Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
20th September 1373.

No. 177. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 25th June 1873, No. 1,099:—

Read the following letter from H. SEWELL, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot, to J. GROSE, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Wandawash, 14th April 1873, No. 219:—

I HAVE the honour to forward, herewith, copies of letter addressed to me by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated 1st instant, No. 201, and my reply thereto, dated 11th instant, No. 151, as also Sub-Collector's letter No. 409, dated 6th July last, together with its enclosure, on the subject of the necessity or otherwise of restoring the tanks of Virupatchipuram and Allapuram, near Vellore, referred to in Government Proceedings, dated 16th May last, No. 799. I am of opinion, as stated in my letter to Colonel Mullins, that the tanks in question should not be restored. The loss of Revenue to Government will only be about Rupees 230, as will be seen from the Statement given in paragraph 8 of Mr. Kelsall's letter. The rate of Rupees 4 per Cawny when the lands under these tanks are converted into dry, seems to me to be fair, and not too heavy on the ryots. As it is contemplated to convert all wet lands under these tanks into dry, I see no necessity to give any compensation to the holders of these lands, the reduction of the assessment being itself favourable to them.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Lieut.-Colonel J. MULLINS, R. E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, to H. SEWELL, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot, dated Fort Saint George, 1st April 1873, No. 201.

HAVING in accordance with the instructions conveyed in Government Order, No. 2,917 of the 10th December 1872, examined the circumstances of the Virupatchi Agraharam and Allapuram tanks, the breaching of which in the cyclone of May 1872 occasioned disastrous inundations, and the loss of many lives, and having inspected the several drainage channels by which the water supply of these tanks and of the adjacent country is, or can be, conveyed to the Palar, I have the honour to inform you, that I am of opinion that the restoration of the tanks, in a manner which would render them quite secure, is feasible, but as the question of their abandonment has been raised in the Minute of the Honourable R. S. Ellis, and the settlement of this question left for disposal in the Revenue and Public Works Departments, I shall be glad of your opinion on this subject.

Government Order, Military Department, 10th May 1872, No. 1,551.
Public Works Department, dated 18th May, No. 160.

2. Particulars of the Revenue involved are given in the Minute just referred to, and it may be mentioned that so far as I can at present judge, the cost of securing an adequate water-supply to the irrigation under the two tanks will not exceed a sum, on which the Revenue involved would yield a return just sufficient to cover the interest on the outlay. It appears to me that it would be best to abandon the Allapuram tank, which is a shallow Reservoir, without any natural advantages of situation, and to store in the Virupatchi Agraharam tank enough water for the whole of the cultivation under both tanks. There will be no difficulty in providing for the safe discharge from the Agraharam tank of even a far heavier rain-fall drainage than that due to the storm of May 1872. A waste weir of ample dimensions can be constructed on rock at the east end of the tank, the soil for the bund is excellent and stone for revetment is abundant close at hand, while a moderate addition to the former depth of this reservoir would compensate for the abandonment of the Allapuram tank.

3. The sacrifice of a small amount of Revenue would be very unimportant, were it to be considered unadvisable to risk the recurrence of the accident which last year led to the sacrifice of

so many lives and to much suffering by many hundreds of the inhabitants of a part of the town of Vellore. It should not, however, be overlooked that the greater part of the town is on well raised ground, not liable to suffer from the breaching of any of the tanks in the neighbourhood, and that on the other hand, cusbah and the ground occupied by the Family Lines near the R. C. Church are so low that they will always be subject to inundation, whether the tanks be restored or not, though, of course, this inundation would not be attended with such disastrous consequences as must result from a considerable body of water being poured down from breached tanks, as in 1872. The Family Lines of the 14th Regiment were situated in a most dangerous locality, on, indeed, ground which was the natural and direct line of out-fall for a flood, and the other Family Lines close to this, though not so exposed to the strong flood current, were necessarily inundated to a very considerable depth. There can, I think, be no question that this locality is unsuitable under any circumstances for dwellings. The drainage from the south may be confined to the cusbah nullah if this be widened and embanked, but even then the ground immediately to the eastward will, in heavy rains, be submerged by the drainage from the eastward, for which there will be no out-fall so long as the nullah is in flood. Cusbah to the west of the nullah is on very low ground, but its drainage can pass away to the westward into the Nakel Calvah.

4. From what I have said above, it will, I hope, be tolerably clear—

1st.—That there are no technical difficulties to prevent the restoration of the Virupatchi Agraharam tank, and that the site is a favourable one for a tank. Also that it will be better to increase its capacity so as to admit of the abandonment of the Allapuram tank, without sacrificing the wet cultivation under the latter.

2ndly.—That independently of the question of restoring the tanks, the re-occupation of the low ground to the east of cusbah nullah and between the Adroonandal abandoned tank and the Fort should not be permitted.

3rd.—That the village of cusbah can be protected, though its site is low and inconvenient.

