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MADRAS RECORD OFFICE

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS

Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.
B.P. No.

765

Press
Mis.

Dated

9-6-1876 ~~196~~

Not to be folded or roughly handled

765
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*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th June 1876.*

No. 83. Read the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 9th May 1876, No. 1,214:—

Read the following letter from J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Tindivanam, 23rd March 1876, No. 117:—

WITH reference to the last paragraph of the Board's Proceedings of the 11th instant, No. —, I have the honor to forward, for eventual submission to Government with a view to an authoritative decision on the question, copies of the

From District Engineer, dated 1st March 1876,
No. 313.

To District Engineer, dated 18th March 1876,
No. 66.

From Deputy Collector, General Duties, 16th
February 1876, No. 106, paragraph 2.

correspondence noted in the margin between the District Engineer and myself, from which it will be seen that a difference of opinion exists between us as to the responsibilities of our respective departments in the matter of controlling the distribution of water for irrigation in anicut channels.

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ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Major H. R. MEAD, R.E., District Engineer, South Arcot, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, dated Kodamangalam, 1st March 1876, No. 313:—

WITH reference to the extract from the report of Deputy Collector, General Duties, forwarded by you to me on the 23rd February 1876, I regret much to have to point out both to you and to him that the distribution of water after it leaves the head sluices of the Ponnai anicut is, and always has been, entirely under the Revenue Department, and, as this is the case, I am surprised to find your Deputy Collector writing a general charge of inefficiency against the Range Officer on a point that I suppose he, the Deputy Collector, is chiefly responsible for.

2. The distribution of water in a season like last year is a very difficult matter to arrange, and I am well aware that your Revenue Establishment is not able to manage it as it should be done; at the same time, I believe you will agree with me that more can and should be done than is. I will gladly assist when I can do so; as, however, I have no establishment whatever, and also no power, but little can be done in assistance except in advice, and this is not often of much use.

3. This last season, as you are well aware, was a very bad one indeed, and no doubt the extended portion of the anicut not being raised to the full height (this point is not alluded to by the Deputy Collector) added to the scarcity of water in the Raghavien channel. I must, however, remark that Mr. Wiffen frequently requested the local Revenue authorities to assist him in the construction and upkeep of a corumboo (temporary bank in the river bed) which he made in the river both for the supply of the channels and for the execution of his work in the repairs, but that they never gave the slightest assistance.

4. With regard to the Deputy Collector's remarks on orders of Government, No. 1,766, dated 9th July 1873, I can only say that it is an order of Government, but I must add that it has not been acted up to every where.

5. In conclusion, I must beg that the Department of Public Works may not either in the eyes of the people or of the Revenue officials be held up as responsible or deficient in matters on which they have nothing to do with. I am fully alive to its deficiencies, and I regret to add in this district they are great and numerous; on the point complained of, however, if there is blame it must rest on the Revenue Department who are responsible for the distribution of the water; whether they can do all that should be done or not regarding it is of course a question; my opinion is they cannot.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th June 1876.*

6. I request, however, you will make it known to your Revenue officials that it is their business to attend to the distribution of water after it has left the anicut head sluices.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 2.

From J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, to Major H. R. MEAD, R.E., District Engineer, South Arcot, dated Tindivanam, 18th March 1876, No. 66.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 1st instant, No. 313, in which you make certain observations on an extract from a letter addressed to me by the late Acting Deputy Collector which I forwarded to you for your information. That extract contained a statement that the ryots of the villages watered by the Ponnar anicut channels complained bitterly of the falling off of interest taken in the matter of distributing water to their tanks by the Department of Public Works Officer in charge of the anicut since the days of Mr. O'Shaughnessy, and he gave his opinion that much of the "Shavi" could have been prevented this year had an ordinary caution been exercised by the officer responsible for distribution of water in timely regulating the supply to the tanks.

2. In your letter above quoted you regret the necessity you are under of pointing out to the Deputy Collector and to me that "the distribution of water after it leaves the head sluices of the Ponnar Anicut is, and always has been, entirely under the Revenue Department," and you express your surprise that the Deputy Collector should have written a general charge of inefficiency against the Range Officer on a point that you suppose the Deputy Collector is chiefly responsible for.

