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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	1174	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.

Dated 28.8.1876 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

1174
1

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28th August 1876.

No. 286. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 4th August 1876, No. 1,977, Forest No. 69 :—

Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, to the Hon. D. F. CARMICHAEL, Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Ootacamund, 16th June 1876, No. 871 :—

I HAVE the honor to inform you that I have lately visited the forests on the western slopes of the Nilgiris and wish to draw the attention of Government to the fact that there is a very large tract of superb coffee land available which I think it desirable that Government should open out for planters.

2. The tract I allude to commences about Walaghaut (4,000 feet) half way down the old Sispara Ghaut and runs due south through dense heavy moist forest for six or seven miles till a beautiful valley (called Attapaddi by the natives and the Silent Valley by Europeans) is entered, which extends right away nearly to Manaur; the elevation of this valley is nearly 3,000 feet, and contains a large amount of fine shola forest and beautiful tracts of grass land, and it is in every way adapted for coffee or cinchona. On the west of this valley rises a high peak, marked on the trigonometrical map as Kanjacombu.

3. The water-shed is to the western coast, so that the upkeep of the forests on the score of the water-supply is of very little consequence as compared with our northern and eastern slopes, where all the water runs down into the Bhowany and Cauvery, and, as I have already given my views that we must protect most of the forest that remains on these latter slopes, I think it all the more [illegible] tracts now alluded to should be thoroughly opened out by Government; but even if considerable reservations are made, many thousand acres will still be available.

4. The tract in question I believe all belong to Government, and they have already disposed of some 900 acres in the vicinity of Walaghaut.

5. To open out this country, a good cart road should be made up to the northern portion of the Silent Valley, *i.e.*, some six or eight miles to the south of the present old and disused bridle road called the Sispara Ghaut, and the foot of this should be connected with the main road at Wundoor by a good cart road; bungalows should be erected at the foot and top of the ghaut, and several rest-houses for coolies.

6. If this were carried out the whole of this valuable tract would soon be opened out and brought under cultivation, and great profit would accrue to Government, but until a good road is made up the ghauts I would advise that no more forest should be given up in this direction, as it is sure to be eventually abandoned under the existing condition of the communications.

7. About twenty or twenty-five years ago, a coffee estate of some 300 acres was opened out for Professor Owen in the vicinity of Walaghaut, the extreme northern limit of the tract under consideration; this I understand was obtained from Government as a free grant for thirty years, but subject to assessment after that period; it was opened out by a Mr. Stainbank and subsequently by a Mr. Perry, and two other estates sprung up in the neighbourhood, 600 acres of heavy forest in all being cleared; it probably did not pay, but considering the state of the communications and the consequent difficulty of procuring labor, &c., this might have been foreseen, and Professor Owen, I believe, sold the estate to the Land Mortgage Company; the Sispara Ghaut, at its best

only a bridle-path and scarcely practicable for loaded bullocks and always swarming with leeches, was about this time, on the opening out of the Carcoor Ghaut, given up by Government, and the estates gradually went to ruin; what coffee was collected had to be sent down on coolies' heads, which, of course, could not pay, and no money was spent on the upkeep of the estates which soon became overgrown with scrub; the whole 600 acres were bought by a Mrs. Elliot for a very small sum: no attempt was made to work them, but when what crop there was ripened it was picked and sent down and the estates were left to mature till the next crop season. Mrs. Elliot died a few months ago, and the whole of these 600 acres were put up to auction lately at Calicut and realized, I believe, 3,000 Rupees. Most of the coffee has gone out and it is all overgrown with a rank thorny jungle which can probably never be reclaimed; there is only about 2 tons of coffee on the whole area this season, and the purchaser is not likely to make his money out of it. The whole of the tract was the most superb heavy forest and splendid coffee land, and it is a thousand pities to see what it is turned into only from the want of proper communications. Before Mrs. Elliot's death she obtained a further grant from Government of some 300 acres of the same heavy forests, a little to the south of the 600 acres now turned into a thorny wilderness; this was, I believe, a free grant at least for a number of years. She sold this tract to a Mr. Ferguson of Ferguson, Hinde and Company, Calicut, and they have commenced to open out an estate on it, but there is no attempt to improve communications and labor is consequently most difficult to procure, and, unless Government comes forward and makes roads as I propose, the fate of this tract will certainly be the same as the other.

[illegible] Government on the subject is either to get them to open out the country in question by proper roads, or else to stop all further grants or sales of land until there are proper communications.

No. 872.

FORWARDED to Government through the Collector of Malabar and the Board of Revenue for remarks.

