

1924

KENYA

C. O.  
10797  
6 MAR 24

DATE

29th February 1924

276

Norton Griffiths & Coy.

CIRCULATION:—

Mr.  
Mr.  
Mr.

Asst. U.S. of S.

Perm. U.S. of S.

Part U.S. of S.

Secretary of State.

Extension of Mann Gishu Railway

Refers to indication given in 1920 that work would be entrusted to Messrs. Griffiths & Coy, & emphasises importance of commencing work without delay.

Previous Paper

B.A.  
49212-21  
See B.A.  
62819  
25

MINUTES

I am sorry that I have not been able to send this paper on before.

We have had several letters from Messrs. Norton Griffiths Ltd. as to the construction of the new railway extensions. For example, 33838/23, asking that they might be allowed to construct the new extension under the supervision of the Uganda Railway, 45592/23 on the same subject, 49555/23 in which they pointed out the good work done by them on the Uasin Gishu Railway and the savings effected justified their being given any further railway extension work carried out from funds available on the Uganda Railway, and 62819 to the same effect. They also pointed out that the fact that they had a staff and plant available put them in a specially favourable position for undertaking the new work.

In none of these cases was it

alleged

17 MAR 1924

msd

Subsequent Paper

62/1924



formal, but still unofficial, discussion in January, 1920.

Apart from this allegation of a pledge, the letter is on the same old grounds of savings effected on the Uasin Gishu Railway. The contract was prepared at a time when prices were very high and it was anticipated that there might be ~~large~~ savings. The contract provided that the Government should benefit from these savings, and it also gave the contractors a large bonus on the amount saved. It would be ~~useless~~<sup>absurd</sup> to regard such savings, made in the interest of the contractor himself, as being themselves a ground for giving further work to the same contractor.

As regards plant, etc., if they are really in a better position to tender than other contractors, their advantage should be apparent in a competitive tender.

I entirely agree that their presence on the spot is an advantage from the point of view of beginning the work early. The same thing would apply to departmental construction; but in any case it has been decided, after full consideration, that the work, if not departmental, shall be by competitive tender, and there should be an end of the discussion. I venture to submit draft for consideration to avoid further delay.

W.C.S. 11.3.24

H. J. D.  
12 Jul 24

*Drawn with me*  
**NORTON GRIFFITHS & CO. LTD.**

TELEGRAMS:  
JONORGRIF, LONDON.

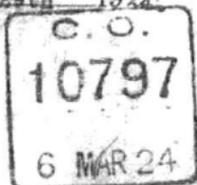
TELEPHONES:  
VICTORIA 7542 & 2122.

*9077*  
3, CENTRAL BUILDINGS.

WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1.

February 29th 1924

The Secretary of State for the Colonies,  
The Colonial Office,  
Downing Street,  
WHITEHALL, S.W. 1.



UASIN GISHU UGANDA RAILWAY EXTENSION AND PROPOSED  
FURTHER EXTENSION TO GINGA.

Sir,

We are requested by Messrs. Griffiths & Co. Ltd. of Nairobi, East Africa, for which Company we act as London Agents, to bring to your notice the following circumstances.

In 1920 it was intended to extend the Uasin Gishu Railway by a branch from Nakuru to Soy, a distance of 240 miles, and Messrs. Norton Griffiths & Co. Ltd. on behalf of Griffiths & Co. Ltd. entered into negotiations with the Colonial Office for the construction of this extension. Terms were more or less agreed when for financial reasons the extension was shortened to 146 miles and the original cost reduced. It was indicated at this time that if the remaining 94 miles should be completed at a later date, Messrs. Griffiths & Co. would be entrusted with the work.

The line - as to the 146 miles - is now approaching completion and it is understood that the immediate extension of the remaining 94 miles is proposed. Messrs. Griffiths & Co. will have done their work under contract time and it is ascertained that there will be a saving, on the original estimate, of an amount approaching £750,000.

At the present time, the organisation, staff and a very large supply of labour, in the employ of Messrs. Griffiths & Co. is still available on the spot and, in the event of the extension being given to them, they would be able to proceed with the work at the moment sanction was given. This would effect economies and eliminate delays which would be inevitable in the event of the extension work being placed elsewhere, or under a different organisation.

The immediate extension of this line, as your Department will readily appreciate, will require the provision of rails, rolling stock etc. and do much to mitigate the unemployment question at home. The work could be carried out under the direction of Major G. Rhodes, Chief Engineer, Uganda.

