Revenue Department

Minutes of Consultations

27th April 1858

Back Nos 474 & 48

Order No 533 of 27th April 1858

செப்பனிடுபவர் பெயர்
செப்பனிடுவதற்காக எடுத்துக் கொள்ளப்பட்ட நாள்
செப்பனிட்டு முடித்த நாள்
சரிபார்க்கும் மு. நி. பத. எ. கையொப்பம்
அனுப்பி வைத்தவரின் கையொப்பம்

Fort Saint George, Revenue Consultation of 27th April 1858.

No. 47. Read the following Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department dated 22nd February 1858, No. 671.

Read Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Revenue Department.

Passing orders on the subject of the provision of supplies for Troops and Travellers and the impressment of carriage for the former. (Here enter 20th January 1858, No. 76.)

Referred to the Commander-in-Chief.

22nd January 1858.

From the Quarter Master General of the Army, Bangalore, 16th February 1858, No. 80; to the Secretary to Government, Military Department.

Sir,

I am desired by the Commander-in-Chief, with reference to Minutes Consultation of 20th January last, No. 76, to request you will be so good as to lay before Government the following, being His Excellency's opinion on the supply of Provision and Carriage for Troops marching.

1st. Provisions.

Supplies for Troops marching should be collected by the Civil authorities, and His Excellency strongly recommends that the suggestions contained in paras. 10 and 11 of the Revenue Board's Proceedings should be adopted in every instance; he considers this plan much preferable to devolving the duty on the Commissariat Department, by whom, moreover, it could not be performed without the aid of the Civil authorities.

2nd. Carriage.

This is a far more difficult question, and one with which it is not easy to grapple. The present system, or perhaps, if more properly designated, want of system appears to carry with it grievances of serious import, both to Cart-owners and hirers. For whilst the former suffer from a want of defined Rules whereby they may be protected from the worst evils, springing out of *impressment* a necessary evil, in itself,—The latter are the victims of men, named Bandy Maistries, through whom Carts are obtained, but who exercise such controlling interest and authority, that they can prevent the hire of Carts at all, unless at rates frequently as high as 30 per cent above fair remuneration, and which Cart-owners would be glad to take themselves, indeed *do* take, as the Maistries appropriate to themselves the surplus, whereby these men obtain from 600 to 1,000 Rupees for the supply of the Carriage to a single Regiment. In Legislating on this subject the case of each of the above parties would call for particular attention.

1st. To Cart-owners—one of the greatest hardships, if not the greatest, is that of having their Carts taken on, sometimes to the extent of 3 or 4 reliefs, whereas the owner has, in the first instance, only agreed for one relief, thus a man undertakes to go to Bellary from Madras, on arrival at the former station his Cart is seized, and he is obliged to proceed to Secunderabad, and thence perhaps to Nagpore, in the same way. To lessen this evil, His Excellency would suggest that Tickets be issued to Cart owners who have performed one march giving them immunity for, say at least 6 months, from further impressment—it may be argued that *second* impressment is absolutely necessary at times: but it is thought, Cart-owners being thus insured against being compelled to proceed on 2nd or 3rd marches, would have much less hesitation in bringing out their Carts for hire, and much less difficulty would be experienced in getting together the requisite number. Another grievance of Cart-owners is the separation *Carts* the property of the same owner, when hired by a Regiment, and employing them in different parts of the Camp. A certain Cart-owner, for instance, has 6 Carts employed in a Regiment, these are frequently *distributed* througout the Regiment, 1 to Grenadiers, 1 to Light Company, 1 to the Mess &c., &c., this may not at first appear a grievance at all, but it is a most serious one nevertheless. Little arrangements made for the case and feeding of the cattle are set-aside by this arbitrary scattering of a party intended to be kept together and great difficulties ensue. It too frequently happens that a person requiring a Cart is allowed to take what he thinks the best suited to his purpose, whereas as it should be the care of the Commanding Officer to consult as much as is

