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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
19th May 1871.*

No. 259. Read the following letter from the Acting Director of Revenue Settlement, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 9th May 1871, No. 924-32:—

I HAVE the honour, in compliance with the Orders of Government, dated 15th March 1871, No. 454, to submit further explanation as regards the Government money stolen by a peon named Annaru Ponkalu, attached to the Cuddapah Settlement Party, and to state that the other peons were suspended until they could find some trace of their fugitive comrade, which they have hitherto failed to do.

2. The Supervisor's further explanation has been received, and I beg to forward a translation thereof. It will be seen that his main line of defence is, that he ordered the peons to sleep at the Taluq Cutcherry during the night in question. This the peons deny, and the facts that no memorandum or anything of the kind was given the peons to show to any taluq official, and that the Supervisor does not cite any one to support his assertion that he gave this order, tend to throw doubt upon this portion of his explanation.

3. In justice to the Supervisor it must, however, be observed that he was merely *accidentally* passing through Muddenapally at the time; that he had neither house nor office there; and that had he not been at Muddenapally on that date, the money would have been delivered to the peons for conveyance to him upon their own responsibility.

4. As mentioned in my former letter, whatever arrangements we may make, it is impossible to help trusting to a considerable extent to these Government messengers. Thus the money sent from my Office to the Supervisor working under me in the Chingleput District, for the payment of his party, is entrusted to two peons upon whose honesty I have to rely.

5. I am sorry to say that no tidings have been heard of the runaway; nevertheless I shall be glad if Government are enabled to take a lenient view of the matter, as regards the Supervisor's responsibility, as he bears a high character both for industry and probity.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From LAKSHMIKANTA ROW, Supervisor and Inspector of the Party, to the Acting Deputy-Director of Revenue Settlement, Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts, dated Muddenapally, 20th April 1871.

I BEG to submit the following explanation in reply to your order of the 20th instant, No. 1.

2. I came to Muddenapally as per order to make known personally certain matters concerning the party. A Gumastah, Vassanta Row, and two peons, Chakalakondadu and Annaru Ponkalu, accompanied me. While at Muddenapally the order for the payment of salaries for the month of December reached me; and the peons I had being considered insufficient, I obtained the services of Avidana Ramulu, a peon attached to the Head Classifier there. I put these three peons in possession of the above money, and ordered them to be careful, to keep together, and to sleep in the Taluq Cutcherry. Vassanta Row told them, on their asking if they might go for their meals, that while one peon went for his food, the other two should remain watching. Had they obeyed these orders the money would not have been stolen, but they did as they liked, and thereby caused the loss. It will be clearly seen from the kyfeat of these peons that this loss arose from no fault on my part.

3. Thinking it would not be proper to keep Government money in a private house, the three peons were ordered, as above stated, to be careful and sleep in the Taluq Cutcherry during the

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night and proceed next morning with the money and reach my Office at Tamballapally. Being on circuit and having no other cash-chest (except the one at Tamballapally), I was unable, according to practice, to secure the money in a box, seal, and place the same in the Taluq Cutcherry or Police Station. My cash-chest contained money, and was in the Office at Tamballapally, and the practice of transmitting cash from place to place was only by means of peons, and not by sending it in a box.

4. There were no other peons with me, the only two I had having been given up on account of the money, and as both these three and other peons who had been similarly in the habit of conveying cash had acted trustworthily hitherto, there was no occasion for me to inquire where they were sleeping. If it is true that peons Kondadu and Ramudu had informed Gumastah Vassanta Row that night that the fugitive Ponkalu was not to be found, he would have told me of it, and they have stated in their kyfeat that this circumstance was not made known to me. It was only in the morning when the runaway peon's landlord brought the belt and badge that I was aware of the fact, and took measures by informing the Police to apprehend the fugitive.

5. The Government state that I should have retained the money for the night, but not having a sufficient number of peons to guard it, I gave the necessary orders that the peons should remain with it in the Taluq Cutcherry, and it was on account of their not abiding by my orders that the money was lost, and not on account of any want of care on my part.

From the above it will be seen that I am in no way to be blamed, and beg therefore you will obtain the permission of Government to relieve me from being responsible for the amount.

No. 260. ORDER THEREON, 19th May 1871, No. 885.

Miscellaneous.

GOVERNMENT adhere to the opinion expressed in G. O. 15th March last, that Supervisor Lakshmikanta Row is

much to blame for not having retained the money, which he drew on the evening of the 18th February, under his own immediate charge until it was necessary for the peons to start, and there is no proof that he ordered the peons to sleep in the Taluq Cutcherry.

2. At the same time they do not feel justified in calling on him to refund the money which would, in any case, have been entrusted to the peon's care; and looking to the recommendation on his behalf made by the Acting Director, they hope that a severe reprimand will make him more careful in future.

3. As to the peons, Chokala Kondadu, Avadhana Ramudu, and Pakeer Sahib, it is quite possible they were implicated in the success of the absconded peon: the money was entrusted to them conjointly, and they divided it for their own convenience; and it was their business to see each that the others were with them with the money, and Government direct that until the fraud is cleared up they shall not be re-employed.

4. Government leave it to the Acting Director to decide what punishment ought to be inflicted on the Gumasta Vassanta Row.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Acting Director of Revenue Settlement.
,, the Accountant-General.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Pr. of the Madras Govt
Under date the 19th May 1871

Read the following
letter from the A Director
of Revenue Settlement

Reporting further on
the Supervisor's responsibility
in regard to the money
stolen by late Peon Aravoo
Ponkalu -

M.B. 9th May 1871
No 260
32

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Avadhana

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 ment ought to be in-
 flicted on the Gurmasta
 Vasant Rao.

7B

13 Letter to Dr. J. C. Lillie 20
6 ———— Dr. J. C. Lillie

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[Handwritten signature]

No. 259-260

Relation to the
Army, &c. &c.
by a Pen in the
Sott. Dept.

Handwritten signature or initials, possibly "H. G. M." and "D. S."