

DESPATCH

EAST AFR. PROT.
No. 36314

36314

2-2-9

Inventor. No.
Jackson 522

(Subject.)

1905
5 Feb

Destruction of Nairobi Post Office
by fire.

Last previous Paper.

See report on ... by P. M. G. Requests
sanction to write off ... 11 annas the amount ...
remarks as to repairs ... by the ... of ...

(Minutes)

Mr. Head

Appears - & expresses satisfaction
at the energy & judgment shown
by Mr. ...

M. 12/10

at once

H. J. R.

12/10

Amad 462 18 Oct.
60p ... to amount off 10 Oct 91

Next subsequent Paper

31113

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE

No. 502

30544
COMMISSENER'S OFFICE

Mombasa

September 14th 1906

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a despatch with enclosures which I have received from the Post Master General reporting the destruction by fire of the Post Office at Nairobi and requesting sanction to write off the sum of twenty eight rupees and eleven annas, the amount lost.

2. Very good work was performed by various Government officials during the fire which was of a disastrous character, the loss to private property being estimated at seventy five thousand rupees. Not the least of those who rendered valuable services was Mr. Oliver, the Post Master, who succeeded in saving all the records and general effects.

Rs. 28-11-0

M. Principal Secretary of State

for the Colonies

Downing Street

London, S.W.

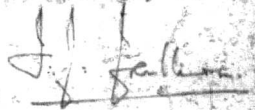
effects of his office. I have therefore the honour to
recommend that the small sum mentioned by Mr. Gosling be
written off as an unavoidable loss.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,



(In the absence of H. M. Commissioner)

36314

BRITISH EAST AFRICA AND UGANDA

12 OCT 1905

62

Registered No 946/05
38

GENERAL POST OFFICE,

MOMBASA,

Dated 12th September 1905.In any further correspondence on this subject
the above number should be quoted.

Sir:-

With reference to the telegram received from
R.M. Sub-Commissioner at Nairobi on the 1st instant
reporting the destruction by fire of several buildings
in Victoria Street, Nairobi, including the Post Office,
I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a report
by the Acting Postmaster at Nairobi describing the
occurrence and the steps taken to save the Post Office
effects and provide for the temporary carrying on of
the Post and Telegraph business elsewhere.

On receipt of the telegram referred to, I at
once proceeded to Nairobi and was very pleased to find
on arrival that Mr. Oliver, the Acting Postmaster, had
been both cool headed and extremely energetic in saving
the valuables and general effects of his Office; and
had afterwards dealt very promptly and wisely with the
situation created by the burning of the building. By
his efforts, and with the able assistance of the officials
of the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Department,
Post and Telegraph business was resumed within 24 hours
of the ordinary time of opening of the Office.

H. H. Deputy Commissioner,
East Africa Protectorate,
MOMBASA.

Mombasa

September

1905

SIR D. SPENSARD

No. 602

Reference. 111.

Inclosures 2.

Respected

by bag

No 28 11 Last 5 days at Nairobi
Cable Mombasa & wire 2/6

3. The Post Office building was the property of the Administration, having been purchased from the late Mrs. Foustead; it was intended to be used on completion of the new Office as quarters for European clerks and in this respect it would appear that some provision will be necessary in the Estimates for the ensuing financial year. In regard to the registered and other letters in the Office at the time, and the Office records, apparently everything was saved: it is possible that a few articles may have been overlooked but nothing had been found missing up to the time of my leaving Nairobi.....

With regard to the stamps and cash I was assured on my arrival, that everything had been saved, but found that the accounts had not yet been balanced. When this was done a deficiency of Rs. 26-11-0 was discovered in the stock of the counter clerk Mackertich. I reported this to the Assistant Auditor at Nairobi who thereupon made an audit of the stamps and cash and found a total shortage of Rs. 26-2-6 (a copy of Mr. Bradney's report is enclosed). The Acting Postmaster however disputes any loss having occurred in ^{the} stamps and cash under his immediate charge and the only question to be considered is therefore the loss by the counter clerk (Mr. Mackertich) which Mr. Oliver places at Rs. 8-11-0. Mr. Mackertich is very young and although it would seem, from my enquiries upon the spot, that he had ample time in which to place the stamps entrusted to his care in safe custody some allowance should, I think, be made for his not unnatural excitement, and the confusion which must, to some extent, always prevail in case of fire requiring the hurried removal of effects at night. In these circumstances I would recommend that the amount be written off as an unavoidable loss.