The point which we particularly wish to emphasise in every interest is the desirability of the work being started without delay. This is important from the contracting point of view and also because of the urgent needs of the country and of the adjacent Crown Colony of Uganda. As to the latter, this extension will tap the traffic and enable the Colony to freight its increasing cotton crop without transshipment at the Lake Victoria Nyanza.

As we have indicated, Messrs. Griffiths & Co., being on the spot and thoroughly equipped, are in the unique position of being able, if we, they, to carry out the extension without any break in delay.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

MESSRS. GRIFFITHS & CO. LTD.



SECRETARY.

**NORTON GRIFFITHS & CO. LTD.**  
TELEGRAMS:  
JONORGRIF, LONDON.  
TELEPHONES:  
VICTORIA 7542 & 3123.

*Draws with me*  
**MM**

3 CENTRAL BUILDINGS.

WESTMINSTER, S. W. 1.

*R* 213  
*7/2/24 6/3*

February 29th 1924.

C. O.  
**10797**  
6 MAR 24

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The Colonial Office,  
Downing Street,  
WHITEHALL, S.W. 1.

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As we have indicated, Messrs. Griffiths & Co., being on the spot and thoroughly equipped, are in the unique position of being able, if required, to carry on the extension without any break or delay.

We are, Sir,

Your obedient servants,

NORTON GRIFFITHS & CO. LTD.

SECRETARY.

9 Kenya  
1979/74

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See for Draft

Downing Street,

March, 1924

Gentlemen,

I am etc. to ack. the

receipt of your letter of the 29th

Feb., regarding the further railway

construction <sup>Content stated</sup> in Kenya and Uganda,

and to inform you that he has decided

<sup>(if and)</sup> that where departmental construction

is not adopted for any section of the

entire programme of further construc-

tion, the contracts for building new

lines or parts of them shall be sub-

ject to competitive tender as between

private contractors and the railway

administration jointly.

2. When it is possible to

issue invitations to tender, he has

no doubt that the special advantages

which Messrs. Griffiths & Co.

(Nairobi) Ltd. have in the way of

plant and staff will be to their

advantage

DRAFT.

MESRS. NORTON GRIFFITHS & CO.  
LTD.

MINUTE.

Mr. Bottomley. // 3.24.

Mr.

Mr.

Sir C. Davis.

Sir G. Grindle.

Sir H. Hoole. 12/17/24

Sir J. Masterton Smith

Mr. ...

Mr. ...

Date of Despatch.

for ...

advantage in preparing their  
tenders. But he is not prepared  
to recognise that they, or the  
London firm, have any special claim  
to consideration in respect of the  
fact that the original length of  
construction of the Uasin Gishu *Railway, as*  
*originally proposed, was reduced*  
Railway was in use before the time  
when the *employment of Messrs Giffiths & Co*  
~~contract with your firm~~  
was under official consideration  
by the Secretary of State.

I am, etc.,

(Signed) H. J. READ

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C. D.  
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Downing Street

17 March, 1924.

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9nd

Gentlemen,

I am etc. to acknowledge

DRAFT.

the receipt of your letter of the 29th February regarding the further railway construction contemplated in Kenya and Uganda, and to inform you that he has decided that, if and where departmental construction is not adopted for any section of the entire programme of further construction, the contracts for building new lines or parts of them shall be subject to competitive tender as between private contractors and the railway administration jointly.

Messrs. Norton Griffiths & Co. Ltd.

MINUTE.

Mr. Bottomley 11.3.24

Mr. C. Davis.

Mr. G. Grindle.

Mr. H. Road. 12.3.24

Mr. J. Masterton Smith  
Lord Arnold

Mr. Thomas  
Mr. D. D. D.

*12/3/24*

2. When it is possible to issue invitations to tender, he has no doubt that the special advantages which Messrs Griffiths and Company (Nairobi) Ltd. have in the way of plant and staff will

be

be to their advantage in preparing  
their tenders. But he is not  
prepared to recognise that they, or the  
London firm, have any special claim  
to consideration in respect of the  
fact that the length of the Uasin  
Gishu Railway, as originally proposed,  
was reduced before the time when  
the employment of Messrs. Griffiths  
and Company was under consideration  
by the Secretary of State.

I am etc.

(Signed) H. J. READ