

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

Revenue DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No.	1173	Press Mis.
Dated	17. 5.	18 66.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 305. Read the following letter from the Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, Fort Saint George, dated Madras, 16th April 1866, No. 1,752 :—

1. In accordance with Proceedings of Government, 24th July 1865, No. 1,710, paragraph 2, I beg to transmit a Report upon the Jawady and Yelagiry Hills in the Salem District, by Lieutenant C. J. Walker, Deputy Conservator of Forests, who accompanied the Honorable D. Arbutnot, the Collector, on an excursion over them, in September last.

2. These ranges have been seldom visited by Europeans, except by sportsmen for a day or two, on account of the reputed unhealthiness. The only record of the Yelagiries is a brief report by the late Captain Samuel Best, Engineers, published in the "Fort Saint George Gazette," 6th August 1847, page 691. Of the Jawady Hills, I am not aware of any existing memoir. It seems desirable to publish these two papers together, for general information.

3. During the formation of the Madras Railway, extensive felling of trees occurred upon both ranges, but now the forests are, in a measure, under control, and seigniorage is paid at the outlets to Salem and South Arcot. The principal trees appear to be

Naga...	...	...	<i>Eugenia Jambolana.</i>
Dinduga	...	...	<i>Conocarpus latifolia.</i>
Kadukai	...	...	<i>Terminalia Chebula.</i>
			<i>Terminalia coriacea.</i>
Poorsh	...	...	<i>Chloroxylon Swietenia.</i>
Sundra	...	...	<i>Acacia Sundra.</i>
Perumbay			<i>Prosopis spicigera.</i>
Beel...	...	...	<i>Ægle marmelos.</i>
Chendan	...	...	<i>Santatum Album.</i>
Theka	...	...	<i>Tectona grandis.</i>

4. Lieutenant Walker recommends that *three* tracts of forests upon the Jawady Hills should be reserved at present, and roughly indicates their boundaries—

I. Between Pillyoor and Cullyoor, including the woods adjacent to the villages of Wullundulpett and Coopum.

II. Near the village of Perunurtoor to the Burgoornadoo slopes, this would include the villages of Palenkottay, and stretch west half way to Nayakanoor; these two have, in the aggregate, an area of fifteen to twenty miles.

III. A third tract near Terunamullay of somewhat greater extent.

I understand that the Collector generally approves of these preliminary recommendations.

5. On the Yelagiry range, Lieutenant Walker specifies a small patch of Teak covering, two or three acres, as worthy of reservation. I have myself visited the spot, which is within easy walk from Tripatore, and consider the proposal judicious.

6. I may remark that the Sandalwood operations alluded to are in progress, and promise well; a sale of the first cuttings will be held soon, which will test the

comparative value of the wood. It is remarkable that the tree should have been so long overlooked in a locality easily reached from Madras.*

• Distance to Vaniembady 123 miles, 5½ hours by train.

Captain Best considered the soil and elevation of the Yelagiries well suited for the growth of wheat, fruit, and vegetables, for the Madras market. He built a bungalow and constructed a tank by bunding up a ravine; the additional water thus obtained enabled him to form a promising garden; but his early death from fever tended to retard the location of settlers. None of the lower ranges can, at all times, be considered safe from fever; but it is not known where Captain Best contracted the illness which proved fatal.

As to the health of the villagers, it is not easy to obtain correct information; but from my own observations and inquiries, during a day spent on the Yelagiries in 1858, I was led to conclude that all classes enjoy excellent health.

Report on Jawady and Yelagiry Hills by Lieutenant C. J. WALKER.

1. On the 16th, 17th, and 18th September, I ascended various small spurs of the Jawadies from Singarapettah, but found no timber of any value except a few small Satin trees (*Chloroxylon Swietenia*); this scarcity is easily accounted for, as Singarapettah is close to the main road from Utnagherry and Samulputty Railway Station to South Arcot, and these spurs are easily accessible to any one wanting timber. I believe also that formerly all sorts of trees were cut promiscuously for firewood.

