

THE ADMINISTRATION OF GUNTUR DISTRICT
WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO LOCAL INFLUENCES ON REVENUE POLICY:
1837-1848

by
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ABSTRACT

Between 1837 and 1845, a silent combination of local forces benefited at the expense of the State. For lack of accurate information from the villages and lack of support from Madras, British officers lost control of their subordinates and their authority was weakened. Indian district officers, notably Maratha Brahmans under the leadership of the Sheristadar, supplanted the Zamindars. Acting in the name of Government, these officers became free from supervision and acquired the perquisites and dignities of power. The aura of divinity, the borrowed glow of the huzur, so clung to them that they could walk like giants. A daughter's marriage or the erection of a shrine by one of these officers would bring special contributions from the villages. But the villages often gained the better part of bargains with district officers. As village money spread a corrupting influence into ever higher levels of the hierarchy, the administration became caught in the webs of village influence. As in the story of Gulliver, the strength of the district was pegged to the earth by countless tiny threads, a captive of Lilliputian villages. Executive control over Guntur would not have faltered nor would policies have suffered paralysis had not local influences utilized remarkable sources of strength and had not central authority been weak and ineffectual. In short, local influences undermined central authority and thwarted State policy.



from a sketch by C. Mackenzie 1788

East View of Bellumcondá; September 1788.

Copied by C. G. G. G. 21 Aug. 1870.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ⁺

BOC	Board of Control
BOR	Board of Revenue
COD	Court of Directors
EC	Elphinstone Collection
GDR	Guntur District Records
GCI	Government of India
GOM	Government of Madras
IOL	India Office Library
MD	Madras Despatches
MRD	Madras Revenue Despatches
MRL	Madras Revenue Letters
MRO	Madras Record Office
MRP	Madras Revenue Proceedings and Consultations
TC	Tweeddale Collection

⁺ Note: These abbreviations are to facilitate the reading of footnotes.

PREFACE

This is a study of a collision between localizing and centralizing forces which occurred within one of the units of the Madras Presidency during the early British and late Company periods. It spans the Governorships of Lord Elphinstone (1837-1842) and Lord Tweeddale (1842-1848).⁺ It examines the zone in which the delegates of British power came into direct contact with the elite among the leading communities of the Indian people in a district.

Curiosity may be aroused as to why this kind of a study has been pursued and why Guntur was selected for this purpose. The reasons are, of course, partly accidental and partly deliberate. Much is owed to many people for the development of what has gone into the pages of this book. Grateful acknowledgment and thanks must be expressed to each person who gave a helping hand. That such thanks are due will become evident from the explanations which follow.

The idea that I should draw upon my knowledge and experience as a boy who was reared in Telugu country was first planted by Prof. Richard Park (now at the University of Michigan). After noticing what appeared to be a polarity of preoccupations by students of India in which, on one side, there seemed to be a tendency for historians and political scientists to concentrate upon a wide and often an All-India frame of reference and in which, on the other side, there

⁺Note: The period also coincides roughly with the Collectorships of John Goldingham and Hudleston Stokes.

seemed to be a tendency for anthropologists and sociologists to focus attention upon the minutia of individual villages, the thought of making a historical enquiry into the middle plane occurred. Between these macroscopic and microscopic approaches there seemed to be a yawning gulf of unknown which might prove a rich field for historical research. Also, it appeared to me at the time that much Indian history had been written from above, from the eye of the rulers. Only such affairs as engaged the attention of the supreme rulers loomed large. The idea of writing a history from below with the hope that other studies in local history might follow, some day giving rise to a social (and economic) history of India by an inductive process was encouraged by Prof. R. I. Crane (University of Michigan).

It was under the inspiration and guidance of Dr. Percival Spear and with the aid of a Research Fellowship awarded by officers of the Rockefeller Foundation, notably Mr. Chadbourne Gilpatric, that ground was broken and opportunity provided to do this work.

After preliminary research at the University of California (Berkeley), work was begun at the India Office Library (London). The very generous help of Mr. S.C.Sutton and his staff enabled a series of enquiries to be made into the affairs of Madras districts during the early 19th century. Those remarkable sources of information, the district manuals, showed potential strikes of material. Perhaps because as a boy I had spent weeks and months each year travelling among the villages and camping on the plains of Guntur (and Nalgonda) and perhaps because the best lead pointed to this district, there was

more than usual curiosity about Guntur. The Manual of Kistna District revealed that Guntur had suffered from bitter factionalism among its leaders and that a scandal had been uncovered in 1845. By following this seam, a goldmine of original material was struck which serves as the base for this study.

The first strike was the report of Walter Elliot, 840 pages in all, on the troubles of Guntur. This was followed shortly by the discovery of another report of almost equal length by John Goldingham on the social and economic condition of Guntur, to which long treatises were appended by various local leaders of the district. The papers of the 13th Lord Elphinstone proved to contain correspondence with many leading and lesser figures in Madras, Calcutta, and London, the most notable of which were the semi-monthly letters from Walter and Maria Elliot (1836-1848). The Marquis of Tweeddale graciously permitted me to examine the papers of his grandfather (and put them on permanent loan in the India Office Library). The Goodwood Archives of the Duke of Richmond contained some especially revealing letters from the 8th Marquis of Tweeddale.

The hard core of this book, however, rests upon an interpretation of manuscript materials in the Guntur District Records, a hitherto untapped source stretching from 1788 to 1859. But for the patience and help of Sri M. Natesan and his staff at the Madras Record Office, it would have been impossible to microfilm all of the materials which were needed.

The assistance given by various members of the Indian Administrative Service has been too profuse to be detailed. The resources

of the Central Record Office in Hyderabad were made available by its Director, Sri V.K.Bawa. Sri K.M.Unnithan, First Member of the Board of Revenue, offered encouragement and advice, as also did Sri N. Ramesan, Sri M.R. Pai, Sri C.K. Murthy, and many others. Sri M. Purushotum Pai, Chief Secretary to the Government graciously smoothed the way for work in district and taluk record offices. The Collector of Guntur, Sri M.A. Haleem, and his Personal Assistant, Sri P.Subbiah, together with the Huzur Sheristadar, the Head Clerk, and Tahsildars went out of their way to be helpful, even though pressed by their normal duties.

Thus, it has been possible to draw together for the purpose of this study manuscript and printed materials, a substantial portion of which have not been used before. Perhaps of equal importance has been the discovery of hitherto untapped sources for historical research offering opportunities for others to contribute to our knowledge of local history in India.

My research and writing has been supervised by Dr. Kenneth Ballhatchet. I am most grateful to him for the hours of careful attention he has given to my work, for useful criticism and advice and for the unrestrained development of thought which he encouraged. In addition I am indebted to various members of the School of Oriental and African Studies. I owe much to the valuable suggestions contributed by those who read various chapters. Among these persons were Prof. K.A. Nilakanta Sastri (University of Madras), Prof. Bisheshwar Prasad (University of Delhi), Dr. S.P.Sen (University of Calcutta),

Dr. A.T. Fishman (Andhra Christian College), Prof. R.L. Park, Prof. R. I. Crane, and Dr. Spear. Finally, to my wife, Carol, who has supported me steadfastly and whose assistance has been invaluable, my thanks are due most of all.

R.E.F.

London, March 1, 1961.

INTRODUCTION

Guntur District today is an administrative and political sub-division of Andhra Pradesh within the federal Republic of India. It was constituted in 1904 out of that half of the former Krishna District which lay south of the Krishna River; and it was enlarged in 1909 by the transfer to its jurisdiction of the Ongole Taluk from the Nellore District. The present Guntur District, however, must be distinguished from the old Guntur District which was a part of the Madras Presidency under the rule of the East India Company and which was abolished in 1859, along with the Masulipatam and Rajahmundry Districts, when two large districts were organized around the great irrigation systems of the Krishna and Godavari Rivers. Before the French set up their district headquarters at the ancient village of Guntur (1752-1759), the Muslim rulers of Golconda and Hyderabad called the district Murtijanagar Circar. Still earlier, under successive Hindu kingdoms, the district was known as the Kondavidu Sima. The object of this study is the old Guntur Zillah.¹⁺

I. A DESCRIPTION OF THE DISTRICT

Roughly fan-shaped, with a fan-handle of territory (Ongole) pointing south and an arching curve of the Krishna River around the

¹ The Imperial Gazetteer of India: Volume XII (Oxford: 1908), pp. 388-90.

+ Note: Zillah or Jillah means territorial division and is to be distinguished from Circar or Sarkar which means government organization or administration.

west, north, and east, the district spreads across a flat, coastal delta from the Bay of Bengal gradually rising until it enters the rough and jungled hills of the Palnad. Sea sand gives way to rich, black "cotton-soil" on the plain with red gravel and clay becoming more prominent as the terrain meets the hills in the interior. From a narrow gorge in these hills, the Krishna pours forth into a broadening stream across the delta.

Isolated stone hills -- a sight common to South India -- rise abruptly out of the Guntur plain looking like huge boulders dropped from the sky. The larger hills are surmounted by ancient fortifications. The smaller hills are crowned with small white shrines. The largest of these hills, a long stone ridge in the center of the plain, is called Kondavidu. Flanked by the hill fortresses of Vinukonda and Bellamkonda in what was once a formidable triangle of power, the silent ruins of Kondavidu stare blindly out over the plains.

Today, Guntur is one of the rich districts of India. Larger in area than Connecticut or Northern Ireland but smaller than New Jersey or Wales,¹ its plains are a luxurious carpet of green the year around. Palm fringed squares of sugar-cane, rice, and other staple crops, which are laced together by irrigation canals, provide food surpluses for the Indian consumer. Much of its wealth comes from tobacco which is exported to Britain and America. Arterial canals carry commercial

¹ Government of India. Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. India 1958 (New Delhi: 1958), p. 553, gives the area as being 5,795 sq. mi.

vessels along the coast. Metaled roads from the taluks feed into trunk highways. Subsidiary railroads join the main lines which connect the industrial, commercial, and population centers of India. Several colleges, including a medical college, and some big hospitals are located within the district. Completion of the Nagarjunasagar Project (for hydro-electric power) promises to make Guntur into an industrial center.¹

The old Guntur District was nothing like this. When the rains failed (which was often), the plains were parched and destitute. Famine, plague, and cholera visited its people almost as persistently as the revenue collectors, while flood, cyclone, and tidal-wave paid occasional visits. The population was less than a sixth of what it is today (1847: 411,599 people and 1951: 2,549,996). Guntur was a hardship station for English officers. One has but to look in the small graveyard at Guntur at the names of men, women, and particularly of small children to see how true this was. Officers so shunned going to Guntur that after 1848 a special compensation allowance of 2,000 rupees was given to the Collector who served there.

II. A PROJECTION OF THE PROBLEM

When, after other efforts to halt a deterioration of the Guntur District had failed, a Commissioner was sent to investigate the

¹ Statistical Atlas of The Guntur District: 1360 Fasli (1950-51) (Hyderabad: Government of Andhra Pradesh). Statistical Abstract of Andhra Pradesh: 1956 (Hyderabad: 1958).

causes of the trouble, he reported to the Madras Government:

The Circar, instead of having improved during the long period it has been subject to the peaceful sway of the British Government, is actually in a worse state now than it was when it was ceded by the Nizam upwards of 50 years ago.¹

The reasons which lie behind this melancholy disclosure are the central theme of this study.

An examination of the development of a district administration with special reference to local influences on revenue policy must necessarily be concerned with more than formal structure and functions. An attempt must be made to probe deeply into social relationships. A description is required of how the local leadership was able to meet the leviathan of English power. Whatever elements of originality or continuity, of flexibility or rigidity, and of stability or instability existed within the executive arm of the State must be discovered. How the policies necessary for the growth of a strong government were balanced against local aspirations must be found. The way in which State power was exercised, the manner in which the British accommodated their rule to the peculiarities of a distinct area and people, the capability of the East India Company and its servants in resolving problems, and the importance of the District Collector in carrying out measures and upholding State authority are subjects which must be scrutinized.

The main argument of this study is that executive control over

¹ Walter Elliot [Elliot Report] to Government of Madras (para 66), April 17, 1846: [MRP] Madras Revenue Proceedings and Consultations (range 280: vol. 20: p. 7562), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

Guntur would not have faltered nor the condition of the district become so lamentable had not central authority been weak and ineffectual in its actions and had not local influences drawn upon remarkable resources of strength. In short, local influences undermined central authority.

Three terms need to be clarified in order to prevent confusion and misapprehension. These terms are: "administration", "local influences", and "revenue policy".

Administration is the performance of the executive duties of an institution or organization. It is the managing or directing activity of the State in the exercise of its power. Specifically, we mean that it is the conduct of governing or ruling over Guntur District.

Influence is the invisible exercise of power, the act of producing an effect without apparent force or direct authority. It suggests an inner pressure arising from social class (or caste), moral character, wealth, of other imponderables and intangibles which weigh upon the minds of men. Influence combines the ingredients which are necessary for leadership. Specifically, we are interested in the local influences emanating from the leadership within Guntur District, namely: the village leaders, the aristocratic leaders of the old order, and the newer district officers. We want to examine the means by which these leaders exerted an influence, whether by petitions, intrigues, bribes, religious sanctions, or the manipulation of components within the administrative machinery.

Policy is a settled course of action which is adopted and carried

out. Policy is a process of governing and a procedure of management based on objectives and interests which are tangible, though higher principles and intentions may exist in the minds of those who make policy. Policy is a process of decision-making and implementation. Depending upon the complexity in the behavior of a government, an institution, or an individual who makes or determines it, policy is that quotient of divided motivations which is actually applied. Even no policy is policy in this sense. It matters little how high the purposes of the members of a governing organization are if the end product is paralysis.

The primary object of revenue policy is, of course, the realization of revenue and the secondary objective is to realize revenue in such a way that the resources for producing this revenue are preserved and developed. Since the revenue administration of Guntur Collectorate was the executive and service arm of the Government, however, revenue policy also included questions of general administration. The selection, promotion, discipline, removal, and management of personnel were matters bearing on all aspects of revenue policy. The degree of centralization or of delegation of power in making decisions about personnel bore directly on revenue policy.

At the beginning of the 19th century two systems of administration were ratified in London. First, large blocks of governmental power based on legal rights of property-ownership were delegated to those who were thought to be the traditional leaders in the district. When a cautious and conservative Court of Directors discovered that this

course was proving to be a somewhat radical innovation in the Madras Presidency, they suspended its further introduction. Second, as a result of careful observation and also as a result of the strong character and thinking of a remarkable observer, a course of action was followed by which most governing powers were retained by the State Government. Instead of trying to protect the people from abuse at the hands of the State, the second system sought to protect the people from oppressive speculators by means of the State. This plan was adopted in London only after years of pushing and pulling; moreover, the Court of Directors were not without doubts.¹

In 1837, the same doubts and arguments, the same pushing and pulling, and the same conflicting purposes and motivations existed. As a result of a conflict in the basic premises of these two systems of government, policies became neutralized. In some respects, neither the Cornwallis system (the Wellesley experiment in Madras) nor the Munro system were carried out completely. Both existed together within the same district; and as will be seen, each tended to cancel the other. The resulting policy was sufficiently paralyzed to jeopardize British administration in Guntur.²

¹ T.H.Beaglehole, Thomas Munro and the Development of Administrative Policy in Madras: 1792-1818 (Cambridge University Ph.D.Dissertation: July 1960), pp. 10-21.

² P.B.Smollet, Civil Administration in Madras (London: 1858), favored the Zamindars. J. Norton, Letter to Lowe on Condition and Requirements of Madras Presidency (Madras: 1853), favored a return to the pure ryotwari system of Munro. See also "The Land Revenue of Madras", Calcutta Review (vol. 17: pp.282-339), and "Sir Thomas Munro and the Land Tax", ibid. (vol. 15: pp.351-374).

To perpetrate an armed incursion for the sake of rapid plunder and swift retreat is an achievement. To maintain garrisons in an area of territory is a greater achievement. To intervene and to govern in the affairs of local inhabitants is still more difficult. But to maintain a steady and uncorrupted administration which is proof against both decay and lethargy in the rulers and silent resistance and subversion from the ruled is an achievement which is most remarkable.

After almost two decades of comparative peace in the subcontinent, the British were no longer in 1837 just a power in India, but the power over India. Yet while they were politically supreme, they were challenged silently from within. The steady and monotonous throbbing of the engines of State administration lulled senses and deadened perceptions. Undue preoccupation with the excitements of social life, intrigue, and ambition muffled the sound of warning signals and the centers of administrative power were not fully tended. Trouble was bound to crop up and this was most likely to occur in a remote and difficult district.

CHAPTER ONE

LOCAL INFLUENCE AND THE RISE OF BRITISH AUTHORITY BEFORE 1837

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CHAPTER ONE

LOCAL INFLUENCE AND THE RISE OF BRITISH AUTHORITY BEFORE 1837

The central pillar supporting the umbrella of British authority over Guntur District in 1837 was constructed from the elements of revenue administration. Revenue was broadly of two kinds. That which came from land was called mahasulu and that which did not come from land was called sayaru.¹ In a country which depended more upon agriculture than upon industry and commerce for its income mahasulu was thought to be "the grand, the permanent, the ascertainable pre-existent source" of wealth from which the sinews of power should be drawn.²

Actually how much power was drawn from land revenue, how strong a state-structure it supported, how large a military and administrative apparatus it maintained in proportion to the wealth of the country, and how much it was able to give comfort and luxury to royal households before the coming of the British is a question which still vexes classical and medieval scholars. Some land was directly administered by officers of the State. This was called haveli. Other lands were held (or handed out) as quasi-feudal grants on tenures which ranged from temporary and conditional to permanent and unconditional. Larger political grants were called jagirs. There were also grants of land, both small and large, for religious institutions (inams), for

¹ H.H.Wilson, Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms (Calcutta: 1874), pp. 320, 454.

² James Grant, "Political Survey of the Northern Circars," The Fifth Report (Calcutta: 1918), edited by W.K.Firminger, pp. 28-29.

schools and entertainers (inams), and for government servants (maniams and savarams). A substantial proportion of the villages of the district, probably a tenth, were agraharams held by Brahmans. All of these factors seem to indicate a degree of decentralization and local strength which would belie proud claims which often emanated from rulers in Hyderabad and Golconda.