practicable the convenience of the Cart-owners, thereby unquestionably securing both to them and the hirers a much greater freedom from annoyance and difficulty. The hirers of Carts suffer as I have above shewn by the rapacity of Bandy Maistries. It has obtained much belief that there are many more followers with a Native Regiment now than formerly, this however does not appear to the case, the Quarter Master General of the Army a few years back, caused a return to be sent by all parties moving on the day previous to the entire march being concluded, of the number of Followers, Public and Private, as well as of Carriage of all description present in Camp on that day. In followers there was little or no difference to what it had been long previous, but the reduction in Carriage-Bullocks and Tattoos was remarkable, whilst the increase of Carts was many hundreds per cent. Originally Carriage-Bullocks were the means of transporting all Merchandize as well as Travellers; but as the resources of the country have become more developed and Roads suitable to Wheeled conveyances have been made, the old Carriage-Bullock has gradually disappeared, and Carts have been substituted, but whilst this has taken place, the exports from inland Districts have vastly increased, and articles are now collected, and taken to ports which in former days obtained no notice. It is clear therefore that as the effects of civilization become thus developed—so in ratio increases the demand for Carts and the less willing and able is the owner to give up his Cart on hire for the use of a Regiment, unless under some such protecting Regulations as I have mentioned above, which should be extended to the Sepoys or hirers, by a limit being placed on what is called "the Custom" of the Maistries, and penalties for overcharging enacted.

In conclusion, His Excellency desires me to remark, that a considerable diminution of the evils complained of by all parties would ensue, if the ordinary reliefs of Regiments were extended to 5 years. The Commander-in-Chief is aware that a proposal of the kind made by the Marquis of Tweedale did not meet the approval of the Honorable Court of Directors, on the plea that such a length of time at one Station would bring about too many local ties amongst the men, Sir Patrick Grant would beg to observe on this, that there may be causes which would necessitate the stay of a Regiment at a certain station, a shorter or longer period, but of which he alone would be enabled to judge, and submit to Government his recommendation on the subject, but with all due deference to the Honorable Court, any danger to the Service from *local* ties is by no means to be feared. Each Regiment being as it were, a Colony of itself, and even should ties be formed, the only effect would be beneficial, inasmuch as it would render the station in which they existed better recruiting ground for the future.

The Commander-in-Chief is aware that the frequency of the reliefs of late years, has been caused by so large a proportion of the Army being employed on foreign Service, by the necessity of assigning to the European Officers no more than their fair share of the half batta stations—by the heavy extent of the Civil duties imposed upon the Troops in consequence of the inefficient state of the Police—and by the want of concentration so often urged upon the attention of Government. But His excellency would fain hope that these causes will soon now cease to operate, and that the reliefs may then be effected not more frequently than every five years, the formation of a regularly organized Police having been already authorized, and there being a prospect of a local force for Pegu being likewise sanctioned as recommended by the Commander-in-Chief in his Report on that country, dated the 2nd February 1857.

Communicated to the Revenue Department.

(True Extract and Copy.)

(Signed) C. A. BROWNE, Colonel,
Secretary to Government.

No. 48. ORDER THEREON, No. 533; dated 27th April 1858.

1. With his letter of the 21st February 1857, the Member of the Legislative Council for this Presidency transmitted a bill, introduced by Mr. Grant, for amending the law regarding the provision of supplies to Troops and Travellers, and to punish unlawful impressment; and requested the opinion of Government on the expediency of extending the bill to this Presidency. After consulting the Commander-in-Chief on the subject, the Government, for the

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reasons fully explained in their letter to Mr. Eliott of the 28th April 1857, expressed a decided opinion against the proposed extension; and on the same date, they called on the Board of Revenue to report, as requested by Mr. Eliott, the actual practice of the Civil officers in the districts in regard to the provision of supplies to Troops and Travellers, and whether there had been any material improvement in this respect since Sir T. Munro wrote his Minute on the subject in 1821. The Board replied to this reference in their Proceedings of the 24th November 1857. They first adverted to the existing practice regarding the provision of supplies to Travellers, and the Government concurred with them that there was no occasion for any change in this respect. They then stated their views on the provision of supplies to Troops, and the impressment of carriage for them, and offered (paras. 6 to 29) certain suggestions with a view to diminish the evils and inconveniences experienced under the present system. These suggestions were referred* to the Military Department for consideration, and a copy of the Board's Proceedings was transmitted to Mr. Eliott, with an intimation that, in the Board's opinion, a decided improvement had taken place in the system of supplying Troops and Travellers, since Sir T. Munro wrote his Minute in 1821, and that they anticipated still further improvement, if the suggestions they had offered should be carried into effect.

* *Ex. M. C. 20th Jan.* 1858, *No.* 76, *para.* 5.

2. With the Extract from the Minutes of Consultation in the Military Department recorded above, is transmitted a letter from the Quarter Master General of the Army, giving the views of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief on these important matters, and the Government will now pass orders on such points as can be decided in the Revenue Department, and will refer, for consideration on the Military side, such as may be peculiarly connected with that branch of the administration.