2. On the 19th (the Collector, who had kindly promised to accompany me, having arrived the previous day) we ascended the hills by a steep and rocky, but rideable ghât to a village called Pillyoor, ten miles from the base of the hills. On the way I observed a fair show of young Sandal and Satinwood trees, and some ripe Nagamarum (*Eugenia Jambolana*) at and around Pillyoor, there is not much Sandalwood, and they are principally young trees, whose growth has been stopped by creepers; numbers of fine Gall-nut, Nagamarum, and Karangalli (*Accacia Sunda*). The Overseer, Mahomed Aly, reported having come on a tract of young Teak trees, but I fear only stump shoots from felled trees, which rarely attain any size.

3. On the 20th we proceeded along the top of the hills to Wullundulpett, a village seven miles from Pillyoor. On the way I observed a large number of Sandal trees, many being fit for cutting, also Nagamarum and other second class timbers. I should say that from the tract passed on this march from two to three hundred bandy-loads of Nagamarum could now be obtained. In the afternoon I counted in a short time twenty-five Sandal trees fit for cutting, great damage is done by the creepers* which are very luxuriant here, we cut as many as we could in the manner recommended by Dr. Brandis, and I intend sending a Pygust and two men with bill-hooks to go through all the Sandal tracts, and rid the young trees of

* Chiefly *Comolulus Dæmia Bryonia*.

i. e., Cutting near the ground, and about the height of six feet.

these plants so detrimental to their attaining size and heart-wood.

4. On the 21st in descending the hills we passed through the villages of Coopum and Kullatoor to a village called Cullyoor (ten miles from Wullundulpett) situated in a ravine, which runs from South Arcot nearly across the hills towards Tripatore. At Coopum I found Sandalwood trees fit for cutting, and also observed Dinduga (called here Numay) and Nagamarum, the first is in some quantity.

Conocarpus Latifolia.

5. The descent is steep and rocky, but timber could be easily dragged to the foot, and then carted down the valley to Chungumah in South Arcot, which is only ten or twelve miles distant from Cullyoor.

6. On the 22nd we ascended to Pillyoor, a village on Terunamullay (about nine miles distant,) passing the village of Norputt. On the road there was a little timber, principally Nagamarum and Perambay. (*Prosopis spicigera*.)

7. Accompanied by the Overseer I inspected the jungles on this hill. There is still a fair shew of timber, principally of the second class; it is evident that much reckless felling has gone on for years. Access is easy to South Arcot, and I believe that even now much timber is removed clandestinely, as we cannot guard the foot of the hills completely—there being many places of descent.

8. On the 23rd we proceeded to Palenkottay (12 miles) by the villages of Cehurbady, Moortoor, Perunurtoor, and Shurtalore. At Perunurtoor there is a good deal of Sandalwood and Nagamarum.

9. I proceeded with the Overseer to the slopes of Burgoornadoo, Titanoor, and Irupanoor. At the foot of these is the boundary between the Salem and Vellore Districts.

10. I counted within an hour thirty Sandalwood trees ready for cutting, and observed many young and healthy plants. It must have been in this part that Mr. Yarde marked many trees, as reported by Mr. Blinkinsop in the Annual Report for 1859 and 1860.

11. The creepers here are not numerous and destructive. It is probable that many were cut by Mr. Yarde, at any rate a marked difference is visible. I observed on these slopes a considerable quantity of fine Vilvamarum (*Ægle marmelos*), Dinduga and other woods.

12. 24th, Sunday, we halted. I walked round Palenkottay and saw a good deal of timber; but much scattered, there also traces of unregulated felling are every where apparent.

13. On the 25th we proceeded to Nayakanoor (eight miles) through heavy Bamboo jungle containing little timber of value. On the evening, as it threatened to rain and nothing was to be gained by staying at Nayakanoor, we descended to Moortoor, a village at the base of the hills (between the Jawadies and Yelagiries) on the north-west side, and about five miles from Allangayam, where we have a Tannah.

14. On the 26th and 27th I visited the Yelagiry hill. Not feeling well, I did not ascend to the top which is very steep, rocky, and unrideable. I had ascertained from Wudders and others that there was no timber on the summit, which is a cultivated plain.

15. There is little good wood on this hill, on the slopes thirty or forty bandy-loads of Vengay (*Pterocarpus marsupium*) might be obtained, but the best has been already cut.

