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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 24th August 1872.

Read the following letter from G. D. LEMAN, Esq., Acting Collector of the Kistna District, to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Masulipatam, 25th July 1872, No. 1,957:—

I HAVE the honour to forward my report on Salt roads.

There are four Salt Stations—(1) Pandraka, (2) Manginapudi, (3) Nizampatam, and (4) Chinna Ganjam.

2. Of these I have visited Manginapudi and Nizampatam only.

3. *Pandraka* is frequented by Lambadies, who prefer the large crystals of salt formed here spontaneously for the long journeys they have to take it. Three platforms have been already given up as useless—*Vide* Board's Proceedings, No. 100, 7th January 1870. There remain four of the old Chinna Pandraka stations and the Gunnamapurra platform, which now form the Pandraka Cotam. Since the cyclone of 1864, when the old cut, by which the sea-water used to pass through the sand hills to the swamps where the salt forms, was filled up, the supply of salt-water has been getting more and more scanty, and I have applied for and obtained sanction to survey the place to find out whether or not we can get water at a remunerative cost through a cut to the south of the old one.

4. *The road from Argole to Bantumully* can hardly be called a salt road; it is 32 miles long running through the rich Gudivada Taluq and a most useful road generally. It is like all our roads here, a bank of earth difficult to pass along in the dry and impassable in the wet weather. The Local Fund Board have provided funds, and sanctioned the metalling of it in the current year. Last year nothing was done; but the embankments were kept in order. A bridge required is being constructed at Polatazu Coda, as also the bridge across the high level canal at Argole.

5. There are no salt station roads at present. If the survey gives satisfactory results, one from Kotampurra platform to Bantumully will be wanted.

6. The salt-water canal has silted up, and the terminal basin once proposed was never constructed; and it will depend on the result of the survey what recommendation should be made about them.

7. *Manginapudi*.—There are three platforms in good order and in use. The track from Masulipatam to Manginapudi lies through sand all the way; it is six miles long. There has never been a road there, and I am not disposed to press the great emergency of it at present. It is a road heavy but never impassable as are all the unmetalled roads inland; and it is only a short stage, as handies using it for the most part would make a halt at Masulipatam. The estimate has just been returned by Government, and the Local Fund Board have it under their consideration whether the road estimate shall be re-submitted to Government or the alternative project of a canal, for I do not think that both are needed.

8. The road to Padana is not made yet or sanctioned even. It is four miles long, and until the continuation *via* Cowtaram to Gudivada is on hand, would be utterly useless ending at Padana in one of our mud or dirt banks (as the season may be) that are dignified here by the name of roads. The whole line will,

however, be a useful one when completed; and as the Gudivada road has been sanctioned, I shall at once move the Local Fund Board to sanction this small piece in addition.

9. *The Kona Canal.*—The late Superintending Engineer, 2nd Division, lately reported that there was not water enough in the upper reaches of the canal to supply what would be wanted for this; it is, therefore, held in abeyance. It was intended to flood the Kona swamp which produces spontaneous salt, and so save the Salt guard and more effectually prevent smuggling in the hot weather. If made, it would also be useful as an irrigation work.

10. *The moat around works is not yet begun;* there appears to have been some doubt who was to prepare the estimate. The Collector complained to the Board that he had not got any estimate from the Public Works Department; and the late Superintending Engineer supposes that the revenue authorities "can dig a moat without the help of his department." I have called upon the Salt Deputy-Collector for an estimate; and if he cannot furnish it, I will again apply to the Public Works Department.

11. *Nizampatam.*—This is the only depot where there is provision for exportation of salt by sea. None has been exported for some time. Large quantities were, however, taken from here to Bezvada and Jaggiapeta as soon as the Nizampatam Canal was opened; so much so that it became necessary to import salt from Isakapalli in Nellore. I hardly think the supply will fall short again, for the demand was an extraordinary one, due to the recent opening of the canal; but in case it should be necessary to increase our supply of salt, Mr. Boswell (as there is not enough water for extension of the Nizampatam works) fixed on a swamp about four miles away for a new depot. The line in the pits by which it is proposed to work them is reported strong, and I have ordered experimental digging to be made round about to ascertain that there is sufficient, on the completion of which I shall have the honour to submit my scheme, should it be necessary, to the Board.

12. *The roads are—*

(1.) To Guntur, 30 miles in length, viz. Chandole, of which the road is good from Guntur to Chandole, but from thence merely an embankment. This the Local Fund Board are going to take in hand at once.

(2.) Road to Bandar *viz.* Repalli a fair dry-weather road.

