

DESPATCH

EAST ASIA DESPATCH

No. 3542

13342

1905

April

Previous Paper

(Subject.)

Death of Mr W G Gray.

To report on circumstances attending
death of Messrs W G Gray & Son
and to ascertain if there are any
memoranda respecting
the same.

(Minutes.)

Mr Read

It is not quite clear what
will be done with the funeral and
state of the deceased. However in
the course of inquiry it will be
desirable to have a telegram to them
at regular hours, and to send to
the usual legal funeral represen-
tatives a copy of the obituary.

But we need not enter into
this till a later date.

The body of the deceased
was sent to Mr Robert Gray
and referred to Mr Gilmour.
Letter to Mr Parkinson (F.O. 216)
as substance of the copy
stamped 11/2/11
N.Y.C. 1/5

I would at send copy of the depo: of Mr. T. G. Davis,
but say that a report has been received
from the Town: from which it appears that
in the latter part of last year he payed
+ sent the Emperor of Thomas Jacques, presented
across the Town in a northly direction
with cattle + trade goods for the purpose of
Kings buying country - & that they had
had of fever within a day or two after
about the middle of October to the
Abbe country on the south side of the
Dane River - they came to begining of
November & Mr. Davis (Jacques) whom we
here was Mr. Davis) arrived at Kitee on the
south side of the Dane River + stated
that he was in partnership with both the deceased
+ supported the statement by the production of
account books containing also his joint name
- He further stated that he was proceeding to
Kanishe with the property of the deceased +
was going to claim his share of the partnership
as soon as it could be arranged up - the Mr.
Jacques died at Joannine in Nov: of the
+ left his property and dealt with by the
Administrator for £ 200/- copy of this report (No. 2)
should be enclosed.

Commissioner

Memorandum.

April 4th 1900.

Sir,

With reference to Foreign Office despatch No. 60
February 18th relating to a report on the circumstances
attending the death of Mr. W. G. Macbray, I now
transmit herewith a copy of a report by
Collector of Customs and Excise, [redacted]
now in India, dated [redacted]
President's order was issued
that two British officers should be sent to
India, and General Macbray
had been selected by authority of the Treasury
and had been despatched to the Tigray
country where he reached me. I can assure you
that no steps were taken to bring him into
the country; but all who had come
from the Tigray country said
that the above was in general knowledge
and that they were travelling in one of the most
dangerous parts of the
Protectorate; they were almost, if not quite, devoid

of safety's Principal Secretary of State
for the Colonies,
Downing Street,
London.



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Mombasa,

April 4th 1905.

Sir,

With reference to Foreign Office despatch No. 82 of February 16th calling for a report on the circumstances attending the death of Mr. W.G. Gray, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a report addressed by the Collector of Kitui to the Sub-Commissioner of the Ukuza Province in January last.

In this report you will perceive that it was rumoured that three Europeans, Messrs. Thomas, Jacques, Willing, Gunn Gray, and Thomas Mac Gregor (whose real name was Mc Gregor) had been physicianed by natives near the Tana River. When this rumour reached me, I caused a searching enquiry to be made into the matter; But all that has transpired tends to show that the three men in question died of fever. They were travelling in one of the most unhealthy districts of the Protectorate they were almost, if not quite, devoid

of

Baty's Principal Secretary of State

for the Colonies,

Dawning Street,

London.

of the necessities of life; they ate food which their black
followers refused to touch; and they slept on the ground
without any protection against the inclemency of the
weather. As they appeared to be on friendly terms with the
natives, and as their property was not looted after their
death, it is highly improbable that they were poisoned,
especially as Mac Gregor (or Mc Leish) died some five or
six days' journey from the place where his companions
contracted their fatal illness.

With regard to the property of the three deceased, I
have the honour to transmit herewith a memorandum by the
Administrator General from which it will be seen that the
total value of their estate was less than one hundred pounds.

A copy of Mr. Skene's report is being sent to Mr.
William Jacques of 33, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin, the
brother of the late Thomas Jacques, and Mr. William Mc Leish,
of Gaolhouse Jail, had been informed of the death of his
brother, Mr. Thomas Mac Gregor Mc Leish (alias Mac Gregor).

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

J. Shuster

111 W. 13th St. A 200

Reference, 3, O. 1934, 1st W.C.

Telegrams

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COPY

KITUI,

20th January 1906.

sir,

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I have the honour to submit the following report concerning the alleged poisoning of Messrs. Grey and Jacques.

During the first week of November a Swahili and several Wakamba porters arrived at this station and stated that they had been in the employ of Messrs. Grey and Jacques who had just died in the Kibei country, on the Kenya side of the Tana river. The Swahili said he had been with them last year and that they had been taken ill after a long hard march from Kibei towards the coast and had died. Whether that the deceased had travelled across the Tana in a northerly direction or southwards I am ignorant for the purpose of buying ivory.

