

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Rublie **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No.	766	Press Mis.
Dated	2-7-1967.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

2/10/68

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Department,
2nd July 1867.*

Read the following papers :—

No. 17. From the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines, to the Secretary to Government, Military Department ; dated Fort Saint George, 1st June 1867, No. 40.

I have the honor respectfully to solicit the attention of Government to the annexed appeal from the Superintendent, Gun Powder Manufactory, on a matter vitally affecting the health and comfort of the large establishment under his charge ; and, as Colonel Rowlandson has been in communication with the Municipal Commissioners, the question will be best explained by Government having the whole of the papers connected therewith before them.

From Colonel G. ROWLANDSON, Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory, to the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines, Fort Saint George ; dated Madras, 30th May 1867, No. 503.

I have the honor to request you will do me the favor to submit, with as little delay as possible, for the orders of Government, the correspondence herewith forwarded, the subject of which is briefly as follows.

2. Her Majesty's Gunpowder Factory, under my charge, is surrounded, as you are aware, by a plain more or less open, across which on the north the Railway passes, east to west, at about 300 yards, and the branch to the Luggage Terminus, north to south, at about the same distance eastward. This plain is liable after heavy rains to become submerged, and, while drying up afterwards, for several months, emits copious exhalations, which, the soil being uncontaminated hitherto, have not been found deleterious to health, or offensive ; and the Manufactory has been remarkable for its salubrity.

3. The Municipal Commissioners, in their anxiety to preserve the health and comfort of the inhabitants of the town, are at great pains and cost to collect and carry away to remote depositories the sewage and sweepings of the town, but, with a total disregard for the health and comfort of the numerous residents and employes at this Manufactory, have recently selected for one of these depositories the plain on the north and east, shut in between this Factory and the Railways. Extensive trenches are being dug, and are filled with the filthy and noxious sewage, covered over. The stench borne into the Manufactory by the breezes, which have heretofore been welcomed as the most refreshing, from the north and east, is of a sickening character, and cannot be prevented or avoided. The soil, saturated with this sewage, will become during the rains a pestilent and disgusting quagmire, and the noxious vapours therefrom, which will contaminate the atmosphere, cannot but be injurious to the health, as offensive and disgusting to the sense, of all employed here.

4. I have represented the evil to the Commissioners, but without avail ; I, therefore, most respectfully beg to protest most earnestly against its continuance, and to appeal to the Right Honorable the Governor in Council to interpose his authority to protect the servants of Government at this Manufactory from the uncalled for and pernicious evils involved in this scheme, which, if not prevented, will, I am well advised, deprive this Factory of some of its most important and valuable employes, who will not consent to labor on under conditions so prejudicial to all comfort and health, in a climate so trying and unfavorable in itself.

5. As the evil is being daily augmented by the constant additions of cart-loads of sewage, I respectfully submit that this representation may go forward without delay, with a view to its earliest possible discontinuance.

From Colonel G. ROWLANDSON, Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory, to the Municipal Commissioners, Madras ; dated Madras, 20th May 1867, No. 487 (Immediate).

I have the honor to bring to your notice that the public scavengers during the last three or four weeks have been burying cart-loads of sewerage of the town in trenches in a line east from

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2nd July 1867.*

Her Majesty's Gun Powder Factory, in the direction of the branch Railway, within a few yards of the Mills, from which a most offensive stench is conveyed by the sea-breeze into the Manufactory, constituting a nuisance seriously affecting the comfort and health of the numerous employes of the Factory, which I trust you will have the goodness to order to be immediately discontinued.

From the Municipal Commissioners for the Town of Madras, to Colonel G. ROWLANDSON,
Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory; dated Madras, 21st May 1867.

In reply to your letter (marked "immediate"), No. 487, of yesterday, we beg to forward copy of the Sanitary Inspector's (2nd District) report on the nuisance complained of by you, and trust that the measures taken may have the desired effect. Our President purposes visiting the spot to-morrow morning.

