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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

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DEPARTMENT

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GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

16th November 1878, No. 931 I.

Irrigation.

Read the following paper :—

No. 87. Endorsement of the Acting Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Fort St. George, 12th November 1878, No. 326 I.

From J. H. LATHAM, Esq., Chief Engineer and Manager of the Madras Irrigation and Canal Company, to the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, dated Kurnool, 30th October 1878, No. 135.

Canal Reports for September 1878.

I HAVE the honor to forward per book post Upper and Lower Division Reports, together with my own, for the month of September 1878.

MADRAS IRRIGATION AND CANAL COMPANY.

UPPER DIVISION.

Monthly Report for September 1878.

WATER was kept at 4.0 at Soonkisala in the canal throughout the month.

2. Rain during the month was very heavy. Including the first few days of October we have had more than 45 inches in Kurnool, the greatest total rainfall known during the last 16 years. At Velapanur it has been upwards of 52.

3. Several floods came down the vagoos below Jutoor, and it was not until the 18th that water could be let down the canal to Sirvail.

4. Floods have everywhere been extraordinarily high, but the most notable one was that which came down the Hindry on the night of the 4th October or early on the 5th. This flood was certainly 5 feet higher than any known before. The Bellary road was flooded nearly the whole of its length, and the water extended some way across it into the fields. All bungalows between the road and the river were cut off, but notably the one belonging to the Chief Engineer. The bottom of this building was used as an office and contained all the plans. Water rose to between 3 and 4 feet inside the rooms. The almirahs containing records were overturned and many plans entirely swept away.

5. The next house was one lately used by the Chief Accountant, Mr. Buchan. Fortunately no one was in it. The verandah roof fell in with a crash and the building is in a very unsafe state.

6. The small building in Mr. Latham's compound, hitherto used as a Divisional Office, was also flooded, but only a portion of the records damaged.

7. The result of this accident is that all office work is delayed and all are engaged in trying to restore the damaged plans and papers.

8. *Accident to the Hindry Aqueduct.*—It appears that the fourth pier from the south abutment has had its foundation damaged for some length. As far as we can see about one-third of its length on the up stream side has settled down and a part of the fifth arch with the parapet was carried away. It is impossible as yet to say what extent of foundation will have to be replaced; but I have arranged to pass water by means of a temporary masonry wall on the 13th. I am in

hopes that the broken arch will remain as it is and help to sustain the others. Owing to a considerable bend in the river above the aqueduct the great body of water seems to strike the piers obliquely, and at first it almost appeared as if a large tree had smashed in the parapet. The water, however, did not cover the arches, and the large crack where the pier parted is distinctly visible now.

9. During September the rains were so frequent that, although much paddy was sown, water was taken by very few ryots. The change in the system now being organised renders it difficult for me to give the irrigated area. From the 15th of October our Amins start the check measurements; Mr. Lister undertakes to give the actual areas through the Revenue authorities.

10. My time has been principally taken up in preparing plans, estimates, &c., for building boats. Mr. Fellows has been appointed Foreman of the Workshops and has already made considerable progress in getting the engine and machines into place.

11. It is proposed to work the punching and shearing machine, screw cutting-machine, and a circular saw direct from an engine formerly used at Bavanasly Workshops. A lathe and a drilling-machine can be afterwards driven by a separate shaft if necessary.

12. An accident happened to one of the coolies. While moving some scaffolding, a wooden frame fell on the leg and broke the bone badly. He was taken to the hospital and Dr. King immediately set the leg and attended to him.

13. The work at the station was much hindered by rains, and now the emergent work at the aqueduct stops further progress, as all material for building was at once taken for the temporary wall.

14. Fine weather seems to have set in.

11th October 1878.

(Signed) C. H. WILKS,
Divisional Engineer.

LOWER DIVISION.

Report for the Month of September 1878.

