

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Political DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 381

Press
~~Mis.~~

Dated

14. 5. 1887

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Recd, 12th

N^o 175.

Tanjore

Commissioner's Office

8th May 1857.

From

H. D. Phillips Esq

Commissioner of Tanjore

To

E. Maltby Esq

Acting Chief Secretary to Government

Fort St. George.

Sir,

I have the honor to submit the information required in an Extract from the Minutes of Consultation dated the 24th ultimo, N^o 316, transmitting a copy of certain interrogatories founded upon the amendment recently made by the Plaintiff in her Bill in the suit against the East India Company.

*
Kamatchee
bhojee.

1st Interrogatory. 2.

The late Rajah Serwajee on the 18th July 1852, that is, subsequently to his marriage with Kamatchee bhojee and about three years previous to his decease, did

duly

duly and lawfully marry seventeen
wives, of whom two, named Soyerrumba
bhojee and Tookumba bhojee, decessed
respectively, without issue, on the 18th
September 1854 and the 9th June 1855.

3. Eight of the seventeen marriages were performed between the hours of 4 and 6 in the afternoon; the other nine between 7 and 9 O'clock in the same evening.

4. The names of the surviving fifteen ladies and the order in which the marriage ceremony was performed, are correctly stated in the first interrogatory.

5. These Hindoo ladies are now resident beyond the jurisdiction of H. M. Supreme Court. They are living within the limits of that

that portion of the Tanjore Province over which neither the judicial nor the Revenue authority of the Government of Madras has ever extended, but within which the Rajahs of Tanjore have successively exercised all the powers and privileges of independent Sovereignty subject, thro' the medium of a Resident, to such general control as the paramount power for political purposes might occasionally deem desirable.

Interrogatory 2.

I find nothing in my records to show the exact terms of the plea advanced by the Government in the answer filed in the Supreme Court, relative to the right of joint succession to the late Rajah's personal property possessed by all his widows. It is therefore difficult to reply with

with precision to the first part of the
Plaintiff's second Interrogatory,
in which it is asked if the Defend-
ants do not "assert and submit
that by the Hindoo Law as pre-
vailing among the Mahrattas
yes yes" to "or what else do they
submit".

7. There can be no doubt whatever,
I believe, that the eldest of the widows
of a Mahratta man who has deceased
leaving no son natural or adopted,
does not succeed to the property left
by him, but that all his widows
are joint heiresses and should
divide the estate of the deceased
amongst them, according to Hindoo
Law.

8. But such a rule would be as in
the information on this point - and
The Mahratta custom in this respect
can best be learnt at Bombay.

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not be applicable to a Raj and the
public property belonging to it, which
being indivisible would be inherited
by the eldest of the widows of the
deceased Rajah in the same
manner that it would have been
by the eldest of any number of sons
the last Rajah might have left.

9.
Bawah Sahib.
Kamah Sahib.
Annah Sahib.
Pritamp Singh.

Bawah Sahib the 5th of the
Tanjore Rajahs was the eldest
son of Tookojee the fourth Rajah,
who died leaving four sons. Bawah
Sahib, so far as appears from
some old papers in the Palace,
deceased without issue leaving
six wives. 1st Soojan bhojee. 2^d
2^d Jayarunt bhojee. 3^d Sakhar
bhojee. 4th Lookroomer bhojee. 5th
5th Geriya bhojee. 6th Parvati bhojee.
10. Soojan bhojee was placed

on the musnud by the immediate ^{a.d. 1738.}
relations of the Rajah her husband
and the principal authorities of
the Durbar. She retained pos-
session of the Raj for less than
one year and was deposed by the
parties, who appeared to have been
instrumental in her own elevation,
assisted by certain officers and
troops despatched from Fort St.
David and funds supplied
by the Dutch at Negapatam.

11. It can not now be ascertained
how long she lived after this event,
as the papers from which the par-
ticulars could be gleaned are
under the seal imposed in conse-
quence of the Supreme Court's Regu-
lation. The point however, if of
any

any importance may, it is supposed,
eventually be ascertained by laborious
search. Neither can it now be ascer-
tained to what extent she exercised
regal powers, or whether she was
allowed the sole absolute control
of the Raj and all the real and
personal property of her husband
during the brief duration of her
administration of the Raj.

12. The force which aided in
her removal was likewise employed
in placing on the Musnud, Savagee
Shahajee commonly called the
Rat Rajah, who reigned less
than a year and died a violent
death at the hands of a party
which had risen in favor
of Pretamp Sing, fourth son of
Lookajee the 4th of the Tanjore
Rajahs

a.d. 1739.

Rajah before mentioned. Subsequent to the reign of Pretamp Sing, as the Government may be aware, the succession was regular.

