21-9-07
24-11-26

Revenue (189) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES.

G.O., No. 4067

DATED 10th October 1896

[Despatch Abstract.]

Declining to sanction Mr Platt's application for transfer to the Balasore Sub Division

21-9-07

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

Revenue (1896) Department.

CURRENT No. 6286

SECRETARIAT
28 AUG 96
REV. DEPT.

From

The Secretary to the Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Rev

Order

C. M. No 128.
The Bd. is requested to forward a copy of its Proceedings (with the connected correspondence) which on Mr Platts' conduct in Orissa, showing the reasons wh. necessitated his transfer from that Sub. Div.

Mis **No.** 3565

Dated 25th August 1896

Received 28-8-96

Registered 28-8-96

Enclosures 2 Enclosures

Spare copies

Entered
28th Aug. 1896

To

The Bd. of Rev. (Sep. Rev.)

SUBJECT

Submitting to Government with remarks the petition of Mr. Platts, Assistant Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Customs Department, praying for a transfer to Orissa

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

To

His Excellency the Governor of
MADRAS.

(Through proper official channel.)

The humble petition of Mr. S. G. L. Platts, Assistant Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Customs Revenue, Bellary Sub Division.

RESPECTFULLY SHOWETH THAT :—

1. By order No. 381 dated 5-8-1896, on page 978, part I, Fort St. George Gazette dated 11-8-1896, your humble petitioner finds himself transferred to the Nellore Sub Division.

2. Your petitioner is informed by the Commissioner Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue that this transfer is the consequence of certain defects noticed in your petitioner's proposals for the establishment required in connection with the extension of the treetax system into the Kurnool and Cuddapah Districts.

3. In communicating this information to your petitioner, the letter goes on to say "The Commissioner regrets that he has been obliged to put you to the expense of this move as you will again have to be transferred to Orissa when the administration of the Salt Revenue of that Province is taken over by the Bengal Government."

4. Your petitioner thereupon requested the Commissioner to recommend to Government a transfer to Orissa now so as to save your petitioner the expense of two consecutive moves.

5. In reply to this, your petitioner was given to understand that so long as the Salt Revenue of Orissa remained in the hands of the present Commissioner, your petitioner's transfer to Orissa would not be allowed considering the circumstances under which your petitioner was removed from Cuttack.

6. Your petitioner was removed from Cuttack upon entirely trivial grounds.

7. It is unnecessary after this lapse of time to discuss in detail the charges then brought against your petitioner, but briefly stated they amounted to the four following facts :—

(*a*) The ordering of Messrs Burn & Co. Calcutta to commence the construction of a new cutter in anticipation of the Board's sanction.

(*b*) The carrying out of certain alterations and repairs to the cutter "Ada" in anticipation of the Board's sanction.

(*c*) The not keeping up of a horse.

(*d*) The use of the expression "The personal prejudices of any officer should not be allowed to inconvenience Government work" in a certain letter to the Superintending Engineer Orissa circle appealing

against the arbitrary order of an Executive Engineer in summarily prohibiting the beaching of the Salt Department boats on canal banks for the purposes of repair.

8. In regard to (*a*) your petitioner immediately withdrew his orders to the firm on the Deputy Commissioner pointing out that it would be advisable to obtain the Board's orders first.

9. With reference to (*b*) certain alterations were adjudged unnecessary and your petitioner was mulcted of salary to the extent of some Rs. 200.

10. As regards (*c*) your petitioner had pointed out that no horse was necessary for the purposes of his work and this view was supported by your petitioner's immediate superior the Deputy Commissioner. Nevertheless the Board arbitrarily insisted upon your petitioner getting a horse and a suitable animal was therefore purchased, fed, and kept without use ; thereby causing your petitioner loss.

11. In the matter of (*d*) your petitioner himself referred the correspondence to the Board. The sentence quoted was adjudged open to objection and on being instructed to withdraw the expression your petitioner formally did so.

12. It will thus be seen that in each and every case your petitioner expiated his errors which had never been committed mala fide.

13. The foregoing occurred at long intervals during the course of the year 1894 and a part of 1895, but all mistakes were subsequently raked up and made the occasion of your petitioner's transfer from Cuttack.

14. On that occasion was dragged in another irrelevant charge that your petitioner had done unsatisfactory work during his period of training at Voyalur.

15. Your petitioner was trained purely for Salt work and his period of training at Voyalur extended from November 1892 to November 1893.

16. According to the terms of your petitioner's appointment to this Department, he should have been sent to Cuttack in June 1893, but as the Deputy Commissioner then reported that your petitioner had not quite learnt his work, the period of training was, with the concurrence of the Bengal Government, extended by another six months. At the end of this further period of six months, your petitioner's work was favourably reported on by the Assistant Commissioner and your petitioner was accordingly sent to Orissa.

17. It will be thus be seen that the so called unsatisfactory work during your petitioner's period of training related to a time antecedent to June 1893 and was followed by six months good work. Moreover, on the Deputy Commissioner's report the Board's resolution ran to the effect that the Board was willing to admit that the short-comings noticed were such as might be expected in a beginner learning new work in a new country and amongst people with manners and customs and language strange to him.

18. Two years subsequently, this matter is dragged up and used against your petitioner. Your petitioner begs to leave to observe that, if this system of accumulating all the trivial errors of an officer be generally followed, few would escape condemnation.

