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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 1190 Press

~~B.P. No.~~ ~~Mis.~~

Dated 9. 8. 1875 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th August 1875.

No. 68. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th May 1875, No. 1,429, Forest No. 94 :—

Read the following letter from J. HOPE, Esq., Acting Collector of Kurnool, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 10th April 1875, No. 111 :—

I HAVE the honor to forward, in original, the Inspection Report of the Acting Inspector of Forests, and to submit the following remarks for the information of the Board of Revenue.

2. As the Board are aware, the Nullamullay Forests have never been properly explored, and it is to be regretted that, owing to unavoidable causes, Captain Walker was not able to see much of it himself this year. He hopes, however, to make a prolonged tour during the next cold weather.

3. The first attempt to conserve these forests by the levy of a seigniorage appears to have been made in Fasli 1263 (1853-54). In September 1861, the Conservancy Rules of November 1860 were introduced into the district, but as the result was far from satisfactory, the more valuable portions of the forests comprised in the Nullamullay Range were placed under the charge of a special department, under the orders of Government, dated 16th July 1862, No. 1,538.

4. The rules by which it was then sought to enforce conservancy will be found recorded in Board's Proceedings, dated 9th July 1862, No. 4,414. Certain trees were reserved for departmental felling alone, while others, such as the Nallamaddi, Yegi, Jettegi, Nar Yepi, &c., were allowed to be cut only on payment of seigniorage. This was fixed at Rupees 3 a bandy for Teak and Rupees 2 for the other reserved timbers, in the rough. The unreserved junglewood was granted at 1 Rupee a bandy-load, but the charge was remitted, if the wood was taken for agricultural purposes or for building houses destroyed by fire. All villagers were entitled to get firewood free for domestic consumption.

5. In G. O., No. 1,767, dated 31st July 1865, the list of reserved and unreserved trees was revised, and the seigniorage on the former raised to Rupees 3 a bandy-load. Of the reserved trees, stunted Billoo and Nar Yepi were allowed to be cut free of tax for agricultural purposes (G. O., No. 1,866, dated 12th October 1864).

6. These rules with the modifications referred to have been from time to time published in the District Gazette, and have been acted upon to the present day. The mode in which they have been worked is that known as the license and voucher system. Before entering the forests, parties applying for timber were required to pay the amount of seigniorage into the nearest treasury and obtain a voucher from the Tahsildar. This voucher was produced before the Forest Assistant or Overseer, who granted a license specifying the kind and quantity of wood to be felled and the time within which it should be removed. These licenses were checked off at the Tanna station, or at the first village through which the bandies passed.

7. The object of this double system of voucher and license is explained in the letter recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 3,874, dated 10th July 1865. It was to place "a check both upon the Forest Department and upon the native Revenue officials." But, as only one Forest Assistant and a single Overseer were

sanctioned for the whole range, who were located at Nundial and Cumbum (till 1865 there was no Overseer), it was found difficult to adhere to the strict letter of the rule without putting parties from other taluqs to much inconvenience by making them travel long distances, and for several weeks together, to get a license from the Forest Department. The inconvenience was increased if the forest officer happened to be on circuit, as must frequently have been the case. Accordingly, a practice appears gradually to have sprung up (I am not aware when) under which the Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars of some of the taluqs where there was no forest officer were provided with blank forms of licenses signed and sealed by the Forest Assistant, and both the voucher and license were issued by the Tahsildar or Deputy Tahsildar. After I joined the district, this practice was extended to the Sirwell Taluq, at the special request of the Acting Deputy Conservator, Mr. Boileau.

8. Captain Walker considers that "there can be no real conservancy under this method, as the Tahsildars and his Cutcherry are not supposed to know, except in a very general way, where a tree may be felled and where not." But I fail to see that the argument can have much weight, since the forests are not demarcated, and it is not proposed to restrict the felling of timber in any particular locality. The right of refusing to grant a pass which is supposed to be reserved to the forest officer under this system has seldom been exercised to my knowledge, and it seems to me that, under the existing state of things, it would be practically impossible to limit the felling to any particular tracts or to particular description of trees, large or small, mature or immature. Consequently, the system of requiring the licenses to be issued by the forest officers must become a mere matter of form, which can have no possible effect on conservancy, but which must entail unnecessary hardships upon the people, in that they will have to travel often forty or fifty miles to the forest officer whenever they want to get a pass for a few bandy-loads of wood. A very glaring instance of this came under my observation last month when I was settling the Nandikotkur Taluq, where a man had to go thirty miles to Nundial and come back all the way to apply to me for a pass, which he could not procure from the Forest Department, because the assistant was absent in Markapoor on the other side of the ghaut. I would, therefore, recommend that, in lieu of the voucher and license, the ticket system referred to in paragraph 3 of Captain Walker's letter be adopted in this district, not only as regards the unreserved junglewood, but the reserved timber also. The ticket might be in the form of a cheque book in triplicate consecutively numbered and issued to the Tahsildar and Deputy Tahsildar, with the signature and seal of the Forest Assistant. In the case of reserved trees, the ticket would be granted only by Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars, and in the case of the unreserved kind, by the village authorities also, as suggested by Captain Walker. Once a fortnight or once a month, the duplicate might be sent to the forest office for check.

9. As stated by Captain Walker, the tickets or licenses granted to the applicants should be recovered when the timber is passed at the Tannas, and after that there should be no interference on the part of forest officials, except where they have reason to believe that wood has been stolen when information

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should be laid before the Magistrate having jurisdiction. This is the rule at present; but it is constantly broken. The enclosed extracts from my letters to the Forest Assistant will show what steps have been taken to set matters to rights.

