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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No. 6376 A Press.
B.P. No. Mis.

Dated 17.11.1877 197 .

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Archives I—10,006—19-4-79.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

MARINE DEPARTMENT.

22nd October 1877, No. 571.

Covelong.

Read the following papers :—

No. 35. *Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 19th October* 1877, *No.* 2906.

Read the following letter from R. J. MELVILLE, Esq., Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, to the Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Saidapet, 24th September 1875, No. 569 :—

I have the honor to forward a letter received from the Salt Deputy Collector in which he requests that a Conservator and two peons may be appointed for the port of Covelong.

2. As will be seen from the statement which accompanies his letter, the export of salt at that port is considerable and likely to increase. It has advantages over Ennore and the Madras Cotaurs inasmuch as boats are procurable and the salt is at hand and can be at once shipped into boats.

3. I think the necessity of the appointment of a Conservator is shown by the inconveniences at present experienced by Masters of vessels, who, owing to the absence of such an officer, are compelled to go to Madras to get their port clearances and are [illegible] boatmen, who are under no proper control. I am of opinion that duties of Conservator can be performed by the Salt Superintendent at Covelong, who, if the revised scheme of salt establishment be sanctioned, should be able to undertake this in addition to his other work. Sanction to entertain two peons will be necessary.

4. Covelong had a Master Attendant till 1837.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From D. V. NARASINGA ROW, Deputy Collector, in charge of Salt, to the Acting Collector of the Chingleput District, dated Madras, 11th September 1875, No. 510.

I have the honor to bring to your notice that the Board, in their Order, dated 16th March 1868, No. 1890, sanctioned the export of salt to Calcutta from Ennore, Madras, and Covelong. The latter port is most convenient both to the merchants and Government for exportation. After my taking charge of this department, in 1872, about 468,298 Indian maunds of salt were made, the annual or average quantity produced previous to that year having been 251,912 Indian maunds of salt.

2. In the year 1874, owing to the occurrence of the cyclone, 163,143 Indian maunds were made, and during the last Fasli or the current official year about eight lakhs of maunds were made. I now beg to submit a statement showing the number of vessels which conveyed salt from the Covelong Port during the last three years and the probable port-dues or tonnage collected from them by the Sea Customs Collector at Madras, from which it will be observed that a greater quantity of tonnage has been collected from the month of May last to date than in the two previous years, while the remaining salt is likely to be exported before the end of the official year or before the new salt is produced. From the platforms to the beach the distance is from 100 to 200 yards, and the anchorage is 700 to 800 yards from the beach. The surf is generally calm, and about 25 Masulah boats with the required labor are procurable on the spot always, whereas to export salt from the Madras Cotaur it will have to be carried in carts through the town to a distance of 1½ miles on to the beach and watched there until it is exported. The export of salt from Ennore has the disadvantage of boats and labor not being procurable at the spot. They are supplied from Madras at extra charges, while the salt there is available for exportation only occasionally ; therefore I have been, and am, paying special attention to the Covelong Division so

as to be in a position to supply any quantity of salt which may be required for exportation. There is local demand for salt made at other divisions, but not for the salt made in this division; and, although we do not get more than the prime cost of salt for the salt purchased for exportation to Calcutta, yet every maund of salt landed at Calcutta pays a duty of Rupees 3-4-0 in addition to our cost price, which is more than the duty charged in this Presidency. The principal difficulty and inconvenience felt at present at this port is that often more than six vessels resort at one and the same time to load, when, owing to the number of boats being insufficient to transport the salt to the shipping, the vessels are delayed for more than two or three weeks in taking in the salt. There are several persons who are willing to employ more boats to convey salt to the shipping, but the present boatmen have expressed to resolve to stop supply of boats if others introduce new boats; moreover, at present these boatmen charge different rates to different vessels, according to the necessities of exportation; it is desirable hence to bring them under the control of marine regulations.

3. The other difficulty consists in that as soon as each vessel arrives at Covelong its Commander has to repair to Madras, a distance of twenty-four miles, to pay the port-dues to the Sea Customs Collector and obtain a clearance after the salt is laden. Some of the Captains have complained to me that they do not like this as they have in consequence to leave their vessels for six days, and that it is also very dangerous to be away from their ships in this bad season, which I consider to be sound objections, and beg that you will therefore be so kind as to recommend to the Board of Revenue to obtain the sanction of Government to the appointment of a Conservator on Rupees 30 per month and two peons on 7 Rupees each to receive the port-dues and to grant clearances to the vessels and to register the number of boats employed in loading vessels. The cost can be advantageously met from the collections realized by them, and I beg you will have this statement verified by the Sea Customs Collector.

P.S.—Since the foregoing was written I have received information to the effect that Covelong was a sea-port town about thirty-five years ago, when Mr. Maclean was the Collector. There was a Master Attendant, it appears, with the requisite establishment; but since it was abolished and the establishment done away with for reasons not to be ascertained.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) R. J. MELVILLE

ENCLOSURE No. 2.—Statement.

