

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. 2057	<u>Press</u> <u>Mis.</u>
191-192	
Dated 16-11-1918	1863

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
16th November 1863.*

No. 191. Read the following letter from Captain R. H. BEDDOME, Officiating Conservator of Forests, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Manantoddy, 27th October 1863, No. 735:—

SIR,

1. I have the honor to forward a letter from Captain W. A. Gib, Assistant Conservator of the Wynad Forests, and request that you will lay the same before Government for orders.

2. When Captain Gib took charge of the Wynad Range he discovered that much Teak was being felled throughout the Wynad under the pretence of being felled on private temple land. After the Government Order No. 2,311 of the 5th of December 1860, all claims to timber lying felled in the Wynad Forests were registered; I consider that these claims only should stand good, and that claims made now for the first time after the expiration of nearly three years should not be attended to.

3. In their Order No. 122 of the 19th January 1863, Government ordered that a certain time should be fixed for the removal of this timber, and that all timber not removed within the time should be confiscated; after this order ample time for removal was allowed to all parties claiming timber, the period varied from 5 to 10 months according to the number of logs claimed by each party. I should recommend that when the time allowed in these licenses has expired that all removal of timber should be put a stop to; this in fact is ordered in the Government Order above alluded to, but I have thought it better to lay the subject again before Government.

From Captain W. A. GIB, Assistant Conservator of Forests, to Captain R. H. BEDDOME, Officiating Conservator of Forests, dated Manantoddy, 14th October 1863, No. 85.

SIR,

1. Several persons have lately laid claim to a large number of Teak wood logs lying in the Wynad Forests and Mysore country adjacent thereto. These claims I consider untenable, and the value of the timber being great, probably not less than Rupees 12,000, I propose claiming them on behalf of Government; but previous to doing so, I have the honor to give you a full statement of the several claims made with a view to the subject being laid before Government for orders.

In the meantime I have numbered and stamped them and detained them.

2. When all the timber felled in Wynad and lying therein and in the neighbourhood was detained by Order of Government in December 1860, Captain Hunter, then Acting Assistant Conservator, with the assistance of the Mysore jungle Darogah who knew more about it than any one else, and that of most of the wood merchants themselves who claimed the timber made out a list of their several claims and registered them in his Office. From time to time most of these claimants of the timber repeated their claims by letter to the Assistant Conservator, and some who had not in the first instance made any claims did so in the same manner, and the Assistant Conservator after making enquiries as to their validity entered them in his books. In this manner I firmly believe that every man who really had a right to any of the timber preferred his claim within a year of the date of the Government Order detaining it.

3. In January 1863, Government ordered the release of the timber, and I took great care that this should be well known; writing to every wood merchant who claimed any of it. There is no official Gazette published in Mysore where almost every one who had any claim to the timber resided, or I would have given notice in it.

4. Lately, however, several claims have been preferred under suspicious circumstances, and it is to these cases I wish the attention of Government to be directed, in order that I may receive instructions as to how I am to act.

5. First case is that of Nagiah; a wood merchant, residing in Wynad. This man's name is entered in the original list as the owner of 310 logs. In his letter to the Acting Assistant Conservator, Captain Hunter, he claims 260 cart loads, which would contain probably 310 logs. On the order to release the timber reaching me, I wrote (in February 1863) and requested him to come and point out his logs previous to my giving him a passport. He did not answer my letter, but came himself in June 1863; my Writer being then temporarily absent from my head quarters, I requested him to wait till he returned, which would be in two days, to enable me to go over the Canarese records so as to verify his claims. He did not wait; on the 18th September 1863 he returned and claimed 670 logs, being 360 more than he is entitled to both in the original list and his own letter written in February 1862. On this being pointed out, he stated that he was ill when the letter giving the smaller number was written by his son, but acknowledged his signature was attached thereto. On being questioned as to when he bought the timber, he stated that he had done so three years ago. On being asked to show a receipt for the money, he replied that on receiving charge of the timber he returned the receipts. He produced, however, three certificates, two dated 14th September 1863 and one 15th September

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1863, signed by three men, named Naga Gowda, Dasapah and Deena Chendriah, neither of these three men are entered as timber owners in the original list; but in his letter to the Assistant Conservator, dated 9th October 1861, Naga Gowda for the first time laid claim to 872 logs; Dasapah in his letter, dated 9th May 1861, also for the first time claims 300 cart loads, and Deena Chendriah never claimed any timber, but his brother Soorapah (since dead) in a letter, 9th October 1861, claimed 600 logs. Naga Gowdah's certificate states that he having formerly (no date mentioned) received money (amount not specified) from Nagiah gives over 316 cart loads of timber to him. Dasapah's certificate states that having about three years ago received money (amount not specified) he hands over 150 cart loads of timber to Nagiah; and Deena Chendriah's certificate states that he or his brother, it does not clearly mention which, having received money from Rungajenah (not Naugirh) he hands over 100 cart loads to him (Rungajenah).