10. The way-permit system referred to in paragraph 4 of the Acting Inspector's letter is another abuse, which, I am glad to see, has been abolished. Under this system, merchants who obtained wood on licenses were required, when selling it, to grant permits or passes on forms supplied to them by the Forest Department. If the pass was not produced, whenever and wherever the timber was challenged, it was liable to confiscation. The Village Curnam was required to keep a register of the sale thus effected, with the number and date of license under which the timber was brought from the forests; and with this account, the Forest Officer occasionally checked the stock in the merchants' depôts. As justly remarked by Captain Walker, the system "is illegal and unauthorized." Its existence was first brought to my notice in April 1873, when Mr. Boileau wished to prosecute a Curnam for keeping false account of sales and stock. I then declined to sanction the prosecution. In July last, I again wrote: "we cannot legally interfere in any way with merchants who have passed their timber on licenses through the Tannas. It could only be by mutual agreement between the Department and the merchants that the system of way-permits can be adopted. The latter may well ask, what benefit they derive from the system, or why they should be compelled to conform to it?" On this occasion, the question went before Captain Walker, and has now been finally set at rest.

11. The other portions of the Inspector's report do not seem to call for remark. I concur fully in the views expressed by Captain Walker, and beg the Board will obtain the early sanction of Government for the introduction of the rules proposed by him subject, if approved, to the modifications suggested in paragraph 8. The questions raised in clauses 1 to 4, paragraph 13 of his letter, have already been before the Board, and some have been disposed of.

Clause 1.—Under the opinions expressed in Board's Proceedings, No. 6,101, dated 13th October 1870, free passes for firewood have been granted to all resident villagers, whether cultivating land or not. Some months back, the Forest Assistant brought to my notice that some of the taluq officials had obtained firewood on such passes, but it seems to be doubtful whether the term villagers includes officials also. I am, however, informed, it is so understood in Nellore and some other districts.

Clause 2.—The Government Order referred to has not been communicated to this district.

Clause 3.—Before the receipt of Board's Proceedings, No. 82-2,577, dated 12th December 1873, the charge on firewood taken for sale was 1 Rupee a bandy-load. It was reduced to 4 Annas under that order, but I do not see why, as proposed by Captain Walker, the rate should not be assimilated with that sanctioned for the rest of the Presidency excepting Ganjam, *viz.*, 6 Annas.

Clause 4.—Under the permission granted in paragraph 11 of G. O., No. 240, dated 1st March 1873, I desired Mr. Boileau to submit any proposals he might deem expedient to utilize the hill products without interfering with the rights of

the Chentsus. When definite proposals are received, they will be submitted to the Board through the Inspector of Forests.

12. I shall reserve my remarks on paragraph 11 of Captain Walker's letter until the submission of the general scheme promised by him. For the present, I will content myself with stating that the existing establishment, even with the addition of the eight temporary peons sanctioned in Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 225-3,437, dated 27th November 1874, is utterly inadequate to guard a line of forests extending over seventy or ninety miles in length, and about twenty in breadth, and yielding about 30,000 Rupees annually from seigniorage and other sources.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Captain CAMPBELL WALKER, Offg. Inspector of Forests, to C. G. MASTER, Esq., Acting Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Triputty, 1st March 1875, No. 677.

I HAVE the honor to submit my Inspection Report for Kurnool District. I met Mr. Hope at Kurnool where Mr. Boileau joined us, and, after several consultations and settling the general system to be pursued, I proceeded with the latter officer to Nundial, and thence to Chintagoonta and Chagulmurray, leaving the district by Yerragoonta. Owing to my camp having been detained by the breaks in the railway line, I was unable to penetrate into the forests as I had proposed, but hope to make out a prolonged tour next cold weather.

2. This range may be said never to have been properly organised, and there has been naturally a great want of systematic conservancy and ma[illegible] varying according to the individual bias of the Collector and Forest Officer in charge.

There are no local rules based on the general rules for the Presidency; but I have now drafted a set in consultation with Mr. Boileau and the Deputy Collector of Nundial, which Mr. Boileau is to submit for the approval of the Collector and Board. They resemble those recently submitted from Coimbatore, and may be adopted provisionally, pending a general revision of our departmental rules for the Presidency which is rendered necessary by the recent changes and growth of the department.

3. The practice as regards felling timber, &c., has hitherto been to require a voucher and license for every thing, however small the quantity or value. The voucher is issued by the Taluq Tahsildar, and, owing to the great delay and inconvenience which would occur in getting the license from the Forest Officer or Overseer, a system has grown up by which the Tahsildars in some taluqs issued the license also.

There can be no real conservancy under this method, as the Tahsildar and his cutcherry are not supposed to know, except in a very general way, where a tree may be felled and where not. I propose to amend this by requiring the voucher and license for trees of the reserved classes *only;* the latter to be invariably issued by the Forest Officer or Overseer. By degrees the system of marking trees to be felled should be introduced and lists of marked trees supplied to the Tahsildars for their information and that of applicants. For jungle-wood, fire-wood, bamboo, &c., I propose to have tickets similar to those in general use in the southern districts, forming at once a voucher and permit to fell. These should be issued by all Tahsildars and by such village-officers as the Collector and Forest Assistant may select; the latter (*i.e.*, the village-officers) to receive a per-centage on the collections at such rate as the Collector thinks fit. The tickets will be in duplicate or triplicate, and the Deputy Collector suggested a very good and simple plan, by which their issue might be checked and recovery ensured by the duplicates being dropped into a locked box at time of issue. It is imperative that all tickets and licenses should be recovered on the produce being removed. This has not hitherto been acted up to. By the above means we shall commence really to conserve the valuable class of trees, and ensure their being felled

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only when a sufficient number are available and mature, whilst giving every facility for the removal of jungle-wood, &c., the quantities of which removed we do not, as a rule, pretend to limit, so long as we collect the Government royalty thereon.