3. Holding the views you do it is perfectly natural that you should feel annoyed that an officer of your department should be blamed for neglecting to do what you consider was no part of his duty, but I think you must have penned your assertion, relative to the duty of distributing water after it leaves the head sluices of the Ponnar anicut having always rested with the Revenue Department, without referring to past orders on the point, and I must after such reference be permitted to point out the erroneous character of your dictum.

4. In Extract from Minutes of Consultation, No. 1,580, dated 15th August 1857, the Government passed orders on the question of which department, the Revenue or Public Works, should be entrusted with the duty of distributing water for irrigation, and considered that distribution to the villages should rest solely with the Department of Public Works, but that the detailed distribution to the fields should be left to the villagers, but before passing final orders they referred the matter to the Revenue Board for their opinion. The Board considered that the expediency of entrusting the duty to one department or another must very much depend on the nature of each irrigation work; that when a tank supplies one village the interference of the Department of Public Works is unnecessary, but when it supplies more than one the management of the sluices should be left to the village authorities, the size of the sluices being regulated by the Department of Public Works, and that the sluices in large anicuts and the heads of main channels taken from large rivers should be solely controlled by Department of Public Works.

5. The Government finally ordered that in the case under notice (a reference from Masulipatam) it was not at present necessary or expedient to lay down any more specific rule than to declare the Engineers must exercise complete control over all the larger works for which separate establishments are allowed, and added that the question of the complete transfer of all hydraulic works down to the smallest village tank might be left to be settled hereafter.

6. The question again came up for discussion in 1873, and the Government in passing orders in G.O. of the 5th March 1873, No. 713, Public Works Department, on a Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, absolutely restricted the functions of the subordinate officers of the Public

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th June 1876.*

Works Department to the regulation of the water supply in channels which supply the lands of more than one village, and vested in the village officers the charge of the water supplied to single villages from the moment it quits the regulating sluice, over which, however, they will have no control, and the Chief Engineer in paragraph 4 of the Note on which the Government Order was passed gave his opinion that the regulation of the water supply in all systems of irrigation in which any such regulation at all is practicable should down to the sluices which supply one village only be vested in the Public Works Officers.

7. It seems to me, therefore, perfectly clear that the officers of the Department of Public Works have to look after the regulation and distribution of the water supply in anicut channels along their whole course down to the limit of working the sluices in the said channels which supply single villages only, and that their control is not confined to regulating the supply at the head sluices of those channels. On this point I beg to request your perusal of paragraph 4 of the Note of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation already quoted.

8. I am, therefore, compelled to the conclusion that you and the Range Officer are under a misapprehension as to the responsibility of the latter in respect of the superintendence of the distribution of the water in the Ponnar anicut channels after it has left the head sluices, and that if, in consequence of that misapprehension, he did neglect to supervise that regulation this year, the Deputy Collector's strictures were by no means unjustifiable.

9. It is quite possible you have not a sufficient establishment to do all that is required, but that does not shift the responsibility to the Revenue Department, and a proper establishment should be budgetted for.

10. Again, these channel sluices are sometimes mechanical contrivances of considerable nicety, worked by screws, which in the hands of a village ryot or vetti would very soon get damaged, so that on that account it is advisable that the trained subordinates of the Public Works Department should have the handling of them.

11. I shall forward copies of this correspondence to Government through the Board of Revenue, because as a difference of opinion exists between us as to the respective responsibilities of our departments in controlling the distribution of the water supply in anicut channels, I think it is highly desirable that the matter should be authoritatively settled, especially as the large Palanadorai anicut channel is likely soon to be opened for irrigation purposes, and if the whole responsibility of the Department of Public Works in connection with the regulation of the sluices along its length, and the distribution of water through them, is to cease absolutely at the head sluice, application will have to be made to Government in the Revenue Department for the entertainment of a staff of sluicemen to be under the orders of the Tahsildar.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

*Extract from a letter from the Officiating Deputy Collector, General Duties, South Arcot,
to the Collector of South Arcot, dated 16th February 1876, No. 106.*

