

of a secret, which, to me, is property of the first importance.

I have the honor to be, my Lords,  
With consideration,  
Your Lordships' obedient servt.

Lieut. H. P. 92nd Regt

The Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty,  
&c. &c. &c.

(Copy.)

No. 12.

Admiralty, 4th Sept. 1833.

SIR,—Having laid before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 30th ultimo, on the subject of your invention of a cheap and effectual remedy for dry rot, in which you state your unwillingness to compromise your secret by describing it to their Lordships, without having, in the first instance, a conditional guarantee of compensation entered into by their Lordships; I am commanded to acquaint you, that their Lordships have no wish to interfere with your valuable discovery, still less to be a party withholding it from the public, and have no desire to give you any further trouble on the subject.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
(Signed) GEO. ELLIOTT.

Lieut. —, &c. &c. &c.

(Copy.)

No. 13.

Langton's Cottage, Sept. 5, 1833.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 4th instant, wherein you observe, that having laid my letter of the 30th ultimo, before the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, on the subject of a cheap and effectual remedy for dry rot, in which letter I state my unwillingness to communicate my secret to their Lordships, without having in the first instance, a conditional guarantee of compensation entered into by their Lordships, and that you are in consequence commanded to acquaint me, that their Lordships have no wish to interfere with my valuable discovery, still less to be a party withholding it from the public, and have no desire to give me any further trouble on the subject,—I feel it a duty to myself to declare, that I am wholly at a loss to conceive how my letter to them can be construed into an unwillingness to describe my secret to their Lordships, or to desire that they should be a party withholding it from the public—for whom it is principally intended, inasmuch as the public service would be benefited by its adoption. What I merely sought was an authority from their Lordships to make the disclosure, not to themselves, but to the public; and if in any part of my communication to their Lordships I have deviated from the usual course of proceedings in these matters, I can only say, it has been from ignorance of the necessary forms, and by no means from any, the slightest feeling, which could by their Lordships be construed into disrespect.

In alluding to the question of compensation, I merely adopted the suggestion of the Surveyor of the Navy, to whom I had mentioned the subject; nor could I by any possibility imagine that, had such allusion been unreasonable, reference would have been made to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty by that officer. Had I understood it was their Lordships' desire I should communicate my secret to the Surveyor of the Navy, I should not have hesitated to comply with such desire, as being tantamount to a command; but this I certainly did not—assuming, on the contrary, from the tone adopted in the first communication I received from the Admiralty, that it was a subject on which I was left to exercise my own discretion.

Trusting that this disavowal of any thing like intentional disrespect towards their Lordships, will be received with the frank-

ness with which it is offered, I have only to add, that should it still be their pleasure I should communicate my secret to the Surveyor of the Navy, I shall consider the intimation of that fact a due and official authority for the disclosure.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

George Elliot, Esq.,

Lt. H. P. 92nd Regt.

Secretary to the Admiralty, &c. &c.

(Copy.)

No. 14.

Langton's Cottage, Farnham Royal, Bucks.  
Sept. 12, 1833.

SIR,—It is with deep regret I have to acquaint you, that my negotiation with the Admiralty for the transfer of my remedy for dry rot, has totally failed; and under circumstances which render it imperative I should transmit for your information, copies of all the correspondence which has taken place on the subject.

To their Lordships I have already disavowed any such feeling as unwillingness to communicate my secret to them; and it appears to me, that the explanatory letter which I forwarded in reply, ought to have satisfied their Lordships I had only acted on the presumption that they neither expressed desire, nor gave me authority to divulge my secret to an inferior party; but although the silence which has since been preserved by their Lordships, leaves no question that the subject has been finally disposed of by them, I feel that I have still an important duty to perform, that of satisfactorily explaining to you, Sir, to whose prompt attention to my views, I owe the originating of the question with His Majesty.

From the very outset it is evident, that their Lordships were disinclined to entertain the plan; and, although referring me to the Surveyor of the Navy, most distinctly stated, through their Secretary, that they did not wish to give me any further trouble on the subject—or, in other words, that they did not desire to have any thing further to do with it. Under these circumstances, I confess that, left to take counsel only of myself, I scarcely knew how to act; yet, feeling, as I did, that their Lordships had given me neither order nor authority of the remotest kind for the communication, I deemed it a duty I owed to my personal interests to stipulate for some sort of guarantee from themselves, before I divested myself of a secret, which must become that of any, and every, body from the moment of my entering upon the experimental trial. In consequence thereof, I addressed the letter No. 9, to their Lordships.

