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TAMIL NADU ARCHIVES

GOVERNMENT OF TAMIL NADU
Revenue DEPARTMENT

G.O. No.	585	Press.
B.P. No.		Mis.
Dated	25-5-1880	197.

Not to be folded or roughly handled

585

GOVERNMENT OF MADRAS.
REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

25th May 1880, No. 585.

No. 278. READ THE FOLLOWING PAPER :—

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th April 1880, No. 560.

ABSTRACT.—Applying for sanction of Government for entertainment of a temporary Police guard for salt swamps in Kistna District, and requesting further information from Commissioner of Salt Revenue regarding the proposal to destroy this salt.

No. 279. ORDER THEREON, 25th May 1880, No. 585.

Separate Revenue, No. 15.

Salt.

SANCTION is granted accordingly for a temporary Police guard consisting of two Head Constables and sixty-two Constables at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,632-8-0 for the three months

during which their employment is necessary. There is no objection to the services of pensioned sepoy being utilized.

2. As regards the disposal of the swamps and swamp salt, the Government await the further information which the Commissioner has been asked to furnish, but they are inclined to agree with Mr. Bliss in thinking it advisable to prevent the formation of swamp salt except in localities where the produce is exceptionally fine, and where it can be easily collected and stored for sale without objection.

3. Meanwhile the papers will be communicated to the Chief Eng. nec., Irrigation Department, for his remarks.

(True Extract.)

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

To the Board of Revenue.
„ the Accountant-General.
„ the Inspector-General of Police.
„ the Financial Department.
„ the Chief Engineer for Irrigation.

Exd. A. F. Goodall.

10 Copies.

585
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No. 560.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE, dated 26th April 1880.

Read the following letters:—

From H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, to C. A. GALTON, Esq., Secretary to the Board of Revenue, (through Inspector-General of Police,) dated Calicut, 15th April 1880, No. 2,264.

I HAVE the honor to forward for orders copy of a letter, No. 168, dated March 12th, 1880, from the Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Salt Revenue, Northern Division, on the subject of the arrangements necessary to be made for the efficient guarding of the Kistna salt factories and salt swamps.

2. Mr. McIver proposes the following temporary additions to the present strength of the Police guards employed on this duty:—

	Present Strength.	Addition proposed.
Pandaka factory	9	15
Manginapudy do.	10	18
Kona swamps	14	10
Peravali and Kottapatam swamps	...	6
Nizampatam factory	21	9
Chinna Ganjam do.	21	6
Total	75	64

He proposes that this force should consist of two Head Constables and sixty-two Constables, and states that it will cost about Rs. 1,250 for the three months during which its employment will be necessary. He has not sent up a proposition statement, and the information given in his letter is insufficient to enable me to prepare one. I have written to him for one, but in the meantime would request that the proposed force may be sanctioned, the exact cost being reported afterwards. The matter is somewhat urgent, as the loss of revenue through the illicit removal of salt from the Kona swamps is notorious, and has been estimated by persons acquainted with the district at lakhs, rather than thousands, of rupees annually.

3. I have informed Mr. McIver that until such arrangements are made and are in good working order for guarding the Kona swamps as will render impossible the removal of swamp salt, it will be better not to collect and sell any on behalf of Government. My reason for this is that whenever and wherever Government is collecting and selling swamp salt, it is impossible to tell whether swamp salt found in bazaars, &c., is licit, or illicit, and the revenue is thus exposed to considerable danger which can be averted by the destruction, instead of the collection, of all salt of the kind found in the neighbourhood—a safer, and I have no doubt a cheaper, course in the long run, though at first sight it may seem a wasteful one.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From L. McIVER, Esq., Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Salt Revenue, Northern Division, to H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, dated Masulipatam, 12th March 1880, No. 168.

With reference to your telegram of the 21st February 1880 and previous correspondence on the subject of the Kona swamp guards, I have the honor to report as follows.

1/4 of 1500/1000

REVENUE.

Colt. of (1880) cylinders.

Local

FOR BOARD OF REVENUE,

Secy. Secy. Secy.

1000 May 20th

1000 May 20th

End.

G.O. 578-273

MAY.

