

## OLD FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL

Notes by Adrian Fletcher – last update 11 May 2011

# INDIAN RECORDS SERIES OLD FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL

A SELECTION OF OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS  
DEALING WITH ITS HISTORY

EDITED BY

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There are separate notes about references to Charles Hampton in “The Early Annals of the English in Bengal” by the same author.

### From Vol 1 of Old Fort William in Bengal

1728 – page 127

*Hospital to be surveyed.*

*December 17.*—Mr. Charles Hampton, Buxey, acquainting us that the Hospital is very much out of Repair,

ORDERED, That Captain Thomas Snow, Master of Attendance, and John Aloffe, do take a carefull Survey of the Same, and deliver their Report, in Writing, to this Board.

1730 - page 132

*Salt Petre Godown to be secured.*

May 11.—Mr. Richard Bouchier Export Warehouse Keeper acquainting us that the Salt Petre Godown is very much out of repair,

ORDER'D That Mr. Charles Hampton Buxey do take care to secure it for the present and that it be thoroughly repair'd after the rains.

Then there is a gap of 80 pages and 18 years, at which time –

1748 - page 212

212. MR. HAMPTON APPOINTED SURVEYOR. PRISON TO BE REPAIRED.<sup>1</sup>

*Extracts from Bengal Public Consultations. Fort William, June 20, and August 15, 1748. Range I., Vol. XXI.*

June 20.—There being no Surveyor appointed by the Board AGREED that Mr. Charles Hampton Senior be appointed to that service.

This would have been the same Charles Hampton who had started out as a writer from England in mid 1710, and was “last heard of” (by us) in December 1731 as being “Eighth in Council”. He had in the twenties spent a fair amount of time as a senior Council member in Cossimbazar (a Company trading post and fort near Berhampore, to the north of Calcutta). What happened in Hampton’s life (apart from the birth of son Samuel in October 1735 and another son Charles on an unknown date) between 1731 and 1748?

Charles Hampton’s appointment was followed by loud squeals from a Mr Bartholomew Plaisted who, with believable logic, said that he had already been appointed in this role and he thought it gross that he was expected to acquiesce in a defacto unappointment – but nobody wanted to listen (until later when he took his case to the Court of Directors in London and they ordered his reinstatement – see later).

219. PLAISTED REQUESTS PERMISSION TO RETURN TO EUROPE.

*Letter from Bartholomew Plaisted to Adam Dawson, September 27, 1749.*

*Miscellaneous Letters received, 1749-50, Vol. 35.*

HONOURABLE SIR,—I think it my Duty to Acquaint your Honour that as soon as I have compleated the Drafts I am now about shall request permission to lay down to go home to Europe and as this Step takes Its rise from the Boards Decree of June 20th 1748 so I hope with all due Respect I shall be permitted to lay before your Honour or the Board the Reasons why I cannot Readily Acquisce (*sic*) in a Step of the Board so injurious to my Character (pardon the Expression I cannot find a softer) for as yet my Mean Sagacity cannot find one single Paragraph in that paper but what Ultimately tender'd to the Company's Interest and which was laid in consequence of the Duty I owe the Company for from my Accepting of the Post it had been part of my Office to take an Account of every thing expended under my Inspection and my Predecessor for 15 Years before me so that I came to the Post with this duty annex'd to it and therefore sign'd a daily Account but at last the Bannians was pleased to tell me I

*February 15.*—The Export Warehouse Keeper acquainting the Board that the Saltpetre Godowns<sup>1</sup> are in a very bad way and desiring a survey thereof

ORDERED him to remove the saltpetre and that Mr. Charles Hampton Surveyor do deliver in his Report thereof in Writing to the Board. . . .

*February 17.*—Mr. Charles Hampton Surveyor Delivers in his Report of the Honourable Companys Saltpetre Godowns

ORDERED the Buxey to repair them and the Report to be entered after this Consultation. . . .