Another much disputed notion, that the State was sole owner and final authority over land, that immediate cultivators were to pay State agents, that a fixed percentage of all production should reach the State treasury in metal specie, has existed (at least in modern times).¹ The correctness of this notion is open to question, though admittedly rulers usually tried to make good such a claim and local interests tried to nullify or mitigate its realization. The very concept of land-ownership, as we know it in the West, seems to jar against a usage where concern over the produce of land was apparently of more importance. Thus, if central control weakened, this weakness became apparent in the realization of less revenue; and if the State realized less, then some more local power gained it and was strengthened thereby. The logic of the fish (matsya-nyaya) presumably prevailed. Whatever was too big to be swallowed was left to try to swallow

¹ For further discussion of this difficult problem, see the introduction to chapter four. A good summary of early British controversy, arising out of the positions of Grant and Shore, is found in F.D. Ascoli, Early Revenue History of Bengal and the Fifth Report, 1812, (Oxford: 1917) pp. 42-53, 54-62. For a discussion on how terms changed meaning according to locality and time, see P. Saran, The Provincial Government of the Mughuls 1525-1658 (Allahabad: 1941), p.249.

something smaller.

In any case, there is little reason to doubt that the muscles of power were being tried constantly. Heated bargaining over crop-sharing would begin with the planting. As harvest approached, contests would develop over who could make off with the grain, shorten the measure, or default on delivery. Collecting agents would be put off with complaints, pleas, and bribes. Moneylenders gladly advanced bills of exchange in return for collateral in the crops. As a season ended, account books would close showing large amounts still unremitted to the collecting agent. Only instruments of fear checked the "stubborn propensity for parsimony, chicanery and refractoriness" and the "secretion or collusive dissipation of the revenue."¹

Sayaru could be as difficult as mahasulu. Taxes on non-agricultural produce were, if anything, more thorough. Along the Hyderabad border, frontier customs were required. Sea customs were levied at every port. Inland tolls and imposts caught almost everything that moved. Collecting stations blocked bridges, fords, ferries, and roads. Taxes on houses, shops, stalls, brothels, liquor and drug retailers; duties on cloth looms, leather tanneries, salt pans, liquor stills, drug makers, metal works and almost every form of manufacturing; fees on professions, licences, and legal documents; charges on religious festivals, temples, and special days; percentages even on court bribes, fines, and confiscations: such were

¹ James Grant, "Political Survey of the Northern Circars," op.cit., pp. 42, 29-46.

the objects of savaru before the British arrived. Of course, the degree to which these objects were realized is an entirely different matter; however, times of disorder tended to make this form of taxation more repressive, since every petty chief (or robber) tried to enforce it. Theoretically, if such a process continued unchecked, virtually all commerce and industry would grind to a halt; however, such enterprise did continue, although to what degree we do not know.¹

It is clear, however, that British authority was confronted with local influences of considerable strength. Some idea of the nature of these local influences may be gathered by observing some reflections of the image in which local leaders apparently held themselves.

I. THE IMAGE OF LOCAL INFLUENCES IN 1788

An image may be constructed from translations of stone and copper inscriptions, together with Brahmanical writings on cadjan (palm) leaves, of the elite groups of the district and of the way in which they regarded themselves at the time when the British arrived. To explore whatever fragmentary sources survive from pre-modern times is a task which is entirely beyond the scope of this study;² however, an entirely objective picture of these times is not necessary to show how strong were traditions which were accepted and notions which were

¹ James Grant, op.cit., pp. 28-29.

² Some sources containing inscriptions found in Guntur District are: Sircar, D.C., Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization, Volume I (Calcutta: University Press, 1942), pp.215 ff., Battiprolu and Guntur; pp.443, 445f., Narsaraopet Taluk agrapharam grants. South Indian Inscriptions: Volume X (Madras: Archeological Survey, 1948). Epigrapha Indica.

believed by village leaders. The power of these notions has a relevance quite distinct from their validity and as such ^{has} ~~have~~ a bearing upon the argument of this study.

Apparently collected at various times between 1738 and 1817 by Colonel Colin Mackenzie, for there are marginal pencil notes indicating when a particular chronicle was translated from Telugu into Marathi and from Marathi into English, the local (village) histories of Guntur in the Elliot Collection contain a wealth of information about local institutions and leading castes (Niyogis in particular). Their value in reflecting an image is enhanced because they come from such leading villages as Kondavidu, Chebrolu, and Guntur (now Patta-Guntur). An occasional intrusion of what is obviously founded on religious precept or folklore tends to strengthen our knowledge of these leaders. When the remarkable agreement of these village chronicles is seen in the light of events in which the British came to power and ^{is} ~~is~~ compared with James Grant's "Political Survey of the Northern Circars" and other sources, some continuity with the events which transpired after 1837 can be seen.

A. THE LOCAL IMAGE OF HINDU RULE

One tradition credits Mukanti, a Pallava king of Dharanikota, with a reorganization -- "to prevent confusion in the transactions of revenue and justice,"¹ a confusion which came from faulty village

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History-Volume I, "On the Origin of Village Accountants," page 93 (IOL: Mss.Eur. F.46), pp. 93-97.

records. Because the Goldsmiths (Aravas) gave the king trouble, Brahmans were brought down from Benares to be the Village Accountants under a new system.

Within a new administrative system (something like the jajmani social system now present in North India) villages became semi-autonomous. Twelve kinds of hereditary village officers were appointed whose pay was to be in kind out of the goods and services produced by the village and allotted by custom. The three highest officers, the Pedda-Kapu (Headman), the Karnam (Accountant), and the Dhana-Parikshaka (Moneychanger) were to be answerable to the State for their actions. In descending rank there followed the priest, potter, washerman, carpenter, ironsmith, barber^e, waterman, watchman, and menial. Menial duties were to be divided between the Mala and Madiga ("pariah and chuckler"). Disputes were to be handled in the traditional manner by arbitration councils within the family, caste, village or groups of villages as the occasion demanded.¹

Supposedly, the most durable village office was that of the Karnam. His skill in accounting and bookwork was exacting. Because of this, a village seldom held more than one such family. This family would be related to Karnam families of the same sub-caste in other villages. Through such family connections a net-work of local power could be developed. Higher levels of authority could thus be resisted, then corrupted and infiltrated, and finally permeated and

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History - Volume I, "On the Origin of Village Accountants," page 93 (IOL: Mss.Eur. F.46), pp. 93-97.

undermined. Without the cooperation of Karnams, effective administration would be impossible. Violence was no solution. A few Karnams might be removed and two or three villages stamped upon; but the remaining villages with their Karnams would continue to exert their silent influence.

Brahmans claim to have slowly displaced Arava and Jain Karnams. The strongest Brahman group was the Niyogi. A Gajapati minister "in the Condaveedoo Seema," according to one account was so abused by Arava Karnams that -- in about the year 1144 -- he established the legendary Aruvelu Niyogilu ("6000 Niyogis") as Karnams in the Telinga country "for as long as the sun and the moon endure."¹ Successive waves of other Brahman groups, however, such as the Hoysalas, Kanakapillais, Lingayats, Patrulus, Badagals, and Nandavarikas (or Yanavalkis), not to mention the non-Brahman Linga Baliyas and Kayasthas are also said to have been brought into the district in the train of succeeding regimes.² Since these other groups were small, however, they could retain only isolated pockets of influence in scattered villages once they and their masters were superseded by another regime. Niyogis indicate that it took them approximately 400 years to root out the Aravas and Jains, to fend off the other

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History Volume I, "Translation of Dandakaville by Vadhamundi Kamaraz, Curnum of Peturu Village in Repalle Talook, Zillah Guntur," p. 106 (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 46).

² ibid., "On the Origin of Village Accountants," pp. 96-103. Also: Local History Volume III, "Historical Memoir of Chebrolu," pp. 91-104 (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 48).

competitive Brahman groups, and to permeate the local administration with members of their own caste.¹

That villages survived forces and innovations of central authority emerges as a common theme. Institutions above the village were seemingly much less durable than the village. Struggles for village and district positions happened whenever a new regime sought to enforce its authority; but power at high levels was much more transient and the danger passed away. Perpetual strife, counter-marching armies, and rapid rising and falling of fortunes are said to have occurred as each king tried to spread his umbrella over the plains.²

A group of villages were gathered into a samutu. Samutus were grouped together into a sima. Kondavidu Sima was bounded by the simas of Bellamkonda, Vinukonda, and Nagjunakonda. Farther away were the simas of Nellore, Kandukur, Addanka, Kondapalli, and Ellore. Each sima was under the charge of a Samprati or Stalla-Karnam who was the counter-

¹ This process is born out in Gordon Mackenzie's A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 15-38.

² Several local histories give this image: Elliot Mss., Local History Vol. I, pp. 93-106, 330-335 (Eur. Mss. F. 46); Local History Vol. II, pp. 62-71 (Eur. Mss. F. 47), also pp. 91-104, 240-241, and 515-578. G. Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 1-50. For general works, see: K. Gopalachari, Early History of the Andhra Country (Madras: University Press, 1941), pp. 73-90; G.C. Ganguly, The Eastern Galukyas (Benares: 1937); K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, A History of South India (Madras: 1955) and The Colas (Madras: 1955); and T.V. Mahalingam, South Indian Polity (Madras: 1955).

part of a Karnam at a higher level.¹⁺

B. THE IMAGE OF MUSLIM RULE

Guntur was ravaged by Muslim jihads before its rule by Hindus ended. After the Warangal king was carried off to Delhi the Reddi kings of Kondavidu held an unsteady hand on the district for a century. The area continued to be the battleground between Golconda, Vijayanager, and Orissa for another two centuries. Vijayanagar was in nominal control after 1516. Control continued to see-saw back and forth until Golconda took over the key fortresses in 1579. Yet, even though Islam seemed to be paramount, annual sallies across the river disputed the point.²

1. The Golkonda Regime

The ascendancy of Golkonda brought predictable changes in administrative personnel. Outsiders were brought in who were more closely attached to the interests of their Muslim masters. These outsiders were Desasthas, Maratha Brahmans of Madwa persuasion who had held positions in the Deccan, and Golkonda Vyaparis (or trader Brahmans).

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History Vol. I, "Condauid Country, or Guntur," pp. 103-05 (Eur. Mss. F.46).

⁺ Note: Perhaps this image which Niyogis possessed may be contrasted with what was a fairly standard British view, expressed by Mackenzie: "...the Hindus changed very little...their customs are probably the same as they were five hundred or a thousand years ago...the same villages, the same cultivations, the same arts and industries," in A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.11.

² Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 20-38. K.A.Nilakanta Sastri, A History of South India (Madras: 1955), pp. 271-287.

A number of Niyogis were put to the sword and others were removed from district positions. At subdivisional levels, where armed forces were needed as police to maintain order and enforce decisions, one martial caste was replaced by another. Velamavaru were severely treated and Kamma people were brought in to manage the parganas and samutus. Some names and circumstances may have changed; but villages were not being affected by the changes which were going on above them.¹ Niyogi strength at the village level was not much disturbed.

Two officers were put in charge of the district, one a Muslim and the other a Desastha. As co-rulers whose respective functions were the sword and the pen, Murtija Khan and Khasa Raya Rao reorganized the administration. The "Candavity Seema" was divided into fourteen subdivisions. These fourteen parganas included Vinukonda, Bellamkonda, Guntur, Tadiconda, Chebrolu, Prattipardu, Gurjala, Ponnuru, and other current names. The entire district was renamed the "Murtijanagar Circar". Twelve Muta Saddis or revenue officials were appointed and Samutu Bandis or regulations were issued to guide the administrations.²

A struggle for key administrative positions persisted throughout this period. There were those who were skilled with the pen and *those who were*

¹ Elliot Ms., Local History Volume I, "On the Origin of Village Accountants," p. 101 (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 46).

² Elliot Mss., Local History Volume I, "Translations of Dandakavile at Candavid Village," by Vinnacotta Venkanah, p. 331 ff. (*ibid.*). The name may have been in honor of a general: p. 34 of Mackenzie.

skilled with the sword. At the lower levels, local Brahmans, chiefly Niyogis, tended to monopolize positions requiring clerical skills while local warrior castes such as Kammas, Velamas, Telagas, Kapus, and Rajus dominated military occupations. At the higher levels, this division was between Muslim soldiers and Desastha or Vyapari administrators. Competition for position or for power between castes possessing special skills, between pen-holders and sword-holders at each level, and between concentrations of power at different levels marked an arena of local controversy which was very complicated. Maneuvers, shifts, and combinations within a local conflict usually occurred under the Muslim umbrella without notice or interference.

Thus, what we may call a caste system of selection, rooted in caste and nourished by nepotism, seems to have been characteristic of traditional administration. It would have been important for a Brahman group to gain the king's ear; for, by winning his confidence, the administrative hierarchy could gradually be filled with family and caste members. Yet unless villages were so managed that revenues remained regular, those holding the higher positions would ultimately lose the confidence of the ruler. If competition between caste groups were very hard coalitions could be formed. It would be unwise for a state-wide Hindu coalition to indulge in overt bids for supreme authority. Rather, by taking lessons from the white ant, such a group might silently gain an inner control finding nourishment within the body of State organization without disturbing the crust or causing the umbrella to collapse. It may be supposed that such a group could effectively slacken or tighten

the sinews of power, silently supporting or undermining the strength of the ruling prince. Only occasionally, if the umbrella of state authority were too decrepit or if a caste elite were too strong, ambitious, or foolish, might there be a danger of disintegration. Presumably, such a caste-guild system could have had a moderating influence upon an autocratic and often despotic state; for by its very nature it would tend to limit the excesses both of central and of local power.

How such a system might have operated in Guntur, while not always clear is still discernible. A Desastha, Khasa Raya Rao, apparently had a much stronger hold on the administration than his Muslim co-rulers. Local accounts give the Muslims no credit for the fall of Kondavidu. One look at the steep hill fortress is enough to discredit any notion that heavy guns or elephants would have sufficed. The local story is that Raya Rao bribed the Governor "with bags of brass pagodas".¹ The influence of Raya Rao may also be seen in the fact that he remained while his Muslim co-rulers were often replaced.

Yet the hold of Golconda on Guntur was anything but firm. When Ali Kahn Luri failed to persuade Raya Rao and his Desasthas to join him in a plot to detach the district from Golconda authority, his irregular

¹ Elliot Mss., "Historical Memoir of Chabrole in the District of Chintapilly," Local History Volume III (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 48), p.100. This record was translated from Telugu into Marathi and then into English by a Brahman named Venkata Rao in 1817.

forces were still able to gain enough local support to thwart central power. After Raya Rao's return to Golconda further unrest followed. Vijayanagar forces entered the district. Revenue payments were withheld. Finally, "Mohamad Padasha sitting on a throne studded with precious stones at Golconda"¹ heard how the rebellious Mannavars (District Police Officers) were obstructing the road to every village. Amin-ul-Mulk was sent to restore order and this he did with great severity.²

Over the long run centrifugal forces prevailed. Explaining this tendency James Grant wrote:

In proportion to the complete sway of each new sovereignty, so the complete reduction of the tributary dependencies on the sea-coast became more and more an object of policy.³

The names of only five Murtijanagar Amirs and their Desastha co-rulers are known. Thereafter, as Golkonda was increasingly humiliated by the Mughuls and Marathas, full sway in the district became impossible. Under the last king of Golkonda administrative decentralization became complete. Tanisha's Niyogi ministers, Akanna and Madanna Pantulu, organized the district in such a way that the haveli villages and amani (government) samutus were governed "by means of the inhabitants

¹ Elliot Mss., "Translation of Dandakavile from Condavid Village," Local History Volume I (IOL: Mss.Eur.F.46), p. 332.

² loc.cit., p.332. How tenaciously the older groups, the Niyogis, clung to power is noteworthy. See also: Local History III (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.48), pp. 91-102.

³ James Grant, "Political Survey of the Northern Circars," in W.K. Firminger (ed.), The Fifth Report: 1812, Volume III (Calcutta: 1918), p. 24.

of the country."¹⁺ Niyogi influence in Golconda was paralleled by even greater Niyogi strength in the villages where the "Patel-Pattavarie" combined the office of headman and accountant in one person.² A mild but orderly rule predominantly by local Brahmans might smack of heresy to Sunni fanatics but it was the kind of government which inspired folklore and song.³⁺⁺

2. The Hyderabad Regime

During the century of Hyderabad (and/or Mughul) rule, State control over Guntur was greatly qualified by political realities. Guntur was only one district in one province within an enormous empire of twenty-two provinces. Aurangzeb was too busy fighting to consolidate his gains. His viceroy, Ghazi-ud-din, relied on the local Hindu officers for administration. After the six provinces of the Deccan Subah came under the umbrella of Asaf Jah in 1724, only ceremony tied Hyderabad to the house of Timur.

Muslim rulers made few changes in the existing system of local government. There were altogether too few Muslims in South India to do more than hold top posts and provide garrisons for the areas which they

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History Volume I (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.46), pp.333-34; with parallel accounts in G. Mackenzie's A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 35-38, and Henry Morris' A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Godavery District (London: Truber & Co., 1878), pp. 167-76. +Note: Tanisha probably had good, practical reasons favoring local Hindu bureaucracies. Golkonda firmans indicate that these Shia kings developed a sophisticated state cult in which their kingship was deified.

² Elliot Mss., "On the Origin of Village Accountants," Local History Volume I (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.46), pp. 101.

³ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.38. +Note: This folklore and song pervades Telugu country to this day.

wished to control. During the 65 years from 1687 to 1752 forty-two Muslim officers ruled the district. They were helped by Desastha assistants and by powerful local families. The names, positions and tenures of these officials, when compared with similar data for the districts of Kurnool, Nellore, Ellore, Vellore, Salem, and Madura,¹ indicate that while the outer surface of a local administration might have received some new place-names, different boundaries, and fresh inam awards, inner sinews of power remained largely undisturbed. The average tenure of an Amildar in the Murtijanagar Circar for these years (1687-1752) was 1.59 years. Since the tenure of Hindu subordinates was much longer -- it became virtually permanent, we may infer that compact groups of Hindu officials not only collected the revenues but kept a firm hand on the machinery of administration.²⁺

(1) Muslim Admildars: Short tenure and varied conditions of appointment have made the Amildar a confusing figure in local history. Under different titles he could be and usually was given almost absolute control over his charge. What, since the time of Akbar had been a dual system, at least in theory, came to be united in the person of the Nizam "and became so in all inferior gradations of

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History of Volume III (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.48), pp.1-240, 515-738. This volume contains detailed histories of Telugu districts taken from Sanskrit, Telugu, Maratha, and Persian sources.