3. The Board of Revenue proposed that, "in every case where the number of troops is "larger than the ordinary bazars can supply, or where the bazars are distant from the line of "march, supplies should be purchased and conveyed to the halting places at Government ex-"pense, the owners receiving payment when the purchase is made, and not being required to "quit their residences. The supplies should, on the arrival of the troops or their advanced "guard, be made over at once to some officer of the Corps, whose duty it should be to arrange "for their distribution and payment, the Magistrate's subordinates having simply to provide the "articles previously indented for; articles not bought by the Regiment might be made over to "the Magistrate for resale by auction, and the loss (which, the experience of some Districts "already shows will be but trifling) borne by Government." They adduced the fact that, in those Districts where this system had been always in force, there had been few complaints; and remark that the trader and the sepoy are equally saved, the one from injustice, the other from over charge. The Board suggest that the duty of thus providing supplies may, if it should be thought preferable, be discharged by the Commissariat; but His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief decidedly prefers that it should be in the hands of the Civil Authorities, and the Government concur in the opinion. This will therefore be the rule invariably followed in future.

4. As regards carriage, it appears for the present to be absolutely necessary to retain in the hands of the Magistrate, the power to press carts on occasion of troops marching, the evil is great, it is known, and admitted, but at present there is no remedy, and all that can be done is to take what precautions may be possible, to reduce its pressure and its weight.

5. It appears that the evils which may be remedied are; 1st, taking carts more than one march; 2nd, the employment of the carts of one man on different duties with the marching corps, and 3rd, over charge made by the person who, under the name of Maistry, undertakes to supply carriage.

6. The first evil the Commander-in-Chief proposes to remedy by the grant to each owner of a cart pressed for the service of troops, a ticket, specifying the distance he is required to go, and exempting him from any second impressment for a certain specified period. The Government are apprehensive that this would not be always practicable, but they are willing so far to adopt the suggestion as to direct that the local authorities shall always give consideration to the case of those who have but lately been sent with troops, and shall in preference make available the carriage of parties who have been longest free from impressment.

7. The second point, viz. the arrangements to be made on the line of march, in order that the carts of each owner may be employed on one duty, and thus be together, and under the care of their owners, will receive attention in the Military Department.

8. As regards the third point, the capacity namely of the Maistries who are said to make a considerable profit out of the supply of carriage, remains to be considered. The Government are at all times unwilling in any way to interfere with the regulation of prices and rates, such matters are, almost universally, better left to the ordinary principles of supply and demand, and Governments usually err when they think they understand the merchants' interests better than they do themselves; when however troops are forced to march on the one hand, and owners are forced to give them carriage on the other, ordinary principles are so far departed from, that it may be very necessary for the Government to step in, and to prevent the cart owners from taking advantage of the soldiers' necessities, and their own position as forced to supply them, and so to regulate charges as may be not unjust to either.

9. On future occasions therefore of carriage being supplied to the troops when marching, by the Civil authorities, the Magistrate will forward to the Officer Commanding a statement of the charge to be made for each cart, and the payment of that charge it will be the duty of the Commanding Officer to enforce. The Government consider that in consideration of the carriage being pressed, the owner is entitled to rather more than the regular rate of hire, and as it would not be fair that the extra charge should fall upon the sepoy, that the amount should be debited to the State.

10. The remainder of the Quarter Master General's letter referring to the frequency of reliefs will be considered in the Military Department.

(Signed) H. FORBES,
Acting Secretary to Government.

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Extract from the Minutes of Consultation
Under date the 27th April 1858

Read the following
Extract from the Minutes
of Cons in the Military
Department

(Recd under 22d Feby/58 ch by)

With his Letter of
the 21 February /57, the
Member of the Legislative
Council for this Presidency
transmitted a Bill, intro-
duced by Mr Grant,
for amending the Law re-
-garding the provision
of supplies to troops and
conveyance, and to prevent
unlawful impressment,
and requested the opinion
of Govt on the expediency
of extending the Bill to
this Presidency. After
consulting the Commande-
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in Chief on the subject, the Govt. for the reasons fully explained in their letter to the Chief of the 2d April /57, suspended a decided opinion against the proposed extension; and on the same date they called on the Board of Revenue to report, as requested by the Chief, the actual practice of the Civil Officers in the Districts in regard to the provision of Supplies to troops and Travellers, and whether there had been any material improvement in this respect since Sir T. Munro wrote his minute on the subject in 1821. The Board refer to this reference in their Proceedings of the 24th November 1857. They first advert to the existing practice regarding the provision of

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Supplies to travellers, and the Govt concurred with them that there was no occasion for any change in this respect. They then stated their views on the provision of supplies to troops, and the superiority of carriage for them, and offered (paras 6 to 29) certain suggestions with a view to diminish the evils and inconveniences experienced under the present system. These suggestions were referred to the Military Department for consideration, and a copy of the Board's Proceedings was transmitted to the Chief, with an intimation that, in the Board's opinion, a decided improvement had taken place in the system

