

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.**Government of Madras.***Revenue* **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 2124

~~Press~~
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5-6

Dated

1-10-1862

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
1st October 1862.*

No. 5. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Military Department, dated 26th September 1862:—

Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel C. H. DRURY, Commanding Madras Volunteer Guards, to the Secretary to Government, Military Department, dated Fort Saint George, — September 1862, No. 87.

SIR,

Letter No. 56, dated 4th August 1862.
From the Inspector General of Ordnance and
Magazines, to the Secretary to Govern-
ment, Military Department, regarding an
indent of the O. C. I. V. G. on the Grand
Arsenal for 120 Sappers' Carbines (Rifles.)

1. I have the honor to return the correspondence as per margin, referred for my observations on the 2nd current.

2. Allowing the objection in paragraph 2 of the Inspector General's letter to be one of mere form; as I presume, that, if the Arms indented for be in the Arsenal, and

no demand exist which may interfere with their issue to the Volunteer Guards, Government would be disposed to pass an order directing the supply. I will at once proceed to remark upon the first clause of paragraph 3, in the conditions of which I fully concur.

2. It is obvious that an Arm, the efficiency of which depends so much upon the correct adjustment of its parts, would require a more than ordinary amount of care for its preservation. No Rifle would therefore be given to any Volunteer without his giving a pledge, that it should be returned into store for inspection whenever he might be called upon to do so. These arms will not be issued *indiscriminately*, and I may be allowed to express my conviction, that a valuable weapon such as the Enfield Rifle, would meet with every care from the parties in whose hands they would be placed.

3. The succeeding paragraphs of the Inspector General's letter are devoted to a quotation from a letter from the General Commanding Centre Division, and a concurrence in the opinion therein expressed.

4. The conditions therein attached to the issue of Rifles to the Madras Volunteer Guards are such as to throw considerable difficulty in the way of putting the corps in possession of a better class of Arm; but, these difficulties are not altogether insurmountable. They are two, the necessity for the services of a Musketry Instructor, and the setting a part of a piece of ground where practice at long ranges may be safely carried on.

5. With regard to the first question, I would observe that in my letter to Government No. 68 of 9th July 1862, I proposed to set apart a certain sum, surplus to the expenses of the corps, to meet the salary of a Musketry Instructor for a limited period. Since submitting the above letter it has been necessary to lay before His Excellency the Governor, certain facts connected with the state of the Quarter Master's accounts, which have led to that Officer being permitted to resign. The necessity for the appointment of a Quarter Master is not apparent; and I would suggest that the combined duties of Adjutant and Quarter Master be performed by the Adjutant, a Non-Commissioned Officer, as at present, being in immediate charge of the Stores, this would at once make the salary of the Quarter Master (Rupees 70) available for a Musketry Instructor; and if to this be added from the surplus Regimental fund, Rupees 30 per mensem; should Government in communication with the Commander-in-Chief be disposed to make the services of a qualified Officer available for this duty, I do not anticipate that any difficulty would be experienced in obtaining an Officer on these terms, possessed of the necessary Certificate of qualification.

6. Lieutenant Vanderzee of the 34th Regiment Light Infantry, who holds a Second Class Hythe Certificate, has notified to me his willingness to accept such an appointment, and would doubtless acquit himself therein with credit.

7. The establishment of an Enfield Rifle Range is a question perhaps not so easily disposed of, and one on which there may be as many diversities of opinion as there are points for consideration. The main objects to be attained appear to be space, the safety of the public during practice, and a non-interference with private property, or public traffic along any frequented thoroughfare.

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8. With these points in view, I have carefully and minutely inspected the ground in the neighbourhood of the Native Infantry Butts, north-west of Black Town, and beg now to forward a survey taken at my request by a guide in the Quarter Master General's Department. The ground surveyed is a long strip of waste land lying to the westward of Cochrane's Canal, perfectly free in its whole length from cultivation of any kind.

