

E. AFRICA

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7 OCT

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COLONIAL

1920

POSTAGE

RAILWAY COMMISSIONER

Last previous Paper
No.

It refers to Reg. No. 1000

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Colonial Paper

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10th September 1920.

Dear Sir Henry Thornton,

In the absence of Lord Milner, who is at present in the country, I ventured to open your letter to him of the 7th, and forwarded it to him. He has now sent me a note in reply and asks me to say that he is very much obliged for the pains you have taken about the matter in question. Lord Milner has not yet discovered a suitable man to report on the Uganda Railway, but he thinks on the whole he will follow your advice and at any rate ask General Hammond to see him later on.

Yours very truly,

W.C.T.

Sir Henry Thornton, K.B. . .

Great Eastern Railway
General Manager's Office

31

Liverpool Street Station, London, E.C. 2.

GRAPHIC ADDRESS
AN. RAIL LONDON

TELEPHONE
ON WALL 412
3140.

7th September, 1920.

Please quote in
this reference

Dear Lord Milner,

I have received a letter from General Hance, whom you will recall was connected with the Transportation Section of the Peace Congress at Versailles, recommending a General Hammond for the post in Africa. It seems that General Hance was erroneously informed that I was looking for someone to go out to Africa and wrote me directly in connection with the matter. I enclose copy of his letter in order that you may see what he says.

General Hammond was brought to Paris by General Maah when the latter was appointed Inspector General of Transportation. He is relatively young, being I think somewhere between 35 and 40; is very energetic; a good Engineer; understands the Tropics, but I am afraid is deficient in commercial vision in perhaps some of the bigger qualities of mind which would be expected in such a man as you desire. On the other hand, it may be that he has developed as the result of the broadening experience he has had since the Armistice, and consequently, I do not want to do him an injustice. I think it might be quite worth while for you to see him in order that you may make up your own mind from a personal interview, and, furthermore, take another opinion than my own, as doubtless someone in the War Department can tell you more about his recent work than is possible for me.

I have written to General Hance to say that I have nothing to do with the appointment and have forwarded his letter to those who are charged with that responsibility.

I am told that the present General Manager of the Furness Railway, Mr. Speakman, is a very good chap and I am privately making enquiries in regard to him.

I hope you will not think I am unduly troubling you in regard to this post, but I am very anxious you should secure a good man, although, on the other hand, as I said in the first place, it is exceedingly difficult to find a person with the necessary qualifications.

Yours sincerely,

J. W. Thompson

Since writing the above I have found that Speakman is not an engineer. Therefore I don't think he can fill the bill.

Would you send Thompson a line saying that I am very much obliged for his taking so much pains about the matter. I am still not satisfied, I think I shall have to advise you of my own selection.

(COPY)

"Oakleigh"
New Chapel,
Lingfield. Surrey.

PERSONAL.

5. 9. 20.

My dear Thornton,

I understand you are on the look out for a man to report on the railways of East Africa and that Brigadier General Hammond's name had been brought to your notice for the job.

As Hammond has been serving more or less under me now for nearly 18 months, I am writing to let you know what his recent experience has been and to put in a very strong recommendation in his favour.

After a brief spell as Allied Railway Advisor to a political Mission to Poland, Hammond went early last year as President of an Allied Railway Mission to Poland, the British section of which was 10 officers. The job was to advise the Polish Railway administration, to find out their most urgent requirements, to decide in detail on the orders to be placed for a £500,000 relief credit for Railway reconstruction, to facilitate international traffic, and generally to report on railways and waterways and to keep our end up. Hammond did this job exceedingly well. His mission was by far the best organised of the missions we sent to Central Europe.

In February this year, Hammond was selected to be head of the Communications Department of the Silesian Plebiscite Commission, where he controls the railways, waterways, Posts and Telegraphs, having British, French and Italian Officers under him. The position has been one of great difficulty, not only with the Germans but on account of the action of some of our allies, but Hammond has handled two or three ticklish crises with commendable tact but firmness.

You will see, therefore, that he has had a considerable broadening of general experience since the armistice, and with his experience on Colonial Railways both in South and West Africa, and knowledge of the tropics - where he keeps fit - I can confidently recommend him for any railway job in East Africa. His present job can be given up by him before the end of the year.

If you would like to see him I would fix up for him to come over for a few days.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd) H. O. MARSH.

South African Railways

and report on these. Suggestions made to me by Sir Eric Geddes in a conversation in the Cabinet room on August 1933.

