

C.S.

PUBLIC WORKS  
(Roads)

1926.

No.

~~507/26.~~*Confidential 26/26.*

Mr. S. H. Riches.

SUBJECT.

1926.

20th October.

COMPLAINT REGARDING THE MANNER IN WHICH ONE  
OF THE GOVERNMENT MOTOR LORRIES IS BEING DRIVEN.

Previous Paper.

29/26.

MINUTES.

1 - 2

Letter from Mr. S. H. Riches, 20th October, 1926.

*Chief Constable,**For your report please.**J. J. J.**G. Col. Lee**21. 10. 26.**Hon Col Sect  
Sir,*

on Saturday the 16<sup>th</sup> inst Mr Riches  
Customs Officer reported to me that one of the  
Stanley Improvement Works Lorry drove along  
Ross Road on the south side close to the  
fence, to the danger of two children who  
were ahead so much that they had to run  
from the south to the north side of the road  
in front of the Lorry.

He also added that there was no other traffic  
on the road at the same time therefore  
the Lorry could have kept to the centre of the  
road

Subsequent Paper.

I reported the matter to the Police Magistrate on Monday the 18 inst but finding out that one of the lorry drivers was suspended we came to the conclusion the matter was in the hands of Mr. Roberts Officer in Charge of S. I Works.

Some two weeks ago from a complaint received from Mr. Bennett Customs Officer to the Police Magistrate, I personally warned Mr. S. Summers, lorry driver, to be more careful and not drive at too high a speed.

I am of the opinion that the speed for these lorries should not exceed ten miles an hour. Motor Act of 1903 is in Law Library.

I am sir

your Obedient Servant

Ph Constable

22-10-26

Ex. Enquirer.

S. I. Doherty

For any observations that you may

have to make please.

J. L. K.

J. L. K.

20.10.26

Hon. Colonial Secretary.

With reference to the complaint from the Chief Constable I can quite believe that this happened, but it appears rather late in bringing the matter to my notice. Had it been reported to me at the time I would certainly have taken immediate action (as is the practice in this Department) to investigate the case.

2. It is true that I suspended a driver for 7 days, but this was for another charge altogether having no knowledge of this occurrence at the time.

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Sheet. 2.

3. I do not consider that the lorries of this Department travel at an excessive speed, and they receive constant personal supervision and every care is taken to avoid accidents.

*C. Roberts.*  
Executive Engineer.  
25th. October, 1926.

Hon. Colonial Secretary.

With reference to the letter from Mr. Riches, I very much regret that you should have to be bothered with this, also that I should have to waste my time in answering such a letter, but since it has been referred to me I should like to make the following observations as requested.

2. Motor traffic in the Colony is in its infancy and there are bound to be complaints and most probably some accident, but it will not be for the want of instruction and close personal supervision on the part of both myself and the Foreman of Works. It must be remembered that we are dealing with raw material. It is quite easy to get a trained driver from England but his methods would not suit this town, and it is the policy of this Department, although it means much more work, to train the local people in all branches as much as is possible so that they will become an asset to the Colony.

3. I do not take exception to a legitimate complaint, but when it is quoted as being with the authority from one with wide experience of the Rule of the Road in the United Kingdom, etc. etc., might I ask how many years ago it is since this man was in the United Kingdom, and then I believe he only

had

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Sheet 3.

had a few months leave during which time he learned to drive with a view to securing a job as a motor driver in Africa. The mechanism of motors and motor transport generally has advanced tremendously during the last few years and one is apt to forget this when they have been in the Colony many years laying dormant so to speak.

Mr. Riches appears to have been rather backward in bringing to light his skilled knowledge on motoring, but I would suggest that he be asked to train the man to drive the Morris Caterpillar Lorry and to teach him the mechanism. He could then bring to light his skill as a motor driver-mechanic.

4. With reference to paragraph 4, I attach  
Encl. 3 - 4. a statement showing the tonnage transported, running costs, etc., of the Morris 1 ton lorry in question during the period 21st. July, 1925 to 30th. September, 1926, from which it will be seen that 4,471 tons of materials have been transported, a great saving has been effected over horse hire transport, and the purchase of the lorry and the way it has been run has more than been justified.

