

DISPATCH

EAST AFR. PROT.

22476

N<sup>o</sup> 22476

REC 29 JUL 05

Comm. Governor. No. 321  
Stewart

(Subject.)

1905

June 2

Mr DW. Noble.

Last previous Paper.

18345

No correspondence re his withdrawal of resignation. P.M.S. recommends he be allowed to withdraw the resignation, but that he should be required to serve on probation for 1 yr. Concurs & requests approval

(Minutes.)

Mc-Head  
Draft submitted.

1905 6/7

Further draft (to Comm:) herewith for comment. As the new Postmaster (see G.P.O. 11847) will get in course of time, it will be rather anomalous if Mr. Noble doesn't, but we have no need to come to a decision until his probationary appointment is confirmed.

? Remind G.P.O. on 11847 (bundle below)

5615  
11/7

at mee.  
H.J.R.

to R.K. Noble 7 July  
Annot. 301. 14 July

Next subsequent Paper

22476

Commissioner's Office,

22476

Nombasa,

Recd

June 2nd 1905 29 JUN 05

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

No. 321

Sir,

In obedience to the instructions contained in your despatch No. 187 of April 18th, I have the honour to submit the following report respecting the position of affairs in regard to Mr. Noble, the Postmaster at Nairobi.

2. As stated in my despatch No. 95 of February 30th, Mr. Noble offered to resign his appointment on certain conditions, which were accepted by the Marquess of Lansdowne in his telegram No. 72 of March 25th. In the meantime, however, Mr. Noble had reconsidered the matter, and requested to be allowed to withdraw his resignation. I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of his letter addressed to the Postmaster General.

3. At a later date I interviewed Mr. Noble personally in

order

H. H. Principal Secretary of State

for the Colonies,

Downing Street,

London, E. V.

22201  
Noble to Mr. Goring  
16 May 20  
Noble to Mr. Goring  
16 May 20  
Noble to Mr. Goring  
16 May 20  
Noble to Mr. Goring  
16 May 20

504  
569

5

order to ascertain what his wishes really were and whether he had any grievance. As a result of this interview I enclose a copy of a despatch in which Mr. Noble states that he is anxious to be permitted to withdraw his resignation, and that he is willing to serve wherever he may be sent in either this or the Uganda Protectorate. I also enclose a copy of a despatch from the Postmaster General recommending the course proposed, but suggesting that its acceptance should be made subject to Mr. Noble serving a further probationary period of one year to commence with his return from leave in or about December next. With this I am heartily in accord, and I venture to hope that you will assent.

4. With regard to the letter which Mr. Noble's father <sup>F. O. No. 365</sup> addressed to the Under Secretary of State, a copy of which was forwarded to me in Foreign Office despatch No. 125 of <sup>F. O. No. 440</sup> March 10th, I have the honour to enclose a report with enclosure by Mr. Geeling. I would invite your attention to the last paragraph from which you will see that Mr. Noble apparently deceived his father. Instead of expressing approval of Mr. Noble's work at Nairobi Mr. Geeling found it necessary to inform Mr. Noble on January 31st, that he had shown himself markedly incapable of efficiently performing

his

6  
his duties, and that the reasons which suggested his removal to Bombay might be held to justify more extreme measures were it not possible to provide employment for him elsewhere.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

J. Stewart

COPY.

Nairobi Post Office,

20th March 1905.

C O  
 22476  
 Recd  
 Recd 29 JUN 05

The Post Master General,  
 E. A. & U. Protectorates,  
 MOMBASA.

Sir,

In reply to your letter No. 85/05, I have the honour to state, in explanation of the passage in my telegram "Consider all previous correspondence cancelled" that I have changed my mind in regard to resigning the service and am now desirous of continuing in it and am perfectly willing to be moved from Nairobi.

This being the case, I shall be greatly obliged if you will do your best to influence H. M. Commissioner to allow me to withdraw from the position I had assumed.

Thanking you in anticipation and regretting the trouble I have caused you.

I have &c., &c.,

Sd/- D. W. Noble,

Postmaster.

Mombasa,

June 2nd

S/P D. STEWART.

No. 21

Reference G. O. despatch No. 127.  
 of April 1<sup>st</sup> h. our despatch No. 96  
 of Feb. 20th, P. O. Cal. No. 72  
 of March 25th & despatch No. 125  
 of March 10th.

Inclousures 5

received

by bag

*Received by H. Noble, Postmaster*  
 20th March 1905

Nairobi,

May 17th 1905.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that H. M. Commissioner has, in an interview, instructed me to inform you that he is willing to consider the withdrawal of my resignation subject to your recommendation, and also under the understanding that I agree to serve in both this and the Uganda Protectorate.

