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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue — DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	2781	Press. / Mis.
Dated	17-9-1877	197 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Y/2781

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

17th September 1877, No. 2,781.

Famine Relief.

Read the following paper:—

No. 356. From C. J. KNOX, Esq., Special Assistant Collector in charge of Kurnool, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 4th September 1877, No. 821.

I HAVE the honor to forward for order a letter (in original) from Major Thomas, lately transferred from Bellary to this district on famine duty, who reported his arrival here on the evening of the 31st.

2. I request that in the event of Major Thomas being sent back to Military duty another officer may be appointed to this district in his place.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Major E. H. THOMAS, Madras Staff Corps, to R. DAVIDSON, Esq., Acting Collector of Kurnool, dated Kurnool, 3rd September 1877.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of G.O., No. 2,518-A, dated 17th August 1877.

2. In my explanatory letter of the 29th July to the Collector of Bellary I omitted to state a very important item regarding the vagrants whom I took upon myself to deal with summarily. In my hurry to refute the distorted account of the affair, I failed to point out that the mild caning of certain railway thieves took place over their clothes, and not after the manner of "a magisterial sentence," as it has been made to appear by the introduction of those words; and this I cannot but think will be held still further to extenuate that which in the order above referred to is designated "thoughtless and hasty" but "not cruel" action on my part: action, in short, which reduces me to only the Kurnool standard of qualification for famine work.

3. The same order lays down that the practice was "objectionable and most irregular;" the idea intended to be conveyed being, I presume, that the practice was irregular, and in consequence of such irregularity objectionable; or, in other words, as stated further on in the same order, that "the course pursued was unjustifiable." Assuming this my reading of the order to be in accordance with its spirit, I arrive at the (to me) somewhat disturbing conclusion that no allowance is to be made for a most exceptional state of affairs, but that a rigid application of the strict letter of the law is applicable to any Famine Officer who, in the face of such circumstances as occurred in my case, is sufficiently public-spirited to use his discretion within reasonable bounds.

4. Further, if the matter is to be regarded from this point of view, I beg respectfully to point out how thoroughly unjustifiable theoretically was another phasis of my famine duties in Bellary, viz., the systematic deportation to relief-works of the immigrants, of which piece of illegality, nevertheless, not a single word has been written!! Nine-tenths of these people would not have gone out had they known I had no right to force them out by means of Police-men, Peons, and Relief Inspectors. True, that the cholera rate in Bellary was kept under by these means, and that as Municipal Vice-President I was in a position to invariably trace all fresh outbreaks of this epidemic to immigrants, but what of that, where a strict adherence to the letter of the law was to be paramount? These persons were British subjects, and the act of deportation was as distinctly illegal as if, upon grounds of expediency, it had been applied to Sabaputhy and the other fellow.

5. Since this affair began I have discovered that a Municipal Chairman of a Sub-Committee is the brother of Sabaputhy, and as I have, as Vice-President, more than once given offence in this immaculate quarter by a strict adherence to rules, it becomes conceivable that municipal as well as other motives underlie the recent agitation against me in Bellary, an agitation which this my ignominious transfer to Kurnool is, so I learn, looked upon as crowning with complete success. It is not for me to point out the deplorable moral effect produced by allowing agitators of this description to find themselves able to dispose successfully of such public servants as incur their disapproval, and I have already disclaimed personal feeling in the matter.

6. In a letter, dated 28th July, the Collector of Bellary was so good as to express satisfaction with the successful manner in which my famine duties had thitherto been conducted, and I beg further to invite attention to my zeal and willingness and knowledge how to accommodate myself to an exceptional state of affairs, as proved by the fact that upon Mr. Howe's departure in May, I made no difficulty about serving virtually under Mr. Kisch, a Civilian of four years' standing to my twenty-one years' service. I presume this will not be expected of me in the Kurnool District. The fact is that when without solicitation of mine I was offered temporary employment in the Revenue Department, I erroneously supposed it was only until such time as I should cease to be an unemployed or general duty officer. I now find that Majors of my standing, and even junior to me, are being posted to regimental appointments, while I am being passed over. My prospects in the Military Department are thus being sacrificed to this temporary, and by no means dignified, position in the Revenue.

7. Government have been good enough to express an assurance that I "will in future avoid any similar thoughtless orders;" to this assurance I am most anxious to give effect, and I therefore venture most respectfully to solicit the still further favor of being allowed to return to military duty.

No. 357. ORDER THEREON, 17th September 1877, No. 2,781.

Miscellaneous.

MAJOR THOMAS' services are replaced at the disposal of the Military Department at his own request.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of Kurnool.
,, the Military Department.
,, the Accountant-General.

Exd. A. Grubert.

2/2781

Kurnool
3rd September 1877.

Cur 97/

From
Major C. B. Thomas
M. Staff Corps

To
The Acting Collector
Kurnool

Sir
I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of G.O. No 2518 A. dated 17th August 1877.

