M.R.O. 14—18,000—27-9-34

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue **DEPARTMENT.**

G.O. No. 2021 Press ~~Mis.~~

492.493

Dated 29-8-1865.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 492. Read the following letter from P. GRANT, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to J. D. SIM, Esq., Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Coimbatore, 27th February 1865, No. 26:—

SIR,

1. I have received Proceedings of Government and their Order thereon, dated 27th July 1864, No. 1,344, forwarding a map of the Neilgherries, and directing me to mark thereon the Sholahs, which should be reserved with special reasons for the reservation.

2. The forest on the Coonoor Ghát is to be reserved under orders of the late Honorable the Court of Directors, dated 5th August 1857, No. 51.

3. The Sholahs within the Ootacamund, Coonoor, and Kotagherry Stations, as laid down in the Government Orders noted in the margin, should also be reserved. Within the limits of the Kotagherry station there remain but two Sholahs, the Longwood with an adjoining strip of wood, and a small Sholah near Dunhutty Bungalow.

20th March 1860, No. 425.
21st November 1863, No. 2,093.

4. At Coonoor, within the limits of the station above the ghát, there is scarcely a wood deserving the name of Sholah left. Within the Ootacamund station a few Sholahs remain; but it will require no small amount of vigilance to preserve them, the demand for firewood is becoming very pressing. On no account should any of the Sholahs within this station be allowed to be cut; they add much to its beauty, and this point is one of no small importance to those who pay short visits to the Hills, whether for recreation or the sake of health. At present there is a mania on the subject of Tea and Chinchona cultivation, and many of those who pay flying visits to the Hills, seem to think that all that has to be done to realize a fortune, is to cut down a Sholah, a century old perhaps, burn it up, pit the ground and put in Chinchona plants, which are not generally more than half an inch in height. By the time this is done, the experimentalist has to descend to the low country, and await the fruits of his labors. The greater the difficulties such men experience in procuring wooded lands, the better for themselves, and the stations for which they do not care one iota, so long as their wishes are gratified. The following remarks apply to that portion of the Hills consisting of the station of Ootacamund, and the country embraced by the old Melur road, and the road to Kotagherry, as far as the Bhowany river on the south. For convenience of reference a red dotted line is run parallel to the boundaries. The reserved Sholahs are marked thus Φ. They are—

a. Munjacombay, and b. Kartairy Sholah.—Between Coonoor and Deva Sholah, these Sholahs alone remain; they should be reserved for the supply of wood for agricultural and house-building purposes, for the numerous Burgher villages in that part of the hills.

c. Nidi Mund.—This is a small Sholah on top of a hill with a large mund in it. It belongs to the Todas, and no trees in it should be cut.

d. The Hoolicul woods, which surmount the top of the Hoolicul Droog mountains opposite to Coonoor. It seems unnecessary to enter into any special reasons for their retention; they attract the clouds and absorb from them that

March 1860 No 425
November 1863 No 2093 noted in the margin should also be

moisture which, to a certain extent, fertilizes the country below, and would otherwise be carried away to unknown regions beyond the Bay of Bengal.

e. The Sholahs between Lamb's Rock and Lady Canning's seat. This is one of the most beautiful spots near Coonoor. Invalids and others visit them, and rejoice in their varied and luxuriant beauty. To cut them down would be a national disgrace.

f. The Sholahs near Coonoor from which the Conservator of Forests supplies the Wellington Barracks with fuel. With these exceptions the other Sholahs may be held at the disposal of the public; but of course the narrow belts of wood which skirt the hill side streams to a distance of 60 feet on each side of them, are excepted.

