

S U P P L E M E N T  
TO  
GENERAL ORDERS.

SEPARATE No. 12 of 1842.

BY THE HONORABLE THE GOVERNOR IN COUNCIL.

BOMBAY CASTLE, 9TH APRIL 1842.

The Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to publish the following Compilation of all existing orders under the head "Messos."

*By order of the Hon'ble the Governor in Council.*

P. M. MELVILL, Lieut. Col.

*Secy. to Govt.*

## MESSES.

I. The Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to sanction the undermentioned monthly rates of Mess allowance to the Army of this Presidency in assimilation to the scale in Bengal.

G. G. O. 136  
Nov. 1837.

To each Regiment of European Cavalry or Infantry, of Her Majesty's or the Hon'ble Company's Service.....	} Rs 150 0 0
To the Brigade of Horse Artillery, each Regiment of Native Cavalry or Infantry and each Battalion of Foot Artillery or Golundanze.....	} „ 120 0 0
To each Local Corps of Cavalry or Infantry, when the number of Officers is not less than three.....	} „ 60 0 0

II. The above allowances being expressly for the maintenance of a Regimental Mess, will be drawn at Regimental Head Quarters in all situations, when such shall have been established; the fact being certified as heretofore, viz :

III. When a Mess is in existence a certificate to be furnished in the following form :—  
“ I do hereby certify that the Regimental Mess has been duly kept up during the past month and that the allowance drawn for its maintenance will be applied to the purpose for which authorized.”—Where a Mess is newly formed the certificate will bear “ that a Regimental Mess was established on the 1st ultimo (or as the case may be) and that it has been duly kept up &c. &c.

IV. In re-publishing the following General Order by the Right Hon'ble the Governor General of India in Council, No. 95 of 1836; the Right Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to direct, that the Orders and principles thereby established regarding Regimental Messes, be considered applicable to the Army serving under this Presidency.

G. G. O. 5th  
July 1836.

*Fort William 16th May 1836;*

V. His Excellency the Commander in Chief having laid before Government, an Extract from the proceedings of an European General Court Martial recently held at Nussceerabad, from which it appears that a broad latitude of interpretation has been given in the verdict of the Court, to the term “ a Mess;” the Right Hon'ble the Governor General of India in Council with a view of defining the ordinary acceptation of the words of the prescribed monthly certificate signed by the Commanding Officer of each Corps in which a Mess is maintained, is pleased to declare, that “ a Mess being maintained” is intended to imply that such an arrangement has been made in the Regiment, as will enable the Officers to meet together in Mess and will afford the sort of home for Officers which will obviate the necessity for each keeping a separate and expensive establishment.

VI. For forming “ a Mess,” a contribution from the Officers of a Regiment must be necessary to provide table equipage &c. &c. and a former Government highly approving the principle of a Regimental Mess, liberally granted a specified monthly allowance to aid in maintaining the same, but they never could have contemplated the allowance being drawn when a Mess was not bonâ fide established.

VII. The General Court Martial before alluded to, having recorded an opinion that a Commanding Officer is justified in authorizing the drawing of the Mess allowance when no Mess is established, it has become requisite for the Right Hon'ble the Governor General in Council to notify, that the formation of a Mess in a Corps, must always be antecedent to the drawing of the allowance.

VIII. The certificate to be signed by a Commanding Officer, must in future run, that “ a Mess has been established and is maintained” in the Corps, and the allowance is not to be drawn until the first has been arranged, and no longer than the second can be certified.

IX. His Lordship in Council desires that the Army will understand, that by the alteration now made, it is not intended to throw the slightest impediment in the way of the formation of Regimental Messes; on the contrary, the institution is one which is highly approved and much recommended.

X. The Commander in Chief having further observed, that a balance of the Government Mess allowance drawn on the occasion under consideration, remains unappropriate, His Lordship in Council desires the Military Auditor General will see that the same is recovered on the public account.

XI. In continuation of General Order No. 95 dated 16th May 1836; the Hon'ble the President in Council in concurrence with the Right Hon'ble the Governor General, is pleased to direct, that whenever the contingencies of the Service, or any other cause, may temporarily prevent the Officers of a Regiment meeting daily in Mess, after one has been established, a report of the nature of the obstacle which opposes their so meeting, is invariably to be made to Head Quarters; and no Mess allowance is to be drawn for such period, without the sanction of Government having been previously obtained.

G. O. C. I.  
29th Apr. 1839.

XII. The Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to sanction the application of the Bengal rule to the case of the Officers of the Foot Artillery, under Orders for Field Service which provides for a moiety of Mess allowance being passed to each Wing.

G. L. 17th  
Nov. 1836.

NOTE. This Regulation extends to Wings of any Regiment detached, either European or Native.