19. The four errors committed at different times in Cuttack have nothing to do with the internal administration of the Salt Revenue which, in the Balasore Sub Division, consists purely and simply of preventive work.

20. This preventive work your petitioner closely and effectively supervised with the result that during your petitioner's regime that is to say during the year 1894-95 detection was on the whole better than in the previous year, and the administration of the Salt Department in Orissa was adjudged to be satisfactory. Vide para 34 Part X and para 50 Part XI of the Special appendix regarding the Salt administration of Orissa for the year 1894-95.

21. Under the circumstances your petitioner would urge that the 4 Cuttack errors in record against him do not constitute an entire and absolute disability on his part to hold charge of the Balasore Sub Division.

22. Your petitioner formerly an Assistant Superintendent in the Bengal Police was induced to leave that department on the distinct understanding that his services were required for salt work in Orissa alone.

23. Your petitioner has, on removal from Cuttack, been placed in charge of purely Abkari work of the nature of which he had no previous knowledge, training, or experience.

24. Your petitioner is now being sent to the Nellore Sub Division where also the new systems of Abkari administration form a large and integral portion of the work of the Assistant Commissioner.

25. Your petitioner's want of experience in abkari matters will at any crisis again jeopardise his position and detract at all times from the value of his work It cannot, therefore, your petitioner would beg most respectfully to represent, be to the public interests to keep him at Nellore where he has all the disadvantages he laboured under at Bellary, with the additional one of not knowing the language. In the Ceded Districts Hindustani is spoken to a large extent and your petitioner was therefore in some touch with the people. On the other hand, Nellore is, your petitioner understands, purely a Telugu District, a fact which shuts out your petitioner from any contact with the inhabitants.

26. Since 1892 your petitioner has had the following transfers :—

(i) In October 1892 from Gaya in Bengal to Voyalur (Chengleput District) a distance of over 1500 miles.

(ii) In November 1893 from Voyalur to Cuttack a distance of some 1000 miles.

(iii) In June 1895 from Cuttack to Ranipet (North Arcot District) a distance of over 1000 miles.

(iv) In September 1895 from Ranipet to Bellary a distance of some 300 miles.

(v) Now again he is transferred to Nellore in the face of a long transfer to Cuttack impending over him at no distant date.

27. It is well known that the travelling allowances granted by Government do not nearly cover the actual expenses of a move however short.

28. Your petitioner is a married man with a family, and is solely dependent on his salary, and has therefore had to borrow money from time to time to defray the expenses of his journeys.

29. Under the circumstances, if your petitioner is compelled to set up house at Nellore, simply to break it up again he will be driven greatly into debt.

30. Having regard to the conditions under which your petitioner accepted service in the Department, it cannot but be regarded as a punishment to keep him at Abkari work in the Madras Presidency.

31. Your petitioner has been a year away from his legitimate charge of the Balasore Sub Division, has undergone the expense of two transfers, and has been mulcted of salary.

32. Your petitioner therefore appeals to your clemency, and urges that he has paid more than the full penalty of his errors at Cuttack, and requests to be restored to the Balasore Sub Division, where the language and people are known to him and where alone he can work without the weight of those disadvantages under which he labours in the Madras Presidency.

As in duty bound your petitioner will ever pray.

S. G. Platts
Asst Commr

Bellary
Dt 18-8-96

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE
MADRAS.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue.)

Dated 21st August 1896.

Mis No. 3532.

Read endorsement of the Deputy Commissioner, Central Division No C 54 dated 24th July 1896 submitting with remarks Mr Platts's explanation in connection with the discrepancies in the figures for the Tree Tax proposals.

Read also letter from the Assistant Commissioner, Bellary (on Deputation) dated 2nd August 1896 No 1208. forwarding the statement of the Inspector, Madanapalle circle furnishing figures in connection with the introduction of the Tree Tax System into the circle.

Resolution

In Board's Proceedings Mis No 2630. dated

1896
REVENUE
Enclosure No. 1
Current No. 6206

dated 24th June 1896, the explanation of Mr Platts, Assistant Commissioner, Bellary Sub Division, was required on the following points in connection with his proposals for the additional subordinate establishment in the districts of Cuddapah and Kurnool necessitated by the introduction of the Tree Tax System into them from the 1st October 1896:—

(1) The great disparity between his estimate of trees likely to be tapped on the introduction of the tree tax system and the number actually tapped in the following taluks:—

	No of trees now tapped	No of trees likely to be tapped
Pulivendla —	4,700 —	68,650
Madanapalle - -	6,000 —	48,770
Badvel - -	12,900 —	1,38,000
Nandyal - -	60,000 —	5,000
Ramallakot - -	48,624 —	15,000.

(2) His submission of figures shewing that all the trees in the Jammalamadugu taluk and all the Cocoanuts in the Cuddapah taluk would be tapped on the introduction of the tree tax system;

(3) The disproportionate difference between the present rentals and the expected collections from tree tax in the following taluks:—

	Present rentals Rs	Probable tree tax collections Rs
Pulivendla	5095 —	70,000
Pattikonda	42,870 —	6000
Nandikotkur	49,000 —	100,000
Ramallakot	49,000 —	15,000;

(4). Failure to supply complete information for the Koilkuntla, Gooty and Ramallakot taluks; and

(5) Late submission, in an incomplete state of the establishment proposals called for on 16th April 1896 and a disingenuous statement

statement to Mr Merriman in connection with the Easter Holidays in connection with the same.

