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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE.

Government of Madras.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

G.O. No. <u>74</u>	Press Mis.
Dated <u>11-1-</u> 1871.	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
11th January 1871.*

No. 152. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th August 1870, No. 5,450:—

Read the following letter from the Officiating Collector of Madura, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 26th January 1870, No. 29.

I have the honour to submit, herewith, a tabular statement summarizing the information called for by the Board in their Proceedings of the 15th November 1867, No. 7,453.

2. From a consideration of the figures contained in the said statement, I am of opinion that it is not desirable to give these tanks over at punjah rates, for it is evident that the expense of keeping them in repair has hitherto borne but a small proportion to the revenue (about 2 per cent. per annum) that has been yielded by them. I attribute this to the fact that *practically* the ryots have in *self-defence* been compelled to keep their petty tanks in order at their own expense, and I propose to settle the whole matter definitely and on just grounds by making the said small tanks over to the present cultivators at a per-centage reduction on the present assessment, on the clear understanding that they will be held responsible for repairs, and that in case there be a decrease in cultivation owing to any neglect on the part of the tank owners, no remission will be allowed for the lands thereby left waste.

3. In case the tanks were improved and put in better order by the ryots, they would receive an equivalent for their capital and labour if permitted to add to their holdings at punjah rates.

4. I do not know whether the Board are at present prepared to entertain any proposition for the reduction of revenue, but the present case offers a fair opportunity for this experiment, and the owners of the lands now under consideration would, I believe, willingly take them over at a permanently reduced assessment, making themselves responsible for repairs and consenting to forego the remissions they now receive in seasons when their supply of water is deficient, provided a fair reduction were made in the gross amount they now annually pay to Government.

5. I may here mention that the enclosed Statement refers to tanks which are nominally of two classes—one private, the other Government; the only real difference being that the former were never repaired by Government, whilst the latter have been occasionally repaired.

6. I enclose Mr. Bliss's report on this subject.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

ABSTRACT.—Statement showing the tanks in the talooks of Melur and Dindigul in the district of Madura, the Ayacut of which is below 20 cawnies.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From the Acting Sub-Collector, to the Collector of Madura, dated Dindigul, 6th October 1868, No. 208.

In reply to your letter, dated 3rd instant, I have the honour to state that I have just received a Return from the Tahsildar of Dindigul giving the particulars as to tanks proposed

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to be abandoned, called for in your letter, No. 2,011, dated 18th December 1867. By some misconception, however, the Tahsildar has made a rough estimate at a guess of the probable expense of repairs for ten years instead of ascertaining the actual expenditure of the last ten years and taking that as the probable cost for the next similar period. As soon as I can get the necessary information to supply this omission, I will send you the Return.

2. I will venture to take this opportunity of pointing out that, so far as regards the Dindigul Taluq, the question of giving over small tanks to the ryots seems to have received a very one-sided consideration, or rather, to have been approached under a misconception. In his letter, No. 126, dated 9th June 1866, Mr. VansAgnew reported that there were in the Taluq 1,639 tanks, 1,351 of which the people had always maintained in repair, the repairs of the balance only being considered a charge on Government. Now in the first place, Mr. VansAgnew did not distinctly state that the tanks, the repairs of which the people have always performed and which are known as "Private" tanks, are not "Private" tanks in the sense I have always heard the term used, except in a very few instances. I always thought a "Private" tank was one in which Government had no concern; neither paying for its repairs nor drawing nunjah revenue from it. But in the Dindigul Taluq a "Private" tank means something quite different. It means a tank, the cost of keeping up which in repair is met by the ryots, and on the ayacut of which nunjah assessment (sometimes at a very high rate) is imposed by Government. I cannot but think from no notice being taken of this peculiarity in the circumstances of by far the greater number of the tanks of the Taluq, that this fact must have escaped the memory of the Board and Government. And in the second place, I am unable to discover that the tanks of one class are of a different origin or more lightly assessed than those of the other. On the contrary, the lands under what are called "Private" tanks are frequently far more heavily assessed than those watered by neighbouring "Government" works, both land and supply of water being of a similar character. The fact seems to be that every tank, the ryots of which have either been unable to obtain Government assistance towards its repairs or have been too public-spirited to ask for it, is considered a "Private" tank, and the ryots are expected to execute and do execute all repairs without aid and without any remission of the full and sometimes very high nunjah assessment charged on their lands; and this seems to have been the case ever since we have held the country. On the other hand, in every case in which Government has once aided the ryots in the repair of a tank, no matter to how small an extent, that tank has been entered as a "Government" tank for the future, and such repairs as have been done have been carried out at the expense of the State. And so very liberally inclined have officers been (at the expense of Government), that, in carrying out the very unsound principle above enunciated, they have rested content with the most slender proof of former repairs and in many instances have saddled the State with the maintenance of some petty work for ever, on the mere *ipse dixit* of the ryots, that Government aid towards its repairs had previously been accorded. In illustration of this, I may point out that of the 178 tanks of less than 20 cawnies ayacut, stated by Mr. VansAgnew to be "Government" tanks, no less than 60 or more than one-third have on further inquiry been found to be "Private" tanks, and consequently under the scheme now under consideration will not obtain the benefit of punjah assessment, though always repaired at the expense of their respective ryots.

