M.R.O. 14—10,000—21-4-22

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 1690	Press / Mis.
413-416	
Dated 22-9	1860.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
22nd September 1860.

Read the following letters:—

No. 413. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th May 1860, No. 2,529.

Read letter from Director of Revenue Settlement, dated 19th May 1860, No. 503.

(In Cons., 21st May 1860, No. 2,338.)

1. The Board have conferred with the Director of Revenue Settlement on the subject of the proposed "Rules for the Water Assessment in the Godavery and Kistna Deltas" and it is only necessary for them to submit the revised draft for the consideration and orders of Government.

2. The only alteration which appears to need remark is that in Clause VI. On consulting with the Director, it appeared that he concurred with the Board that it was inexpedient to allow the Raiyats the full option of converting "Nanja" into "Punja," because such a course would involve annual examination of the fields, would interfere with the irrigation by tracts, and would be at variance with the general practice of the country. Moreover, the Raiyats cannot reasonably expect such a privilege, after Government had incurred all the labor and expense of providing regular and permanent irrigation. The rule has consequently been altered, so as to admit of the conversion, in the only case where it is expedient, viz., when the means of irrigation permanently fail.

3. With reference to the Order of Government, dated 21st May 1860, No. 820, Revenue Department, the Board beg to explain that their Proceedings, dated 16th May 1860, were submitted to Government merely to acquaint them with what was being done on a very important question. It was never intended by the Board that those proceedings should be considered as the final settlement of the question, so far as they were concerned.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM, *Secretary.*

No. 414. From H. NEWILL, Esq., Director of Revenue Settlement, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, Fort Saint George, dated Camp Narsápúr, 4th July 1860, No. 667.

SIR,

1. In reference to the Board's Proceedings of 19th May 1860, No. 2,372, I have the honor to submit copy of a letter from the Collector of Godavery District, giving explanation as to the grounds on which he proposed so early a date as 31st January for the Raiyats to give notice of their intention to discontinue the use of water.

2. As this option has been struck out of the rules as revised in consultation with the Board, this point is disposed of.

3. It will be observed further from paragraph 3 that Mr. Purvis does not object to the date originally proposed (31st March) for the receipt of applications for water for converting dry lands into wet, and if the rules have not yet been finally disposed of by Government it seems, therefore, desirable that the original date, 31st March, should be retained instead of the end of February, as afterwards modified out of deference to Mr. Purvis.

4. A copy of this letter is addressed to the Secretary to Government, as the final orders have not yet reached me.

From A. PURVIS, Esq., Collector of the Godavery District, to H. NEWILL, Esq., Director of Revenue Settlement, dated Cocanada, 21st June 1860, No. 506.

SIR,

1. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo, asking for more particular information as to the grounds on which I proposed so early a date as 31st of January for giving notice to the discontinuance or new use of water.

2. The principal rice crop in this part of the country is generally cut by the end of December or quite the beginning of January. It seems to me, therefore, that there will be no hardship in requiring Raiyats who are anxious to give up the use of the water to declare their intentions by the date named by me. This will give time for the Officers of the Public Works Department to make arrangements for diverting the supply from those who no longer want it, to the fields of those who are desirous of benefiting by irrigation.

3. I have no objection to urge the date first proposed by you for the receipt of application for water for the purpose of newly converting dry lands into wet.

No. 415. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th July 1860, No. 3,417.

Read letter from the Director of Revenue Settlement, dated 4th July 1860, No. 667, submitting copy of a letter from the Collector of the Godavery District, relative to the dates to be fixed for the applications for the use or discontinuance of water in the proposed Rules for the Water Assessment.

(In Cons., 9th July 1860, No. 3,314.)

The Board concur with Mr. Newill and resolve to recommend to Government that the 31st March be inserted in No. 7 of the "Rules for the Water Assessment in the Godavery and Kistna Districts" in lieu of the end of February, which is the date entered in the draft submitted to Government with the Board's Proceedings, dated 26th May last, No. 2,529.

(A true Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM, *Secretary.*

No. 416. ORDER THEREON, 22nd September 1860, No. 1,690.

1. After consulting with the Director of Revenue Settlement, the Board of Revenue re-submit the Draft rules proposed by that Officer for the water rate in the Godavery and Kistna Districts, noting but one alteration as worthy of remark, viz., in Rule VI, by which it is now proposed to disallow to the raiyat the option of converting Nanja into Punja, except when irrigation shall permanently fail.

2. The Government now proceed to pass orders on the proposed Rules:—

Rules I and II as proposed by the Board are approved.

Rules III and IV will be noticed below.

Rule V. This rule proposes a charge of one Rupee an acre for temporary irrigation for dry crops where arranged in tracts, and one and a half Rupee for isolated fields thus watered. This appears to the Government to be a needless refinement and complication. This irrigation is equally valuable to the raiyat, whether his field be "isolated," or watered in common with others. It seems undesirable therefore to make a difference in the rate, which will inevitably lead to disputes and evasions. One great advantage of a light assessment is that it makes it practicable to get rid of these nice distinctions; and certainly the proposed rate is light enough for that. The rule will therefore be as follows:

V. "Temporary irrigation for dry crops will be charged for at 1½ Rupee an acre."

Rule VI as modified by the Board and Mr. Newill, is approved, slightly modified as follows:

"Land once classed as Nanja cannot be transferred to Punja unless the means of "irrigation fail permanently."

Rule VII is approved. But, in accordance with the Board's Proceedings of July 25th above recorded, the limit as to date of applications will be the 31st March as originally proposed.

Rule VIII is approved, as modified by the Board, to omit the limitation of time as to applications for temporary irrigation for dry crops.

