

Protectorate of Northern Nigeria.



SNP 7 2238/1912

Lokoja
Cantonment
Report - March Qtr 1912

No. 129. CML
1912.

FROM THE CANTONMENT MAGISTRATE, LOKOJA,
To

The Chief Secretary. Zunguru.

Sir.

I have herewith the honor of forwarding you my Quarterly Report for March February, & January/12.

It is the custom in Zunguru to report seperately on the Native Town, and the Cantonment, but not in Lokoja so I shall follow the custom of this station and unite the report.

This Quarterly Report will also contain the monthly progress report of the Native Town improvements.

I trust that this will be placed before His Excellency the Governor for his information.

I have the honor to be Sir
Your obht servt

H. C. Hall

Cant Mag

13/4/12.

... please leave a quarter margin.

GENERAL. 1. On the 1st Feby I took over the office of Cantonment Magistrate Lokoja from Mr Byfield.

2. There is little to remark on General Works of the Cantonment, as owing to the funds being exhausted, no labour could be employed.

The station is in a fair state of cleanliness, this owing to the rains being late in falling.

A certain number of prisoners have been engaged in keeping the roads clear and the compounds have been gone over.

At the present time I have 30 Prisoners engaged on Cantonment works, this as apart from those at sanitary work under the S M O.

Courts. 3. In the Criminal Court I have tried 48 Cases in the Quarter, chiefly cases of Theft this is an increase on the past quarter.

4. In the Civil Court there have only 8 cases been tried, all petty debts.

5. I have held 7 Inquests, all over natives.

6. In the Native Court there has been a large increase of cases before the Alkali, this I think because I have been stirring this Court up, it having got rather slack owing to the dissensions between the two Alkalis, who have been for the last few months acting.

I believe that it was intended to remove the old Alkali who has been here for many years, but had grown slack, and to replace him with a Mallam from Bida, but on enquiries being made, I found that it would be a case of "out of the pan into the fire", so I obtained sanction to send the latter back to Bida, and I think that the old Alkali is waking up, and that the threat of removing him has had a good effect.

7. The number of cases tried in this Native Court during the three months was 55.

8. I have found this Court very useful in enforcing Sanitary measures, and the enforcing of the payment of Rents.

9. A commencement has been made with the Building of the new Native Court House in the town. His Excellency the Actg Govnr. when he passed through Lokoja, chose the site of it on Sterling Hill, and sanctioned the expenditure of £200. out of Municipal funds, over it. It is being built of Brick and Iron and will contain beyond the Court Hall, two offices for the Municipal Clerks etc.

It is intended that the Alkali and Dogari will live on the hill near to the Court, and steps will be built up the hill from the new road on the river front, and from the centre of the town.

Handwritten notes:
The new Court House was built on Sterling Hill, and sanctioned the expenditure of £200. out of Municipal funds, over it. It is being built of Brick and Iron and will contain beyond the Court Hall, two offices for the Municipal Clerks etc. It is intended that the Alkali and Dogari will live on the hill near to the Court, and steps will be built up the hill from the new road on the river front, and from the centre of the town.

QUARTERS. 10. With regard to the European Quarters in Lokogja, there is nothing to report on, the difficulty lying with the sites for Native accomodation.

There are a large collection of artisans, Builders, carpenters, etc in this station, whose duties compell them to live near to their workshops, or stores, also pilots, river steamer captains, stores clerks, and so forth, about whom the same rule applies.

*There is no more
the 100 plots
for the
plots*

It has been suggested that the overflow population of Lokogja, that is the people who are rendered houseless by improvements, should go to live at the new town of Noma, but this is quite impossible, and the difficulty is to know where to locate them.

I have applied for several sites, but there has been some dis-qualification in each case, and now I am faced with the fact that there is no site available.

I was informed that on the site behind the Preparanda, people might be allowed to erect grass, and banana, huts but no mud or brick, this of course is of little use as natives do no care to spend a considerable amount of money over their houses which they are only allowed erect on the condition that they may be turned out at any moment.

I have daily applications for plots, and I have not one for distribution, with the result that the small villages, that have been allowed to be built in the past, are in a most unhealthy state owing to the numbers of lodgers, and so forth, that live in each hut, and in case of an epidemic there will be great dangers to contend with.

Besides all this the sites of the plots on such places as the MMAR AZara (where the marine and P W D Carpenters live) and the Block on the Camp Road (where Clerks, pilots, and captains, live) is so small that even a decent house cannot be built and all the houses are so close to each other that a fire always destroys the whole camp. The obvious remedy, making larger plots, is quite impossible as the turning out of half the plot holders would only mean more houseless people.

*What are the
obstacles to
the 100 plots
being
STAFF*

It will be absolutely necessary in the immediate future to either appropriate some of the military spaces, such as vacated by the Artillery, or to form a village in the "Happy valley".

11. This quarter I have been in a very poor way for office staff. On my arrival here I found that altogether there were six clerks in the cantonment office and the town office, all of these were fourth grade, and none of them had had a month in either office,

STAFF. 10 cont. The second grade clerk belonging to the Cantonment office had proceeded on leave, and the other clerk that knew the files, etc, was in prison.