As will be observed from the enclosed register of rainfall rain has fallen copiously all along the division. It will also be noticed that Dhoor gets the heaviest falls, and this is the case every year. On the 25th the heaviest fall in the shortest time that has, I believe, been experienced occurred at that station between 3 to 6 A.M., 8.42 inches were measured at Dhoor, and at Beempad, four miles further south, 6.35 inches were measured; elsewhere the rain has been comparatively insignificant. It has been easy to foretell the advents of rain from the almost total absence of wind, the oppressive heat at nights, far less endurable than during the hot winds of April and May, and the marked falling of the barometer. The 25th (at Adyapully) the reading at 4 P.M. was 29.87 inches against 29.90 for last year. After a rise for two or three days it has fallen again, and there are symptoms of an abundance of rain yet to come, although water is standing in the fields as though they were under supply from an irrigation source.

2. Happily the rain has caused no injury to masonry or earthworks beyond the guttering of soft soil banks. During the heavy downpour at Dhoor the water arose above the crowns of the arches of the aqueducts and culverts, and at places was within 2 feet of the top of the eastern or left bank.

The country around Dhoor was a sheet of water, the Kurnool and Cuddapah trunk road being of course submerged.

3. A breach occurred in the high right bank at the 186th mile on the 28th. Its dimensions were 80 feet by 60 feet by 14 feet. It was closed again on the 30th and water allowed to supply to the irrigation above it, though not needed, was uninterrupted. The spot has always given trouble, and a gang of bankers have been stationed there for many months, ramming. The sole reason of the accident was the neglect to thoroughly ram the earth in the first instance. This is I think the last weak spot in this section, and, being repaired almost entirely with puddle, there is little to fear in future. There have been many breaches in the banks close to this spot, and I think all the weak places have been exposed, and good sound earthwork substituted.

4. The channels are being frequently breached and injured by the heavy falls of rain, and their repairs occupy no inconsiderable share of the Overseers' time. The mischief is aggravated by the numerous cuts the ryots make in the banks. During heavy falls of rain the water rushes through and extends the cuts; and then again there is the difficulty of procuring earth to close them. I have brought this matter to Mr. Lister's notice and no doubt the ryots will be taught to be satisfied with sufficient water and the means provided by the Overseers for distributing it.

5. The Penner has been in heavy fresh almost throughout the month. On one occasion there were 7 feet of water going over the crest of the anicut.

253
2

6. In such weather as that we are experiencing it is difficult to get any work done, consequently there is little to show for the month. On the extension a little progress has been made in the earthwork, and the masonry of Culvert No. 1 is raised to 2 feet 6 inches throughout. Elsewhere the masons have done a few days' work.

7. With such weather few applications are made for water, and although there is a large area of wet crop sown the ryots do not need water; in fact the rain is too much for the dry paddy which I do not expect to irrigate until November. In the Cuddapah District the ryots are still ploughing and sowing paddy in new lands, as they have given up hopes of being able to get in dry crops. I do not ever recollect paddy being sown so late in the season as this, and I do not know when the sowing will cease. It is obvious that with such weather the staple crops, which should be sown in October, cannot be sown; the ryots cannot even get an opportunity to plough their land. One of the greatest wants now is labor: the supply is not equal to the demand, and it is a matter of great difficulty to get a single cooly to work on the canal.

8. The general health has been moderately good. On the extension there have been several deaths from cholera amongst the Wuddahs, and it has been extremely difficult to keep them at their work; as it is many gangs have left the work through fear of contagion. It also created a slight scare among the masons; an Overseer had a serious attack of it. I have also been laid up for three days by most severe attacks of diarrhoea and vomiting, although I have been most careful about my diet. In addition, a disease which is seemingly not well known, has been attacking several of the coolies and others. It appears on the foot in the shape of an open sore, which, prostrating the sufferer, at once extends rapidly until death occurs: there are I believe a few cases of recoveries. An Overseer's father was attacked by this loathsome disease and died in a few days. A Policeman who had occasion to come to me about some lost cattle was attacked by this disease, and, being unable to walk, was taken to Cuddapah in a bandy. A Store Peon, who was sent to Adyapully, caught the disease and is still suffering from it.