4. I find a system of way-permits in force, under which it has been customary to challenge timber-carts on public roads far beyond the forest limits. Mr. Boileau admits that this entails much inconvenience, and, even as a means of check, is liable to abuse; at any rate, it is illegal and unauthorised, and should be abolished at once. The department must check the felling *in* the forests and removal on their limits, recover the permits, and then cease to interfere, unless it can be proved to the satisfaction of a Magistrate that stolen timber is in transit or has been secreted, when a search warrant can be obtained and the case legally inquired into.

5. I find that a nominal reserved forest has been constituted in accordance with G. O., No. 1,124, dated 28th July 1870, and includes a large area, 300 square miles I think, in which people are not supposed to cut or enter at all. It by no means follows that they do not, and, as the forest has never been demarcated, nor the reserve legally constituted, and there are no patrols or forest guards in it, I find it difficult to believe that people walk 30 miles to get a jungle-wood pole when they can get one close by in a forest which is merely reserved in so far as no permits are issued to cut in it, and that the tannahs or forest stations are declared to be closed. I believe rather,—and am supported in my belief by the Collector and all that I saw and heard,—that closing the forest means simply sacrificing the Government revenue to be derived from it, which is either not paid at all or goes into the pocket of the neighbouring village and forest officials who wink at forest depredations which they are powerless to prevent over so large an area, and the penalties for which it is doubtful if we can legally enforce. I recommend, therefore, that, pending legislation and the constitution of State reserved forests on a legal basis, the forest be thrown open and that it be notified that there is no reserved forest properly so called at present, but that certain trees are reserved, and can only be felled by permission of the Forest Officer previously obtained in the form of a license, and that for other produce a royalty or seigniorage is payable before removal at the rates notified in the District Gazette, for which tickets will be issued to be given up on leaving the forest, beyond which no interference or restrictions are authorised.

6. With reference to Board's Standing Order, No. 151/6, Mr. Hope suggested that Mr. Boileau should at once select and report on the limits beyond which no clearing of forest or jungle for cultivation should be permitted without previous reference, and that the remainder, which would be, as a rule, scrub jungle, should be given freely without any reference or delay. This commends itself in every way, and I trust Mr. Boileau has already made a commencement. I am forwarding to Mr. Hope the rules for disposal of referred durkhasts in force in Madura where they work well. They might, I think, be generally adopted, and I therefore submit copies for the information of the Board and Government.

7. I think the adoption of the above measures will tend to make the forest rules work much more smoothly, allay any feeling of hardship on the part of the people, and very much simplify the work of the Forest Officer, whose time has hitherto been taken up in signing way-permits and licenses for two Annas worth of produce and inspecting people's back-yards and the purlieus of villages for stolen timber, real or imaginary, to the detriment of his real work in the forests. Nor do I think conservancy will suffer. The felling of reserved timber-trees will be under control, and the exact places where felling is going on should be known and notified; the people will not steal so much if they can get passes readily, and are not afraid of constant and inquisitional visits when they have paid and removed on permit, and the village officials, who issue tickets, will be more likely to aid us in detecting unauthorised felling.

8. Of course, we shall still require to watch the forests and protect the outlets. The better to do this, we propose to close some of the roads or bye-paths where there are more than one, to have tannah stations where the situation of the villages renders it impossible that the passes can be checked and recovered by the village-officers, to make the rules more generally known

and respected, which will be done through the village-officers issuing tickets who will doubtless, as in other districts, prize the privilege both on account of the position and emoluments; but above all, by the organisation of a regular system of forest guards or patrols, each entrusted with a beat or block of forest, a part of which he is to visit each day, and with all felling in which he should be perfectly cognisant.

9. The line of ghaut-forest (Nullamullays) is not less than 90 miles in the west or Nundial side, and probably more in the east or Cumbum side, and it has been sought to guard this and ensure rigid conservancy with an establishment of one Overseer, three Duffadars, and 28 Peons. Such an attempt, with the prejudices and interests of the people arrayed against us, as is always the case until the real object and advantages of forest conservancy are known, has naturally resulted in failure, and, although the revenue was worked up for a period by the energy of Mr. Sheffield who had secured the support of the Collector, I do not think anything approaching to real conservancy has ever been attempted or effected. The revenue recently fell off considerably, and there is little doubt that smuggling was rife. At present, eight extra watchers are employed as sanctioned by the Board in Proceedings, No. 225-3,437, of 27th November 1874, which may do good for a time; but the real thing required is to improve the organisation of the department and the position and *personel* of the employés.

10. The peons have hitherto been supposed to remain in tannah stations, checking licenses which they could not read; the Forest Officer has been employed in doing Gumastah's work, or endeavouring to traverse forests of large extent where he was regarded as an enemy, or at best a private contractor greedy only of gain, whilst large quantities of valuable timber have doubtless been removed from the forests without any revenue accruing to Government; and any attempt at departmental felling been frustrated by open competition on the part of traders, who were allowed to fell on license at very moderate rates of seigniorage, whilst the Government department were trying to establish depôts and auction sales.

11. I do not advocate any attempt at departmental working in this range for the present. If the measures which we advocate meet with approval and support, Mr. Boileau will have his hands quite full enough in organising and controlling his establishments, which I propose to revive completely in submitting the general scheme, augmenting them by an Overseer for the western side and Sub-Overseers for the several taluqs under conservancy. Meanwhile, he will, I hope, be so far freed from office-work of a routine and petty nature that he will be able to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the forests, secure the sympathies and good will of the jungle-tribes (Chentsoos) and villagers adjoining the hills, laying out a system of roads, and eventually to selecting and demarcating the State and communal reserves, the former of which would then be worked entirely by the department.