PARA. 2. Nunja Shavi wherever it is found is universally attributed by the cultivators and village heads to the strict enforcement of the order to keep open the calingulahs from the 15th of October by which two months' supply from each of the tanks seems to have been wasted away, and the order I regret to find has operated injuriously this year. It seems to have affected all the tanks in general where, though no actual shavi is to be found, the harvest is made by means of well irrigation after the tank-beds became dry, and better crop could have been raised had it not been for the order. Under the Raghavien channel too the tanks of all the villages with the exception of the first twelve from the mouth have not had adequate supply distributed to them from the river, and it has resulted in shavi at the rates above specified. Here the cause is not

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th June 1876.*

attributed to the adversity of the season, but to the mismanagement of the Department of Public Works Officers in charge of the irrigation works. The ryots proudly point to the days of Mr. O'Shaughnessy when in charge of the Ponnar anicut for regulating an equal distribution of water to all their tanks, and bitterly complain of the absence of all interest in the subsequent supervision, and in this year especially when his intervention was most needed no notice was, it is said, taken by the Range Officer of the ryots' complaint, and that no steps were taken to run down the supply through the channel to the more remote tanks to save them from shavi whilst there was still a flow of water in the river, but that they were simply referred to the Tahsildar for the regulation of the supply, who, I believe, has no power in the matter. As to the amount of the truth of what the people assert, I have no means of knowing. If there had been no shavi in former years under these tanks, it was due, I believe, to the more favorable season which found them adequate supply independent of the channel. But I am of opinion that much of the shavi could have been prevented this year had an ordinary caution been exercised by the officer responsible for distribution of water in timely regulating the supply to the tanks.

(Signed) V. DORASWAMY IYER,
Offg. Deputy Collector.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Collector.

SUBMITTED for the orders of Government, with reference to G.O., dated 18th March 1876, No. 392.

2. The District Engineer, with reference to the charge of neglect on the part of the officers of the Department of Public Works in regulating the supply of water from the Ponnar anicut, that the distribution of water after it leaves the head sluices is, and always has been, entirely under the Revenue Department. The District Engineer, however, is under a misapprehension, as pointed out in the Collector's reply of the 18th March, the general principle that the distribution in field channels, and channels irrigating single villages, should be left to the villagers, but that all larger channels and the sluices of village channels should be managed by the Department of Public Works having been approved by G.O., dated 11th March 1873, No. 48, R.D. Government, *vide* the orders marginally noted. If no establishment is provided, as stated by the District Engineer, the requisite staff should be entertained; but in any case the main channels from the Ponnar anicut must remain under the control of the Public Works Department.

(True Copies and Extract.)

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

No 84.

ORDER THEREON, 9th June 1876, No. 765.

Irrigation, No. 2.

THE Government agree with the Board in the remarks made by them in paragraph 2.

*Proceedings of the Madras Government, Revenue Department,
9th June 1876.*

2. Instructions will be issued in the Public Works Department on the subject of the misapprehension of orders on the part of the Public Works Officers of South Arcot brought to notice in the correspondence submitted by the Board.

3. Notice will be taken of the Range Officer's shortcomings in the Public Works Department.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Public Works Department.

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

*Distribution of Water for Irrigation in Anicut Channels in South Arcot District.—*Concurring with the Board in their remarks regarding responsibilities of the Revenue and Public Works Departments in the matter of controlling the —, and directing the issue of orders in the Public Works Department on the subject of the misapprehension of orders on the part of the Public Works Officers brought to notice.

JUNE
No. 83-84.

G.O., 9th June 1876, No. 766.

Recd.

Encl.

Dated June, 9th.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE,

Co., Co., Co.

REVENUE.

Bohl. of 118761 311/10/73.

No. 1,214.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 9th May 1876.

Read the following letter from J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Tindivanam, 23rd March 1876, No. 117:—

With reference to the last paragraph of the Board's Proceedings of the 11th instant, No. —, I have the honor to forward, for eventual submission to Government with a view to an authoritative decision on the question, copies of the

From District Engineer, dated 1st March 1876, No. 313.

To District Engineer, dated 18th March 1876, No. 66.