² Elliot Mss., Local History II, "Lists of Hakims or Officers Administering the Guntur and Ellor Circars," pp. 62-71 (IOL: Eur. Mss. F.47).⁺ Elliot received this from the Despandi of Gudur in the Masulipatam District.

authority."¹ The military and police powers (faujdari and nizamat) and the civil and fiscal powers (zilahdari and shaikdari or diwani) were combined. The sword and the pen came together in one person. At his level, the Amildar became the chief executive, legislative, and judicial power. In theory, nothing but his own personal weakness or the ruin of his district restrained him. As James Grant put it, he "held a greater variety of trusts than...ought to have fallen to any officer."²⁺

In one sense the Subahdar of Hyderabad, the Nawabs of Arcot, Kurnool, Masulipatam and Rajahmundry, not to mention the more independent Rajahs of Tanjore, Mysore, and Vizapapatam, were basically nothing more than powerful Amildars who had made their offices hereditary and strove to keep their subordinates from doing the same. An Amildar of the Northern Circars was not much different from a Faujdar of the Carnatic except that he was more closely subject to the authority of Hyderabad. 'Nawabs and their Faujdars in the south were virtually independent of Hyderabad and of each other. Often,

¹ Great Britain. House of Commons. The Fifth Report of 1812. Appendix 3: James Grant, "Political Survey of the Northern Circars". Parliamentary Publications (IOL: Collection No. 56), pp. 631-32.

² Firminger, W.K. (ed.), The Fifth Report, Vol. III (Calcutta: R. Cambray & Co., 1918), p. 25.

⁺ Note: In Guntur, as elsewhere, Muslim rulers worked out an attractive relationship with Hindu bureaucracy based on hard facts. The Muslims held power and skimmed off the cream. Hindu bureaucrats served up the cream and waxed fat in the process. The Muslims were warriors, not clerks.

deference to Delhi and to Hyderabad was only ceremonial.

Actual administration in the Murtijanagar Circar was, to put it mildly, spasmodic and confused. The Muslim Amildars ruled through their Hindu subordinates while they themselves were preoccupied with entertainment, wars, and the politics of Hyderabad.

A certain class of Hindus...relieved their ignorant, voluptuous Mussalman rulers from the intricate details of internal police and the management of Mofussil collections.¹

At times, an Amildar ruled more than one district; and at other times two hakims or district officers were appointed to the same district. Titles such as Amildar or Faujdar or Zilahdar or Jagirdar, were in the Guntur District only temporary titles attached to very temporary officers.

(2) Hindu Zanindars: Below the Muslim umbrella the older Hindu institutions seem to have continued much as before. What changes did occur appear to have been more in district personnel and terminology, rather than in institutions which were "merely an extension of the village institutions in circles of villages or districts."² Names and terms reflect some of the forces and influences which worked at various levels of the administration.

The penetration of Maratha Brahman influence is apparent from the titles of the district officers. The most important Hindu of the district was the Desmukh. He was the "real" District Officer. He was

¹ ibid., p.26. Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.344.

² Walter Elliot's Report to COM, April 14, 1846 (para. 99): MRP (281: 20: No. 39 of December 6, 1847).

the permanent executive, the revenue collector, the agent of the government. He was the buffer between local inhabitants and foreign intruders, the cement of opposed cultures, religions, customs, and languages. Standing between the Muslim garrisons and the villages, the Desmukh could be a representative of local opinion and a check to despotic action. Next, the Brahman Despandi, who was the District Accountant and Registrar, recorded all official actions, registered all grants and privileges and kept all original rent-rolls, assessment papers and fiscal accounts. Since he was usually also the Majumdar, or Auditor, he was a potential check to all other officers. Then, there was the Mannavar or District Head of Police. Since the Desmukh and the Mannavar relied upon the sword for their immediate authority, they generally came from a martial caste, both offices often being held by one person.¹

The Office Manager or Sheristadar held a pivotal position. He stored official papers, forms, stationery, and reports. He was custodian of district buildings and materials. He selected the host of writers and clerks needed for office staff. He controlled such lesser officials as the Record Keeper (Daftardar) and Cashier (Shroff). Should his superiors prove weak or ignorant, he possessed marvellous tools for power. As acting chief minister to the District Officer, he held in his hands the seeds of power and the possibility of playing a dominant role. Like the Despandi he relied upon his pen for his

¹ Great Britain. House of Commons. The Fifth Report of 1812, Appendix 13. James Grant "Political Survey of the Northern Circars". Parliamentary Publications (IOL: Collection No. 56), pp. 631-32.

influence. If he were both Despandi and Sheristadar, the extent of his power would not be difficult to imagine.¹

The Zamindars of Guntur were, in fact, the hereditary district officers just described. Hyderabad officials indiscriminately used and perhaps misused this Persian word for "land controller"². They applied it to those officials who were more permanently in charge of the country, to the Hindu administrators and rulers. These Hindu Zamindars were generally of three classes: ancient hereditary chiefs (samasthanam rajas), hereditary district officers, and temporary or removable district officers. Of course, all Zamindars wished to show that they were ancient. Their rulers wished to keep them under their control by being able to remove them. Confusing as the term became, its application for Guntur is quite clear.³

The oldest Zamindar family in Guntur, the Velamavaru Manika Raos, seem to have held executive and police power over the entire Kondavidu Sima under the Vijayanagar Empire. Muslim ascendancy brought the Desastha Manur Rao family into the district. In 1690, the Mughuls divided authority over the 44 haveli villages and 14 samutus of Murtijanagar Circar between both families. Manika Rama Rao became Desmukh and Mannavar and Manuri Pantruni Rao was made Despandi, Majumdar, Sheristadar, Zamindar, Killadar or Governor of Kondavidu

¹ ibid.

² Elliot Report to GOM, April 14, 1846 (para. 99): MRP (281: 20: 7644) No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

³ Elliot Report to GOM, April 14, 1846 (para. 99-100): MRP (281: 20: 7645) No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847. There are many references to this point.

Fortress, and Huzur Nayakaram or Prince.¹ While there is little doubt as to where Mughul favor lay, the Maratha family had trouble. In about 1710 a powerful Kamma family from across the river was introduced. Both the Nawab of Arcot and the Nawab of Rajahmundry had to intervene before an equitable distribution of authority, together with suitable russums (commission fees) and savarams (free land grants), could be made. One local chronicler wrote that "22 villages of Chebrolu Summut in the Talook of Chintapally" were assigned to Vasireddy Padmanabhudu. From this meagre beginning, Vasireddy power quickly grew while that of the Manika Raos rapidly declined. In 1725, the offices of Mannavar and of Desmukh over 225 villages were conferred on the Vasireddy family. An imperial sanad later confirmed Vasireddy authority over five mahals or "samuts."²

As Muslim power relaxed, the Hindu officers of Guntur grew strong. Acting in much the same way as had the Poliyagars and Nayakars under the crumbling Vijayanagar umbrella (authority), local officers assumed high titles and dignities. Large portions of the revenue failed to reach the Hyderabad treasury.

¹ Elliot Mss., Local History I (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 46), "Translation of Dandakavile at Condavid Village," pp. 332-33. Names of samutus are given. Local History III (Mss. Eur. F. 48), "Historical Memoir of Chebrolu," pp. 91-102.

² Elliot Mss., Local History III (ibid.), p. 97. Firminger (ed.), The Fifth Report, Vol. III. (Calcutta: 1918), p.64. Mackenzie, G. A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 344 ff. Morris, Henry A Historical Account of Godavery District (London: Truber & Co., 1878), pp. 210-30. Elliot Report, ibid. (para. 100).

...a continual struggle was carried on between the Sir Subah and the Hyderabad Sirkar on one hand, and the Sir Subah and the Zemindars on the other; while these had a similar game to play with the village officers and ryots. The whole gave rise to a general system of evasion and deceit.¹

Guntur Faujdars were too weak to enforce their authority. A fort was built astride the Hyderabad road. State (haveli) lands were seized by refractory subordinates. Because of oppression, the district became depopulated and waste.²

The Nawab of Rajahmundry, Anwar-ud-din, sent an energetic and severe "Zilahdar" to Murtijanagar to extirpate those who had "availed themselves...to usurp the feeble authority of their Mohammedan superiors."³⁺ For seven years, from 1732 to 1739, Rustum Khan and his subordinates, some of whose names we know, kept a firm rule over the district (circar).⁴

It was probably during this period that a local Telaga family was raised to a position of power. Presumably as a counter-poise to the rapidly growing strength of the Vasyreddy Zamindar, the Malrajus were given Desmukhi and Mannavari authority over the Vinukonda and Bellamkonda parganas. Malraju Narsu Rao built his fort (kota) in the heart of the district and called the town which grew up around it

¹ Elliot Report to GOM, April 14, 1846 (para. 13): MRP (281: 20: 745), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

² Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 39-40. Elliot Mss., Local History I (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 46), p. 335.

³ Mackenzie, ibid., p. 41.

⁴ ibid. + Kulla-minar or towers of skulls were erected to show authority.

Narsaraopet.¹

The district was now plunged into a period of disorder and chaos typical of those times in India. In 1752 the French set up a military station on the road junction opposite the ancient village of Guntur (now Patta-Guntur). De Bussy attempted to introduce a strong administration; but he did not stay long enough to do more than give the district its modern name. In commenting on this period, one village chronicler wrote of the French that they "came, annoyed the country, and held the management...becoming tyrannic for seven years."²

An energetic and able Faujdar, Hussein Ali Khan, tried to bring order to the Northern Circars and to balance the conflicting pressures and claims of Hyderabad and Madras during the next decade (1759-1769). Despite repeated incursions, this officer left the last coherent records of administration under the Muslims. After examining these records at Hyderabad, James Grant wrote that Guntur was

anciently composed of five purgannahs...since divided into 25 mootahs, containing 868 villages...distributed under five Desmookees...and the 39 havillee villages of Kondavidu.³

Even so, it was not possible for this officer to stem the tides of power politics flowing around him.

¹ Firminger (ed.), The Fifth Report, 1812 (Calcutta: 1918), vol. 3. pp. 64. Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1833), 301 ff.

² Elliot Mss., Local History III (IOL: Mss. Eur. F. 48), "Chabrolu" pp. 97. See Mackenzie, ibid., pp. 51-66; and Orme, R., History of Military Transactions in Indostan (London: 1803), p. 378.

³ Firminger (ed.), ibid., Grant's "Survey...", pp. 63-64.

What occurred during the last twenty years of Muslim rule, from 1768 to 1788, is not a pleasant subject. Guntur became the Jagir of the Nizam's brother, Basalat Jang; but this individual had only a precarious hold on the district. In the words of Gordon Mackenzie,

Such a scene of plunder and rapine is presented by grasping renters, intriguing French agents, Rebellious Zemindars and lawless bandits, that one marvels how crops were ever harvested or even sown by the peasantry at this period of misrule.¹

French officers, British deserters, renegade chiefs, robbers and secret agents in the service of the Jagirdar made Guntur a political problem. When arms shipments were landed at Motupalle and Vetapallam, British officers seized the ports. Hyder Ali took up a menacing position on high ground at Adoni. The Nizam moved down to Bezwada (on the river). After further maneuvering, a general war broke out in which Guntur was only one of the battlegrounds. When peace returned, Basalat Jang's former position was restored.

The death of this weak ruler in 1782 left the district to the far from tender mercies of the Nizam's Amildar, Saif Jang, and his associates. By the time Lord Cornwallis arrived in India to enforce British claims to the Guntur Circar, claims based on treaties, firmans, and previous conquests,² the Nizam was not sorry to surrender the now destitute and unprofitable district.

Some idea of the territorial and administrative disorganization

¹ Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 77.

² ibid., 69-83. Lord Clive had obtained Imperial firmans from Delhi in 1765.

which the British officers encountered when they took over the district in September, 1788, can be gained from Mackenzie's statement that: "The Zemindars might have done just as well if they had drawn their villages by lot."¹ The jurisdictions of the four great families were so intermingled that delineation was almost impossible. Instead of five neat divisions, the British beheld a muddle in which some villages were actually shared by two or by three Zamindars. (See Map No.2, App.VI).

II. THE YEARS OF CONFUSION: 1788 to 1802

During the first twelve years of British rule in Guntur, resistance from local leaders, subversion from Government officers, and frustration from ignorance delayed the introduction of political and administrative stability.

A. THE ZAMINDARS

The transfer of power in Guntur from the Nizam's officers was only a formality. Long under the almost exclusive control of the Zamindars, the district paid little heed to outside authority from any quarter, whether in Hyderabad or in Madras. During the last seven years of Muslim rule, the Nizam hardly received 10 lakhs a year out of the average 13.2 lakhs of rupees which he demanded. Yet, the Amildar, Zamindars, and Karnams respectively admitted that as much as 11.2, 12.4, and 18.7 lakhs of rupees had come into their hands.²

Father Manenti, an ex-Jesuit at Cambellpuram, writing about the

¹ Mackenzie, op.cit., p. 345.

² BOR to Ram, (paras. 4-8), November 7, 1795: MRP (281: 21: 7454), No. 39 of December 6, 1847, para. 13.

affairs of a certain Papi Reddi, gave a sorry picture of the district in 1789. Papi Reddi had "entangled himself with the Zamindars." He had played the fool in renting 6 villages for 6000 pagodas because, while he would hardly draw 300 from the villages, he would be forced to pay 9000 pagodas. The villages were almost "depopulated."¹ Manenti would not recommend Papi Reddi as a guard for Kondavidu fort for this reason.

For a long time, the Great Vasireddy, Venkatadry Naidu, had over-awed the three other zamindari families of the district and defied the Nizam and the British. The Masulipatam Council's attempt to put his cousin in charge of his holdings north of the river had ended in humiliation. The furious Zamindar had promptly crossed the river, razed a fort and captured his cousin. A suggestion that his energy might be curbed if he were put in charge of Vinukonda and Bellamkonda was rejected as too risky. As long as responsibility lay with the inept and corrupt Council at Masulipatam, Venkatadry Naidu's power remained free and undisturbed.²

Even so, firm words were used. Golkonda rulers had asked for 12 lakhs and the Nizam had demanded 14 lakhs of rupees.³ Surely the British should ask as much. Accordingly, what were considered to be

¹ Mackenzie, Donald, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.346.

² ibid., p. 310.

³ James Grant's "Political Survey of the Northern Circars," in Firminger (ed.) The Fifth Report, 1812 (Calcutta: 1918), pp. 46-57.

moderate agreements (kabuliats) were drawn up with the Zamindars for two-thirds of the gross estimate (anchana) of annual produce. The Zamindars were told to make good the 30 lakhs of rupees which they had failed to pay during the past seven years. They were to repopulate the district or themselves be held liable.¹

Unfortunately the decade from 1790-1800 was one of the most disastrous on record. The famine of 1791-92 was so severe that an estimated sixth of the poorer, laboring people died of starvation. A tidal wave in July 1791 washed away much of the produce and many of the cattle in the coastal and river villages. The water which remained knee deep for weeks ruined the grain which was stored in pits (patras). The following year there was a severe drought.²

During these calamities the Vasireddy continued to hold power while the other Zamindars engaged in quarrels. In 1792, Venkatadry Naidu offered to pay two-thirds of the seven-year debt and promised 3,15,000 pagodas a year in revenue for the next three years if he were given sole charge of the whole district. Since only Venkatadry Naidu seemed able to control the district, Anthony Sadier and his Council in Masulipatam favored this proposal.³

This arrangement was never realized. The fresh winds of reform

¹ Elliot Report, (para. 9): MRP (281: 20: 7488), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

² Elliot Report, (para 10): MRP (281: 20: 7449-50), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Ram to BOR, July 6, 1799.

³ Elliot Report, (para. 11): MRP (281: 20: 7451), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

blew, the Masulipatam Council disappeared, and the Vasireddy Zamindar began to feel the pressure. He was compelled to release and reinstate his cousins in their villages across the river. A battalion of sepoys was stationed in his fort at Chintapalli. For a while, even the Zamindar himself was put under guard at Guntur.¹ His small army was disbanded and he was allowed to keep no more troops than would be necessary for the collection of revenue.²

Despite the loss of his independence, the proud Kamma continued to display a brave front. He never returned to the palace which had been desecrated by Company soldiers. Another palace was erected at Amaravati which became famous throughout the district. Built out of stone quarried from the now famous Buddhist ruins, his residence was supported with pillars covered in silver and gold and was roofed with sheets of burnished copper. Gardens were laid out and temples restored. From this show-piece of grandeur the Zamindar exercised his powerful influence for another twenty years.³

B. THE GRAMA RAYULU⁺

Traditional devices were used to meet the needs of the village community. Separate funds were customarily set aside to meet village expenses. These were called grama kharchulu. Religious festivals, temple staff and maintenance, dancing girls, public amusement, charity,

¹ Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.311.

² BOR to Andrew Ram, (paras. 1-5): GDR (962: 120-30), March 21, 1796.

³ Mackenzie, ibid., p. 311.

⁺ Grama Rayulu: lit., "village chiefs or princes," the village leaders. See: H.H.Wilson's Glossary (Calcutta: 1874), p. 441.

gifts to dignitaries, office equipment and staff (sadaravarudu), and traveling expenses for village officers (batta) were paid out of these funds. Since land revenues were also expenses incurred by the whole community and since the Karnam kept the accounts for both grama mahasulu and grama kharchulu, the bookkeeping was often lumped together. All expenses, whether revenues or funds for local purposes, were, after all, a drain on the resources of the village itself. Under the old farming (ijaradari) and sharing (asara or visabadi) systems, the expenses both of revenue collection and of local government had usually been born entirely by the village.¹ In bad times, the village employed its extra resources through the Grama Kharchu to purchase relief. In good times, the same resources could be hoarded against the evil day, or used to purchase power for the village elite, the grama rayulu.

The earliest British officers in Guntur, Hughes and Sadleir, found out how troublesome village leaders could be.² The Committee of Investigation sent from Madras in 1790 discovered the same thing. Actual revenues far exceeded what came to the Company. Village leaders exacted their own support and more from the poorer and weaker communities. Most Karnams kept two sets of books so that the Zamindars and the Circar would be deceived as to the actual resources of the country. Concluding that the Grama Kharchu was unreasonably heavy and

¹ Elliot Report to GOM, (para 83): MRP (281: 20: 7591), No. 39 of December 6, 1847, re: Robert Hughes' letter of September 29, 1789.

