M.R.O. 1—20,002—12-8-65.

(1) Number of Pages 14.

(2) Date of repair 24-12-66.

(3) Initials of the Referencer

MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue. DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	1112.	Press / Mis.
Dated	1-9-1874 ~~196~~ .	

Not to be folded or roughly handled

No. 11. Read the following letter from A. WEDDERBURN, Esq., Collector of Coimbatore, to the Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated 18th August 1874, No. 68 :—

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of Proceedings, Madras Government, 14th August 1874, No. 1,027, Revenue Department, noticing certain denudation of forest on and within sight of the Coonoor Ghaut, notwithstanding peremptory instructions were given in G. O., 30th January 1868, No. 259, paragraph 6, to reserve the same; and requesting an immediate report on the subject to be submitted jointly by the Commissioner of Nilgiris and Collector of Coimbatore, showing precisely the number of properties now existing in the neighborhood, their extent, and the dates on which they were granted, with any remarks on the subject which it may occur to them to make.

2. I took charge of the Collectorate of Coimbatore in March 1868. The District then included the Nilgiri Hills as one of its taluqs.

3. My attention was soon called by Colonel Walker, then Superintending Engineer, 7th Division, to some denudation that had taken place on the road to Lady Canning's Seat, just as the first shoiah of the south face is entered. This was the work of a contractor who supplied wood to the Wellington Barracks; I believe the woods were then under the "Nilgiri Jungle Conservancy." I wrote very strongly to Colonel Morgan on the want of conservancy shown by clearing an open space in an old jungle by which the wind acted on the unsupported trees, and the destructive clearing was then, I believe, put a stop to.

4. In August 1868 the first Commissioner of the Nilgiris was appointed. I ceased to have any further concern with the Hills, which, I believe, I did not revisit until in company of the Earl of Selkirk in February 1872, whose attention was attracted by an extensive denudation of forest below the picturesque droog, which, he observed, was the finest object he had seen in his Indian travels, and the injury to which he denounced in strong language.

5. The history of this denudation will, I believe, be found in the records of the Commissioner's Office, as I was given to understand it took place in 1870 or thereabouts.

6. As all the records were transferred to the Nilgiris a few months after I joined Coimbatore, I am unable to give a list of proprietors on the ghaut; the taluq boundary being the very base of the ghaut, beyond the Kallar bridge, running close to the first ascent of the new ghaut, and so including the whole.

7. When I took charge of the district in 1868, the coffee mania, which commenced after the plethora of capital arising from the high price of Indian cotton in 1862-63, had abated and the tide had turned; coffee planting was then in a depressed state, and the object in some cases was rather to get rid of the land than to acquire it, and in a few cases with which I had to deal I urged that all arrears should be foregone, on such forest lands as were unfelled being redelivered to Government. This was on the Kotagherry side.

8. I was of opinion that the demand for forest land for coffee and Cinchona had been complied with to too great a degree; it outstripped survey and even correct demarcation. Mr. Grant, the former Collector, informed me that he regretted having ever been a party to the disposal of the famous Devi Sholah, which would, uncleared, have been a most valuable fuel-reserve for Ootacamund.

9. That persons who had acquired land on the ghats have, if they had entered into any engagement to spare the trees on the ravines, now observed it is but too apparent; but my charge of the hills was only limited to four and-a-half months, and as that was a period of depression in coffee planting I cannot think that any denudation occurred in that short time.

March, July 1868.

10. As Government invite remarks on the subject, I would notice that the occupiers of forest land appear to be under the impression that they confer a benefit on the State by clearance of forest and cultivation of coffee, *etc.*, which is chiefly an article of export.

11. No such claim as public benefactors is put forth by other cultivators of the State waste lands whose avowed object is personal profit.

12. This view of public benefaction by coffee, *etc.*, planting may have been shared by the former local authorities, and led to fewer restrictions being imposed on such grants of forest land than would have been adopted under a longer-sighted policy.

13. I write from recollection and under correction—the records having been transferred to the Nilgiri Commissionership,—when I state my impression that the demand for land at one time was so urgent that lands were sold before being properly measured and demarcated, and that estates even changed hands before they were surveyed. I recollect, at least, in my short tenure, having had to furnish plans to accompany title-deeds for estates which had been purchased many years before; and the very heavy work which devolved on my office to expedite the delivery of title-deeds has fixed itself in my memory.

14. The reason why my predecessor, Mr. Grant, could not comply with the sudden and large demand for surveys and title-deeds was the inadequate establishment previously at his disposal; it was afterwards increased, and by the exertions of the Revenue Survey Department arrears were overtaken.

15. But I can give but little information on the subject, as the lands were all sold and delivered before I took charge, when, as I before observed, there was rather a wish to resign than to keep and pay for land, far less to acquire more; and I have no recollection of having had or complied with any applications for land during my brief charge of the Hills.

No. 12.

ORDER THEREON, 1st September 1874, No. 1,112.

Forests, No. 3.

COMMUNICATED to the Commissioner of the Nilgiris, in continuation of G. O., 14th August 1874, No. 1,027, Revenue Department.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Commissioner of the Nilgiris.
„ the Collector of Coimbatore.
„ the Inspector of Forests.

