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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

1/5 DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

22nd April 1878, F.R. No. 959.

Famine Relief.

Read the following:—

No. 319. Memorandum from the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, to the Superintending Engineer, Chingleput, dated Fort St. George, 16th March 1878, No. 26 C.N.

His Grace the Governor desires that the project for forming a tank on the Adyar, or restoring the Pommel Tank as it probably would be, should be made available as early as possible for the employment of relief labor, the intention being to supplement from such a tank the supply of the irrigation under the Mylapore or long tank. It is believed that Colonel O'Connell some years back made some inquiry about such a project in connection with the water-supply of Madras, and probably therefore he will have no difficulty in deciding exactly what the nature and extent of the investigation should be.

* * * * *

(Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Col., R.E.,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

From Colonel P. O'CONNELL, R.E., Superintending Engineer, Chingleput, to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Madras, 20th March 1878, No. 1,155.

Referring to your memorandum, No. 26 C.N., dated 16th instant, I have the honor to state that the restoration of the Pommel Tank was proposed chiefly in order to supply Madras with water under high pressure and to keep full a navigable canal to be used chiefly for carrying gneiss stone for the use of a breakwater which Sir A. Cotton desired to see constructed at Madras. It was found on investigation that, in order to ensure the safety of the tank, an expensive waste weir would be required, and that a considerable extent of valuable land, then irrigated by the Chembrambankam Tank, would be submerged. Since then the Chembrambankam Tank has been enlarged, and its cultivation no doubt extended, so that the restoration of the Pommel Tank would probably now submerge more land than it would have done if carried out when first proposed. Moreover, the items for weir and compensation were not originally thought so much of as they came to be compared with heavy items for iron piping required for the distribution of water all over Madras under *high pressure*, the scheme for which distribution under high pressure was prepared under the direct orders of Lord Harris, then Governor of Madras, to myself. His opinion being that the first step in the investigation respecting the water-supply of Madras should be the ascertaining of the probable cost of providing the most complete system, viz., that of constant supply under high pressure, providing also for extinguishing a fire in any of the larger buildings in the city.

2. To complete the bund of the Pommel Tank without providing it with a suitable waste weir would probably lead to breaches in the bund and dangerous floods in the Adyar. Famine labor can, however, be employed in raising the remains of the old bund without closing the breaches, leaving the question of doing so to be reconsidered at a future time if Government desire this to be done.

3. I will consult the Range Officers respecting the remainder of your memorandum, the works proposed in which seem suitable; any others which may also prove on inquiry to be so will be recommended for approval.

Memorandum from the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, to the Superintending Engineer, Chingleput, dated Fort St. George, 28th March 1878, No. 32 C.N.

In reply to the letter, No. 1,155, of the 20th instant, from the Superintending Engineer, Chingleput, the undersigned has the honor to say that the restoration of the Pommel Tank would of course have to include the provision of suitable surplus works capable of disposing of a maximum flood discharge from the catchment basin. It appears to be desirable that Colonel O'Connell should show on a Revenue Survey Map the existing remains of the bund of the old Pommel Tank as also if possible where the surplus weir would have to be placed, and should give such other particulars as he may be able to state approximately, e.g.:

- The depth of water at the end.
- The area of the waterspread.
- The capacity.
- The area of the catchment basin.
- The probable annual yield of this basin.

The Revenue Survey Map will show what description of ground will be submerged. Then probably the Famine Department will be able to decide whether it will be desirable to complete the investigation of a project for the restoration of the tank.

(Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Col., R.E.,
Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

From Colonel P. O'CONNELL, R.E., Superintending Engineer, Chingleput, to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated St. Thomas' Mount, 1st April 1878, No. 1,371.

In reply to your memorandum, No. 32 C.N., dated 28th March 1878, I have the honor to refer you to my report printed among the Selections from the Records of the Madras Government, No. XI, at the Fort St. George Gazette Press, 1855, pages 50 to 61, where the particulars you ask for will be found.

2. As an enlargement has since been made in the Chembrambankam Tank, and as rates have altered, both design and estimates would of course have to be revised.

3. The map facing page 10 shows generally the description of the ground which would have been submerged, and if the manuscript contour surveys from which this map was filled in with information respecting the Pommel Tank can be found in your or the Chief Engineer's office, the contours of the Pommel might perhaps be laid down on a Revenue Survey Map.