² Anthon Sadleir (Chief-in-Council) to GOM, extract of letter of April 30, 1791, in Appendix E of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8149 ff.), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

that it would be a waste of time to regulate "such an abuse", the committee recommended that the institution of Grama Kharch be abolished. All future village expenses would be defrayed from the district treasury. Accordingly, a notice was duly published in Telugu forbidding all such exactions and urging people "to refuse and resist every demand of this kind".¹

Such a deeply ingrained custom was not to be so easily legislated out of existence. The rule could not be enforced. The first Collector to take charge of Guntur under the clear authority of the Board of Revenue in Madras soon remarked on "the dexterity of the people in fabricating accounts".² A sample check into the books of 18 villages uncovered a disparity of 19,850 Madras pagodas which had gone into the pockets of the village leaders. The Board of Revenue observed that such practices were bound to grow whenever "the hands of power over them relaxed".³ George Ram's retort came close to the heart of the whole problem:

The inhabitants having so long laboured under oppression have acquired a proportional skill in every mode of evasion to which, I apprehend, the means of detection in the hands of the Collector are by no means adequate.⁴

Village costs had jumped over 25 percent since the arrival of the

¹ Committee of Enquiry, (Basel, Cochrane, Jones & Scott) to GOM, extract of letter of August 21 (Cons. on 31), 1790, in Appendix D of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8136-49), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

² G.A.Ram to BOR, extract of letter of August 5, 1794, in Appendix D of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8137), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 18

³ BOR to G.A.Ram, extract of letter of November 9, 1794, in Appendix D of Elliot Report, ibid.

⁴ Ram to BOR, extract of November 24, 1794, in Appendix D of Elliot Report, ibid.

British. If the villages of the district could be rented out to the Zamindars for five years on leases for two-thirds of the gross produce, (a revenue demand which Ram put at 3.4 lakhs of pagodas), the sticky problem of trying to deal with the village leaders could be avoided. This course was followed.¹

C. THE DESASTHA DUBASHES

The very nature of their duties as confidential servants and commercial interpreters tended to make Dubashes into double agents. As go-betweens, their success depended on their ability to resolve differences, compromise opposing interests, avoid stalemates and conclude agreements. As mediators, they drew alien minds together. As Banians, or Diwans, or Babus, they were a phenomenon definitely needed and distinctly fitted for the demands of a plural society. Whatever their title, there existed throughout British rule in Guntur a group of Indian district officers, a bureaucracy of go-betweens who linked the rulers and the ruled.

A small but compact elite of Maratha Brahmans had long held the upper levels of local administration when the British came to Guntur.² They had served the Zamindars. While Komartis and Banians were better suited to commerce, Desasthas with their generations of administrative experience were best suited to government work. The Marathas quickly

¹ Ram to BOR, December 19, 1795, GDR (979: 4-18).

² We have already noted they entered Guntur in the Golkonda period. See: Ruthnaswamy, M., Some Influences that made the British Administrative System in India (London: Luzac & Co., 1939), p. 87 and p. 293. Ruthnaswamy indicates that Maratha Brahmans and the Maratha language dominated the administration of the Carnatic.

became proficient in the English language.¹ A number of these Brahmans soon attached themselves as private agents to the new rulers; and with success, their numbers grew.

The first Desastha to gain power under the British in Guntur was Venkata Rama Rao, the Dubash of Robert Hughes. Together with an anonymous but notorious Papiiah, an English Translator named Accalamanti Narsiah, and other headquarters officers, he took advantage of the ignorance of his patron. By taking over the detailed work of administration, he was able to spread a net of cleverly fabricated records and of systematic embezzlement. By utilizing the disunity of both the British and the Zamindars, he strengthened the local oligarchy of Desasthas. The winds of reform which finally uncovered scandals and corruption blew this person and the whole Masulipatam Council from power.²

In reflecting on the habit of his Indian officers receiving secret sums, in return for favors, a habit which he attributed to "an intemperate thirst for gain," the first Collector of Masulipatam wrote:

A breach of trust...excites no self-reproach. They submit to personal restraint with a composure truly philosophic.³

¹ Row, Vennelacunty Venkata Gopal, The Life of Vennelacunty Soob Row, Native of Ongole, Translator and Interpreter to the Late Sudr Court, Madras from 1815 to 1829 (Madras: C. Forester & Co., 1873), chapter 1. This is an interesting account of how English was learned.

² Elliot Report to GOM, (para. 60): MRP (281: 20: 7551-52) No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

³ Thomas Oakes to BOR, June 9, 1798, in Appendix C of No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847, MRP (281: 21: 8115 ff.).

Punishment was not due to guilt but to the bad fortune of being discovered.

The next person to take over the local bureaucracy was Atmuri Venkatachallam. Described by Thomas Jarrett as "a vulture preying upon the simple people",¹ he was the last old-time Dubash in Guntur. His master, George A. Ram, while the first covenanted Collector of the district, was also too old to change his ways. Together they held sway over the district for six years until they were dismissed for incompetence in January of 1800. Even so, the influence of Atmuri Venkatachallam could be strongly felt behind the scenes for another decade.²

D. THE NEW RULERS

Lack of harmony and want of information added confusion and weakened the authority of the British in Guntur. The district was first put under the charge of the Provincial Council at Masulipatam. This Council, supposedly subject to the Government of Madras, exercised a dangerous degree of independence. Bickering among the authorities at Madras during this early period did not serve to dampen this insubordinate attitude. Then the winds of reform began to blow. A committee sent up to Masulipatam to investigate reported scandals and the reasons

¹ Ruthnaswamy, Some Influences that made the British Administrative System in India (London: Luzac & Co., 1929), p. 87. Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 346 and 358.

² Elliot Report to BOR, (para. 60): MRP (ibid.), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

for deficient revenue. Sadleir and Dobbyn, the Chief and Second in Council, died before the enquiry was over. Other officers were allowed to choose between resignation and dismissal. The Masulipatam Council was abolished in 1794. Henceforth, Collectors were to be directly responsible to the Board of Revenue. Commercial activity -- "shaking the pagoda tree" -- by Government officers was forbidden. All of the corruption and venality of the previous administration was to be swept away.¹

The reforms did not extend, however, to those local people whose cooperation was most essential. George Ram, the first Collector of Guntur, needed more than linguistic ability to obtain detailed information about the land tenures and resources of the district. The Board of Revenue wanted to fix the validity of titles, particularly of inams, so that fixed money allowances could be given instead of privileged land.² After much prodding, Ram finally produced an eight volume "English Register" of supposedly all the lands in the district. This was far from satisfactory. After Ram was dismissed in 1800, William Gordon was ordered to continue the enquiry; but nothing was really accomplished. What records did survive from this early period were due to the efforts of Andrew Scott, the Collector who made the

¹ Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 345. For constitutional nature, see Sir Courtenay Ilbert, The Government of India: Historical Survey (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), pp. 68-70. Keith, A.B., A Constitutional History of India (London: 1936).

² BOR to Ram (Circular to all Collectors), May 23, 1795, in Elliot Report (para. 87), April 17, 1846, Madras Revenue Proceedings (281: 20: 7600), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

Permanent Settlement.

The oldest records from British rule were those submitted by the Despandi of Kondavidu Samutu to Anthony Sadleir in 1739. These listed the lands, villages, and samutus of the district, including only inam totals without the names of Inamders. There were also accounts of Samutu Despandis for the six years prior to the Permanent Settlement (1796-1802). Scott found these to be much blotted and corrected; nevertheless, at least some hazy figures for waste, cultivated, taxed and untaxed lands, for ploughs, crops, cattle, and population, and for sayaru and mahasulu collections and balances were available.¹

The most significant feature to emerge from this early period, is the reluctance with which information was disclosed. This was particularly true with regard to the nature and extent of the tax-exempt or quit-rent inam lands. Except for Ram's highly unreliable English Register, no figures on inam holdings were to be found. Moreover, both the measuring standards used and the Maratha shorthand (modi) employed by district officers seem to emphasize a desire to keep information secret.

III. THE DIFFICULTIES OF ZAMINDARI SETTLEMENT: 1802 to 1837

The Permanent Settlement of Guntur was essentially administrative in character. It was primarily a method of obtaining a steady revenue.

¹ Elliot Report to GOM, (paras. 87-90), April 17, 1846: MRP: (281: 20: 7601-02), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

It was a way of delegating authority by which means of supervision, kinds of sanction, and forms of organization and personnel selection were involved and, indeed, directed to the purpose of insuring a continuous flow of revenue. In the manner in which it was formulated by Lord Cornwallis and carried to Madras by Lord Wellesley and Lord Clive, it was a decision that it would be better to allow local and semi-autonomous agents ^{to} take over the entire land revenue administration.

Such words as "landowner" and "proprietor" and "private right," with their English connotations, tend to hide this administrative character. Because it wished to have a fixed, regular, and moderate income, the State conferred "proprietary right, that most powerful incentive to industry."¹ No independent spirit sprang from the ground to defend this "right". The right was not hallowed by tradition and custom; it was an authority delegated and it was foreign. Presumably, if such privileges with their accompanying obligations and limitations could be given, they could also be taken away.

A. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ZAMINDARS AND THE CIRCAR

The Zamindars of Guntur were invited to hold tracts (mutthas) hereditarily in return for regular, permanently fixed money payments to the Collector.² Since the Guntur Zamindars were considered to

¹ BOR to Andrew Scott (para 24), December 29, 1801, as included in Goldingham's Report to C.R.Cotton (para 11), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2466), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² BOR to Andrew Scott (paras 1-4), August 27, 1800: Guntur District Records (volume 3957: pp. 118-36).

have been no more than hereditary district officers, they were given ordinary titles (sanads)-- titles which were alienable and divisible.¹⁺ They were responsible for land revenue (mahasulu) only, and not for other revenues (sayaru) nor for police and justice. Neither the capital or labor required nor the actual harvest of a given year was considered. Each Zamindar was to collect one half of the harvest, remit two-thirds of that half to the Government, and keep the rest. The State share was given an unalterable cash value representing average productivity calculated at below average prices. Although Villagers were to be dealt with according to custom, they were to be protected from arbitrary expulsion by the fact that their contracts would be legally binding.²⁺⁺

All the haveli (government) land was divided into mutthas, assessed, and conferred (sometimes sold) upon the Zamindars in return for an agreed revenue.³ Since the accounts of the previous thirty years were undependable, since both Zamindars and Karnams tried to conceal the real resources of the country, and since the Board of Revenue, in its desire for moderation, set the amount far below what was recommended by either Collector or Zamindars, the Permanent Settlement of Guntur

¹⁺ Note: Mutthadari or "proprietary" titles were ordinary as distinct from samasthanam or "ancient" titles which could not be alienated nor divided among heirs, only primogeniture inheritance being legal. Baden-Powell, B.H., The Land Systems of British India: Volume III (Oxford: 1892), pp. 654-58.

² BOR to Andrew Scott (paras 3-6), August 27, 1800: GDR (vol. 3957: pp.118-36). ++ Note: Actual prices never did fall to the commutation prices applied. Also, the ryotwari system took no account of capital investment.

³ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 347-48.

was anything but severe.¹ On the Board's orders of December 29, 1801, Andrew Scott drew up the sanads bestowing the magic of property. In return, the Zamindars were to pay the following revenues each year.²⁺

Zamindari	Kasba	Villages	Peshkash
1. Vasireddy	(Amaravati)	333	Rs.5,40,737
2. Malraju	(Narsaraopet)	323	3,38,792
3. Manur Rao	(Chilikalurpet)	79	1,26,700
4. Manur Rao	(Sattanapalli)	80	1,26,700
5. Manika Rao	(Repalli)	67	92,528
Total		882	Rs.12,25,458

In its anxiety to see this arrangement work, the Board scratched off roughly 40 lakhs of rupees due to the Government, cancelled 50 lakhs in personal debts due to Armenian and Komarti financiers in Masulipatam, and deferred the first full payment of revenue by eight years.³

¹ Elliot Report to GOM (paras 6 & 7), April 17, 1846: Madras Revenue Proceedings (range 281: volume 20: pp. 7438-47), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

² Goldingham Report to C.R.Cotton (para. 10), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2465), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. Also in Elliot Report (para 14): MRP (281: 20: 7455), op.cit., and in every Settlement Report, proceeding, minute of consultation, letter home, and despatch on Guntur land revenue. +Note: James Grant, in his "Political Survey of the Northern Circars," gave the following tabulation of Hussein Ali's assessment for Guntur:

1. Vasireddy	300 villages	Madras Pagodas	1,32,000
2. Malraju	230 "	"	70,000
3. Manika Rao	180 "	"	75,000
4. Manur Rao	150 "	"	68,000
5. Kolluru (extinct)			6,000
860 "		"	3,51,000

During the first 12 years of Company rule in Guntur, an average of only about 9 out of a demand of 11 lakhs of rupees was realized.

³ Goldingham Report (para. 46), ibid. See also Section 8, Regulation II of 1802, A.D.Campbell, A New Edition of the Code of Regulations for the Internal Government of the Madras Territories, Volume I (Madras: 1840).

Having grown up in a political jungle where State rule was weak and local impunity common, the Zamindars were not able to appreciate the purposes of British policy. The new settlement made it possible for them to enjoy annual incomes often larger than what they were obliged to remit to the Collector.¹ As a result, the Zamindars were able to live on an unprecedented scale. For fifteen years they tried to outdo each other, indulging in every vanity, whim, and fancy. Support for "13 battalions of Native Infantry" could have been maintained by their annual expenditure.²

No picture of affluence was more striking than that of Venkatadry Naidu, the Great Vasireddy. He was careful to pay promptly for his 551 villages, 333 of which were in Guntur. He kept a retinue of several thousand men, 300 horses, 80 elephants, 50 camels and uncounted bullock carts. His palaces at Amaravaty, Chebrolu, and Chintapalli, his town house in Guntur, and his other residences reflected his prosperity. He built temples and rebuilt the lofty gopuram at Mangalagiri. Over a hundred richly gilt brass pillars, 30 feet high, were erected at various shrines; hundreds of Vaidiki purohits were fed daily; shawls, gold, and jewels were distributed among learned sadhus; holy men were employed to pray for him day and night; and legendary sums were spent on festivals, sacrifices, fire offerings, and marriages. His weight in silver and gold was bestowed upon Brahmans several times. At great feasts and on "auspicious" occasions, he handed out clothing and

¹ Goldingham Report to Cotton (paras 13-17), ibid (280: 7: 2467-71). Elliot Report (para 6), loc.cit. (281: 20: 7439-42).

² Elliot Report (para 7), ibid. (281: 20: 7443).

jewelry to village leaders and their wives. His peshkash ("tribute") was paid in advance and 1.95 lakhs of rupees deposited in the Guntur Treasury for withdrawal from Collectors during his pilgrimages. While in Benares, he gave rich gifts to Baji Rao, the ex-Peshwa. On his return from Ramesvaram, he gave a nazr of one lakh of pagodas to the Nizam in return for the title "Manur Sultan".¹

To a lesser degree, the other Guntur Zamindars followed the same short-sighted path. Only the Malraju, however, was able to compete with the grandeur of the Vasireddy. Malraju Gunda Rao kept 100 elephants in his stockade and became hereditary sponsor of the huge Kotapakonda Mela (a position he still retains). The Manur Rao and the Manika Rao families were already tearing themselves to pieces over disputed successions.²

The old story of dynastic decline now occurred in miniature. Instead of zanana poisons, rebellions and wars, the field of action for intrigue and conspiracy was territorially and tactically more limited. Under the British umbrella, the families and particularly the servants schemed and struggled over the wealth of the district. The turning point toward rapid decay coincided roughly with the

¹ Elliot Report (para 7), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7443-47), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Goldingham Report (para 30), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 24770-74), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. See also: S.V.K.Rao's Arzi on social and economic development in Appendix A of Goldingham's Report.

² Goldingham Report (para 31), ibid (280: 7: 2481); and Elliot Report (paras 17-22), ibid. and Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 313, 317-21.

Vasireddy's death and with the Pindari incursion.

When he died in 1816, Venkatadri Naidu left two adopted sons, 551 villages, several palaces, and a movable fortune estimated at some 55 million pounds sterling (55 lakhs) in the hands of his two Desastha diwans. The complexity of the struggle which ensued is staggering. While the liquid assets were dissipated within two years, the disputed succession lasted more than thirty.¹ How this litigation moved by intricate turns through a tangled maze of English procedures, Hindu laws, and a hierarchy of courts is a fascinating story of 113 pages.² By the time the final decision was handed down from the Privy Council, the issue no longer mattered. The fortune was gone; the zamindari was auctioned; many of the contesting parties were dead; and two Desastha families were reputed to be the wealthiest in that part of the country.³

Jaganadha Babu, with 314 villages, was induced by Sabnavis Ananta Rao to claim the 237 villages of Ramanadha Babu. Ramanadha Babu was defended by Potturi Kalidas Rao. For years the two Diwans pursued the litigation, hired pandits, bribed witnesses, bought mantrams, furnished entertainment, and finally provided loans for the young heirs. Jaganadha Babu borrowed until the saukars (bankers) sued and then

¹ Goldingham Report (para 30): MRP (280: 7: 2480), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. Elliot Report (para 7): MRP (281: 20: 7466), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Thomas Oakes to BOR (para 45), July 11, 1819.

² Moore, Edmund F. (ed.), Reports of cases heard and determined by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on Appeal from the Supreme and Sudder Dewanny Courts in the East Indies, Vol. IV: 1846-50 (London: Stephens and Norton, 1930), pp. 1-113.

³ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 314.

peeled the silver and gold off the pillars and copper off the roof of his palace.¹ Governor Munro, when touring the area, found both men tired of the suit and willing to stop; but the Diwans successfully prevented any amicable settlement.² After Jaganadha died in 1826, his two widows turned on each other, one producing a son to back her claim. During the next 15 years, Rangama and Chava Lakshmipati (the adopted son) were pushed forward by the Sabnavis family against Achamma, Ramanadha Babu, and Potturi Kalidas. A decision from the Sadr Adalat just after the terrible Guntur Famine of 1832 put Ramanadha in charge of the huge estate; but neither his capacity nor circumstances enabled him to manage. The zamindari fell back under amani management.³

The course of the other Zamindars paralleled that of the Vasi-reddys too closely to be repeated. Supervision was relaxed for the sake of pleasure. Death resulted in disputed inheritance. Debts accumulated. Revenues failed to materialize so that the Collector was continually nursing the mutthas back to health.⁴⁺ Worst of all,

¹ Elliot Report (para 16), op.cit., (281: 20: 7463-65).

² A.J.Arbutnot, Selections from Minutes and Other Official Writings of Sir Thomas Munro (Madras: 1886), p. 196.

³ Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.314. Goldingham Report to C.R.Cotton, (paras. 17-21): MRP (280: 7: 2471-74), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

⁴ Goldingham Report, MRP (280: 7: 2475-80), No. 30 of April 16, (1841), (paras. 22-29). Elliot Report, (paras. 16-22): MRP (281: 20: 7463-73), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. +Note: A detailed chart of the years of amani management of each estate is given in each of these reports. After 1818, authority was continually alternating back and forth.

administration was trusted to Diwans who were bent on taking what they could as quickly as possible.¹ All that was needed to complete the ruin was a year or two of calamity. The terrible famine and epidemics which began in 1832 were more than enough. By 1837, the Zamindars were worse off than they had been in 1802, their debts to the Circar alone being over 43 lakhs of rupees.²

B. RELATIONS BETWEEN ZAMINDARS AND RYOTS

Under the Permanent Settlement, the Ryot was considered "the key-stone of its permanency".³ No longer was the Ryot to struggle with swarms of officials. He was to sow and reap feeling that each hour of work added to the comfort of his family.⁴ "A more industrious and substantial class of cultivators" was to rise which could make contracts (darkhasts, pattas, etc.) for "moderate money rents" and which could be protected from abuse by the newly constituted judiciary.⁵

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- ¹ The strong and destructive influence of these servants is amplified in Appendix G of the Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8192-8205), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Seven letters on Diwans are given:
- (1) George Andrew Ram to BOR, November 25, 1794.
 - (2) George Andrew Scott to BOR, September 20, 1800, para. 4 (Cherukuru:).
 - (3) Andrew Scott to BOR, November, 13, 1801.
 - (4) Daniel Crawford to BOR, September 6, 1803.
 - (5) Thomas Oakes to BOR, May 26, 1817, paras. 14-15.
 - (6) Thomas Oakes to BOR, July 11, 1819, paras. 29-32.
 - (7) John Whish to BOR, June 14, 1826, para. 15.
- ² Goldingham Report, (para. 38): MRP (280: 7: 2486), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.
- ³ BOR to Andrew Scott, extract from para. 25 of Board's letter of 25 December, 1801, in Goldingham Report, (para. 11): MRP (280: 7: 2465), No. 30 of 16 April, 1841.
- ⁴ BOR to Andrew Scott, extract from para. 41 of Board's letter of 25 December, 1801, in Goldingham Report, ibid.
- ⁵ BOR to Andrew Scott, extract from paras. 37-42 of Board's letter of 25 December, 1801, in Goldingham Report, ibid.

The identity of the Ryot, however, was vague. He could be anything from a "poor ignorant peasant" to a "principal inhabitant" or "head cultivator." The Telugu rayutu was confused with rayulu. The lowly village laborer was lumped together with members of the village elite. Generally and practically, Ryot was a title for one of the vocal and influential few, one of the grama rayulu. He was not one of a variety of menials and laborers who did the real work of cultivation in conditions ranging from daily-hire to near slavery. He took decisions and made agreements. Usually he was one of the top village officers, such as Headman, Karnam, or Munsif, and was often all of these rolled into one person.¹

The Zamindar was faced with the same administrative dilemma as that which had faced the Government before the Permanent Settlement. At a lower level, he had to decide how much of the task of supervise directly and how much to delegate to others. Under a centralized system, the work would be done through his own Dewans, Vakils and Despandis. Every person from top to bottom in his hierarchy would be accountable to the Zamindar. Under a decentralized system, the work would be contracted out to Ijaradars or Renters on competitive bids. These Ijaradars in their turn would be faced with the same dilemma all over again.

Ultimately, the task boiled down to how to extract revenue from the village and from the Ryots. The Zamindar or the Ijaradar

¹ Goldingham Report to C.R.Cotton, (para. 37), 13 December, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2486), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. This is just one of countless instances where the distinction is made. Note: Henceforth, we will use Ryot when meaning village leader and ryot when not meaning this.

had to decide whether to deal with the Ryots jointly or individually or whether to by-pass the village leadership altogether. A fixed money value (makta) could be put on each field based on a careful measurement of land-area; soil-quality, moisture, and other differentials. A fixed share of all crops produced (kailu, varamu, kuppa, or asara) could be set aside as revenue. A fixed division of all lands and apportionment of revenue for the whole village according to this division (visabadi) could be made among the Ryots. How often such arrangements should be made for extracting village revenues also had to be decided. A money value on land did not vary from year to year; but the cultivator and the land under cultivation did vary. Crops certainly varied from year to year. Finally, one method could be used for irrigated (nanja) land and another for dry (punja) land within the same village. Obviously, great vigilance and energy had to be applied in obtaining the revenue.¹

The method of settlement commonly used in dealing with villages was a hybrid of all of these methods. Each village varied somewhat from the next, depending upon the constitution of that village and upon the competence of the Ijaradar or of the Zamindar's servants. The makta system was haphazardly introduced

¹ Hemingway, F.R., Madras District Gazetteers: Godavari (Madras: Government Press, 1907), 164-169. Goldingham Report to C.R. Cotton, (paras. 64-72), 13 December, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2509-2523), No. 30 of 16 April, 1841. An excellent detailed treatment of this very complex subject is given in Boswell's A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: Government Press, 1873), pp. 261-280.

in a few villages. No uniform standards of productivity were established, and no money payment was required.¹ As a rule, an agreement was made with the Ryots each year. The Karnam or the Ijaradar usually became the responsible person. A settlement was either made for a rent or for a share of the total produce of the village by darkhast; or it was made in separate pattas for sub-rents or sub-shares of the village produce with each Ryot. The Ryots' and the Zamindars' agents eyed each other suspiciously throughout the year. Mahasuldars or "crop-watchers", Anchana-dars or "crop-appraisers", and Kaildars or "crop measurers" were only a few of those who kept their eyes on the crops because when the kailu or "heaps" were divided, each received a small percentage. This way of obtaining revenue at the village level was commonly called the "joint-rent", "village-lease", or simply the "village" (gramawari) system.²

The cooperation between Zamindars and Ryots in obtaining a good settlement from the British did not survive long under the short-sighted and reckless administration of the Zamindars. As the Zamindars devoured their own substance, they were forced to reach lower and lower exploiting the villages for all they were worth. Village leaders were forced to keep for themselves and to withhold from the Zamindars as much as possible. In the tug-

¹ Elliot Report to GOM, (para. 15): MRP (281: 20: 7456-60), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

² ibid.

of-war which developed, every trick of deception and artifice of pressure was used.

Certain circumstances helped the Zamindar. Some villages were dis-united either by communalism or by factionalism. Brahmans enjoyed un-bounded influence in the district; but they were divided into many castes, each cordially despising the rest. Just below the Rajus, or Telugu Rajputs, were the martial Kapus, Kammas, and Telegas; and below these were the lesser Sudra castes. Komartis (Vaisha), Sikh Bondilis, and Muslim traders were hated by high and low alike. More than a score of castes were at the bottom of the social order. The lowest of the low who loathed each other were the Madigas and Malas. These communities shunned contact with each other. Eating, marriage, dress, conversation and other social actions were closely circumscribed by family, gotram, sub-caste, caste, and so on.¹

When village leadership was composed of two or more castes and when natural human vices were compounded with what many consider to be a special love for disputation and intrigue among Telugus, it was possible for the Zamindar to crack the shell of village solidarity. Whenever a village elite was divided against itself, he could play upon the discord to pry out what he wanted. One group of village leaders would grow fat with the Zamindar while the rest of the village was picked

¹ Boswell, J.A.C., A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: Government Press, 1873), pp. 202-60. Norton, J.B. A Letter to Lowe on the Condition of the Presidency of Madras (Madras: Pharos & Co., 1854), p.206.

clean.

An efficient Zamindar -- Malraju Gunda Rao was a good example -- skilfully employed rewards and sanctions. Head Ryots, Ijaradars, and Karnams in his favor benefited. They would be invited to feasts, petty darbars (audiences), tamashas (frolicksome occasions), and melas (festivals or fairs). They and their wives would be recognized and flattered with clothing and jewelry.¹ Generous loans for seed or for special need would be advanced to them through the Village Moneylender (Saukar).⁺ Recalcitrant Ryots, on the other hand, ran the risk of suffering from ingenious instruments of coercion, both physical and psychological. The kitti, a pincer-like device for finger squeezing, was the most common among many tortures.² Pujas (worship or magic) and mantrams (chants for casting spells) were used to invoke evil spirits and sickness.³ A new measuring gadget, an old debt, a denial of common pasturage, a contribution for "auspicious" occasions such as a birth, a marriage, an investiture of sacred thread, a piercing of ears: the means of exaction were countless. In a highly personal way, a Zamindar could see to it that no one, whether servants or ryots, became rich except himself.

The struggle was not necessarily unequal. A firmly united

¹ The Arzi of S.V.K.Rao on the social and economic condition of Guntur Zillah, in Appendix A of Goldingham's Report to C.R.Cotton, December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2613-14), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² Report of the Commissioners for the Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture (Madras: Government of Madras, 1855), pp. 14, 17, 36-47. Smollet, P.B., Civil Administration of Madras (Madras: 1858), pp. 1-34.

³ Good examples of this can be found in Eliot's note books; see Robert Sewell; Sir Walter Elliot of Wolfelce (Edinburgh: 1896), pp.1-31.

village could present a tight phalanx against the Zamindar. In most villages, where a single caste or an old coalition of castes were dominant, rival castes or factions usually had to submit or move elsewhere. Secrecy was the shield and bribery the sword of a successful village elite. On paper, these weapons were concealed in the Grama Kharchu. On land, these weapons operated silently in the encroachment of inams on taxable fields. Inspectors were deceived and the eyes of supervisors bribed until they closed. True records were hidden. Exact cultivation was not told. Real produce was taken away at night. Wealth was buried. In matching wits with the Zamindar, only a foolish Ryot showed signs of enterprise or affluence.¹⁺

Under the regulations, the terms and conditions of village appointment (the daskhat) were not properly fixed. A village office was neither inalienable nor fixed for a minimum term (Reg. XXIX of 1802). Revenue agreements, whether in darkhasts or pattas (required in Reg. XXX of 1802), were too hard to enforce. Ryots could move beyond the effective control of either the Zamindar or the Collector. Claims had to be pressed in the Zillah (Civil) Court; and prosecution had to be pressed in the Provincial (Circuit) Court. Both civil and criminal actions were hampered by English legal procedures and by the minuteness and secrecy of village operations. Poor ryots suffered

¹ Daniel Smith to BOR, June 21, 1806, extract in Elliot Report (para 83), loc.cit. (281: 20: 7594). +Note: Smith wrote of the zamindari villages: "the irregularity called Grama Khurch is still existing as formerly without any diminution whatsoever."

from the expenses of litigation, but not the village leaders. Knowledgeable Ryots or Karnams were by no means blind to the impunity afforded to themselves by the law.¹

IV. PROBLEMS OF AMANI MANAGEMENT

In the wake of the Madras Regulations and of the Zamindari Settlement of 1802, the power of the Collector was considerably reduced. Judicial and magisterial authority was vested in a separate hierarchy, the pillars of authority being the Zillah Court and the Northern Provincial Court.² Since land revenue was delegated to the Zamindars, the most substantial work remaining to the Collector was the supervision of other sources of revenue, the sayaru.

At the very time that this sweeping reorganization was being made, however, the Nawab of Arcot ceded a number of interior districts to the British. Among these Rayulu Simas, or Ceded Districts as they were called, was a hilly tract adjoining Guntur known as the Palnad. Andrew Scott was ordered to restore this division to order early in August, 1801. Because of its unsettled condition, Palnad was not broken into mutthas for Zamindars, but was "held in trust" by the

¹ Elliot Report (para 82), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7587), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Also F.R.Hemingway, Godavery District Gazetteer (Madras: 1907), p. 164.

² Regulation II of 1802. Campbell, A.D., A New Edition of the Code of Regulations for Madras (Madras: 1840). Misra, B.B., The Central Administration of the East India Company (Manchester: 1959), p.158.

Collector under what was called amani management.¹

During the years which followed, as the mutthas of one and then another Zamindar fell under the Collector for non-payment of taxes, for minority, or from litigation, amani was extended until at times the whole district came under the direct supervision of the Collector and his staff. The restoration of magisterial and police power in 1816² and of special judicial power in revenue matters in 1822 and 1831,³ brought the Collector back to a position of supreme authority. Of course, the Zillah Judge continued to exercise his authority over civil and criminal justice; but the Collector was once more the huzur of the district.

By taking on the responsibilities for direct amani management, the Collector inherited a number of problems which threatened his authority. During the period from 1800 to 1837, these developed along three main lines. British administrators were challenged: first, in their control of district personnel; second, in their dealing with village leaders; and third, in their attempts to implement a workable land revenue system.

¹ Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 151-161. Palnad had formerly been under Nellore. On treaty, July 31, 1801: GDR (980: 99:-100). Scott's orders, August 6: GDR (980: 116).

² Boswell, J.A.C., A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: 1873), p.565. Regulation X-XII of 1816.

³ Boswell, J.A.C., A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: 1873). pp. 576-77; Regulations XII of 1816, IX of 1822, and VI of 1831. See also: Misra, B.B., The Central Administration (Manchester: 1959), pp. 267-270.

A. THE PROBLEM OF KACHERI COMBINATIONS

After the Permanent Settlement came into force, two factors tended to weaken a Collector's power in Guntur. First, the demand for experienced officers in the zamindari organizations and the limited supply of such officers meant that the Collector's opportunity to select officers was restricted.¹

Second, instead of one British Collector gaining local experience steadily over a number of years, a string of short-term officers shuttled through the Collectorship without staying long enough to leave much of an impression on the district.² The absence of an experienced British officer who really knew what was transpiring in Guntur increased the boldness of the kacheri officers. The small Desastha clique were able to have things their own way.

1. Robertson's Investigation

Trouble already had been brewing in the Salt Department before Francis Robertson was assigned as Acting Collector to Guntur, late in 1810. A number of officers in Chinna Ganjam had been replaced. Atmuri Venkatachallam's hand had moved (in the background) and Accalamanati Narsiah had been put in charge of the department. In the storm of protest which had blown up, Thomas Jarrett had defended his actions with what the Board considered "unusual warmth." But since

¹ Arbothnot, A.J., Selections from Minutes and Writings of Thomas Munro (Madras: Higginbotham & Co., 1886), pp. 201-206.

² Mackenzie, Gordon, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 359: nine Collectors in as many years.

"considerable abuse actually exist~~ed~~ in the Salt Department of every district," and since "the complaints came from persons engaged in intrigue to serve their own ends," the Board of Revenue did not become overly anxious.¹

Soon after his arrival, Robertson dismissed the Huzur Shroff, Tunuguntla Namasiva Rao, for embezzlement. Shortly afterwards, he also suspended the Huzur Sheristadar, Tandanki Lakshmi Narain Rao, and the Cashkeeper, Tandanki Sitarama Rao. The Diary Writer and the Arrack Daroga were implicated. Incriminating papers were found buried in a tank. Robertson reported,

Most of the Huzur Cutcherry servants are implicated. I shall not take immediate steps against these servants as I believe them to be mere tools of two or three Head Servants.²

The man who helped Robertson to discover these irregularities was another Desastha who represented a faction which wished to gain power in the kacheri. His name was Sabnavis Kasava Rao. His family had large interests and property in Masulipatam. One of his relatives was Diwan to the Vasireddy Zamindar and another was Diwan to the Nawab of Masulipatam.³

¹ BOR to Thomas Jarrett, May 10, 1810: GDR (963: 143-154). Also: Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8098-99), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

² F.W.Robertson to BOR (para. 4), February 21, 1811: GDR (385: 23-39). Also his letters to BOR, February 9 & 15: GDR (385: 2-8 and 12-21).

³ Elliot Report to GOM April 17, 1846: (paras. 16 & 60): MRP (281: 20 7550-52), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Sabnavis Ananta Rao has already been mentioned above.

The kacheri elite, on the other hand, were also strongly supported on the outside. The Diwan of the Manika Rao had been branded by Andrew Scott for his nefarious connection with Atmuri Venkatachallam.¹

Manur Rao Venkata Krishna Rao, the Chilkalurpet Zamindar had once provided the kacheri junta with 2,000 pagodas for Thomas Jarrett, 1000 pagodas for distribution among the kacheri staff, and another 1000 pagodas for a jewel to be presented on the occasion of the birth of the Collector's son.² In a letter from the Sheristadar to the Zamindar, which was intercepted, Lakshmi Narain Rao plainly revealed his close connection with the Desastha Manur Raos:

Destroy my old and new letters. Subnevis Caseva Row has instructed all Chowkidars to intercept my letters. Be cautious in sending yours...direct them to Narain Row. My letters will be written by other people..I shall give my name to the bearers...destroy the same when perused.³

Like the Dubash in earlier years, the Sheristadar held a position enabling the exercise of great patronage and power.⁴ Lakshi Narain consolidated his power and stretched his hand into every branch of revenue. Not only did the Zamindars pay for his favor, ^{but} money also came to him from all of the sayaru departments. Government jobs were bought at

¹ Andrew Scott to BOR letters of October 13 (para. 5) and November 3 (para. 4), 1800, and of April 20, 1801: Extracts from Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8095-97).

² F.W.Robertson to BOR, report of September 20, 1811, on Chilkalurpet (para. 18 of enclosure No. 1): GDR (385: 303-320).

³ ibid.

⁴ Aitken, E.H., Behind the Bungalow (Calcutta: Thacker, Spink & Co., 1889), p. 75: "all the district knows he is virtually the Collector."

auction and job-holders were pressed for "charitable contributions."¹ One kacheri officer protested that "for want of food and raiment" and for fear of reprisals, he was obliged "to commit even roguery", to pay for temples run by the Tandanki family, and to act against the Collector, Sabnavis Rao, or any other threat to the kacheri leadership.²

Robertson set forth the grounds for legal action against the kacheri leaders and had the Sheristadar committed to jail.³ The Board of Revenue was more cautious. Feeling that it would be well to watch out for "malevolence and party spirit among the natives who were formerly in the Collector's employ and those subsequently entertained to their exclusion," the Board urged Robertson to listen to what one party might say against the other since "facts once well established cannot be altered by the motives that may have led to their detection."⁴

Robertson would have done well to have used this factionalism to strengthen his own control. Instead, he went out into the field stations to gather evidence of more mischief. While he found much wrong among the weavers, the maramat (public works) officers, the salt makers, the Lambardi caravans and so on, he did not collect much which would stand up in court.⁵ He allowed the leaders in the Huzur

¹ F.W.Robertson to BOR, February 21, 1811, (paras. 5, 6, 7): GDR (385: 23-39).

² F.W.Robertson to BOR on February 21, 1811 (para. 7): GDR (385: 23-39). Also letter of March 2, 1811: GDR (385: 44-50).

³ F.W.Robertson to BOR on February 25, 1811: GDR (385: 40-42). Charges detailed.

⁴ BOR to Robertson to March 7, 1811 (paras. 1 & 2): GDR (963: 343-7).