3. It would seem, therefore, that if the present scheme be carried out as it stands, we shall, with curious infelicity, be helping those who least require and least deserve consideration. The people who really should be aided are not those who have persistently sought to foist on Government the burden of undertaking petty irrigation repairs, but those who have for years put their own shoulders to the wheel and have done their own work for themselves without aid.

4. The papers connected with this subject were only brought to me yesterday with the tabular form received from the taluq, but it at once struck me that if it be thought worthwhile to disturb the existing state of things, which has lasted for years, and of which (anomalous though it is) but few complain, and then only when the assessment is outrageously high, the just and proper and most simple course would be to formally hand over all small tanks without exception

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to the people, and once for all, make a per-centage reduction of the assessment to cover cost of repairs and risk of seasons. The more I think of it, the less I am of opinion that it is *necessary* to make any alteration in the existing system, and the less force do I see in the reasons originally urged by Colonel Moberly for a change, viz., that the trouble and expense of keeping up petty tanks was more than they were worth. In theory it is so, I admit; but I shall be very much surprised when I come to total up the amount expended on such repairs in the Dindigul Taluq for the last ten years, if I do not find that *practically* both trouble and expense have been avoided by the simple process of letting the small tanks take care of themselves. In any case I cannot think that it will be fair to give up small "Government" tanks to the ryots at reduced rates, while the cultivators under the "private" tanks pay full nunjah assessment as heretofore and receive no aid towards their repairs.

5. It would take some time and labour to ascertain the exact financial effect of the scheme I have done myself the honour to suggest as alternative to that now under consideration; but I can say safely that the annual loss could not be great. Even not taking any account of the gain that would accrue by the saving of remissions, I feel sure that Rupees 5,000 per annum would be an outside estimate of loss, while the saving of trouble to Government servants in the inspection of waste and withered crops and in many other ways, and to the people in soliciting the Curnum's favour to get them remissions, etc., would be most important.

6. Should the scheme I have sketched above meet with approval, I will get accounts prepared to show how it would work.

In his report on the Public Works of the year 1864-65, the Collector of Madura drew attention to the fact that the bulk of the tanks in the Melur and Dindigul Taluqs are rain-fed, of small capacity, and requiring to be frequently replenished during the season in order that a crop may be brought to maturity, that the harvest frequently fails in consequence, and that a state of impoverishment has resulted. He added that Circulars Nos. LXII. of 1859-60 and CXXXI. of 1860-61 of the Chief Engineer have aggravated matters by forbidding outlay of public money on repairs of works, when the cost is less than Rs. 25, and have had the inequitable effect of throwing the entire cost of maintaining these small works on their impoverished ryots, while cultivators under larger and more prosperous works of irrigation have their tanks repaired at public cost because their up-keep is more costly. He asked that this anomalous condition might be remedied, but noticed that the whole subject of the cost of maintaining small irrigation works demands immediate attention, for while the revenue demand under them remains almost stationery, the steadily advancing cost of repair has altered the proportion between revenue and maintenance expenses, while the largely increased profits of cultivation arising from the advance in prices remain exclusively with the cultivators. He therefore deemed it right that "the ryots should be made to bear a portion of the extra cost of maintenance now falling on Government."

2. Mr. Levinge was requested to report the extent of repairs hitherto customary as compared with those now executed in the villages to which he alluded, and the remarks of the Superintending Engineer were invited.

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3. The Superintending Engineer remarked that the Collector had furnished him with a return of 1,491 works in the Melur Taluq, yielding on an average less than 76 Rs. each, and that he proposed to spend on the average 410 Rs. each on 100 of them. The Engineer deprecated the expenditure, as he considered that it would be scarcely the duty of Government to maintain these insignificant and miserable works which are incapable of improvement, and he recommended that the wet revenue demand should be abandoned for a dry assessment, and that ryots should be left to cultivate dry crop or keep up their own irrigation works.

4. In reply to the call of the Board of Revenue, the Collector submitted a classified statement of the tanks in the taluqs of Melur and Dindigul, of which the following is an abstract:—

	Number.	REGISTERED IRRIGABLE AREA.		CULTIVATION IN 1271, AREA.		DIFFERENCE PER CENT.	
		Cawnies.	Assessment.	Cawnies.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.
MELUR.							
Tank of 50 cawnies register and upwards	103	8,644	41,971	4,999	20,371	42.1	51.4
Tank of 30 cawnies, and upwards	129	4,891	21,854	2,489	11,457	49.1	47.6
Tank of 20 cawnies and upwards	169	4,149	19,863	1,745	10,711	57.8	46.0
Tank under 20 cawnies ...	2,085	12,143	59,032	6,342	29,641	47.7	49.8
	2,486	29,827	1,42,720	15,575	72,180	47.8	49.4
DINDIGUL.							
Tank of 5 cawnies register and upwards	36	4,329	27,212	3,656	23,858	15.5	12.3
Tank of 30 cawnies and upwards	37	1,405	7,200	1,088	5,717	22.5	20.6
Tank of 20 cawnies and upwards	37	878	4,107	682	3,217	22.3	21.6
Tank under 20 cawnies ...	178	1,578	7,450	1,173	5,517	25.6	25.9
	288	8,190	45,969	6,599	38,409	19.4	16.5

5. The information thus given in respect to the tanks in the Melur Taluq seems to be complete for Fasli 1271. Subsequent correspondence shows that the few tanks of the Dindigul Taluq on which it has been usual to expend public money only are shown in the statement. It is to be regretted that the account of cultivation is not derived from the average of ten years; but it is probable that the Fasli for which it is given (1271) was a fair average year.