13. The Rat Rajah's birth is known to have been involved in much doubt and mystery. It was formerly a current belief that he was not really the child of the wife of Serfojee 3. Tanjore Rajah, who claimed to have given him birth, but had been taken from a slave girl named Roopee, and brought to Serfojee's wife who had previously been feigning pregnancy - in order that the absence of real issue in Serfojee's family might thus be remedied.

14. The deceit then practised appears to have passed undetected for

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for some time but having subsequently been bruited abroad, Serfojee's younger brother of Serfojee interfered and expostulated so seriously that the Child, as a measure of safety, was withdrawn from Tanjore and removed beyond the Coleroon to the jungle tracts of Wodiarpollim in the Trichinopoly District - where he grew up until it was found convenient to bring him before the Tanjore public as a fit substitute for Soojan Choyre.

15. It has not been possible to discover records which serve for a denial or an admission of the truth of the comprehensive questions in the second Interrogatory relative to Soojan Choyre's real position in Tanjore during the
very

very short period for which she was
recognized as the Head of the State.
I conclude that on Buwah Sahib's
death the Ministers of that time
regarded her as a sort of political
necessity and made use of her as
such. It is clear that great confu-
sion had arisen and that unusual
difficulties were encountered, or
the early chance from a Rance of
less than a year's existence, to the
expelled and doubtful descendant
of a former ruler would not have
been adopted.

16 In respect of the turn now
given to Ramathee Choyee's claim
it seems necessary I should mention
that her position in regard to the
late Rajah, does not appear
to give her that right to be
regarded

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regarded as his principal widow
which she puts forward.

17 Altho' late married to
the Rajah much against his own
wish and desire and solely to
meet the urgent pressing of his
Father Serfojee, she never became
his associate and no intercourse
is believed to have been held. His
dislike of her is said to have
been marked and manifest
on all occasions, but particularly
he abstained from performing
with her a ceremony called the
Put-abshe-^{2 Kraw} "Puttabee Shaktam", which was
duly performed with Syclimba
Choyee his first wife, the mother
of the young Princess now in
the Tanjore Fort.

18. The "Puttabee Shaktam" ritual
confers

confers on the wife who is the
object of it the privilege of seating
herself with the Rajah on certain
occasions on the Munsud and
generally establishes her in a
much higher position in a do-
mestic and public point of
view than that of the wives
with whom no other than the
ordinary marriage ceremony has
been observed.

19. On the death of his first
wife Sydumba Choyee the late
Rajah is understood pointedly
to have abstained from the "Pattala
Shakum" with Ramatchee Choyee
but he did perform it with no
less than three of the seventeen
ladies whom he married in

1852 and assuming the ceremony to
be of the character above stated,
of which there seems no doubt
whatever, it is for consideration
how far on this ground alone,
Ramatchee Choyee can be
accepted as the chief represen-
tative of a Rajah who died
without male issue.

I have the honour to be

Sir

Your most obedient servant

T. D. D. D.

Commis. Genl.

N^o 380.A

Extrait from the Mins: of Coun:^{rs}

dated 11th May 1857

Read the following letter
from the Comm: of Tanjore

/ Here enter 8th May 1857
n^o 175/

H
L.Y.

Ordered that copy of
the foregoing letter and of

the papers noted in the margin

be furnished to the
Company's Solicitor with

reference to para 2 of his let.

per ~~opinion~~ of the 21st

ultimo, n^o 204.

Ordered also that the
following letter be despatched

to the Government of India

/ Here enter 14th May, n^o 381/

J.M.

Copy to the St. Solicitor: with copies of the papers
noted in the margin - Dispd. 18th

Letter fr. Resid^t Col. Blackburne
d/ 22nd June 1812.

Reply from Chief Sec^y to Resid^t
d/ 1st March 1814

Paras 5 & 6 of Memo: from the
Resid^t of Tanjore with his letter
of 7th April 1854 - n^o 3 with
list of the names & succession
of the Rajahs of Tanjore

Para 15 of letter from the Resid^t
d/ 6th Nov 1855 with list of the
names of the Maharatta Rajahs
of Tanjore with the dates of
succession -

Official 1857 Regard

sd. N^o 380.A

Communications
Tanjore - n^o 175

dated 8th -
Rec^d 12th May 1857

N^o 409

Forwarding the in-
formation called for
by S. M. P. of 14th April
n^o 316, regarding the
succession of Rajahs
George Elliot Windsor
of Maon Dahlid, & the
Raj of Tanjore

Copy to the Govt of India
in May 1857. n^o 381.
Go to H. M. Comptrolr's Office
n^o 3 - n^o 380.A
10
21st May
1857

+ - it will be observed that Kamechoe Whayee is not
opposed by the case of Sooran Whayee - He usurped the throne
in disturbed times when there was no paramount power to oppose
to & was deposed almost immediately.