12. I have already submitted separate proposals for abandoning the plantations which it would appear to me should never have been undertaken or maintained as Imperial Forest Works. Should my proposals be approved of, the trees remaining will, of course, be looked after by the ordinary conservancy establishments.

13. There are several other points on which definite orders are required, *viz*: —

(1.) Are only cultivating ryots entitled to the privilege of free passes for bandy-loads of fire-wood, or does the privilege extend to all, whether Government officials or not?

(2.) Does the privilege of free-felling extend to all villagers, or only to those having forest or jungle within their village limits? G. O., No. 1,357, dated 5th December 1873, lays down the latter as the rule, but at present free passes are issued in Kurnool and other districts to villagers remote from any forest or jungle, and the real free consumption must be very large as *all* head-loads of fire-wood which really includes jungle-wood for posts, &c., are removed free without any pass at all.

(3.) Is the exceptionally low rate of Annas 4 per bandy-load of fire-wood sanctioned by Board's Proceedings, No. 3,644, of 23rd August 1871, for this district to be continued, or should it not be assimilated with that (Annas 6) which is usual elsewhere in the adjoining district of

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Cuddapah for instance? I think it ought, as those who are entitled to it get it free altogether, and there is a considerable export.

(4.) Are the department prohibited from collecting directly or indirectly the minor forest-produce, chiefly Myrobalans on the Nullamullays, having due regard to the interests of the Chentsoos who now make complaint that much is collected by villagers from the plains employed by merchants? The Chentsoos are, I believe, quite ready and willing to collect for us when they can, if we are authorised to offer them more remunerative rates than they now obtain, and the villagers from the plains have clearly no special claim to the produce.

14. There are many other points of detail which require attention; but these can be settled locally and by degrees. I endeavoured to explain to Mr. Boileau the general principles on which to act, and found him very zealous, well acquainted with his range, and anxious to do well. I do not consider that he is in any way to blame for the want of organisation and system; on the contrary, I think he has done his best, though, from being placed in charge at an early age without any real experience or supervision to guide him, he has doubtless made many mistakes, and devoted his time to minute details better left to subordinates. This will, however, all be of use to him, as he has now acquired much practical knowledge, and has a good colloquial knowledge of the language in which, I trust, he may shortly pass the departmental test which he has hitherto failed to do.

15. The reference of all forest cases to the Collector before prosecution produces here as elsewhere great delay and extra work, and I fear allows many a forest depredator to escape. I am addressing Government separately on this subject with reference to Board's Proceedings, No. 110-1,914, dated 22nd July 1874.

16. I have to thank Mr. Hope for giving me every facility for arriving at correct conclusions as to the existing state of forest-matters, and giving up much of his time to consulting with me as to how they should be amended, and have little doubt that once put in order real forest conservancy will flourish under his control and Mr. Boileau's personal supervision.

No. 678.

SUBMITTED through the Collector of Kurnool and Revenue Board in accordance with G. O., No. 1,511, dated 7th December 1874.

TRIPUTTY, *1st March* 1874.

(Signed) CAMPBELL WALKER, Captain,
Officiating Inspector of Forests.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

Translated from Tamil.

IN conformity with the rules published with reference to G. O., dated 14th July 1869, No. 2,041, in the District Gazette of the 23rd April 1870, page 237, the following rules have been published with regard to applications for forest or jungle lands:—

I. Tahsildar should exercise his discretion in referring application for lands to Forest Overseer. If any land covered with valuable trees be given without referring to Forest Overseer, Tahsildar should be held answerable for the grant.

II. Tahsildar should keep a register according to the subjoined form of all durkhasts to be referred to Forest Overseer, and should send at the end of each month to the Deputy Conservator an abstract statement prepared from the aforesaid register of all cases remaining undisposed of with an explanation for so remaining.

III. Tahsildar should issue necessary instructions to village Curnum to attend the Overseer whenever required, and to the Revenue Inspectors to give every assistance reporting to the Tahsildar as required.

IV. As soon as the report from Forest Overseer is received, Tahsildar should consider deliberately whether the land can be given or not, and if the Overseer's opinion is not in accord-

ance with his, he should refer to the divisional officer such opinion with a view that it may be settled in concert with the Deputy Conservator in charge of the district.

V. Tahsildar should intimate the final disposal of the land to the Overseer, and should arrange with him as to the land being demarcated according to Government Order when leaving it to the possession of the applicant, and as to the trees standing in the land being paid for by the applicant or as to the time fixed for removing the trees by the Forest Department for Government.

KODACANAL,
25*th April* 1870.

(Signed) CAMPELL WALKER, Captain,
Deputy Conservator.

Register of Applications for Lands referred to the Forest Department for report in the Taluq of District

Consecutive Number.	Date of Reference to Forest Overseer.	Name of Applicant and his Residence.	Extent and Situation of Land applied for.	Date of Receipt of Forest Overseer's Report.	Purport of Overseer's Report.	Final disposal.

(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

(True Copy.)
(Signed) CAMPBELL WALKER, Captain,
Officiating Inspector of Forests.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

Instructions to Forest Overseers regarding referred Durkhasts.

THE Overseer will keep a register (as per form) of all Durkhasts for forest or jungle land referred by the Taluq Tahsildar for report, and in every case in which a reference remains undisposed of for more than two months from date of receipt and entry in the register, he will submit a special report to this office as to cause of delay, &c.

2. As a rule, the Overseer will *personally* inspect the land, taking with him the applicant and village Curnum who will indicate the exact position of the land. He will arrange with the Tahsildar for the requisite orders being issued to the latter to ensure his attendance. In cases where the portion of land applied for is small, and known not to contain valuable trees or to be situated in the interior of any tract or block of forest or jungle he may depute the Sub-Overseer, Maistry, or Duffadar in charge of the taluq to visit and report on the land, but in such cases he

should arrange with the Tahsildar for the attendance of the Revenue Inspector (as laid down in the accompanying instructions to Tahsildars), who will also submit a report to the Tahsildar.

