

Revenue (1899) Department.

MISCELLANEOUS SERIES:

G.O., No. 1456

DATED 22 April 99

[Despatch Abstract.]

Recording Board's Procp.,
Commg: to certain Collectors
letter from the Director General
of Statistics regarding the
maintenance of a record
of wholesale prices.

BACK PAPERS.

G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.	G.O.	No.	Department.	Date.

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Revenue (1899) Dept.

REVENUE DEPARTMENT.

1899.

Board of Revenue

(Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture),

MADRAS.

Current No 2337

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Proceedings, No. 89, 21st March 1899.

Sp. no. 1456 of 22 April 99

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Wholesale prices.—Communicating to certain Collectors letter from the Director-General of Statistics regarding the maintenance of a record of —.

24/11

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF REVENUE

(REVENUE SETTLEMENT, LAND RECORDS AND AGRICULTURE).

READ—again Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (R.S., L.R. and Agri.), Mis. No. 1090, dated 14th February 1898.

ABSTRACT.—Communicating to the Collectors concerned letter from the Director-General of Statistics enclosing the comparative statement of retail and wholesale prices of food-grains in certain stations of Madras for the 2nd half of November 1897, and requesting to cause an enquiry to be made into the accuracy of the figures.

READ—again the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (R.S., L.R. and Agri.), Mis. No. 6824, dated 24th November 1898:—

Read—the following letter from E. A. ELWIN, Esq., Acting Collector of Bellary, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement and Director of the Department of Land Records and Agriculture, dated 12th November 1898, Dis. No. 1403:—

With reference to B.P., Mis. No. 6075, dated 12th October 1898, I have the honour to express my regret that the Tahsildar of Bellary, who reported the prices to the Board, is unable at this distant date to satisfactorily explain the identity of the wholesale and retail prices of white cholam.

2. I am inclined to think that the figures were probably more imaginary than real, for there must have been hardly any wholesale dealings in white cholam at the end of November last as the crop that should have been reaped in February 1897 had been almost wholly lost, the drain on stocks had been great and the crop of 1897-98 had but recently appeared above ground.

Resolution—Mis. No. 6824, dated 24th November 1898.

Recorded.

2. The following letter will be despatched to the Director-General of Statistics:—

“With reference to your letter, No. 98 P.W., dated 31st January 1898, I am directed to state that the apparent discrepancies to which you draw attention have been carefully enquired into, and to state in reference to the figures you quote that in the case of the price of rice in Tanjore, the wholesale prices are returned from the port of Negapatam, and the retail from the town of Tanjore, so that no comparison is possible, and that the quotations you allude to refer to rice of different qualities. In regard to the prices of cholam and cumbu reported from Madura, I am to state that enquiry shows that the correct wholesale prices should be—

Cholam	...	...	Rs. 2-12-6 per maund or 14-6 seers per rupee.
Cumbu	...	...	„ 2-11-1 „ or 14-13 „

“As to the prices of cholam at Coimbatore, it is stated that the quotations refer to different sorts of the same grain. The other discrepancies are small, but I am to add that in many cases grain of several varieties is sold in the markets as at Coimbatore, and even if all be taken into consideration in framing a quotation, the results will vary according to the method of calculation pursued. Again in many places there is no marked distinction between wholesale and retail transactions, and the retail

dealers are in ordinary times independent of the wholesale traders, and obtain their supplies largely from their rural customers by a system of barter, and can thus work on the smallest of margins.”

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAH,
Secretary.

To the Director-General of Statistics.

READ—again the following Proceedings of the Board of Revenue (R.S., L.R. and Agri.), Mis. No. 222, dated 9th January 1899:—

Read—the following letter from J. A. ROBERTSON, Esq., Officiating Director-General of Statistics, to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture, dated Calcutta, the 9th December 1898, No. 643-P.W.:—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, Mis. No. 6824, dated the 24th November 1898, stating the reasons for the differences between the wholesale and retail prices at certain stations of some food-grains for the 2nd half of November 1897.

2. I beg to point out that the statements of wholesale prices were framed in view to strict comparison with the prices of the same commodity in retail transactions, and that no comparison is possible unless wholesale and retail prices are returned of the same quality of the article in a standard weight or measure, the prices being those current at the same place and time; and I would suggest that the District officers who record the wholesale and retail prices be advised to bear this in mind. It may also be pointed out that when different classes of the same grain are sold in the market, the average price may be most conveniently determined by taking the average of the rates ruling for all classes.

Resolution—Mis. No. 222, dated 9th January 1899.

Before communicating any further instructions to the officers concerned in preparing the record of wholesale prices in this Presidency, the attention of the Director-General will be drawn to B.P., No. 124, dated 9th June 1896, in which the instructions at present in force are given.

It will be pointed out to him that, except inferentially, there is nothing to be found in the instructions of the Government of India, printed in the Proceedings above quoted, to show that a comparison of wholesale and retail prices was desired, and also that where transactions take place in units of volume, the conversion of averages into units of weight must often lead to apparently conflicting results.