6. It will be observed that Nagiah in his letter already referred to, claims 260 bandy loads or 310 logs. He then on appearing before me claims 660 cart loads or 670 logs, but according to the very certificates which he produces to prove his claim he only owns 566 cart loads, being less than what he now claims by 94 cart loads. He cannot explain this discrepancy satisfactorily. On being told to show his logs, he pointed out 676 cart loads, making another difference of 16 cart loads. Another suspicious circumstance is the fact that in his letter to the Acting Assistant Conservator, dated February 1862, he stated that his timber was lying in various places, some within the Wynad boundary and some within that of Mysore; but when he appeared before me in September 1863, he stated that it was all in one place, and the 676 cart loads that he pointed out as his certainly were lying in one place on the bank of the river, but he has since then floated some down the river without permission, but measures have been taken to prevent its going into Mysore.

7. Before concluding Nagiah's case, I must draw particular attention to the fact that he states he bought 150 bandy loads from Dasapah, and has, as has been already mentioned, a certificate from him to that effect. Now, Dasapah only claims 300 originally, while according to the certificates he has himself given to Nagiah, and as will be seen further on to Bava Saib, he has sold 150 to the former and 238 to the latter, being 88 more than he ever claimed.

8. *Second case.*—Bava Saib, wood merchant residing in Mysore, name not in original list, claimed for the first time in his letter, dated July 1863, 672 cart loads. In a subsequent letter written in the same month he claimed 700, thus adding 28 to his number. He was then directed to go with the Forest Gumashta to point them out; but instead of doing this he came to me on the 19th September 1863, on this occasion he claimed 701 logs, and stated they were all in one place; on being asked for proof of his having purchased these logs, he first produced two certificates signed by Naga Gowda and Dasapah respectively. Dasapah certifies to Bava Saib having purchased 210 logs from him, and Naga Gowdah certifies to having sold him 462 cart loads. Both these certificates are dated July 1863. He cannot show any receipt for the money. He subsequently to this produced another certificate, signed by Dasapah and written in the same month as the two former, to the effect that he had bought 238 logs from him, being 28 more than in his first certificate. On going to point out his own logs in the jungle he pointed out 710, being 38 more than he claimed in his first letter to me.

It must be remembered that, as has been mentioned in the preceding case, the names of Dasapah or Naga Gowdah are not to be found in the original list, and that Dasapah certifies to having sold 88 logs more than he ever claimed. Bava Saib when he first came to me stated that all his wood was lying at one particular place on the bank of the river, and so that which he claims was at one time, but he has secretly floated some of it down the river mixing it up with that of other merchants who have obtained passports from me.

9. *Third case.*—Syed Allum, residing at Mysore, name not in the original list, never preferred any claim till he appeared before me on the 19th September 1863, nearly three years since the wood was detained. On this occasion he claimed 40 bandy loads, but when taken to the jungle could only point out 32 bandy loads as his property; cannot show any voucher of any description to prove his title to the wood, and I believe that he has none.

10. *Fourth case.*—Sooboo Chetty, residing at Mysore, name not in original list, never made claim to any timber till he appeared before me on the 18th September 1863, when he claimed 133 cart loads. The next day he only claimed 121, being 12 less than the day before; but in the jungle he could only point out 82 as his property, being 51 less than his first claim. He has no documents of any kind to prove his ownership, and in my opinion he owns none.

11. *Fifth case.*—Booden Saib, residing in Mysore, name not in original list, made his first claim in person on the 19th September 1863, and claimed 249 logs and 10 bandy loads of small pieces. In the jungle he pointed out 312 logs as his property, being 63 more than he claimed in the first instance. Has no voucher of any description, and in my opinion has no just claim to the wood.

12. *Sixth case.*—Liddy Gowdah, residing in the Mysore District, name not in original list, never preferred a claim for any timber till he appeared in person before me on the 10th

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October 1863, when he laid claim to 161 cart loads or 240 logs. Has no voucher of any sort to prove his claim, and cannot explain satisfactorily why he did not make the claim he now does before.

13. I shall now proceed to state how, as it appears to me, these claims have been made.

Timber felling in Wynad has been going on for many years, and one way or another a large number of unclaimed logs have accumulated; I have had my eye upon these for a long time, but deemed it advisable not to claim them until their real owners, if such existed, had had ample time to prefer their claim to them. No such claims were made until those in the enclosed list were, and I believe that they are utterly false.

14. It is not to be credited that had the timber really belonged to these men who now claim it, being as it is of great value, that they would have allowed so long a time to elapse without applying for pass ports to remove it. It has been perfectly well known all over the country for the last two years that a list of the owners of the detained timber was kept in my office, and doubtless had they any real claim to any they would have made it long ago. The fact is almost all the Mysore wood merchants are mixed up in a kind of partnership, and when those who had got passports saw a number of logs lying about, they suggested to these men that it would be easy for them to claim them and get passports from me.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) R. H. BEDDOME, Captain,
Officiating Conservator of Forests.

ORDER THEREON, 16th November 1863, No. 2,057.

No. 192.

1. The Government consider that the parties referred to in this letter and in its enclosure as claiming wood must substantiate their claims to the satisfaction of the Assistant Conservator; and if they fail to do so, that the timber, after the expiration of a reasonable period, should be treated as Government property. This course will accordingly be adopted.

2. The Officiating Conservator must himself determine what period should in each case be allowed for the removal of timber.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Officiating Conservator of Forests.
„ Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

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Fort St Geo: }
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Off^r Conservator of Forests - Dept of Agr.
41 Board of Revenue. —

for order

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