OOTACAMUND,
16th June 1876.

(Signed) R. H. BEDDOME, Lieut.-Colonel,
Conservator of Forests.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Note to the Conservator of Forest's letter, No. 871, *dated* 16*th June* 1876.

I AM personally very well acquainted with the tract of forest in question. It is quite uninhabited, except at Wallaghaut where the coffee estates are, and it belongs entirely to Government.

2. Colonel Beddome has been misinformed on several points regarding it—

(1.) The valley in question known to the European Officers of the district as "the Silent Valley" is quite distinct from the Attapaddi Valley which forms the sources of the Bhowany river running eastward, and which is separated from "the Silent Valley" by a ridge of lofty forest-clad hills.

(2.) The Sispara Ghaut has not been "given up by Government" since the opening of the Carcoor Ghaut in 1869. It has since 1870-71 had a small annual allotment sufficient to keep it open as a bridle-path, and the grant for the current year will be found as Items 32 and 33 of Appendix to Part II in the Calicut Circle Budget.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28*th August* 1876.

1174/2

(3.) I am not sure to what period Colonel Beddome is alluding when he says "coffee had to be sent down on coolies' heads." I know of my own personal knowledge that in 1867 the ghaut was in good riding order as far as Walaghaut where the coffee estates are, and in tolerable order from that place as far as Sispara. Since then and up to the present time loaded bullocks have brought down the estate produce and taken back loads of grain, &c.

3. Colonel Beddome considers that the present condition of the old Walaghaut Estates is due to "want of proper communications." I am by no means disposed to agree with him on this point. The planters in Wynaad had for years to send down their produce on pack bullocks, and even to the present day a considerable proportion of Wynaad Coffee is brought down in this way. The estates can be easily reached from Wundoor in one day, and I fail to perceive how the state of the roads made it difficult to procure labor.

4. I am of opinion that want of funds, mismanagement, and *perhaps* unsuitability of climate from excessive rainfall have had more to do with the present condition of the old clearings than the state of the communications.

5. The estate *lately opened** may succeed better than the old clearings, and if that happens it will then become necessary to consider whether the construction of yet another ghaut road with bungalows and coolies' halting-sheds, &c., be undertaken, but at present I feel quite convinced that that scheme is premature.

* One hundred acres were only granted, not 300 acres as Colonel Beddome supposes.

6. Good roads have hitherto followed upon the opening out of coffee districts, not preceded them. Colonel Beddome wishes to reverse this which is the natural order, and I feel also convinced that the alternative policy which he advocates in paragraph 8 is wrong. The estates have at present a road passable both ways for pack bullocks and kept in repair by the residents themselves to whom the allotments are made over for expenditure. The experience of Wynaad shows that having to send down produce on pack bullocks does not prevent the opening up of land for coffee. So I consider that to stop all further sales until proper roads (by which I understand Colonel Beddome to mean cart roads) are constructed would be a mistaken policy, and I would, therefore, beg strongly to deprecate the issue of any orders which would fetter my discretion in making further assignments of land in that neighbourhood on the usual conditions.

7. The "free grant for a number of years" to which Colonel Beddome alludes in paragraph 7 was made by my predecessor, Mr. MacGregor, in 1874 with the sanction of Government (G.O., Revenue Department, No. 1,157, dated 24th October 1873). Mrs. Elliott obtained the land subject to the ordinary rules in such cases, and the only exception in her case was that the lands were not put up to auction.

CALICUT,
8th July 1876.

(Signed) W. LOGAN,
Collector.

THE foregoing letter with the Collector's note thereon will be submitted for the orders of Government.

2. The Board entirely concur in the views expressed by Mr. Logan. Colonel Beddome's proposal to open up the tract alluded to in anticipation of its being occupied by coffee planters is decidedly premature; on the other hand, his recommendation that the grant of lands if applied for should be refused cannot be supported. The Collector must be allowed to exercise his discretion on that point.

(True Copies and Extract.)

(Signed) C. A. GALTON,
Acting Secretary.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
28th August 1876.

No. 287. ORDER THEREON, 28th August 1876, No. 1,174.

Forests, No. 14.

THE Government agree with the Board and the Collector that it is not desirable to open up the tract in anticipation of its being occupied by coffee planters as advocated by Lieutenant-Colonel Beddome, and that the system of granting lands to applicants should continue according to existing arrangements.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) D. F. CARMICHAEL,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Conservator of Forests.

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

Recd 2-8/1876 - in the Secretary's Office Register Letter No. from
Compiled Copy on the 22 4th.

