

505.  
*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,  
23rd March 1872.*

No. 280. Read the following Proceedings of the Madras Government in the Public Works Department, dated 20th March 1872, No. 176 :—

From the Superintending Engineer, 2nd Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Camp at Parikeed, 18th December 1871, No. 128.

IN reply to G. O., No. 23, 6th December 1871, I have the honour to observe that, as Government have forbidden, during several years, the retention of any wood in stock, I have had no opportunity of judging as to the best means of seasoning timber.

From the Acting Superintending Engineer, 5th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Shatiatope, 2nd February 1872, No. 238.

I HAVE the honour, in reply to G. O., No. 23, of 6th December 1871, on the subject of seasoning timber, to state that I have had no experience permitting me to offer anything very original on the subject ; indeed, the keeping of " stock " is so much discouraged that the officers of the department purchase seasoned timber just as they require it, and it cannot, therefore, be expected that they should have much acquaintance with the subject.

2. The Memorandum by Mr. Molesworth, forwarded with the above-quoted G. O., is, I think, worthy of special attention, more especially paragraph 4 ; indeed, I would be disposed to endorse almost every word of the Memorandum.

3. So far as my own views are concerned, I would say there seems little doubt that—

*First.*—Natural seasoning is best.

*Second.*—All artificial modes of seasoning are more or less injurious, more especially those in which are used preparations which exert chemical action on the fibres and structure of the wood.

*Third.*—The seasoning should be completed, as far as possible, before the log is sawn into scantlings, and care should be taken that the water in which the seasoning is carried on is running and as pure as possible, also that the log is protected from the contact of the atmosphere by total immersion, so as to prevent oxydation.

*Fourth.*—Rapid seasoning of scantlings is very detrimental, producing changes in the fibrous structure, which diminish the strength of the timber.

*Fifth.*—If circumstances render advisable impregnation with some foreign substance, it appears to me that oil in some form or other is the least objectionable as it has no chemical action, and it is, indeed, a well-known fact that the timbers of ships that have been employed in the whale trade or of *fishing* boats last for a very long time.

4. The only original suggestion I have had is from one of the Range Officers, who thinks it would be worthwhile to place the scantlings in sand warmed by hot air or water-pipes. He conceives that the sand would absorb an

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equal amount of moisture all over the planks; that its weight would tend to assist the squeezing out of the moisture and prevent any tendency to warp, while the moisture, as fast as removed from the wood, would be evaporated by the hot air-pipes and escape through the sand. The experiment is one that could be very easily tried.

From Captain J. O. HASTED, R. E., Officiating Superintending Engineer, 6th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Tanjore, 8th January 1872, No. 810.

I HAVE the honour, with reference to G. O., No. 23, dated 6th December 1871, to make the following remarks on the subject of seasoning timber.

2. In the districts that I have been employed in, Moulmein timber is almost exclusively used, and, as we are unable to keep any stock of timber in hand and the demand is very uncertain, we are obliged to buy in the market wood which I am certain is not half-seasoned, and the result may be seen in the cracking and warping of many of the beams in existing public buildings. So long as we are obliged to purchase timber in the open market for any building that is to be constructed only as soon as the estimate for that building is sanctioned, we must use unseasoned timber and expect to find the results which we notice at present.

3. The remedy for this evil is either the establishment of Government timber-yards as near as possible to the Moulmein Forests, where the timber can all be seasoned and supplied to Madras and the Coast Districts as indented for, or the establishment, at each seaport where Moulmein timber is usually landed, of a yard where timber could be kept in stock and supplied to the works after being seasoned. I think the latter plan might be adopted at Madras, and at some other ports where the demand for timber is likely to be large, with advantage, and all Government works in the neighbourhood supplied from the yard. The cost of the timber would be enhanced, of course; but the advantage of using seasoned in place of unseasoned timber would warrant slightly increased rates for wood-work, and when the demand is considerable the increase of rate would be only trifling.

4. The establishment of timber-yards near the hill forests where timber could be seasoned and supplied to this department would be very desirable. The difficulty in drawing the supply of wood required on our works from the Forest Department seems to be the uncertainty of the demand; this must always exist, but I should imagine that when the system is working well there would be no difficulty in finding a sale for the seasoned timber.

