Archives I—10,006—16-8 77.

(1) Number of pages 12.

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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

Revenue **DEPARTMENT**

G.O. No. / B.P. No.	2059.	Press. / ~~Mis.~~
Dated	23-12-1878	197 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

2,059
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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

23rd December 1878, No. 2,059.

Read the following paper :—

No. 254. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 21st November 1878, No. 3,105.

Read the following letter from H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Madras, 13th November 1878, No. 1,648 :—

ADVERTING to the Board's Proceedings, Miscellaneous No. 2,667, dated 18th March 1878, to which I understand the Collector of Tanjore did not reply prior to my assuming charge of the Salt Department, I have the honor to report that no additional platforms will be required at Vedarniem. All the salt there has been stored on the existing platforms on which there is room for about $6\frac{1}{4}$ lakhs of maunds altogether. The present stock (October 31st) is 582,000 maunds, so that additional platforms would no doubt have been required if it had not been for the consignment of 93,000 maunds to Vizagapatam.

2. As regards establishments there and at Negapatam, I have the honor to report that I have dispensed with the entire additional establishment sanctioned for the former in G.O., dated 21st August 1877, No. 2,548, Revenue Department, and with all the additional hands sanctioned for Negapatam in G.Os., Nos. 2,415 and 44, Revenue Department, dated 31st July 1877 and 10th January 1878, respectively, except the Shroff. I have supplied the places of the latter by the temporary transfer of the same number of the permanent officials belonging to Vedarniem, where there is now no work for them.

3. I will take this opportunity of submitting a few remarks on an important question affecting these two stations which has already been decided, but which I venture to think requires reconsideration.

4. This is ought not the transport of salt from Vedarniem to Negapatam to be resumed ?

5. The facts are these—

6. At Vedarniem we have an enormous stock, nearly six lakhs of maunds, which we are selling off at the rate of about 16,000 or 18,000 maunds per annum. We can only sell there the spontaneous salt which is locally consumed. No one will even look at the manufactured salt, and the merchants at Negapatam declare positively that they will go anywhere for salt—to Gundalam, for instance, whence it would be impossible to supply the demand—rather than to Vedarniem.

7. On the other hand, the stock at Negapatam on the 31st October was 163,796 maunds only (about seven months' supply); the sales there have averaged 284,540 maunds per annum for the last three years, and the full outturn for which the division can with certainty be reckoned on does not exceed 150,000 maunds per annum.

8. Negapatam is a division which in my opinion has in some respects been unjustly maligned. It is true, of course, that the salt made there is abominably bad ; but there is no natural reason for this that I can see. The soil is good, and the supply of pit-brine fairly strong though not very copious. Sea brine is however obtainable. There ought therefore to be no difficulty in making as much fairly good salt as is required to meet the demand, but for the unfortunate fact that labor at Negapatam is from various causes very scarce and dear. I have issued instructions that the owners of the many pans now lying waste shall be warned that if they do not resume cultivation their pans will be resumed and regranted to others. But with the best exertions the Salt Deputy Collector can make, and I have no doubt he will do his best, I consider it impossible that the local demand can ever be met by the local supply.

9. My opinion therefore is that Vedarniem salt must be brought to Negapatam for sale. If not, I do not believe that the trade will go to Vedarniem for it; nor, for the reasons already given in my letter recorded in the Board's Proceedings, No. 2,619, dated 25th September 1878, regarding the entirely parallel case of the Chingleput District, do I consider that it is desirable in the interest of the consumers that they should be driven to do so. It follows, therefore, I venture to think, that similar arrangements to those I have already proposed for the Chingleput should be made for the Vedarniem salt also.

10. If the Board and Government agree with me, I will submit detailed proposals.

11. If they do not, I confess to being of opinion that the Vedarniem Salt Division should be closed. I admit that it is probably one of the best sites for salt culture in the whole world, and that good salt ought under suitable arrangements to be more cheaply produced there than anywhereelse (on the same scale) in the Madras Presideney; and I deplore the loss of capital which its closing would entail. But it is none the less obvious that it is useless to manufacture salt in a locality where no one will go to buy it, I may say at any price.

