

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Public DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	3/5	Press Mis.
Dated	27-3-1966	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

29-7-72

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
27th March 1866.*

No. 125. Read the following letter from the Superintendent of the Government Central Museum, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Madras, 21st March 1866, No. 44.

I have the honor to report my return to the Presidency on the night of the 19th instant.

2. I left Madras on the morning of the 5th instant, and arrived at Ootacamund on the afternoon of the 7th instant. Having heard at Coonoor that two elephants had been recently buried, I waited upon Major Ewart, the Commissariat Officer at Wellington, in hope of obtaining these skeletons also, but I learned that the Medical and Civil authorities had insisted upon the carcasses being removed to a considerable distance from Coonoor, and that they had been cut up and rendered useless for my purposes. Had Major Ewart been permitted to bury them whole, as he purposed doing, I should have been able to clean them and bring them to Madras. It is an unfortunate accident that deprived me of that opportunity, but the authorities, doubtless, had sufficient reasons for their decision.

3. On the 8th, with the Tahsildar, I visited the spot where the first Elephant was buried, at about three miles from Ootacamund on the Pykarah road. Arrangements were made for disintering the skeleton on the following day, but after working for about four hours I found it was useless to proceed any further, as the bones had been broken with hatchets and were also rotten, *i. e.*, the smaller bones. The Elephant had died near the bazaar, and was cut up to facilitate its removal.

4. On the 10th I proceeded to the other pit, two miles further on. It took two days, Saturday and Monday, to get the skeleton out. It is complete and in fair condition. Although so long buried a large quantity of the flesh remained, but in a most putrid condition. The smell in the pit was exceedingly offensive, and it was only by giving the coolies arrack two or three times during the day that I could keep them at work. By Wednesday evening, the two Taxidermists, with the help of coolies, had cleaned and brought the bones to Ootacamund. They were packed on Thursday and seeing nothing further to detain me I made arrangements to leave on Saturday.

5. I had hoped to obtain some of the Fauna of the Hills, which is almost entirely absent from the Museum collection. I am sorry to say I was disappointed. I could not get a Shikaree to bring anything in. I did not even succeed in obtaining any of the small fish from the lake, nor could I get any fish from the Pykarah or Bhowany rivers. I did, however, get some frogs and lizards which were not in the Museum, and a few Aquatic Beetles. I left a supply of methylated spirit with Mr. McIver, who, with his Assistant, Mr. Batcok, have kindly promised to collect for me.

6. I was much surprised at the small amount of animal life at the Hills. It is, I understand, due to the dryness of the season. There appears to be a great want of water just now; many of the water courses being quite dry and others having only a very small stream trickling through them. I was informed that the latter end of the year would be a better time to collect; and I hope to be able to send a man there for two or three months after the rains are over, in September or October.

7. I will forward a bill for the expenses incurred in a day or two.

No. 126.

ORDER THEREON, 27th March 1866, No. 315.

To be recorded.

(True Extract).

A. J. ARBUTHNOT,
Chief Secretary.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

Pro 27 February 1866 No. 95/6.

Public 1866 Dept
Government C. Museum

N^o 44

From
Captain J. Mitchell
Supt. Gov. C. Museum
F.

The Honble A. J. Arbuthnot
Chief Secy to Government
Fort St. George

(Dated 21st } March 1866.
Recd 22nd }
No 329.

Reporting his re-
turn to Madras and
the result of his journey
to Cotacamund. to bring
down to the Museum, the Carca
for Elephant buried there -
27 March 1866 No. 315.

Received
J. E. B. Esq.

c 22 March.
R 21st -
125/125.