4. In order to provide for the housing of the Post Office pending the erection of the new Post Office building for which partial provision is made in the current estimates, I have, with the concurrence of the Sub-Commissioner, arranged for the renting of the basement and out buildings of the Masonic Hall. The terms of tenancy, which are as per copy of draft agreement enclosed, provide for the letting of the premises to this Department for 9 months at a monthly rental of Rs. 50/-, with the proviso that the tenancy can be terminated on this side at an earlier date by giving one month's notice. This period of nine months should allow ample time for the erection of the new building and I trust that you will approve of the action taken.

5. With reference to ^{the} services rendered on this occasion by Mr. Oliver, the Acting Postmaster, I intend to recommend that they be recognized by his being placed upon the grade of European Postal Clerks and Telegraphists (salary £.160 x £.8 to £.200) as from the date of the occurrence. This will give him an immediate increment of Rs. 50 per mensem. I am, however, deferring my communication in this regard until after the 1st instant, as in the event of Mr. Houlahan failing to arrive from South Africa on that date the appointment offered him will lapse and the proposed promotion of Mr. Oliver could then be accomplished without departure from the arrangements of the current estimates.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Sd.) J. COSLING

POSTMASTER GENERAL

COPY

Post Office,
Nairobi, 5th September 1906

The Postmaster General
British East Africa and Uganda
Nairobi.

65

Sir,

In connection with the destruction by fire of the Post Office, Nairobi, on the morning of the 1st September 1906 I beg to report as follows:-

Between the hours of 2 and 3 a.m., I was aroused by the explosion of cartridges and the blowing of askaries' whistles and on looking out of the window noticed the glare of a large fire in the immediate vicinity. I dressed and going into the street found that Payne's Hotel was on fire. I watched the progress of the fire until the hotel was completely destroyed and the adjacent building had become ignited. When I found that there was no hope of this building being saved and that the direction of the wind was blowing made it very evident that the fire would spread I decided that it was advisable to remove the valuables and letters from the Post Office. I gathered the staff residing on the premises and despatched an urgent note to the Sub-Commissioner informing him briefly of the state of affairs and of what I intended to do and asked for assistance to remove and guard the contents of the office. I then instructed the clerks in charge of valuables to attend to their safes and drawers and remove all cash, stamps, registered letters etc.,. This was done and the collection of valuables put into three or four bags which were sealed and placed in the carriage of the Sub-Commissioner (who had arrived) and an armed guard placed over them. This, as I then thought, placed all valuables in safe keeping and the attention of the staff was turned to letters, records, telegraph instruments etc. These, with the assistance of men supplied by the Sub-Commissioner, were removed and as there was no hope of

No. 602 of September 16th 1906.

IN SIR J. STEWART'S DESTRUCTION

Enclosure No. 1

the building escaping destruction the removal of general effects was continued until it was no longer safe to remain in the building. By this time practically every-thing had been removed but unfortunately in the hurry in which it was done several articles of furniture were damaged. When it was impossible to do anything further in the building a move was made to collect and arrange records etc., which were scattered about. While this was being done I found that the bag containing the counter clerk's (Mr. Mackertich) stock of stamps and stamp cash was lying ~~lying~~ unsealed among the bags of papers, stationery, etc., I had the bag placed in a safe, the keys of which I retained.

As soon as the fire had burnt out arrangements were made by the Sub-Commissioner to have the articles belonging to the Post Office removed to the European cricket pavilion which had been selected as being the most suitable available building to carry on postal business in. With the able assistance of the Public Works Department the move was made and as soon as letters and books could be placed in order business with the public was resumed. As the result of an exceedingly smart piece of work on the part of Mr. Moran, the Telegraph Line Inspector, the wire was led into the pavilion and communication with Mombasa and Kisumu restored at 12.30 a.m.

When the Office was fairly straight the cash, stamps, registered letters etc., were checked, with the exception of a shortage in the Counter clerk's stock of stamps everything was found to be correct. This shortage - Rs. 28-11-0 - in my opinion is due to the semi-darkness, excitement and confusion that existed and the hurry in which the removal was made. I attach Mr. Mackertich's report regarding the loss.

I cannot conclude without informing you of the valuable assistance afforded me by the Sub-Commissioner, the Officer in charge of Public Works, and the staff of this Office.

I have &c., &c.