Exd. F. R. Bantleman.

Govt. of 1874 Circular

REVENUE.

THE BOARD OF [illegible]

&c. &c. &c.

Dated Ootacamund 1st September 1874.

Read:

G. O. 1st September 1874, No. 1112.

Received

SEPTEMBER
Nos. 1113

Proceedings of Government, dated 14th August 1874, No. 1027, forwarding the Conservator of Forests' report of certain denudation of forest on the Connoor Ghaut, notwithstanding peremptory instructions were given in G. O. 30th January 1868 No. 259, para. 6, to reserve the same, and requesting an immediate report on the subject to be submitted jointly by the Commissioner of Neilgherries and Collector of Coimbatore, showing precisely the number of properties now existing in the neighbourhood, their

No. 68

Coimbatore Collectorate

Office 18th August 1874

From

A. Maddenburgh Esquire,

Collector of Coimbatore.

To

The Sr. Secretary to Government,

Revenue Department, Madras.

Sir,

I have the honor to acknowledge
receipt of Proceedings, Madras Government,
14th August 1874 No. 1027, R. D, noticing
certain denudation of forest on, and
within sight of the Connoor Ghaut,
notwithstanding peremptory instructions
were given in G. O. 30th January 1868
No. 259, para 6, to preserve the same, and
requesting an immediate report on the
subject to be submitted jointly by
the Commissioner of Neilgherries
and Collector of Coimbatore, showing
precisely the number of properties now
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extent and the dates on which they were granted with any remarks on the subject which it may occur to them to make.

2. I took charge of the Collectorate of Coimbatore in March 1865. The District then included the Nilgherry hills as one of its Talugs.

3. My attention was soon called by Colonel Walker, then Superintending Engineer 7th Division, to some denudation that had taken place on the road to Lady Canning's seat, just as the first shola of the south face is entered. This was the work of a Contractor, who supplied wood to the Wellington Barracks. I believe the woods were then under the "Nilgherry Jungle Conservancy." I wrote very strongly to Colonel Morgan on the want of conservancy shown by clearing an open

open space in an ob jungle by which the wind acted on the unsupported trees, and the destructive clearing was (I believe) put a stop to.

3. In August 1868 the first Commissioner of the Nilgherries was appointed. I ceased to have any further concern with the Hills, which I left not revisit, until in company of the Earl of Selkirk in February 1872, whose attention was attracted by an extensive denudation of forest below the picturesque Droog, which he observed was the finest object he had seen in his Indian travels, and the injury to which he denounced in strong language.

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place in 1870, or thereabouts.

5. As all the records were transferred to the Nilgherries a few months after I joined Coimbatore, I am unable to give a list of proprietors on the Ghaut. The Taluq boundary being the very base of the Ghaut, beyond the Kallar bridge, running close to the first ascent of the new Ghaut, and so including the whole.

6. When I left the District in 1868, the coffee mania, which commenced after the plethora of Capital, arising from the high price of Indian cotton, in 1862/63, had abated, and the tide had turned. Coffee planting was then in a depressed state, and the object, in some cases, was rather to get rid of the land, than to acquire it, and, in a few cases, with which I had to deal, I urged that

that all arrears should be forgone on such of such lands as were unfelled being redelivered to Government. This was on the Nilgherry side.

7. I was of opinion that the demand for fresh land, for coffee and Chinchona, had been complied with to too great a degree; it outstripped survey and even correct demarcation. Mr Grant, the former Collector, informed me that he regretted having ever been a party to the disposal of the famous Devi Shola, which would, uncleared, have been a most valuable fuel reserve for Ootacamund.

Not to it is too far off

8. That persons who had acquired land on the Ghaut, have, if they had entered into any engagement to spare the trees on the ravines, not observed it, is but too apparent; but any charge of the kind was only limited to 4½ months,

March - July 1868.

and

and as that was a period of depression in coffee planting I cannot think that any denudation occurred in that short time.

9. As Government invite remarks on the subject, I would notice that the occupiers of forest land appear to be under the impression that they confer a benefit on the state, by clearance of forest, and cultivation of coffee &c. which is also an article of export.

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Ev.
No. 185

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13. The reason why my predecessor Mr. Grant could not comply with the sudden and large demand for surveys

and

and little deeds was the inadequate establishment previously at his disposal, it was afterwards increased, and by the exertions of the Revenue Survey Department, arrears were overtaken.

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I have the honor to be
Sir
Your most obt. Servant,

Alexd. Maclean
Collector.

No. 2791 / 1874 Department
R. Dis. 68

From,
The Collector of Coimbatore

To, The Ag. Secretary to Govt. Rev: Department
Madras

Dated 18th } August 1874
Recd. 19th }

Report regarding the denudation of forest in the old & new Coonoor ghauts.

With order

No. 1112

Communicated to the Commissioner of the Nilgiris in continuation of G.O. 14 August 1874 No. 1527 R.D.

14 Bd. of Rev
4 Commr. Nilgiris
1 Coll. Coimbatore
2 Inspector of Forests

O. 14 August 1874 A. 122
30 January 1875 - 24

1 Sept.