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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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Not to be folded or roughly handled

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

1st August 1877, No. 519 W.

Buildings and Roads.

Civil Works.

Read the following paper :—

No. 11. Endorsement of the Chief Secretary to Government, Military Department, dated Fort St. George, 14th July 1877, No. 4,050.

From Brigadier-General H. O'CONNELL, Quartermaster-General, to the Secretary to Government, Military Department, dated Ootacamund, 11th July 1877, No. 346-4,875.

I HAVE the honor, by order, to forward, for the consideration of Government, a letter from the Commandant, Queen's Own Sappers and Miners, on the health and general condition of the British Non-commissioned Officers of the Royal Engineers employed on the Buckingham Canal.

2. A statement in one of the Madras papers on the mortality and sickness amongst these men led to the Commandant of the Sappers being called upon for a report on the subject, and for suggestions for the improvement of the condition of the men.

3. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief trusts that the recommendations in the enclosed letter will receive the attention of Government. British soldiers are, at all times, well cared for by the State, and, even amidst the hardships of actual warfare, great pains are taken to provide them with regular and good food. This is economical as well as humane, for the death of every British soldier causes a considerable pecuniary loss to Government.

4. It was these considerations that led His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, when giving the services of these Non-commissioned Officers for employment on the canal, to request that care should be taken to provide good food and other necessaries for the men. (See letter No. 284, dated 13th January 1877, published in Proceedings of Madras Government, Public Works Department, 24th January 1877, No. 225.)

5. His Excellency desires to recommend, for the favorable consideration of Government, the suggestions at the end of Colonel Prendergast's letter, that the Europeans employed be treated liberally as regards pay and allowances and that rations be supplied them; also that Native Commissioned and Non-commissioned Officers of the Sappers be employed as Overseers.

From Colonel H. N. D. PRENDERGAST, R.E., V.C., C.B., Commandant, Queen's Own Sappers and Miners, to the Quartermaster-General, dated Bangalore, 7th July 1877, No. 971.

WITH reference to your letter, dated 29th June 1877, I have the honor to state, for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, that from what I saw in the Nellore District during my inspection of the "B" and "I" Companies of the Queen's Own Sappers and Miners, and from what I have heard from the Non-commissioned Officers lately returned from the Buckingham Canal, I am of opinion that the Civil Surgeon of Nellore has judged nearly correctly regarding the condition and the reasons for the ill-health of the establishment of the canal.

...e following Non-commissioned Officers of the 42nd Company, Royal Engineers and ...n Sappers and Miners, have been employed :—

...k and Names.	Date of joining.	Left the Canal.	Remarks.
...derton	12th Nov. 1876...	...	
...lding	1st Feb. 1877 ..	...	
...Cormack ...	1st „ „ ...	...	
...shop	8th Jan. „ ...	...	Died 21st June 1877.
...ice	1st Feb. „ ...	...	
...ssett	22nd June „ ...	...	
...nson	6th Aug. 1876 ..	18th June 1877...	On three months' sick leave.
...rry	1st Jan. 1877...	...	
...ight	6th Aug. 1876 ..	...	Died 26th May 1877.
...wlings	12th Nov. „ ...	12th June 1877...	On four months' sick leave.
...an	1st Feb. 1877 ..	...	
...lley	1st „ „ ...	...	Died 24th May 1877.
...zzard	1st „ „ ...	24th April 1877.	On two months' sick leave.
...rtis	1st „ „ ...	22nd May „ ...	On four months' sick leave. Wife and child died.
...ndle	16th June „ ...	...	

... the two Non-commissioned Officers who joined in the last half of June. The Non-... Officers, thirteen in number, have served on the canal for an average of about six ...ng which time three have died, four are on sick leave, and the health of others is bad. ... far as I can judge the want of good food is the principal evil from which the ...ve suffered; if they had been well fed some of those who have succumbed would ...e stood the hard work and exposure. All the Non-commissioned Officers who have ... that they experienced great difficulty in obtaining supplies, and that prices of such ...d be procured were very high.

...re is, I believe, only one way to secure good and ample food, and that is to pay for ...little use to trust to the Revenue Department to aid in procuring food at a time ...enue Department is overwhelmed with other work. The sanitary condition of the ... I conceive, in a great measure the result of this confidence. I would suggest that ...ons should be purchased at Nellore or Ongole and sent out by cart to the canal; ...cart for each division on the canal every week would suffice. The cost to Govern-...g rations to the head-quarters of each division, whence they might be distributed ...y, would be trifling as compared to the loss caused by the deaths and ill-health ...rs, and it would seem just that European Non-commissioned Officers whose whole ...ied with most arduous and important duties in connection with famine relief ...lves be protected from anxiety regarding food for themselves and their families.