6. The picture of the state of rain-fed irrigation works (2,486 in number) in the Melur Taluq afforded by these returns, is most unsatisfactory. Four-fifths of

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the whole (2,082) are registered to irrigate under 20 cawnies each. (Subsequent returns show the real number to be 2,244.) About one-half of the irrigable area under these works was waste and 50 per cent. of the assessment was uncollected. The amount of public money expended on the up-keep and improvement of the tanks is not shown, but it has probably been very small.

7. Of the irrigable area under 288 tanks in the Dindigul Taluq which are occasionally repaired at the public cost, one-fifth only was waste and only 16.5 per cent. of the revenue was lost. The inference to be drawn is that either the best tanks only are repaired or that expenditure has a very useful effect in maintaining the revenue.

8. The Collector, however, entirely deprecated the proposed indiscriminate abandonment of small tanks, because considerable sacrifice of revenue* which he estimated at Rupees 13,000 would be entailed, while the expense of repairing the works is not now large, because

	RS.
* Dindigul	2,573
Melur	10,862
	13,235

confusion would arise from the abandonment of some and the retention of other tanks having a common source of supply, because much dissension would be occasioned amongst the ryots themselves leading to further deterioration and ultimate loss both to Government and the cultivator, and because the Periyar Anicut Project will probably convert in respect to many of these tanks a precarious supply of water into a permanent one, when with increased profit the ryots themselves will willingly repair their own works, under the control of the Revenue authorities, subject to inspection of the Department of Public Works. The Collector apprehended no difficulty in the meantime in maintaining these irrigation works.

9. He, however, advocated the abandonment of all small rain-fed tanks registered to irrigate under five cawnies, for such small tanks are usually owned by one family or at most by one or two individuals who he considered can easily keep them in good order.

10. The Board called for a statement showing the revenue derived from the tanks reported on, and the probable outlay which had been incurred on their repair for the past ten years; also an estimate of the financial result of the change in classification of the land contemplated, and inquired the number of tanks under five-cawny register to which the recommendation applied.

11. The reports and statements now submitted are incomplete in some respects as regards the call made on the Collector, and the statements apply to small tanks registered to irrigate under 20 cawnies only. The returns omit all tanks above this class, and no separate information in respect to those registered to irrigate under 5 cawnies is submitted, nor are obvious discrepancies between the earlier and present returns explained.

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12. The Sub-Collector removes a serious misapprehension in respect to the classification of tanks in the Dindigul Taluq as previously returned. It has been usual it appears to class as "Government" tanks only such tanks as are occasionally repaired at public cost, and as "private" all those which in default of other aid have been kept up by the ryots themselves or have been neglected altogether. This distinction has apparently occurred almost accidentally, for there are no orders, and in every other respect the conditions of the two classes are identical, and the Sub-Collector naturally considers that the ryots cultivating under the so-called private tanks are entitled to equal if not greater consideration than their more fortunate neighbours who have enjoyed contributions from the public purse.

13. The statement of which the following is an abstract shows that a large proportion of the irrigable area under such tanks in both taluqs is waste. There is some improvement as regards the area of cultivation under this class of tanks in the Melur Taluq since Fasli 1271, consequent, probably, on the high prices now obtained for produce; but three-tenths of the area is still waste with corresponding loss of revenue. In the Dindigul Taluq, notwithstanding high prices, nearly one-half of the entire registered area is uncultivated, a corresponding revenue remains unrealized, and an exceedingly unsatisfactory condition prevails:—

	Number of tanks.	REGISTERED AYACUT.		AVERAGE CULTIVATION FOR TEN YEARS.		DIFFERENCE.	
		Acres.	Assessment.	Acres.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.
MELUR.							
Tank under 20 cawnies register	2,244	16,887	58,117	12,041	39,946	28.6	31 3
Dindigul do.	1,473	8,158	26,986	4,430	14,475	45.4	46 3

Considerable, but not perhaps material, difference appears between the returns of this class of tanks in both taluqs in the statement abstracted in paragraph 5 and the one now submitted.

14. The public outlay on these works during the last ten years has been partial and insignificant; under 100 (out of 3,717) have been attended to at all, and the amount spent has not exceeded one and-a-half per cent. of the revenue derived. In fact, they have been left practically to such up-keep as the ryots have extended to them or entirely neglected. This is done

Taluqs.	Number of tanks under 20 cawnies.	Average revenue for 10 years.	REPAIRS DURING 10 YEARS.		Percentage of revenue.
			No.	Amount.	
Melur ...	2,244	39,946	79	7,917	1.9
Dindigul ...	1,473	14,475	13	611	0.4
Total...	3,717	54,421	92	8,528	1.5

avowedly in Dindigul Taluq where not one tank in ten is classed as a tank having claim on the public purse for maintenance. Of these last (126 in number) scarcely one in ten has been repaired during the last ten years. In the Melur Taluq the same distinction does not obtain, but practically scarcely one in thirty of these small tanks now reported on has been repaired during the last ten years.