XIII. The Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to sanction the grant of Mess allowance to the Officers composing the late Barrecah Field Force at the rate specified in the concluding part of the report, vizt. Rs 10 each Officer per mensem.

G. L. 150  
Aug. 1838.

NOTE. This was a special grant, made under the peculiar circumstances of the Officers composing the Detachment belonging to different Regiments. It was drawn only for the number of Officers present, under a certificate of a Mess having been bonâ fide maintained, and was not allowed to exceed the amount of Regimental Mess allowance.

- G. L. 10th  
June 1839.
- XIV. The Hon'ble the President in Council is pleased to sanction Full Mess allowance to the European Regiment stationed at Colabah.
- G. L. 10th  
Dec. 1838.
- XV. The Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased so long as Mess allowance may continue to be undrawn at the Head Quarters of the Artillery Regiment to permit the Officers of the Foot Artillery proceeding on Field Service to Scinde to draw the full amount of Mess allowance.
- G. L. 22d  
Nov. 1839.
- XVI. Whatever allowance might be granted for maintaining a Mess with this Detachment (Field Detachment 25th Regiment Native Infantry) it would, consistently with the practice in Bengal, be met by a corresponding deduction in the Mess allowance drawn at the Head Quarters. The apportionment however of the regulated sum is to be left with the Regimental authorities on the above understanding.
- G. L. 1st  
March 1839.
- XVII. His Lordship has reason to believe that no Mess Rent allowance has ever been granted in Bengal when a Mess has been formed by Staff Officers in the Field, and further that, in His Lordship's opinion, the allowances drawn by the parties concerned are on a scale which renders any such addition unnecessary.
- G. L. 5th  
Feb. 1839.
- XVIII. The Government allowance is intended to cover other expences besides those of the mere Buildings, the whole sum ought not reasonably to be asked as rent.  
NOTE. *The Expense of Mess Houses not to be increased in consequence of the increase of the monthly Mess allowance.* G. L. 21st March 1840.
- G. O. 17th  
May 1804.
- XIX. Commanding Officers of Corps are particularly called upon to establish Messes, as in His Majesty's Service, in every situation when the Corps is likely to be so long stationary, as to render it practicable; and give every encouragement to this system, a suitable Mess Room will be provided for the Officers of each Corps.
- G. O. 22d  
Dec. 1809.
- XX. An impression having existed that at the Mess, or other Meetings of release from absolute Military Duty, there was also a release from professional Responsibility and Obedience, it is expressly signified that the Commanding Officer present with the Regiment, is responsible for the Discipline and good order of the Corps in every particular; and that whether the Battalion is actually under Arms, or otherwise, every Officer and Individual belonging to it, is equally accountable for the maintenance and preservation of good order, and the Rules and Discipline of War, according to the Powers granted to them by their respective Commissions and Situations.
- G. O. C. 18th  
March 1809.
- XXI. The intention of the Hon'ble the Court of Directors, in recommending the establishment of Messes in the Corps composing their Army, and of Government in encouraging them was to promote Economy and Harmony among their Officers, by bringing them together in social intercourse, and thereby confirm a regular system of concord, comfort, and happiness among them, in as far as such good effects could be produced by an observance of Economy, or be expected to arise out of a reasonable and moderate Conduct towards each other.
- G. O. C. 19th  
Nov. 1821.
- XXII. It never could have entered into the contemplation of the Court of Directors, or of Government, that Messes were to be made subservient to Cabal, or be considered as licenced Meetings to canvass the conduct of Commanding Officers, or of any Individual of the Corps; nor will the Commander of the Forces permit the appearance of such conduct, without severe animadversion, or taking such steps as shall effectually restrain it.
- G. O. C. 13th  
Nov. 1841.
- XXIII. The Commander in Chief recommends, especially when they are very young in years, (as in the cases of Appointment to Command of Companies, Courts-Martial, Detachment, and other Duties of importance, on the Roster for which they are not placed till a little acquainted with Military Rules) that Officers shall not be appointed to sit as Presidents of the Regimental Mess, until accustomed to its usages; and more particularly on what are termed Guest-Nights.
- XXIV. Under Instructions from the Government of India, and with a view to assimilate the rules relative to Mess Houses under this presidency, with the system which obtains in Bengal and Madras, the Hon'ble the Governor in Council is pleased to Cancel the whole of the General Order dated 7th October 1824, with the exception of the 9th, 10th and 16th articles. Vide Para. 25, 26, 27.
- XXV. It is expected, and required, that all Regiments, whether of Cavalry or Infantry, drawing the Monthly Allowance from Government shall keep up an efficient Mess, and that Mess Rooms are or will be consequently built at all Stations, or Cantonments, whether on Field or Peace Establishment, by the Officers of Regiments themselves, as at present, and through the aid of the above Allowance.
- XXVI. The Presidency Station and that of Surat, are alone excepted, where, from having no regular Cantonments or Officer's Lines, distance of residence would prevent the constantly assembling in one Mess Room.
- XXVII. The Government Mess Allowance for Tent Carriage or Mess House Rent, is in future to be accounted for by every Regiment in the Service, in a Book kept for that purpose under charge of the Adjutant or Paymaster of the Regiment, and is to be termed the "Mess Tent and House Rent Fund," and which Book is to be produced at all Inspections, as other Regimental Books, and on no account is any part of the Public Allowances ever to be appropriated to Messing Expenses, or to be made subject to any charges but those of providing and keeping up Mess Rooms and Furniture, and Mess Tents and Carriage; this account is to be balanced every Month, and all charges against it are to be authenticated by the President of the Mess, or of the Mess Committee.