4. You will see at page 58 that the area of land under the Chembrambankam tank which would have been submerged amounted to 1,936 cawnies or nearly 4 square miles, and that an additional area of 1,286 cawnies belonging to the six villages named would also be submerged. The total area submerged would thus have amounted to 3,222 cawnies or 4,260.5 acres or 6.63 square miles of valuable land, the total area of the waterspread being 48 millions of square yards or 15½ square miles.

5. If the design is to be re-investigated the best person to superintend the contour survey would be Mr. Ottmann, who was originally employed on the survey. I should have no confidence in the work of a stray Surveyor picked up at hazard, and there is no one in the district at present who can be spared for this work. Any regular and efficient Surveyor in Government employ could of course do the work, but if Mr. Ottmann is in health and can stand the work in this weather he would be the best man for it.

6. It is to be noted that, however much the depth of the water in the tank be reduced with the view of avoiding the submergence of valuable land, a large weir must still be built in order to pass the drainage from 178 square miles of land in addition to whatever water may after heavy rain flow over the three waste weirs of the Chembrambankam Tank whose aggregate length is 1,192 feet, so that it will not pay to make a shallow tank by restoring the Pommel reservoir.

No. 50-W.

SUBMITTED for information. It will be seen that the reference made to the Superintending Engineer has led to the discovery that a very complete account of the circumstances of the Pommel Tank drawn by Colonel O'Connell in 1854 is on record, and will be found at pages 50 to 61 of Selections from the Records of the Madras Government, No. XI, 1855. The state of the country has no doubt changed considerably during the last twenty-four years, but were the contours of the reservoir laid down on the Revenue Survey Map it is probable that the Revenue Settlement Department would be able to show the extent of cultivated land within the F.T.L. contour, and to frame an approximate estimate of its value and of the compensation which would have to be paid.

2. Lieutenant (now Colonel) O'Connell's calculations of loss by evaporation and absorptions are valuable, and it will be desirable that he should apply them to the reservoirs of the Madras Water Works and compare the results with those given by the registers which have been maintained for some years.

3. The undersigned entertains some doubt as to whether the water-supply of the Pommel Tank basin would be found to be as plentiful as it was estimated to be when the report was drawn up. He thinks that the actual water-supply of the Chembrambankam Tank would however decide the yield per square mile of catchment basin with sufficient accuracy, the free basin being of course in each case duly considered. A supply of water would sometimes be obtainable through the Chembrambankam Tank.

4. The intended arrangements for the disposal of surplus were a calingulah 900 feet long estimated to cost Rs. 86,712. As the weirs of the Chembrambankam Tank which would dispose the surplus water of the tank would be 1,192 feet in length, no doubt 2,000 feet.

5. A search will be made for the contour surveys referred to in paragraph 3 of the Superintending Engineer's letter.

Fort St. George, (Signed) JOHN MULLINS, Lieut.-Colonel, R.E.,
8th April 1878. Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
To the Additional Secretary to Government, Revenue (Famine) Department.

No. 320. ORDER THEREON, 22nd April 1878, F.R. No. 959.

Miscellaneous.

The Pommel Tank Project will be of no value as a relief work during the present famine, but may be worth further investigation from a revenue point of view and in connection with a supply of water to the Long tank.

(True Extract.)

Additional Secretary to Government.

To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, with one enclosure.
to the Revenue Department.
to the Board of Revenue.
to the Financial Department.
to the Collector of Chingleput.

Ed. C. Howarth.

Spate Copies.

18/10225
60th of (1878) 20th

REVENUE.

THE CHINESE PAYMENT FOR

IMMIGRATION.

to, to, to

Printed April 22nd.

Printed 30th.

Printed 1st May

Printed

O.D. 2nd April 1878, F.R. No. 959

APRIL.

No. 519,290.

For 1878.

Forwarded to the Chicago District
Selling will interest to the revenue of the
State. For the Immigration on the Southern
and Western States. For the Immigration on the
and it will be of no value as a relief work during
the present famine, but that it may be worth
the present Immigration from a revenue point of
view and in connection with a supply of water to
the long term.

21. 1878

Remitted

21. 1878

21. 1878

21. 1878