While assuring you that I am perfectly willing to do this I shall feel very thankful if you will recommend my being allowed to withdraw my resignation.

Thanking you in anticipation,

I have &c., &c.,

Sd/- D.W.Noble.

The Post Master General,  
E.A. & U. Protectorates,  
Mombasa.

The Post Master General.

Mr. D. W. Noble  
to

Enclosure No. 1

In Sir D. Stewart's despatch

No. 121 of June and 1905.

COPY.

General Post Office,  
Mombasa,  
20th May 1965

No. 25/05  
25

Sir,

In submitting the attached application in original from Mr. Noble, Post Master at Nairobi, for permission to withdraw his resignation, I have the honour to say that I have no objection to the course proposed provided that this is made subject to the condition regarding service in both the East Africa and Uganda Protectorates which Mr. Noble states he is willing to accept. I think, however, that it would be desirable to make Mr. Noble's further service in this Department subject to a probationary period of one year to commence with his return from leave, say, in December next.

2. A proposal to associate a withdrawal of resignation with a probationary period may seem somewhat unusual, but as explained in my letter No. 20 of the 1st instant Mr. Noble has shown himself markedly incapable of conducting the Nairobi Post Office where his duties are largely

H. M. Deputy Commissioner,  
Nairobi.

The Post Master General.

Mr. D. W. Noble

Incl. Encl. No. 2  
IN SIX D. STAMPS & RETURN  
NO. 221 OF 1965 2nd 1965.

of a supervising nature. I am inclined to think that if he is placed at some office where he would himself be under supervision his work would be better; or he might perform satisfactory service at some small Post office where he would have to do the whole of the work himself, and any deficiency would become at once apparent. This, however, is largely conjectural. I hope to obtain satisfactory work from Mr. Noble under one of the conditions indicated but there is, of course, no assurance that such will be the case. It seems therefore desirable to place him upon probation particularly as such probation whilst safeguarding the interests of this Department should stimulate his activity.

5. Mr. Noble will shortly be proceeding on leave and if the withdrawal of his resignation is permitted I propose, on his return, either to keep him at Mombasa under my personal supervision or to send him to Kampala to act as Post master there: the actual course pursued to depend upon future expediency which will be affected by the class of Europeans obtainable to fill the new appointments provided in the estimates for the current financial year.

I have &c. &c.,  
Ed/- J. Gosling,  
Post Master General.



Registered No. 85/05

20

MOMBASA.

1st May 1906

Sir:-

I have the honour to report as follows regarding the question raised in the letter of Mr. D. R. Noble of Red Hill, England, dated the 6th March 1906, forwarded under cover with the Foreign Office despatch No. 126 of the 10th idem.

2. Dealing first with the general principle involved it is obviously impossible in East Africa and Uganda to give any Postmaster a permanent station. It would be alike unfair for me to demand that a Postmaster should remain permanently at an unhealthy station, and unreasonable for him to expect to be stationed continuously at a healthy one. Arrangements have already been made for an increase in the European Staff, and further Europeans will be required as (and if) the country progresses, some of whom will have to serve at unhealthy posts, e.g., at Kisumu. Changes on account of health will be necessary from time to time and in this connection such a healthy station as Nairobi is far too valuable as a sanatorium for the Postmastership to be permanently vested in any one individual ..... The Principal Medical Officer recently laid stress upon the undesirability of Officers being permanently appointed to unhealthy places: if a man were able to look forward to a change there was, he said, less tendency to depression and therefore a better prospect of maintenance of health.

M. Deputy Commissioner

East Africa Protectorate

MOMBASA.

3.

H. M. Commissioner.

to

The Post Master-General

Inclosure No. 3

in Sir D. Stewart's despatch

No. 251 of June and 1905.

3. The question of Mr. Noble's removal from Nairobi did not, unfortunately, arise solely from the necessity of exchange of stations referred to above ..... I assumed control of this Department in April 1904 and visited Nairobi six weeks later. On this the occasion of my first visit I was surprised to find that a large proportion of the people I met had complaints to make of the local Post Office, some of which took the form of reflections upon the capacity and industry of the Postmaster. I spoke to Mr. Noble concerning this and also regarding his office which I found unsatisfactory. He admitted that there was a local prejudice against himself but declared that this, and also a complaint regarding his absence from the office during official hours, had no legitimate cause. He attributed the unsatisfactory work of the office to an incompetent and inadequate staff..... I made it clear to him that I expected efficient and satisfactory work and promised improvement in the staff, which I made as soon as possible, subsequently sending him two European clerks.