⁵ F.W.Robertson to BOR on April 15, July 1, 6, 24, 30 and August 16, 1811: GDR (385: 66-68, 224, 237, 272, 283, 300).

Kacheri to cover their tracks. A general destruction of papers occurred throughout the district. Back in Guntur, he found confusion and chaos in such secretariat departments as the Daftarkhana (Record Office) and Sherista (Accounts) Department. This was, in his view, "purposely intended as by that means peculation [was] less easily detected."¹

Robertson wrote what the Board no doubt had already guessed,

A complete combination of the whole of the public servants in a variety of peculations exists in every branch of this Zillah which might be continued indefinitely.²

This combination was led by the "principal servants in every department."³

Meanwhile, Lakshmi Narain Rao boasted from his jail cell in Masulipatam that he would soon be back at his old position in the kacheri.⁴ Tandanki Krishna Narain Rao, Accalamanati Narsiah, and Atmuri Venkatachallam worked behind the scenes to resist the Collector. Relatives and friends -- there were 26 relatives alone -- who were "linked by fellow feelings and a desire for mutual gain," filled most of the top posts in the Huzur Kacheri.⁵ These people were able to

¹ F.W.Robertson to BOR on June 15, 1811: GDR (385: 211-23). Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8116).

² F.W.Robertson to BOR on May 9, 1811 (para. 2): GDR (385: 69-74). Extract in Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8110).

³ ibid. Also Robertson to BOR on March 2, 1811: GDR (385: 44-45).

⁴ F.W.Robertson to BOR on March 11, 1811: extract in Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8109), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

⁵ F.W.Robertson to BOR on August 20, 1811: GDR (385: 303-20). Also May 9, 1811: MRP (281: 21: 8110-12).

counter every step which was taken by the youthful Collector. They knew of every move he made, even obtaining extracts of his letters.¹ Having completely isolated Robertson, the Kacheri next turned to the attack. The Huzur Shroff's accounts which contained the evidence of embezzlement were declared to be spurious.² Charges of torture and extortion were sent to the Board of Revenue against Robertson.³ Even the former Collector, Thomas Jarrett, was visited by a delegation and his aid enlisted.⁴

While there was little reason for the Board of Revenue to doubt that "a systematic combination of the Huzur Servants of any rank in the Cutcherry with those in the Mofussil...attended with vicious consequences"⁵ did exist, ^{they were} ~~it was~~ anything but pleased with the results of ^{Robertson's} ~~Robert's~~ investigation or with the interference of Jarrett. Much dust had been stirred up, with little solid accomplishment.⁶ Both officers were censured; and Thomas Oakes was ordered to take over the district.⁷

¹ ibid., enclosures 1 and 2 of August 20, 1811: GDR (385: 320-23).

² ibid., See also Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8110).

³ BOR to Thomas Oakes on December 11, 1811: GDR (963: 619-39).

⁴ BOR to F.W.Robertson on February 18 and March 7, 1811: GDR (963: 334-46). Robertson to BOR on April 15, 1811: Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8110).

⁵ F.W.Robertson to BOR, August 20, 1811 (enclosure No. 1), in Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8120), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

⁶ BOR Proceedings of May 30 and June 27, 1811, in Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8125). BOR to Thomas Oakes, September 10, 1811: GDR (963: 408-96).

⁷ ibid.

2. Oakes' Moderation

On his appointment to the Collectorate in June 1811, Thomas Oakes was told that since there was little doubt that a tight combination existed, it would be wise to move with caution.¹ The new Collector was faced with a disrupted administration, a group of delinquent kacheri officers, and a number of accusations against Robertson.

Both Oakes and the Board of Revenue agreed, after an examination, that the evidence against Robertson was largely false. Some men had been flogged. Some property had been seized. A gallows and leg-irons had been ostentatiously displayed. But no deliberate cruelty, such as putting a man in the sun, had occurred. Robertson was just "a young man full of ambition having an ardent desire to uphold the justice and honour of the Company." "In the public interest," he was kept on as Head Assistant Collector under Oakes.²

Sabnavis Kasava Rao and the other interlopers who had deceived Robertson and caused dissension in the kacheri were dismissed.³ So were the more obstreperous leaders of the older kacheri clique. Among the nine suspensions which were upheld were the Huzur Sheristadar,

¹ BOR to Thomas Oakes, September 10, 1811 (para. 6): GDR (963: 408-96).

² Thomas Oakes to BOR, January 21, 1814: GDR (982: 37-38). BOR to Oakes, March 12, 1812 (paras. 2 and 3): GDR (963: 819-31). BOR to Oakes, December 7, 1813, and March 21, 1814: GDR (966: 291-96 and 967: 236).

³ BOR to Thomas Oakes (paras. 2-4), October 15, 1813: Guntur District Records (vol. 966: pp. 175-183). Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8128-32). Oakes to BOR (para. 2), January 21, 1814: GDR (983: 37-38). Oakes to BOR (paras. 1-10), January 19, 1814: GDR (983: 31-36).

the Huzur Shroff, the Huzur Daftardar, and the Motarpha Daroga for Guntur Town.¹ A man named Lakshmiah, who came from outside the district and who was thought to have no connections in the kacheri, was put in charge of the headquarters staff.² Factionalism between contending groups was thus at least temporarily dampened and the subversive propensities of the kacheri elite held in check.

Yet, the country could not be governed without cooperation from these Indian district officers. The Board of Revenue was anxious to see that the Collector was not carried away again by impatience and zeal. Disciplinary measures would have to be slow and thorough, based on careful proceedings arising from first-hand and not hearsay evidence. Oakes was urged to keep an especially vigilant eye upon those who "handled public money" and upon the accounts connected therewith.³

Well might such advice be heeded; for trouble ever recurred where money and accounts were concerned. The ancient craft of counterfeiting - chipping, shaving, plating - abounded. False coin was substituted and passed on. The Government and people were covertly encouraged to blame each other. Many kinds of coin were in circulation (not until

¹ Oakes to BOR, August 15, 1812: GDR (981: 443). BOR to Oakes (paras. 1-4), July 6, 1812: GDR (965: 118-22). Oakes to BOR (paras. 34-36), January 22, 1813: GDR (981: 18-60).

² BOR to Thomas Oakes, July 21, 1817: GDR (974: 112-25). Oakes to BOR, August 14, 1818: GDR (984: 61-71), with whole record of Lakshmiah.

³ BOR to Oakes, July 6, 1812: GDR (965: 120-2); March 28, 1814: GDR (967: 260-71).

1836 was legal tender standardised) and moneychanging was a profitable business. Shroffs and treasury officials stood to gain in these and in many other ways. Nor were accountants without the means to turn their skills to good purpose: writing unknown symbols (modi) and keeping alternate sets of books.¹

By taking advantage of the factions among the kacheri servants, "most of whom were related to each other,"² Oakes was able to gather evidence of fabricated accounts and tampered coinage, together with a detailed list of proven bribes. The new Government Servants' Conduct Rules of November 20, 1813, made the accepting of bribes a punishable offense.³ The Collector felt that the offenders should "be rendered incapable of ever again serving the Honourable Company," that their names should be published in the Government Gazette "for sake of example," and that they should be given a choice between imprisonment or repayment of the 11,000 rupees which had been taken.⁴ The Board of

¹ Thomas Oakes to BOR, June 24, 1813: GDR (982: 275). Oakes to BOR, March 15, 1814: GDR (983: 115-248); this is one of the most extensive descriptions of methods of operations which I have found. For an abstract of charges, see Oakes to BOR, March 20, 1815: GDR (983: 257-74). A colorful and entertaining picture is found in C.F. Kirby, Adventures of an Arcot Rupee (London: 1867). For Munro's suggestions on coinage, see BOR to Oakes, December 26, 1811: GDR (963: 660-692). The problem fills early correspondence. Special concern over counterfeiting was voiced in BOR to Oakes, March 4, 1814: GDR (967: 228-30).

² Oakes to BOR (paras. 2-4), March 15, 1814: GDR (983: 115 ff.)

³ BOR to Oakes, November 13, 1813: GDR (982: 498-99). Oakes to BOR, January 20, 1814: GDR (983: 40-41), list of bribes.

⁴ Oakes to BOR, January 22, 1813 (paras. 34-36): GDR (982: 18-60). Appendix C of Elliot Report: MRP (281: 21: 8126ff.) No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847. This refers specially to troubles in the Salt Department.

Revenue, while agreeing that the "presumptive proofs" were strong, did not favor prosecution, feeling that it was better to dismiss the worst offenders than to risk a failure in court.¹

Trouble with combinations of district officers in many districts² gave Madras authorities cause for serious concern during this period. After consideration, these subversive tendencies were attributed to "the defects of their education, uncertainty of their promotions, meagre pay, and the uncertainty of their tenure of office."³ Among the various remedies suggested by the Government of Madras in 1816 were: the establishment of schools for educating these officers; increased salaries and pensions; and some special incentives such as larger commissions for salt and customs officers and opportunities to acquire maniam grants.⁴⁺ In order to stop "the artful intrigues, the corrupt compacts, the daring embezzlements, the hardy frauds, the shameless perjuries," the Board and Government agreed with Thomas Munro that the same ^{remedies} ~~remedies~~ should be applied to Indian officers as had been applied to European officers of the Company.⁵ Since the

¹ BOR to Oakes (paras. 1-4), October 15, 1813: GDR (966: 175-83). Also in Appendix C of Elliot Report, loc.cit. (281: 21: 8131).

² Ruthnaswamy, M., Some Influences that made the British Administrative System in India (London: Luzac & Co., 1939), pp. 87 ff. One of the most notorious subversive organizations was that of Casee Chetty, Coimbatore.

³ BOR to Oakes (paras. 2-3), April 22, 1816: GDR (971: 268 ff.).

⁴ ibid. Note: ⁺Little actually came of most of these proposals.

⁵ Ricketts, Report of the Commissioner for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: John Grey, 1858), p.335. Also, ibid.

Sheristadar was considered to be the key to the whole problem, the ceiling of his salary was lifted to a much higher level. A Huzur Sheristadar who started with a monthly pay of 60 pagodas (Rs. 210) and who worked diligently for thirty years could now obtain as much as 200 pagodas (Rs. 700) instead of having his pay frozen at 80 or 100 pagodas. At the same time, more severe penalties against fraud, bribery, and embezzlement were passed.¹

What served best to check the spirit of intrigue and to control subversion within the Guntur Kacheri, however, was the fact that for twenty years there was a steady hand on the administration. Thomas Oakes ruled the district from 1811 to 1821. He was followed by John Whish, who ruled until 1831. Other incidents, of course, occurred to undermine authority; but these two men by their very presence gave stability and continuity to administration.²

B. THE PROBLEM OF VILLAGE ENCROACHMENT

Only years of amani experience could show what strength lay beneath the surface of the small and seemingly insignificant villages. Eventually, a series of disclosures from Grama Kharchu and Inam records revealed a steady, silent encroachment upon the power of the State.

¹ BOR to Thomas Oakes, April 22, 1816: GDR (971: 268 ff.). Ricketts, loc.cit. Regulation VII of 1817, and IX of 1822 in A.D.Campbell's Code...(Madras: 1840).

² Elliot Report to BOR (para. 60), April 17, 1846: Madras Revenue Proceedings (IOL: range 281: volume 20: 7552), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.359.

1. Grama Kharchu Disclosures

Daniel Crawford, after observing how this institution worked in Palnad, wrote that it was "a source of lamentable injury to the poor and ignorant ryots, and the most material obstacle to the improvement of the country."¹ Unless supervised Samutudars would certainly combine with Karnams, Kapus (Reddi Head Ryots), and Despandis at the expense of the poor ryots and hide their profits in the Grama Kharchu accounts,² Such an insidious process would result in wholesale emigration from the district. The "prosperity and happiness of the majority of the population" was blocked by local officers.³ The Thanadar and all the Samutudars in Palnad were dismissed; the Karnams were severely warned and told that no money was to be paid without proper sanctions and receipts; but these orders "were never complied with."⁴ All Crawford could obtain was a register of total collections (kistu) for each village; moreover, he had no way of knowing if these were correct. No Collector could personally check into the accounts of every village. The help of a cooperative staff was essential. (See Appendix No. III for details of Crawford's description of the Grama Kharchu.)

The next officer to give serious attention to the problem was

¹ Daniel Crawford to BOR (para. 12), July 18, 1804, in appendix E of Elliot Report: ibid (281: 21: 8150).

² Crawford to BOR, July 18, 1804 (para. 12): Appendix E of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8151), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

³ ibid., (281: 21: 8150).

⁴ ibid. (para. 13), (281: 21: 8152-53).

Thomas Oakes. When he turned his attention to the amani management of the Palnad, he found "the whole of the servants in league to defraud the Circar."¹ A hierarchy of fear was established with the Grama Kharchu as its foundation and with that twice dismissed officer, Accalamanati Narsiah, at its pinnacle.² "In nearly every village of the Palnad", accounts were either concealed or fabricated.³ After digging "in distant villages, in pots of grain, and in baskets of cotton...buried in the ground or sunk in tanks," Oakes disclosed that Grama Kharchulu were used to disguise a graduated scale of nazranulu (gifts) reaching up through the levels of hierarchy to the district kacheri.⁴

When the Chilkalurpet and Sattanapalli lands came under amani in 1816, Thackeray, who was in charge while Oakes was on leave, reported that he could find no accounts "owing to the extreme knavery of the zemindary curnums."⁵ In 1818, Oakes wrote that in these estates

¹ Thomas Oakes' Report on Palnad to BOR, (paras. 22-30), June 20, 1812: Appendix C of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8132), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847. Also in GDR (981: 320-87).

² ibid., (281: 21: 8133).

³ ibid.

⁴ Oakes, Report on Palnad to BOR, June 20, 1812: Appendix C of Elliot Report; MRP (281: 21: 8133), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847. See also: Thomas Oakes to BOR, July 11, 1813 (para. 16): GDR (982: 304-329).

⁵ Acting Collector (John Thackery) to BOR, October 12, 1816 (para. 9); Appendix D of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8139), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

collections and disbursements had "always been made by the Head Inhabitants, Curnums and Caupoos;" nor had there ever been "a sufficient check on these people to prevent their plundering the lower ryots or occasioning balances by their exorbitant demands."¹

Shortly after the death of Venkatadry Naidu when the Vasireddy villages in Guntur had to be taken over temporarily, Oakes found "a general combination to plunder...entered into" by the local leaders.² Jaganadha Babu refused to show his divisional (samutu) accounts for 121 villages. Karnams in his village also refused to cooperate. Not until the exasperated Collector resorted to rattaning in public did he obtain far from adequate records for 74 villages.

In his report of September 3, 1818, Oakes made a detailed analysis of the operation of Grama Kharchu (See Appendix No. III for detailed examples). Originally, this institution was meant to defray necessary village expenses, reimburse village officers for their work, and pay the costs (batta) of settling disputes. Oakes found the fund used chiefly to bribe officers at the kacheri or at the courts. Three sets of accounts were kept by every Karnam: the true one was concealed, and the other were used to deceive the Government and the Zamindar. Bribes were usually listed as gifts to gods, a practice hardly surprising since

¹ Thomas Oakes to BOR (Report on Manur Rao Zamindaris), September 30, 1818, (para. 15): GDR (984: 152-246).

² Thomas Oakes to BOR, May 26, 1817 (paras. 3-7): appendix D of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8140), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847. Oakes wanted to avoid blame for not discovering abuses earlier. See also: BOR to Oakes, June 5, 1817: GDR (974: 35-41).

kacheri officers were, after all, servants of a divinity, i.e. the huzur.⁺ Extra money was simply taken out of village funds as needed and the accounts were then manipulated to gloss over discrepancies. Thomas Oakes was convinced that the Grama Kharchu unduly extended and strengthened the influence of the village against higher authority.¹

2. Inam Disclosures

According to the Madras Regulations of 1802, titles (sanads) to inam lands were not valid unless they had been obtained prior to February 26, 1768. Grants obtained after that date could be resumed by the Government. Grants not registered within a year of the proclamation of this ruling by the Collector could be fully assessed; moreover, grants had to be re-registered every five years or be liable to forfeiture.²

The snag in this whole arrangement, however, was that the Government could not recover invalid inams without recourse to the Zillah Court.³ Before this could be done, a complete, accurate, and detailed registration of every grant had to be obtained and then maintained. If this registration were not done, not only would the Government have no just claim, but all other land would be subject to continual encroachment. Since there were literally hundreds of petty

⁺ Note: Local tradition still ascribes divine attributes to the high and mighty. Concepts such as karma and dharma reinforced this belief.

¹ Thomas Oakes to BOR (Report on Manur Rao Zamindaris), (paras. 15-16), September 30, 1818: GDR (984: 152-246).

² Regulation XXXI of 1802, Sec. 1-19. See A.D. Campbell's Code of Regulations (Madras: Government Press, 1840).

³ ibid., section 18.

inams and maniams, not to mention larger savarams and agraharams,¹⁺ this was almost an impossible task; furthermore, the uncertainty, the expense, and the very magnitude of contesting each claim made this arrangement even more ridiculous from the administrator's point of view.

As has already been pointed out, early efforts to register land, such as Ram's register, had been an utter failure. A proclamation issued by Daniel Crawford in 1803 that all grants were to be registered also brought no success.² When John Byng, the Zillah Judge and Magistrate of Guntur in 1807, asked for a copy of the Guntur Inam Register, he was informed that no such register existed.³ Another proclamation resulted in the creation of a rough register, nine folio volumes long, listing the Inamdars in the order of their appearance. It was later proved that this register contained less than a tenth of the actual inam lands.⁴

No more was heard of the matter until Thomas Oakes brought it up in 1813. Convinced that years would be wasted if the inam question were left to the courts, he suggested that a committee should

¹ Guntur Collectorate, General Branch: Index to GDR (Guntur: 1913).
+Note: This is still true today. There were 73 cases of inam encroachment in 1912 alone.

² Elliot Report to GOM, (para. 86), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7602), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Crawford to BOR, May 14, 1807.

³ ibid., (paras. 86 and 90). Crawford to BOR, May 14, 1807.