From the

to the

C. J. F. Anderson

and I should have to see

Hoy - General Manager of South African Railways.



FELIX HOTEL
FELIXSTOWE

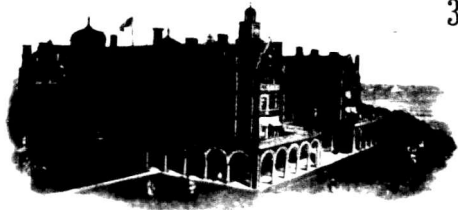
Saturday

Mr. Lord Milner.

I understand from [unclear]
 he is reluctantly compelled to decline the
 mission, which you might have felt
 bound to offer him I am sorry to hear
 he represented, in my opinion, more nearly
 qualification you require than anyone I
 suggest at the moment in [unclear] &
 [unclear]. I think I should tell you, in con-
 sultance, that his conclusion was largely in-
 fluenced by the fact that he, [unclear] man-
 [unclear], Sir Herbert [unclear], will in all probability
 be asked to take [unclear] & [unclear].

rain commences for the railways of them
tations with the government in regard to
future, which will necessitate his giving
the direction of his railway for the next
or eight months. Under these circumstances
it would hardly be fair for one of the
most valuable & able assistants to
for a protracted period. This, I may
is a development which has not
on the horizon in the last few days.
Sylvester can not tell you this, and
get a credit, but I wanted you to
stand the position.

If you have not yet found any
and my advice is still devoted to
get for your consideration. Lighter
soon now employed at the Memorial
Department in the Mechanical Engineering
direction. He was at O & I during
in a responsible post and did well.



ELLIS HOTEL

ELLINSTOWN

begin his career on the Great Eastern Rail-
way but left because promotion was
slow. I think he was on some Indian
railway before the war. He is getting on
in years and I think is just under
left, but he is youthful in body. As
soon as I return I will get more
information about him. I don't re-
member he fairly measures up to what
you want but I don't want to consent
that foolish till I am sure. He has
Bromell, because he has some, and

main commands for the railways of these
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FELIX HOTEL

FELIXSTOWE

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I think he fairly measures up to what
you want but I don't want to comment
that footed till I am once I like him
Dismell, because he has courage and

is not a "damned fool" which con-
firms your
good deal.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. Whitton

Great Eastern Railway,
General Manager's Office,
Liverpool Street Station, London, E.C. 4.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
G.E. RAIL, LONDON

TELEPHONE
LONDON WALL 412
3140.

2nd August.

1920.

Please quote
this reference.

Dear Lord Milner,

In my last letter to you I told you I would get further particulars with regard to Lightly Simpson, whom I suggested for the post you have open in Africa.

Simpson I should say is between 48 and 50. He is a grandson of a former Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway, studied engineering at Cambridge University, entered the employ- ment of the Great Eastern Railway, and finally rose to the post of Wagon Works Superintendent at Temple Mills. He left the Great Eastern and went on one of the Argentine Railways as In- spective Superintendent. At the outbreak of war he came back to England and was in charge of mechanical engineering matters under the Director-General of Transportation in France. In the latter post he did exceedingly well and was regarded as one of the best men in his department. He is now in charge of mechanical en- gineering matters at the Ministry of Transport.

Simpson is a rather older man than I would care to suggest, but he is of powerful physique, in good health, and is really younger than his actual age would indicate. He has ability, courage and tenacity, in addition to which he has had a certain ex- perience in railway work in new countries. He does not quite come up to the standard of Major Salinger, but, on the other hand, I feel quite safe in recommending him for the post you have in mind. At any rate, I feel justified in suggesting that you should have an interview with him. I have not mentioned the matter to him in any way. Will you kindly let me know if you wish me to suggest any other names to you.

Yours sincerely,

H. W. Whitton

5 August, 1940.

Many thanks for your two letters about Lightly Simpson. From all you say of him, I do not feel quite sure that he is the sort of man I want. About your first recommendation, Szlumper, I had no doubt at all and, as you know, offered him the post. It was unlucky that he could not take it but, under the circumstances, I perfectly understand his reluctance and there is no feeling on my part that he behaved otherwise than quite well in the matter. It is just bad luck.

At the moment I have one or two possible candidates in view and, having regard to this fact and to what I have already said about him, I should prefer our not saying anything to Lightly Simpson. But if it is not troubling you too much, I should be grateful if you would still continue to turn the

over in your mind and see whether you can make
other suggestions in case - which I think quite
likely - the man now recommended to me from other
quarters turns out not to be the right man, or not
willing to take the job.