1000 May 20th

1000 May 20th

2. The total temporary Police guard in this district for factories consists of seventy-five men, all told. This force, as far as I have seen, is totally inadequate in point of numbers for its primary duty of guarding the pans day and night during the season of manufacture. But it is further weakened by a portion of it being detached for swamp guarding. The following is the present distribution :—

Pandraka	...	...	...	...	...	...	9
Manginapudy	...	...	...	...	...	...	10
Nizampatam	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Chinna Ganjam	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Kona swamps	...	...	...	...	...	...	14

3. I have no fault to find with the material of the guard which, as far as I am able to judge, is quite up to the average. The Superintendent has done the best possible with means at his disposal, but the result of this short supply of men is that none of the work can be properly done. Thus at Manginapudy there are at present one Head Constable and nine men to guard the pans. The line to be watched is nearly four miles long, and has no artificial protection. There are six posts, three with two men each, and three with one each, and these men have to be on duty day and night. It is quite impossible that they can do the work, and the guard becomes a farce. Twice the number of posts and three times the number of men would not be more than enough. After consultation with the Superintendent of Police and the Salt Assistant Commissioner, I propose increasing the number of posts to nine with three men in each—two always on duty and one always on patrol at night.

4. At Pandraka we have to provide a guard for a salt-bearing area in several patches enclosed by a line of five miles in length totally unprotected. For this there are at present nine men. There should be at least fifteen. We also require three sentry posts between the salt swamp and the platform along the line of conveyance. To complete the guard here we should therefore have twelve additional men. For Addalapara swamp, a post with three men. Here we propose to dig a few wells to draw away the brine and drain the swamp.

5. At Kona swamp there are at present ten men and four more going out shortly. The Superintendent of Police stated last year that one Head Constable and twenty-four men were necessary, and he is of the same opinion still. Mr. Assistant Commissioner Durma Row proposes by closing two channels and linking together three stretches of raising ground with low bunds to keep water from reaching the most dangerous part of the swamp. Where salt of good quality is now forming, he proposes to collect it and sell it on the spot, and he therefore calculates on being able to protect the revenue with comparatively small Police assistance. We are going to try his plan, but the Police guard will still be necessary. The Assistant Commissioner's scheme affects only a portion of the swamp, and many outlying tracts have still to be guarded, and it is to be remembered that the place is surrounded by professional smugglers who will not tamely acquiesce in our measures. Last year they carried off salt in caravans of carts and beat off the Police who tried to interfere. It would never do to risk this again this year. For my own part I would prefer a stronger force than that recommended by Major Hoskins, but I have adopted his figures.

6. Nizampatam and Chinna Ganjam I have not yet reached, and for these factories and for the salt swamps in their neighbourhood we shall probably want more help; for the present I have asked, at Major Hoskins' suggestion, for six men to furnish guards at Peravali and Kottapatam respectively. The Assistant Commissioner considers necessary an addition of nine men for Nizampatam and six for Chinna Ganjam. I adopt this subject to modification after I have been over the ground. This makes altogether a requisition for two Head Constables and sixty-two Constables for three months, involving a cost of say, Rs. 1,250. I would ask you to apply for sanction for this, and at the same time to obtain the permission of the Government for the enlistment of pensioned sepoys among the temporary guard. The latter request is to save time, as there is a Government Order prohibiting the entertainment of discharged public servants without special sanction. Sepoys already know part of the work, are accustomed to discipline, and can be sent out of school much more rapidly than raw recruits. This is important as we want the men at once. After I have gone more thoroughly over the swamps, I shall be prepared to make a suggestion for future years.

7. If the present proposals are sanctioned, I would ask you to telegraph.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) P. RAJARATNA MOODALY,
Personal Asst., for Commr. of Salt Revenue.

E. No. 1,792.

FORWARDED to the Secretary to the Board of Revenue. The cost of the guard for three months amounts to Rs. 1,632-8-0.

(Signed) T. K. GUTHRIE, Major,
Madras, Ag. Asst. Insp. Genl. of Police.
21st April 1880.

From H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, to C. A. GALTON, Esq.,
Secretary to the Board of Revenue, dated Calicut, 16th April 1880,
No. 2,273.

I HAVE the honor to enclose for orders copy of a letter, No. 170, dated March 13th, 1880, from the Deputy Commissioner of Salt Revenue, Northern Division, upon the subject of the steps to be taken with regard to the Kona swamps in the Kistna District.