5. A month or six weeks will be required to put on paper the detailed information regarding the tanks and the channels to the south of Vellore, upon which the arrangements for disposing of water on the recurrence of extraordinary falls of rain must be based. It is of importance, however, that the question of the restoration of means of irrigation should be settled, because the measures to be adopted for disposing of the drainage from the catchment basin of the Virupatchi Agraharam tank will differ materially, if this tank be restored, from those which will be proper if the main breach be left open. In either case, just the same quantity of drainage will have to be provided for, and similarly just the same quantity will be diverted into the Thorapady tank and into the cusbah nullah respectively, but in one case this drainage will be carried along the breach channel, and in the other along the surplus channel of the tank.

6. The expenditure necessary for restoring the Virupatchi Agraharam tank and for diverting a part of the surplus into the Thorapady tank would form a charge against agricultural ordinary funds, but all outlay for improving the natural lines of drainage into the Palar would be unconnected with irrigation, and it will have to be decided from what funds this charge should be met.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. SEWELL,
Acting Collector.

ENCLOSURE No 2.

From H. SEWELL, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot, to Lieut.-Colonel J. MULLINS, R.E., Chief Engineer for Irrigation, Madras, dated Wandawash, 11th April 1873, No. 151.

IN reply to your letter of the 1st instant, asking my opinion on the question of restoring the breached tanks above Vellore town, I regret in the first place that neither Mr. Whiteside nor Mr. Kelsall who were in the district at the time of the cyclone, are now at hand to give their opinion in the matter, which would have been of more value than mine.

2. From all I have heard of the cyclone and its effects, I must say that I should decidedly prefer to see the tanks left as they are. The loss of Revenue to Government would not be very serious, probably about Rupees 230, and I do not think ought to be weighed against the safety of a large and important town like Vellore; and though you state "that there would be no difficulty in providing for the discharge of a far heavier rain-fall drainage than that due to the storm of May 1872," still cyclones are uncertain, and tank bunds are liable to be breached, and if a breach should occur again, the danger to Vellore would be very similar to that in last May.

3. In any case the nullahs carrying off the drainage of the basin would, as you say, require to be strengthened, and I presume by that means the safety of the cusbah village could be secured.

4. I quite agree with you that the site on which the Lines stood should not be re-occupied.

5. I see that Mr. Kelsall, in the concluding paragraph of his letter to the Collector, No. 409, dated July 6th, 1872, suggests the possibility of at some future time forming a reservoir for the town in the bed of the Virupatchipuram tank. This would be a work of great importance, though I suppose it is hardly likely to be carried out yet. But I presume, that leaving the tanks in their present condition would not materially interfere with such a future work. If the idea is sanctioned by Government, it would be as well to retain some portion of the bed of the tank unoccupied, and only to give out the upper part for cultivation. This would entail a further loss of Revenue, but not, I imagine, of any great amount, as the Reservoir would not, of course, require the full extent of the tank bed.

6. I regret the delay in replying to your letter, but I have been very busy during the last week with the Jamabandy of this taluq.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. SEWELL,
Acting Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

From J. KELSALL, Esq., Acting Sub-Collector, to W. S. WHITESIDE, Esq., Acting Collector of North Arcot, dated Vellore, 6th July 1872, No. 409.

I HAVE the honour to reply to your letter No. 755, of May 29th, 1872.

2. The Allapuram tank, so far as is known, has never breached, the large tank at Virupakshipuram breached in Fasli 1276 (1866-67).

3. Statement A obtained from the Range Officer shows the expenditure on each work since 1857. The expenditure on the Allapuram tank in 1866 was to raise and strengthen the bund, and to turn the channel which carried off the surplus water from the cusbah nullah to the Thorapady tank.

4. The following Statement gives the cultivable area and assessment under each of the tanks. The assessment rates range from Rupees 5¾ to Rupees 10—

Villages.	AYACUT.		DEDUCT INAM.		REMAINING CIRCAR.		CULTIVATION.	
	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.	Extent.	Assessment.
	C. A. CH.	RS. A. P.	C. A. CH.	RS. A. P.	C. A. CH.	RS. A. P.	C. A. CH.	RS. A. P.
Allapuram	56 14 12	457 2 8	6 11 12	52 15 9	50 3 0	405 2 11	43 12 8	351 7 5
Virupatchipuram	94 5 12	847 7 10	19 0 4	172 6 8	75 5 8	575 1 2	71 3 4	639 12 3
Total...	151 4 8	1,304 10 6	26 12 0	225 6 5	125 8 8	980 4 1	114 15 12	991 3 8

Allapuram Kawny..... 22 13 12 Rs. 105 14 3
Virupatchipuram do. ..... 55 15 4 ,, 199 0 10

5. The extent of land in the bed of the tanks is given the margin. Out of the Allapuram tank-bed land Cawny 4-8-8 with an assessment of Rupees 36-5-4 is already held on putta.

6. In the event of its being decided not to restore the tanks, the wet assessment would have to be reduced to lower dry rates; Rupees 4 is a fair average rate, and this would give

Allapuram Cawny. 43×4=172
Virupatchipuram do. 71×4=284

The beds of the tanks, composed of the richest soil would also be available for cultivation. Applying the same rate of assessment, we have

Allapuram ... ... 18×4=72
Virupatchipuram ... ... 55×4=220

The proper assessment of these tank-bed lands according to the Pymaish account is Rupees 69-8-11 and Rupees 199, but the soil is now exceedingly rich, and I do not consider the rate I have proposed at all high.

