No 107 S.C. w.d. available

Superintending Engineer's Office
Coimbatore, Nov.r 25.th 1874.

From

Colonel C. B. Wilkinson R.E.
Superintending Engineer
Coimbatore.

To

Colonel G. D. Walker R.E.,
Secretary to Government, F.W.W.
Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to report, for the information of the Government, that the Ponachy Pass may be considered open for bullock traffic, as, on the 11th November 1874, I rode up without dismounting from my horse, from the bottom to the Ponachy Saddle, a distance of 6¼ miles, the ascent being 1000 or about 300 feet a mile. The height of the Ponachy Saddle being nearly 3000 feet above the Sea:-

2. A temporary road at a steep ascent was improvised between the 12th & 13th zigzag, as I reported in my letter, No 95 of 29th October 1874, that portion where some very nasty slab

rock

rock is to be passed, but I have is not finished
no doubt if the Government give
one the Rs 2,500 applied for, the
ghaut will be finished to a
bridle-path with a 12-feet width
at the turns throughout without
any further calls.-

3. Three days before I went up there was a heavy fall of rain which somewhat damaged the ghaut, causing small land slips and injuring one or two of the revetments, but about Rs 300 will set all this right, and it can come out of the Rs 2,500 applied for.-

4. In making this report, I would bring to the notice of Government how much the success of bringing this bridle path ghaut to an almost finished state is due to the Overseer Manuvalu Pillay, who since the departure of Mr Assistant Engineer Johnston, has had sole charge of it. In G. O. No 1769 of 25th July 1870, the Government confirmed the provisional recommendation as an Overseer, 3d Class,

and

and in the letter which the G. O. gave, could be spoken from knowledge of him very highly. The Overseer only now gets Rs 60 which when on the Veilgherries from which place he was transferred had Rs 20 Hill Allowance besides; under these circumstances I hope the Government will give Manuvalu Pillay a higher grade, to 2nd Class Overseer, as a reward.-

5. With reference to G. O. dated 24th September 1870, No 2420, I have the honor to report that the estimate of a new line of road from the foot of the Ponachy ghaut to the town of Annamallay, a distance of 8¾ miles, is now ready in my office and it amounts to Rs 35,500, without compensation for land which will be heavy, including Rs 9,100 for the Ochard bridges Rs 3,450 for the Chinnar.-

6. I have in person gone over the line and checked the estimate, so I hope in a few days more to forward it with report to Government direct,

and

and not through the Local Fund Board, as it appears from the terms of the voluminous correspondence that it is considered a Provincial rather than a Local Fund work. If I am wrong in this surmise, I hope Government will set me right.—

7. With regard to the widening out the bridle path to 12 feet throughout, I shall not be able to get the estimate in quite so soon although in my late visit I went through the data which is nearly ready, and also gave directions, where the Executive Engineer was in doubt, as to the best method of surmounting certain difficulties, the face of the hills being very steep, expensive stone revetments will be required, the estimate will run to a high figure and take sometime in making out, but I hope by the end of December or beginning of January to send it in.—

8. When this estimate does go in it will be time to consider if

if, with changed state of affairs on this lower spur of the Ninnan allayes the present easy though narrow grant will not suffice, for many years to come, the wants of the planters.

9. I understand when the question about the grant was first mooted it was to answer two purposes:—

1st:— As a road for carrying away the coffee and other produce from the lower spur of places where coffee would be grown;

2nd:— as the best and easiest method of approach to Michaels Valley as a place which would vie with Kotacamund as a sanitarium, open out fields for tea planting, and perhaps make a good position on the upper portion of Doracuddu-aut for a Government Colony for the "Poor Whites" about whom so much had been lately written.—

10. With the first purpose I am afraid it will be some time before anything more than the present road will be

be required. On the first opening out these hills, I believe 13 Coffee Estates were opened out, or rather marked out, but only five had any money spent on them. At present two of these have been abandoned, a third is managed by a Native who never spends any money on it, and there only remain the Waterfall and Waverly Estates, and neither of them to my eye appears very flourishing, and would not have more, if so much, as 20 to 25 tons of coffee between them per annum.—

11. The spot appears to me ill-chosen for coffee, in the valleys the wind in the monsoon is a great deal too high, and must stunt the coffee, whilst on the sides of the hills where not exposed to the blast, or facing N. E., the hills are, though covered in many places with heavy jungle, too steep for profitable coffee cultivation. My ideas are some what justified by the state of the coffee interests in these parts, where, if I am to believe reports, a great deal of money has been expended and then the Estates abandoned.—

12. With the 2nd purpose for which this ghaut has been worked out I will deal presently. The ghaut road now abruptly ends on a saddle at a height of about 3,000 feet. From this a small path leading down hill over the other side of the Saddle to the Poniachy Estate on the banks of the Poracuddaclive owned by a Native and too low to be of much value another path impassable for ponies, but I believe used by bullocks, leads us to the Waterfall Estate, a distance of 3 miles zigzagging up the Poniachy Hill, from which at very steep gradient it is continued to the Waverly Estate about two miles further on.

on. I do not enppose for many years to come, if ever, these two estates will be in a position to open out the road to the width of the present Government grant.

13. It now comes for me to ask for instructions and to know what are the intentions of Government, am I to leave this grant road terminating abruptly on the Poriasky Saddle, or am I to continue the trace to Michaels Valley, in order that intended settlers may come to prospect up there?