The result of all this has been to handicap me to a large extent especially as the greater part of each morning has had to be spent in the Native town.

I dispensed with the services of two of the clerks immediately, as absolutely useless, and one of the remaining ones I have had to turn into a headman of labour in the town, as he could hardly spell his own name.

I would point out that with the amount of work that will be necessary in the future, if the present programme is thoroughly followed out, it will be necessary to have a most competent second, or first grade, clerk, in both offices, in the municipal office because there is a great deal of money handling, and discretion required.

Owing to the above reasons, I am afraid that I cannot state that my offices are in the ~~state~~ ^{condition} that I should like them to be in.

Also it is to be noted that the office of the municipality was pulled down, and the work has had to be carried on in a market MB stall.

NATIVE TOWN. 12. The work of improvement of Loloja, and the laying out of a town, in its immediate vicinity for the accomodation of the overflow of the former has been pushed on with as much haste as adverse circumstances allowed.

The River front road commenced by Mr Byfield has been completed, in the rough, as far as the middle of the new town of Noma, and ballasting and draining of the road, so as to admit of even motor traffic, has been carried out to a point half way on the road.

The proper ballasting of this road was of great consequence, as the soil was of such a light sandy nature as to render it liable to being washed and blown away.

The road will now last for many years.

13. The old Mosque has been completely cleared away, and the new one completed, and built and roofed, in such a manner worthy of the name of a mosque.

A wall has been built all round it so as to enclose the 100ft square.

14. Zenabu has been paid the £150 compensation for her compound, the Niger Coy are busy building her new habitation on a site close to on the South side of the market 100ft square.

The moving of her old compound will be delayed until the new

*Mr. 3034
1912
MM
13/12/12*

14) (con). place has been completed.

*Continued.
The small lock
was not completed
last year for the
State has been
instructed that
Shoona be con.*

15. The building of market booths, on the principal of the ones erected at Zunguru, is well on the way.

*Permanent to Durioyer
the 1200 ft. road
Zunguru should be
at once.*

This work was sanctioned by H E on his way through. The present form of brick and tin booths, is not at all appreciated as they are not open enough, and nobody can see their wares. He also saw this and will approve of their alteration. He intend to erect about four of these new form of booths at first, and the cost will be \$100, which should be realized in about two years, if a fee is charged for their use.

16. The sanitation of the town was in a bad way, and I have erected about 20 Lana mat latrines, with five pans in each, on the side of the new road, so as to prevent people using the bank. This has been completely satisfactory, but I have had to increase the staff, and strongly advise that immediately these latrines be built similar to the ones at Zunguru, these would be permanent whereas the Lana mat ones have to continually renewed.

17. During the quarter under review, all the land laying south of the market, and 100 ft road, has been rased, to the ground, the space marked out on the proper plan, and now all these plots have been let to responsible people, who are only to build iron and mud buildings. Which system would be the eventual remedy most suited to apply to the whole of the town.

It must be noted that the space needed to enlarge the market square has been reserved.

18. The new town, called Noma Town, has been brought into existence during this period and has been fairly successful, but will be more so in the future if pushed on with.

About 240 compounds have been marked out, on the plans as laid down by Sir H Bell, and I hope to forward a map now of the town as laid out. Most of the compounds have been let out and the owners names inscribed in a Register similar to the one at Zunguru.

It is to be noted that, as the town improvements proceed, people will be only too pleased to take advantage of these plots, and in the future when it will be necessary to do extensive pulling down, people will be forced to take refuge out on this site, altho, certain people such as pilots and ship captains will have to be first considered, on re-allotting plots, in the old spaces.

I have told all these people that they will not be expected to pay any rent for the next two years which is only fair consider

18) considering the expence they are put to in building their new houses.

*See no man
why a road
was not
be set up in*

19. It is as well to state here that the regeneration of Lokoja is not a matter of months, but years, and once the hand has been put to the plough, it will be worth while to do it very thoroughly therefore I do not claim that Nomatown is now completed, or anywhere near it, of course it is not popular with the towns-people on account of the distance it is from the market place.

A certain amount of money will have to be spent during the rains keeping it clear of bush.

I must also state here that a large amount of assistance has been given me by Mr Pratt of the P W D in this work, and without his assistance I could not have made much progress.

*Why an assist
to the P.W.D.
work is done
for the P.W.D.
be asked for
a favour
necessity*

20. It is necessary here, as the question of the assistance of the P W D has been raised in the past, to remark that, unless a forman, and an asst resident, are place at the services of the progress of the improvement works will be very slow, and expensive, as without white supervision the Lokoja labour is as useless. Hence the necessity for P W D assistance in the past, and present.

21. As the rains have now commenced I have stopped "pulling down", but there is plenty of work to be done in the market square, and on the roads, to keep a large number of men employed untill the end of the rains.

20/9/22

I stopped the breaking through of the 50ft roads until Noma was prepared to receive people, and would suggest, that, this is not proceeded with until after the rains, and during this period if a survey of the old town could be made it would render the arranging of the town to proceed much quicker.