(Sd.) H. Oliver

POSTMASTER

Nairobi,

5th September 1906

To

The Postmaster

Nairobi.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that the only way in which I can account for the shortage is that it may have been lost or stolen on the morning on which the fire took place as an skari who assisted me in removing my stock of stamps and cash out of the office informed me that he was taking the same to the Sub-Commissioner's trap but afterwards found that he had left the bag containing the stamps etc., next to the railings in the street without any one to guard it.

On Monday afternoon the Auditor checked my stock and reports that there was Rs. 23-6-2 short.

Sir, I hope this will prove a satisfactory report regarding the above mentioned question.

I have &c., &c.

(Sd.) W. Mackertich.

No. 42.

Branch Local Audit Office,
Nairobi, 5th September 1905.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit for your information the following statement on a survey of the Imprest at the Nairobi Post Office made by me yesterday afternoon:-

Amount of Imprest	Rs. 2000- 0 - 0
Stamps cash, vouchers etc., found by me.....	" 1944-13 - 6
<hr/>	
Shortage	Rs. 55- 2 - 6

Details of balance found were as follows:-

Value of cash stamps etc. with Postmaster Rs. 1871-4-0

Value of cash stamps with Counter Clerk " 274-1-6

(This includes Rs. 19-12-0 credited him for petty expenses shown in his cash book.)

Value of cash stamps with Telegraph Clerk Rs. 82-10
cash

Value of stamps with Postman
(viz. 3 with Rs. 8-10-0 each) " 16-14

Rs. 1944-13-6

The Money order cash which is kept separately was also examined by me; I found the correct amount in hand.

The amount short of Rs. 55- -6 was lost during the recent fire here.

The matter will form the subject of a report to the Local Auditor.

I have &c.,

(Sd.) G. T. Bradney

Assistant Local Auditor.

The Postmaster General,

Mombasa.

Memorandum of agreement made this sixth day of September Nineteen hundred and five between Richard George Bland (of the Stores Department Uganda Railway), J _____ D _____ Mackay (Captain 3rd Kings African Rifles) and W _____ J _____ Radford (Medical Officer at Nairobi) being respectively the Worshipful Master, and the two Wardens of the Lodge Harmony (Nairobi) of the Society of Freemasons, hereinafter called the Lessors of the one part, and John Thomas Goaling, Postmaster General of East Africa and Uganda Protectorates, hereinafter called the Lessee of the other part, "witnesseth:-

1. The Lessors being tenants of the building known as the Masonic Hall situated in Victoria Street Nairobi, with the premises thereto attached, under an agreement with Mr. J.P. Bhedwar dated the 30th of June Nineteen hundred and five, and registered at _____ Number _____ terminable on the 31st of May Nineteen hundred and six, and having under the said agreement power to sublet, hereby agree to lease to the aforesaid Lessee the whole of the basement and out-houses of the aforesaid Masonic Hall for the period from the sixth of September Nineteen hundred and five until the 31st of May Nineteen hundred and six for a monthly rental of Rupees Fifty.
2. The Lessee agrees to rent the aforesaid premises for the aforesaid period and to pay therefor the said monthly rent of Rupees Fifty.
3. And it is further agreed that the said Lessee on tendering to the said Lessors one complete months notice or paying one months rent in lieu of such notice shall have the right to terminate his tenancy of the said premises without paying any further compensation.
4. The said Lessee undertakes upon the termination of the said _____ said _____

said tenancy to leave the said building and premises in the same condition as at the time when entered into by him, and any damage or alteration made in the course of adoption of the building for use as a temporary Post Office shall be made good by the said Lessee.

As Witness the hands of the Parties:-

Comme
36315

E.A.P

71

DRAFT.

E.A.P No 462.

13 October 05

O.L.B

MINUTE.

- Me. *the 13/10/05*
- Mr. *[scribble]*
- Mr. Anthonis.
- Mr. Cox.
- Mr. Lucas.
- Mr. Graham.
- Mr M. Omswoy.
- The Duke of Marlborough.
- Mr. Lyttellon.

Sir
 I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your draft No 502 of the 15th ult. relating to the deduction of War Office Post Office by force, and to inform you that I support the payment of Rs 28 - 11 - 0 being the value of stamps etc. lost in the fire. I have noted with pleasure the promptness & energy displayed by Mr. Oliver on this occasion.

copy to Comptroller of the Treasury 14 Oct 05

Copy of draft sent to Mr. Lyttellon
 this to Audit Office
 L.F. 1905

I am