5. The method to be adopted in seasoning timber in this country should, I think, be unartificial, as the only advantage to be gained by artificial seasoning would be some saving in time, while it would entail the employment of skilled labour and be more costly, though the natural seasoning is stated by Mr. Molesworth to be the best. Having had so little experience in the preparation of timber, I have much hesitation in giving an opinion on the subject; but it seems to me that the arrangement of logs and planks proposed by Mr. Molesworth is preferable to that proposed by Major Pearson, the object being to keep as much of

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the log or plank as possible from contact with any other substance, and in all cases to keep the butt end downwards but not in contact with the ground. I imagine the climate of the Eastern Coast would be very favourable for seasoning timber after immersion in water, the climate being dry and the variations in temperature inconsiderable. The length of time that it may be necessary to dry the planks in order to season them must depend greatly on the climate, and experience in different localities only will decide this.

From the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to the Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madura, 2nd February 1872, No. 4,293.

IN reference to G. O., dated 6th December 1871, No. 23, calling for an expression of my opinion on the subject of natural seasoning of timber, I have the honour to observe that I prefer the arrangements proposed by Mr. Molesworth to those described by the Officiating Inspector-General of Forests.

2. The suggestion of the latter-mentioned officer, however, regarding the construction of sheds appears to me of the first importance, for if adopted the drying would no doubt be more regular and the loss by splitting would consequently be reduced. At the same time, as these sheds would have to be constructed, it is presumed, with thatched roofs, the danger from fire would be considerable. But with ordinary precautions this risk might be reduced to a minimum.

G. O., 17th November 1871, No. 1,960.  
" 13th March 1872, No. 83.

TRANSFERRED to the Revenue Department with reference to the Orders marginally noted.

2. The Officers of the Department of Public Works have generally had but little opportunity of making themselves acquainted with the principles of the processes used for seasoning timber, as it has been the custom of late years to discourage the accumulation of stocks of that material, whether in logs or scantlings. Those officers who have replied up to the present time to the reference made to them appear, however, to concur generally in the views expressed by the Consulting Engineer for State Railways in preference to those of the Officiating Inspector-General of Forests.

3. The observations made by Captain Hasted in reference to the difficulty in procuring seasoned timber for current work as required, and the use in consequence of wood which is imperfectly prepared, as also the suggestions of that officer for the formation of Government depôts on the coast, will receive further consideration in this department.

No. 281.

ORDER THEREON, 23rd March 1872, No. 505.

Forests, No. 14.

ORDERED that these reports be forwarded to the Government of India in continuation of letter dated 21st March 1872, No. 490.

RR. Read the book No 128.  
S.W. Dept, dated 20 March 1872

Superintending Engineer's  
Office 2nd Division  
Camp Parikar 18 Dec 71



From

Colonel F. J. Moberly R.E.  
Superintending Engineer 2nd Div

To,

Colonel J. Carpendale R.E.  
Secretary to Government  
Public Works Department.

Sir,

In reply to G.O. No 23. 6<sup>th</sup>  
December 1871. I have the honor to observe  
that as Government have forbidden dur-  
-ring several years the retention of any  
wood in stock I have had no oppor-  
-tunity of judging as to the best means  
of seasoning timber -

I have the honor to be  
Sir,

Your Most Obedt Servant  
F. Moberly Colonel R.E.

Superintending Engineer 2nd Div

No 810



Supr's office to Division.  
Saurjore — 8<sup>th</sup> — January 1872.

From,

Captain J. O. Hasted R.E.  
Offg. Supr. Engineer to Division.

To,

Colonel J. Carpendale. R.E.  
Secretary to Govt. D. P. W.  
Fort Saint George.

Sir,

I have the honor, with reference to G.O. No 23, dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 1871, to make the following remarks on the subject of seasoning timber.

2 — In the districts that I have been employed in, Moulmein timber is almost exclusively used and as we are unable to keep any stock of timber in hand, and the demand is very uncertain, we are obliged to buy in the market, wood which I am certain is not half seasoned & the result may be seen in the cracking & warping of many of the beams in existing Public Buildings. So long as we are obliged

P. H. 1871. Hasted

No 6138.