22. The Slaughter house has been completed but up to date has not been used.

*Was very pleased
of the progress
made*

23. When H E, the Actg Governor, was passing through Lokoja he inspected the whole town, and Noma, and was pleased to approve of works that were being done.

24. The expenditure over the works above enumerated were to a certain extent covered by a special vote, altho a large amount of this vote was absorbed by compensations paid for the Mosque,

*His very warm
to maintain a
reserve fund
fund to
to*

£2000 and Equabu £150. The balance of the moneys used were taken from the Municipal funds of which there is still £400 in hand, If the amended estimates sent in by me last week are approved this balance of £400 will be used for improvements in the coming financial year.

Rates, Rents, & Taxation. 25. As will be seen in the attached Quarterly accounts there are always a considerable number of outstanding amounts.

Lokoja, however, cannot be compared to Zunguru in this matter as there is no system of counterfoil receipt books from which these affairs may be checked.

*Extracted to
M.P. 8/2/1911
Please ask the
M.P. to see
have a survey
of Lokoja town
made.*

The condition of the Native Town precludes any system similar to that in vogue in Zunguru, and this cannot be remedied until a plan of the town is made, itself a work for some months, even with a practical surveyor.

26. The present system of taxation in the Native Town proper, in a charge monthly on each room of 9d, and a perforated 9d receipt is given for each 9d, this was collected by three municipal clerks also called tax-collectors.

*Shades have bought
it takes time from
house to work
of the town
all combined
inhabitant houses*

These native officials wandered about the town and collected when they could, or might, and apart from possibilities of fraud (uncheckable), it was very undesirable that Coast Clerks should enter the compounds of the country people, so I stopped this and ordered the Council to turn out the people regularly, and send them to the one clerk who sits in a shed in the market place, and I have instructed the latter to apply to the council in case the householders do not turn up *promptly*.

I am afraid that this is not being responded to in the manner in which I like, but the difficulties at present are nearly insuperable, for many reasons viz (1) The Register of inhabitants is no guide, as it is so undescriptive simply alluding to one Mamadu, or Awudu, of which there are hundreds. (2) The multiplicity of inhabitants in one compound helps them to evade payment (3) Lack of a map of the town. (4) The pulling down of houses to make way for roads, and market place, has thoroughly disorganized what might have been a possible system. (5) There being no counterfoil it is an impossible thing to check the Register with the amounts taken. etc etc.

*I agree
household
you can
The
Butchers are
small class
will affect*

27. I would here strongly point out the ease with which there may be fraud with the present arrangement and also that the only way out of the difficulty is in having a proper survey of the town, which will also help the "Improvements" scheme to a large degree.

28. Till the present time the Butchers have never paid any tax to Government, but there is evidence to the effect that fees have always been paid to someone (that somehow they forget who.

This is now paid into the office as in Zunguru, and when the

28(con). when the market sheds have been erected, the market should be a source of income.

29. The Market Booths I have referred to in my para 15.

These booths will I think be let later on, when the rains are on, as people will have nowhere to put their goods out of the way of the rain, but their reconstruction is absolutely necessary.

II E the Actg. Governr remarked on this when passing through.

30. The plots of land let to townspeople inside the Cantonment area, that is the little village on the Camp road in the neighbourhood of the Higer Coy, has been especially unfortunate with regard to fires having been burned out twice since Feby/11.

This having been the case, and as only half the houses have been built up again until now, little or no rent has been obtained

Mr Lyle had ideas of re-assessing them, but I do not advise this as the rents that they paid before was very excessive for the small area of land let (30 by 30ft). Therefore, except in the cases of the plots facing the camp road I do not advise any change.

31. The ~~outlying~~ villages in the Cantonment Area have paid their usual taxes, but it has been found necessary to take certain of the small villages away from proximity of the European Hospital, and they have been accomodated elsewhere.

ICE FACTORY. 32. It has been ordered that the issuing of Ice from the Factor is in future to be in the hands of the Cant. Mag.

I have already given reasons why this is not desirable, and I trust I may be allowed here to add further reasons.

There is no comparison between the Eunguru Factory and the one here, in that, at the former place, the Factory is adjacent to the C M's office, but here it is half a mile away, and "situated on board one of the boats". The issues here are much more irregular

as the machine, or engine, is faulty, and ice is issued at anytime in the day when it is made, and it will require the work of one clerk always to stand by, in case an issue is ready, this reason

also works out in another way in that as the issue is irregular the attendance of the "boys" fetching it is similar, and a notice has often to be sent round to all concerned when ice is ready.

This certainly will not assist the C M's Office which is already too full of work.

Again the Cant Mag, whose whole time should be devoted to the "Improvements" cannot spare time to stand near to the Ice Machine to check the issues, which is the reason he instructed to take

*To the Hon. Secy. Govt. of India
in response*

*Done
Extracted to
1/10/11
What alterations
in your proposal?*

32(con).over the issue dept, I take it ?

I trust these explanations will not be taken as unwillingness
to carry out an instruction, but only to show the difficulty the
C M is placed in with regard to it.

Ac stall
com

20/4/12