16. I sent Mahomed Aly to the top of the hill. He corroborated the report of the Wudders, but observed a few stunted Teak trees on a slope, Sandalwood is not found here. Mahomed Aly reports having found Dinduga, and Kara murda (*Terminalia Coriacea*) in some quantities on the upper slopes towards the north, but the trees are young.

17. On the 28th we proceeded via Tripatore to Salem.

18. With reference to the foregoing description, I beg to point out that the extent of the Jawady hills is so great that it would take months to explore them properly. I could only

Remarks.—Great extent of the hills.

visit in ten days the places where I heard that Sandal and other woods were principally found, and by going in one direction myself and sending the Overseer in another, endeavoured to see as much of the country as we could. In this I succeeded so far as such a short visit would permit, excepting the hills which lay in a more westerly direction, viz., Perunbaul, Rugasundrum and Cumbagoodie, and closely resemble the others in the timber resources. I obtained a general idea of the state of the jungles, ways, and means of cutting, dragging, &c., and relative position of the hills.

Reasons for not making a prolonged stay.

19. I might have stayed longer, but had been warned against this. My people were getting sick and frightened, and there were signs of rain coming, which is apt to induce fever. Having been absent three months from Salem, I was anxious to return. I shall now give a summary of my observations on these hills, &c., &c.

Timber.

20. A fair show exists in several places principally of woods, as Nagamarum and Dinduga, which the natives esteem for building and other purposes.

Sandalwood.

21. The amount of Sandalwood, both ripe and young trees, greatly exceeded my expectations, as from previous reports I gathered that it was so choked with Bamboos and creepers as to prevent satisfactory growth. The best is found near the village of Coopum, (paragraph 4,) and the slopes around Burgoornadoo, (paragraph 9;) I consider that there are enough trees for felling to yield a supply for three or four years, by which time a little care being taken of the younger trees it is probable that many will have attained a size fit for cutting. The comparative value of the wood remains to be ascertained.

Soil.

The soil is generally excellent, in many places too good for the growth of Sandalwood. There is no apparent reason why plantations of Teak and other trees should not grow well here in suitable localities. The Collector who has a good knowledge of such matters concurs in this opinion. At present there is no Teak on the hills except stump-shoots found in great numbers. This will readily be understood when it is remembered that up to June last this tree had been felled indiscriminately at the low seigniorage of Rupees (2) two per bandy-load.

Kumari.

22. Great damage has been done and doubtless will still be done (unless strict measures are adopted) by the system of Kumari cultivation, which has been especially forbidden by Government; notwithstanding it is practised here to an immense extent, and as the Collector remarks "there is no one to stop them." At and around the village of Wullundulpett (paragraph 3) the damage done by this pernicious system is most apparent, large patches bared of wood being visible on the hill sides. The jungle burnt, the land cultivated for a few years, and then abandoned, and a new piece burnt. I spoke to all the heads of villages on the subject, and pointed out to them that although I did not want to give them annoyance still this constant burning and felling must be stopped.

Climate.

23. There is no doubt that this is the worst enemy with which we have to contend here, the natives below universally consider the Jawadies and still more the Yelagiries as excessively feverish, and told me that if I remained more than three days on the hills I and all my camp would get sick. For nine or ten months in the year there seems to be no doubt that a great amount of fever prevails.

Height of Hills.

24. The height of the hills from 2,500 to 3,500 feet partly accounts for this, but no other reason presents itself; the Mullialays who live on them are strong, hardy looking men, although they suffer much at certain seasons. As it was, although we went in the best month and used every precaution of taking Quinine, and giving it to all in the camp night and morning,

Amount of sickness from fever.

25. Mr. Beaumont of the Revenue Survey, who was with us, was attacked a week after going down. I also had some slight symptoms which I battled effectually with Quinine. My Overseer and two Peons were also laid up. It seems certain then that in this respect some difficulty will be experienced.

Suggests that some part of the Jawadies, and the ripe timber (if any) on the Yelagiry felled.

26. I am decidedly of opinion that some part of the Jawady hills should be regularly demarcated, as a reserved forest, to yield a quota of the required supply of timber in this District. I am not prepared to lay down specific limits for such tracts. The immense extent of hill and the scattered state of the forests renders exact definition a matter of some difficulty.