The duty Engineer

to

The Secretary to

Govt. D. P. W.

at Fort

St. George

2/18

December 1871

Remarks that as

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only will decide this.

I have the honor to be  
Sir,

Your Most Obedt Servt

John A. R. Capt. R.

Offg Supg Engg & Div

P. W. 1872 Depauli  
From No 146.  
The Offg Supt Infy  
Sicily & Co

To, The Secretary to  
Govt. D. & W.  
1 Int Saint George  
Rev-964/72.

Dated 8<sup>th</sup> } January 72.  
Received 11<sup>th</sup> }  
No. 810.

Reporting with re-  
ference to G.O. No. 23,  
dated 6<sup>th</sup> December 71.  
on the Subject of Season-  
ing Planks & timber.

No 4293

Superintg Engineers Office S.D.  
Madura 2 February 1872

From

Lieut. Colonel N. A. Roberts R.E.  
Superintg Engineer S.D.

To

Colonel J. Harpendale R.E.  
Secretary to Government S.D.

Sir,

In reference to G.O. dated  
6<sup>th</sup> December 1871, No 23, calling for  
an expression of my opinion on  
the subject of natural seasoning  
of timber, I have the honor to  
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to those described by the Officiating  
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same time, as these sheds would  
have to be constructed, it is  
presumed, with thatched roofs,  
the danger from fire would be  
considerable. But with ordinary  
precautions this risk might be  
reduced to a minimum.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your Most Obedt servant.

Richd. Robert Lieut. Col. R.E.  
Superintg Engineer & D.

Comp. P.S.

P Oct 11

Miss. 6th Aug 1823

P. M. 1872 Oct 11

From No 621.

The Duke of Burg.

To Mr. D. D. D.

The very Hon.

Mr. D. D.

Oct 11 1872

Recd 6th Feb 1872

Nov 9 1872

Each received two  
news on the pub  
fect of natural  
decoration of  
timber.

Revenue 1872. Dep't.  
N<sup>o</sup>. 964.

Proceedings of the Govt.  
P. W. Dep't.

Dated 20<sup>th</sup> 2 March 72  
Received 20<sup>th</sup>

C-4 N<sup>o</sup>. 176—

Reports from the Supp.  
Engineers 2<sup>d</sup>, 5<sup>d</sup>, 6<sup>d</sup> & 8<sup>d</sup>  
Divisions, on the subject  
of seasoning timber

S. O. No 505-23 March  
1872

N<sup>o</sup>. 280

Forest



N<sup>o</sup>. 505.

(1)

Proceedings of the Madras Government.  
Under date the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1872.

Read the following Proceed-  
ings of Govt. P. W. Dep't.

Transferring reports from the  
Superintending Engineers 2<sup>d</sup>, 5<sup>d</sup>,  
6<sup>d</sup> & 8<sup>d</sup> Divisions on the subject  
of seasoning timber.

H. E. 20 March 1872. N<sup>o</sup>. 176.

Ordered that these  
reports be forwarded to the  
Govt. of India in continuation  
of letter dated 21 March 1872  
No 490.  
2. Captain Hasted's  
observations on the subject  
of Govt. Timber depots  
will be referred to the  
Conservator of Forests  
for his remarks.

L. H.

24. Pub. W. Dep't. Despt. 25 March 72  
13. Conservator of Forests

24. Pub. W. Dep't.

No 280-281

Report about sea  
seasoning timber

7 copies  
despatched  
25 March 72



RD  
23 March 72

#506.  
To the Secretary to the Govt of India  
Dep of Agri. Rea & Comm  
(Forests). —

Sir

In continuation  
of my letter dated 21<sup>st</sup>  
March 1872 No 490, I  
am directed to forward  
herewith the margin-  
ally noted reports from  
Officers of the V. W. Dept  
relative to the subject  
of seasoning planks  
and timber generally.  
Further reports will  
be transmitted as re-  
ceived. —

[Signature]

Supd Insp. 2<sup>nd</sup> Div.  
Do 5<sup>th</sup> Div.  
Do 6<sup>th</sup> do  
Do 8<sup>th</sup> do

Let

No 282

Subject of Index

Des / on