With many thanks for your help, and hoping
not trespassing too much on your good nature,

Milner

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With many thanks for your help, and hoping
not trespassing too much on your good nature,

Mulmer

L. & S. W. RY
DOCKS & MARINE MANAGERS' OFFICE,
SOUTHAMPTON

21 VII 1920

Dear Lord Milner

I have to refer to the interview you were good enough to give me last Monday, and to the requirement of the Government for a man to go to East Africa to report upon the Railway position there.

I have carefully considered the proposal, and have discussed it with my General Manager (Sir Herbert Parker), but in view of the intricacy of home Railway affairs at the moment he is very loath to ask the Directors to sanction me, absent for such an extended period, and I, too, felt that duty to my employers demands that I shall set aside the prospect of offering myself for what would, I am sure, prove to be a very interesting mission.

I hope



L. & S. W. R.
SHIPS & MARINE MANAGERS OFFICE
SOUTHAMPTON

that this decision will cause you no inconvenience
and that if at a more opportune time I can render
any service to you or to the Country you will not
fail to call for my services

Regretting my inability to carry the
matter further, I am

Very truly
yours

Your obedient servant,

Richard B. [Signature]

Hon. The Viscount Melbourn

Colonial Office

40

16.7.20

Dear Major Szlumper,

I think you have heard something from Sir H. Thornton about our needs in East Africa, and I am encouraged to hope that you may be willing to undertake a commission there on behalf of the Government. I should be very glad of a short talk with you on the subject, if it was convenient for you to come and see me here at 3 o'clock on Monday next, the 19th.

Yours etc.,

(SD)MILNER

Mr Gilbert S. Szlumper,

Docks Manager,

London and S.W. Railway,

Southampton.

may be the biggest at the moment but if for any reason you don't want him please let me know & I will try to produce another.

I am leaving town tomorrow & will not be back till the middle of next week.

Yours sincerely

G. W. Thomson

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"EASTMAN RAIL LONDON"
TELEPHONE NOS
LONDON WALL 417
" " 7140



GENERAL MANAGERS' OFFICE,
LIVERPOOL ST. STATION,
LONDON E.C.2.

July 14. 1926.

Dear Lord Milner:

I have found a man I am prepared to unqualifiedly recommend for Africa but I am not sure if you can get him. He is Gilbert D. Szlamper, the son of the Chief Engineer of the London and South Western Ry. He was secretary of the Railway Executive Committee during the war and is now Asst. Supt. of the L. S. W. Ry. at Southampton. As a matter of fact he is in training for the post of Superintendent

from where - He is well in general
I should like to see a book for
the post in Africa. Unfortunately,
his prospects here are very good and
he is a coming man in his rail-
way. He is likely to be the General
Manager one day & I think he might
take 6 months leave to make the
report & then you & he could decide
afterwards if he is to go perman-
ently. Good men are not cheap
and men of ordinary ability for
such work as you have in mind
are no good at any price.

His address is:

Majors Gilbert S. Sphumper,

Docks Manager,

London & South Western Ry -

Southampton.

Perhaps, if you agree, you will
send him a line under personal
cover & tell him when & where you
will see him. I have told him all
I can about the job but it would
be better if you could meet. I
feel quite comfortable about
Sphumper, he is really the

W

42

Great Eastern Railway
General Managers Office

Liverpool Street Station London E.C.2.

10th July.

1920.

Please quote
this reference

Dear Lord Milner,

I hope you will forgive me for not having replied earlier to your recent letter regarding a man for the African Railways, but I have been out of town more or less and, furthermore, I wanted to think about it a little before writing you.

I have not been able to think of a suitable person thus far as I will not recommend anyone unless I am absolutely sure he is what you want. The proposal is most alluring for a young man of capacity, courage and a little of the spirit of adventure. What you want will be hard to find, as the qualities involved are not often found in a relatively young man. You require a man who is fundamentally an Engineer, but who has an all-round railway experience, coupled with tact, courage, sound judgment and vision. If you will give me a few days more, I will see what can be produced. If you had asked me three months ago I should have named exactly the man for the post, but unfortunately he is now well placed in Canada.

In conclusion, please do not think you are troubling me for it is always a real pleasure to serve you in any way that I can.

Yours sincerely,

A. W. Thompson

17, Great College Street

4. 7. 20

Henry Thornton, K. B. E.