The lorry has been running continuously for more than 12 months and, except for an occasional overhaul and cleaning, it has not been found necessary to lay her up awaiting spares, and furthermore the engine is still in perfect condition and has not been run to death as is suggested.

5. With

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Sheet A.

5. I submit that Mr. Riches should be asked to tender a written apology to Mr. Challen, Foreman of Works of this Department, for the accusation contained in paragraph 5 of his letter. He was not as stated allowed to take the wheel for the first drive and to promptly smash the gear box. This statement is entirely untrue as he did not take the wheel and damage the gears.

This officer has merely carried out my instructions, and he has worked hard often in the face of difficulties.

The actual cost of repairing the gears delivered Port Stanley was £3. 1. 9. and not £30 or £40 as stated,

"When these gears arrived he was still allowed "to continue his 'teaching'". Yes. This was so but it was under my instructions, and I consider that Mr. Challen has done well and deserves every credit and all I can say is "Well done Challen".

"His next exploit ..... steam roller". This matter was fully dealt with by His Excellency Sir John Middleton.

6. In conclusion I must say that, whilst appreciating Mr. Riches eagerness to minimise what might probably result in a serious accident, it certainly seems that he has some other motive for including paragraphs 5 and 6 in his letter, and it rather appears like washing dirty linen.

7. I submit that the transport along with all other matters concerning this Department can safely be left in my hands, and, whilst willing <sup>to</sup> help and to investigate any legitimate complaint or grievance, outside interference of this sort will not be tolerated.

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Sheet 5.

I speak not with a few weeks experience on a motor car, but with over 20 years general experience in charge of public works often working with a fleet of 3 and 5 ton lorries as well as light cars.

C. Roberts.

Executive Engineer.  
25th. October, 1926.

G.S.

Submitted. It is not desirable to provide further unseemly discussion in this matter. I should like to let things be as they are but while W. Robert's letter calls for no specific reply I feel that some notice must be taken of W. Riches' letter.

2. I propose to ~~acknowledge~~ request the Treasurer to acknowledge the receipt of memo 2/1 by me and to inform W. Riches that any communication which he may desire to address to me should be forwarded in the usual manner through the Head of ~~the~~

Department. I will add that W. Richer shall  
be careful in future to confine himself to a  
concise narration of the facts or circumstances  
that he desires to bring to the notice of the  
Government.

3. I do not think that other action  
is necessary.

Wm. R.

1-11-26.

H.C. Both Mr. Richer and Mr. Roberts show a  
lamentable ignorance of official procedure  
and etiquette.

2. Will you please write to Hon. Treasurer  
as proposed in respect of Mr. Richer's letter.

3. In his second minute of 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct.  
Mr. Roberts has let his feelings run away  
with him, and has expressed himself in places  
in a manner which cannot be accepted in  
official correspondence. He is temporarily in  
Colonial employ<sup>only</sup>, and for this reason I take  
a more lenient view of the matter than I  
would otherwise, but at the same time, after  
reading thro' the correspondence carefully, the  
course adopted can hardly be ignored. I  
should be glad if, at a convenient opportunity,  
you would be so good as to see Mr. Roberts  
and explain to him that minutes in the  
strain he has used should not be written  
in official correspondence.

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4. You have now sent up a further letter from Mr. Riches dated 28th Oct. In your proposed letter to Hon. Treasurer this letter he should be asked to acknowledge this further communication.

5. This M.P. had better be transferred to Conf. Register.

J.D.  
2 Nov. 1926.

4. Memo to Hon. Ch. Treasurer 3rd Nov 1926.

y.g.

Submitted. I saw W. Roberts this morning as directed by y.g. I had some difficulty but I believe that I succeeded eventually in bringing the point home to him. At the same time W. Roberts steadfastly maintained his right to "non-interference" and "non-toleration". He said, however, that he realized that he must be correct in future

J.D.  
6 Nov. 1926

6. 11. 26

J.D.



Memo from the Hon. Secy. Treasurer & Collector.  
6th Nov<sup>r</sup> 1926.

5-6.