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15. The financial result of the change proposed by the Superintending Engineer is shown in the margin. There would be a nominal loss of Rs. 50,000 on the Registered Demand (*Ayacut Beriz*) and an actual deficit as compared with the average realizations of the last ten years (Rs. 54,421) of Rs. 30,417 per annum under this class of small tanks alone by abandoning the works and charging dry assessment on the land in place of the present consolidated wet rates.

16. The Board consider therefore that Colonel Moberly's proposals must be rejected on financial as well as administrative grounds.

17. Two points present themselves for decision, (1) having reference to the large nominal irrigable area which is now lost to irrigation either from permanent deterioration or original over-registration, should not revision and partial re-classification be undertaken as a general measure? (2), Who is to keep up these small works in future?

18. On the first point it is obvious that relief is required and that the registered irrigable area of all rain-fed tanks irrigating under, say, 100 cawnies should be at once revised in Madura. The statement shown in paragraph 5 shows that all are in an unsatisfactory condition. As the Board have recommended in respect to Cuddapah, each work should be examined, the area usually watered carefully ascertained and registered, and all land which is either never, or very rarely, watered by the tanks, transferred to dry rates with proportionate assessment. This seems to the Board to be reasonable and fair, the more especially so as the up-keep of the tanks is practically left to the ryots who cultivate under them.

19. As a financial measure, the change would probably prove profitable to the State. The statement under consideration shows that in the taluqs of Dindigul and Melur about 8,500 acres of land is waste under tanks registered to irrigate under 20 cawnies with a nominal demand of Rs. 30,700, at about Rs. 3-4-0 per acre. Were this area transferred to dry cultivation with an average assessment of Rs. 1-8-0 to Rs. 2 per acre, there is reason to hope that a considerable portion thereof would be cultivated again, whereby a deficit of Rs. 30,000 would be converted into an income which might rise as high as, say, Rs. 15,000. The Board resolve to submit these views for the orders of Government, and if they concur, the Collector will at once proceed with the re-classification of the whole of the land under the class of small tanks now reported upon and prepare materials for decision in respect to the waste land under those of higher capacity but precarious and deficient supply.

20. As regards the second point, viz., the up-keep of these tanks. The Board after giving the above needful relief, would leave the repairs to the ryots until the Government come to a decision on the general question.

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11th January 1871..*

No. 153.

ORDER THEREON, 11th January 1871, No. 74.

Land Revenue.

THE Government authorize the Board to carry out the proposal made in paragraph 18 of their Proceedings above recorded; it being understood that additional water-rate will be charged, should water at any time be taken from the tank for the land which, on re-classification, may now be registered as dry.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,

Secretary Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Ld. F. R. Dantleman.

RECEIVED

JANUARY.
Nos. 152-153.

Lands watered by tanks in Madura District.
—Proposal of the Board of Revenue to revise their
registered irrigable area on the condition specified,
sanctioned.

G. O., 11th January 1871. No. 74.

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Recd.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

REVENUE.

Govt. of 118711
Madura.

No. 5,450.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 25th August 1870.

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4. I do not know whether the Board are at present prepared to entertain any proposition for the reduction of revenue, but the present case offers a fair opportunity for this experiment, and the owners of the lands now under consideration would, I believe, willingly take them over at a permanently reduced assessment, making themselves responsible for repairs and consenting to forego the remissions they now receive in seasons when their supply of water is deficient, provided a fair reduction were made in the gross amount they now annually pay to Government.

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6. Should the scheme I have sketched above meet with approval, I will get accounts prepared to show how it would work.

In his report on the Public Works of the year 1864-65, the Collector of Madura drew attention to the fact that the bulk of the tanks in the Melur and Dindigul Talooks are rain-fed, of small capacity, and requiring to be frequently replenished during the season in order that a crop may be brought to maturity, that the harvest frequently fails in consequence, and that a state of impoverishment has resulted. He added, that Circulars Nos. LXII. of 1859-60 and CXXXI. of 1860-61 of the Chief Engineer have aggravated matters by forbidding outlay of public money on repairs of works, when the cost is less than Rs. 25, and have had the inequitable effect of throwing the entire cost of maintaining these small works on their impoverished ryots, while cultivators under larger and more prosperous works of irrigation have their tanks repaired at public cost because their up-keep is more costly. He asked that this anomalous condition might be remedied, but noticed that the whole subject of the cost of maintaining small irrigation works demands immediate attention, for while the revenue demand under them remains almost stationary, the steadily advancing cost of repair has altered the proportion between revenue and maintenance expenses, while the largely increased profits of cultivation arising from the advance in prices remain exclusively with the cultivators. He therefore deemed it right that "the ryots should be made to bear a portion of the extra cost of maintenance now falling on Government."

2. Mr. Levinge was requested to report the extent of repairs hitherto customary as compared with those now executed in the villages to which he alluded, and the remarks of the Superintending Engineer were invited.