Tracts proposed to be reserved.

27. A tract should be reserved between Pillyoor (the first village mentioned) and Cullloor, (in the ravine leading from South Arcot,) including the woods adjacent to the villages of Wullundulpett, Coopum, &c., and another tract from near the village called Perunurtoor (paragraph 8) to the Burgoornadoo slopes or, i. e., the boundary of the District with Vellore (North Arcot). This would include the villages of Palenkottay, and stretch west half way to Nayakanoor (paragraph 13). If Teak planting be thought hereafter desirable the Ternamullay would be a suitable place.

These tracts only proposed as a preliminary measure. Difficulties about villages included. Survey necessary.

28. This proposal is only a preliminary measure, the tracts would have to be surveyed and accurately defined, the chief difficulty arises from the number of villages included in each tract, to each of these a piece of firewood jungle should be assigned. Some efficient plan could doubtless be devised, and above all it is desirable that the hill men should be encouraged to adopt a settled life. Whilst the survey was in progress, I would, on communication with the Officer, select other tracts which might appear suitable for reservation; meanwhile, I would recommend that strict orders should be reiterated to not giving land on Puttah without reference to this Department.

29. In cases where a Puttah is granted for forest land I would suggest that the extra price leviable (Rupees 2½ for cleared land, and Rupees 5 for forest land) should be carried to the credit of Forest Revenue, as being derived from that source.

Supposed area of tracts proposed.

30. The first two tracts which I have proposed to demarcate have an area of about fifteen to twenty square miles. The third or that on Terumullay rather more. The Yelagiries being cultivated to a great extent, I would only specify the small Teak tract about two to three acres requiring reservation.

Sandalwood cutting.

31. I have given orders to commence the Sandalwood cutting, and do not anticipate any difficulty as to labor, as besides the Wudders and Mulliallys we have some Poojaries (the same race who work the Denkenacottah Jungles) at Ilurroor who would readily work on the same terms as those of Denkenacottah.

32. I beg to observe, in conclusion, that whilst convinced of the advantage and necessity of reserving some parts of this District, I am not sanguine that these tracts (excepting the Sandalwood parts) will for many years prove remunerative to Government. Sooner or later, however, they will be of great use in a District like this with three Railways drawing their supply of fuel, and exporting timber, which now is becoming scarce. The Sandalwood Depôt at Tripatoor and some of the work on the Jawadies ought to be supervised by the South Arcot Overseer.

(Signed) C. J. WALKER.

14th October 1865.

Report of the late Captain SAMUEL BEST of the Engineers on the Yelagiry Hills, in the Salem District.

1. I started from Wanumbaddy at 4 A. M. on the 7th July 1846 and rode along the high road to Salem as far as Veyumpett about 4 miles, and thence through scattered jungle and over a low ridge to the foot of the Yelagiry hill, the distance of which, from the gate of the public bungalow at Wanumbaddy, does not exceed 5½ miles, or about 130 miles from the fort of Madras by the Western Trunk Road. The path which I ascended by is about South, 5 degrees East from the bungalow, and is too steep for a pony or bullock, proceeding nearly straight up a shallow ravine until it reaches the top of the mountain. It took me an hour and ten minutes to walk up, including several halts to get breath.

2. The side of the hill slopes with a base of about 3 to 2, and there is not much soil on it. There is a thin growth of small trees among the loose stones which are scattered over the whole slope, and a few bamboos about half way up. It would be difficult to make a good road on account of the want of soil, but a better one than the present one practicable for bullocks and horses, might be made at trifling cost, by clearing away the trees and some of the stones, in a more oblique direction than the present path.

3. The first village I reached was Mootoonoor, a recent clearing apparently, with four or five most wretched wattle huts. The few inhabitants I saw there were very miserable in appearance, and had evidently suffered from fever, but clothed and lodged as they were, in the low country they could hardly have been free from it.

4. I walked on, about 2½ miles to a village, named Kotioor, gradually ascending about 200 feet more. A small tent and table, &c., and 14 servants and coolies who had left Wanumbaddy about 4 A. M. arrived at Kotioor at ½ to 10, and my tent and other things carried on men's heads were pitched at Poonganoor, about ¼ mile from Kotioor.