⁴ ibid., (para. 90). Orders to local officers given in 1798, 1804, 1807, 1823, 1826.

be appointed "to settle in perpetuity" all inam lands.¹ He was certain that "nearly the whole of the present maniams would be resumed and the illegitimate profit now enjoyed by a set of vicious and intriguing Bramins be brought to Government."² Most agraharam villages, he was sure, stood on the flimsiest of documentary authority.³

Again the subject lapsed into fitful slumber until Oakes toured the Palnad in 1821 to see about famine relief. He was disturbed by the way in which the poor and the Government alike suffered at the expense of the village leaders. Often more than half of a village was claimed as maniam land. Maniam boundaries were anything but clear and sometimes non-existent. Special lands (jarib) meant for relief in times of calamity had been appropriated. Dead and long departed persons were fictitiously listed as Inamdars so that the Karnams could enjoy the benefits. After trying to register some of these lands so that further encroachment at the expense of the revenue might be checked, Oakes admitted that his efforts were all but useless.⁴

Two years later, John Whish tried to cope with the problem of Karnams' maniams among zamindari villages. He was disturbed by the fact that the office and service land of a Karnam was usually held by

¹ Thomas Oakes to BOR (Palnad Settlement Report), (paras. 5, 13-14, 34-35): July 11, 1813: GDR (982: 304-29). Also Elliot Report (para. 86): ibid.

² ibid.

³ ibid.

⁴ Thomas Oakes to BOR, (paras. 21-23), March 10, 1821: Appendix C of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8141-45), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847).

the whole family of the Karnam. When the Collector asked questions about the holder of the official daskhat (appointment) and the official inam, each family member would shift responsibility to another. Unless a whole family were present -- often as many as twenty persons -- little could be done. Even their progress ^{of an enquiry} depended largely upon the temper and inclination of these families.¹

Whish assigned a small staff to investigate all the inams of the district in order to compile a reliable Inam Register. He decided to compare his results with those in the earlier "Register of 1807"; however, the two copies which he found did not square with each other. He found that the more recent copy listed 90 more Inamdars and 169 more kuchelas of land than the older copy; furthermore, these newer Inamdars were almost entirely residents of Guntur Town (Kasba). By putting two and two together, Whish came to the conclusion that the more recent copy had been removed from the Kacheri by the Daftardars and that new pages had been inserted. Neither copy was reliable enough for use.²

Whish's investigation was never completed. The material in his register was never tested for authenticity nor compiled in a proper form. Even so, a total of 696 villages were examined, including all of the Vasireddy and Malraju villages. Comparisons which he made between his own findings and what was to be found in the accounts of the Zamindari Despandis convinced him that at least a quarter of the

¹ John Whish to BOR, (paras. 4-7), December 2, 1822: Appendix D of Elliot Report, ibid., (281: 21: 8145-48).

² Walter Elliot to GOM, (para. 90), April 14, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7616), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

inams were invalid. Agraharams and inams were rarely listed accurately, the tendency being to list more land than what the sanads had originally granted.¹⁺

C. THE PROBLEM OF RYOTWARI ADMINISTRATION

The introduction of the ryotwari system first in Palnad and then in Guntur proper was a slow and painful process. It was hindered not only by the normal bureaucratic foot-dragging and by the competition of the zamindari and gramawari (village) systems at policy-making levels, but by the barriers of local usage and entrenchment.

Palnad was too unsettled in the beginning to be divided and sold under the Permanent Settlement. Ijaradars rented villages, capriciously altering their demands from year to year. After a rough survey, Crawford issued triennial leases to village Ryots.² New and better solutions were argued while this system continued. The Board of Revenue, convinced that the ryotwari system was harmful and that it was better to deal with village leaders (Ijaradars and Head Ryots), ordered a permanent village settlement in 1812.³ However, the necessary detailed information on resources and productivity and the

¹ ibid., (paras. 89-92). ⁺Note: Accalamanati Narsiah was involved in these activities. Extracts which Oakes had given out to Inamdars, though unauthenticated as documents, were used as evidence in court; see Whish to BOR, January 26, 1827: GDR (3983: 10-16, 24-33).

² Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 151-62. The whole settlement history of Palnad was reviewed by the Board in their letter to Thomas Oakes, March 3, 1814: Guntur District Records (967: 172-227). Oakes went over it again in his letter of October 25, 1814: GDR (983: 519 ff.).

³ BOR to Thomas Oakes, March 24, 1812. GDR (964: 1-114), a long treatment on the subject of comparative land systems.

means to obtain an equitable agreement with each village were wanting. While the three-year settlement continued, Oakes was told to find out whether a decennial village lease or an annual ryotwari settlement would be preferable to the Ryots. On the basis of Oakes' reply, a seven year village settlement was ordered two months later.¹

Meanwhile, the argument over the respective merits of the various systems had been going on in Madras and in London with the ryotwari system making a steady headway. Because no proper survey had yet been made in Palnad, because its productivity was undependable, and because the Ryots preferred the village system, the Madras authorities tried to dissuade the Court of Directors from the application of the ryotwari system to this hilly tract. In this they failed.² Final orders on the ryotwari policy were sent to Oakes late in 1818.³ The arrival of Thomas Munro as Governor of Madras in 1820 assured the future of this policy, but did not greatly hasten its practical operation.

The new system was based on executive orders rather than on legislative enactment for its authority. Its application depended upon administrative efficiency. Whenever a village darkhast (contract) or a zamindari sanad (title) lapsed, pattas, which were statements of fact, were given to individual ryots obliging them to pay so much money on

¹ BOR to Thomas Oakes, December 8, 1814, GDR (968: 164-90).

² BOR to Thomas Oakes, February 12 and March 25, 1816: GDR (971: 67-102; 170-238). The Board's letter of March 3, 1814, expressed similar intentions and gave somewhat similar instructions.

³ BOR to Thomas Oakes, September 21, 1818: GDR (976: 366-431).

each plot of ground. Only the money value attached to the known productivity of each piece of land was to remain permanent. The privilege of cultivating that land, which was called a "right", was heritable, saleable, but also relinquishable on a year to year basis. At the time of settlement (jamabandi), the ryot decided if he would take a piece of land for the coming year. If he failed to pay, he lost his privilege. Sometimes he could be challenged for his privileged tenure. Such practices as joint-pattas, patta-subdivisions among family members or among sub-tenants, special remissions and privileges, and even payment in grain were variants of the system which might be found. Essentially, the old makta-visabandi agreement with each community of the village was involved. Each patta was recorded with the village officers and each payment was made to and accounted as received by the village officers.¹

The formal introduction of the ryotwari system carried out after the seven-year village leases expired in 1821 foreshadowed what was to be the major problem, namely, the disparity between policy and practice.²

¹ Baden-Powell, B.H., Manual of Land Revenue Systems and Land Tenures in British India (Calcutta: Government Press, 1882), pp. 654-58. Elliot, Walter, "Correspondence relating to Ryotwar, etc.," pp. 77-95 of Elliot Mss. (IOL: Mss. Eur. D.330). These are copies of official records dating between 1825 and 1837, with two excellent entries by Indian officers (Nos. 4 and 5). Finally, "Teloo goo Kyfeyet from Rayats of certain villages in Paloor Tanah...with modes of Revenue Settlement," Appendix B of Goldingham Report, MRP (280: 7: 2587 ff.), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² Arbuthnot, A.J., Selections from Minutes and Other Official Writings of...Thomas Munro (Madras: Madras University, 1917): "On Relative Advantages of Ryotwar and Zamindari Systems" pp. 94-102: "The Principle of the Ryotwar System," 15 April, 1812, pp. 107 ff. While it is not our purpose to discuss the merits of this system, Eric Stokes' The English Utilitarians in India (Oxford: 1959), pp. 83-108, is particularly good on assessment theory.

Even after receiving his final orders, Oakes had protested that the village leaders preferred the old system.¹ On the Board's advice, he accepted the land values and soil classifications of the village leases as correct.² Village rents were merely divided up among the ryots and made answerable to the Collector through the village officers instead of through the Ijaradar. A formal statement was then issued by the Board of Revenue declaring that all of the necessary steps had been taken with the consent of the ryots and that the work was to be commended "as a model for other districts."³

Within two years, John Whish reported that all of this work had been done by the villagers themselves and that it was naturally satisfactory to the village leaders. He could find no persons answering the description of village Headmen other than the Karnams. The Karnams had formerly acted as the Ijaradars; moreover, they now fulfilled practically the same functions through their handling of village accounts.

The Curnums...are by no means men...of correct, clear, and fixed ideas...and their views of things are in the same degree loose and not to be depended upon.⁴

From an administrative point of view, the work of the Karnams was "most shameful," "next to useless," and "calculated to mislead."⁵

¹ BOR to Oakes, May 10, 1819: GDR (977: 320 ff.).

² BOR to Oakes, July 31, 1820: GDR (3958: 37-45).

³ BOR to Thomas Oakes, (para. 4), March 23, 1821: GDR (3958: 312-22).

⁴ John Whish to BOR, June 9, 1823: GDR (3979: 134-64). BOR to John Whish, August 12, 1823: GDR (341-80). GOM's views, Oct. 14, 1823: GDR (3962: 475-79).

⁵ John Whish to BOR, (para. 5), December 2, 1822: Appendix D of Elliot Report, MRP (281: 21: 8146).

It is clear, therefore, that the results of the ryotwari system, as it was applied in Palnad and in such zamindari villages as came under amani management, were almost negligible. Although revenue had increased almost fourfold in Palnad under the village system -- probably due largely to the establishment of peace and security -- revenue did not increase any further under the new system.¹ No appreciable change occurred in leadership and control at the village level. By implication, the new system meant to extend Government control past the village leadership to the more lowly cultivators; but the term "ryot" was not defined carefully enough. Instead of lowly ryots gaining and maintaining an independent status, the old leading Ryots continued to dominate through pattas and village machinery what they had formerly held on village leases. Since they themselves compiled or at least influenced the compiling of data on productivity and since no systematic survey was made by the Government,² these leaders were not only able to preserve a moderate assessment but they were able to weight it unequally against alien or dissident elements within their villages. The only real threat to their position came from inquisitorial hosts of district officials who, if given a chance, would have preyed upon the very vitals of prosperity just as the zamindari diwans were doing;

¹ John Goldingham to C.R.Cotton, (para. 5), December 13, 1839: MRP (281: 6: 2459), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² John Whish to BOR, June 9, 1823: GDR (3979: 134-64). (Reprint 124/1-10).

however, here the traditional village defences mentioned earlier were aided somewhat by the vigilance of the Collector.¹

The steady and strong hands kept on the amani administration by Thomas Oakes and John Whish gave a greater impetus to the rise of British authority in the district than any quality inherent in the systems of revenue settlement which were employed. The welfare of the people was the pivot on which success turned under any system. The fact that Oakes and, to a greater degree, Whish took a deep interest in the welfare of the people and kept sharp eyes on local affairs was a significant factor in forestalling a deterioration in local government similar to what was occurring in the zamindaris.²⁺

CONCLUSION

Two main lines of policy were explicitly followed by the British in Guntur prior to 1837. The zamindari policy was a course of action in which former hereditary district leaders, Maratha Brahmans and high (martial) Sudras, were confirmed in a quasi-baronial status on the condition that they would pay a tribute representing a third of

¹ Norton, J.B., A Letter to Robert Lowe on the Condition and Requirements of Madras Presidency (Madras: Pharoah & Co., 1854), pp. 178-79.

² Goldingham Report to C.R.Cotton, (para. 8), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 6: 2461), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. *Note: Oakes was finally removed from Guntur for allowing his Sheristadar to accept a gift from the dying Malraju V. Gunda Rao and for having received a loan from this Zamindar. See Arbuthnot, A.J., Selections from... Writings of ... Thomas Munro (Madras: 1886), pp. 521-27; and BOR to John Whish, December 7, 1824: GDR (3963: 17-22).

the productivity of their lands. Whether, in the case of Guntur, this course of action was motivated by a recognition of legitimate power over the district from which certain rights arose or whether it was prompted by other motives is difficult to determine.

The second major course of action was the ryotwari policy. The system which this course attempted was the exact opposite of the zamindari system. Instead of delegating a large amount of control to autonomous agents, the ryotwari system attempted to extend State control into every corner of agricultural life. Here again, all the motives which gave rise to this policy, whether arising from a recognition of the rights of individual cultivators or from a realistic assessment of the requirements of government, are difficult to determine and are not the theme of this study.

What is important to observe is that there was a distinct difference between the explicitly declared policies and the actual courses which were followed. Both the zamindari and the ryotwari courses of action were severely qualified by the local situation insomuch that they lost much of their character. Policies were blunted by local influences and neither zamindari nor ryotwari fully came into operation.

The type of revenue system which prevailed was greatly influenced by the way in which villages were constituted -- their institutions, their leadership, their customs. These villages, after all, were the social organizations which were "really at the bottom of all revenue systems"¹. If the British settled with the Zamindar, he still had to

¹ Baden-Powell, B.D., Manual of Land Revenue Systems... (Calcutta: 1882), Book IV, Chapter 3: "The Revenue System of Madras," p. 642.

cope with the villages. If the Zamindar settled with the Ijaradar, this person still had to cope with his village or villages. One village might be a privileged agraharamu dominated by one Brahman family. Another might be dominated by a coalition of Brahmans and Rajus, or Brahmans and Kammas, and so on. A third village might be a palem for outcastes (panchalas), such as Malas and Madigas. A large, old, and powerful village might control many smaller satellite hamlets while a poorer, smaller village might have trouble fending off outside forces. The Karnam and/or Head Ryot (Meadman) might be the sole power or he might have to negotiate with a junta, either within his family or among the leading communities. The Karnam might be a stranger, an enemy, or a new force called in to tip the balance of local politics. The settlement might be made with one person claiming to hold the village or with several claiming to hold the village jointly. In each case, the village as a vital entity was the determining factor; but no two cases were exactly alike. Diversity rather than flat uniformity characterized the villages.

There is no evidence to show that the village system of revenue administration was seriously impaired either in Palnad or in Guntur proper prior to 1837. The ryotwari system operated more at the level of names and forms than in practice and actuality. The Ryots who contracted for the revenue were village leaders and not the lowly, laboring cultivators (ryots). Under both zamindari and amani management, arrangements were made locally on an ad hoc basis, with rents and joint-rents, pattas and joint-pattas being concluded for each village.

The zamindari system also operated more in name than in truth after 1817.

Thus, at their respective levels, amani prevailed over zamindari and gramawari, over ryotwari.

Commenting upon the confusing dilemmas of policy which resulted, John Goldingham remarked (in 1838):

In revenue matters, it is a long time before the mind will receive an impression of the truth. And this because so many are engaged in keeping up the worst state of management that a considerable mental effort is necessary to detail and lay aside representations which are presented in a plausible shape and sanctioned by custom.¹

All villages of course tried to conceal information concerning themselves as a defense against extortion and ruin. Zamindari villages, however, seem to have fared worse than those directly under the Government.

¹ J. Goldingham to C.R.Cotton (para 67), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2511), No. 30 of April 16, 1841. Appended to this report on the social and economic condition of the district are seven reports from influential communities. That of S.V.K.Rao is more detailed than Goldingham's (though perhaps not as reliable).

CHAPTER TWO

THE ORGANIZATION AND CONDITION OF THE ZILLAH CIRCAR IN 1837

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CHAPTER TWO

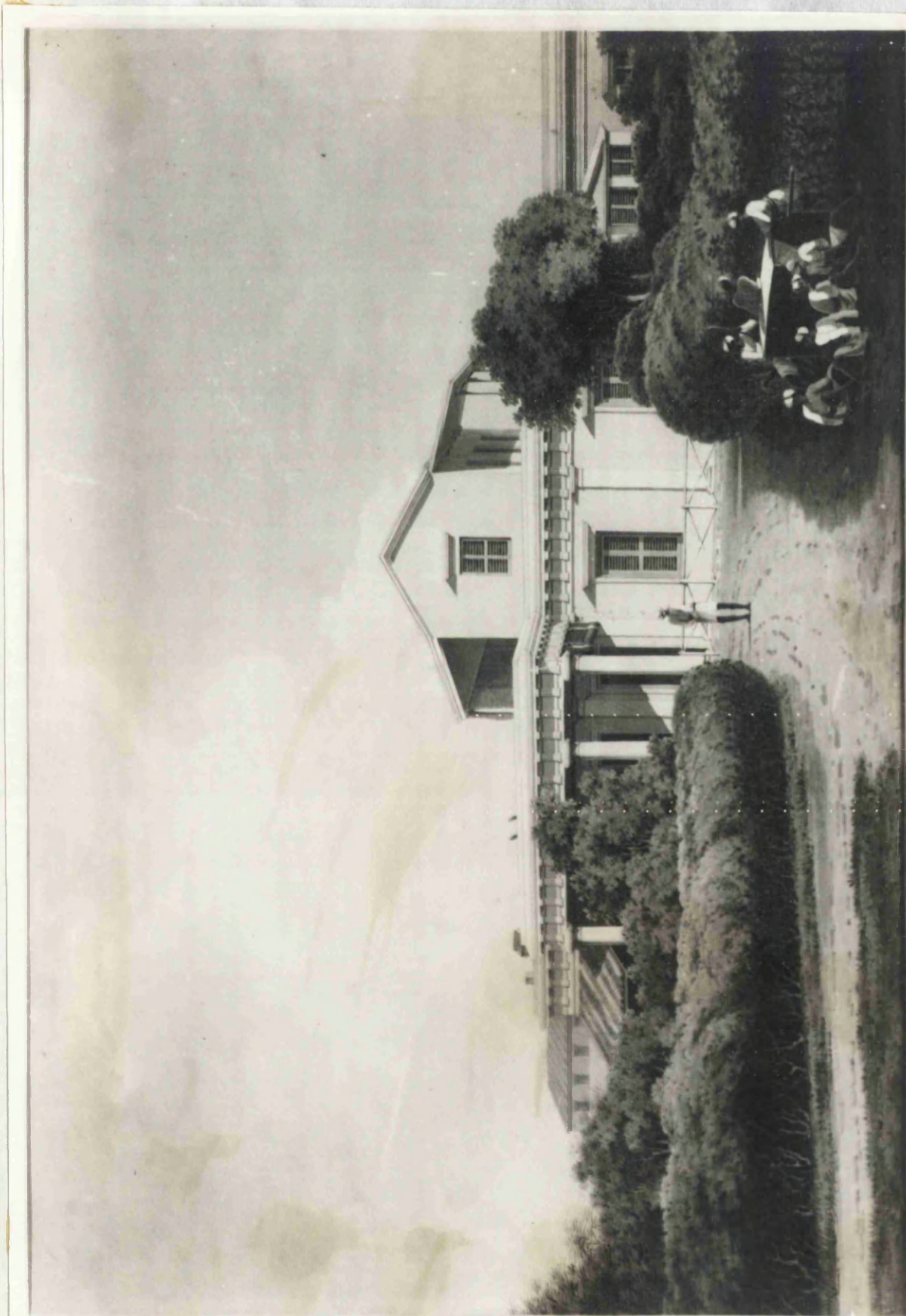
THE ORGANIZATION AND CONDITION OF THE ZILLAH CIRCAR IN 1837

Europeans were greatly outnumbered by their Indian subordinates in the district. Although the over-all ratio of Britons to Indians serving the Madras Government (village level excluded) during the first half of the 19th century was never less than 1 to 4.4, a ratio more like 1 to 100 existed when the military was excluded. Again, if only civil servants were considered, the ratio widened to 1 European and between 170 and 190 Indians. The disparity increased even further in the districts, particularly in the "settled" districts, since proportionately more Europeans worked at the Presidency. The Guntur administration in 1830, for example, contained 3 Europeans and 1,368 Indians. Normally, however, there should have been 4 or 5 British officers in Guntur.¹

Communal stratification within local administration somewhat offset this extreme disparity between Indians and Britons. Guntur had anything but a homogeneous society and its administrative hierarchy was dominated at different levels by different caste groups, with

¹ These calculations are based on figures taken from: (1) House of Commons. Return on Total Europeans and Natives employed in Madras Presidency: 1800-1851. Returns of All Civil Offices and Establishments for Madras, 1st May 1831. Parliamentary Papers, Indian Civil Service, Collection 366 (London: H.M.S.O., 1853). (2) Ricketts, Report for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments, I (Calcutta: 1858), 321.

