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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU

REVENUE DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	970	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	26-6-1878.	197.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

Archives I-5,806-24-2-78.

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

26th June 1878, No. 970.

Read the following paper:—

No. 311. Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 11th June 1878, No. 1,554.

Read the following letter from W. H. COMYN, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Munjeshwar, 28th May 1878, No. 943:—

I HAVE the honor to report, for the information of the Board of Revenue, the partial destruction by fire of the Sea Custom House and Salt Cotaur at this place (Munjeshwar) on the forenoon of the 18th instant.

2. The fire originated in the cook-room of a Moplah's house near the Custom House, and was due to the carelessness of one of the women of the house who went out, leaving a fire burning in the cook-room, the low-thatched roof of which caught fire. The house was soon enveloped in flames and, as there was a high wind blowing at the time, the fire was communicated to several other houses and to the Government buildings above mentioned before anything could be done to stop it. The roofs of all these buildings, being of thatch, were rapidly consumed.

3. The following is the damage done to the Government buildings. The Weighing Shed attached to the Custom House was completely destroyed and some damage was done to a quantity of duty-paid salt which the importer had failed to remove from the premises. The weighing machines and other apparatus were more or less injured. The Sea Custom House was partially destroyed, the roof having been completely burnt and the doors, windows, and other timber fittings consumed. The record-room however was not much injured. The box containing the Sea Custom records and the current salt records was with great difficulty rescued from the fire by the Custom Peons and Police Constables present. They were also able to save the office furniture, but were prevented by the flames from removing the box containing the old salt records, which was consequently destroyed. These records, however, are comparatively unimportant. The Salt Cotaur, which contained 9,770 Indian maunds of salt, was seriously injured, the roof and doors and wood-work generally being completely burnt. The walls and basement stood and received no injury; but the flames must have got thorough possession of the building, the partitions between the different compartments being burnt down to the ground and the whole surface of the mass of salt contained in the Cotaur being charred and burnt to the depth of from one to two inches.

4. The Salt Deputy Collector estimates the damage thus done to the salt at about seven or eight per cent., and thinks that we may recover 9,000 maunds out of the whole quantity stored. From my inspection I certainly do not think that Mr. Ball's estimate of loss will be exceeded. Taking his estimate, the value of the quantity of salt destroyed, viz., 770 Indian maunds, amounts to Rupees 2,310, i.e., Rupees 1,925, amount of duty at Rupees $2\frac{1}{2}$ per Indian maund, plus Rupees 385, prime cost at 8 Annas per maund. Mr. Ball has submitted an estimate for Rupees 599 for re-roofing and repairing the Cotaur and Sea Custom House and Weighing Shed. To this the following items of damage must be added:—

Value of—		RS.
Wooden Triangle for Sea Custom Beam Scales	...	10
Zinc cover of Platform Weighing Machine	...	5
Wooden Stands of Grainger's Machine	...	12
Do. Box containing Records	...	8
		634

If to this be added the probable value of the salt lost, viz., Rupees 2,310, the total loss to Government amounts to Rupees 2,944, or in round numbers Rupees 3,000. I have checked the estimate for repairs submitted by the Salt Deputy Collector and have sanctioned the amount, including Rupees 200 already advanced for emergent repairs.

5. From reports received and personal inquiries made on the spot, I am satisfied there was no neglect on the part of any of the Custom or Police authorities, but that on the contrary they did all that could under the circumstances possibly be done to save the records and other Government property. There was no time to take precautionary measures for preventing the fire from extending to the Government buildings, and once there the fire was altogether beyond the control of the local authorities.

6. Prompt measures were taken by the Superintendent for protecting the salt from the weather, and the Police guard was strengthened. On the Tahsildar arriving on the spot he set to work to run up a temporary roof; Rupees 200 were advanced to him from the Huzur for the purchase of materials, and 1,000 bamboos (not procurable at this place) were sent from Mangalore. The monsoon being near at hand, and the weather being very threatening, I came down here to hurry on the work and supervise operations. Mr. Ball, who was engaged at the Kundapur Excise Works at the north of the district, has also arrived, and under his immediate superintendence the re-roofing of the Salt Cotaur has been completed, new doors, &c., are ready to be put up, and the necessary repairs to the Custom House are in progress.

7. Though we have had some rain, I am glad to say that — thanks to the precautions adopted — the salt has not been injured by it, nor is there now any fear of damage on that score, the new substantial roof of the Salt Cotaur being sufficiently strong not only to withstand the brunt of the approaching monsoon, but to last for two or three years. The fire and consequent injury to weighing machines and other apparatus have not caused any interruption to the business of the Custom House, there being no transactions owing to the approaching monsoon.

8. In addition to the loss occasioned to Government, the value of private property destroyed by the fire is estimated at about Rupees 3,000. No loss of life occurred.

SUBMITTED for the information of Government.

2. As the proximity of the cook-room alluded to is a source of danger to the property of Government, the Collector should arrange with the owner for its removal.

(A true Copy and Extract.)

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

No. 312.

ORDER THEREON, 26th June 1878, No. 970.

Separate Revenue, No. 33.
Salt.

RECORDED.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) C. G. MASTER,
Secretary to Government.

To the Board of Revenue.

Ed. F. R. Bantleman.

No. 1,554.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 11th June 1878.

Read the following letter from W. H. COMYN, Esq., Acting Collector of South Canara, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Acting Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Munjeshwar, 28th May 1878, No. 943:—

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Sea Custom House and Salt Cotaur at Munjeshwar, in South Canara District.—Record of Proceedings of the Board of Revenue report- ing on the partial destruction by fire of the

JUNE.
Nos. 311-313.

G.O., 26th June 1878, No. 970.

Dated June 20th.

THE BOARD OF REVENUE.

REVENUE.

Govt. of 1878

5. From reports received and personal inquiries made on the spot, I am satisfied there was no neglect on the part of any of the Custom or Police authorities, but that on the contrary they did all that could under the circumstances possibly be done to save the records and other Government property. There was no time to take precautionary measures for preventing the fire from extending to the Government buildings, and once there the fire was altogether beyond the control of the local authorities.

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Submitted for the information of Government.

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(A true Copy and Extract.)

Acting Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Copy to the Acting Collector of South Canara.
" " Commissioner of Salt Revenue.

Ed. G. Freeman.

PROCEEDINGS 11TH JUNE 1878, No. 1,554.

BOARD OF REVENUE,
MADRAS.

1878.

No. 2669.

Revenue 1878. Sept.

Date 18/6/78.

Resol. 18/6/78.

JUNE
No. 1,554.

See Custom House and Salt Cotaur — at Mun-
jeshwar in South Canara District. — Submitting
to Government letter from Collector reporting
the partial destruction by fire of the —, and
requesting that effort be made for the re-
moval of the cook-room near the Government
building.

Handwritten notes and signatures on the left margin, including "Ed. G. Freeman" and "1878".