5. I took observations of the thermometer, at ¼ to 5 A. M. 68°, at 1 P. M. 87°, at (sunset) 20 minutes past 6, 76°, and 8 P. M. 75°. These observations were taken in the imperfect shade of a tree. The day was fair and in the low country excessively sultry. During the greater part of the morning, I walked out without feeling any inconvenience from the sun, went to the village of Utnaoor and to the north-western edge of the hill, whence I obtained an extensive view of the Mysore country, looking across the Palaur and over the hills through which it breaks, as it descends from near Nundidroog.

No. 78, Grand Trigonometrical Survey.
Scale, 4 miles to an inch.

6. The form of the Yelagiry hill is well represented in the engraved map, although some of the villages are not placed quite correctly. A knoll on the north-eastern face, called by the natives, Sawmy Mully, is marked in Arrowsmith's Atlas as being 4,437 feet high, and is about 300 feet above the higher part of the table land, if it may so be called, for it is not flat—a deep valley and stream intersect the mountain nearly in its whole length from north by east, to south by west. There is also a general fall from the northward, and the ground slopes on all sides towards this valley. I should roughly estimate that about 600 acres of land, fit for cultivation, and in great part now cultivated, are at an elevation of 3,500 feet or upwards. The villages of Kotioor, Poonganoor, Utnaoor and Mungalum, are on the highest ground on spots surrounding the head of the valley above mentioned. The fields were being ploughed, and the soil appeared excellent. Wheat sown in September and reaped in April, millet sown in June and reaped in September, and mustard and raggy sown in July and gathered in September are the chief crops. There is a good stock of cattle, but the people complained of want of water. There are two or three small tanks and larger might be easily made. Some of the trees, Banyan, Jack, and Chumpa, are remarkable for size and beauty. There is Teak, but I did not see any.

7. The houses are of wattle and dab and such stones as may be close at hand. They are not calculated to keep out the cold, and the people suffer in consequence. The villages, though small, are well inhabited, and the people (Hindoos) to all appearance healthy.

8. On the next morning (the 8th July) I set out to descend, and walked for about three miles by Mungalum to Nellooor, which is on a lower level than the more northern of the hill villages. I then walked down a very difficult, and ill-traced bullock path, which took me about two hours, and

NOTE.—Captain Ludlow informs me that at the Magnetic Observatory at Madras, the Thermometer in the shade varied nearly at the same times ranged as follows:—

At	h.	m.	°
A. M.	4	41	83 6
P. M.	1	0	91 5
	6	28	83 0
	8	0	87 1

The difference at sunrise is 13 degrees—At sunset and 8 P. M. Madras was hotter by 12 and 15 degrees. In the middle of the day, the difference appears only 4½ degrees, but my Thermometer was ill-shaded.

rode about seven miles to Tripatore, and in the afternoon to Wanumbaddy. A better road than the existing one, might easily be made on this side also, but the hill is too rugged for a good road up to be made any where, unless at great expense. Besides the villages that I have named, there are Pulacunnecoor Kotoor and Vercota, which I did not go to.

9. From the isolated position of this range of mountain and its height, from the thinness of the jungle, the extent of cultivation and the appearance of the inhabitants, I am of opinion that the Yelagiries may be looked upon as generally healthy, although not entirely free from fever at all seasons of the year. The enquiries that I made on the spot confirmed this view, for the inhabitants complained of no epidemic except small-pox, which appears to have been severe some years ago; but which would not probably return if the people were to be vaccinated.

10. Neither I, nor any of the people who accompanied me, experienced the least illness in consequence of our visit. The hills are resorted to at all seasons of the year by Lubbay merchants and others from Wanumbaddy and Trippatoor—and from the statements of the people on the hills I should imagine that cases of fever are not much more frequent than on the plains, and are to be attributed to insufficient shelter and clothing and other such causes rather than to any peculiarity of the climate.

11. The Yelagiry hills, indeed, are naturally in almost every respect similar to the Mysore country, from which they are separated merely by the Palaur valley—in parts rising nearly 1,500 feet higher than Bangalore, but on the average about the same level. Not being so thoroughly cleared, fever may be rather more prevalent.