3. In forming an opinion as to the advisability of land being given up, account must be taken of its situation, as well as the value of the wood; thus a block of fire-wood jungle is very valuable near a large town or railway line, and should not be given up and forest or jungle of comparatively little value in itself should be reserved if it is situated amidst a more valuable tract which it may be found advisable to protect or reserve.

The regular extension of *permanent* cultivation can rarely be objected to if there is no other waste lands available in the village, but *temporary* cultivation or the clearing of new forest and jungle where there is sufficient waste land already cleared and uncultivated should be discouraged as much as possible; the limit of cultivation at the foot or on the slopes of the hills having in most cases been reached.

4. The Overseer should furnish the Tahsildar with a full report of his reasons for considering that any application should be refused, and the latter will communicate to him the final order passed and arrange for the just assessment of the value of the timber or fire-wood, or its removal by the forest department (under the rules sanctioned by Government in G. O., No. 2,041, dated 14th July 1869) in cases when the land is given to the applicant. They will also arrange for its demarcation, &c., as laid down in Rule 2. The Overseer will enter an abstract of the final orders passed in his register, which will thus form a complete record of all such cases.

(Signed) CAMPBELL WALKER,
Deputy Conservator of Forests.

(A true Copy.)
(Signed) R. WILLIAMS, Captain,
Deputy Conservator of Forests.

(True Copy.)
(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

(A true Copy of a Copy.)
(Signed) CAMPBELL WALKER, Captain,
Officiating Inspector of Forests.

REGISTER of Referred Durkhasts received by the Forest Overseer in Charge.

Consecutive Number.	Date of Receipt from Tahsildar.	Name and Residence of Applicant.	Situation and Extent of Land applied for	Date of Despatch of Report.	Final Orders passed.

(Signed) W. McQUHAE,
Collector.

(True Copy.)
(Signed) CAMPBELL WALKER, Captain,
Officiating Inspector of Forests.

ENCLOSURE No. 4.—Extracts from Collector's letters.

ENCLOSURE No. 5.—Draft Rules.

From Captain C. WALKER, Officiating Inspector of Forests, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Ootacamund, 16th April 1875, No. 77.

WITH reference to paragraph 8 of Mr. Hope's letter, dated 10th April 1875, No. 111, forwarding my Inspection Report for the Kurnool District, I have the honor to remark that it is proposed on the revision of establishments, to have an Overseer or Ranger on the Nundial side as well as at Cumbum, and a Sub-Ranger in each taluq under Conservancy who would issue the licenses, as well as the Forest Assistant. A supply of licenses duly filled up for marked trees, or for a certain number in a certain locality, might also be left with the Assistant's Head Clerk and Overseer's Gumastah when these officers were on tour.

2. This would, I think, effectually obviate the delay and inconvenience which Mr. Hope fears may result if licenses are not issued by the Tahsildars. Parties wishing timber must go to the taluqs and villages bordering on the forests, and once there, they would never be far away from the Ranger or Sub-Ranger in charge of the taluq forests.

3. It is proposed to restrict the felling of trees of reserved descriptions to certain localities, and eventually to select and mark the trees to be felled and publish lists periodically.

It has been too long the custom to regard this as impracticable simply because it entails extra work on the forest officer and his subordinates, and at times some inconvenience to parties wanting. There is clearly no real conservancy or attempt at forestry without it, and the Forest Department, if properly organized and supervised, can easily undertake the duty, developing the system by degrees.

4. Complaints will doubtless be made at first by the public that the places or trees selected are inconveniently situated, and that there are others available nearer at hand, &c., but these will soon cease if the people see that we are firm and at the same time reasonable; it must clearly be less hardship to them to have felling regulated and restricted to certain places or trees at a time, than to have whole tracts of the forest arbitrarily closed as I have shown in the Inspection Report has been the case.

5. We cannot expect Tahsildars with their multifarious duties to take trouble in such matters beyond the mere receipt of the money and giving a receipt or voucher; it is clearly the business of the Forest Department to regulate the felling.

6. Besides the sacrifice of conservancy resulting from allowing Tahsildars to issue licenses or tickets to *all* applicants without reference to the supply, such a course would render the checking of the felling and recovery of the permit very difficult, as the forest subordinates would never know till some time afterwards what permits were running.

7. I venture, for the above reasons, to request that my suggestions be adopted in lieu of Mr. Hope's, which, I think, are based on a misconception.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th August 1875.

8. In Proceedings, No. 29-531, dated 5th March 1875, the Board remark that the Kurnool Forests "are at present at least inaccessible to the Railway, and for local consumption may be said to be inexhaustible." I can assure them that there is a very considerable trade demand for Bellary on the one side, and the Nellore and Kistna Districts on the other.

The seigniorage receipts, which amounted to upwards of Rupees 4,000 for February last, are sufficient to establish this, and I think it none too early to conserve our existing stock of reserved timber on the Nullamullays and foster its reproduction.

THESE papers relating to the inspection of the Kurnool Forests by Captain Campbell Walker will be submitted for the information of Government.

2. There is evidently, as stated by Captain Walker, great need of organization, and much misdirection of energy, in the operations of the Forest Department in the district. The voucher and license system has been nominally in operation, but owing to the smallness of the forest establishment in comparison with the enormous extent of forest entrusted to their care, the essential characteristic of the system, *viz.*, the grant of the voucher by the Revenue officer receiving the payment, and of the license by the forest officer—has been abandoned, and it has been the practice in most taluqs for the Tahsildars to issue both documents. Further, the staff of forest officers instead of confining themselves to their proper duties and guarding the forest itself at its outlets, have been engaged in combating smuggling by an inquisitorial and utterly illegal system of "way-permits," and by hunting after smuggled wood in the villages on the plains. This, however, has now been put a stop to.

