

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Political **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.

417

Press

Mis.

Dated

11-7-1949

Not to be folded or roughly handled

ncp

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Political Department,
from 9th to 15th July 1859.*

Read again letters from the Government Agent at Tanjore, dated the 20th April, No. 126 and 24th May 1859, No. 169.

No. 23. Read also the following letter from W. M. CADELL, Esq., Government Agent of Tanjore; to T. PYCROFT, Esq., Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George, dated 27th June 1859, No. 196.

1. With reference to Extract Minutes of Consultation, under date the 27th April last, and my letters of the marginal dates; I have now the honor to submit the following report of the circumstances connected with the late robbery at the Government Agency Office at Tanjore together with a sketch of the premises.

2. From the enquiry which has now been made and which has resulted in the committal of 10 parties to the Criminal Court, it appears, that the robbery had been contemplated some time previously, and that it was planned and effected by the two Vicharippoogurs attached to the residency with the assistance of one of the horsekeepers and 3 other servants employed at the residency and also of a Raj Pensioner, by name Annamalay. In the accompanying plan, the red line marked H, shews the course taken by the robbers; they appear to have come from the south, and one of their number, viz., the 1st Prisoner, Chinnoo, is shewn to have remained in front of the Treasury at E, and to have occupied himself in singing for one or two hours for the express purpose of diverting the attention of the guard. Between the 2 tiled roofs, as will be seen in the plan, there is a small terraced room, where the robbers collected and whence they commenced their operations by breaking open the tiles at G, and after making a sufficient aperture, letting themselves down by a rope into the Treasury room D. It is stated by several of the robbers that they took 2 nights to effect the robbery and that not being able to open the box on the 1st night (Saturday) they returned next night (Sunday) provided with a key (which is stated to have been made by the 9th Prisoner, a blacksmith) and by means of which the box was opened. Be this as it may, however, the lock of the Treasury box was found uninjured, and my own impression is that as several of the Prisoners were frequenting the Office, they must have had opportunities of making themselves acquainted with the exact spot where the box was kept and the pattern of the key. The robbery having also been for some time in contemplation, it seems unlikely that, with the opportunities of observation which several of the Prisoners had, they would have omitted, in the first instance, to furnish themselves with this.

3. The greater part of the money robbed was found in and around the house of the 3rd Prisoner Annamalay, a Raj Pensioner, and who lives at a distance of but a mile from the residency. To the exertions of the Head of Police in the first place and also to those of the Police Ameen, is owing the discovery of the money and I would take leave to bring the activity and energy displayed by these Officers to the special notice of Government. The Head of Police in a case of Gang Robbery which took place in the Fort of Tanjore in the month of July last, took great pains to discover the guilty parties, and was most successful not only in bringing the guilty parties to punishment, but in discovering also a large proportion of the stolen property. This, I believe, he did at considerable personal expense to himself and for which he received no compensation, and I therefore venture to hope the Government may see fit to confer on him some special mark of their approbation.

4. I am the more anxious that this should be done, as notwithstanding the exertions made, I regret to say, that 8 out of the 10 Prisoners committed, have been released by the Criminal Court on account of the alleged insufficiency of the evidence. In this disposal of the case however I do not agree, and I have considered it my duty as Magistrate to enter a formal protest against the unconditional release of parties against whom there were the very strongest grounds for suspicion. I allude more particularly to the case of the 1st and 2nd Prisoners, the 2 Vicharippoogurs who were on duty at the residency on the night of the robbery. One of them, the 2nd Prisoner, confessed his guilt both before the Head of Police and the Acting Special Assistant Magistrate, and detailed all the circumstances of the robbery these details were further corroborated by the confessions of other parties and also by other evidence, and yet with the exception of the party in whose premises the money was found and his mother, all have been released.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Political Department,
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5. From the investigation which has now been made, and also from personal enquiries instituted on the spot by Mr. Kerr, the Acting Special Assistant Magistrate, there is no reason whatever to believe, that the Sepoys were in any way implicated; that the Sentries were remiss in their duty and in fact utterly useless, is I think, however, very manifest. On the night of the robbery, it was moonlight for nearly the entire night and had the Sentries on either side been at all on the alert, it is simply impossible the robbery could have taken place.

6. I have also further to inform the Government, that 2 of the parties concerned, viz., Annamalay, the 3rd Prisoner, and the 7th Prisoner, Shengan, are Raj Pensioners and, as from the evidence adduced, there can be no moral doubt whatever of their guilt, I would take leave to recommend that their Pensions be cancelled.

7. I would only add that when the robbery took place, I made arrangements at once for returning the greater part of the money in the Treasury attached to the Government Agency Office to the Talook Treasury, and that only such sums as are required for the payment of Pensioners for 5 days are now deposited in the Agency Office.

No. 24. ORDER THEREON, 11th July 1859, No. 417.

The Honorable the Governor in Council proceeds to consider the report submitted by Mr. Cadell of the circumstances connected with the late robbery at the Government Agency Office at Tanjore, together with the previous communications received from him on the subject.

2. It appears that between the night of the 16th and the forenoon of the 18th April last, an opening was effected through the roof of the Treasury Room attached to the Agency Office, and the sum of 7,000 Rupees abstracted from the Cash Chest. Through the exertions of the Head of Police, the whole of this amount, with the exception of 53 Rupees, has been recovered.

3. The investigation made into the matter resulted in the committal of 10 parties to the Criminal Court; but of these 8 have been released by the Court on account of the alleged insufficiency of the evidence. Mr. Cadell has considered it his duty as Magistrate to enter a formal protest against the unconditional release of these persons against whom, he states, there were the very strongest grounds for suspicion.

4. The Government notice with their high approbation the exertions of the Head of Police and Police Ameen, and the activity and energy displayed by them upon the occasion. The Agent will state what special mark of approval he would propose that Government should confer upon the former, and what expense he incurred in the detection of the robbery in the Tanjore Fort in July last year.

5. Agreeably to the Agent's recommendation, in the propriety of which the Government concur, it is resolved that the Pensions of the two Raj Pensioners, Annamalay and Shengum, of whose complicity in the robbery no doubt is entertained, be cancelled from the date of last payment.

6. The Agent's report and his previous letter of the 20th April last will be communicated to His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, through the Adjutant General of the Army, in view to such enquiry being instituted as he may see fit to make into the conduct of the Sepoys on guard on the night of the robbery.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. A. P. W. Begbie.

Political Department

Proceedings of the Madras Govt

Read again letter from the Govt Agent at Tanjore dated the 20th April. No 20 & 24th May 1859. No 109.

Read also the following letter from the same Officer.

(dated 27th June 1859. No 196)

Order thereon 11th July 1859. No 417.

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Agent's letter 20th April 1859.

Agent's letter 24 May 1859.

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3. The investigation made into the matter resulted in the commitment of 10 parties to the Criminal Court; but of these 8 have been released by the Court on account of the alleged insufficiency of the evidence. Mr. Cidell has considered it his duty as Magistrate to enter a formal protest against the unconditional release of these persons against whom, he states, there were the very strongest grounds for suspicion.

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J. P.

To the Govd Agent at Bangalore
- Adjutant General of the Army
- Civil Subaltern. } Disptd 15th
with a letter & Order D. 1255

Proc. of Court 15 Jan 13
Political 1838, Sept 10.

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Proc. of Government

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Fl. 1. 638. 670. Fl. 368 of 63

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