P. A. J.

11. 11. 26

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Stanley,

October 30th, 1920

2

Sir,

When passing down the road on the afternoon of the 15th., I observed one of the Government Lorries approaching and keeping very closely to the gates and fencing on the south side of the road, certainly within two feet: although strictly speaking it was on its right side, I considered the driver was hugging these fences in a very dangerous manner, two boys at the time were also approaching the lorry and quite naturally keeping to the fences, but finding the lorry made no attempt to avoid them they darted in front of it at a distance of some 15 yards to Victory Green to avoid being run down, at a time when, in my opinion, it was doing 20 miles per hour.

I might here mention that I am speaking on the authority of one with a wide experience of the Rule of the Road in the United Kingdom and holding, as I do, a 1st. Class Driver-Mechanic Certificate, of the Royal Automobile Club, London.

The speed referred to above I do not consider excessive having regard to the traffic on the road at the time, but where the danger lies, is in the driver's keeping too close to the houses on the south side of the road at a time when they have got the road to themselves: there are what is termed three blind corners on the Front Road which should be given a wide berth but no notice appears to be taken of these, so they are hugged at a fast speed.

Last November, Sir John Middleton stopped me on the road one afternoon, and informed me that he had been told that the lorry was being badly driven, did I agree: (there was only one owned by the Government at that time) I informed him that I had noticed the same thing myself, and that before long the machine would be laid up awaiting spares, he then suggested that I should speak to Mr. Roberts on the subject but to this I could not agree, seeing that I had no business in the matter.

①

Unfortunately these lorry driver's have had a very crude teaching in driving from a man (the Foreman of the Stanley Improvement Scheme) who knows very little about the matter himself, I formed this opinion after putting two questions to him, on the arrival here of the first Government lorry some 18 months ago, he was allowed to take the wheel for the first drive, and promptly smashed the gear box: it was then immediately put away for four or five months until a new set of gears could be obtained from the makers costing probably thirty or forty pounds, when these arrived he was still allowed to continue his "teaching" when I put the two questions to him, previously referred to; in these I elicited the fact that he had been running for some days on low gear and using the accelerator, which of course would cause them to be overrun.

When he had handed the lorry over to another man a little later, his next exploit was to take the wheel of the steam roller, and promptly ran it off the road into a stream dropping probably 10 or 12 feet and doing some £70<sup>(35)</sup> worth of damage, and of course causing it to be laid up awaiting replacements, he and the engineer just escaping by an hair's breadth with their lives by jumping out before the machine fell.

In regard to the handling of this lorry on the 15th. inst., I have brought the matter to the notice of the Magistrate and Chief Constable, and desire to add that my action in bringing the matter to the front is based on the one wish to try to minimise what may probably result in a serious accident.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

Hon: Colonial Secretary,  
Stanley.

*S. A. Nicholls*

*Copy*

From....  
Executive Engineer,  
Improvement Works,  
Port Stanley.

To....  
Mr. E. Aldridge,  
Ross Road,  
Port Stanley.

Date... 28th April, 1925.

*45/25*

STANLEY IMPROVEMENT WORKS.

Horse Hire.

I have to inform you that your quotation, dated 27th April, 1925., for the hire of horses, carts and drivers at the rates specified below, is accepted.

Item.	Description.	Places.	Price.
1.	1 horse, cart and driver.	Government Jetty to Magazine Valley. (or vice versa)	1/6d. per load
2.	1 " "	Sullivan Jetty to Magazine Valley. (or vice versa).	2/- per load
3.	1 " "	Government Jetty to Magazine Valley and return load.	2/6d. per return load.
4.	1 " "	Sullivan Jetty to Magazine Valley and return load.	3/3d. per return load.
5.	1 " "	Government Jetty to Sullivan Jetty (or vice versa).	2/- per load.
6.	1 " "	From Magazine Valley, jetties, etc. to any parts of the town, (or vice versa), as may be ordered.	<i>return 3/3</i> 2/6d. per hour.

A copy of your quotation is attached for your information.

Arrangements will be made to inform you some hours previous or on the preceding evening when horse hire is required.

*G.R.*  
Executive Engineer.

MORRIS ONE TON LORRY.SUMMARY OF TONNAGE TRANSPORTED, RUNNING COSTS, ETC.  
AND THE COMPARISON BETWEEN MOTOR TRANSPORT AND  
HORSE HIRE CONTRACT.

PERIOD.... 21st July, 1925 to 30th. September, 1926.  
(14 months).