5. The localities marked thus O on the map are already in the hands of Europeans, and aggregate 6,200 Acres of the best land. Within the section of the Hills, about which I am now reporting, I doubt if any available land fit for Coffee cultivation remains. Coarse grass land, interspersed with rock and shrubs, may be had; but whether it is suited for the cultivation of Chinchona and Tea remains to be proved. It will be expensive to work, and blocks of any size will be few, as the Burgher cultivation runs through the country in every direction. A very erroneous impression I believe is current as to the extent of land available for Coffee, Chinchona, and Tea cultivation. As remarked already, the land suited for Coffee has been absorbed. The Burghers and the Todas occupy some 45,000 Acres of the best land, and there is in the hands of Europeans and Native planters about 6,300 Acres. Appended is a list of the Coffee, &c., properties held chiefly by Europeans in the country adjacent to and westward of the Coonoor station. Parties have complained of the difficulty experienced in obtaining lands. This difficulty has arisen chiefly, first, from the very small amount of good land available; second, from the fact that when people go to look for land, they naturally ride along the bridle-paths, which are pretty sure to lead to some picturesque Sholah, the existence of which probably suggested the idea, in the first instance, of cutting the path for the convenience of visitors and invalids. This spot then, the searcher for land, makes up his mind to have, and when told in reply to his application that it is reserved on account of its beauty, or its proximity to the station, he is disappointed; third, Burghers often claim lands which are not theirs; but on the other hand people sometimes apply for lands, the property of the Burghers. These lands are generally uncultivated, kept for grazing purposes, and at times it is most difficult to persuade the applicants that the Burghers have any right in the lands, and in the establishing of this fact causes disappointment.

6. Thus, without there being any really legitimate cause of complaint, disappointment arises. With regard to the portion of the hills beyond Kotagherry, Mr. Hannyngton is now there, and will report shortly on the available Sholah in that part of the country. Having taken considerable trouble in inspecting the part of the hills, about which I now write, I deem it advisable to send in this report without waiting until the whole of them can be reported on.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
29*th August* 1865.

No. 493. ORDER THEREON, 29th August 1865, No. 2,021.

Land Revenue.

1. Ordered to lie over, with reference to Proceedings dated 1st August 1865, No. 1,777.

2. The subject will be disposed of on receipt from the Collector of the larger map duly marked off.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Collector of Coimbatore.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

As laid down in the Government Orders
March 1860 No. 425

No. 26

Coimbatore Collectors
Office 27th February 1865.

From

P. Grant Esqr.
Collector of Coimbatore

To

I. D. Sim Esqr.
Secretary to Government

Sir,

I have received Proceedings of Government and their order thereon dated 27th July 1864 No 1344 forwarding a map of the Sholaghurries, and directing me to mark thereon the Sholahs which should be reserved with special reasons for the reservation.

2. The forest on the Coonoor Ghat is to be reserved under orders of the late Honorable the Court of Directors dated 5th August 1857 No 51.

3. The Sholahs within the Ootacamund Coonoor and Kotagherry Stations as laid down in the Government orders noted in the margin should also be

20th March 1860 No 425
21st November 1863 No 2093

received. 5. Within the limits of the Kotagherry station there remain but two Sholahs, the Longwood with an adjoining strip of wood, and a small Sholah near Dunhulley Bungalow.

4. At Coonoor within the limits of the station above the ghat there is scarcely a wood deserving the name of Sholah left. Within the [illegible] 4 are Market, Mount, Fair-Lawn within the Enclosures of this Station. Of the enclosed station a few sholahs remain, but it will require no small amount of vigilance to preserve them, the demand for fire-wood is becoming very pressing. On no account should any of the Sholahs within this station be allowed to be cut. They add much to its beauty, and this point is one of no small importance to those who pay short visits to the Hills, whether for recreation or the sake of health. At present there is a mania on the subject of Tea and Chinchona Cultivation, and many of those who pay flying visits to the Hills, seem to think that all that has to be done to realize a fortune, is to cut down a Sholah, a century old perhaps, burn it up, pit the ground and put in Chinchona plants, which are not generally more than 9 an inch in height. By the time this is done, the experimentalist has to descend to the low country and await the fruits of his labor. The greater the difficulties such men experience in procuring wooded lands, the better for themselves and the stations for which they do not care

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d. The Woodcut woods which surmount the top of the Woodcut Drog mountains opposite to Coonoor. It seems unnecessary to enter into any special reasons for their retention. They attract the clouds and absorb from them that moisture which to a certain extent fertilizes the Country below, and would otherwise be carried away to unknown regions beyond the bay of Bengal.

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2. The Sholahs near Coonoor from which the Coonoor supplies the Wellington Barracks with fuel. With these exceptions the other sholahs may be held at the disposal of the public but of course the narrow belts of wood which skirt the Hillside streams to a distance of 60 feet on each side of them are excepted.

