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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

Government of Madras

Public works DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	2456-57	Press
B.P. No.		~~Mis.~~
101. 102		
Dated	7. 10. 1873	~~195~~ .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 7th October 1873.

No. 101. Read the following letter from the Hon. A. F. BROWN, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, to Colonel G. W. WALKER, R.E., Secretary to Government, Public Works Department, dated Madras, 14th August 1873:—

On the 24th September last, this Chamber had the honour to submit, for your consideration, a memorandum by Mr. L. Strange, a member of the Chamber, proposing an extension of the Madras Railway from Bellary to Gudduck; and at the same time the Chamber expressed a hope that the Madras Government would deem the subject of sufficient importance to call for the appointment of a Committee of professional men to report upon it for the information of the Supreme Government, such Committee to be independent of the one appointed in Bombay to investigate and report on the estimated returns on the proposed State Railway from Carwar to Gudduck.

2. In an Order, dated the 18th October last, the Local Government observed that the extension of railway communication from Bellary to the Bombay frontier in the direction of Gudduck was "one of the lines recommended to the Supreme Government in letter No. 2,397 of 27th September 1871;" and the Government accordingly directed that Mr. Strange's memorandum should be forwarded for the information of the Supreme Government, with an intimation of the general concurrence of the Madras Government in its views. It was stated, moreover, that the memorandum would be referred to the Consulting Engineer for Railways for such remarks as he might desire to record on it, but that, before summoning together a professional Committee to consider Mr. Strange's project, the Government considered it desirable that they should have before them the estimate and surveys of alternative routes that had been made by the Bombay Government, to whom application for the same would be made.

3. The Chamber heard nothing further on the subject until they were favoured with the Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, dated 10th June last. Among these Proceedings is a resolution of the Bombay Government, dated 3rd February 1873, on the Report of the Committee appointed in Bombay to consider the Carwar-Gudduck project, in which the Bombay Government recommend, "in the strongest manner," the construction of a line from Carwar to Bellary, with a branch to Bunkapore, and hope that the Government of India will feel warranted in advising the Secretary of State to accord early sanction to the commencement of the work.

4. The Chamber have not yet been furnished with a copy of the Report of the Bombay Committee, but they gather from the covering letter from the Bombay Government to the Government of India, dated 5th February last, that (1) the proposed railway from Carwar to Gudduck is to be a narrow gauge line; (2) that it is estimated to cost 112½ lakhs, (2½ lakhs of this amount being devoted to improvements at the port of Carwar;) (3) that Messrs. Nicol and Co. of Bombay have proposed to construct the line under certain conditions which are not specified; and (4) that the Bombay Government are in favour of accepting Messrs. Nicol and Co.'s offer, provided that firm will undertake the construction of the whole line from Carwar to Bellary. The Chamber, however, observe with some surprise that nothing whatever is said in the above letter, or in the Resolution of the Bombay Government, about the estimated cost of the railway from Gudduck

to Bellary: the attention of the Bombay Committee having apparently been confined almost exclusively to a consideration of the Carwar-Gudduck scheme.

5. Under these circumstances the Chamber deem it necessary to again call the earnest attention of Government to the desirability of extending the Madras Railway from Bellary to Gudduck in the manner proposed in Mr. Strange's Memorandum. In doing so the Chamber submit that the expediency of making this extension ought not to be considered in connection with the Carwar project, but solely in connection with the broad principle (the soundness of which is admitted on all sides) recently laid down by the Government of India, that only such railways as promise sufficient returns on capital expended to recoup the Government the interest guaranteed shall in future be sanctioned for construction. That the Carwar-Gudduck project secures this important preliminary condition, the Chamber, with all deference to the contrary opinion expressed by the Bombay Government, beg leave to doubt. Nor do the Chamber stand alone in this view. The evidence recently elicited before the Parliamentary Committee on Indian Finance, from Mr. John Fleming, one of the promoters of the railway, has suggested the most serious doubts as to whether the Government of India would be justified in having anything to do with a project whose financial results are not yet so problematical. It appears from Mr. Fleming's evidence, that it is proposed that the guaranteed system should be adopted in the case of the Carwar Railway, and that the Government should advance the necessary capital for the undertaking, while the Company, on their part, would engage to construct the railway under Government supervision, and, to guarantee interest on capital at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum. The following extracts from Mr. Fleming's evidence, as published in the Bombay newspapers, would seem to the Chamber to exhibit the disadvantages of such an arrangement to Government in a very clear light. Mr. Fawcett, it may be remarked, is the member of the Committee who puts the following questions to the witness:—