3. The Inspector is making provision in the revised scheme for strengthening the establishments, which will, it is hoped, enable the license and voucher system to be properly worked in the manner sketched by the Inspector; but what is evidently especially required in Kurnool, is the marking out the forest areas into village jungle, open Government forest in which felling is permitted, and forest strictly closed and reserved. Sufficient tracts should be set apart for the villages at the hill foot, and made over to the villagers to conserve and manage for themselves. It will be found that they will guard them in their own interest and efficiently exclude interlopers from other villages; and besides that the area of the inner tracts to be guarded by the forest establishment would thus be considerably reduced, their task would be facilitated by these tracts being encircled by jungles guarded by the villagers, and by their services and co-operation being enlisted in the cause of conservancy. Further, by the concentration of felling on seigniorage in tracts set apart for the purpose, it would be easier to regulate it and to secure that the Government dues on wood liable to tax should not be evaded. The Board fully sympathize with Captain Walker's desire to obtain systematic demarcation of the tracts under conservancy.

4. The Collector should endeavour to introduce the system above sketched; and in assigning areas as village jungle for grazing and other requirements, he will generally find the number of cattle in the village at the hill foot a safe guide. The

tendency should be rather to assign too much land to the villagers than too little. With forests thus organized and protected, the working of the license and voucher system would be easy, and it would be decidedly the best method of regulating the felling and realizing the proceeds.

5. Captain Walker's rules for the disposal of durkhasts for forest land seem unobjectionable. With reference to the suggestion that the rate of seigniorage on firewood should be raised from 4 to 6 Annas a cart-load, the Board observe that the change is advocated simply to obtain uniformity with other districts; but they cannot see that the reasons accepted for the continuance of the lower rate in Kurnool (G. O., 31st October 1873, No. 1,225) have ceased to be of force. They are of opinion that the practice of the district in this respect and of the issue of free passes should remain unchanged.

6. No further remarks on these papers seem called for.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) H. E. STOKES,
Acting Secretary.

No. 69. ORDER THEREON, 9th August 1875, No. 1,190.

Forests, No. 6.

THE Board's instructions are approved. Authoritative demarcatio[illegible] must await the action [illegible] legislature, [illegible] the Government observe with serious dissatisfaction the annoyance to which the people have been put by mismanagement for some time. They trust to the Collector's preventing any recurrence.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) A. MACGREGOR,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Officiating Inspector of Forests.

Exd. W. H. French.

Govt. of India. Finance, Revenue & Agriculture.

REVENUE.

To

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated August, 9th.

Rect.

Encl.

G. O., 9th August 1875, No. 1,150.

AUGUST.

Nos. 68-69.

Kurnool Forests.—Approving Board's instructions regarding the — inspected and reported on by the Acting Inspector of Forests.

☆

No 2590

1875/25

MEMORANDUM.

REQUESTED for urgent reference the undermentioned paper on the subject of Forest Rules in Kurnool District.

The six original Enclosures sent by Sct. with Bds Roy. 26. May '75 No 1429 which should have accompanied the G.O. 9th Augt. 75 No 1190. R.D.

REVENUE BOARD OFFICE,
18th Sept. 1875.

Registrar.

To

The Deputy Registrar Sct. office Rev Dept.

1193/87

FOREST No. 94.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 26th May 1875, No. 1,429.

Read the following letter from J. HOPE, Esq., Acting Collector of Kurnool, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated 10th April 1875, No. 111 :—

I HAVE the honor to forward, in original, the Inspection Report of the Acting Inspector of Forests, and to submit the following remarks for the information of the Board of Revenue.

2. As the Board are aware, the Nullamullay Forests have never been properly explored, and it is to be regretted that, owing to unavoidable causes, Captain Walker was not able to see much of it himself this year. He hopes, however, to make a prolonged tour during the next cold weather.

3. The first attempt to conserve these forests by the levy of a seigniorage appears to have been made in Fasli 1263 (1853-54). In September 1861, the Conservancy Rules of November 1860 were introduced into the district, but as the result was far from satisfactory, the more valuable portions of the forests comprised in the Nullamullay Range were placed under the charge of a special department, under the orders of Government, dated 16th July 1862, No. 1,538.

4. The rules by which it was then sought to enforce conservancy will be found recorded in Board's Proceedings, dated 9th July 1862, No. 4,414. Certain trees were reserved for departmental felling alone, while others, such as the Nallamaddi, Yegi, Jettegi, Naryepi, &c., were allowed to be cut only on payment of seigniorage. This was fixed at Rupees 3 a bandy for Teak and Rupees 2 for the other reserved timbers, in the rough. The unreserved junglewood was granted at 1 Rupee a bandy-load, but the charge was remitted, if the wood was taken for agricultural purposes or for building houses destroyed by fire. All villagers were entitled to get firewood free for domestic consumption.

5. In G. O., No. 1,767, dated 31st July 1865, the list of reserved and unreserved trees was revised, and the seigniorage on the former raised to Rupees 3 a bandy-load. Of the reserved trees, stunted Billoo and Nar Yepi were allowed to be cut free of tax for agricultural purposes (G. O., No. 1,866, dated 12th October 1864).

6. These rules with the modifications referred to have been from time to time published in the District Gazette, and have been acted upon to the present day. The mode in which they have been worked is that known as the license and voucher system. Before entering the forests, parties applying for timber were required to pay the amount of seigniorage into the nearest treasury and obtain a voucher from the Tahsildar. This voucher was produced before the Forest Assistant or Overseer, who granted a license specifying the kind and quantity of wood to be felled and the time within which it should be removed. These licenses were checked off at the Tanna station, or at the first village through which the bandies passed.