1174/4

FOREST No. 69.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 4th August 1876, No. 1,977.

Read the following letter from Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, to the Hon. D. F. CARMICHAEL, Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Ootacamund, 16th June 1876, No. 871 :—

I HAVE the honor to inform you that I have latély visited the forests on the western slopes of the Nilgiris and wish to draw the attention of Government to the fact that there is a very large tract of superb coffee land available which I think it desirable that Government should open out for planters.

2. The tract I allude to commences about Walaghaut (4,000 feet) half way down the old Sispara Ghaut and runs due south through dense heavy moist forest for six or seven miles till a beautiful valley (called Attapaddi by the natives and the Silent Valley by Europeans) is entered, which extends right away nearly to Manaur; the elevation of this valley is nearly 3,000 feet, and contains a large amount of fine shola forest and beautiful tracts of grass land, and it is in every way adapted for coffee or cinchona. On the west of this valley rises a high peak, marked on the trigonometrical map as Kanjacombu.

3. The water-shed is to the western coast, so that the upkeep of the forests on the score of the water-supply is of very little consequence as compared with our northern and eastern slopes, where all the water runs down into the Bhowany and Cauvery, and, as I have already given my views that we must protect most of the forest that remains on these latter slopes, I think it all the more important that these valuable tracts now alluded to should be thoroughly opened out by Government; but even i considerable reservations are made, many thousand acres will still be available.

4. The tract in question I believe all belong to Government, and they hav already disposed of some 900 acres in the vicinity of Walaghaut.

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Butson

Govt. of India.
REVENUE.
To
THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

Dated August 28th. 1876.
Read. 074
Encl.

G.O., 28th August 1876, No. 1,174.

AUGUST.
Nos. 286-287.

Land on the western slopes of the Nilgiris.—Concurring with the Board and the Collector that it is not desirable to open up certain tract of — in anticipation of its being occupied by coffee planters and that the system of granting lands to applicants should continue according to existing arrangements.

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8. My object in addressing Government on the subject is either to get them to open out the country in question by proper roads, or else to stop all further grants or sales of land until there are proper communications.

No. 272.

FORWARDED to Government through the Collector of Malabar and the Board of Revenue for remarks.

OOTACAMUND,
16th June 1876.

(Signed) R. H. BEDDOME, Lieut.-Colonel,
Conservator of Forests.

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1174/5

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CALICUT,
8th July 1876.

(Signed) W. LOGAN,
Collector.

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2. The Board entirely concur in the views expressed by Mr. Logan. Colonel Beddome's proposal to open up the tract alluded to in anticipation of its being occupied by coffee planters is decidedly premature; on the other hand, his recommendation that the grant of lands if applied for should be refused cannot be supported. The Collector must be allowed to exercise his discretion on that point.

(True Copies and Extract.)

Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Collector of Malabar.
" to the Conservator of Forests.

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1124/6

No. 3391.

From Pres. Bd of Rev.

Dated 4 Aug 8 187 .

FOR ORDERS.

Shows the County of Malabar &
first settled by Dalton.

Mentions a visit the Bd & Collr
had paid Colonel Ds estate some years
ago fully. States that Bd & Collr is dis-
cussing in Orig & forwards such
proposals as they think in question
of even the localities he is writing
of - the Attapady valley in the
Jamma estate of the Raja
Regt with which the Govt has
nothing to do & the grant to
Mr Allen which he apparently

20 24 - 10 - 76 & 21-12-76.

3391/1876

Answer

BOARD OF REVENUE.

1876. Dated

of Revenue.

ADRAS.

H AUGUST 1876, No. 1,977.

Encl.

Ry. 1124 2801

Received 15 Aug 1876

Coffee land—on

Submitting to Gove

letter from Conser

desirability to open

planters by constru

Collector of Malaba

PROCEEDINGS, 4

De

AUGUST.

rest No. 69.

western slopes of Nilgiris—

rnment with Board's views,

vator of Forests regg

out certain tract of

ding roads, and ret

thereon.

Minutes of Board of Ordnance
Oct. 22/8 1762

I agree with
the Lords Board
Bl 24 Oct
23/8

Applⁿ Land on Western Slopes of Nilgiris

FOR ORDERS.

14 Feb Board and Agr Ass on Appl
21 do Consequences reported

No 1174

The Govt agree with the Board and the Collector that it is most desirable to open up the tract in anticipation of its being screened by coffee planters as advocated by Lieutenant Colonel Goodwyn, and that the system of granting land to applicants should continue according to existing arrangements.

c. 21. Aug/76 R 28. Aug

28 Aug 1876 28/8/76