"Now, suppose your plan was agreed to, and that Government advanced the money at 4 per cent., and suppose the scheme turned out a second Mutlah Railway—because equally glowing accounts were given at the time of that undertaking—what security would Government have for the two millions or whatever they advanced for the construction of the Carwar Railway, except a railway which would not pay its working expenses? I cannot suppose the case possible.

"But Port Canning, we were told at one time, was to be the great port of India, the Mutlah Railway was to take the produce of all that side of India to it, and there were statements exactly similar to those you are now making about Carwar.—I do not say your expectations may turn out to be untrue, but as a business man you must know that these representations must be carefully received—now would the Government receive any other security except the railway? They would receive the guarantee of the railway and the sum deposited.

How much—one-half? I do not think so much would be necessary.

One-tenth? Yes.

"Well, suppose your railway cost £600,000 and Government got one-tenth, or £60,000, and they have handed over to them an annual loss of £45,000, as in the case of the Mutlah Railway! The cases are not at all parallel: they are perfectly different.

"How? In this respect—it was believed that the merchants of Calcutta would make use of the Mutlah Railway, but trade went to Calcutta and remained there, and did not go to Port Canning. I believe more must have been done at Port Canning than has been said to be done. But Coompta, which is the rival of Carwar, is not a port at all, and already there is a considerable trade at Carwar, and those at Coompta say, they will bring the whole of their trade to Carwar.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department,
7th October 1873.

"Oh yes; and similarly strong statements were made at the time as regards to Mutlah. I have no doubt you are as convinced at this moment that the railway would turn out a great success as the original projectors of the Mutlah Railway were, that their scheme would turn out a considerable success. All of us are liable to mistakes, and we come to this point again—suppose Government were to advance the money necessary for the construction of this railway, and were to receive as a deposit only one-tenth of its money as a security, and if the railway were to turn out not to pay—the only security Government would have would be an unproductive railway! Yes.

"Now, would you, as a business man, not think that if you advanced nine-tenths of the money required to construct any public work you would think it necessary to exercise the most careful supervision or control to see that your money was not wasted? Yes.

"Then, this control would be so much that the railway would practically be constructed by the Government? No; but let me say this:—The amount to be deposited has nothing to do with the principal; let the Government demand such an amount as will cover its risk. As I understand, Government says we will make no railways unless we suffer no loss; and I say here is a railway in which people are willing to deposit such a sum as will cover the loss.

"Has any such offer been made to the Government? Not that one-half should be deposited.

"Who would pay the superintendence that would be required, because it would be very heavy if Government were to see that its nine-tenths of the money were properly applied? Government. I do not think the Company should be called upon to pay for a heavy staff.

"Ah! now we are getting the transaction out more clearly. In addition to advancing nine-tenths on a security of one-tenth, which I think is imperfect security, the Government would have to pay all the expenses of superintending the construction of the railway! It would have to be a matter of arrangement with the Government.

"Would not every bridge that required to be constructed, every earthwork, every bit of materials which was being used, require to be constantly watched by Government? If they deemed it necessary—yes.

"But it must be necessary—there must be no *if* about it so long as Government is advancing nine-tenths of the money. You know perfectly well, Mr. Fleming, that no man of business would advance money, as you propose, without taking these precautions? Doubtless, Government would take precautions.

Then, would not these precautions involve expense? Clearly they would involve expense."