2. The letter forwarded with the Deputy Commissioner's Endorsement read above contains the explanation called for.

3 To deal with the different matters seriatim:

(1) The Assistant Commissioner explains that the discrepancies in the case of the first four taluks are due to clerical errors. The explanation is true only in the case of the Madanapalle, Badvel and Nandyal taluks; and in these cases too the errors occured in tabulation and not in faire copying. Mr Platts consequently appears to have accepted the obviously impossible figures which these errors in tabulation resulted in without question. In the Pulivendla taluk the disparity commented on is found in the original statement furnished by the Inspector, Cuddapah circle. It is clear that, as Mr Platts himself acknowledges, the figures submitted by the local officers were accepted by him without care being taken to examine whether they were reasonable or not. As regards Ramallakot, the Assistant Commissioner explains that most of the toddy required for consumption will be procured from Hyderabad territory. This may perhaps be correct but in view of the very similar discrepant figures referred

referred to above which received no attention whatever from Mr Platts the Board fears that this explanation is an after-thought. It is also observed that no similar allowance has been made in the case of the Nandikotkur taluk which is similarly situated as regards Hyderabad toddy, on which he calculates on 100,000 trees being tapped.

(2) No explanation has been offered by the Assistant Commissioner regarding the points referred to. This amounts to an acknowledgement that his examination of the figures before him was so superficial that he did not notice that he was anticipating that all existing trees were going to be tapped.

(3) There is of course some truth in the Assistant Commissioner's assertion that the present rentals are an uncertain criterion of what the Collections from tree tax will be and the Board would be prepared to accept the explanation if Mr Platts's handling of the subject was such as to lead it to suppose that the excessive divergence between probable tree tax and present rentals was the result of careful enquiries and mature consideration. Under ordinary circumstances, however, the toddy consumed is locally produced and imports from other talúks affect the border villages and not the interior ones. The increase from

from a rental of Rs 5095 to a
tree tax revenue of Rs 70,000 in the
case of the Yalvienda taluk and
the decrease from a rental of Rs 42870
to a tree tax of Rs 6000 in the case of
Pattikonda are extraordinary divergences
from what might be expected and
could only occur under most exceptional
circumstances. The Assistant
Commissioner has not put forward
anything to shew that he looked into
the extraordinary differences between
rentals and probable tree tax and found
that exceptional circumstances of this
sort did exist. On the other hand
the different results he anticipates
in taluks which adjoin each other
and are more or less similarly situated
in

in the matter of supply afford reason to
believe that these considerations were
entirely overlooked. In Pattikonda with
a rental of Rs 42,870, the Assistant
Commissioner calculates on 6000 trees
only being tapped, but he has not
mentioned the source of supply whence
the large quantity of toddy required
for consumption in the taluk as
evidenced by the present rentals is
to be obtained. Very little will be
transported from Hyderabad across
the Ramallakot taluk, which
itself is allowed only an estimated number
of 15000 trees likely to be tapped though
its rental is Rs 49,000 In Koilkuntla
taluk

taluk only 3000 trees are expected to be tapped, notwithstanding that it is disadvantageously situated in the matter of supplies from outside. and the entry of untaxed toddy from Bellary and Anantapur will of course not be permitted Turning to the Nandikotkur taluk the present rental of which is only one Seventh greater than that of Pattikonda, it is found that 1,00,000 trees are calculated to be tapped on the ground that it supplies more than its own requirements. It has not been stated whither the surplus toddy is to find its way. The adjoining taluks to which the toddy may possibly be transported are Markapur Markapur, Cumbum, Nandyal and Ramallakot but of these the Markapur and Cumbum taluks are inaccessible except by Railway and the Nandyal taluk is treated by the Assistant Commissioner as itself a large exporting taluk. Ramallakot is therefore the only taluk which could import from Nandikotkur, but this is inconsistent with Mr Platts's assertion that that taluk will find Hyderabad toddy so cheap that it will not tap its own trees, for, as explained above, he allows for a decrease in the number of trees tapped in it from 48,624 to 15,000. The Board regrets that it cannot accept Mr Platts's

Platts's explanation for the discrepancies noticed. It seems beyond doubt that he did not in the first instance take the trouble to go into the important question which he had to report on at all but accepted what was put before him by his office, obvious clerical errors and all, without the slightest check.

The Board consider that Mr Platts's reply deserves that he should be reported to Government with a view to his reduction to a less responsible appointment than that of Assistant Commissioner, in connection with the matter dealt with above, but will refrain from doing so on this occasion. He is, however, warned that, should his future conduct call for serious notice, the slipshod dealt with in these proceedings will be considered again.

(4) As regards this matter, the Deputy Commissioner will be requested to communicate to Mr Platts his marginal remarks on the explanation with which the Board generally concurs.

(5) Mr Platts's reply to the Deputy Commissioner's (Mr Meremans) endorsement on his Demi official application for leave requires further elucidation. The Deputy Commissioner will be requested to distinctly recount to Mr Platts the facts connected with the submission of

of the information called for and to direct him to explain without delay how in the face of such facts he gave the reply he did to Mr Merriman.