They had exchanged some of their cattle, were on friendly terms with the natives, and were in the whole quite fairly well on this trading trip. After some however their troubles have set in, their misfortunes began. They had sheep and goats with them but would not eat either any and lived on guava honey, bananas and roots, which the cook said they themselves gathered in the bush. They had no tents or beds, but slept on the ground rolled in their blankets in the open. Then one of the porters fell ill with fever and vomiting and a few days afterwards another developed the same symptoms. They were so ill that they were unable to walk and decided to return to the Tana carried in their blankets slung

and natives. They told the cook that they thought the natives were bad because in the time they had bought from them they had stated to the cook that in his opinion he did not think the natives were poisoned, as they were on good terms with the natives. He said he thought their illness was due to the queer food they ate which he said even he himself would not have eaten. He and the porters reduced their rations of beans which the white men would not eat. The sick men then became delirious with moments of lucidity, and were carried by their porters to the Tana. They arrived in the Kibei country where Mr. Jacques died on the 14th of their arrival, about the middle of October. When Mr. Gray became aware of the death of his companion he arranged this with a Native in pencil, Mr. MacDermot, who he said the cook was to bring from Nairobi to join him, and that he was to pass through Mombasa. He instructed the cook to hand all Mr. Jacques' and his own effects to Mr. MacDermot, should he next day die. On the day following the last of which the cook of Mr. Jacques took place, Mr. Gray was found sitting blood. The cook buried both men side by side and placed stones on the graves. He and the porters then crossed the Tana and proceeded to Mombasa where Capt. Mr. MacGregor to whom he handed the money, cattle, trade goods and other possessions. The above is the story of the cook and the Wakamba porters.

The day following on which the cook arrived at Kitui, he was called before the station master at this station and accused the cook of having appropriated a gold ring and silver watch and a number of oranges. The cook was arrested and confined in a cell. On the evidence adduced it was found that the cook was not in fact at Nairobi, while the station master had been informed that the latter had neither

partner died and was in the U.S.A. therefore released him after having searched him without result.

Mr. McGregor further stated that he was in partnership with both the deceased and supported this statement by the production of a count book containing account in their joint names. He stated that he was proceeding to Nairobi with the property and effects of the deceased and was going claim his share of the partnership as soon as it could be accounted up. I therefore allowed Mr. McGregor to take the effects of the deceased to Nairobi, without delay taking any direct action in the matter, as both deaths had taken place in the Kenya Province, outside my jurisdiction.

The next I heard of Mr. McGregor was that he had returned to Lusaka, in his district, and had died there on December 21st. Mr. May, Assistant Collector, happened at the time to be near his camp and proceeded over the next day and buried the body. He took an inventory of all the property of the deceased and despatched it to this Station where it has since been sold, - a sum according to the instructions of the Administrator General, a part being sold locally and the remainder despatched to Durban. I questioned his servants as to the cause of his death and they said he suffered from fever and severe vomiting and that he had eaten nothing for several days. Among his effects I found a letter written by him, evidently a few days before his death, stating that he had been poisoned by the natives before returning to Africa, as follows:

"I have been ill for some time now and am unable to work. I was informed that a native had been sent to kill the natives who had not given me back my cattle. He used to send his servant to do the trading with the natives. Against his effects

and in ~~the~~ ^{the} morning he excepted to type of tea,
and wrote in a letter to his mother this fragment.
The provision was to burn a bag of rice or
coffee beans, and to add thereto finely mixed with
soot and dust, and then heat it in lumps packed over with
dirt. This was all.

I have quoted the circumstances which attended the
death of Mr. McGregor who was also said to have been poisoned
by the natives, in order to show how readily the natives
are accused. ~~Accusations~~ are in all probability only
the result of the carelessness of those who fall victims
to their own improvident use of life. If the natives had
known the facts of these three Europeans they would have
unquestionably saved their belongings, whereas no attempt
of rescue was made.

Have ~ .
SS/R. S. DODD,
LAWTON

13042

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MEMORANDUM.

At present I have recovered no property belonging to Mr. Grey separately. It is said to have been in partnership with General Jacques and McGregor. In the names of these two latter I have recovered property of a total value of £ 100/- I do not see any likelihood of more being recovered, and if there was in fact a partnership between the three, Mr. Grey's estate would only be entitled to a share in this £ 100/- though what his proportion would be I have no information to enable me to

S. J. R. T. Hamilton.

Enclo Vol. I.
In Sir D. Stewart's Des Stock
No. 200.

of April 4th, 1905.

Crown S. A. P.

13842

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12 May 1905

DRAFT.

Robert Gray
Map Cottage
Gatagara,
Bath, England
MINUTE.

Mr. Sommerville, 8/5
Mr. Read M/14
Mr. Salvage
Mr. Cox
Mr. Long
Mr. Graham
Sir H. Ormsoby
The Duke of Marlborough
of Lyttelton.

Sir,
With reference to the
arrangement mentioned
by Mr. M. G. Moore to
~~attend the Conference~~,
~~2nd, 3rd, 4th,~~
the Under Secretary of
State, Home Office, on
the 7th of February last,
I am directed by Mr.
Long, to inform you that
he would be pleased to
accompany me on
my report to the
Collector of the Native
District of the East
Africa Protectorate
on the subject of the
death of the late Mr.

~~Steamer Report~~
and 15/13842)

12 May 1905
12 May 1905
12 May 1905
12 May 1905

William Guan

Gray Gray

2. In forwarding the report, the Commissioner of the Protectorate informed Mr. G. M. Bell that he had caused a searching enquiry to be made in regard to the rumor that Mr. Gray and his companion had been poisoned, but that all that had been ascertained tended to show that they had died of fever. They were travelling in one of the most unhealthy districts of the Portuguese Protectorate; they were

shortly, of antiquity, devoid of the necessities of life; they ate food which their black followers refused to touch, and they did not find any protection from the inclemency of the weather. So they attempted to be on foot, often with their wives and their property, except loaded mules, after the death of small children, it being impossible to get them away, especially as Mr. & Mrs. Gregor (whose real name was Kheirah) had some fine rags

days' journey from
the place where his
companion contracted
this fatal illness.

3. I am also to add,
as part of a memorandum
by the administrator
General of the Protectorate
relative to the effects of
the deceased.

Dr

W. A.