...uropean Overseers cannot stand the want of food, exposure, and hard work that is ...em on the canal, the Officers Commanding the "B" and "I" Companies of ... doubtless be able to pick out Native Non-commissioned Officers who would ...ties of Overseers, for the Native Sappers are in excellent health.

...Government of India found it economical to build permanent houses called ...ery 5th or 6th mile on the Ganges and Barie Doab Canals: they have terraced or ...se of the first class are about 64 feet in length by 45 in width, and those of the ...e about 40 feet square, while on the Buckingham Canal the Overseers have small ... roofs of cadjans or palmyra leaves. I mention this to show that everything on ... Canal is done in the most thrifty way, and that there would, therefore, probably ...n for extra expenditure when necessary.

...ld beg the favor of His Excellency's consideration of G.O.G., No. 1,124 of 1877, in the Department Public Works. Seven Non-commissioned Officers of the Queen's Own Sappers and Miners volunteered for employment on the East Coast Canal on the strength of a letter which I wrote when with the District Engineer of Nellore, at the District Engineer's request, offering the men Rupees 90 a month as Overseers (the Rupees 90 were intended as ...seer's allowance and Rupees 30 double horse allowance as was shown by a subse-...n Mr. O'Shaughnessy), yet Corporal Tizzard who kept a pony was only allowed ...nth and no horse allowance.

...Cormack.
...ce.
...ding,
...zard, sick leave.
...n.
...ley, dead.
...tis, sick leave. Cholera, fever, sun-stroke. Wife and child dead.

8. Corporal Tizzard claimed regimental pay as a Corporal of Royal Engineers, good conduct pay and batta, as he was only a temporary Overseer and might be remanded any day to his Company, but was only allowed the pay of a Line Corporal. The Corporal had to keep up a separate house for his family at Bangalore during his absence; he has completely broken down in health; in fact from his appearance his death seems to be imminent, and I know of no order by which a Corporal of Royal Engineers can be deprived of his Royal Engineer pay when temporarily employed by the Department Public Works. When the District Engineer asked for Non-commissioned Officers it was not settled whether they should be attached to companies or be detached as temporary Overseers, and hitherto temporary Overseers not on the Unattached List have always received Engineer's pay.

9. I would respectfully recommend that the Non-commissioned Officers shall be treated liberally as regards pay and allowances, considering the amount of sickness and death, perhaps the Wynaad allowances of 50 per cent. increase would not be excessive.

2nd.—That rations shall be supplied by Government to the men and families either gratis or on payment.

3rd.—That Native Non-commissioned Officers of Sappers shall be employed as Overseers if required to save European Non-commissioned Officers.

Transferred to the Public Works Department.

(By order.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Chief Secretary.

No. 12. Order thereon, 1st August 1877, No. 519 W.

In G.O., No. 456 W, of the 20th July 1877, the Governor in Council entrusted to the care of the Collector of Nellore the difficult question of supplies. But he would again urge Mr. Grose to give his best attention to this subject, and to endeavor to arrange for the periodical transmission to the Non-commissioned Officers of those supplies which are needed to keep them in health and comfort.

2. Should the Collector find that he is unable to carry out the wishes of Government, should any difficulty in procuring the necessary provisions in the district arise, he should without loss of time communicate with Government.

(True Extract.)

Colonel, R.E.,
Secretary to Government, P. W. D.

To the District Engineer, Nellore.
„ Collector of Nellore.
„ Revenue Department.
„ Military

Exd. T. D. Ryan.

Spare Copies

Rev. 1877 Dept
Ltr. 6426

BUILDINGS AND ROADS.
CIVIL WORKS.

Gobt. of {1877} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

The DISTRICT ENGINEER,
NELLORE.
&c., &c., &c.

Dated August 1877.

Read 10/8/77 Read

G. O., 1st August 1877, No. 519 W.

AUGUST.

Nos. 11-12.

Min 40 N° 4610
communicated to the
Revenue Board
16 August 1877

Buckingham Canal.—Instructs Collector of Nellore to arrange for the periodical transmission of such supplies as are needed to keep in health and comfort the Non-commissioned Officers of Royal Engineers employed on the