4. In the initial para of his explanation under consideration Mr Platts indulges in the reflection that clerical errors are unavoidable in tabulation. With reference to this it has to be remarked that the errors which the Assistant Commissioner explains as unavoidable could have been avoided by the exercise of the most ordinary care in the tabulation

tabulation and verification. Mr Platts should be instructed to see that such "unavoidable" mistakes do not recur and he should be further informed that his self complacent remark near the close of his explanation that "the wonder is not there were so many errors or omissions but that the errors and omissions were so few" is a gross piece of impertinence which has been duly noted by the Board.

(True Extract)
(Signed) Edmund Gillett
Assistant Secretary

To
The Deputy Commissioner, Central Division
Copy to Mr Platts
(True copy)

Edmund Gillett
Assistant Secretary

52/388

1896
REVENUE DEPARTMENT
Enclosure No. 2
To Current No. 6206

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE
MADRAS.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue.)

Dated 25th August 1896.

Mis No. 3565

Read endorsement of the Deputy Commissioner, Central Division dated 19th August 1896 No 3990 forwarding the memorial of Mr Platts, Assistant Commissioner of Salt and Abkari Revenue.

Resolution

Submitted to Government

2 The Acting Commissioner has no objection to Mr Platts's transfer to Orissa, beyond the fact that he was removed only in June last year from the Charge of the Balasore Sub Division as his presence there, was (it is understood) found by the then Commissioner to be detrimental

detrimental to the interests of the department.

3. A copy of Board's Proceedings Mis No 3532 (S.R) dated 21st August 1896 in which his Officer's explanation for the gross carelessness shewn by him in furnishing statistics relating to the extension of the Free Tax System in the Cuddapah and Kurnool Districts (vide also para 1 of Board's Proceedings No 240 (S.R) dated 24th June 1896) is dealt with is submitted for the information of Government. His transfer to the Nellore Sub Division was proposed as it was considered inadvisable to allow him to remain in charge of the Bellary Sub Division where

where such large changes in the Abkari Administration are taking place.

(True Extract)

Edmunds
Assistant Secretary

To
The Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
with 2 enclosures

27/8/96

Revenue (1896) Department.

CURRENT No. 6566

From The Secretary to the Commissioner of Salt, Abkari and Separate Revenue Madras

Order Mis No. 3801

SECRETARIAT
12 SEP 96
REV. DEPT.

Dated 9th September 1896

Received 12-9-96

Registered 14.9.96

Enclosures 1

Spare copies

SUBJECT

Informing Government with remarks that there are no Board's Proceedings showing the reasons for Mr Platt's removal from the Orissa province.

I have now written D.O. to Mr Murdoch asking for copy of the B.P. I'd want

AEA 12.9.96

To await receipt of D.O. called for by the Secy

WBM

T.A. 14.9.96

of Boards Proc. Nos 2969 dated 10th July 1894
" 1625 " 18th April 1895
" 2821 " 5th July 1895
" 2859 " 9th July 1895

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

FURTHER PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT
Enclosure No.
Dated
1895

MAJESTY'S SERVICE."

Separate Revenue,
Madras.

1,000
19-4-95

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE
MADRAS.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue),

Dated 10 July 1894.

This No. 2969.

Read letter from the Assistant Commissioner Balasore Lb Division, dated 6 June 1894. No. 849 referring for ~~impartial~~ decision Copies of Certain Correspondence passed between the Public Works Department and this office in Connection with a dispute about repairs to departmental boats on Canal banks. and Board's Reference thereon dated 23rd June 1894 to the Deputy Commissioner, Northern Division for remarks.

Read also letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Northern Division, dated 6 July 1894, No. 1548. submitting his

remarks on the above.

Resolution:-

The Deputy Commissioner's remark in para 2 of his letter read above, - that a Manjee or Lascar should have been left in charge of the boats, - is Concurred in. The Inspector should have seen to this.

2. As remarked by the Deputy Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioner's remark regarding "personal prejudices" was improper and highly objectionable. No representation has yet been received by the Board from the D. P. W. authorities, but the Assistant Commissioner should be instructed to withdraw the Expression. He should be warned to Conduct official Correspondence in future in becoming language. If he Considered the action of the Executive

Executive Engineer oppressive, he should have represented the matter to the Deputy Commissioner, and not have indulged in an angry retort in a letter addressed to the Superintending Engineer.

3. The Deputy Commissioner is requested to address the Superintending Engineer himself in the matter referred to in para 4 of his letter, pointing out fully the difficulty that will be Experienced if the boats are not allowed to be drawn up on the bank of the Canal for repairs and requiring him to issue such instructions as will meet the requirements of his Department and of the public, and also so far as he is able to do so, those of the Salt Department. If a Sufficient Space - to be fixed by the Superintending Engineer - is left between the boats and the water, and if some one is left

left in charge of the boats, it would appear that no obstruction is likely to be caused. The Assistant Commissioner and his subordinates must understand that the control of the Canals and of the navigation is entirely under the Orders of the Superintending Engineer and his Staff.

4. The Assistant Commissioner should be informed that his letter should have been addressed to the Deputy Commissioner and not sent to the Board direct.

(True Extract)

Sd/- Edmund Millett

Assistant Secretary

To The Deputy Commissioner, Northern Dn

(True Copy)

Edmund Millett

Assistant Secretary

Dft 17/3/96.

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE MADRAS.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue.)

Dated 18th April, 1895.

Mis No. 1625.

