M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 346 Press ~~Mis.~~

175-176

Dated 14-2- 1861.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
14th February 1861.

No. 175. Read the following humble Memorial of Reverend JOHN GRIFFITHS, Chaplain of Vizagapatam, to the Honorable the Governor of Madras in Council :—

SHEWETH,

1. That your Petitioner in the year 1845 entered as an Assistant Chaplain in this Establishment, and having been appointed Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop, proceeded with him to the Neilgherry Hills where he for the most part resided.

2. That his arrangement was that the Memorialist's family should reside in a separate house, and for this purpose a house was provided for his family at Ootacamund.

3. That circumstances led to the prospect of the residence of Memorialist's family becoming continuous, and that eventually one of his relatives could come and reside there permánently, and for this purpose application was made to the then Principal Collector, Mr. Wroughton, for some waste land around his dwelling, which was granted conditionally, but the grant could not be given until the Survey, then begun, should be finished ; but Mr. Wroughton assured the Memorialist that he might proceed on any improvements he chose as there could be no objection to its ultimate grant.

4. That your Memorialist, on the faith of this assurance, proceeded to rebuild his house and improve the land by planting and other operations, among which were the bringing a stream of waste water from a distance round the hills to his land, and which ultimately should run on to the Cantonment for the benefit of the public.

5. That your Memorialist in order to cut a road to his house from the centre of the Cantonment was obliged to purchase from several parties, portions of private land through which the road must pass, if the line at a proper gradient should be adopted for the purpose.

6. That the nature of the ground rendered the accomplishment of this very difficult and expensive, there being several ravines to cross, the hill side very steep, and parties possessing land in such way as to run across the line, a deviation from which would destroy the evenness of the gradient, as well as the security and possibility of the water being carried down to the Cantonment parallel to each other, which was indispensably necessary for security.

7. Both the Commandant of the Hills, Captain Hall, and the Civil Engineer of the District, Captain F. Cotton, were consulted on the subject, and both gave their approbation and highly approved of the line and of the water-course, and, seeing that the latter would be turned to benefit the public, Captain Cotton proposed to assist by recommending that Government should aid your Memorialist by a grant of public money, but on Mr. Wroughton's departure for England, as well as Captain Cotton's absence soon after, this was forgotten—and the land was purchased, the water-course and road were cut at the sole expense of your Memorialist.

8. That subsequently several Engineers in succession to Captain Cotton, examined and reported on the road, and among them the following :—Major Ludlow, Captain Ouchterlony, Captain Ludlow, Captain Francis, Captain Reilly, some of whom wrote officially to the Collector, recommending him to take the line on the list of public roads and remunerate your Memorialist for the expense by an estimate.

9. That at this period Mr. Thomas was Collector, or Acting Principal Collector of the District, and refused to forward their recommendations, pronounced it " steep," and useless, in the face of the professional examination of the line and of their opinions which described it as " excellent " in every point of view, and as forming the *only* good line which could be made to connect the Cantonment of Ootacamund with the north of Ootacamund, Kotagherry, as a draft road, but would be the best and shortest line to lead to the Mysore country instead of the present route *via* Segoor, and form also a level drive for sixteen miles to Kotagherry which latter, having been pointed out and partly traced by me for Captain Cotton that Officer was authorized by the Governor General while residing there to complete at the public expense and which was accordingly done.

10. That the road is now and has been ever since used by the public, that several houses have been built on sites which but for it could not have been approached without difficulty, and that your Memorialist although recommended by parties who saw the injustice of the Collector's obstructions, to shut it up, has not thought it good to adopt that course though perfectly legal, his object being from the first to assist in the developement of the station for the benefit of all.

11. That your Memorialist, though deprived of many documents by the destruction of all his property and house by fire, has no hesitation in resting on the justice of Government to institute an inquiry into the matter, and confidently refers to the correspondence which must be extant in the Offices of the Board of Revenue, the Civil Engineer Coimbatore, the Magistrate of Ootacamund, though lost to your Memorialist; and respectfully demands that the foul insinuations of sordid motives, of inveracity, and the extraordinary assertions made by the Collector which are absolutely untrue, which appear in the subjoined documents,* may be subjected to the scrutiny of any tribunal before which your Memorialist may be called up to state his case and refute them.

* *Vide letter from E. B. Thomas, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to Board of Revenue (appended) dated the 30th August 1859, No. 165, which I can only call in truth a wilful falsification of facts.*

12. That your Memorialist now respectfully leaves the several questions in the matter in the hands of Government, and appeals to their Honorable Council for redress. And your Memorialist will ever pray.

No. 176. ORDER THEREON, 14th February 1861, No. 346.

Referred, with enclosures, to the Ootacamund Improvement Committee, who will report as to the circumstances of the formation of the road and its public utility, as well as to Mr. Griffith's claim to compensation.

(Signed) J. D. BOURDILLON,
Secretary to Government.

Revenue 1861 Dept.
Pro: of Govt for February.

No 327

From Revd John
Griffiths Chaplain of
Vizagapatam -

Dated 14th February 1861
Rd 6th
5 Enclo.

Claims compensation
for certain road construct-
-ed at his own expense
on the Kielgherries -

From the Secy to the Cotacamund
Improvement Committee D/ 18th May 1861
C. No 1210 Lodged -
From Do 2nd July /61 Gs 1608 Rs
" 26" 3767

With an order

Mis: Pro: 11th May 1861 No 7.

No 346. 11th February

No 346

Referred, with enclosures,
to the Ootacamund Improvement
Committee, who will report as to the cir-
cumstances of the formation of the
road and its public utility, as well as
to Mr Griffiths claim to compensation.

Fort St Geo.
14th February 1861.

7 Copies
To the Secy to the Ootacamund Improvement
Committee with 5 Orig. Enclos. List Despts 5
1 Copy to Reverend J Griffiths

No 175 & 176