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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	741	Press
B.P. No.		Mis.

Dated 2-6-1876 196 .

Not to be folded or roughly handled

74

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
2nd June 1876.*

No. 33. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 13th May 1876, No. 1,254, Forest No. 45:—

Read the following letter from Lieut.-Colonel R. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Ootacamund, 19th April 1876, No. 545:—

WITH reference to G.O., No. 1,754, of the 4th December last, forwarded to me for remarks with the Board's docket, No. 51-2,859, of the 4th instant, I have the honor to inform you that, as far as my department is concerned, the question is answered in Captain Campbell Walker's letter, No. 202, of the 19th of June last, recorded in G.O., 4th October 1875, No. 1,457.

2. I forward, herewith, a copy of a letter* from Mr. Douglas, the Deputy Conservator of the Anamallay Division,

* No. 321, of the 25th February 1876. by which you will perceive that there is a great want of system on the side of the Department of Public Works, with reference to their indents on our department for timber; it is impossible that we can continue to supply their requirements in this manner without proper indents except at a considerable loss. I do not myself think that it is the province of this department to supply timber in sawn scantlings, but if we have to do this, indents giving the measurements should be supplied at least a year before the timber is to be delivered. I would, however, strongly advise that the Forest Department should only be called upon to deliver timber in squared and sawn logs of such dimensions as may be indented for.

3. Another question requiring the consideration of the Board and Government is the price at which our Anamallay timber is now being delivered to the Public Works Department. By Captain Walker's letters recorded in the G.O., No. 1,457, of the 4th of October last, it will be seen that he agreed to a rate of Rupees 1-8-0 per cubic foot for our Anamallay logs (unsawn) at Coimbatore, and the Board sanctioned this. It had been ascertained that the timber actually cost Rupees 1-6-6 per cubic foot when layed down at Pothanore; this, however, did not include superintendence which may be put down at 2 to 3 Annas per cubic foot according to the amount felled during the year, so it is very evident that these rates could not be remunerative or even cover the working expenses of the forest; and as all the timber has been delivered at these rates during the last two years, the forest has consequently been worked at a loss and shown an annual deficit. Captain Walker never calculated that the Teak in the Anamallays has a standing value of 8 Annas per cubic foot, as contractors have constantly come forward and agreed to give this price for any trees that might be marked and handed over to them; it appears to me, therefore, that the Public Works Department should certainly pay this 8 Annas in addition to the actual charges incurred in felling and delivering, so that a fair rate to fix for the supply all round at Pothanore or Coimbatore would be Rupees 2 per cubic foot. It cannot, I think, be the wish of Government that our department should supply the timber at less than the cost of felling and delivering, *plus* its standing value; it cheapens the Public Works Department estimates fictitiously, and our department does not show a correct return.

4. The Public Works Department could probably always get Burma Teak at a cheaper rate; but this timber is acknowledged to be inferior, and it is surely better for one Government Department to indent on another as far as possible. Timber from Zemindari forests and other private tracts worked by contractors without any respect to conservancy and without establishments can often be thrown into the market at rates that far under-sell us, but such supplies are limited and uncertain, and if Government Departments are allowed to look to these because one day they happen to be much cheaper than the regular supply from the Forest Department, our revenues will suffer considerably and forest conservancy will be made more difficult.

5. I cannot second Captain Walker's proposition that a uniform rate should be fixed for Teak throughout the Presidency; the rate in different districts must vary as it depends on the distance the wood has to be carried; for instance, Mudumallay Teak can be laid down much cheaper even up at Ootacamund than Anamallay Teak can at Coimbatore or Pothanore. It might, however, be a good plan to fix a certain value on Teak, Blackwood and all our principal timbers as they stand in the forest and charge this, *plus* the cost of felling, delivering and superintendence.

6. An early settlement of these questions is of great importance.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

Colonel R. H. BEDDOME, Conservator of Forests, Ootacamund, dated Coimbatore, 25th February 1876, No. 321.

I HAVE the honor to submit for your consideration the following remarks concerning the supply of timber to the Department of Public Works during the last and current official years.

2. In August 1874, after some correspondence on the subject had passed, Government issued an order that 600 tons Teak should be delivered to the Department of Public Works at Coimbatore at current market rates; I pointed out at the time that no specification as to dimensions required accompanied the indent. By the month of January 1875, 455 tons of timber were brought to Coimbatore Depot where the want of such specification was at once felt, and after some trouble in picking out timber in accordance with details, only then received, it was ordered that all logs of good quality and likely to cut up economically should be passed. Only 366 logs, containing 7,179 cubic feet, were passed as answering to this description, and the balance condemned as unfit for Public Works Department purposes.

3. The success of this transaction was all important; other means of securing revenue had been for the time set aside, and on its issue depended the receipts of the year. In the hopes therefore of repairing the failure to some extent auctions of the rejected stock were tried, but proved so unsatisfactory, owing to combination among the dealers, that they had to be stopped.