10
Mem^m
In circulating Mr. Phillips's letter of the 8th Inst
the information of Govt, I beg to send
with it the letter with which I despatched
a copy of it to Calcutta.

I took this step after consulting Mr. Boyson,
who said that the information now collected
would enable him to ^{draw upon} answer to the interroga-
tory about Sooran Whayee in the amended Bill
& that as the point was a ^{simple} one he
did not think that the Court would grant
an extension of time for filing it, so as to
enable Mr. Ritchie's opinion upon it to be
first received. - but Mr. B. will defer filing
the answer as long as he can for this purpose.

Mr. Boyson is desirous to have the Advocate
General's opinion without delay as to the
evidence to be adduced in defending the
Suit, & I therefore forwarded my letter
by express.

- Two points in Mr. Phillips's letter call for remark.
In Para 11. he says that the seal imposed
on the papers in the Palace in consequence of

the Court & can moot this point
if of importance to their indi-
vidual interests. The object
of Govt appears to be to come to
an issue on the main question
as speedily as possible & to
avoid the appearance of
causing delay, or of turning
from the principal to a
subordinate matter.

E. M. M. M.

14 May 1857

Mahratta Sovereigns of Sangli

- 1 - Yekhojee - 1676 - ascended throne.
- 2 - Shakhajee - 1684
- 3 - Surfojee - 1713
- 4 - Tookoojee - 1731
- 5 - Bawa Sahib - son of 4 - 1737
- 6 - Soojan khayee (widow of 5 - 1738
deposed in Sep
than a year)
- 7 - Kant Rajah - Shakhajee - claimed to be son of 3 - 1739
deposed also
- 8 - Petaab Sing - son of 4 - 1740
- 9 - Tookoojee - son of 8 - 1764
- 10 - Amarsing Bhonslay - son of 8 - 1787 - deposed by us in favor of No 11 with whom the treaty of 1799 was made.
- 11 - Surfojee - adopted son of 9 - 1798
- 12 - Seevajee - son of 11 - 1832

Note Tookoojee - had a son older than Bawa Sahib - named Nana Sahib. - Nana Sahib died in Tookoojee's life time leaving a son Appoo Sahib - & this infant was legal heir to the throne when Bawa Sahib died childless ascending to the throne per Blackbarnes (letter of 22 June 1813 - PB) but in the distractions which then prevailed his party was overpowered.

Thus when Soojan khayee got herself placed for a time on the musnud, ^{one brother at least} ~~she had~~ her husband (Petaab Sing) was alive - & the son (Appoo Sahib) of another (Nana Sahib) besides other ^{his} male relations.

the Supreme Court's injunction prevents
his obtaining certain information. - To this
Mr. Boyson ^{remarks} that the seal is not that of the
Court, but was put on by the Commissioner
for security - & that there is nothing in
the injunction which forbids the Commissioner
to read the papers, or examine & make list
of any of the property under his charge - In
fact this may be necessary on his part, Mr. B.
observes, as temporary custodian of it, &
no breach of the injunction is committed
unless something is done to make away
with the property, alter its state or injure
it. - In the present instance Mr. B.
does not require more information
about Sooran Bhayee, but Govt may
perhaps think it advisable that Mr.
Phillips should be informed of this
interpretation of the injunction for
his future guidance.

The 2nd point is contained in P 16 to 19.

Mr. Phillips here mentions that though Ha-
matchee Bhayee is the eldest surviving

widow, her claim to the first place in
rank is doubtful, because owing to her
husband's dislike of her a ceremony
called the "Puttabee Shikhar" was not
performed. - & she did not therefore
sit on the throne with him, a privi-
lege which was possessed by some of
the other Queens. -

Mr. Forbes says that this fact is cor-
rect, but he joins in Mr. Boyson's &
my opinion that the point is virtu-
ally of no importance & that it is
not advisable for Govt to raise it
in their defence to the suit. -
The want of this ceremony, though it
affected Hamatchee Bhayee's dignity
as Queen, seems to have no bearing
on her position as a private individual
& it is in this character that she
claims the private estate of her
deceased husband. - But even
were it otherwise the point does
not affect the company, since it
would merely ^{transfer Hamatchee Bhayee's} claim to one of the
other Queens. - They are all before

22
Extract from a Memo from the
President of Tanjore dated 7th
April 1854.

Para 5. At the commencement
of the 17th century the country passed
into the hands of a race of Kings,
known as the Naidoo's, whose united
reigns however extended over only a
seventy years. The last of these
Kings, being hard pressed by his
neighbor the ruler of Trichinopoly,
asked assistance from the Mah-
rattas and, in or about the year
1676, Venkajee or Yechajee, the half
brother of Sevajee, the founder of
the Mahrattah state came to his
assistance with a powerful Army,
and relieved him from all appre-
hension on account of his formida-
ble neighbor. Yechajee however made
such

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such heavy demands for the payment
of the expenses of his expedition, that
the Rajah was unable to meet them
and under pretence of a temporary
occupation to enable him to collect
his due, Yechajee took possession
of the Country and very shortly de-
clared himself Rajah of Tanjore from
this Chief the present Rajah is
descended.