3. The Superintending Engineer remarked that the Collector had furnished him with a return of 1,491 works in the Melur Talook, yielding on an average less than 76 Rupees each, and that he proposed to spend on the average 410 Rupees each on 100 of them. The Engineer deprecated the expenditure as he considered that it would be scarcely the duty of Government to maintain these insignificant and miserable works which are incapable of improvement, and he recommended that the wet revenue demand should be abandoned for a dry assessment, and that ryots should be left to cultivate dry crop or keep up their own irrigation works.

4. In reply to the call of the Board of Revenue, the Collector submitted a classified statement of the tanks in the Talooks of Melur and Dindigul, of which the following is an abstract:—

abstract.—

	Number.	REGISTERED IRRIGABLE AREA.		CULTIVATION IN 1271, AREA.		DIFFERENCE PER CENT.	
		Cawnies.	Assessment.	Cawnies.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.
MELUR.							
Tank of 50 Cawnies register and upwards... ..	103	8,644	41,971	4,990	20,371	42.1	51.4
Tank of 30 Cawnies and upwards... ..	129	4,891	21,854	2,489	11,457	49.1	47.6
Tank of 20 Cawnies and upwards... ..	169	4,149	19,863	1,745	10,711	57.8	46.0
Tank under 20 Cawnies	2,085	12,143	59,032	6,342	29,641	47.7	49.8
	2,486	29,827	1,42,720	15,575	72,180	47.8	49.4
DINDIGUL.							
Tank of 5 Cawnies register and upwards... ..	36	4,329	27,212	3,656	23,858	15.5	12.3
Tank of 30 Cawnies and upwards... ..	37	1,405	7,200	1,088	5,717	22.5	20.6
Tank of 20 Cawnies and upwards... ..	37	878	4,107	682	3,217	22.3	21.6
Tank under 20 Cawnies	178	1,578	7,450	1,173	5,517	25.6	25.9
	288	8,190	45,969	6,599	33,409	19.4	16.5

5. The information thus given in respect to the tanks in the Melur Talook seems to be complete for Fusly 1271. Subsequent correspondence shows that the few tanks of the Dindigul talook on which it has been usual to expend public money only are shown in the statement. It is to be regretted that the account of cultivation is not derived from the average of ten years; but it is probable that the Fusly for which it is given (1271) was a fair average year.

6. The picture of the state of rain-fed irrigation works (2,486 in number) in the Melur talook afforded by these returns, is most unsatisfactory. Four-fifths of the whole (2,082) are registered to irrigate under 20 Cawnies each. (Subsequent returns show the real number to be 2,244.) About one-half of the irrigable area under these works was waste and 50 per cent. of the assessment was uncollected. The amount of public money expended on the up-keep and improvement of the tanks is not shown, but it has probably been very small.

7. Of the irrigable area under 288 tanks in the Dindigul talook which are occasionally repaired at the public cost, one-fifth only was waste and only 16.5 per cent. of the revenue was lost. The inference to be drawn is, that either the best tanks only are repaired or that expenditure has a very useful effect in maintaining the revenue.

8. The Collector, however, entirely deprecated the proposed indiscriminate abandonment of small tanks, because considerable sacrifice of revenue* which he estimated at Rupees 13,000 would be entailed, while the expense of repairing the works is not now large; because confusion would arise from the abandonment of some and the retention of other tanks having a common source of supply; because much dissension would be

* Dindigul	Rs. 2,573
Melur	10,863
	13,235

occasioned amongst the ryots themselves leading to further deterioration and ultimate loss both to Government and the cultivator, and because the Periyar anicut project will probably convert in respect to many of these tanks a precarious supply of water into a permanent one, when with increased profit the ryots themselves will willingly repair their own works, under the control of the Revenue authorities, subject to inspection of the Department of Public Works. The Collector apprehended no difficulty in the meantime in maintaining these irrigation works.

9. He, however, advocated the abandonment of all small rain-fed tanks registered to irrigate under five cawnies, for such small tanks are usually owned by one family or at most by one or two individuals who he considered can easily keep them in good order.

10. The Board called for a statement showing the revenue derived from the tanks reported on, and the probable outlay which had been incurred on their repair for the past ten years; also an estimate of the financial result of the change in classification of the land contemplated, and inquired the number of tanks under five cawny register to which the recommendation applied.

11. The reports and statements now submitted are incomplete in some respects as regards the call made on the Collector, and the statements apply to small tanks registered to irrigate under 20 cawnies only. The returns omit all tanks above this class and no separate information in respect to those registered to irrigate under 5 cawnies is submitted, nor are obvious discrepancies between the earlier and present returns explained.

12. The Sub-Collector removes a serious misapprehension in respect to the classification of tanks in the Dindigul talook as previously returned. It has been usual it appears to class as "Government" tanks only such tanks as are occasionally repaired at public cost, and as "private" all those which in default of other aid have been kept up by the ryots themselves or have been neglected altogether. This distinction has apparently occurred almost accidentally, for there are no orders, and in every other respect the conditions of the two classes are identical, and the Sub-Collector naturally considers that the ryots cultivating under the so-called private tanks, are entitled to equal if not greater consideration than their more fortunate neighbours who have enjoyed contributions from the public purse.