3. The localities marked thereon the map are already in the hands

Wt marked in the map I could

When are they? The map does not show

List of the Coffee &c properties held chiefly by Europeans in the County adjoining to and westward of the Coonoor Station—

	No	acres
Mrs Money	1.	500
Commander Mitchison	2.	250
Colonel Scott	3.	198.
Mr Mc Klotts	5	300.
Mr Hunter	6	1147.
Mr Mullaly junior	7.	243. 300
Mr Mullaly Senior	8	132
Mr L. McIvor	4.	
Mr T. Staines	9.	1235
Captain Hodgson	10	
Mr Straton	11.	
Major Sweet	12	125
Messrs Shambank and Chambers	13.	227.
Mr H. de Faucin	14	405 84.
Carnatic Coffee Company	15	100
Family of late Mr W. Staines	16	210.
Messrs Allan & Co	17.	172
Captain Fuller	18	51.
Nanjappa Rao	19.	22
Mc Cait	20.	34.
Mr Bicketts	21.	67.
Mr Sanderson	22	87.
Colonel Woodhall	23.	489.
Mrs Hayne	24.	198
Arbuthnot & Co	25	370
Mr Grove	26	75
Captain Mann	27.	130
Minor plantations		209.
Total		6,300

Coimbatore Collector's Office 27th February 1865

A. Grant Collector

It seems to me that Mr Grant has taken an erroneous view of the relation between the Govt & the Capitalist who may wish to invest money in Coffee or Cinchona cultivation on the Neilgherries. It is not the business of the Govt or of its servant the Collector to watch over the safety of the Capital of wouldbe Planters - but it is their business to afford to such persons every possible facility in the selection and occupation of land for such purposes. Of course it is necessary that proper determination should be exercised in alienating land - proper reservation should be made in the vicinity of the cantonments within which land should only be sold for Houses and Gardens & what land should be disposed of in Lots not exceeding (say) 10 Acres - beyond this line another boundary should be drawn within which no Lands should be allowed to be sold for Planting purposes - and this land reserved for the use of the Burghers Stock - and the land appropriated by these people should be carefully marked off. Beyond these limits I should be disposed to sanction the sale of land to Planters - but in the latter - the greatest caution should be used in selecting Waste land alluded to in the letter - that is excellent but there are not many patches of cultivable land and it would be hard to keep applicants waiting for several months till the proper out-turn of the land is available - I should be disposed to have a Plan made of double the scale of the present - to show the Waste [illegible] Burghers Stock [illegible] land in the vicinity of Ootacamund - I should keep a certain number of acres for the Burghers out of the Waste land in the vicinity of Ootacamund with regard to the salary Lands -

Extract from the Minutes of Council Dated 27th July 1865 c 12 96.

Read 596/65.

Extract of the Commissioner's Inspection Book dated 29th June 1865 -

Copies 2 [illegible]

any local knowledge of the subject which is limited to a short journey in company of Mr. Saunders' proposals, an opinion of any value. I therefore, intend, with him as well as advantage, if not necessary, pertaining as many of the Sholahs as he mentions, and I certainly showed much regret to learn that, for the sake of a trifling amount of revenue, there had been any removal of the restriction which the Collector is now enabled to abolish by abolishing for Sholah land and so prevent them being cut down. Perhaps it may be well to await the result of Mr. Saunders examination of the Sholahs in the vicinity of Kotagherry and then dispose of the subject as a whole. In the meantime the Collector may be empowered to pass such orders as he may think wanted in regard to Sholah land in exchange for the rent reserved.

8.3.65

Pro 29 October/57 No 59-60
20 March/60 — 117-118
27 July/63 155-156

Further G.O. 10 Augt/65 No 1853

No. 2021

Extract [illegible]
from the Proceedings of Government
Fort St. George
No. 1777 Monday
the 14th day of August 1865

Read the following letter from the Collector of Coimbatore dated 29th July 1865 No. 396 and enclosure

Ordered that the Collector be informed that Government are not prepared to sanction the proposal of Mr. Saunders to abolish the Sholahs to be preserved on the Nilgiri Hills.

(True Extract)
(Signed) C. Babington
Secretary to Government

To
The Collector of Coimbatore

Nos. 492 & 493

No. 2021 - 27 Augt

1865 Revenue Department
Extract from Proceedings of Government for August 1865 No. 596
The Collector of Coimbatore
To
The Secretary to Government
Dated 7th July 1865
Rec'd 3rd March 1865
No. 26
Submits one enclosure

Sholahs