12. It may be argued that if the Negapatam stores are exhausted people will have no option but to go and buy at Vedarniem. If so, I should think it a matter to be regretted, as I should prefer that the population should supply themselves whence they pleased. But I do not think it will be so. The railway from Combaconum to Cuddalore will soon be open. When it is, I have no doubt, the merchants, rather than go to Vedarniem, will go to Gundalam, the stocks at which depôt are quite insufficient to meet the Tanjore and Trichinopoly demand, though enough for the local supply which entirely depends on them. Their complete exhaustion, therefore, would produce the greatest possible local inconvenience. In the meantime, until the railway in question is opened, Trichinopoly and Tanjore might be supplied without difficulty, though at a considerable increase of cost, from Tuticorin. Just now stocks are available there. But I cannot guarantee that they always shall be, nor can there be any defence for administrative arrangements which, without fiscal excise, unnecessarily raise the cost of a prime necessary of life to a population of probably two or three millions of people.

13. It may also be thought that I should have abstained from submitting these remarks until experience has proved that the trade will not go to Vedarniem, that is to say, until the Negapatam stocks are exhausted. But if I delay until then, the mischief will have been done, if I may use the expression. I shall then be driven to replenish the Negapatam stores in a hurry and under the old bad system which has been so long and so justly condemned. Far better, I venture to think, to make arrangements for an almost certain contingency while there is yet time to make proper ones.

14. I trust that the Board and Government will be pleased to acquit me of any intention to be disrespectful in criticising as freely as I have done an arrangement which is sanctioned by very recent orders.

SUBMITTED for the orders of Government.

2. The Board on reconsideration of the subject and in deference to the strong opinion of the Commissioner of Salt Revenue (which is supported by the local experience of their Second Member) that private trade will not resort to Vedarniem, resolve to request the sanction of Government for the transport of the Vedarniem salt to Negapatam under arrangements similar to those proposed for Chingleput in Board's Proceedings, dated 25th September 1878, No. 2,619.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

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

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No. 255. ORDER THEREON, 23rd December 1878, No. 2,059.

Separate Revenue, No. 33.
Salt.

IN modification of G.O., dated 8th March last, No. 366, the Government approve the intention to resume transport of salt from Vedarniem to Negapatam and await the Commissioner's further proposals.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) H. S. THOMAS,
Acting Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.
" the Accountant-General.
" the Salt Commissioner.

Exd. A. F. Goodall.

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No. 3,105.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 21st November 1878.

Read the following letter from H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Madras, 13th November 1878, No. 1,648:—

ADVERTING to the Board's Proceedings, Miscellaneous No. 2,667, dated 18th March 1878, to which I understand the Collector of Tanjore did not reply prior to my assuming charge of the Salt Department, I have the honor to report that no additional platforms will be required at Vedarniem. All the salt there has been stored on the existing platforms on which there is room for about 6¼ lakhs of maunds altogether. The present stock (October 31st) is 582,000 maunds, so that additional platforms would no doubt have been required if it had not been for the consignment of 93,000 maunds to Vizagapatam.

2. As regards establishments there and at Negapatam, I have the honor to report that I have dispensed with the entire additional establishment sanctioned for the former in G.O., dated 21st August 1877, No. 2,548, Revenue Department, and with all the additional hands sanctioned for Negapatam in G.Os., Nos. 2,415 and 44, Revenue Department, dated 31st July 1877 and 10th January 1878, respectively, except the Shroff. I have supplied the places of the latter by the temporary transfer of the same number of the permanent officials belonging to Vedarniem, where there is now no work for them.

3. I will take this opportunity of submitting a few remarks on an important question affecting these two stations which has already been decided, but which I venture to think requires reconsideration.