12. It is well known how greatly the unhealthiness of the Shevaroy hills in the Salem District has diminished since the forest has been removed, and better houses have been constructed; and, if due precautions be taken, I consider it hardly doubtful that the Yelagiry hills may become a safe and useful resort for invalids and others, and which, when a better road is made up the hill side, may be conveniently reached from Madras in little more than 24 hours.

13. The Tahsildar of Tripatoor informs me that from August to Aarch, when there is abundance of water from the rain, there is no illness, but from April to July in consequence of the want of rain, and heat of the weather, the water in which deal leaves are soaked causes illness to those who drink it. The Tahsildar himself with a party who accompanied him to the Jawady hills in October 1845 suffered from fever, but the Jawady hills are 500 to 1,000 feet lower, more extensive and jungly.

14. As the people of these hills and neighbourhood would certainly prefer remaining undisturbed to the risk of trouble arising from the frequent visits of Europeans, in their reports to me they are likely rather to have exaggerated the objections to residence on their mountains. Still no reason is given against residing on them at any period after the rains commence, and before the water begins to fail in the hot weather, and it is so highly probable that this period may gradually be extended to the whole year, that the construction of a better path up the hills from Wanumbaddy and the improvement of the tanks are worthy consideration.

15. I have already observed that the supply of water may be increased. This may be done by constructing a bank across the principal ravine, by which a tank or lake may be formed similar to, though considerably smaller than, that at Ootacamund. There are now two tanks formed by banks across this valley, but for want of good calingulabs, much water which the banks are quite capable otherwise to retain is allowed to escape.

16. The position, soil, and elevation of the range seem well suited for the growth of wheat, fruit and vegetables for the Madras, Arcot, and Vellore markets, and under special regulation a supply of Teak and other good timber might be obtained not only from these but from the Jawady hills and even from those at Chingleput and others at short distances from the Presidency. Now, every Teak stick is cut as soon as it is big enough to carry a roof for a shed or pandal, but if the favorable spots had been planted, the Monigars of the villages made answerable and paid a trifling

8 *Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,*
17th May 1863.

sum for every tree above a foot [in girth counted once in each year, Madras would not have been so dependent upon Burmah, Ceylon, and the Godavery.

20th July 1847.

SAMUEL BEST, *Supt. of Roads.*

No. 306. ORDER THEREON, 17th May 1863, No. 1,173.

Forests, No. 11.

1. The Government have perused with interest Lieutenant Walker's Report of his visit to the Jawady and Yelagiry Hills, in the Salem District. His exploration of the former was only partial, owing to their great extent, and it is desirable that a further and more complete examination should be carried out by the Forest Officers as soon as circumstances permit, care being of course taken to avoid the unhealthy seasons of the year.

2. The three tracts mentioned by Lieutenant Walker in paragraphs 27 and 30 of his Report should be reserved, and measures will be adopted by the Conservator of Forests to have them demarcated. The Collector will have suitable portions assigned to the inhabitants of the adjacent villages for firewood, &c.

3. Kumery should be stringently confined to localities where valuable timber does not exist, and the Collector will issue instructions accordingly.

4. The small patch of Teak on the Yelagiry Hills will be reserved as proposed.

5. The Officiating Conservator will report definitely what measures he would adopt for preserving the timber on these hills, as the simple reservation of tracts will not be sufficient for this purpose.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. D. SIM,

Secretary to Government.

To the Conservator of Forests.
„ the Collector of Salem.
„ the Board of Revenue.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

2. 11/3
17th May/68.
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W.D.

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11 Copies to the Hon. Secy of Forests Dec 18/89 J. D. S.
5 - Col. of Salem
14 - Mr. of Penang

I should like to see
a plan of the hills
with the tracts

(Capt West's report
to be printed as an
enclosure.)

8.8.13 ✓

Revenue 1866 89/10
Pro of Govt for May

23.10.1841
23.4.20
No 11/43.

Pro of the Madras
Government
of 17 May 1866.

From Mr Gov of India 21/10/66
1867 C 1867/96

Dear Mr. Haller's report
of his visit to the Province
and adjoining Malls etc
before Revenue and other
offered regarding their
future convenience.

Pro. No. 42234203-24.7.65

No 305-306-