When, in addition to the foregoing evidence, it is stated that only two of the European firms in Bombay—and these confessedly interested in the improvement of Carwar—are in favour of the proposed Carwar-Gudduck Railway; and when the Bombay Government itself admits that, both as regards estimated capital expenditure and revenue of the railway, "many unexpected circumstances may arise to disturb calculations," it seems to the Chamber that neither the Government of India nor the public at large can feel satisfied that the railway is much wanted for commercial purposes, or that it would be financially successful if constructed. Much stress has been laid on the fact that the railway would offer political as well as commercial advantages to the country, but seeing that there are already three large railway termini on the Western Coast of India, viz., Kurrachee, Bombay, and Beypore, (with the prospect of a fourth at Cochin,) from which communication can be maintained with the interior, and that an invasion of, or political disturbance in, the Southern Mahratta country is a somewhat remote contingency which, if it really did happen, might probably be satisfactorily met by existing railway resources, the Chamber cannot admit that much importance should be attached to the alleged political necessity of the Carwar-Gudduck Railway. At all events, it is undeniable that the State Railways now under construction in the North-West of

India are of more pressing political importance than the Carwar Railway can claim to be, and for that reason should have the first consideration of Government. Finally, the proposed Carwar Railway, though it is to be brought in connection with the Madras system of railways, is to be a narrow gauge line, a circumstance which in itself would render it almost useless as a feeder to the Madras Railway, and would certainly detract from its own usefulness both for commercial and political purposes. Indeed, it is by no means certain, in the face of the strong opposition to narrow gauge lines recently expressed by some of the most eminent Engineers in England, that the Government of India would be prepared to sanction the Carwar-Gudduck Railway in its present shape, even were there no other objections to it. Altogether, therefore, the Carwar scheme may, the Chamber think, be regarded as far from ripe for execution, and it is not improbable that it will be held in abeyance for an indefinite period.

2. In the meantime the necessity for the extension of the Madras Railway from Bellary to Gudduck is daily making itself more urgently felt. In spite of distance, imperfect roads, and a large unbridged river, some 4,000 bales of saw-ginned Dharwar cotton have found their way this season, since the commencement of the south-west monsoon, from Dharwar to Madras, while probably double that quantity of native-ginned Coompta cotton has come forward as "Westerns" during the same period. There is every prospect of this traffic increasing even without the railway, but with railway communication complete between Madras and Dharwar, the Chamber have every reason to believe that during three months of the south-west monsoon the cotton trade with Dharwar would become very considerable. It should be remembered that the difficulties at shipment on the Western Coast during the monsoon are not the accidents of a season; they come with unfailing regularity year by year, and generally when not more perhaps than one half of the cotton crop has been exported. Consequently the balance of the crop unexported on the advent of the monsoon may lie for some months on the dealer's hands in Dharwar, at the risk of course of damage to the staple or a fall of price in the home market. It is not surprising, therefore, that the dealer should turn his attention to another market which, though much more distant than Bombay, offers those immediate advantages of which Bombay, owing to climatic conditions which must always exist, has been temporarily deprived. The above circumstances explain the apparent anomaly why Dharwar cotton should, at a certain season of the year, find its way to Madras, and why Madras should, at such a season, prove the most convenient port for shipment; and a consideration of these circumstances will, the Chamber believe, convince the Government that the extension of the railway from Bellary to Gudduck is not, like the Carwar project, a work of an experimental character, intended to divert trade from its ordinary channel into a new course, but a work which is certain to develop and offer facilities to trade in a channel where it already exists, in spite of many natural obstacles.

3. It has already been fully explained in Mr. Strange's memorandum, that the 90 miles of country through which the above extension would run offer very great facilities for the construction of a railway, while the prospect of increased traffic on the Madras Railway is so promising that the Chamber understand the Company have already made proposals to the Secretary of State to undertake the

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 7th October 1873.

work without delay. It is admitted on all hands that the cost of the extension would be very moderate, there being only one expensive work, a bridge across the Toongabudra river, along the whole line. Even including the expenditure on this bridge it is doubtful if the line would cost so much per mile as the Neilgherry branch extension, which has just been constructed by the Railway Company, departmentally, at about £4,500 per mile only, including the outlay on stations and sidings. The Neilgherry branch runs through a highly watered strip of country at the foot of the Neilgherry mountains, and is, therefore, a much more difficult and expensive line than that which would run over the dry and level country between Bellary and Gudduck. Assuming, which the Chamber believe may be fairly done, that this latter extension could be made for £4,500 per mile, it is obvious that the benefits of a first class railway communication can be provided for Dharwar at less than one-half the cost of the proposed narrow gauge line which is to connect Dharwar with only a comparative close-borough like Carwar, a place whose trade has yet to be made, whose natural fitness as a trade-centre has yet to be proved, and whose fate, notwithstanding the most strenuous exertions on the part of those interested in its welfare, may, as Mr. Lawett has forcibly pointed out, be similar to that of Port Canning.