TO THE HONOURABLE ADAM DAWSON, ESQR., PRESIDENT AND GOVERNOR, &CT<sup>a</sup>, COUNCIL AT FORT WILLIAM.

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,

Agreeable to your Honours &ct<sup>a</sup> Orders I have surveyed the Saltpetre Godowns and find the Walls of the great Godown to the Southered exceeding bad and the greatest part of the Godowns the Plaistering off the Walls There is also a small Godown w[h]ere the Gunneys were kept the Beams and Burgers all Rotten and wants to be new covered.

I am with due Respect,

Honourable Sir and Sirs,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES HAMPTON, Surveyor.

CALCUTTA,

*February 17th, 1752.*

TO THE HONOURABLE ADAM DAWSON, ESQR., PRESIDENT AND GOVERNOUR OF FORT WILLIAM, &C<sup>a</sup>, COUNCIL.

HONOURABLE SIR AND SIRs,

Agreeable to your Honour &c<sup>a</sup>'s Orders, I have surveyed the Marine Yard and Dockhead, and find them in a worse Condition, than when I gave in my Report to your [Honour] &c<sup>a</sup> the 22d October 1750. which beg to be referred to. The Smith's shop is so very bad, that if not timely prevented by pulling it down the Workmen are in Danger of their lives.

I remain with great respect,

Honourable Sir and Sirs,

FORT WILLIAM,

*March the 10th, 1752.*

Your most obedient humble Servant,

CHARLES HAMPTON.

Then, who should reappear, but Matthew Plaisted –

*Mr. Plaisted offered his Former Posts.*

*September 18.*—Mr. Plaisted was now sent for and offered his former Posts of Engineer and Surveyor.

*Mr. Plaisted accepts his Post.*

*September 25.*—Mr. Plaisted acquaints the Board that he will accept of his former posts offered him last Council and enter upon them this day.

After which there is no more mention of Charles Hampton .....

## From Vol 2 of Old Fort william in Bengal

Summarizing the “Costelly’s ruinously expensive new powder works proposal” story which begins earlier on p 155 -

1760]

OLD FORT WILLIAM IN BENGAL

157

### 333. THE COUNCIL REPORT THAT THE POWDER WORKS REMAIN AT PERRIN’S.

*Extract from General Letter from Bengal to the Court. Fort William,  
February 3, 1760. Bengal Letters received, Vol. IV.*

6. We have before advised you of our intention of removing the Powder Works from Perrin’s Garden to a spot belonging to Petumber Seat and had accordingly given the necessary Orders for this being carried into execution, But Mr. Martin Costelly who has for some time past been employ’d in making the Powder having the 28th Ultimo laid before us a list of several new buildings which would be necessary for carrying on this business by which it appears that changing the spot would be attended with immense expence, and we finding likewise from the report of the Engineer and Officer of Artillery enter’d after that days Consultation that the Powder does not turn out according to our expectations, We came to a resolution to put an immediate stop to the new buildings and directed Mr. Costelly to continue the making the Powder at Perrin’s Gardens. And at the same time determined to use every precaution in our power for the security of it there.

Martin Costelly, who had married the newly widowed Ann Hick on 8 February 1749, died in Calcutta in 1764, leaving a will.

p 160 – 1761 – Bartholamew Plaisted, reinstated since 1752, is posted to Bombay, and Edward Handle takes over as surveyor. No mention of Charles Hampton so perhaps he had died in the intervening decade ?

*Plaisted ordered to Bombay.*

*October 13.*—ORDER'D the Secretary to inform Mr. Bartholomew Plaisted of the Honourable Company's having been pleased to appoint him to Bombay, and to direct his preparing to proceed thither as soon as possible.

*October 20.*—AGREED we write to the President and Council of Bombay advising . . . That the Company having appointed Mr. Bartholomew Plaisted on their Establishment, we have directed him to get in Readiness to proceed to his Appointment as soon as possible.

*November 12.*—Mr. Bartholomew Plaisted being appointed to the Bombay Establishment.

Mr. Edward Handle is appointed Surveyor in his room.