From Deputy Collector, General Duties, 16th February 1876, No. 106, paragraph 2.

correspondence noted in the margin between the District Engineer and myself, from which it will be seen that a difference of opinion exists between us as to the responsibilities of our respective departments in the matter of controlling the distribution of water for irrigation in anicut channels.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From Major H. R. MEAD, R.E., District Engineer, South Arcot, to J. H. GARSTIN, Esq., Collector of South Arcot, dated Kodamangalam, 1st March 1876, No. 313:—

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2. The distribution of water in a season like last year is a very difficult matter to arrange, and I am well aware that your Revenue Establishment is not able to manage it as it should be done; at the same time, I believe you will agree with me that more can and should be done than is. I will gladly assist when I can do so; as, however, I have no establishment whatever, and also no power, but little can be done in assistance except in advice, and this is not often of much use.

3. This last season, as you are well aware, was a very bad one indeed, and no doubt the extended portion of the anicut not being raised to the full height (this point is not alluded to by the Deputy Collector) added to the scarcity of water in the Raghavien channel. I must, however, remark that Mr. Wiffen frequently requested the local Revenue authorities to assist him in the construction and upkeep of a corumboo (temporary bank in the river bed) which he made in the river both for the supply of the channels and for the execution of his work in the repairs, but that they never gave the slightest assistance.

4. With regard to the Deputy Collector's remarks on orders of Government, No. 1,766, dated 9th July 1873, I can only say that it is an order of Government, but I must add that it has not been acted up to every where.

5. In conclusion, I must beg that the Department of Public Works may not either in the eyes of the people or of the Revenue officials be held up as responsible or deficient in matters on which they have nothing to do with. I am fully alive to its deficiencies, and I regret to add in this district they are great and numerous; on the point complained of, however, if there is blame it must rest on the Revenue Department who are responsible for the distribution of the water;

whether they can do all that should be done or not regarding it is of course a question; my opinion is they cannot.

6. I request, however, you will make it known to your Revenue officials that it is their business to attend to the distribution of water after it has left the anicut head sluices.

(True Copy.)

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Collector.

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2. In your letter above quoted you regret the necessity you are under of pointing out to the Deputy Collector and to me that "the distribution of water after it leaves the head sluices of the Ponnar Anicut is, and always has been, entirely under the Revenue Department," and you express your surprise that the Deputy Collector should have written a general charge of inefficiency against the Range Officer on a point that you suppose the Deputy Collector is chiefly responsible for.

3. Holding the views you do it is perfectly natural that you should feel annoyed that an officer of your department should be blamed for neglecting to do what you consider was no part of his duty, but I think you must have penned your assertion, relative to the duty of distributing water after it leaves the head sluices of the Ponnar anicut having always rested with the Revenue Department, without referring to past orders on the point, and I must after such reference be permitted to point out the erroneous character of your dictum.

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5. The Government finally ordered that in the case under notice (a reference from Masulipatam) it was not at present necessary or expedient to lay down any more specific rule than to declare the Engineers must exercise complete control over all the larger works for which separate establishments are allowed, and added that the question of the complete transfer of all hydraulic works down to the smallest village tank might be left to be settled hereafter.

6. The question again came up for discussion in 1873, and the Government in passing orders in G.O. of the 5th March 1873, No. 713, Public Works Department, on a Note by the Chief Engineer for Irrigation, absolutely restricted the functions of the subordinate officers of the Public

Works Department to the regulation of the water supply in channels which supply the lands of more than one village, and vested in the village officers the charge of the water supplied to single villages from the moment it quits the regulating sluice, over which, however, they will have no control, and the Chief Engineer in paragraph 4 of the Note on which the Government Order was passed gave his opinion that the regulation of the water supply in all systems of irrigation in which any such regulation at all is practicable should down to the sluices which supply one village only be vested in the Public Works Officers.

7. It seems to me, therefore, perfectly clear that the officers of the Department of Public Works have to look after the regulation and distribution of the water supply in anicut channels along their whole course down to the limit of working the sluices in the said channels which supply single villages only, and that their control is not confined to regulating the supply at the head sluices of those channels. On this point I beg to request your perusal of paragraph 4 of the Note of the Chief Engineer for Irrigation already quoted.