No. 102. ORDER THEREON, 7th October 1873, No. 2,456.

RAILWAY, No. 20.

THE present position of the question of Railway extension from Bellary to Gudduck being this, that the Bombay Government have in the strongest manner recommended to the Government of India that it be undertaken in connection with the further extension to Carwar, His Excellency the Governor in Council is not disposed to move further in the matter at present than to communicate this expression of the opinions and wishes of the Madras Chamber of Commerce to the Government of India, with an intimation that it is desirable that the question of the point at which the break of gauge shall occur, and up to which the Madras Railway Company shall carry out the work as a branch of their lines, shall be considered with reference to the just claims of the various interests of this Presidency.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) G. W. WALKER, Colonel, R.E.,

Secretary to Government.

To the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.

" Consulting Engineer for Railways.

Exd. S. T. Austin.

Spare Copies.

Transcribed from the Telegraph Transmitted

Madras 14th August 1873

From

The Secretary to Government

Political Department

To

Colonel C. H. Bates R.E.

Secretary to Government

Public Works Department

Sir,

In reply to your letter dated the 21st ultimo

Transmitted with the Report of Colonel Ford

= ideration a Memorandum by His Excellency

a member of the Famine Commission upon

the Madras Railway from Beypore to Erode,

and at the same time the Famine Relief

Code Each Madras Government would deem

the objects of sufficient importance to call for

the abandonment of a Portion of railway

ment to which the information of

the Supreme Government, such Committee

be understood, be one objected to. Famine

I am investigated and which on the external security

on the subject of the Railway from Carwar to Sadashiv.

The Hon'ble the Chief Secretary read the letter from Government, dated the 19th October last, forwarding a memorandum by Mr. Rendel, and the letter from Government, dated 7th November 1871, and the Government resolution thereon, dated 14th December 1871, and the memorandum dated 1st January 1872 by the Executive Engineer, Canara, on the proposed Railway from Carwar to Sadashiv, and the general correspondence on the subject in the Canara Collectorate.

The Chamber heard nothing further on the subject until they were favoured with the proceedings of the Madras Government dated 15th

December

Government dated 12th June last. Copies of Executive and Legislative proceedings of the Bombay Government dated 3rd February 1873 and the report of the Committee appointed on January 6 to consider the Carwar-Sadashiv project, in which the Bombay Government recommend in the strongest manner the construction of a line from Carwar to Belgaum, with a branch to Bangalore, and state that the Government of India will feel warranted in advising the Secretary of State to accede early to the commencement of the work.

The Chamber have not yet been furnished with a copy of the report of the Bombay Committee, but they notice from the enclosed letter from the Bombay Government to the Government of India dated 5th February last that (1) the proposed Railway from Carwar to Sadashiv is to be a narrow gauge line; (2) that it is estimated to cost 112½ lakhs (£112,500) of which amount being devoted to improvements at the port of Carwar, (3) that Messrs. Wilcox & Co. of Bombay have proposed to construct the line under certain conditions which are not specified; and (4) that the Bombay Government are in favor of accepting Messrs. Wilcox & Co's offer, provided that firm will undertake the construction of the whole line from Carwar to Belgaum.

Bellary. The Chamber, however, observe with some surprise that nothing whatever is said in the above letter, or in the resolution of the Bombay Government about the estimated cost of the railway from Gudduck to Bellary: the attention of the Bombay Committee having apparently been confined almost exclusively to a consideration of the Carwar - Gudduck scheme.