2. The proposals which Mr. McIver states he has made for the temporary guarding of these swamps have been considered in a separate letter from me (No. 2,264, dated April 15th, 1880,) forwarded through the Inspector-General of Police. They provide merely for guarding the swamps so as to prevent loss of revenue during the current season. In his letter now forwarded, Mr. McIver states his views as to the steps which should be taken permanently to prevent the formation of swamp salt in this locality, so that in future no temptation to break the law may be held out to the people of the neighbourhood, and the guarding of the swamps may therefore be unnecessary.

3. Mr. McIver is of opinion, and I quite agree with him, that if some parts of these swamps are drained, so that the sea water which enters at the spring tides cannot lodge there; some bunded, so that the sea water cannot get in at all, and some swamped with fresh water from the Kistna Canals, the formation of salt there can be prevented. He points out that this is an engineering rather than a police question; and he dwells with force and justice on the temptation afforded by the existence of these vast fields of salt, which nature has placed at their doors, but which it is illegal to touch, to the people of the neighbourhood.

4. I recommend therefore that Government be asked to remit the matter to the Public Works Department for early report. If in the present reduced state of that department no competent person is available for the investigation of the question, I recommend that one be specially engaged for the purpose and the cost of his employment charged to this department. The cost of this measure, and of carrying out such works as may be found necessary for the purposes above described, may be considerable; but it seems to me quite impossible that it can exceed the actual gain of revenue which will accrue, to say nothing of the benefit to the people of the removal from their midst of a temptation which must tend to their demoralization and which must foster among them a lamentable disregard of law and authority.

ENCLOSURE No. 1.

From L. McIVER, Esq., Officiating Deputy Commissioner of Salt Revenue, Northern Division, to H. W. BLISS, Esq., Commissioner of Salt Revenue, Madras, dated Kona, 13th March 1880, No. 170.

In continuation of my letter, No. 168, dated 12th instant, on the subject of the Kistna guards, I have the honor to urge the necessity of at once taking the preliminary steps towards a permanent and effective arrangement for the protection of the Kona and other Kistna swamps. In my letter above referred to, I have suggested such measures as appeared urgently necessary for the present season, but these measures, unavoidably hasty, are merely to meet an emergency and do not pretend to be scientific.

2. The first thing to be done is to obtain sanction for a thorough survey with levels. The Kona swamp extends from the Bandar Upputern on the north to Kistna Sagara Sangam on the south, some twelve miles long, with an average width of four miles; all the enclosed area, however, is not salt-bearing; beside one long belt of high ground running down the centre from north to south, there are several smaller patches with palmyras and some extent of cultivated land.

There are also a few small villages. The most central of which, Kona, gives its name to the swamp and contains six houses. Besides there are some tracts of sand and some which are covered by salt earth. The area on which at present actual salt—and it is of splendid quality—forms is confined to some three or four large fields and several detached patches, but after next spring tides these areas will be much extended.

3. The levels of the swamp are very various, and it is to this fact, I think, that we must look for a remedy. The matter in short is one for Engineers and not for Police to deal with. The survey I propose will, I think, show that it is possible to take advantage of the levels to render the swamp harmless in some parts by draining and in others by flooding. The country has already been gone over by the Revenue Survey, but the admirable taluk and village maps of that department do not show levels or the other features specially of importance to us. These maps would, however, save much preliminary work in our survey. When we get the latter, I would then propose to place it before Superintending Engineer, and ask him for a scheme which I venture to anticipate would include cutting fresh channels, sinking wells, and some bunding.

4. Whatever the remedy is, it will cost money, and possibly a good deal of money; but nothing could be less desirable than that we should continue to rely on a Police cordon. This implies no reflection of the Police; but even were there numbers intolerably increased they could never be a thorough protection, and at the best of times they merely represent detection and repression. What we want is *prevention* and the removal of temptation. The loss of revenue due to these swamps is estimated at from one to three lakhs a year, and from such information as I have gathered it is probably more than the lower figure. The prevention of salt formation will effect a saving in guards. Fresh water channels would bring a good deal of waste land under cultivation, at least so the local ryots say; and this with the reduction of the Police guards and the presumable increase of revenue would be our set-off against the cost. But in this case we have to remember that it is not solely an increase of revenue that is our object. We have for years incurred the responsibility of leaving an enormous temptation before the people, and this we are bound to remove even if the cost be greater than the actual money gain. Within a stone's throw from where I am writing there is at this moment a wide unbroken expanse of spontaneous swamp salt exactly like a 10-acre field with four inches of new snow on it. The salt is nearly ready for storing, and is better than any we manufacture in this district. But for the temporary men we have just brought down there is not a Government servant within six miles. Half an hour's work without fear of detection will fill a cart with a load that can easily be sold for Rs. 24. It would be more than human nature for the poor ryots round to resist this. If they take it they not only injure the revenue but they commit crime, and my view is that so long as we do not take every reasonable precaution to remove this temptation, we share the moral responsibility of that crime, and that therefore we should not measure the cost by the immediate revenue results.