7. The object of this double system of voucher and license is explained in the letter recorded in Board's Proceedings, No. 3,874, dated 10th July 1865. It was to place "a check both upon the Forest Department and upon the native Revenue officials." But, as only one Forest Assistant and a single Overseer were sanctioned for the whole range, who were located at Nundial and Cumbum (till

1865 there was no Overseer), it was found difficult to adhere to the strict letter of the rule without putting parties from other taluqs to much inconvenience by making them travel long distances, and for several weeks together, to get a license from the Forest Department. The inconvenience was increased if the forest officer happened to be on circuit, as must frequently have been the case. Accordingly, a practice appears gradually to have sprung up (I am not aware when) under which the Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars of some of the taluqs where there was no forest officer were provided with blank forms of licenses signed and sealed by the Forest Assistant, and both the voucher and license were issued by the Tahsildar or Deputy Tahsildar. After I joined the district, this practice was extended to the Sirwell Taluq, at the special request of the Acting Deputy Conservator, Mr. Boileau.

8. Captain Walker considers that "there can be no real conservancy under this method, as the Tahsildars and his Cutcherry are not supposed to know, except in a very general way, where a tree may be felled and where not." But I fail to see that the argument can have much weight, since the forests are not demarcated, and it is not proposed to restrict the felling of timber in any particular locality. The right of refusing to grant a pass which is supposed to be reserved to the forest officer under this system has seldom been exercised to my knowledge, and it seems to me that, under the existing state of things, it would be practically impossible to limit the felling to any particular tracts or to particular description of trees, large or small, mature or immature. Consequently, the system of requiring the licenses to be issued by the forest officers must become a mere matter of form, which can have no possible effect on conservancy, but which must entail unnecessary hardships upon the people, in that they will have to travel often forty or fifty miles to the forest officer whenever they want to get a pass for a few bandy-loads of wood. A very glaring instance of this came under my observation last month when I was settling the Nandikotkur Taluq, where a man had to go thirty miles to Nundial and come back all the way to apply to me for a pass, which he could not procure from the Forest Department, because the assistant was absent in Markapoor on the other side of the ghaut. I would, therefore, recommend that, in lieu of the voucher and license, the ticket system referred to in paragraph 3 of Captain Walker's letter be adopted in this district, not only as regards the unreserved junglewood, but the reserved timber also. The ticket might be in the form of a cheque book in triplicate consecutively numbered and issued to the Tahsildar and Deputy Tahsildar, with the signature and seal of the Forest Assistant. In the case of reserved trees, the ticket would be granted only by Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars, and in the case of the unreserved kind, by the village authorities also, as suggested by Captain Walker. Once a fortnight or once a month, the duplicate might be sent to the forest office for check.

9. As stated by Captain Walker, the tickets or licenses granted to the applicants should be recovered when the timber is passed at the Tannas, and after that there should be no interference on the part of forest officials, except where they have reason to believe that wood has been stolen when information should be laid before the Magistrate having jurisdiction. This is the rule at present; but it is constantly broken. The enclosed extracts from my letters to the Forest Assistant will show what steps have been taken to set matters to rights.

10. The way-permit system referred to in paragraph 4 of the Acting Inspector's letter is another abuse, which, I am glad to see, has been abolished. Under this system, merchants who obtained wood on licenses were required, when selling it, to grant permits or passes on forms supplied to them by the Forest Department. If the pass was not produced, whenever and wherever the timber was challenged, it was liable to confiscation. The Village Curnam was required to keep a register of the sale thus effected, with the number and date of license under which the timber was brought from the forests; and with this account, the Forest Officer occasionally checked the stock in the merchants' depôts. As justly remarked by Captain Walker, the system "is illegal and unauthorized." Its existence was first brought to my notice in April 1873, when Mr. Boileau wished to prosecute a Curnam for keeping false account of sales and stock. I then declined to sanction the prosecution. In July last, I again wrote: "we cannot legally interfere in any way with merchants who have passed their timber on licenses through the Tannas. It could only be by mutual agreement between the Department and the merchants that the system of way-permits can be adopted. The latter may well ask, what benefit they derive from the system, or why they should be compelled to conform to it?" On this occasion, the question went before Captain Walker, and has now been finally set at rest.

11. The other portions of the Inspector's report do not seem to call for remark. I concur fully in the views expressed by Captain Walker, and beg the Board will obtain the early sanction of Government for the introduction of the rules proposed by him subject, if approved, to the modifications suggested in paragraph 8. The questions raised in clauses 1 to 4, paragraph 13 of his letter, have already been before the Board, and some have been disposed of.

Clause 1.—Under the opinions expressed in Board's Proceedings, No. 6,101, dated 13th October 1870, free passes for firewood have been granted to all resident villagers, whether cultivating land or not. Some months back, the Forest Assistant brought to my notice that some of the taluq officials had obtained firewood on such passes, but it seems to be doubtful whether the term villagers includes officials also. I am, however, informed, it is so understood in Nellore and some other districts.

Clause 2.—The Government Order referred to has not been communicated to this district.

Clause 3.—Before the receipt of Board's Proceedings, No. 82-2,577, dated 12th December 1873, the charge on firewood taken for sale was 1 Rupee a bandy-load. It was reduced to 4 Annas under that order, but I do not see why, as proposed by Captain Walker, the rate should not be assimilated with that sanctioned for the rest of the Presidency excepting Ganjam, *viz.*, 6 Annas.

Clause 4.—Under the permission granted in paragraph 11 of G. O., No. 240, dated 1st March 1873, I desired Mr. Boileau to submit any proposals he might deem expedient to utilize the hill products without interfering with the rights of the Chentsus. When definite proposals are received, they will be submitted to the Board through the Inspector of Forests.