I have noticed many other cases amongst the coolies, and I hear that several have died from its effects.

9. No field work has been done. As regards the laying out of the telegraph, as the Surveyor who commenced the work is laid up with fever. The line is partly marked out on the plans, and I hope to have the land plans ready next month.

10. The staff were paid from 6th to 12th idem.

ADYAPULLY,
5th October 1878.

(Signed) J. O. DUNPHY,
Divisional Engineer.

CHIEF ENGINEER'S REPORT.

[To accompany Divisional Reports for the Month of September 1878.]

The Sub-Collector in special charge of Irrigation has decided* that for the current season the existing practice of distribution of water must be followed, i.e., that the canal staff be responsible for the water reaching every individual field on which the occupier will use it.

*No. 368, of 16th instant (October). Indeed, I see no reasonable fear of danger intimated in Mr. Horsley's† suggestion "that the distribution should not be left to low-paid bankers." The ryot when detected helping himself to water surreptitiously (and thus being liable to an extra charge) will, no doubt, still continue to say that "he did not receive all that he was entitled to because he refused to fee the banker, and therefore without the knowledge of the banker he helped himself." In the first place the banker is, after all, better paid than servants of similar grade and duties under Government tanks; and he is responsible to his Overseer and to the Engineer for the thorough irrigation of every acre of crop which is known to be under irrigation; and he is looked after by the Overseer (and often by the Engineer) more closely than could be ensured from village officers. I have no case referred to me in past settlements of any banker having caused injury to a crop by wrongly refusing water. When any ryot is not allowed to take the water exactly as he likes, regardless of the interests of others, or of the slope of the ground, or when there is not available for him so much water as he likes, it is the regular course for him to complain of the banker. He sees no one else to complain against. To replace the bankers by villagers under the village authorities for distribution within a village is a step which I, equally with Mr. Lister, would desire to see tried next, but to place village authorities in charge of sluices would be hardly justifiable in the face of experience. During the last severity the village authorities headed their men in depriving standing crop of smaller villages of every drop of water. There seems also nothing worth special action in the ryots' tale about feeing bankers. It might equally be said that the passenger traffic of railways in England is in the hands of low-paid porters; and that passenger says, he did not receive all the attention he was entitled to because he refused to fee

the porter. The feeling in some form probably exists under the canal, and by drawing to some ryots more attention than their due share leaves others with less; but this evil seems limited to inconvenience, and I know of no case of injury from it.

It is a responsibility necessarily falling on settlement officers to uphold the credit of the bankers and overseers whenever ryots have wrongly got the notion that the bankers have been haid upon them. This will invariably happen during a time of insufficiency of supply. Judging from the settlements of the last two years the bankers and overseers deserve (with exceptions of course) public approbation and support for the way in which they have in all cases done their best to maintain a sufficient supply to irrigated crops under all kinds of physical and moral of position, and have recorded the cases of crops deserving remission when the village officers neglected to do so. I ask for no more than justice to these men, and for as fair treatment by the hands of other departments as is justified by the benefit they have done the ryots and demanded by public expediency.

The nightly rains occurring since my return to Kurnool have kept the Hindry in fresh and prevented examination of the damaged pier of the aqueduct. On the night before last nearly 4 inches fell. Last night there was lightning but no rain, and the wind was from eastward; yet it is premature to say that the north-east monsoon has commenced bringing finer weather.

The flood of the 4th, 5th October filled the lower floor of the Chief Engineer's office with mud, and the whole has to be cleaned and re-floored, matted, and whitewashed before it will be safely habitable. It is impossible to get any other temporary accommodation; so that while the current office books and clerks are moved to the first floor, the records are piled in heaps in the verandahs, being too heavy for the upper rooms, of which the walls are cracked. Meantime Mr. Wilks is getting his office into the only available house in the place. It is in the fort.