13. The statement of which the following is an abstract shows that a large proportion of the irrigable area under such tanks in both talooks is waste. There is some improvement as regards the area of cultivation under this class of tanks in the Melur talook since Fusly 1271, consequent, probably, on the high prices now obtained for produce; but three-tenths of the area is still waste with corresponding loss of revenue. In the Dindigul talook, notwithstanding high prices, nearly one-half of the entire registered area is uncultivated, a corresponding revenue remains unrealized, and an exceedingly unsatisfactory condition prevails:—

	Number of tanks.	REGISTERED AYACUT.		AVERAGE CULTIVATION FOR TEN YEARS.		DIFFERENCE.	
		Acres.	Assessment.	Acres.	Assessment.	Area.	Assessment.
MELUR.							
Tank under 20 Cawnies register	2,244	16,887	58,117	12,041	39,946	28.6	31.3
Dindigul do.	1,473	8,158	26,986	4,430	14,475	45.4	46.3

Considerable, but not perhaps material, difference appears between the returns of this class of tanks in both talooks in the statement abstracted in paragraph 5 and the one now submitted.

14. The public outlay on these works during the last ten years has been partial and insignificant; under 100 (out of 3,717) have been

Talooks.	Number of tanks under 20 cawnies.	Average revenue for 10 years.	REPAIRS DURING 10 YEARS.		Per-cent- age of revenue.
			No.	Amount.	
Melur	2,244	39,946	79	7,917	1.9
Dindigul..	1,473	14,475	12	611	0.4
	3,717	54,421	93	8,528	1.5

attended to at all, and the amount spent has not exceeded one-and-a-half per cent. of the revenue derived. In fact they have been left practically to such up-keep as the ryots have extended to them or entirely neglected. This is done avowedly in Dindigul talook where not one tank in ten is classed as a tank having claim on the public purse for maintenance. Of these last (126 in number) scarcely one in ten has

been repaired during the last ten years. In the Melur talook the same distinction does not obtain, but practically scarcely one in thirty of these small tanks, now reported on, has been repaired during the last ten years.

15. The financial result of the change proposed by the Superintending Engineer is shown in the margin. There would be a nominal loss of

Talooks.	Number of tanks.	Registered wet assessment.	Revised assessment at dry rates.
Melur	2,244	53,117	23,220
Dindigul	1,473	26,986	11,515
Difference	---	85,103	34,735
		50,368	---

Rupees 50,000 on the Registered Demand (*AyacutBeriz*) and an actual deficit as compared with the average realizations of the last ten years (Rupees 54,421) of Rupees 30,417 per annum under this class of small tanks alone by abandoning the works and charging dry assessment on the land in place of the present consolidated wet rates.

16. The Board consider therefore that Colonel Moberly's proposals must be rejected on financial as well as administrative grounds.

17. Two points present themselves for decision:—(1) Having reference to the large nominal irrigable area which is now lost to irrigation either from permanent deterioration or original over-registration—Should not revision and partial re-classification be undertaken as a general measure? (2), Who is to keep up these small works in future?

18. On the first point it is obvious that relief is required and that the registered irrigable area of all rain-fed tanks irrigating under say 100 cawnies should be at once revised in Madura. The statement shown in paragraph 5 shows that all are in an unsatisfactory condition. As the Board have recommended in respect to Cuddapah, each work should be examined, the area usually watered carefully ascertained and registered, and all land which is either never—or very rarely—watered by the tanks, transferred to dry rates with proportionate assessment. This seems to the Board to be reasonable and fair, the more especially so as the up-keep of the tanks is practically left to the ryots who cultivate under them.

19. As a financial measure, the change would probably prove profitable to the State. The statement under consideration shows that in the talooks of Dindigul and Melur about 8,500 acres of land is waste under tanks registered to irrigate under 20 cawnies with a nominal demand of Rupees 30,700, at about Rupees 3-4-0 per acre. Were this area transferred to dry cultivation with an average assessment of Rupees 1-8-0 to Rupees 2 per acre, there is reason to hope that a considerable portion thereof would be cultivated again, whereby a deficit of Rupees 30,000 would be converted into an income which might rise as high as, say, Rupees 15,000. The Board resolve to submit these views for the orders of Government, and if they concur, the Collector will at once proceed with the re-classification of the whole of the land under the class of small tanks now reported upon and prepare materials for decision in respect to the waste land under those of higher capacity but precarious and deficient supply.

20. As regards the second point, viz., the up-keep of these tanks. The Board after giving the above needful relief, would leave the repairs to the ryots until the Government come to a decision on the general question.

(True Copies and Extract.)

J. G. M.
Acting Secretary.

To the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department,
with one Statement.

Copy to the Collector of Madura.

Exd. T. Cartledge.

The matter requiring the orders of Govt. is explained in full detail in the Board's Proceedings.

2. Some five years ago Mr. Levinge, the collector of Madurai, made the suggestion to leave the repairs of the ruined tanks of the Melur and Pindigul talooks to the repl. Colonel Moberly. The Superintending Engineer put the proposal into a definite shape suggesting that the Punjab revenue should be abandoned and the land under the tanks be assessed at dry rate.