4. Several months passed but brought no practical improvement. Continued complaints were made by the public and blunders involving serious delay to a considerable correspondence were brought to my notice. Complaints were made from time to time by the Local Auditor, the Treasurer, the Medical Officer, the Military Authorities, the Acting Assistant Deputy Commissioner and the Sub-Commissioner for the Kenia Province. It was obvious that the majority of the mistakes and irregularities at Nairobi were due to inefficient supervision and I may mention the two following cases which came under my personal notice during my visit as illustrative of the kind of

Supervision

supervision that Mr. Noble exercised.

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- (a) A parcel, the addressee of which could not be found, had been kept on hand three months without any attempt being made to communicate with the sender, (there have been several cases of this sort). Two other parcels for Postal Agencies were also being detained without reason.
- (b) A telegram addressed to the Chairman of a local function sent with the object of its being read at the meeting, was, although received before the office closed for the day, not delivered till next morning. I found on personal investigation that the telegraph messengers made a practice of neglecting to deliver messages received just before closing time, keeping them until the following morning, and that there had been complaints of delay in this respect. Although this practice was known to Mr. Noble the only steps taken by him were to issue instructions for delivery to be made the same night, but failing altogether to see that his instructions were being carried out.

5. Towards the end of 1904 it became clear that Mr. Noble's removal from Nairobi was desirable for the credit of the Department. This could not, however, be readily accomplished as I had no European Postmaster with whom to replace him. The Assistant Postmaster General had recently arrived from England but there seemed to be a greater need of his services at the General Post Office (Mombasa) where a responsible European Assistant is urgently required. I accordingly decided to defer action pending the arrival of further European Officers.

6. Such were the circumstances when, in January 1905, Mr. Noble's engagement of marriage was announced. It seemed that despite a hint I had previously given him to

the effect that he might not go back to Nairobi on his return from leave, he still considered himself entitled to remain there and proposed marriage with that idea. It was impossible both on general grounds and on account of his incompetence to retain him permanently at Nairobi and I therefore thought it desirable to bring the matter to a head at once by his removal, even although it would be detrimental to other Departmental Interests to transfer the Assistant Postmaster General from Mombasa just then. In any case such temporary transfer would have to be arranged within a few months to bring the Nairobi Office to a state of efficiency before being given into the charge of a new Postmaster.

7. With regard to the reflections against myself, Mr. Noble (Senior) appears to be unaware that Mr. S. B. Gosling, whom he describes as the Postmaster of Mombasa, holds the appointment of Assistant Postmaster General at a salary which of necessity must always be greater than that of any Postmaster. Present deficiencies of European Staff oblige me to require him to take charge of a Post Office in addition to assisting in the ordinary executive work of the Department, but the duties for which he will ordinarily be employed are the Inspection of Offices and General Assistance in Departmental control. He cannot be permanently stationed either at Nairobi or elsewhere. .... The assumption that the Nairobi Postmastership will increase in value when (and if) that place becomes the Departmental Head Quarters is also erroneous. As already indicated I propose to locate no one Postmaster permanently at Nairobi, and when not filled by an Officer sent there for purpose for health the post would be occupied by a Junior Postmaster, or one whom it might be desirable for me to have under my immediate supervision. In fact the responsibilities

responsibilities of the Postmaster at the General Post Office (whether at Mombasa or Nairobi) are reduced by the presence of the Postmaster General, and the Postmastership of the Departmental Headquarters is of less importance than that of a District Office.

8. In view of the fact that it is stated that I have expressed approval of Mr. Noble's work at Nairobi I am enclosing herewith a copy of a letter which I addressed to him on the 31st of January. This is the communication mentioned in his letter to his father upon which the complaint to the Secretary of State is based. I submit that the remarks in the penultimate paragraph admit of no possible misunderstanding, and that the fact of Mr. Noble (Senior) making such a statement as "Mr. Gealing told my son he was very pleased with all he saw at the Nairobi Office and with its arrangements" clearly indicates that his son is concealing from him the actual state of affairs.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

  
POSTMASTER GENERAL.

COPY.

16

General Post Office,  
Mombasa.

31st January 1905.

No. 85/05.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 30th instant in which you object to be transferred from Nairobi to Mombasa and request that the matter may be placed before His Majesty's Commissioner, I have the honour to inform you that the question has already been discussed with Sir Donald Stewart who approves of the action I propose.