Under these circumstances the Chamber deem it necessary to again call the earnest attention of Government to the desirability of extending the Madras railway from Bellary to Gudduck in the manner proposed in Mr Strange's memorandum. In doing so the Chamber submit that the expediency of making this extension ought not to be considered in connection with the Carwar project, but solely in connection with the broad principle (the soundness of which is admitted on all sides) recently laid down by the Government of India, that only such railways as promise sufficient returns on capital expended to recoup the Government in the interest guaranteed shall in future be sanctioned for construction. That the Carwar - Gudduck project answers this important preliminary condition, the Chamber, with all deference to the contrary opinion

opinion expressed by the Bombay Government very much doubt. Nor do the Chamber stand alone in this view. The evidence recently elicited before the Parliamentary Committee on Indian Finance from Mr John Fleming one of the promoters of the railway has suggested the most serious doubts as to whether the Government of India would be justified in having anything to do with a project whose financial results are as yet so problematical. It appears from Mr Fleming's evidence that it is proposed that the converse of the guaranteed system should be applied in the case of the Carwar railway, and that the Government should advance the necessary capital for the undertaking, while the Company on their part would engage to construct the railway under Government supervision and to guarantee interest on capital at the rate of 4 per cent per annum. The following extracts from Mr Fleming's evidence, as published in the Bombay newspapers would seem to the Chamber to exhibit the disadvantages of such an arrangement to Government in a very clear light. Mr Fawcett, it may be remarked is the member of the Committee who puts the following questions to the witness:

Now, suppose your plan was agreed to, and that Government advanced the money at 4 per cent., and suppose the scheme turned out a second Mutlah Railway—because equally glowing accounts were given at the time of that undertaking—what security would Government have for the two millions or whatever they advanced for the construction of the Carwar Railway, except a railway which would not pay its working expenses? I cannot suppose the case you put.

But Port Canning, we were told at one time, was to be the great port of India, the Mutlah Railway was to take the produce of all that side of India to it, and there were *statements* exactly similar to those you are now making about Carwar—I do not say your expectations may turn out to be untrue, but as a business man you must know that these representations must be carefully received—now would the Government receive any other security except the railway? They would receive the guarantee of the railway and the sum deposited.

How much—one-half? I do not think so much would be necessary.

One-tenth? Yes.

Well, suppose your railway cost £600,000 and Government got one-tenth, or £60,000, and they have handed over to them an annual loss of £25,000, as in the case of the Mutlah Railway? The cases are not at all parallel; they are perfectly different.

How? In this respect—it was believed that the merchants of Calcutta would make use of the Mutlah Railway, but trade went to Calcutta and remained there, and did not go to Port Canning. I believe more must have been done at Port Canning than has been said to be done. But Coompta, which is the rival of Carwar, is not a port at all, and already there is a considerable trade at Carwar, and those at Coompta say, they will bring the whole of their trade to Carwar.

Oh yes; and similarly strong statements were made, at the time as regards to Mutlah. I have no doubt you are as convinced at this moment that the railway would turn out a great success as the original projectors of the Mutlah Railway were, that their scheme would turn out a considerable success. All of us are liable to mistakes, and we come to this point again—suppose Government were to advance the money necessary for the construction of this railway, and were to receive as a deposit only one-tenth of its money as security, and if the railway were to turn out not to pay—the only security Government would have would be an unprofitable railway. Yes.

Now, would you, as a business man, not think that if you advanced nine-tenths of the money required to construct any public work you would think it necessary to exercise the most careful supervision or control to see that your money was not wasted. Yes.

Then, this control would be so much that the railway would practically be constructed by the Government? No; but let me say this: The amount to be deposited has nothing to do with the principal; let the Government demand such an amount as will cover its risk. As I understand, Government says we will make no railways unless we suffer no loss; and I say here is a railway in which people are willing to deposit such a sum as will cover the loss.

Has any such offer been made to the Government? Not that one-half should be deposited.

Who would pay the superintendence that would be required, because it would be very heavy, if Government were to see that its nine-tenths of the money were properly applied? Government. I do not think the Company should be called upon to pay for a heavy staff.

Ah! now we are getting the transaction out more clearly. In addition to advancing nine-tenths on a security of one-tenth, which I think is imperfect security, the Government would have to pay all the expenses of superintending the construction of the railway? It would have to be a matter of arrangement with the Government.

Would not every bridge that required to be constructed, every earthwork, every bit of materials which was being used, require to be constantly watched by Government? If they deemed it necessary—yes.

But it must be necessary—there must be no "if" about it so long as Government is advancing nine-tenths of the money. You know perfectly well, Mr. Fleming, that no man of business would advance money, as you propose, without taking these precautions? Doubtless, Government would take precautions.