4. This is ought not the transport of salt from Vedarniem to Negapatam to be resumed?

5. The facts are these—

6. At Vedarniem we have an enormous stock, nearly six lakhs of maunds, which we are selling off at the rate of about 16,000 or 18,000 maunds per annum. We can only sell there the spontaneous salt which is locally consumed. No one will even look at the manufactured salt, and the merchants at Negapatam declare positively that they will go anywhere for salt—to Gundalam, for instance, whence it would be impossible to supply the demand—rather than to Vedarniem.

7. On the other hand, the stock at Negapatam on the 31st October was 163,796 maunds only (about seven months' supply); the sales there have averaged 284,540 maunds per annum for the last three years, and the full outturn for which the division can with certainty be reckoned on does not exceed 150,000 maunds per annum.

8. Negapatam is a division which in my opinion has in some respects been unjustly maligned. It is true, of course, that the salt made there is abominably bad; but there is no natural reason for this that I can see. The soil is good, and the supply of pit-brine fairly strong though not very copious. Sea brine is however obtainable. There ought therefore to be no difficulty in making as much fairly good salt as is required to meet the demand, but for the unfortunate fact that labor at Negapatam is from various causes very scarce and dear. I have issued instructions that the owners of the many pans now lying waste shall be warned that if they

do not resume cultivation their pans will be resumed and regranted to others. But with the best exertions the Salt Deputy Collector can make, and I have no doubt he will do his best, I consider it impossible that the local demand can ever be met by the local supply.

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11. If they do not, I confess to being of opinion that the Vedarniem Salt Division should be closed. I admit that it is probably one of the best sites for salt culture in the whole world, and that good salt ought under suitable arrangements to be more cheaply produced there than anywhereelse (on the same scale) in the Madras Presideney; and I deplore the loss of capital which its closing would entail. But it is none the less obvious that it is useless to manufacture salt in a locality where no one will go to buy it, I may say at any price.

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14. I trust that the Board and Government will be pleased to acquit me of any intention to be disrespectful in criticising as freely as I have done an arrangement which is sanctioned by very recent orders.

SUBMITTED for the orders of Government.

2. The Board on reconsideration of the subject and in deference to the strong opinion of the Commissioner of Salt Revenue (which is supported by the local experience of their Second Member) that private trade will not resort to Vedarniem,

resolve to request the sanction of Government for the transport of the Vedarniem salt to Negapatam under arrangements similar to those proposed for Chingleput in Board's Proceedings, dated 25th September 1878, No. 2,619.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Commissioner of Salt Revenue.

xd. A. Grubert.

2057/5 Rev Dept.

No 2059

Proceedings of the Madras Government
Under date the 23 December 1878

Read the following
Proceedings of the Board of
Revenue, dated 21 November
1878 No 3105.

In modification of
G.O. dated 8 March last
No 366, the Govt approve
of the intention to remove
transport of salt from
Vedaraniam to Negapatam
and await the Commis-
sioner's further proposals.

14 To The Board of Revenue Jany
1 The Accountant Genl
2 The Salt Commissioner

Ind Asst
U C

Public Department. Revenue Section.

1878.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

To

THE SECRETARY TO GOVT.,
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

Dated November 21st.

Printed 26th.

Received [illegible]

PROCEEDINGS, 21st NOVEMBER 1878, No. 3,105.

Read the 25th/78.

NOVEMBER.

No. 3,105.

Ref. No. 2057-58 December 1878

Vedaraniem Salt. — Requesting sanction of Government for the transport of the — to Negapatam under arrangements similar to those proposed for Chingleput in Board's Proceedings, dated 25th September 1878, No. 2,619.

Submitted.

[illegible]

Sanction accordingly issued.

[illegible]

31 Sheets Received - 53.
21 Sheets - Pr. No.
10 Sheets Pr. No. -
8 Sheets - Pr. -

F.O.

Transfer of Vedar-
nicum Salt to the
Sapeitan

Accd

Hon'ble W. Muir Esq

Despatch

C. 27. Dec 58 R. 23/12/58