12. I shall reserve my remarks on paragraph 11 of Captain Walker's letter until the submission of the general scheme promised by him. For the present, I will content myself with stating that the existing establishment, even with the addition of the eight temporary peons sanctioned in Board's Proceedings, Forest No. 225-3,437, dated 27th November 1874, is utterly inadequate to guard a line of forests extending over seventy or ninety miles in length, and about twenty in breadth, and yielding about 30,000 Rupees annually from seigniorage and other sources.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.—Original Report of Inspector of Forests.

ENCLOSURES Nos. 2 and 3.—Enclosures thereto.

ENCLOSURE No. 4.—Extracts from Collector's letters.

ENCLOSURE No. 5.—Draft Rules.

From Captain C. WALKER, Officiating Inspector of Forests, to H. E. STOKES, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Ootacamund, 16th April 1875, No. 77.

WITH reference to paragraph 8 of Mr. Hope's letter, dated 10th April 1875, No. 111, forwarding my Inspection Report for the Kurnool District, I have the honor to remark that it is proposed on the revision of establishments, to have an Overseer or Ranger on the Nundial side as well as at Cumbum, and a Sub-Ranger in each taluq under Conservancy who would issue the licenses, as well as the Forest Assistant. A supply of licenses duly filled up for marked trees, or for a certain number in a certain locality, might also be left with the Assistant's Head Clerk and Overseer's Gumastah when these officers were on tour.

2. This would, I think, effectually obviate the delay and inconvenience which Mr. Hope fears may result if licenses are not issued by the Tahsildars. Parties wishing timber must go to the taluqs and villages bordering on the forests, and once there, they would never be far away from the Ranger or Sub-Ranger in charge of the taluq forests.

3. It *is* proposed to restrict the felling of trees of reserved descriptions to certain localities, and eventually to select and mark the trees to be felled and publish lists periodically.

It has been too long the custom to regard this as impracticable simply because it entails extra work on the forest officer and his subordinates, and at times some inconvenience to parties wanting. There is clearly no real conservancy or attempt at forestry without it, and the Forest Department, if properly organized and supervised, can easily undertake the duty, developing the system by degrees.

4. Complaints will doubtless be made at first by the public that the places or trees selected are inconveniently situated, and that there are others available nearer at hand, &c., but these will soon cease if the people see that we are firm and at the same time reasonable; it must clearly be less hardship to them to have felling regulated and restricted to certain places or trees at a time, than to have whole tracts of the forest arbitrarily closed as I have shown in the Inspection Report has been the case.

5. We cannot expect Tahsildars with their multifarious duties to take trouble in such matters beyond the mere receipt of the money and giving a receipt or voucher; it is clearly the business of the Forest Department to regulate the felling.

6. Besides the sacrifice of conservancy resulting from allowing Tahsildars to issue licenses or tickets to *all* applicants without reference to the supply, such a course would render the checking of the felling and recovery of the permit very difficult, as the forest subordinates would never know till some time afterwards what permits were running.

7. I venture, for the above reasons, to request that my suggestions be adopted in lieu of Mr. Hope's, which, I think, are based on a misconception.

8. In Proceedings, No. 29-531, dated 5th March 1875, the Board remark that the Kurnool Forests "are at present at least inaccessible to the Railway, and for local consumption may be said to be inexhaustible." I can assure them that there is a very considerable trade demand for Bellary on the one side, and the Nellore and Kistna Districts on the other.

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3. The Inspector is making provision in the revised scheme for strengthening the establishments, which will, it is hoped, enable the license and voucher system to be properly worked in the manner sketched by the Inspector; but what is evidently especially required in Kurnool, is the marking out the forest areas into village jungle, open Government forest in which felling is permitted, and forest strictly closed and reserved. Sufficient tracts should be set apart for the villages at the hill foot, and made over to the villagers to conserve and manage for themselves. It will be found that they will guard them in their own interest and efficiently exclude interlopers from other villages; and besides that the area of the inner tracts to be guarded by the forest establishment would thus be con-

siderably reduced, their task would be facilitated by these tracts being encircled by jungles guarded by the villagers, and by their services and co-operation being enlisted in the cause of conservancy. Further, by the concentration of felling on seigniorage in tracts set apart for the purpose, it would be easier to regulate it and to secure that the Government dues on wood liable to tax should not be evaded. The Board fully sympathize with Captain Walker's desire to obtain systematic demarcation of the tracts under conservancy.

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6. No further remarks on these papers seem called for.

(True Copies and Extract.)

Acting Secretary.

To the Officiating Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, with original letter from Inspector of Forests and its enclosures; also two original enclosures to Collector's letter to be returned.

" the Collector of Kurnool.

" the Inspector of Forests.

Exd. W. H. French.

No 1190. 9 August 75

The Board's instructions are approved. Let Authorities & the communication must await the action of the Supreme Govt. on the various questions connected with the annual settlement of Forest Revenue. The Board must in the meantime keep the Collector fully advised of the progress of the Survey & Demarcation of the Forests, & the Collector must report annually on the working of the Forest Rules.

Proceedings, 20th May 1875, No. 1,425

Received 19 May 1875

Dept. Journal 1875

Encl. 4

1 Copy of each (published) Rule & Order

By Post

Forest No. 94.

MAY.

Kurnool Forests.—Papers relating to the inspection of — by Captain Walker, submitted for information of Government with remarks regarding the working of the license and voucher system and the conservancy of the forest tracts. Opinion expressed that the practice of the district in respect of seigniorage on firewood and of issue of free passes should remain unchanged.

4 To the Board of Revenue &c.
3 The Offg Inspector of Forests