4. The loss and inconvenience to all concerned might in this instance have been obviated by a clear statement of the sort of timber wanted or by a personal inspection of stock by a Department of Public Works Officer before the expense of removal to Coimbatore had been incurred.

5. It is exceedingly difficult, almost impossible, to secure a sale here in the open market; the trade is not sufficiently brisk, and this is the more felt if the sale has to be forced on to meet a deficiency in revenue within the last few weeks of the official year.

6. The Public Works Department indent for 1875-76 was for the same quantity of Teak, and in view of the objections raised to our rough timber, it was decided only to offer sawn. I

accordingly prepared at Anamallay 3,067 rafters containing 3,240 cubic feet, and 165 logs containing 1,501 cubic feet; at Coimbatore 1,071 rafters containing 972 cubic feet and 713 logs containing 7,416 cubic feet; total 262½ tons. This was reported ready for inspection on the 6th of January, and a further consignment of 8,000 cubic feet promised by the end of February; a list of the timber was then called for by the Superintending Engineer and furnished, and on the 10th of February, the District Engineer, Presidency, inspected and selected 486 logs and 393 rafters. It must be noted that the balance is not rejected on the score of quality, but as merely not being suitable in dimension.

7. I have received from the same officer a list of the scantlings wanted for the Post and Telegraph Offices and Military Hospital at Madras, which, had I known of in good time, I could, in all probability, have provided for, but which, from the difficulty of working out timber from the forests at this late period as well as of getting sawyers to work at Anamallay on account of the cholera, I cannot now undertake to supply in the short time left before the end of the official year.

8. The timber now being sawn at Anamallay will be offered in squared logs of which there will be some 600, and the contents are calculated at 8,000 cubic feet. My object is to sell this, and I would suggest that if the timber is sound and of good quality, the Public Works Department be requested to take it over, irrespective of its dimensions, as it was prepared for them without specification. I would not recommend its being sawn into scantlings, with reference to which it was not selected and to produce which might cause heavy wastage; it would be preferable in my opinion to submit to the temporary loss of revenue, as the timber is good and sure to be wanted eventually. Under these circumstances, however, I think the Public Works Department should take it at once.

9. Of course, any of the timber already prepared in Coimbatore and Anamallay which can be further sawn into the scantlings contained in the list furnished by the Presidency District Engineer a sale before the end of next month.

10. The present system of supplying timber is, I think, defective, and one on which no contractor could, I imagine, be got to work. The mistake is to allow this department to collect a stock as was done last year, or to work it up as was done this year, and then to test it by a standard of qualification which is not previously communicated. The timber may be of the best and may be eagerly sought after next year, and yet be quite unsuitable for the purposes of the moment. Instead of supplying the Forest Department with a list of requirements at the beginning, the Public Works Department calls for a list of measurements from which to select what is suitable at the end of the year; this is, I think, reversing the proper order of things.

11. It is not fair to the forest officer whose time might be more profitably occupied and whose reputation in his department is to a great extent dependent on the financial success of his range.

12. It must lead, too, to some inconvenience in the Public Works Department, though not so much felt, as by resorting to other forests or to the open market it is generally possible to procure the timber required.

13. During the past two years this annual supply of timber to the Public Works Department may be regarded more as an experiment than anything else; the timber was not prepared for them originally, and the two departments have not dealt hitherto on a large scale, and transactions require to be put into thorough working order. During the past season 108,760 cubic feet have been cut to season with the view of supplying the Public Works Department and Ordnance Department, and therefore, if it is intended to continue the system, you will doubtless be able, in consultation with officers of Public Works Department, to remedy its defects.

14. Precise details, such as I have alluded to, may not be procurable early in the year, but, if not, it is clear that some regular standard be adopted for guidance and for economy of time and money.

15. Out of 422½ tons of timber prepared this year, only 5,600 cubic feet are at present taken, and even if the 160 tons at Anamallay are accepted, there is a considerable balance left on hand,

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
2nd June 1876.*

saleable doubtless in due course, but not easily so within the next few weeks, and this result is due, I think, to the want of proper arrangement and understanding between the two departments.

(True Copy.)

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

SUBMITTED for the information and orders of Government with reference to G.O., dated 4th December 1875, No. 1,754.

2. From the correspondence already before Government and now submitted, it appears that the insufficient scantling complained of was due partly to the fact that the requirements of the Department of Public Works were not known, and partly to want of means for bringing large beams into Coimbatore.

3. The Conservator raises one or two points of general principle upon which it is desirable that Government should pass a decision. Colonel Beddome suggests that the Forest Department should only be called upon to supply timber in squared and sawn logs of such dimensions as may be indented for and on regular indents only. If the Forest Department is to be required to supply timber in sawn scantlings, measurements should be given at least a year beforehand. The Board consider that it is certainly necessary for the forest officers to have long notice and exact descriptions of the timber required. The Board also consider that the timber should be inspected at the depôts by a responsible officer. The Forest Department should not be called upon to transport timber to Coimbatore for selection there.