REPORT.

With reference to Colonel Rowlandson's letter, No. 487, dated 20th May 1867, I have the honor to report that the sweepings, &c., deposited in the plain between H. M's. Gun Powder Factory and the Railway, is daily buried in pits a yard and a half deep, and properly covered with earth. This morning, I carefully inspected the spot, and found that the rubbish was buried as usual. Since last week I stationed a Peon at this place, to see that there was no irregularity in depositing the rubbish, and I have again given strict orders that every care should be taken to prevent any nuisance to the neighbourhood; but, at the same time, I must allow that an offensive smell will no doubt prevail when the carts are at work morning and evening.

MADRAS, 21st May 1867.

(Signed) R. C. WHEELER,
Sanitary Inspector.

MUNICIPAL COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE,
MADRAS, 22nd May 1867.

MY DEAR COLONEL,

I inspected, yesterday morning, the nuisance complained of by you in the Rubbish Depot newly formed near the Powder Mills, but I cannot very well understand, except when the carts are actually depositing the rubbish, any smell reaching the Powder Manufactory; and even when they are depositing, if during a land wind, the smell would be blown over the Railway, and with the sea-breeze at present it should not bring the smell in that direction; with a north-east monsoon, it would be different, but at that time the whole place will be under water, and unavailable as a rubbish depot. I walked up to where they were burying in trenches 4½ feet deep. These when full are covered over, and certainly, when to leeward, at the end near the Railway, the smell was bad; but the pits had not been properly covered; the ground is very hard, and large clods of earth allow of the noxious gases escaping. As I walked along it towards the Gun Powder Manufactory, the smell was not near so bad;—but I grant these rubbish depots are a very great evil, and I wish I could see my way to get rid of them. The Peon in charge said a cart full of urine and liquid sewage from the Gun Carriage Manufactory came there every day, and the man in charge distributed the contents by drawing the bung out of the cart before he reached the depot. I have asked Colonel Hutchinson to give orders about this, and I shall always be glad of any information you can give me as regards municipal nuisances and shortcomings.

To Colonel G. Rowlandson.

Yours truly,
(Signed) C. DENISON,
President, Municipal Commission.

MY DEAR COLONEL,

POWDER MILLS,
22nd May 1867.

I thank you for your note of the 22nd May, but the question it refers to affects my daily official life, and the comfort and health of my people at this Factory, too deeply and vitally to allow of my discussing it on the grounds you take up. The mere fact of selecting the immediate

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environs of a large Government Factory, employing nearly 200 hands of all classes, to make a depository of the filthy sewage of the town—in other words, to convert the now healthy plain around us into a pestilent noxious quagmire—and so subject the unfortunate and numerous employes at the Mills to all the evils so carefully and expensively removed out of reach of the inhabitants of the town, is, in my view, a scheme so extraordinary and unjustifiable that I cannot understand its having ever been seriously entertained now, any more than heretofore. But, being so, it would be idle in me to discuss its effects with reference merely to the winds that blow, and the varying degrees to which it may distress us at one season more than another; and I have no alternative but to appeal to the Government to prevent such a deplorable evil, which, if persevered in, will deprive me of some of my most valuable and important employes, and add to the necessarily trying duties of this Manufactory the grievous aggravation of disgusting stenches and a pestilent atmosphere, from which I have been heretofore free.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) G. ROWLANDSON.

To Colonel Denison.