7. I have stated above that Cawnies 4-8-8 assessed at Rupees 36-5-4 in tank-bed was held on putta. As water would no longer be available, the rate should be reduced to Rupees 4, which would give Rupees 18.

8. The following Statement shows the loss of revenue:—

Village.	Cultivation.	Tank bed land.	Already on putta in tank-bed.	Total.	Old assessment.	Difference.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Allapuram	172 0 0	72 0 0	18 0 0	262 0 0	351 0 0	95 0 0
Virupatchipuram	284 0 0	220 0 0	... ...	504 0 0	639 0 0	135 0 0
Total ..	456 0 0	292 0 0	18 0 0	766 0 0	990 0 0	230 0 0

9. Without knowing what the Public Works Department consider necessary for the repair of the tanks, I cannot give a definite opinion on the question whether it will pay to restore these tanks [illegible] Moberly's agreement, though I had not an opportunity of seeing him when he was here. I think, however, that the tanks should be restored. If the cusbah nullah be deepened and properly banked, there is no fear of another calamity such as that of the 2nd of May. Setting aside the question of revenue for a moment, another reason is, that these tanks command the whole of Vellore, and I see no reason why, at some future date, they should not be to this town what the Red Hills reservoir is to Madras.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. SEWELL,
Acting Collector.

Statement A.

—	1857-58.	1858-59.	1859-60.	1860-61.	1861-62.	1862-63.	1863-64.	1864-65.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Virupatchipuram ...	... ...	60 12 1	68 5 3	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...
Allapuram ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	13 13 10
Total...	... ...	01 2 1	68 5 3	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	13 13 10

—	1865-66.	1866-67.	1867-68.	1868-69.	1869-70.	1870-71.	1871-72.
	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.	Rs. A. P.
Virupatchipuram ...	44 15 11	57 9 7	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...
Allapuram ...	... ...	157 12 4	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...
Total...	44 15 11	215 5 11	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...	... ...

(True Copy.)

(Signed) H. SEWELL,
Acting Collector.

In their Order dated 16th May 1872, No. 799, Government called for a report (1) as to the necessity or otherwise of restoring the two tanks the breaching of which led to the disastrous flood at Vellore and (2) as to the compensation that would be due to the holders of the land under them in case they are not restored.

2. The loss of revenue anticipated being small (Rupees 230) the Acting Collector is opposed to the restoration of the tanks.

3. In regard to the second point Mr. Sewell observes that as it is contemplated to convert the wet lands under these tanks into dry there is no necessity to give any compensation. The Board do not concur in this view. There is under these tanks a considerable extent of Inam land the holders of which would certainly be entitled to compensation.

4. The Sub-Collector, Mr. Kelsall, thinks the tanks should be restored and that with proper precautions no danger need be apprehended. He also suggests that at some future time they might be used as reservoirs for the supply of drinking water to the town of Vellore.

5. The Chief Engineer for Irrigation is of opinion that the restoration of both tanks in a manner that would render them secure is feasible and that the cost would be moderate. He suggests however as a preferable course to abandon the Allapuram tank, which he describes as a shallow reservoir without any natural advantages of situation, and to increase the capacity of the Virupatchipuram tank so as to admit of its irrigating the lands heretofore dependant on both.

6. The Board approve of this proposal which it is observed does not involve the payment of any compensation, and is independent of the project for the efficient drainage of Vellore and for the protection of the low parts of that town which must be undertaken whether the tanks in question be restored or not.

7. The Board recommend that the land in the bed of the Allapuram tank which it is proposed to abandon be sold by public auction.

No. 178. ORDER THEREON, 20th September 1873, No. 1,018.

Miscellaneous.

RECORDED, with reference to the orders passed in Public Works Department, dated 20th June 1873, No. 1,612, which were communicated to the Board with the order in the Revenue Department, dated 2nd July 1873, No. 10.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) R. A. DALYELL,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
,, the Public Works Department.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Rec'd 10th Sept
No. 1998.

1873.

Board of Revenue, MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 25TH JUNE 1873, No. 1,099.

Dupe 3 July 1873. Encl.

Received 8 July 1873.

JUNE.

No. 1,099.

Tanks—of Virupatchipuram and Allapuram, in North Arcot District, which breached and caused Vellore flood.—Reports from Collector as to restoration of — submitted to Government. Proposal of Chief Engineer for Irrigation that latter tank should be abandoned and capacity of former one increased, approved. Land in bed of Allapuram tank recommended to be sold by public auction.

With Order.

To Collector & Dy Commr
Recorded with reference to
orders passed in Pub. Dept dated
20th June 1873 No 1612, which were
Com: to the Bd with the rule on
Public Dept dat. 2 July 1873 No 1018

20 Sept 1873

c. 11 July/23 R. 17 July