The Commission on Madras Irrigation, consisting of Mr. Foster Webster, B.L., M.C.S.; Colonel Moncrieff, R.E., Bengal, Colonel Mallins, R.E., Madras, sit in Kurnool on Tuesday next (22nd). I much regret this turning topsy-turvy of the office almirahs at such a time.

The steel of the first six cargo boats is expected to reach Madras on the 23rd October. If the weather permit it will be landed and sent to Cuddapah, where Mr. Dunphy will be prepared to put it together.

It seems imperative to build in Kurnool. The Chief Engineer's bungalow and office has become unsafe for another wet season; and the detached bungalow occupied by the Upper Division Office is hardly safe to go into, and seems certain to fall to pieces before a year is out. This is no misfortune in one way; for as a matter of policy it is essential to have offices of more dignified exterior and more appropriate interior than have hitherto sufficed.

Enclosed are abstracts of irrigation for the month ending September 1878.

(Signed) J. H. LATHAM,
Chief Engineer and Manager.

Abstract of Irrigation recorded up to end of September 1878.

Districts.	Taluks.	CLASS OF IRRIGATION.					Tanks supplied.	Estimated Unrecorded Irrigation.
		First Class.	Second Class.	Third Class.	Monthly.	Total.		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Kurnool	Ramallakota	892-91	10437	0-75	..	998-53	..	3-00
	Nandikotkur	585-29	390	..	..	588-29	..	360-00
	Nandial	16-07	..	..	..	19-07	..	650-00
	Sirvail	42-41	..	..	..	42-41	..	..
	Koilkuntla	56-61	405	..	..	60-66	..	..
	Total ..	1,595-29	11192	0-75	..	1,707-96	..	1,013-00
Cuddapah	Jammulamadugu	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
	Proddutur	1,342-90	12-9	..	..	1,355-19	..	224-00
	Cuddapah	1,450-98	238	..	..	1,453-66	..	162-00
	Total ..	2,793-88	14-7	..	..	2,808-85	..	416-00
	Grand Total ..	4,389-17	126-9	0-75	..	4,516-81	..	1,429-00

KURNOOL,
19th October 1878.

(Signed) J. H. LATHAM,
Chief Engineer and Manager.

2953
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SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

2. The serious damage done to the Hindry aqueduct by the flood of 4th October is now reported for the first time. It is to be hoped that ere this something has been done to prevent the collapse of the other arches which, it would appear from Mr. Wilk's report, there was reason to apprehend.

3. The flooding of the office building demonstrates the necessity for providing more suitable accommodation as proposed in the estimate now before Government.

(Signed) J. O. HASTED, Lt.-Col., R.E.,
Ag. Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

No. 88. ORDER THEREON, 16th November 1878, No. 931 I.

ORDERED to be recorded.

2. The Chief Engineer and Manager should be requested by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation to submit a full report of the damage done to the Hindry aqueduct by the late floods.

(True Extract.)

For actual

Lt.-Col., R.E.,
Ag. Joint Secy. to Govt., P.W.D.,
Irrigation Branch.

To the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.
" Revenue Department.

Exd. T. D. Ryan.
Spare Copies

Revenue Dept
No 5317
IRRIGATION.

Govt. of (1878) Madras.
PUBLIC WORKS

TO
THE CHIEF ENGINEER FOR IRRIGATION,
&c. &c. &c.

Dated November 16th.

Issued

Recd. 3 December

G. O., 16th November 1878, No. 931 I

Li. No.

NOVEMBER.

Nos. 87-88.

N. 2953
Communicated to the
Board of Revenue.

4 Dec 78.

Madras Irrigation and
Canal Company. Report of the damage
done by late floods to the —, recorded with
remarks.

17 Ld. Secy. of Revenue