II. In my explanatory letter of the 29th July to the Collector of Bellary, I omitted to state the vagrants whom I took upon myself to deal with summarily: In my hurry to refute the distorted account of the affair, I failed to point out that the mild caning of certain railway thieves took place over their clothes, and not after the manner of "a magisterial sentence" as it has been made to appear by the introduction of those words; and this I cannot but think will be held still further to exculpate that which in the order above referred to is designated "thoughtless and hasty" but "not cruel" action on my part: action in short, which

reduce it me to only the Kurnool standard of qualification for famine work.

III. The same order says down that the practice was "objectionable and most irregular"; the idea intended to be conveyed being, I presume, that the practice was irregular, and in consequence of such irregularity, objectionable; or in other words as stated further on in the same order, that "the course pursued was unjustifiable". Assuming this my reading of the order to be in accordance with its spirit, I arrive at the (to me) somewhat disturbing conclusion that no allowance is to be made for a most exceptional state of affairs, but that a rigid application of the strict letter of the law is applicable to any famine officer who, in the face of such circumstances as occurred in my case, is sufficiently public-spirited to use his discretion within reasonable bounds.

IV Further, if the matter is to be regarded from this point of view, I beg respectfully to point out how thoroughly unjustifiable theoretically, was another phase of my famine duties in Bellary: viz. the systematic deportation to relief works of the immigrants,

of which piece of illegality, nevertheless, not a single word had been written !! Nine tenths of these people would not have come out had they known I had no right to force them out by means of policemen, provost, and relief inspectors. True, that the cholera rate in Bellary was kept under by these measures, and that as Municipal Vice President I was in a position to invariably trace all such outbreaks of this epidmic to immigrants, but what of that, where a strict adherence to the letter of the law was to be paramount? The persons were British subjects, and the act of deportation was as distinctly illegal as if upon grounds of expediency, it had been applied to Sabapathy and the other fellow.

V. Since this affair began I have discovered that a municipal Chairman of a sub-committee is the brother of Sabapathy, and as I have as Vice President more than once given offence in this immaculate quarter by a strict adherence to rules, it becomes

conceivable that municipal, as well as other motives underlie the recent agitation against me in Bellary, an agitation which this my promotion to transfer to Kurnool is, so I learn, looked upon as crowning with complete success. It is not for me to point out the deplorable moral effect produced by allowing agitators of this description to find themselves able to dispose successfully of such public servants as incur their disapproval, and I have already disclaimed personal feeling in the matter.

VI. In a letter dated 28th July the Collector of Bellary used words as to express satisfaction with the successful manner in which my famine duties had hitherto been conducted, and I beg further to invite attention to my zeal and willingness and to my knowledge how to accommodate myself to an exceptional state of affairs, as proved by the fact that upon Mr Howe's departure in May, I made no difficulty about serving virtually under Mr Risch, a civilian of four years standing to my twenty one years service. I presume this will not be expected of me in the Kurnool district. The fact

is that when without solicitation of mine, I was offered temporary employment in the Revenue Department, I erroneously supposed it was only until such time as I should cease to be an unemployed, or General Duty, officer. I now find that Majors of my standing and even junior to me are being posted to regimental appointments, while I am being passed over. My prospects in the Military department are thus being sacrificed to this temporary, and by no means dignified, position in the Revenue.

VII. Government have been good enough to express an assurance that I "will in future avoid any similar thoughtless orders;" to this assurance I am most anxious to give effect, and I therefore venture most respectfully to solicit the still further favour of being allowed to return to military duty

I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obedt Servant

E.B. Thomas Major
Madras Staff Corps.

Kurnool
Collector's Office
4th September 1877

No 821

From

The Dpty Asstt Collector
Dhakargo Kurnool

To

The Asst Secretary
to Government
Madras

Sir

I have the honor to forward for order a letter from Major Thomas Colby ~~transferred~~ from Bellary to this District on joining duty who reported his arrival here on the evening of the 31st ult.

2. I request that in the event of Major Thomas being sent back to Military duty another Officer may be appointed to this District in his place.

I have the honorable
Sir
Your most Obedient Servt
(Signed)
Dpty Asstt Collector
Dhakargo Kurnool

Original

From
Major C.W. Thomas
D.A.A. Genl
To
The Dy Collector
Kurnool.

Dated 3rd September 77

Relating to Major
Thomas's Employ
at Kurnool.

F. 7956

Z No. 1505
Memo:

Major Thomas
Letter is submitted
improper in tone.
I suggest that his
services be replaced
at the disposal of
the Civil Dept. and
that this letter be
forwarded officially thro
Genl. the C. in C.
or any other course he may think fit.
11/9/11 HH

Replaces Mrs
Lewis at Mrs
Own request. As
letter marked
part of Jan 5-
Memorandum
Commissariat
Letter - Nov 1779
H.B. Hd Qrs
1779

Nov 1779 Dept
from
The Commissary
Gen. Office
Head Quarters

to
Major Genl.
Phillips

Dated 4. Nov. 1779
Received 8th
Do
Do
No 821
Enclosure 1

Requests that a
substitute be appointed
to act in the room
of Mr. Lewis
Deputy Commissary
being recalled. Is
willing to do duty
as Assistant
forwards a letter
from that Officer

1779

Major Thomas's answer in relation
to the Deputy Commissary
Office at Head Quarters

17.4.79

Letter from Major Thomas
Deputy Commissary
Office at Head Quarters

April 1781

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