in working it, it should be continued.

Dacca.—The system has worked well and is likely to prevent false personation and should be extended to all kinds of payments.

Bagerhat Sub-Division.—Thumb impressions, if properly taken, seem to be an additional security for the identification of pensioners.

Rajshahi.—The system is not likely to prove of itself a sufficient guard against fraud; but it will establish fraud when detected, and as such, is a valuable check and should be continued.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.
FINANCE AND COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT.
PENSIONS AND GRATUITIES.



RESOLUTION.

No. 4294-P.

Dated Simla, the 1st October 1898.

Identification of Government pensioners
means of thumb-impressions.

On H.M.
E.L. 3-B.