(3.) The road to Bapatla about which a good deal of correspondence has passed between this office and the Superintending Engineer and Government. The term road is certainly not applicable—there is none; and I am not quite sure that there is. The late Superintending

* To Collector, No. 3, April 5, 1872.

† Proceedings of Government, No. 491, October 28, 1871.

Engineer in one letter* says there is no difficulty in the natural soil; but to Government he writes† about the same track that he inspected it as far as he could on horseback with difficulty, apparently showing that the track is easy in dry and bad in wet weather; I do not think there is much traffic at present, which is due to the fact that the Muttadi Revu (a salt creek) is not passable by carts; but I cannot but suppose that if they could

come, they would; there is no doubt about 1,500 carts do come by a round about way to the platforms for salt. I shall endeavour to get the direct road to Bapatla sanctioned this year by the Local Fund Board. I have an estimate as far as Muttadi Revu, a mile and a half out; but that requires correction; and I must apply to the Superintending Engineer for the estimate from thence to Bapatla. I think it will be a very useful road, as it will throw Bapatla open to the seaport of Nizampatam. I do not propose, at present, building a bridge across the creek; but I shall provide for the passage of carts by a raft on two boats which will not cost Rupees 100, and which I shall build out of Salt funds, as the Deputy-Collector is convinced it will attract much traffic.

13. I propose to cut a channel from the creek, where the canal boats now load, up to the new platform now nearly complete, and for the survey of which I would beg the Board's sanction; it is but a few hundred yards; and until the line is shown, I would wish to leave the question of the palmyra bridge in abeyance. The Salt Deputy-Collector keeps a Sangadi (two palmyra trees lashed together) for people to cross the creek; but it is only needed at high tide; at half tide it is easily fordable; and until I know where it will be best located, I quite agree with the late Superintending Engineer that it is not possible to say what kind of bridge is necessary. The masonry wharf on which Rs. 320 have been expended in getting materials also should wait; for, if the channel proposed be made, we shall want it, not where it is now proposed to be put, but at the platform. Meanwhile, I have sanctioned the erection of a temporary staging that will answer all the necessary purposes for this season out of Salt funds. The station roads are in good order; but all efforts to make turf or ~~any other~~ *any other* on the lands have failed.

14. *Gunna Gunjam.*—The Lambadies from Hyderabad frequent this platform; but during the year under report they have in some measure deserted it for the neighbouring one of Kanuparti in Nellore.

15. *The Imperial Road* which connects the Cotaar with the trunk road at Incole is in fair order, and it would appear that the unfinished part of it from Kadavakuduru to the Cotaar is to be undertaken this year at a cost of Rs. 25,150 (Board's Proceedings, 15th April 1872, No. 598.)

16. A masonry bridge at Kundoru was sanctioned in 1869 in lieu of a weak palmyra one between the Cotaar and the village; but it has not yet been taken in hand.

17. The station roads which are four in number are reported to be in good order.

This report, on the salt roads of the Kistna District, is submitted for the information of Government.

2. The so-called salt road from Argole to Bantumilly, attached to the Pandraka division, is 32 miles in length, and is not solely used for the salt traffic, but is a valuable district road. Hitherto this road has been unmetalled, but an allotment for metalling it has now been made, and when the bridges now under construction are completed, its value will be greatly increased.

3. Manginapudi requires either a good road or a canal to connect it with Masulipatam. It is hoped the Local Fund Board will soon make up their mind as to which is to be undertaken, as one of the two is certainly required.

4. *Nizampatam*.—The salt from this place is largely transported to Hyderabad by canal and river, but it is also the natural source of supply to Guntur and the surrounding countries, and the unfinished piece of the road from Guntur, viz., that from Chandole to Nizampatam, should be completed without delay. The road to Bapatla should also be put in hand: a bridge over the backwater at Mutudi Revu will be very costly and is not urgently required; a good ferry boat will supply the want. The portion of the road which really needs attention is the mile or two south of the backwater where it crosses a tidal swamp quite impassable at times.

5. *Chinnai Ganjam*.—The road from the station to Kadavakuduru is, it appears, about to be undertaken; it is much needed, and will when complete make the approach to the salt stores quite easy.

6. All the most important lines of approach to the salt stations appear to be either in progress or about to be undertaken. The enormous cost of making roads in the delta of the Kistna and the remote position of the salt stations causes this district to contrast unfavourably with others in the matter of salt roads; but the right course for improving them has been taken, and it is hoped that in a few years there will not be much to complain of.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

Acting Sub-Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, P. O. W.

Copy to the Chief Secretary to Government. H. D.

to the Acting Collector of the Eastern District

ENG. T. COLLIER.

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See, Reed in John D. Reed, Report of
Collector on the 1871-72, submitted to the
President in Jan. 1873, 12.