From the almost personal character of the reply to that communication, you will perceive, Sir, that their Lordships have taken umbrage at my demand, and placed a construction on my letter, it was by no means intended to bear. Had they said *we command you, or we authorize you*, to make your disclosure, it would have been sufficient, and I should at once have thrown myself upon their good faith and consideration for ulterior remuneration; but so far from a desire of the kind being expressed, I am, in a few brief words, told that their Lordships do not wish to give me any trouble on the subject.

In stipulating for a guarantee, I could have no idea that I was departing from the ordinary course, especially as I had been referred to their Lordships by the Surveyor of the Navy, to whom the etiquette usual on these occasions, must of necessity have been familiar. I beg, therefore, you will believe, Sir, that in no portion of my correspondence with their Lordships, have I been influenced by any feeling which could be construed into disrespect, or a doubt of their faith.

Anxious only that this candid explanation of my motives should have the effect of ex-

onerating me in your opinion from all shadow of blame.

I have the honor to be, Sir,

With deep consideration,  
Your most faithful and obliged Servant,

Lt.-Genl. Sir Herbert Taylor, G.C.H. &c. &c.  
Windsor Castle.

(Copy.)

No. 15.

Windsor Castle, Oct. 7, 1833.

DEAR SIR,—Continued pressure of business has prevented my acknowledging earlier, the receipt of your letter of the 17th September, enclosing copies of a correspondence with the Admiralty on the subject of dry rot, the result of which I much regret, as I am perfectly convinced that you would not have brought forward anything that you had not proved to be useful and important, and equally persuaded am I, that in desiring to attach some condition to the communication of your secret, you had not the most distant idea, or wish, to stipulate for that which might be considered unreasonable; nor do I see that it is at all unreasonable to expect to be remunerated for an essential benefit conferred on the public and the King's service.

But you must make allowance for the manner in which the public departments are tormented with plans and inventions, proposals and specifics of every description, as I can vouch from personal experience; and I believe there are few subjects on which the Admiralty and Navy Board have been addressed more frequently than that of dry rot. Hence the repulse you met with at starting—the difficulty of introducing the subject again, and the eagerness shown to shake it off. It would be of no avail now, consistent with your feelings, to press the matter further, and you will of course consider yourself at liberty to make any other use you may think fit of the secret you possess.

I have the honor to be, Dear Sir,

Your very obedient and faithful Servant,  
(Signed) H. TAYLOR.

Lt. —, &c. &c.

[The above correspondence was subsequently printed, and about to be submitted through a gallant officer now in India, to the House of Commons, when the projector changed his views and came to this country. The following Memorandum was appended to the correspondence.]

#### MEMORANDUM.

(Accompanying the first letter to the Admiralty.)

The accompanying samples are portions of wood which have been submitted to the influence of a cheap and efficient preventive against dry rot. Upwards of twenty years ago, the timber of which they form a part, had been cast aside as unserviceable; and when broken up, was used for a fence in a low marshy ground, subject to frequent floodings. As will be apparent from the sample No. 1, neither tar nor paint has been applied to it during the twenty years that it has lain exposed to the influence of air and moisture; and yet it will be found to be at once firmer, heavier, and more closely knit together, than any new wood of the same quality not similarly prepared.

It will be remarked, that the dark side of the wood, which was more open to the action of the matter applied to, is much harder than the other, which received an infinitely less portion of the nutriment. When submitted to the plane of the carpenter, as in No. 2, the dark surface was found much more difficult to remove than the light; and a respectable timber merchant, to whom the samples were submitted for opinion, not only expressed his full assurance of the virtue of the preventive, but said the wood was so much altered for the better, both in substance and colour, that he should not have conceived it to be deal.

In the sample No. 3, the most striking evidence of the repulsive virtue of the remedy is given; for it will be perceived that in the exterior surface to which the matter had not penetrated, the worm has attempted an entrance; but arriving