Read again Board's Proceedings Mis No. 951 (S.R) dated 2nd March 1895 awaiting the remarks of the Deputy Commissioner Northern Division on letter from the Assistant Commissioner, Balasore Sub-Division stating for certain reasons the absence of a horse does not impair the efficiency of his work in the sub division.

Read also letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Northern Division No. 658 dated 14th March 1895 stating that all the circles in Orissa are so intersected by canals, rivers and creeks that it is almost impossible to ride except in special and limited localities which latter are only traversible in hot weather and that the absence of a horse will not interfere with the Assistant Commissioner's work as itineration is done partly by boats and partly on foot.

Resolution:-

Mr Platto should be informed that his first duty is to obey orders and that he

he should provide himself with a horse without delay. The orders disallowing travelling allowance meanwhile will be enforced He is reprimanded for the insubordinate tone of the 1st sentence of his letter No 252 dated 23rd February 1895 disposed of in the Board's Proceedings first read above

(True Extract)

(Sd) Edmondstoune

Assistant Secretary

(True copy)

Edmondstoune

Assistant Secretary

19/7/95

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE MADRAS

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue.)

Dated 5th July, 1895.

Mis No. 2821

Read letter from the Deputy Commissioner, Northern Division No 1201 dated 12th May 1895 remarking on certain letters from the Assistant Commissioner Balasore Sub division reporting the circumstances under which a cutter for Assistant Inspector Basudebpur and another bigger one for him are required

Resolution:-

To be over pending a report by the New Assistant Commissioner Mr Simpson which should not be submitted until he has had time to ascertain the requirements of the Sub Division.

2. From his letter dated 18th July 1894 No 1051, to the Deputy Commissioner, it would appear that it was the fact of Mr Platts being a married man that

constituted

constituted the necessity for a new and larger cutter for his use

3. Mr Platts' explanation in his letter to the Board dated 22nd March 1895, No 364 for having ordered the construction of the new cutter without sanction, is in no way acceptable. He does indeed admit and apologize for his error, but he had no reason or excuse for presuming that the Board would grant its sanction and give him carte blanche to select and order such a boat as he might think fit, nor should he have been so ignorant of departmental procedure as not to know that the sanction of the Bengal government would have to be obtained. If any claim is made by messrs Burn & Co, Mr Platts will have to meet it

4. A note of this matter will be made against Mr Platts in the Board's Confidential Register and he is strictly and finally warned against a recurrence of such conduct. This case will further be taken into consideration in passing orders on the unauthorized repairs to the Cutter

(True extract)

(Sd) Edmund Millett
Assistant Secretary

(True copy)

Edmund Millett
Assistant Secretary

7/3/96

construction of the new Cutter without sanction and making a note of these proceedings in the Confidential Register against his name.

Read also letter from the Dy Commissioner, Northern Dn, No 1203 dated 13th May 1875, remarking on the letter of the Asst Comr, Balasore Subdn, requesting the Board to reconsider its order directing him to refund Rs 400 spent towards the additions and alterations of Cutter "Ada"

Resolution

In February last the Dy Commissioner, Northern Dn, submitted for sanction an estimate for Rs 611-4-3 for certain repairs and improvements effected by Asst Comr, Mr Platts to his Cutter, the "Ada", without the prior sanction of either the Dy Comr or the Board. In reviewing it (in B. P. No 1151 dtd 14·3·95), the Board observed that of a few of the items of work could be admitted without objection and that the others were either extravagant and unnecessary or not immediately necessary. It animadverted on his action in carrying out the expensive alterations without the previous approval of his superiors and in defiance of the distinct orders

and

and instructions of the Board in paras 357(2), 367-A(II)(i) and 374 of C.O.I of 1893, BP 1272 this dated 7.4.93 and BP 4374 this dated 27.10.93, and directed that he be held personally responsible for the expenditure of Rs 400 incurred on account of the items of work to which objection was taken as stated above. Final orders in the matter were however deferred pending receipt of his explanation called for in B.P. No 1065 this dy 9.3.95 regarding his action in ordering the construction of a new cutter for his use.

2. The papers disposed of in the Board's Proceedings read above and the letter last read above contain the explanations of Mr Platts and the remarks of the Dy Commissioner thereon in respect of the new cutter and the repairs to the "Ada".

3. In his letter No 408 dy 27.3.95 Mr Platts states the circumstances under which he carried out the repairs to the "Ada" and requests the Board to reconsider its orders in B.P. No 1151 this dy 14.3.95. (1) He urges that the improvements effected under his supervision were not extravagant, nor so expensive as those executed to other cutters in the Sub Division by his predecessors who also had not obtained previous sanction. The unauthorized action of his predecessors could not justify

Mr Platts in contravening distinct and well known orders, but as remarked by the Deputy Commissioner in his letter No. 1203 of 13.5.95 the Board did not overlook the irregular conduct of his predecessors; on the contrary, it called on the Asst Comrs to be careful in future to get estimates before hand, and this order has now been disobeyed by Mr Platts.

Moreover in the cases of the repairs quoted by Mr Platts the boats stood in urgent need of repairs owing to cyclone damages, an urgency which did not exist in the case of the "Ada"

(2) Mr Platts next proceeds to justify his action in converting the cockpit into a Store room and states that circle boats do not require this alteration as the Inspectors do not venture out in big rivers in unfavourable weather. With reference to this, it may be observed that it has nowhere been ordered that Asst Commissioners are to venture out in big rivers in unfavourable weather, & that none of his predecessors ever suggested that their safety required this alteration.