3. During the years of scarcity (1866-67) the people of the Melur taluk suffered severely and the question was again brought

prominent

Pho. 21 (Joh. 1865) 412-3
15-16-17-18-19-20-21-22-23-24-25-26-27-28-29-30-31-32-33-34-35-36-37-38-39-40-41-42-43-44-45-46-47-48-49-50-51-52-53-54-55-56-57-58-59-60-61-62-63-64-65-66-67-68-69-70-71-72-73-74-75-76-77-78-79-80-81-82-83-84-85-86-87-88-89-90-91-92-93-94-95-96-97-98-99-100-101-102-103-104-105-106-107-108-109-110-111-112-113-114-115-116-117-118-119-120-121-122-123-124-125-126-127-128-129-130-131-132-133-134-135-136-137-138-139-140-141-142-143-144-145-146-147-148-149-150-151-152-153-154-155-156-157-158-159-160-161-162-163-164-165-166-167-168-169-170-171-172-173-174-175-176-177-178-179-180-181-182-183-184-185-186-187-188-189-190-191-192-193-194-195-196-197-198-199-200-201-202-203-204-205-206-207-208-209-210-211-212-213-214-215-216-217-218-219-220-221-222-223-224-225-226-227-228-229-230-231-232-233-234-235-236-237-238-239-240-241-242-243-244-245-246-247-248-249-250-251-252-253-254-255-256-257-258-259-260-261-262-263-264-265-266-267-268-269-270-271-272-273-274-275-276-277-278-279-280-281-282-283-284-285-286-287-288-289-290-291-292-293-294-295-296-297-298-299-300-301-302-303-304-305-306-307-308-309-310-311-312-313-314-315-316-317-318-319-320-321-322-323-324-325-326-327-328-329-330-331-332-333-334-335-336-337-338-339-340-341-342-343-344-345-346-347-348-349-350-351-352-353-354-355-356-357-358-359-360-361-362-363-364-365-366-367-368-369-370-371-372-373-374-375-376-377-378-379-380-381-382-383-384-385-386-387-388-389-390-391-392-393-394-395-396-397-398-399-400-401-402-403-404-405-406-407-408-409-410-411-412-413-414-415-416-417-418-419-420-421-422-423-424-425-426-427-428-429-430-431-432-433-434-435-436-437-438-439-440-441-442-443-444-445-446-447-448-449-450-451-452-453-454-455-456-457-458-459-460-461-462-463-464-465-466-467-468-469-470-471-472-473-474-475-476-477-478-479-480-481-482-483-484-485-486-487-488-489-490-491-492-493-494-495-496-497-498-499-500-501-502-503-504-505-506-507-508-509-510-511-512-513-514-515-516-517-518-519-520-521-522-523-524-525-526-527-528-529-530-531-532-533-534-535-536-537-538-539-540-541-542-543-544-545-546-547-548-549-550-551-552-553-554-555-556-557-558-559-560-561-562-563-564-565-566-567-568-569-570-571-572-573-574-575-576-577-578-579-580-581-582-583-584-585-586-587-588-589-590-591-592-593-594-595-596-597-598-599-600-601-602-603-604-605-606-607-608-609-610-611-612-613-614-615-616-617-618-619-620-621-622-623-624-625-626-627-628-629-630-631-632-633-634-635-636-637-638-639-640-641-642-643-644-645-646-647-648-649-650-651-652-653-654-655-656-657-658-659-660-661-662-663-664-665-666-667-668-669-670-671-672-673-674-675-676-677-678-679-680-681-682-683-684-685-686-687-688-689-690-691-692-693-694-695-696-697-698-699-700-701-702-703-704-705-706-707-708-709-710-711-712-713-714-715-716-717-718-719-720-721-722-723-724-725-726-727-728-729-730-731-732-733-734-735-736-737-738-739-740-741-742-743-744-745-746-747-748-749-750-751-752-753-754-755-756-757-758-759-760-761-762-763-764-765-766-767-768-769-770-771-772-773-774-775-776-777-778-779-780-781-782-783-784-785-786-787-788-789-790-791-792-793-794-795-796-797-798-799-800-801-802-803-804-805-806-807-808-809-810-811-812-813-814-815-816-817-818-819-820-821-822-823-824-825-826-827-828-829-830-831-832-833-834-835-836-837-838-839-840-841-842-843-844-845-846-847-848-849-850-851-852-853-854-855-856-857-858-859-860-861-862-863-864-865-866-867-868-869-870-871-872-873-874-875-876-877-878-879-880-881-882-883-884-885-886-887-888-889-890-891-892-893-894-895-896-897-898-899-900-901-902-903-904-905-906-907-908-909-910-911-912-913-914-915-916-917-918-919-920-921-922-923-924-925-926-927-928-929-930-931-932-933-934-935-936-937-938-939-940-941-942-943-944-945-946-947-948-949-950-951-952-953-954-955-956-957-958-959-960-961-962-963-964-965-966-967-968-969-970-971-972-973-974-975-976-977-978-979-980-981-982-983-984-985-986-987-988-989-990-991-992-993-994-995-996-997-998-999-1000-1001-1002-1003-1004-1005-1006-1007-1008-1009-1010-1011-1012-1013-1014-1015-1016-1017-1018-1019-1020-1021-1022-1023-1024-1025-1026-1027-1028-1029-1030-1031-1032-1033-1034-1035-1036-1037-1038-1039-1040-1041-1042-

Recd 1870. Sept
Board of Revenue

MABRS. 2902

PROCEEDINGS, 25TH AUGUST 1970, NO 5, 150. +

Geoff. S. Schell

Received *2-26/70* Encl. *2/23*

AUGUST.
No. 5,450.