It will further be pointed out that of the marts selected with the approval of the Government of India for the purpose of recording wholesale prices of grain the following are not district head-quarters from which alone retail prices are reported to the Director-General:—

Vizianagram.	Negapatam.
Guntur.	Vellore.

The district head-quarters were designedly omitted, as they are in several cases not marts of any importance.

(True Copy and Extract.)

(Signed) R. V. SRINIVASIAH,
Secretary.

To the Director-General of Statistics, Calcutta.

READ—also the following letter from J. A. ROBERTSON, Esq., Officiating Director-General of Statistics to the Secretary to the Commissioner of Revenue Settlement, Land Records and Agriculture, dated Calcutta, the 4th February 1899, No. 110-P.W. :—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the B.P., Mis. No. 222, dated the 9th January 1899, pointing out (1) that, except inferentially, there is nothing to be found in the instructions of the Government of India to show that a comparison of wholesale and retail prices was desired, (2) that where transactions take place in units of volume, the conversion of averages into units of weight must often lead to conflicting results, and (3) that there are certain marts which are not district head-quarters from which alone retail prices are reported.

2. With reference to point (1), I beg to invite attention to the last paragraph of the circular from the Department of Revenue and Agriculture, No. 48—79, dated the 17th October 1894, read in the preamble of the Resolution of the Government of India (No. 7-S. G., dated the 16th April 1896) referred to in the Board's Proceedings (No. 124, dated the 9th June 1896), in which it was suggested that wholesale prices might be taken on the same dates of each month for which retail prices are reported "so as to be at once comparable with the returns of retail prices." It may also be stated that the stations selected for recording wholesale and retail prices are generally the same, so as to ensure easy comparison of the two sets of prices.

3. Regarding (2), I beg to observe that the question of converting averages of units of volume into units of weight is perhaps not involved in the case of food-grains, the prices of which are returned in maunds and seers in the half monthly statements furnished by the Board. If, however, they are sold at places in units of volume, I would suggest that, in order to avoid any conflicting results, particular care should be taken to see that they are weighed in each case and correctly converted before the prices are returned in maunds and seers.

Mart.	Grain.
Vizianagram	... Ragi.
Guntūr	... Cholan and Cumbu.
Negapatam	... Rice.
Vellore	... Ragi.

4. As regards the marts noted in the margin, no change is desired, if they are more important than the district head-quarters in respect of the wholesale transactions in the food-grains specified against them.

RESOLUTION—No. 89, dated 21st March 1899.

Communicated to the Collectors of all districts except Anantapur, Chingleput, the Nilgiris and South Canara.

2. Wholesale prices should be recorded, in future, on the 15th and on the last day of each month instead of on the last day of the week as directed in paragraph 4 of B.P., No. 124, dated 9th June 1896. At places, however, where it is only at the regular markets that wholesale transactions take place, the prices ruling on the market day immediately preceding the 15th or last day of a month should be recorded and reported in the returns. Before submitting these returns, the officers reporting the wholesale prices of food-grains should compare them with the retail prices recorded on the same day, and any anomalies should be explained fully. The officers concerned have already been requested in B.P., No. 437, dated 2nd December 1898, to report wholesale prices only when wholesale transactions take place.

3. The Director-General will be informed that the suggestion made in paragraph 3 of his letter last read above, to weigh the grains in each case and convert the rates before returning them in maunds and seers appears not only impracticable, but if it were possible to carry out such a scheme it would not secure the end in view. In many cases, the grains dealt in wholesale will, as already pointed out, be of a different description and quality to those dealt in by retail, e.g., new grain and old grain. The retail price record cannot be interfered with, as it must be maintained for settlement purposes. If then direct comparison with wholesale rates of exactly the same

article is insisted on, it will be pointed out that in a large number of cases the wholesale price return may be expected to be blank. Again in cases where several sorts of grain are dealt in, wholesale prices are usually reported for fixed units of volume, the average being struck for the number of sorts in equal amounts by volume. In the retail price record, the average is struck for a fixed unit of value the rupee. Consequently the proportions in the mixtures or averages are not the same. To issue an order that in each case on which a record of transactions is made, the recording officer should proceed to the market and weigh up samples to obtain the wholesale rates in terms of maunds, would defeat its own end, as it would be futile to expect it to be carried out.

In these circumstances, the Board requests that, unless some other method may be suggested, the figures reported may be accepted.

(True Copy and Extract.)

Secretary.

To the Collectors of all districts, except Anantapur, Chingleput, the Nilgiris and South Canara (Divisional-officers and Tahsildars concerned).
" the Director-General of Statistics.
Copy to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department.

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 When examined _____
 When signed _____

189

READ AGAIN G.O., No.
 189

DATED

Order No.

ENCLOSURES TO C. No.

ORDER OF GOVERNMENT

A A A A A A A

LETTER OF GOVERNMENT.

STATEMENT WITH DITTO.

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