(3) With regard to the renewal of the mast, gaff, &c, he states that it was with a view to obtain rapid sailing, — an object of no importance. The Board has no doubt that the speed of the cutter before was sufficient to satisfy requirements.

(4.) Mr Platts' explanation for the high rate for wood work cannot be accepted. The rate of Rs 5-6-11/5 per cubic foot of wrought wood when teak wood was purchased in logs at Rs 3-8- per cubic foot (the latter rate being in itself excessive) would mean that the wastage in cutting and smoothing wood was 36 per cent which is abnormal. The provision for carpenters' hire in addition to these exorbitant rates cannot be admitted.

(5) As to the copper sheathing, file sails, canvas awnings and ropes, they should, if due care had been taken in handling the boat, have lasted very much longer, but in view of the circumstances now set forth by Mr Platts which led him to renew them, the Board will not insist on his paying for them (Rs 150). As to the other items noticed above, the Board cannot, as already stated, accept his explanations and according directs in modification of the order in B.P. No 1151 dtd 14-3-95 that Mr Platts refund Rs 250 in three instalments.

4. In this connection the Board must make reference to (1) his presumptuous conduct in ordering the construction by Messrs Burn & Co, Calcutta of a new cutter without obtaining the consent of his superiors or the sanction of the Bengal

(c Government (vide B.P 2821 his: 3.5.95).

(ii) his extremely unsatisfactory work while he was in charge of the Vayalur Circle where he was sent to learn Salt work.

(iii) his use of unbecoming language in his correspondence with the Executive Engineer, Brahmini and Byturni Division, taken objection to by the Superintending Engineer, Orissa Circle, in regarding to the beaching of boats on the canal bank (vide B.P. 2969 his dy 11.7.94).

(iv) Lastly his conduct in not obeying the orders of the Board regarding the purchase of a horse, and the insubordinate tone of his explanation contained in

in para 1 of his letter cr no 252 dated 23.2.95.

5. Mr Platts has already incurred the Board's severe displeasure and would, if he received his just deserts, be recommended for reduction; as, however, he has now been removed from the Salt Dr for which he has shewn himself so unfit, the Board will rest content with the fine imposed upon him by having to refund the cost, amounting to Rs 250 of the extravagant and needless repairs executed without sanction, as ordered in the previous paragraph.

6. A note of these Proceedings will be made against his name

in

in the Board's confidential Register.

7. The estimate sanctioned in Board's Proceedings No 1151 thus dated 14 March 1895 for Rs 211-4-3 will now be considered to have been sanctioned for Rs 361-4-3 from Budget Item No 73 of 1894-95.

/Signed/ Edmund de Millett
Assistant Secretary

To The Dy Com^r, Northern Div.
" Asst Comm^r Balasore Sub Div.
Copy to Mr Platts through
Dy Com^r, Central Div.
/True Copy/

Communicated
Assistant Secretary

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE MADRAS.

SECL GOVT MADRAS 1381F95 REV. DEPT.

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

(Separate Revenue.)

Dated 9th September 1896.

Mis No. 3801

Read Government Official Memorandum, No 128 Revenue, dated 28th August 1896.

Resolution:-

With reference to the official memorandum read above, the Board begs leave to state that there are no Proceedings showing the reasons for Mr Platt's removal from Orissa. The Board's remarks in para 2 of its Proceedings Mis No 3565 (S.R) dated 25th August 1896 was based on the following passage in para 2 of Board's Proceedings Mis No 1150 (S.R) dated 18th March 1896 in which are embodied the notes of inspection of the Orissa province by the Hon'ble Mr Arundel, the late Commissioner: "It is satisfactory to note

"Note that the relations of the departmental officers"
with the District officials are everywhere —"
amicable and harmonious. The friction that"
formerly existed was due to the defects of"
temper, tact and judgment on the part of"
the Assistant Commissioner, Mr Platts,"
who was transferred from the Province last year"

2. An extract from the demi official letter in which Mr Platts's transfer was recommended by the Hon'ble Mr. Arundel is submitted herewith in a closed cover.

(True Extract)

Edmund Luckett
Assistant Secretary

To
The Secretary to Government
Revenue Department
with 1 enclosure.

10/9/96

4/11

C. Nos. 6206 and 6566.

The Honourable Mr. Bliss C. D.C.

FOR ORDERS.

Mr. Platts, Assistant Commissioner of Salt and Abkari Revenue, who has been posted to the charge of the Nellore Sub-Division from Bellary, has submitted a memorial praying that he may be posted to the Balasore Sub-Division instead of to Nellore in view of the impending re-transfer of the Orissa Salt Department to the Govt. of Bengal

2. On his transfer from the Bengal Police to the Madras Salt Dept. Mr. Platts was appointed an Inspector, and after a year's training in the Vayalur Circle, was posted in ~~November~~ December 1893 as Assistant Commissioner, Balasore Sub-Division.

3. In June 1895, he was transferred to the Arcot Sub-Division, as the Commissioner of S. & A. Revenue considered that he was "getting out of hand and insubordinate, and that he could not be trusted so far away any longer particularly with Mr. Dharma Rao as his chief."