With regard to your claim that your letter of appointment entitles you to be permanently stationed at Nairobi, I would draw your attention to the following words in the fourth paragraph of that communication:-

" You must understand that you enter the service of that Protectorate subject to all regulations affecting it which are now in force or which may be promulgated from time to time"

I further quote for your information the following extract from the existing regulations for the employment of Officers in the British Protectorates in Uganda and East Coast of Africa

" The post at which an Officer is employed is determined by the Commissioner who may also, at his discretion, transfer him either permanently or temporarily from one post to another."

It will be clear to you from the foregoing that your contention cannot be admitted.

With reference to your statements regarding the growing importance of Nairobi &c. this is the very reason why I am  
unable

H. E. Commissioner.

The Commissioner General

to R

D. W. Nott

Postmaster

Mombasa

unable to allow you to remain at that Station. You have shown yourself markedly incapable of efficiently conducting the work of the Nairobi Post Office, and your removal which is necessary in the public interest and on general grounds of the efficiency of the service, would have been arranged before had any one been available to replace you.

I am disposed to take a lenient view of your shortcomings which are possibly due in a large measure to your youth & inexperience, and I am hoping that at Mombasa where you will be under my personal supervision you will do better. I should perhaps point out, however, that the reasons which suggest your removal to Mombasa might be held to justify more extreme measures were I not able with the concurrence of H. M. Commissioner to provide employment for you other than that upon which you have hitherto been engaged.

I have &c., &c.,

Sd/- J. Gosling,  
Post Master General.

Comm  
22476  
18

DRAFT.

D. R. Noble & Co.

MINUTE.

- Mr. *Whe* 4/7
- Mr. *Reed* 4
- Mr. *Antrobus*
- Mr. *Cox*
- Mr. *Lucas*
- Mr. *Graham*
- Sir *M. Ommamney*
- The Duke of Marlborough*
- Mr. *Lytelton*

18345

*for answer*

*my July 05*  
 Will refer to the letter  
 from this dept. of the  
 7th ult. I am directed  
 by Mr. P. Lytton  
 to inform you that  
 he has now received  
 a report on the case of  
 your son Mrs D. R.  
 Noble from the H.M.  
 Commission for the  
 t. before Patrick  
 It appears from this  
 report that you were  
 misinformed, mistaken  
 or glancing that.

*Capt Comm 301. 74 July*

INSTRUMENT NO. 1  
IN S.D. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT  
NO. 121 OF JUNE END 1905.

Mr. D. W. Noble.



your son's work as  
Postmaster at Nairde  
had been satisfactory to  
the Govt. On the contrary  
the manner in which he  
discharged his duties  
might have been held  
to justify more extreme  
measures if it had not  
been possible to move him  
to a place of less responsibility  
at Mombasa.

Your son has now  
asked to be allowed to  
withdraw his resignation  
expressing his wish at the same  
time to serve in any part of  
the East Africa or Uganda  
Particulars.

His request has been  
granted on this order

to be standing, but he will  
be required to serve on  
probation for one year <sup>19</sup>  
after his return from  
leave, and his conduct  
-ance in the service will  
depend upon the  
manner in which he  
discharges his duties  
during that period.



Rha

Comm. S.A.P.  
22476

20

14 July 1905

DRAFT

S.A.P. No. 301

Sir,

I have the hon. to ask

the rect. of your despatch no.

321 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June

last, and to inform

you that I approve of

the proposal that his

S. W. Noble should be

permitted to withdraw

his resignation of his

appl. as a Postmaster

in the Protectorate service

on the understanding that

his appl. will be for one

probation for one year

from the date of his

return to East Africa

after his next leave of

absence and that he

will be liable to re-appoint

D. Stewart

MINUTE.

Mr. Biddowley 11/7

Mr. Read H

Mr. Antrobus.

Mr. Cor.

Mr. Lucas.

Mr. Graham.

Sir M. Ommanney.

The Duke of Marlborough

Mr. Lyttelton.

for comm

S. W. Noble 14/7  
(2247) 67

Remaind G.P.O. n. 1847  
27.

any part of the East  
Africa or Uganda

Protectorate.

2. Inasmuch as you will have  
observed from my  
dep. no. 215 of the  
8th of May last, that  
I have approved of the  
offer of an incremental  
scale of salary in the  
case of the additional  
Postmaster for whom  
provision has been  
made in the Estimates.

This arrangement will not  
necessarily apply to the  
comptroller, but  
I have to request that  
when you report, towards  
the end of the year 1906,  
upon the advisability  
of confirming his  
probationary appointment, you  
will inform me whether

you are able to  
recommend the grant

of a similar scale of  
increments in his case.

3. I enclose copy of a  
letter which has been  
addressed to Mr. D. R.

North.

L