5. The foregoing deals with Kona swamp alone, but in the large area between the Kistna Sagara Sangam and the main mouth of the Kistna there is much swamp, and again west of the main mouth reaching almost to Nizampatam there is more. We have the Pandraka, Addalapparra, Peravalli, Kottapatam, and Chinna Ganjam swamps to deal with as well, and over all these the proposed survey ought to go. Government has recently approved of the factories being mapped by the Survey Department (*vide* G.O., No. 42, dated 10th January 1880). Possibly you might obtain the services of a party for this more pressing object first, and it certainly could be *Revenue Survey* work in the most primary sense of the name.

(True Copy.)

(Signed) P. RAJARATNA MOODALY,
Personal Asst. for
Commr. of Salt Revenue.

In the first letter sanction is requested for the entertainment of a temporary guard of two Head Constables and sixty-two Constables for three months at a cost of Rs. 1,632-8-0 to guard extensive salt swamps in the Kistna District; the second letter contains proposals for preventing the formation of salt in this locality, and Mr. Bliss requests that the matter may be referred to the Public Works Department for early report as to the feasibility of the measures suggested by Mr. McIver. The Board question the advisability of destroying this salt which is stated to be of splendid quality, and would prefer to see it collected and stored on behalf of Government if it could be disposed of locally or sold for export. Mr. Bliss will be requested to report on this point. The early sanction of Government will be requested for the entertain-

ment of the temporary Police guard, which is absolutely necessary to prevent wholesale removal of the salt.

(True Copies and Extract.)

Secretary.

To the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.
Commissioner of Salt Revenue.

Copy to the Inspector-General of Police.

Esq. A. Gruber.

585

Revenue Department.

No. 585

PROCEEDINGS of the MADRAS GOVERNMENT.

Under date the 20 May 1880.

Read the following

Proceedings of the Board of Revenue, dated 26th April 1880, No. 560, relative to the intimation of a temporary Police guard for Salt Swamps in the Kistna District.

Sanction is granted accordingly for a temporary Police guard, consisting of 2 Head Constables and 62 constables and an estimated cost of Rs. 1632-8-0 for the three months during which their employment is necessary. There is no objection to the services

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32-1-8-1880-110.

Revenue 1880 No. 560

1880.

Board of Revenue,

MADRAS.

THE SECRETARY TO GOVT.,
REVENUE DEPARTMENT,
&c., &c., &c.

Dated April 26th.

Printed by
Revised 11/1/80

PROCEEDINGS, 26TH APRIL 1880, No. 560.

22-3/9/80

APRIL
No. 560.

PIC

Salt Swamps in Kistna District.—Applying for sanction of Government for establishment of a temporary Police guard for — and requesting further information from Commissioner of Salt Revenue regarding the proposal to destroy this salt.

Back 110-278
Oct. 5.

Services of - few
 - signed beyond
 being utilized.
 2. The Government
 await the further
 information which
 the Commissioner
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 however, to agree
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 thinking it advis-
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 of Swamp Salt
 except in locali-
 ties where the
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 -tionally fine
 and where it can
 be easily collec-
 -ted and stored
 for sale in the
 future.

G.C.C.
 Handwritten notes
 and initials

- 32nd May 1880 Board of Revenue and
 1. The Commissioner General of
 2. The District General of Pat
 3. The Financial Dept
 4. The Chief Engineer

Sept 20

Impress
B. M. G. H. S.
New York

Print.
26.5.80.

PRINT
28.5.80

Hon. W. H. S.

Revenue Department
Recd. Govt. 8 25th May/85
21st 585
A. W.