Submitted for the orders of Government through the Master Attendant.

2. The Board recommend that the Salt Superintendent at Covelong be appointed a Sea Customs Superintendent, duly authorized to grant port clearances, and Conservator of the Port of Covelong in addition to his ordinary work. The pay proposed for him in the scheme dealt with in G.O., dated 17th August 1875, No. 1344, was Rupees 145, which might be granted for the double duties and will suffice; and the two peons asked for might be allowed him. It will be necessary to make the Boat Rules applicable to the port.

(True Copies and Extract.)

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

No. 36. *From J. H. TAYLOR, Esq., Lieutenant, R.N.R., Master Attendant, Madras, to the Officiating Chief Secretary to Government, dated Madras, 3rd November 1875, No. 6880.*

Administrative Department.

I have the honor to submit, for the consideration of Government, the accompanying Proceedings of the Board of Revenue recommending the appointment of a Superintendent of Sea Customs and Conservator at Covelong with the following remarks.

2. The inconvenience felt by Commanders of vessels in having to travel up to Madras by backwater from Covelong, in order to enter their ships at the Custom-house, has been frequently brought to the notice of this department, and I concur with

the Board in thinking that it should be remedied as soon as possible. There is no law in force which can compel a Shipmaster to leave his ship and port for such a purpose, and I recently had occasion to point out to the Collector of Sea Customs at Madras that the levy of *port-dues* on vessels touching at Covelong was not sanctioned by Act XII of 1875. To levy dues the port must be formally brought under the Indian Ports Act and a Conservator appointed. I doubt whether the salt trade would in itself warrant the expense of meeting the salary of such an official from the General Port Fund as at other ports, but, as the Board of Revenue point out that the Salt Superintendent will perform the duties of Conservator and Superintendent of Sea Customs on his present salary, I have no objection to offer to such an appointment, but the necessary application will have to be made to the Government of India to have the port of Covelong brought under Act XII of 1875. A flagstaff for signalling and a lascar or signaller will be required, and the expenses of erecting and maintaining the same can be met from the General Port Fund.

3. There is nothing to prevent the Boat Rules being made applicable to the port at once, but the necessary orders on the whole subject will doubtless be passed by Government in the Marine Department.

No. 37. ORDER THEREON, 22nd October 1877, No. 571.

The foregoing papers (the disposal of which was deferred pending the decision of the question of the appointment of a Superintendent of Sea Customs at Covelong) relate to a proposal to extend the provisions of "The Indian Ports Acts, 1875," to the Port of Covelong in the Chingleput District and to appoint the Superintendent of Sea Customs to be Conservator of the Port.

It is observed that the Master Attendant, Madras, entertains doubts as to whether Covelong would in itself warrant the expense of meeting the salary of a Conservator of the Port from the General Port Fund, as at other ports," but as it appears from the Proceedings of the Board of Revenue that it is intended that the increased rate of pay (viz., Rupees 175) proposed by them for the Salt Superintendent at Covelong—who, they recommend, should be appointed Superintendent of Sea Customs and Conservator of the Port, in addition to his ordinary work—should "be granted for the double duties," the Governor in Council has no objection to appoint that officer to be Conservator of the Port, and to authorize the erection of a flagstaff and the employment of a lascar or signaller.

3. No action, however, can be taken in this matter until the sanction of the Government of India is accorded to the increased rate of pay proposed for the Salt Superintendent. This sanction, it is understood, has not yet been applied for.

4. But in anticipation of such sanction being applied for in the Revenue Department, and granted by the Government of India, the Master Attendant, Madras, will be requested to submit a draft Notification defining the limits of the port of Covelong, and also a set of Rules for the management of boats and catamarans at that port, to enable the Government in this department to make the requisite application to the Government of India for sanction to extend the Indian Ports Act to the port under Section 5 of that Act, and for confirming the Rules referred to under the provisions of the Boat Act (IX of 1846).

(True Extract.)

For Chief Secretary.

To the Master Attendant, Madras.
" Revenue Department.

Exd. A. S. Rodgers.

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Revenue Depart.
No 4568.

Govt. of 1877 Madras.

MARINE.

To THE MASTER ATTENDANT,
Madras,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated October, 22nd.
Issued —— 29"
Recd. 29th do Encl.

G.O., 22nd October 1877, No. 671.

Ins 80 17-11-77 No 6376 A.

OCTOBER.
Nos. 35—37.

Cuddalore.—A draft Notification defining the limits of the port of Cuddalore, and a set of Rules for the management of boats and entrances at that port called for, in view to the sanction of the Government of India being requested for the extension thereto of the Indian Ports Act, 1875.

Written over

No 6376 A.
Communicated to the Board of Revenue
W. Lewis
Esq
Sec to Govt Revenue Dept
20-11-77