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11. I shall forward copies of this correspondence to Government through the Board of Revenue, because as a difference of opinion exists between us as to the respective responsibilities of our departments in controlling the distribution of the water supply in anicut channels, I think it is highly desirable that the matter should be authoritatively settled, especially as the large Palau-durai anicut channel is likely soon to be opened for irrigation purposes, and if the whole responsibility of the Department of Public Works in connection with the regulation of the sluices along its length, and the distribution of water through them, is to cease absolutely at the head sluice, application will have to be made to Government in the Revenue Department for the entertainment of a staff of sluicemen to be under the orders of the Tahsildar.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Collector.

ENCLOSURE No. 3.

Extract from a letter from the Officiating Deputy Collector, General Duties, South Arcot, to the Collector of South Arcot, dated 16th February 1876, No. 106.

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attributed to the adversity of the season, but to the mismanagement of the Department of Public Works Officers in charge of the irrigation works. The ryots proudly point to the days of Mr. O'Shaughnessy when in charge of the Ponnar anicut for regulating an equal distribution of water to all their tanks, and bitterly complain of the absence of all interest in the subsequent supervision, and in this year especially when his intervention was most needed no notice was, it is said, taken by the Range Officer of the ryots' complaint, and that no steps were taken to run down the supply through the channel to the more remote tanks to save them from shavi whilst there was still a flow of water in the river, but that they were simply referred to the Tahsildar for the regulation of the supply, who, I believe, has no power in the matter. As to the amount of the truth of what the people assert, I have no means of knowing. If there had been no shavi in former years under these tanks, it was due, I believe, to the more favorable season which found them adequate supply independent of the channel. But I am of opinion that much of the shavi could have been prevented this year had an ordinary caution been exercised by the officer responsible for distribution of water in timely regulating the supply to the tanks.

(Signed) V. DORASWAMY IYER,
Offg. Deputy Collector.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) J. H. GARSTIN,
Collector.

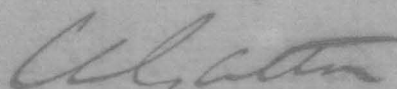
SUBMITTED for the orders of Government, with reference to G.O., dated 18th March 1876, No. 392.

2. The District Engineer contends with reference to the charge of neglect on the part of the officers of the Department of Public Works in regulating the supply of water from the Ponnar anicut, that the distribution of water after it leaves the head sluices is, and always has been, entirely under the Revenue Department. The District Engineer, however, is under a misapprehension, as pointed out in the Collector's reply of the 18th March, the general principle that the distribution in field channels, and channels irrigating single villages, should be left to the villagers, but that all larger channels and the sluices of village channels should be managed by the Department of Public Works having been approved by Government, *vide* the orders marginally noted. If no establishment is provided,

G.O., dated 11th March 1873, No. 48, R.D.
" " 2nd " 1875, " 419, "
" " 3rd Nov. " " 1,562, "

as stated by the District Engineer, the requisite staff should be entertained; but in any case the main channels from the Ponnar anicut must remain under the control of the Public Works Department.

(True Copies and Extract.)


Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to the Collector of South Arcot.

Exd. W. J. Lewis.

5.0.18 March 76 net 372
 3.0.77 net 1562
 13.0.78 net 1011
 2.0.79 net 419
 11.0.80 net 487
 19.0.81 net 137
 2.0.82 net 1562

The Govt agree with the Board in the remarks made by them in para 2.

Instructions will be issued in the Public Works Dept on the subject of the mis-apprehension of orders on the part of the P. W. Officers of S. Arcot brought to notice in the correspondence submitted by the Board.

When order is taken of the Range Officers

24.2.76
 Revenue 1876. Defunct
 Board of Revenue
 MADRAS.

PROCEEDINGS, 9TH MAY 1876, No. 1,214.

24.2.76
 Encl

MAY.
 No. 1,214.

Distribution of water for Irrigation to
 Ancient Channels.—Submitting for orders of
 Government copies of correspondence between
 Collector and District Engineer of South Arcot
 regarding responsibilities of Revenue and Public
 Works Departments in the matter of controlling
 the —

With order
 24.2.76-9.5.76

14.5.76 Board of Revenue
 21.0.76 Public Works Dept
 2.0.76