4. As regards price, the Board consider that Colonel Beddome's proposal to charge the actual cost of felling and delivery in addition to the value of the standing timber is fair. A uniform rate throughout the Presidency is not feasible as cost of carriage must vary greatly. The Board think that the wood should be selected by an officer of the Department of Public Works at the depôts, and either transported and converted at its own cost, or, if transported and worked up by the Forest Department, a price sufficient to cover the cost of these operations in addition to the value of the timber should be charged. Rupees 2 a cubic foot for Teak logs, delivered at Pothanore or Coimbatore, appears a reasonable price. The proposal that the Department of Public Works should be precluded from purchasing timber in the open market does not commend itself to the Board.

5. To obviate misunderstanding in future, it is advisable that definite rules on these points should be laid down by Government in the Department of Public Works.

(True Copies and Extract.)

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

No. 34.

ORDER THEREON, 2nd June 1876, No. 741.

Forests, No. 2.

PARAGRAPHS 3 and 4 will be referred to the Public Works Department for consideration and for the issue of the

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necessary orders. Without sufficient notice being given to the Forest Department, it cannot be expected that the requisite timber can be supplied by them: and the system of indents and previous inspection by Public Works officers, as proposed, will remove much of the inconvenience and difficulty experienced under existing arrangements.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Public Works Department.
„ the Board of Revenue, with copy of Government Order.
„ the Conservator of Forests.
„ the Financial Department.

Exd. W. H. French.

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ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From C. G. DOUGLAS, Esq., Deputy Conservator of Forests, Anamallay Range, to Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. BEDDOM, Conservator of Forests, Ootacamund, dated Coimbatore, 25th February 1876, No. 321.

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4. The loss and inconvenience to all concerned might in this instance have been obviated by a clear statement of the sort of timber wanted or by a personal inspection of stock by a Department of Public Works Officer before the expense of removal to Coimbatore had been incurred.

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6. The Public Works Department indent for 1875-76 was for the same quantity of Teak, and in view of the objections raised to our rough timber, it was decided only to offer sawn. I accordingly prepared at Anamallay 3,067 rafters containing 3,240 cubic feet, and 165 logs containing 1,501 cubic feet; at Coimbatore 1,071 rafters containing 972 cubic feet and 713 logs containing 7,416 cubic feet; total 262½ tons. This was reported ready for inspection on the 6th of January, and a further consignment of 8,000 cubic feet promised by the end of February; a list of the timber was then called for by the Superintending Engineer and furnished, and on the 10th of

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9. Of course, any of the timber already prepared in Coimbatore and Anamallay which can be further sawn into the scantlings contained in the list furnished by the Presidency District Engineer shall be so converted and forwarded without delay, and for the rest I must just do my best to obtain a sale before the end of next month.

10. The present system of supplying timber is, I think, defective, and one on which no contractor could, I imagine, be got to work. The mistake is to allow this department to collect a stock as was done last year, or to work it up as was done this year, and then to test it by a standard of qualification which is not previously communicated. The timber may be of the best and may be eagerly sought after next year, and yet be quite unsuitable for the purposes of the moment. Instead of supplying the Forest Department with a list of requirements at the beginning, the Public Works Department calls for a list of measurements from which to select what is suitable at the end of the year; this is, I think, reversing the proper order of things.

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

SUBMITTED for the information and orders of Government with reference to G.O., dated 4th December 1875, No. 1,754.

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4. As regards price, the Board consider that Colonel Beddome's proposal to charge the actual cost of felling and delivery in addition to the value of the standing timber is fair. A uniform rate throughout the Presidency is not feasible as cost of carriage must vary greatly. The Board think that the wood should be selected by an officer of the Department of Public Works at the depôts, and either transported and converted at its own cost, or, if transported and worked up by the Forest Department, a price sufficient to cover the cost of these operations in addition to the value of the timber should be charged. Rupees 2 a cubic foot for Teak logs, delivered at Pothanore or Coimbatore, appears a reasonable price. The proposal that the Department of Public Works should be precluded from purchasing timber in the open market does not commend itself to the Board.

5. To obviate misunderstanding in future, it is advisable that definite rules on these points should be laid down by Government in the Department of Public Works.

(True Copies and Extract.)


Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

Copy to the Conservator of Forests.

.. to the Collector of Coimbatore, with copy of G.O.,

dated 4th December 1875, No. 1,754, Revenue Department.

Exd. W. H. French.

31 May/75 M^g 851
 - 4 Oct/75 M^g 1451
 - 6 May/75 M^g 702
 - 12 Oct/74 M^g 1305
 - 29 April/74 M^g 503

No 741
 Passes 3 and 4 will be referred to the
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 22 June 1876

21 May 1876.

Board of Revenue,
 MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 13th MAY 1876, No. 1,254.

20 May 17 11/18

Received 21 May 1876

MAY 2nd 1876
 Forest No. 45.

Supply of Timber to Public Works De-
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 views with reference to suggestion of Conserva-
 tor of Forests that his department be called
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21 May 1876

- 21. The Board of Revenue
- 14. The Conservator of Forests
- 21. The Conservator of Forests
- 5. The Financial Dept