My dear Thornton,

I hope you will forgive my bothering you in the following matter:

We want a really good railway man to go out to East Africa and advise us about railway developments there.

In the first instance it is a report upon the present position all round that is required - condition of line, extensions, rates, railway policy generally, especially in view of the fact that several Colonies are interested - viz. (1) Uganda, which is greatly interested in and entirely dependent upon the railway (it is called after it "Uganda Railway") and (2) the British East Africa Protectorate (now renamed "Kenya Colony"), which actually administers the line as it lies entirely within its borders.

But, while the immediate object is simply a report, there are other possibilities in prospect.

I have decided that in future the existing Uganda railway and its extensions must be administered

by

44

India Office,

Whitehall, S.W.1.

16th September, 1920.

My dear Thornton,

The Viceroy replied to Mr. Montagu's telegram that the question whether General Freeland could be spared was primarily one for the Board of the Bombay Baroda & Central India Railway Company.

Mr. Montagu accordingly consulted the Chairman, and has heard from him that he much regrets that in view of the shortage of senior officers he cannot spare General Freeland. Will you tell Lord Milner, and say Mr. Montagu is sorry his wishes could not be met.

Yours sincerely,

H. C. Thornton, Esq., C.M.B. C.V.O.

1st September, 1920

Dear Thornton,

Sir Eric Geddes has seen your note of the 21st August, and in view of the fact that Lord Milner wishes to deal with the matter at once, and desires Sir Eric to write, Sir Eric thinks he cannot improve on his previous suggestion.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Gordon

C. Thornton, Esq., M.A., F.R.S.,
Colonial Office,
Downing Street, S.W.

30th August, 1920

My dear Sir,

You will remember my sending you a letter which I received from Eric Gasson's Private Secretary about the rails plan for Uganda. We have now had the enclosed telegram from Coryndon. Would you like any action taken on it?

Yours truly,

H.C.T.

The Hon.

Viscount Milner, C. S. I., C. C. S.

23rd August, 1920.

Dear Private Secretary,

I have your letter of the 21st August, asking for Sir Eric Geddes' recommendations about a Railway-man who would be suitable to be sent to report on the Uganda Railway.

Sir Eric is away for a short time and I am writing to let you know that I will show him your letter and get him to let Lord Milner have his opinion as soon as he returns, which I expect will be at the beginning of next month.

I hope that this delay will not inconvenience Lord Milner. For the present, as far as possible, Sir Eric is to be on a late holiday, and I do not wish to refer anything to him which can possibly wait till his return.

Yours sincerely,

[Handwritten signature]

Private Secretary to
The Hon. Viscount Milner,
C.S.E., G.C.S.I.,
Colonial Office.

21st August 1920.

Dear Private Secretary,

A week or so ago Lord Milner asked Sir Eric Goddard whether he could recommend a Railway-man, who would be suitable to be sent out to report on the Uganda railways. I believe Sir Eric mentioned some names, but later on he asked me personally to ask Lord Milner not to take any further action until Sir Eric had an opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. Unfortunately during the rush of work the last week or so Lord Milner had no opportunity of speaking to Sir Eric on the matter. He is now, however, anxious to go ahead and would be glad if Sir Eric could let him know what he had in his mind on the subject.

Yours sincerely,

H.C.F.

The Private Secretary to

21st August 1920.

Dear Private Secretary,

A week or so ago Lord Milner asked Sir Eric Geddes whether he could recommend a Railway-man who would be suitable to be sent out to report on the Uganda railway. I believe Sir Eric mentioned some names, but later on he asked me personally to ask Lord Milner not to take any further action until Sir Eric had an opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. Unfortunately during the rush of work the last week or so Lord Milner had no opportunity of speaking to Sir Eric on the matter. He is now, however, anxious to go ahead and would be glad if Sir Eric could let him know what he has in his mind on the subject.

Yours sincerely,

H. S. P.

The Private Secretary to

Sir Eric Geddes.

5th August, 1920

Dear Tolerton,

Sir Eric Geddes told me the other day that he was anxious to see Lord Milner with reference to the appointment of a railway expert to report on the Uganda Railway. He asked me to tell Lord Milner that he would be glad if the appointment could be held up until he had had an opportunity of speaking to him on the subject. Will you kindly tell Sir Eric that Lord Milner will not do anything further in the matter until he has seen him and hopes to have a word with Sir Eric the next time they meet at the Cabinet?

Yours sincerely,

R. H. Tolerton, Esq., D. S. O., M. C.