4. Mr. Platts was subsequently transferred from Arcot to Bellary and thence to Nellore. He requested the Commissioner to recommend his posting to Orissa to save the expense of two consecutive moves, but was informed that so long as the administration of the Salt Revenue of that Province remained in the hands of the Commissioner ~~Commissioner~~

G. O. No. 2730 d/11-7-96.

Note.

A second reminder on this G. O. was despatched on 29th September 1896.

Copy of D. O. to the Private Secretary in the closed cover filed with C.No.6566.

Para 5 of the Memorial.

Commissioner, his transfer thither would not be allowed considering the circumstances under which he was removed from Cuttack.

5. In the present Memorial, Mr. Platts contends that he was removed from Cuttack "upon entirely trivial grounds", and in ~~GIVEN~~ para 7 of his Memorial he gives a summary thereof.

They are :-

~~It is unnecessary after this lapse of time to discuss in detail the charges then brought against your petitioner, but briefly stated they amounted to the four folowing facts :-~~

"(a) The ordering of Messrs Burn and Co. Calcutta to commence the construction of a new cutter in anticipation of the Board's sanction.

(b) The carrying out of certain alter-ations and repairs to the cutter "Ada" in anticipation of the Board's Sanction.

(c) The not keeping up of a horse.

(d) The use of the expression "The personal prejudices of any officer should not be allowed to inconvenience Government work" in a certain letter to the Superintending Engineer, Orissa Circle, appealing against the arbitrary order of an Executive Engineer in summarily prohibiting the beaching of the Salt Department boats on canal banks for the purposes of repair."

6. The first point is dealt with in Board's Proceedings No. 2821, dated 5th July 1895. The Board observed that Mr. Platts' explanation for ordering the construction of a new cutter without sanction

Vide copy of the B. P.s separately put up.

sanction would not be accepted, that he had no reason or excuse for presuming that sanction would be granted and that he would be given a free hand in ordering such a boat as he might think fit and that he should have known that the sanction of the Govt. of Bengal was necessary.

7. The second point is dealt with in B. P. No. 2859 Mis dated 9th July 1896. In February 1895 an estimate for Rs.611-4-3 for certain repairs and improvements to the "Ada" carried out by Mr. Platts without the prior sanction of the Dy. Commissioner or the Board was submitted for sanction. The Board found that the expenditure on several items was excessive and that several others were either unnecessary or not immediately necessary and directed that he should be held personally responsible for the expenditure of Rs.400. In asking for a reconsideration of this order, Mr. Platts urged (1) that his predecessors in the Sub-Division had also erred in not obtaining previous sanction, and (2) that the improvements effected under his supervision were not as expensive as those carried out by them to other cutters. The Board did not accept this explanation. In the first place the unauthorised action of his predecessors was considered not to justify his action. Secondly, the Board had not overlooked the irregularity the h

Vide copy of B.P.s separately put up.

the cases referred to by him and the orders issued then were in Mr. Platts' records, and finally he could not plead any urgency, as in the other cases, in which the boats stood in urgent need of repairs owing to cyclonic damages. The Board was unable to approve the conversion of the cock pit into a - store room, or the renewal of the mast, gaff &c or to admit the high rate charged for wood work. The amount which Mr. Platts had to pay was, however, reduced to Rs. 250.

8. The third point is dealt with in B. P.No.1625 dated 18th April 1895. As Mr. Platts had not provided himself with a horse as required by the rules of the Department, his travelling allowance was disallowed. Upon this, Mr. Platts appears to have written direct to the Board stating that the absence of a horse did not impair the efficiency of his work. The Deputy Commissioner on being asked for remarks supported him, but the Board requested the Dy. Commissioner to inform Mr. Platts that his first duty was to obey orders, and reprimanded him (Mr. Platts) for the insubordinate tone of the first sentence of his letter. The letter is not available here, but attention is invited to the following sentence in the D. O. from the Hon:Mr. Arundel, the then Commissioner, to the Private Secretary filed with G.O. No. 2410 dated 15-6-95 - " and when ordered Platts' ide himself with a horse as

vide copies of B.P.s separately put up.

but was buying one for his wife's use in Calcutta."

9. The last point is dealt with in B. P. No. 2969 dated 10th July 1894. The question was whether boats were to be allowed to be drawn up on the canal bank for repairs. There was a difference of opinion on this point between Mr. Platts and the Exe-cutive Engineer of the place and the former appears to have addressed the Superintending Engineer using certain objectionable expressions, which the Board had to call upon Mr. Platts to withdraw. The Deputy Commissioner was requested to interfere in the matter and to settle it in communication with the Superintending Engineer.

10. The question for consideration is whether these are trivial matters as urged by Mr. Platts. The Board did not think so, for, in the concluding portion of its Proceeding No. 2859 dated 9th July 1896 after enumerating all the above points, the Board observed "Mr. Platts has already in the foregoing instances incurred the Board's severe displeasure and would, if he received his just deserts, be recommended for reduction; as, however, he has now been removed from the Sub-Division for which he has shown himself so unfit, the Board will rest content with the fine imposed upon him"

vide copies of B.Ps separately put up.

vide copies of B.Ps separately put up.

memorial, Mr. Platts states that he has expiated his errors in every case and that all his mistakes were subsequently raked up and made the occasion of his transfer from Orissa. It will be observed from para 3 of this note that the transfer was not looked upon as a punishment, but it was considered inadvisable to retain Mr. Platts in Orissa. It will be seen also that the mistakes were not subsequently raked up. The transfer took place in June 189-, and the Board's final order was passed in July 1896.