9. It is, I believe, considered sufficient for all purposes of Rifle practice at long ranges, that there be a clear space of 2,000 yards in length by a quarter of a mile in breadth. From the Railway embankment following the red line on the plan, the nearest thoroughfare is 2,080 yards. This thoroughfare is a mere foot-way little frequented; but should it be considered advisable, passengers might be warned to keep to the north of the present road-way. On Cotton's Canal there is no traffic, certainly none that would be inconvenienced by a temporary stoppage for an hour or two during practice. I am given to understand that it is only used as a means of removing the filth to a distance from the suburbs of Madras, should this be the case an arrangement might be made with the Municipal Commissioners regulating the hours during which the boats should ply. The minimum width of the ground is 413 yards from the Magazine to Cochrane's Canal, a point where the danger from glancing bullets would be less than along the whole length of the ground. From this it gradually widens to the end of the range.

10. It will be observed that the ground is bounded on the east by Cochrane's Canal, and that along the whole length of the ground marked out for practice, the canal is unbridged. There is therefore neither road nor foot-way across the ground.

11. Eastward of the range for a considerable distance, is an open space of rice cultivation, free from habitation of any kind. It would perhaps be difficult, near any large town, to select a spot so well fitted for a Rifle range from the nature of the ground, the surface of which is loose, sandy, and level; or so peculiarly exempt from the inconveniences attending the neighbourhood of a large and busy population.

12. Pending the decision of Government on the several questions which have come under discussion in this letter, it would be premature to enter upon the subject of the expense of the erection and maintenance of a Butt for Rifle Practice. I shall therefore content myself with remarking that, should Government approve of the proposed plan, any Butt erected on the ground, would become public property available for the practice of Regiments of the Line, as well as Volunteers.

13. Before closing this letter, I would beg to bring to the notice of Government another point which opposes itself to the issue of Rifled Arms to the Madras Volunteer Guards; the objection is hardly substantial, but this appears a favorable opportunity for bringing it under consideration, with a view to its being formally disposed of.

14. The Madras Volunteer Guards were not organized under the rules prescribed in a letter from the Government of India, Home Department, No. 1,931, dated 10th September 1860, but under Act XXIII of 1857. It may consequently be made a matter of question, whether the Corps may be armed with Rifles, and yet not come within the rules laid down for the establishment of Volunteer Rifle Corps. But I cannot discover that any restriction is made with regard to the nature of the Arms to be issued to Volunteer Corps under the Act referred to, which is at the same time much more stringent in its bearing upon the discipline and maintenance of the Regiment, than the rules more recently prescribed.

15. The Corps would not apparently be the less amenable to the rules and provisions of the Act under which it was raised, because in part or wholly armed with Rifles; and it may here be remarked that one Company of the Corps was originally a Rifle Company, but the Rifles with which they were armed, being the long Enfield, could not be conveniently used in exercise in combination with the short Fusils with which the rest of the Corps is armed. They were therefore dispensed with.

16. Moreover, the intention of this Government to arm the best shots in each Company with the short Enfield Rifle was notified to the Government of India in a Memorandum on the Ball Practice of the Corps, which accompanied my letter of the 9th July to Government before quoted.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
1st October 1862.*

Referred to the Revenue Department for information, as to whether the land in question is available for a Rifle Practice Range, and with the previous paper to the Commander-in-Chief for His Excellency's observations.

(Signed) H. MARSHALL, Colonel,
Secretary to Government.

Fort Saint George,
26th September 1862.

No. 6. ORDER THEREON, 1st October 1862, No. 2,124.

Referred to the Collector of Madras, the Commissioner of Police, and the Municipal Commissioners for report on paragraphs 7 to 11 of Colonel Drury's letter. Mr. Cunliffe will submit his reply through the Board of Revenue.

(Signed) T. PYCROFT
Chief Secretary.

India in a Memorandum on the Ball practice
of the Corps, which accompanied my letter of the
9th July to Government before quoted

I have &c
(Sigs) C. H. Drury, Lieut Col
Commanding Madras Volunteer Force

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Fort St. George
26th September 1862

J. Marshall
Secretary to Government

To The Revenue Department.
With a Survey Sketch
(To be returned)