Then, would not these precautions involve expense? Clearly they would involve expense.

Then, in addition to the foregoing evidence which is stated Extracts from Correspondence in Bombay — and these generally interested in the improvement of Carwar — are in favor of the proposed Carwar - Hubbuck Railway; and when the Bombay Government itself admits that, as regards estimated capital expenditure and revenue of the railway, "many unexpected circumstances may arise to disturb calculations", it seems to the Chamber that neither the Government of India nor the public at large can feel satisfied that the railway is much wanted for commercial purposes, or that it would be financially successful if constructed. Much stress has been laid on the fact that the

from its ordinary channel into a new course, but a work which is certain to benefit and offer facilities to trade in a channel where it already exists, in spite of many natural obstacles.

It has already been fully explained in the Chancellor's memorandum that the proposed Counter Weaver Branch alone extension would not offer very great facilities for the construction of a railway, while the probable increased traffic on the Radnor Railway is no reason that the Chamber mentioned the Promoters have already made provision in the Secretary of State to undertake the work without delay. It is admitted on all hands that the cost of the extension would be very moderate, there being only one expensive work a bridge across the Tonyandder River along the whole line. Even including the expenditure on the bridge, it is doubtful if the line would cost so much per mile as the Aberdare Branch extension, which has been constructed by the Railway Company, departmentally at about £2500 per mile only, including the rolling stock and plant. The Aberdare Branch and Extension to

Aberdare would be of course of the most valuable nature and in addition would avoid a very expensive line from Pontypridd round over the dividing land between Cardiff and Merthyr. Whether the Chamber believes may be right that the latter extension could be made for £2,500 per mile, it is obvious that the benefit of a first class railway communication can be provided for Aberdare at less than one half the cost of the proposed narrow gauge line which is to connect Aberdare with only a comparative short distance of the Railway, a place whose population is the largest, whose natural trade is the most, and whose future prospects are the most promising of any town in the district, and which has not the slightest opposition to contend with on the part of those interested in its welfare, may, with the greatest confidence, be asserted, as the Promoters of both Companies.

I have the honor to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

[signature]

Chairman

P. D. 1873 Depart.
Ry. & Roads for Oct.
No 5201.

From.

The Chairman, Chamber
of Commerce

Dated 14th August
Recd 22nd September } 1873.

Calling attention
to the desirability of
extending the Madras
Railway from Bellary
to Guddluck.

No 2456 Bad R.
Rep of the Madras Govt
Read the Secretary
from the Chairman,
Chamber Commerce } R. 22 Sept 73)

The present posi-
tion of the question
of Railway extension
from Bellary to
Guddluck being this
that the Bombay
Government have in
the strongest manner
recommended to the
Government of India
that it be undertaken
in connection with the

P.W.
24/9.

I should be inclined
to press the Railway
strongly on the Supreme
Govt.

J.D.S

the further extension
of Canara, His Excellency
the Governor in Council
is not disposed to move
further in the matter
at present than to
communicate this
expression of the
opinions and wishes
of the Madras Chamber
of Commerce to the
Government of India,
with an intimation
that it is desirable
that the question of the
point at which the
break of gauge shall
occur and up to which
the Madras Railway

Enclosed
I shall be glad
to receive
any further
representations
that may be
made to me
on the
subject.

Company shall carry
out the work as
a branch of their
line, shall be consi-
dered [illegible] with reference
to the joint claims of
the various interests
of this Presidency.

No. 2457

Docket No. 9

Copy of the above
forwarded to the
Govt of India.

I will write
separately
enclosed.

J.C. of the
Docket dated 16/10/73

To,
The Consulting
Engr.
for Govt.
Chairman of the
Chamber of Commerce

J.C. dated 24/10/73

1361

No. 2460

Ch 5201 ☆

Govt. of 1878 Madras

PUBLIC WORKS.

To the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce

Dated

Read. Ansd.

G. O. 7th Rets. 2456-2457.

Nos. 101 & 102

Railway from Bellary to Gudduck. Papers in letter from the Chairman, Chamber of Commerce, calling attention to the desirability of extending the Madras Railway to Gudduck.

A. 2480