From Colonel G. ROWLANDSON, Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory, to the Municipal Commissioners, Madras; dated Madras, 29th May 1867, No. 501.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your reply to my previous letter, bearing date 21st May 1867, forwarding your Sanitary Inspector's report (in which he states "I must allow that an offensive smell will, no doubt, prevail when the carts are at work morning and evening"), and on the following day I was favored with a note from Colonel Denison, your President, who was good enough to inspect personally the spot complained of, and who informs me that "to leeward the smell was bad; the pits had not been properly covered; the ground is very hard, and the large clods of earth allow of the noxious gases escaping." For five months in the year, from October to February, the wind passes from the north-east directly over the plain, now being polluted by the trenches filled with the disgusting sewerage of the town, which already have extended southward abreast of the south entrance of the Manufactory, so bringing also every direct sea breeze under the same conditions. It is admitted by your own official that a bad smell cannot be avoided, at least every morning and every evening, and the soil of the whole plain surrounding the Manufactory on its north and east, over which its most refreshing and salutary breezes pass, is in course of being saturated with the black pestiferous sewerage of the town. During the monsoon this plain, when the rains are heavy, becomes frequently more or less submerged; and, as it dries up after the close of the rains, the exhalations from the contaminated waters and mire cannot but be as injurious to health, as destructive to all comfort.

2. These sweepings and sewerage are, at great expense, collected and carried forth to depositories as far removed as possible from the inhabited parts of towns; and I am persuaded that, while such pains and expense are incurred to preserve the health and comfort of the inhabitants, it cannot be the intention of Government that a large Government Manufactory like this, where its European and East Indian employes are required constantly to live, and where nearly 200 people are working daily from day-light to evening, should thus be subjected to the very evils and dangers which it is sought to remove from the inhabitants!

3. My attention to the nuisance was attracted by the complaints of my subordinates, who were sickened, on the day of my writing, while at their work! I was not before aware of such a scheme being in contemplation or commenced, and at once addressed you, in the full hope and expectation that the grievance complained of would be at once arrested; but as no such relief appears to be contemplated on your part, and having been respectfully informed by some of my most respectable European employes that no consideration will induce their continuance at work in the Manufactory (which has heretofore been remarkable for its salubrity) under conditions so destructive of all comfort and at so serious a risk to their health, it becomes my duty at once to represent the case to Government, and earnestly to solicit the interposition of its authority to protect its servants from the infliction of a nuisance of so serious a nature, which, up to the present time, has never been before attempted, or, I suppose, thought of!

4. Pending the decision of Government on the matter, I have most respectfully to request that you will be good enough to suspend the continued destruction of the salubrity of the neighbourhood of the Manufactory.

From the Municipal Commissioners for the Town of Madras, to Colonel G. ROWLANDSON, Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory; dated Madras, 31st May 1867.

We have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 501, of the 29th instant, on the subject of the nuisance complained of by yourself and subordinates in the Gun Powder Manufactory, owing to the effluvia arising from the deposit of street sweepings and rubbish in pits on the ground between the Powder Factory and Canal.

2. The rubbish of a portion of the 2nd District used to be deposited in pits behind Burghall's stables; this ground, however, could hold no more, and another place had to be found.

3. For that now in use, we have the sanction of the Sanitary Commissioner, and though we deeply regret the annoyance caused to yourself and subordinates, and are fully alive to the extreme nuisance occasioned by these depots, we cannot undertake to put a stop to the depositing of rubbish in the present depot, as requested by you in the last paragraph of your letter.

4. A certain quantity has to be carried away daily, and we must, therefore, have some place of deposit. A plan, however, has been put before the Board by our Civil Engineer to day, for the burning of a great portion of the rubbish, and we trust in time we may be able to abate in some degree what we fully allow is a nuisance. We are very willing indeed that reference should be made by you to Government on this subject; for, as they have refused to give us a special grant for conservancy purposes, unless they are prepared to take upon themselves some portion of the burden of the Municipality in their sanitation and conservancy measures, which have to be carried out for so large a body of Government servants and employes, we cannot with the limited means at our disposal hold ourselves responsible for the evils which we foresee, and which are only too likely to occur this hot weather.

Referred to the Public Department.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
5th June 1867.

(Signed) R. HAMILTON, Col.,

Dy. Secy to Government.

Referred to the Collector of the Madras District, for report whether the land in question is the property of Government, or of the Municipal Commission.