12. In paras 14-18 of the memorial, Mr. Platts refers to the allusion to ~~Mr. Platts'~~ his unsatisfacory mark at Vayalur made in para 4(ii) of B. P. No.2859 dated 9th July 1896, and contends that at the end of his training in that circle the Assistant Commissioner reported favourably upon his work. From a perusal of the Hon: Mr. Arundel's D. O. already quoted, it will be observed that no reference was made to this subject at all in recommending Mr. Platts' transfer.

vide Copies of B.Ps separately put up.

13. In paras 22 and 31 of his memorial, Mr. Platts states that there was an understanding that his services were required for Salt work in Orissa alone, and that the Balasore Division is his legitimate charge. When his transfer to the Arcot Sub-Division was recommended, H. E. appears to have enquired whether there was not an understanding with the Bengal Govt. that the Assistant Commissioner at Balasore should

D. O. to the Private Secretary in the closed cover filed with G.O.2410 d/19-6-95.

be a Bengal officer, the Commissioner replied in the affirmative and stated that this condition had never been observed and that the Bengal Govt. had raised no objection. He forwarded copy of a communication from the Hon: Mr. Crole who observed therein "It would never do for one single moment to admit that the Assistant Commissioner in Orissa is outside the discipline of the Department. Mr. Platts is on the graded list and must be prepared to go to any sub-division to which he is posted. One Assistant Commissionership was reserved for a Bengalee nominee (I am writing from memory) which would naturally be Orissa in ordinary circumstances. But I have never up to this moment heard of such an absurdity as a claim to maintain an Assistant Commissioner in Orissa whom it is deemed advisable to transfer"

14. It is hardly necessary to discuss seriously Mr. Platts' complaint in paras 23-25 of the memorial that he had no previous knowledge, training or experience of Abkari when sent to Arcot and that even now his want of experience will detract from the value of his work. From June 1895 up to now he has been in charge of Abkari work and an officer in his position may fairly be expected to have learnt it by this time.

15. Mr. Platts' present transfer to Nellore was recommended by the Commissioner mainly on the ground that the large

large changes in Abkari administration to be introduced into the Cuddapah and Kurnool districts could not safely be we entrusted to him. From B.P.No. 3532 dated 21-8-96 forming an enclosure to C. No. 6206, it will be seen that Mr. Platts' proposals for the introduction of the tree-tax system were found to be defective and that the data furnished by him were such as could not be accept-ed. The Board concludes the review of Mr. Platts' explanation on this subject ~~ix~~ as follows:- "It seems beyond doubt that he did not in the first instance take the trouble to go into the important question which he had to report on at all, but accepted what was put before him by his office, obvious clerical errors and all, without the slightest check".

16. Mr. Platts requests a transfer to Balasore on the following grounds :-

(a) that the four charges on which he was transferred from Balasore had nothing to ~~do~~ do with the internal administration of the salt revenue;

(b) That having been trained only for salt work, he does not know Abkari work;

(c) that he does not know Telugu, which is the vernacular of the Nellore district; and

(d) That frequent transfers entail much expenditure, and that as his re-transfer to Orissa is impending, a transfer to Nellore in the meantime should be avoided.

17. The Board states that it has no objection to Mr. Platts' re-transfer to

to Orissa except that he was only recently transferred from that Province.

18. The Board of Revenue wishes to be informed by wire when orders are passed in the case.

KO
3/10/96

I do not think it wd be wise to transfer Mr Platts to Orissa until the Salt administration of that Province is about to be handed over to Bengal.
Mr Platts is not to be trusted in charge of that subdivision and if he were sent there in compliance with his petition, he would realize that he was probably insured against a retransfer for the short remaining period that Orissa is under Madras and might give free rein to his insubordinate proclivities. When I was in Orissa in January last, I learned from various officers that the friction which had occurred between the Bengal officers & the Salt Dept. was entirely due to Mr Platts's defects of judgment & temper, & on my return to Madras I selected a gentlemanly & trustworthy officer - Mr St. John - to go

to Orissa as Asst Commr to see that the subdivision was judiciously worked & controlled during the short comparatively short period it was likely to remain under the Madras Govt. Our Officers would no doubt like to get rid of Mr Platts by letting him go back to Orissa at once, but so long as that Province is under our Govt for Salt administration we have a duty to perform to it wh. in my view precludes Mr Platts's return to it until the time for restitution has come.

HA 7.10.96.

When making any change in the W. A must think time about this case. I asked him to send his remarks on the papers which he has done above. I think there can be no doubt that Mr Platts will be back in Bengal with-

Certainly - But not at present, for the reasons given by the Hon Mr Arundel

7/10/96

Draft tels. as amended sent 8/10/96

Mr. Arundel

8/10/96.

C.Nos.6206 & 6566

Order: Nº 40679 10th October 1896.

Mr Platt's' application for transfer to the Balasore Sub-Division cannot be sanctioned.

8/10/96.

To Mr.Platts thro' the Board of Rev.S.R.

des. 16-10

Draft telegram for approval.

To the Board of Revenue, S.R.

" Mr.Platts' application for transfr to Balasore rejected."

8/10/96

List from orders.

KO
10/10/96

for copying _____

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G.O., No. DATED
189

DATED No.

No.

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A — Copy in full.
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