Tanks in Melur and Dindigul Talooks in Madras District.—Letter from Collector forwarding information on subject of proposed abandonment of, submitted to Government, with opinion that all land which is either never or very rarely watered by tanks should be transferred to dry rates with proportionate assessment.—Collector requested, if Government should concur in views of Board, to reclassify all land under small tanks, and prepare materials for decision in respect to waste land under those of higher capacity but of precarious and deficient supply. Opinion expressed as regards upkeep of small tanks being left to ryots.

Seen 11th Aug 1911.

Ms. 152

26 Oct 1950

prominently to notice, but in 1867, the then collector, Mr. Arbutnot, reported against the general proposal as he considered the sacrifice of revenue involved to be unnecessary, that the measure would involve endless disputes between ryots cultivating under the abandoned tanks and those holding lands under tanks still repaired by Govt. and that all difficulties in connection with these tanks would disappear when the Periyar Irrigation scheme was carried out, as it would afford them an unimpeded supply of water. Mr. Arbutnot was however in favor of abandoning to the ryots all tanks, the ayacut of which was not in excess of 5 + cawnies.

4. With the Proceedings now submitted, the Board forward the

M
reports of Mr. J. P. Arbutnot and Mr. Bliss on the subject. The latter gentleman is apparently of opinion that no change is really necessary at present, while Mr. J. P. Arbutnot would make a percentage reduction in the assessment of lands under all tanks irrigating 20 cawnies and under, on the understanding apparently that the full reduced assessment be collected for all land under the tanks whether cultivated or not.

5. The Board of Revenue would re-classify the land under all the tanks referred to by Mr. J. P. Arbutnot, in the hope that much of the so called irrigable land, now invariably left waste, would be taken up for dry cultivation.

cultivation and would then leave
the repairs of tanks with their
revised ayacuts to the ryots
until the Government come
to a conclusion on the
general question.

6. The Board do not say
whether they would require full
or reduced rates from the ryots
for the irrigated land under
the tanks, nor do they explain
whether they would hold them
liable for ^{the} ~~the~~ ^{to} ~~assess~~ of this quantity of wet land
whether they cultivated it or not.

7. In favor of Mr. J. R.
A. Bullock's proposal it might
be argued that so long as a
wet assessment is levied by
govt.

Government, the people are
entitled to have their
tanks repaired at Govern-
ment expenses, and that
therefore, as the charges
for repair is to be defini-
tely ^{thrown} upon the ryots,
they are entitled to some
reduction of assessment
as representing the cost

of repairs to Government
and apparently his proposal
that the ryots shall be
charged this reduced rate
upon the lands whether
they cultivate them or
not, is to insure their
making a proper ex-
penditure upon keeping
up the tanks.

It is however sub-
mitted that it may
be presumed —

(N)
that the wet rates now
levied from the land under
most of these tanks represent
merely the interest on the
original outlay by the State
in the original Construction
of the work, and that, therefore,
no reduction of the rates
of assessment is equitably
needed, the repairs being
such as ^{are} usually included
under this head "Kudde &
Maramut" or customary
repairs at the ryots own
expense. If this view be
accepted, it would certainly
be advisable not to give
the tanks over to the ryots
but to retain them, as
heretofore, as Government
works, merely requiring
that all such works as
were

were properly included
under the head of "Customary
Labor" should be performed
by the ryots, and that all
repairs of a more important
character should be
carried out by the Public
Works Department.

9. It is submitted that
beyond a re-classification
of land under the tanks
as irrigable or not, it is not
at present necessary to
disturb the existing state
of matters. It is also worthy
of consideration whether
even this step is desirable
at present, as the Argement
of the tanks will
doubtless be largely
increased

The execution of
the Perryer project
is not to immediate
I think as to justify
delay. I think as
to the W's proposal
to reclaim the land
the dry being subject to
water rate a low rate
is better - J. S. P.

increased when the Perryer
project is completed.

JMS

I think this is the
best course
By A.
yes. Super. N.

Edwards

Land

8

Rev. Depto
5

N. 74

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 11 January 1871

Read the following
Proceedings of the Board of Revenue

Forwarding information on subject
of proposed abandonment of Tanks in
Madras District, with opinion that all
land which is either never or very
rarely watered by tanks should be
transferred to dry rates with proportionate
assessment.

Here enter 25th August 1870
N. 5450

The Government
authorise the Board to carry
out the proposal made in para 18
of their Proceedings above recorded.
it being understood that additional
water rate will be charged should
water at any time be taken from
the Tank for the land which on
re classification may now be
registered as Dry.

L.B.

List By Over

14 Folders of Rev. with an Envelope

20/11/71

24/4

G. C.

Lyons water ch. by bank
in alluvial soil.

De