FORT SAINT GEORGE,
11th June 1867.

(Signed) F. BRANDT,

Ag. Under Secretary to Govt.

No. 18. From the Acting Collector of the Madras District, to the Chief Secretary to Government, Fort Saint George; dated Sydapet, 24th June 1867, No. 124.

Adverting to the Government endorsement, of the 11th instant, on the accompanying letter from the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines, I have the honor to state that the land therein referred to is the property of Government, forming part of the western esplanade. It was, however, made over to the Municipal Commissioners of Madras, with certain other lands, under G. O., No. 4117, of the 24 December 1863, and No. 382, of the 3rd February 1864.

2. The Deputy Collector of Madras informs me that the Tahsildar of Madras visited the spot on the 17th instant, with Colonel Rowlandson, the Superintendent of the Gun Powder Manufactory, and reported that the nuisance complained of would be severely felt by the people in the Manufactory and its neighbourhood when the sea breeze sets in.

3. The sites where the rubbish is buried is shown in the accompanying rough sketch prepared in the Deputy Collector's Office.

No. 19. ORDER THEREON, 2nd July 1867, No. 766.

The piece of land which is used as a deposit for night-soil, near the Gunpowder Manufactory, is, it appears, the property of Government, being part of the western esplanade which was handed over for conservancy purposes to the Municipal Commissioners in 1864.

2. It is observed, however, that the esplanades, and some small tracts without the walls given over to the Commissioners at the same time, had been up to that time utilized as grazing grounds only, and were handed over to be enclosed and protected, the rents being foregone in favor of the Municipality.

3. The Commissioners ought certainly to have consulted with Colonel Rowlandson before using a spot close to a large and important Government Factory, for purposes which cannot but affect the comfort and the health of all engaged in the building. The site seems, moreover, to have been otherwise ill-selected, for it appears that, in the rains, this piece of ground is submerged. Both in showery weather, and after the heavier rains, the place must, therefore, as represented by Colonel Rowlandson, become an intolerable nuisance to the neighbourhood, notwithstanding that such precautions as are possible may be taken; and in the rainy season the Commissioners would, under any circumstances, be compelled to select some other spot.

4. The Government direct, therefore, that the Commissioners will desist from using this part of the western esplanade as a deposit for night soil and sewage.
(True Extract).

Acting Chief Secretary.

To the Inspector General of Ordnance and Magazines.

- " Municipal Commissioners for the Town of Madras.
- " Collector of the Madras District, with plan returned.
- " Military Department.

Exd. J. H. Burns.

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Read the following letters.

From the Inspector General of } Hereafter 1st June 1867 N^o 40
Ordnance and Magazines }
— " — By Collector, Madras } — " — 24th — " — 1864.
District }

Order 2^d July 1867 N^o 706-

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3 The Commissioners ought certainly to have consulted with Colonel Rowlandson before using a spot close to a large and important Government Factory, for purposes which cannot but affect the comfort and the health of all engaged in the building: the site seems moreover to have been otherwise ill-selected, for it appears that in the rains this piece of ground is submerged: both in showery weather, and after the heavier rains the place must therefore, as represented by Colonel Rowlandson, become an intolerable

nuisance

nuisance to the neighbourhood, notwithstanding that such precautions as are possible may be taken: and in the rainy season the Commissioners would under any circumstances be compelled to select some other spot.

4 The Government direct therefore that the Commissioners will ~~at once~~ desist from using this part of the Western Esplanade as a deposit for night soil and sewage.

To the Insp. Genl. Ord. & Mag:
Municipal Commr. for the Town of Madras.
Collector of the Madras District.
Military Department.
Despt 6/7
with plan returned

7-10-30 1870

Public 1867. Department.

No. 4107.

PROCEEDINGS OF GOVERNMENT

Dated. 2^d July 1867.

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" " 736 of 1869.
" " 1063 of 1870.

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C 28 June
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