G. O. C. 10th  
Dec. 1828.

XXVIII. Experience having proved the maintenance of a Regimental Mess to be necessary to the due preservation of harmony, respectability and discipline, in a Military Society, and as the Commander in Chief is convinced, that there is no Individual employed upon the Staff of the Army who is not most anxious to promote the comfort of his brother Officers and character of the Corps to which he belongs, His Excellency is now pleased to declare, that he considers every Staff Officer bound to pay the ordinary Regimental Mess Subscription, or other permanent expenses incurred for Mess furniture by those actually present with the Regiment, so long as he shall remain in India.

XXIX. To remove, moreover, any difficulties which may have arisen, in regard to the payment of the Subscriptions required of Regimental Officers, in Corps which are allowed to maintain a Band upon the economical scale prescribed in the General Order of the 30th of March 1810, the Commander in Chief is further pleased to announce, that every Officer belonging thereto is bound to pay the usual Band Subscription when he shall enter a Regiment, whether he joins it or not. For Officers are expected to join their Regiments immediately upon their Appointment; and when, instead of doing so, they may be employed upon the Staff or receive any Leave of Absence, it would be highly improper to make such indulgence a plea, whereon to evade any Regulation or Usage which has been sanctioned by Authority.

XXX. The Commander in Chief expects, however that the present Order will not be perverted into a licence to distress individuals by extravagance under either of the above heads; and he will accordingly be ready to receive, investigate, and redress any complaints that shall be made by Officers who may feel aggrieved by undue exactions, at variance with the general custom of the Service; but His Excellency will, of course, in every instance, hold the complainant responsible for the correctness of his representations.

XXXI. The Commander in Chief having lately observed by Statements received from the different Regiments, that considerable variation exists in the rates of contribution by Donation and Monthly Subscriptions to Mess Funds. He thinks it may be most desirable to lay down equitable and fixed rates of contribution according to rank and upon the principle lately established in Her Majesty's Service, and beyond which no Subscription should be obligatory.

Adj. Generals  
Circular  
8th Sept. 1829.

XXXII. Thirty days Net Regimental Pay, to be paid by every Officer in the Regiment on appointment for the purpose of establishing a Mess Fund.

XXXIII. In all cases of Promotion, each Officer to pay the difference on thirty days Net Pay between the rank obtained and that previously held, to be appropriated as directed in the preceding paragraph.

XXXIV. A Monthly Subscription of two days Net Regimental Pay to be likewise paid by the Officers present with Corps (any absence under a year, from whatever cause not to be excepted,) to defray wear and tear; to supply the various minor wants and deficiencies that are daily occurring in a large establishment, and to furnish a few Papers and Periodicals.

Surgeons to pay Donations and Subscription as Captains.

Assistant Surgeons as 1st Lieutenants.

Veterinary ditto as 2d Lieutenants.

XXXV. This scale of Subscription, is, His Excellency conceives, fully adequate to the support and maintenance of a Mess upon that respectable footing which it is so desirable to uphold; at the same time not so ample as to warrant the procuring of an unnecessarily expensive equipment.

XXXVI. His Excellency's sentiments with regard to Officers on the Staff contributing with their brother Officers to the respectability of their Regimental Mess are already made known to them in the General Order of 10th December 1828.

XXXVII. He is confident that no Officer would wish his good fortune in obtaining employment on the Staff, from which not only a Superior opportunity is given him of forwarding his prospects in his profession, but considerable pecuniary advantage likewise accrues, to be considered a disadvantage to his Regimental Mess. An establishment from which it is hoped he may have derived much comfort and happiness during his period of Regimental Service, and to the permanent well being of which he would ever feel deeply interested.