14. The Secretary to Government, who I believe knows the country well, proposes the trace on the left or south-western side of the Toracuddu-aut where there are difficulties in the shape of very steep sides and rocky precipices to be tackled with, but can of course be overcome; whilst on the right or north-Eastern side

side there is a gentle rise and a fine open grassy jungle, but then by going to that side, it would increase the distance very much, as when you come past the bottom of Jungacher Mallay on the opposite side, at the crossing of the river you would only have gained 4,600 feet and still have at least 2,400 feet to gain before reaching Michaels Valley. So I put that side out of the question.

15. To carry the trace on the left bank from the top of the Poriachy Saddle the first spot to gain would be the top of the waterfall below the Waterfall estate, a height of 700 feet above the Saddle or a total height above the sea of about 3,700 feet, a distance of a little over 2 miles. The present line to this estate rises and then falls down to the estate and is 3 miles, the cottage being 3,000 feet.

16. From this point there will be

be no difficulty in making
a trace, though the jungle
in places is very heavy, to
Michaelo Valley, I should hope
without a zigzag.—

17. I put out of the question
the going round between Jum-
gachee Mullay and the river
Ypracidiw a difficult course
as it is very precipitous high up
the mountain; and I am doubtful
if it is feasible, close down to the
ravine, as marked out in the
map by dotted line; again in
that way the distance would be
greatly increased as the trace
would have to come a long
way almost at a level.—

18. The top of the waterfall
is 3,700 feet whilst Michaelo
Valley is said to be about
3000 feet or we have 3300 feet
to get up at 300 feet a mile, which
makes a distance of 11 miles
only.

19. In the map the stream
that runs through the 1st O in
the word Poonachy Annam
Coorl is the one with the
waterfall

waterfall, from this point I would
trace out the path round
the hill and up the valley
where the next stream runs in
there round a very prominent
bluff point just opposite
to the A in the word Aver from
whence there are two large
valleys on either side of the
hill called Alimbaculmullay
or rather where the O is in
that word and it would be
nearly the 11 miles to Ukka
mullay, if the map is right,
climbing up gradually at 300
feet a mile, and then according
to circumstances as we find
the lay of the land we could
go either over the saddle be-
tween the Ukka and Jumgachee
mullay, or to the south of
Ukkamullay. I have no doubt
this generally is the proper
line, very likely in carrying
out the trace we should be stop
by a precipice and have to
modify the slope, but these
are difficulties that can
be overcome, I may find of

course

course that I shall be obliged to keep down near the river and go as the dotted line shown in the map, but then, if it is so, the length of the grant will be much increased, as when you round the point I imagine Mullay the river is only 4,600 & only 900 feet above the waterfall and the distance not 8 miles instead of 3 miles, and we shall have still some 2400 feet to gain 7200 feet or at least 8 miles more.-

20. I have made these remarks in my present visit to the hills, where I could not do as I intended to, explore into Michaels Valley, but I was stopt at the Waterfall bungalow; it was impossible at this season of the year to get on further, coolies would not go for the same reason that I was stopt by leaches and long grass, but I was able daily to go myself to prospect

- pect and get a good deal of valuable information from the Poohars, Coravers and the manager of the Waterfall Estate.-

21. Should Government determine to finish this work so well begun, I hope I shall be given the service of an officer to trace this line, which he can do under my own personal inspection. Nothing however can be attempted until February at the earliest, in fact when the grass has been burnt down.-

22. I could not find out that any part of the upper plateau of the hills was ever feverish except at the coffee blossoming season when it is always feverish.-

23. The map I have referred to no one kindly lent to me, by the Secretary to Government and was,

I

I think originally issued with Major Buckalew's report.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient
Servant.
(Signed) Colonel R.C.
Superintending Engineer
Coimbatore.

Copied
Sept 28th

P. W. D.

Proceedings of the Madras Government,

Under date the 187 .

Read the following:—

From
The Supt Engineer
Coimbatore

H. L. No. 107 of 25th Nov 1876

His Excellency the
Governor in Council
not prepared at present to
go into the question of
any extension of the road
to the head of the Pommachy
Shaut in the direction of
the higher plateau of the
Anaymullays until some
thing more shall have
been done for widening

To
The Secretary to Govt
P. W. Department
Madras

Dated 25th November 1876
Received 29th " "

Sir,

I have the honor to submit herewith a report on the proposed extension of the Pollachy road to the Pommachy Shaut, as ordered in your letter No. 2528 dated 16th Oct 1876.

Copied 28-12-76

the good trace now
nearly completed, so that
Carts may use it, and
for connecting it with
existing roads in the
low country - He awaits
therefore the submission
of the estimates already
called for in G.O. nos 848
of 25th March, 2720 of 24th
September and 3316 of
26th November -

The case of Overseer
Manivasha Pillay will be
taken into consideration
by the Chief Engineer -

Govt.

338 - 339.

S.E. Coimbatore (4 C)
Revenue Deptt (3 —)
Financial " (2 —)

Despd 17/12/74.

intimating that the
question of any extension
of the road to the head of
the Koonachy Chaut in
the direction of the higher
plateau of the Anay-
-mullay, cannot be
entered into until some-
thing more shall have
been done for widening
the good traced now
nearly completed, and
awaiting the submission of
Estis already called for -

A Lane Esqr

7470

Govt. of 1874 Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

The Collector
Coimbatore
9th Dec 1874

Dated

Recd.

Encl.

G. O. 16 Dec 1874, No. 3543.

Nos. 338-339

Ponachy Ghat-

Coimbatore Dt. Awaiting the submission of the Estimates already called for in certain orders before going into the Question of any deviation of the road to the head of the ~~Ghat~~ Ghaut in the direction of the higher ~~ghats~~ Malcaud of the Anamalay mullays until some time more shall have been done for indenting the good trees, now nearly completed.