* G. Mins. Con. 20 Jan 7/58 P 376 para 5.

system of supplying troops and travellers since Lieut T Munro wrote his minute in 1821, and that they are competed still further improvement of the suggestions they had offered should be carried into effect

2 With the Extract from the Minutes of Council the Military Department recorded above, is transmitted a letter from the Quarter General of the Army, giving the views of the Military the Commander in Chief on these important matters, and the Government will now pass orders on such points as can be decided in the Revenue Department, and will refer for consideration as the military code, such as may be peculiarly connected with that branch of the administration.

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The Board of Revenue proposed that "in every case "where the supplies of troops "is larger than the Monopoly "Depots can supply, or where "the Depots are distant from "the line of march, supplies "should be purchased and "conveyed to the halting "places at Govt expence, "the owners receiving "payment when the Regt "about to march, and not "being required to quit "their residences. The superintendent of the Salt Golahs or their Agent of the Troops or the advanced guard, to make "report at once to some Officer "of the Corps, whose duty "it should be to arrange "for their distribution and "payment, the Magistrate "& Subordinates having orders "to provide the articles re- "quired by indents for "Articles not brought "by the Regiment might "be made over to the "Magistrate for resale

by

"by auction, and the Corporation
"the expenditure of some Pro-
"vinces already thrown with
"be but trifling, borne by
"Government." They addressed
the fact that, in those Districts
where this system had been
always in force, there had
been few complaints, and
remark that the Warden
and the Depy are equally
sured, the one from ex-
justice, the other from
overcharge. The Board
suggest that the duty
of these proceedings
ples may, if it should
be thought preferable
be discharged by the
Commissariat, but His
Excellency the Commander
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corps

corps and 3d overcharge
made by the person -
who, under the name
of Majesty undertakes
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6 The first evil the
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of a Cart prepared for the
service of troops, a ticket,
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~~-solutely bound~~ Govt. ought
~~Govt cannot the dura-~~
~~-tion of the term of ex-~~
but they are willing, so far
~~-emption must however~~
~~to adopt the suggestion~~
~~be left undetermined~~
as to which Rate
~~and must be fixed by~~
the local authorities
according

Hardship of fine
considerable to the
case of one who
must lately been
sent with the Son &
share in preference
make available the
carriage of Packets
or have been contract
free from im-
-pressment

533/8 according to the facilities
that may exist in each
District for procuring
carriage, and the frequency
of the demand which
the vicinity of troops
may render probable.

The second point to
the arrangements to
be made on the line
of march, in order that
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for the Govt to step in, and to prevent the carriers from taking advantage of the soldiers necessities, and their own position as forced to supply them, and so to regulate charges as may be not unjust to either – on future occasions therefore of carriage being supplied to the troops when marching by the Civil authorities, the Magistrate will forward to the Officer Commanding a statement of the charge to be made for such cart, and the payment of that charge it will be the duty of the Commanding Officer to enforce –

The Govt. cannot be a party in considering of the carriage being hired, the owner is entitled to rather more than the regular rate if hired; and as it ought not be paid for a chance thrown [illegible] after the [illegible] fog, but the amount should be debited to the State

The [illegible] be left to [illegible] adjusted [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

The

The remainder of the Quarter Master Gene-rals letter referring to the frequency of relief will be considered in the Military Department-

DR

11 Copies to the Board of Rev-
24th Feb 58

4 — Brity Copies
3 — Irish Copies

for

29/4/55
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Pro- of the Board of Revenue
24th March 1666 N° 904.

11 N°47 & 48.

6.30 Tallack B 23rd C 30 47 April

Revenue 1858 Dept.
Cons 27th April

N°533.

Extract Minutes of Cons:
of 27th April 1858

Read a Report of the Board of Rev: dated 2d July 1858 C N° 1064 - in Cons. 6th July 1858 C N° 1170 in Cons. 20 Feb. Observing on the subject for amending the Laws regarding the provision of Supplies to Troops & Travellers, & to punish unlawful impressment, & so as regards Carriage, it is absolutely necessary for the present to retain in the hands of the Magistrate the power to press Carts on occasion of Troops marching & pointing out certain remedies which may be applied, to reduce the pressure & weight of the evil. -

Ex: Proc: 15 of Rev: 19th July 58
C N° 1162 C.
Ex Pro: 15 of Cons: 8/5 June 1596 N° 1934 in Cons.