Rule IX will stand good, without the addition of the words "for trespass."

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Rule X is approved, as modified by the Board. But the word "wholly" may be omitted as redundant; and the word "and" should be substituted for "but."

Rule XI. The following will be substituted for that proposed.

"The rules will also apply to Zamíndáris, except where a composition shall have been "made either for a fixed yearly payment, or according to the quantity of water supplied."

Rule XII. As altered by the Board is approved, slightly modified as follows:

"The arrangement whereby in a part of the Kistna Delta in the Guntoor District a "consolidated water rate of four Rupees an acre has been introduced, will be superseded by the "present rules. But in the other parts of the Delta in that District where the system of Nanja "rates prevails, that system will remain undisturbed till the new Revenue Settlement."

3. It remains to notice Rules III and IV, which relate to the water rate for second crop on fully irrigated land. By Rule III tracts of land fully supplied with water for two crops are to pay a consolidated water rate of four Rupees an acre, to be paid in all years "except in cases "of failure of water;" and by Rule IV the rate for a second crop on land not included in such tracts is to pay 1½ Rupee an acre. Thus the entire charge for a fully irrigated second crop would, under these rules, be either one Rupee an acre or 1½ Rupee. It appears to Government that this is unduly low. The charge for a second crop on ordinary Nanja land is a sum equal to half the Nanja assessment of the first crop, which includes the land assessment as well as the water rate; but it is now proposed that half the latter only shall be paid, and only a third of it, where the land is in "tracts." For the most part also, the whole assessment is much higher in the case of the old Nanja than the new rates in the Godavery and Kistna will be. The difference may be shown by an example. On an acre of old Nanja paying 7 Rupees assessment for one crop, the charge for the second crop will be 3½ Rupees. But in the case of an acre of irrigated land in the Godavery District, paying the same amount for the first crop, viz., 4 Rupees land assessment, and 3 Rupees water rate, the charge for the second crop, on the principle proposed, will not be 3½ Rupees but 1½ Rupee, or only one Rupee if the land is in a "tract." Thus the charge for the second crop will not be half the charge for the first crop, but only one-fifth or one-seventh of it.

4. In the case of inferior land the difference will no doubt be less; for example, in the case of land assessed at 1 Rupee an acre, the land and water rate united will be 4 Rupees for the first crop, and Nanja land under an old consolidated assessment of this amount would pay only 2 Rupees for the second crop. But in point of fact land at so low a rate under the old assessments is very rarely two crop land; because those assessments always included consideration as to the means of irrigation; and if that was copious and certain, the Assessment was high.

5. In the two Deltas now in question, however, the land assessment will be decidedly light, expected by Mr. Newill to average 2 Rupees an acre, though great part of the land is of very good quality, with a moderate uniform water rate. The Government are far from objecting to a light assessment. They think true policy requires it. But there is a limit below which the necessities of the State prohibit reduction; and the Government think that a tract of country so highly favored as these Deltas, ought not to be taxed more lightly than other parts of the country.

6. There is another consideration. The supply of water for a second crop in these Deltas must be very limited without special means taken to provide it; and the means will be the construction of very extensive reservoirs up the river. The cost of such works will properly be chargeable to the second crop, for they will be necessary for that only. But the light charge proposed to be made for the water would hardly pay for the necessary works, and so, by lessening or taking away the inducement to construct them, might prevent their being made. A higher charge than that proposed by the Board seems therefore necessary and proper. The principle of a water rate seems to require that the rate should be the same for both the first and second crop; and three Rupees an acre would probably not be high as the entire charge on the second crop.

7. It is argued that the second crop takes much less water than the first; and also that the crop itself is poorer; and that two crops in a year exhaust the soil. As to the first argument, the Government doubt the fact; it is true the crop is a shorter time on the ground, but from the much greater power of the sun during the hot and dry season, the evaporation* (which in fact constitutes the consumption of water) is much more copious. The second objection is no doubt true as a fact; but even the second crop of an acre of land is probably worth at least 10 or 12 Rupees. The exhaustion of the soil is also true in many cases. But this is for the owner to consider. A Rupee or two less to pay would not make it worth his while to deteriorate his land; nor would it be wise on the part of Government to hold out such an inducement.

* NOTE.—*Evaporation not only from the water itself, but from the plant, which must supply itself from the water.*

8. The question here treated, viz., that of the amount and form of the charge for water on a second crop in these Deltas, is one of very great and permanent importance; and for the foregoing reasons the Government are of opinion that it needs further discussion. They resolve therefore to refer back this point to the Board, with instructions to report further upon it, after consulting with the various officers both of the Revenue and Engineer Departments, best qualified by practical and local knowledge and opportunities of observation, to give an opinion on the subject. They may properly consult the Collectors and District Engineers of both Districts, Captain Rundall, and Messrs. G. N. Taylor, Dykes, Newill and R. E. Master.

9. The Board will communicate the rules so far as now approved for the information and guidance of the officers concerned.

4. They will also report what has been done by the Collectors of the Godavery and the Kistna Districts, in pursuance of the Order of December 7th 1859,† directing that the water rate should be levied immediately on Inám and Zamíndári land, and on Government land where the state of assessment might make it practicable.

† *No.* 1,656, *paragraph* 5.

(Signed) J. D. BOURDILLON,
Secretary to Government.

Copy ina Letter to England
D/10th October No 110 of 1860

Revenue 1860 Depart.
Pro: of Govt for September
No 1690
Pro: of the Madras Govt
D/22nd September 1860

From Rec^r 2904/60.

Revised Draft
Rules for the water-rate
in the Godavery and
Kistna Districts, with
orders thereon.

No 1135 to 1516