Total weight transported by lorry during above period.	.....	4,471 tons.
Saving in time on transporting 4,471 tons by lorry over horse and cart transport.	.....	6,007 hours.
Saving on costs for transporting 4,471 tons by lorry over horse and cart hire rates (taking average rate per load of 8 cwts for horse & cart @ 1/6d).	.....	£547. 8. 6.
Cost of Morris 1 ton lorry (including £10 worth of spares ordered with lorry) landed at Port Stanley complete.	.....	£304. 6. 5.
Transport cost per ton by Lorry.	.....	1/3d. ton.
" " " " by horse & cart... hire.		3/9d. ton.
Saving per ton over horse & cart hire...		2/6d. per ton.

Notes.

Monthly statements are available in this office  
to amplify this.

Previous to the running of the Morris lorry it was  
necessary to resort to horse transport, and a copy  
of the horse hire contract let is attached showing  
the rates paid. The average weight per load carted  
on this contract was 8 cwts.

From the above figures it will be seen that, during  
the above period of 14 months, great savings have been  
effected both on costs and in time over horse hire  
transport,

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Stanley,

October 28th, 1926,

Sir,

With reference to my report of the 20th. inst.: dealing with, what I considered to be, one of vital public interest, regarding the dangerous practice of lorry driver's in keeping too close to the fences and dangerous corners on the south side of Ross Road, it has recently come to my knowledge that the subject matter contained in that report has been freely circulated to the town to such an extent that scarcely one word has been omitted, in fact, I have never known during my experience in this Colony a similar instance were the contents of what I regarded as a confidential matter to the Government had so completely leaked out. Last Monday morning I passed Mr. Roberts and his Foreman on the road and passed the usual greeting, in return I got from them a look of scorn: that same day my son informed me that he had heard in the Working Mens Club that I had reported the driver of the lorry (Summers), and also the observations I had made regarding the Foreman (Mr. Challon): I can only think that Mr. Roberts must be held primarily responsible for this, and can only result in such matters being withheld in the future: I bear no malice towards either of the parties concerned, but where the interests of both the Government and the public is at stake, I consider it incumbent upon anyone to bring the matter to the front.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient servant

The Honourable-  
 Colonial Secretary,  
 Stanley.

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No.

*Confidential*

14

MINUTE.

3rd November, 19 26.

*From*

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,  
STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS.

To The Hon. the Acting Treasurer,

Stanley.

I am directed by the Acting Governor to inform you that two letters, dated the 20th October and the 28th October, respectively and relating to the manner in which the motor lorry belonging to the Stanley Improvement Works is driven, have been addressed to me direct by Mr. S. H. Riches, Assistant Customs Officer in your Department.

2. I am to request that you will acknowledge the receipt of these letters and inform Mr. Riches that any communication which he may desire to address to me should be forwarded in the usual manner through the Head of his Department.

3. I am to add that Mr. Riches should be careful in future to confine himself to a concise narration of the facts or circumstances which he desires to bring to the notice of the Government.

*J. M. L.*

Acting Colonial Secretary.

Copy.

5

MINUTE

Mr. S. H. Riches, Assistant Customs Officer,

I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your two letters, dated the 20th October and the 28th October, respectively relating to the manner in which the motor lorry belonging to the Stanley Improvement Works is driven, which were addressed by you to the Colonial Secretary.

2. I am to inform you that any communication which you may desire to address to the Colonial Secretary should be forwarded in the usual manner through the Head of your Department.

3. I am to add that you should be careful in future to confine yourself to a concise narration of the facts or circumstances which you may desire to bring to the notice of the Government.

(sgd) M. Craigie Halkett

Ag. Treasurer and collector.

6th November 1926



No. CONFIDENTIAL

MINUTE.

(6)

(It is requested that, in any reference to this letter, the above Number and the date may be quoted.)

C/26/26

..... 6th November 19 26

From..... Ag. Treasurer & Collector To

Stanley.  
.....  
.....

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY,

Stanley, Falkland Islands.

Hon. Col. Sec,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your minute C/26/26 dated the 3rd inst., and in accordance with the instructions contained therein I have this day handed a minute to Mr. S. H. Riches, Assist: Customs Officer - copy of minute attached hereto.

*M. Craigie Harmer*

Ag. Treas.  
6.11.26