6. Yechajee had three sons
who succeeded to the Musnud in the
order of their birth. Shahajee in 1684-
Serojajee in 1713 and Tookojee in 1731. All
the three brothers left Children and a
three irregular succession to the Musnud
followed Tookojee's death. first, that
of Bava Sahib, a son of Tookojee,
in 1737, second that of Soojan Bai
Sahib, the widow of Bava Sahib, in
1738, and third, in 1739, that of Sha-
hajee Bhoonslah, son of Serojajee
commonly called the Kāl Rajah,
from the Tamil word for jungle, an
affix

affix not unusually given in the South
of India to those whose manners
and habits are uncivilized. The latter
was almost immediately deposed
and sought restoration to the mus-
soud by the assistance of the British,
who now for the first time interfered
in the politics of Tanjore.

Extract from a letter from the Resident of
Tanjore dated 6th November 1835.

Para 15. Yakoje, the first Maratha
Rajah of Tanjore, had three sons, who
each reigned in succession, the third
son Soojooje had four sons, and was
succeeded by the third Bava Sahib
as the eldest two were not born in
wedlock, Bava Sahib had no children
and on his death in 1737 he was suc-
ceeded in the musmud by his Widow
Soojanbayee Sahib. I am informed
that similar successions took place
at

15
at the latter end of the last Century to
the Musmud of Sattara and Kolapoor
but for this I have no record to refer
to.

Extract from a letter from Sir Wm. Colme-
r. Blackburn Resident at Tanjore
dated 22nd June 1843.

Para 16. The first Nanah Sahib
died in the life time of his father,
leaving an infant son, Appoo Sahib,
the father of the Petitioner. Appoo Sahib
was still an infant at the death,
without children, of his Uncle Bava
Sahib, to whom he was the legal heir.
In the distraction which followed
the death of Bava Sahib, the ad-
herents of Appoo Sahib were overpowered,
and finally Petaup Sing seated him-
self firmly on the Throne, and transmitted
it to his descendants.

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Recd by Express - 14/5

No 381

Pol. Dept.

Letter to the Govt of India

Sir

In reference to P. 2 of my letter of the 24th ulto I have the honor to forward for the information of the R. H. the G. G. in C copies of the papers noted in the margin, and to request that they may be laid before the Advocate General. - & an answer to the interrogatory in P. 2 of the amended Bill with regard to Soojee Sahib's succession to Bhayee. This is being prepared upon the papers by the Company's Solicitor & will be forwarded immediately on completion but I am meanwhile directed to request that

Letter from Commissioner, Tanjore dated 8 May 1857

Letter from the Resident Col. Blackburne - 22 June 1853.

Reply from Chief Secretary to Resident Col. Blackburne dated 1st March 1854.

Paras 5 & 6 of a Memo submitted by the Resd^t at Tanjore with his letter of 7 April 1854. No 3 with list of the names and succession of the Rajahs of Tanjore.

Para 13 of letter from the Resd^t at Tanjore of 16 Nov. 1855 with list of the names of the Marattah Rajahs of Tanjore with the dates of succession.

At
Q
M.

Recd by Express - 14/5
No 13 of 1857

No 380. A.

Extract of Minutes of Council

Extract of Minutes of Council

24th May 1857

10-11

This Court may receive
as early as possible the
Advocate General's opinion
as to the evidence which
should be adduced
on behalf of the Company
at the hearing of the
cause so that there
may be time for its
preparation. -

Fort St. George, }
14 May 1857

JM

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Dr. J. C. & Co. 17th St. N.Y.
Dec 13th 1857 Dec 13th 1857

10 at 12

to the public conveyance in
the American Mills / Hamada
Alloye & Co. to the S. S. Co. of
others to being prepared by
the S. S. Co. with a formal
order, and, in accordance to
the S. S. Co. with a formal
order, in accordance to
the evidence & the address
an action of the Co. at the
hearing of the case.

Dr. J. C. & Co. 17th St. N.Y.
Dec 13th 1857 Dec 13th 1857

Dr. J. C. & Co. 17th St. N.Y.
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the evidence & the address
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hearing of the case.