Note: The average military personnel ranged between 10,000 and 14,000 Europeans to between 15,000 and 25,000 Indians. Indian civilians numbered 40,579 in 1831 and roughly 35,000 in 1858.



A DISTRICT BUNGALOW, drawn by John Gantz, 1811.

Desasthas at the top and other Brahmans, Muslims, and high castes ranged below them, outcaste groups being at the very bottom of the ladder. Respectable Indians remained relatively isolated within their caste barriers. The few dominating the top levels cultivated their English and developed contacts among their British superiors. Maratha Brahmans were in some respects as removed from lower levels as their British masters.

Over a thousand villages with about a half million people were ruled by a host of district officers under the control of a handful of Europeans.¹ An understanding of how these officers could operate within the territory (zillah) and organization (circular) of Guntur District can scarcely be obtained without examining, step by step, the nature and condition of each level of the administrative hierarchy.

I. THE HUZUR LEVEL

Traditionally, the "presence" of supreme authority wore a mantle of divinity. All who dwelled within the shadow of his umbrella gave proper reverence and deference, offerings and revenues. Under the British, the huzur was the level at which the will of the State and authority over the district met and formed a single institution. Indeed

¹ Officially, Guntur had 882 and Palnad, 152 villages. The Census Report of September 9, 1822: GDR (3979: pp.44-45), listed 454,754. An estimated half of the people died or left the district in the Guntur Famine. The total was only 224,411 in 1834/35 according to the Jamabandi Report of August 5, 1836: GDR (61: 5392: 235), para 17.

it was one person. It was the foreign ruler, the Collector and Magistrate, who was informally known as "the Collector" or "the Huzur". Yet, the aura of the huzur also covered all European officers (as well as non-official Europeans) in Guntur and spread over the entire headquarters establishment (kacheri) of the district. In this sense, the Huzur was commonly the place where the Huzur (Person) resided.

A. THE HUZUR AND HIS STAFF

The tradition of a unified huzur was modified in the massive foundations laid by Lord Cornwallis. Separation of power was permanently built into district administration. Governmental power was divided into revenue, magisterial and judicial branches. Since no provision was made for a completely separate executive, magisterial power was merged either with revenue or with judicial power. With the ascendancy of the Munro system in Madras, the sword was taken away from the District Judge and given to the District Collector.

1. The Collector

The Huzur was the pivot for all State concerns in the district and the guardian of welfare and safety for its people. He had authority over "all persons employed in the executive administration of the revenue and persons paying revenue or concerned with revenue."¹

Wherever land was not permanently settled, "the Collector [determined] the demand annually upon occupied land,"² collected

¹ BOR Proceedings of September 19, 1836 (para 8): MRP (MRO: 1522: 12863-885). Regulation II of 1803.

² ibid. (paras 8-9); Reg. XXVII of 1802.

instalments of revenue (kists) according to crop and marketing seasons, and recovered unpaid amounts from previous seasons. He was responsible for the survey and assessment of all land. He collected sea and land customs, liquor and drug excises, personal and professional taxes, profits from salt and tobacco monopolies, and proceeds from licences, stamp paper and other miscellaneous sources. He managed all State property, buildings, and endowments and he took care of property for disqualified owners.¹⁺

The Collector was Magistrate and Superintendent of Police.⁺⁺ It was his responsibility to keep the peace, to enforce the law, and to prosecute offenders. He could give sentences of up to two years confinement or hard labor, 1000 rupees in fines, and whipping. He also possessed special judicial powers for trying and punishing district officers under his authority.²

In general administration, the Collector was responsible for agricultural and commercial prosperity, for education, for health, for postal services, dak bungalows and choultries (rest houses), and for roads, bridges, dams, canals and other engineering works. Hardly a thing happened in the district which did not concern him, whether it

¹ ibid. ⁺ Note: Under the Board of Revenue, he was Superintendent of Stamps, Court of Wards, Public Works Officer, and agent for many other offices. Another generation passed before the Superintendent of Survey and the Director of Settlement sent officers periodically into Guntur.

⁺⁺ Note: Not until 1858 did he answer to the Inspector General of Police.

² BOR Proceedings (paras 8-9), September 19, 1936: MRP (MR0: 1522: 1522: 12874 ff.). J.Boswell, A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: 1873), pp.558-66.

was a storm, an epidemic, a famine, an economic decline, or an outbreak of thagi and dacoity.

All that the Collector did, however, required approval and confirmation from the Board of Revenue, the Government, and such other central departments as were concerned. The Collector was District Treasurer and as such was subject to the orders of the Account-General. **Although** there were general and special authorizations for disbursements on ordinary and regular or other accounts, no changes in these could be made without going through proper channels for sanction. No more than 20 rupees could be spent for contingencies without previous sanction from Madras.¹

In personnel selection and removal, the Collector could appoint all the Indian officers in his administration with the exception of the Huzur Sheristadar, whom he could nominate. He could dismiss all officers below the rank of Tahsildar. Officers of the Tahsildar cadre could not be removed without specific authorization from the Board of Revenue.²

The real danger was over-centralization. In a vast territory of 132,000 square miles, more than 1,000 miles long, with roughly 1.5 million ryots paying over 3 crores in land revenue to twenty Collectors, the Board of Revenue could try to do too much. Collectors whose districts were three and four times the size of districts in other

¹ BOR Proceedings, September 19, 1836: ibid.

² ibid.

parts of India were already hard pressed. Excessive interference from Madras could paralyze their efforts. It usually took twenty years to become a full Collector and much longer to be promoted into the extremely limited number of senior positions in Madras; therefore, aspiring officers in the mufassal needed to toe the line. The Board of Revenue could keep a tight hold on the purse and on the appointment or removal of senior Indian officers, effectively controlling the district police and revenue personnel. Not only were Collectors' orders appealable, but the Board of Revenue was the channel of communication for subjects of every description, whether legislative, police, fiscal, sanitary, agricultural or anything else. The Board had to pronounce with authority on land tenures of exceeding complexity and variety. How the Board could minutely supervise its distant districts and give clear and knowledgable opinions and instructions on all these subjects, how it could even begin to cope with thousands of letters and appeals is difficult to comprehend. The answer is that it simply could not. The Board of Revenue was continually faced with a backlog of business with which it could not cope.¹

The remedy for this evil was for the Madras authorities to allow the Collector to exercise greater discretion and responsibility. Boards and Councils were slow and cumbrous machines for arriving at decisions. A trusted Collector, given proper powers and some latitude,

¹ BOR Proceedings (paras 1-7), September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: 12863-74). Rickets, Report for Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments, I (Calcutta: 1858), pp. 161-65.

could often succeed when the Board was paralysed and the Government puzzled. When the Board of Revenue was filled with understanding members, supervision was kept to a minimum and, except in certain key subjects such as finance, the Collector was given some free rein.

Unfortunately, by 1837, effective control over Guntur District had been paralyzed for several years. Guntur administration had been virtually headless. At a time when the district needed a strong, continuous and understanding huzur, when the land was ravaged by famine, cholera, and plague, there had been almost nothing. Without taking into account officers left temporarily in charge, between the departure of John Whish in July, 1831, and the arrival of John Goldingham in July, 1837, ten Acting Collectors (15 officers if those temporarily in charge are counted) shuttled in and out of Guntur. No single tenure was more than 11 months, the average being nearer 4 to 5 months per Collector (17 transfers occurred in 6 years). Worst of all, many of these Collectors were complete strangers in Telugu country.¹

2. The Collector's Staff.

Obviously the enormous and variegated burden of responsibility for the welfare of the district was too heavy for any one man. The Collector was provided with a European staff to make up for what he lacked in energy and knowledge. This help was of two kinds: general and specialized.

¹ Walter Elliot's Report on Guntur District (para 96), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7635), No. 39 of December 6, 1847, "Chart of Officers appointed Acting or Permanent to the office of Collector." G.Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.358.

Guntur as yet had no Sub-Collector; for although its revenue work was almost as much as in an "unsettled" district, its administration was still listed as "settled" (zamindari). The Head Assistant had no particular assigned duty; but he was usually in charge of one or two taluks in which he was responsible for the revenue, police, and general administration. Other assistants were similarly employed; however, these could not be entrusted with a taluk until after a year's residence in the district and until approved in Madras. Junior Assistants, usually young trainees just finished with their examinations in Madras, had no specific duty and were employed at the discretion of the Collector.¹⁺

Promotion in the covenanted civil service was based primarily on seniority although, of course, it was also determined by available vacancies, recognized merit, and other intangibles and pressures common to the age. A Junior Assistant was eligible for active service only after he was pronounced fit to perform official duties in one or two vernacular languages. If he failed to qualify, he was removed into the mufassal (interior) on college allowance to work under a Collector until either he became fit or was forced to quit the service. An officer qualified as a Head Assistant or a Sub-Collector as soon as he was pronounced fit for service; he qualified as a Collector after four years and as a Principal Collector after seven years of service

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 10), September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: 12876).

⁺ Note: Another generation passed before Sub-Collectors took over the Salt and Treasury Departments.

although, as already noted, one rarely became a Collector in under twenty years. A Collector could be promoted to Principal Collector according to his merit and seniority without reference to the district in which he served; however, Guntur rarely rated a Principal Collector while Cuddapah and Tanjore were almost invariably so favored.¹⁺

It was not until after India came under the Crown that the really significant multiplication of special officers took place. These specialized officers, although under the general direction of the Collector, were responsible to their special department in Madras.² In 1837, Guntur had only two special officers: a surgeon and an engineer.

The medical officer who helped the Collector was usually an Army

¹ BOR Proceedings (paras 10-11), September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: 12876).

+ Note: Principal Collectors received Rs.36,000 per annum: Collectors, 30,000; Sub-Collectors, 14,000; Head Assistants, 8,800 or 6,700 depending on whether they had 6 years experience (3 years in revenue work was compulsory); Juniors got Rs. 350 or 260 per mensem depending on their language ability. Tent and per diem allowances were generous; and house-rent was provided for lower grades not benefiting from the bungalows which were provided. John Goldingham received a total of 52,000 rupees per year. Record lists of Madras Civil Servants (IOL: volumes 1-7) give all details on this and show that Guntur did not enjoy Principal Collectors often.

² C.D.Maclean, Standing Information regarding the Official Administration of Madras Presidency in Each Department (Madras: 1877). Note: (1) District Post was strictly official until 1846 and was merged with general post in 1854, the Collector retaining control under the Postmaster-General. (2) Thomas Munro made the Collector responsible to the Board of Public Instruction; but no progress came until the Education Department was formed in 1855. (3) Although proposed as early as 1834, Registrars responsible to the Inspector-General of Registration did not come until 1864.

Surgeon attached to the local battalion. Due more to lack of facilities than to lack of desire, medical service was restricted primarily to government employees. Not until 1846 was the choultry built from the bequest of John Whish turned into a Lungarkhana (hospital) for the general public. The District Surgeon, assisted by a small establishment of Indian Dressers, Vaccinators, and helpers, cared for the needs of the administration.¹

The first engineers and surveyors in Guntur were also army officers. Lieutenant F. Mountford produced the first accurate map of the district in 1817. In 1837, the Department of Public Works, which was then under the Board of Revenue, was divided into four Divisions within the Presidency. Each Division had a Civil Engineer and between one and three Assistant Civil Engineers. The Civil Engineer -- there was at least an Assistant in Guntur for several months in each year -- drew up plans, made estimates, and ascertained the correctness of bills for engineering works. Projects were executed through the local Maramat Department (Public Works) under orders from the Collector.²

When it was noticed that all through the worst months of great famine of 1833, the Krishna River was three-quarters full, preliminary

¹ George Evans Edgcome, who had been Assistant Civil Surgeon in Guntur since 1829, was replaced by Edward Smith in 1837. The Huzur also had a 1st class Native Dresser at Rs. 35 a month and a 2nd class one at Rs. 28. BOR to Collector, June 20, 1837: GDR (5368: 188: 226-27).

² BOR Proceedings, September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: 12876 ff.).

steps were taken to follow up suggestions first advanced in 1792 for the irrigation of the delta. Captain Buckle was assigned to investigate the possibilities and to begin some smaller irrigation works. The Pulleru canal, a cut about 15 miles long able to pass 34 million cubic yards of water, was opened in 1837. Buckle advocated an ambitious project of throwing a dam across the river and then building an extensive network of canals sufficient to irrigate the entire delta. The magnitude of the cost of this project would have been enough, if accurately estimated, to have terrified the Government and the Directors. Thirteen more years were to pass before the plan was sanctioned.¹

3. The Zillah Judge and Judicial Organization

Under the Sadr Faujdari Adalat (Criminal High Court of Appeal) and under the Sadr Diwani Adalat (Civil High Court of Appeal), the judicial administration of the Presidency was divided into four territorial (mufassal) divisions. Guntur was within the Northern Division and was under the jurisdiction of a Provincial Court of Circuit which kept its headquarters at Masulipatam. Under the Provincial Court and subject to its control was the Zillah Court.

In 1837, the Zillah Judge possessed very limited power. All suits above the value of 5,000 rupees were within the original jurisdiction of the Provincial Court as also were all punishments exceeding ten years imprisonment with hard labor and thirty stripes with a

¹ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), pp. 252-59.

rattan. For this reason he tended to be identified with the huzur in much the same manner as the European subordinates of the Collector. His appearance of being lower than the Collector was somewhat changed by the reforms of 1843. As reconstituted at that time, the Civil and Sessions Judge was given all of the power formerly held by the Provincial Court (which was abolished) ... namely, unlimited civil jurisdiction and power to punish criminals with up to fourteen years imprisonment and thirty-nine stripes. These powers were not modified until the Indian Penal Code came into force in 1860.¹

Below the Zillah Judge, who was usually an Acting Assistant Judge and Joint Criminal Judge (Edward Newberry was the third to hold the post in 1837), were two separate hierarchies reflecting the dual nature of the judiciary. In criminal justice, there were three grades of magisterial courts. Covenanted Europeans were of the first grade; Tahsildars were of the second grade (six months imprisonment, a 200 rupee fine, and whipping); and Taluk Sheristadars or Deputy Tahsildars were of the third grade (one month imprisonment and a 50 rupee fine). The lowest level of officers vested with criminal powers were "the heads of villages called Village Munsifs."² Under

¹ John Boswell, A Manual of Nellore District (Madras: 1873), pp.558-59, 566. F.J.Richards, Madras District Gazetteers: Salem, Vol. I-Pt.II (Madras: 1918), pp.81-88. F.R.Hemingway, Madras District Gazetteers: Godavari (Madras: 1915), pp.188-189. C.D.Maclean, Standing Information Regarding the Official Administration of Madras Presidency (Madras: 1877), pp. 183-95.

² C.D.Maclean, op.cit., pp. 187, 194.

Regulation XI of 1816, these officers were empowered to put offenders in the village choultry for twelve hours and put low caste offenders in the stocks for not more than six hours. In civil justice, there were at least three levels of adjudication below the Zillah Judge. In Guntur Town there was an Auxiliary (Subordinate) Court presided over by a Principal Sadr Amin which, established in 1827 to assist the Zillah Judge, had much the same civil jurisdiction as the Zillah Court. Next, there were District Munsifs' Courts, usually at every taluk headquarters, with power to decide cases involving up to 1,000 rupees and final jurisdiction in suits of up to 20 rupees. Finally, under Regulation IV of 1816, the head of a village was ex-officio Village Munsif with power to decide on personal property of up to 10 rupees value without appeal and up to 100 rupees in the character of an arbitrator. Panchayets could decide on suits without any value limitation (Reg. V of 1816); moreover, the Collector could summon Village and District Panchayets to settle disputes.¹

B. THE HUZUR KACHERI

The Kacheri at Guntur was the nerve center of district administration. The headquarters office -- actually a labyrinth of offices in several buildings connected by passage-ways and verandahs -- was the continuing expression if not the essential hub of district power. The Kacheri was the instrument which received and transmitted communications, which

¹ J. Boswell, op. cit., pp. 558-566. The Zillah Court convened 3 times a week.

obtained, digested, recorded, and preserved information, and which conveyed and implemented decisions from above and channeled or resolved disputes and petitions from below. The entire fiscal, police, and general administration was organized within its departments.

1. The Head (Huzur) Sheristadar

If the Kacheri served as the transmission between the processes of decision-making and wheel turning, it was the Sheristadar who served as the clutch for engaging these two mechanisms. As has already been seen, he was the direct descendant of the former Desmukh, Diwan, and Dubash. His official position was summarized by the Board of Revenue in 1836 as follows:

The Principal Native Revenue Officer under the Collector is the Head Sheristadar. He superintends every department and is the general inspector and controller of accounts. He is usually consulted by the Collector on every question connected with the administration of the revenue and particularly in the annual settlement; and the orders of the Collector for guidance of the subordinate executive Officers are generally passed after discussion with him. He has no independent functions or authority but acts always in the name and under the authority of the Collector. His salary on his first appointment in a settled District is 60 Rs. 210 and in an unsettled District 80 Pagodas Rs. 280 per mensem which is increased according to length of service until after 20 years it amounts to 125 in the former and 200 Pagodas Rs. 700 in the latter.¹

Although merely a ministerial officer and office manager, "the enormous and multifarious duties" which overwhelmed the Collector ^{or} ~~or~~ and the fact that a Sheristadar's tenure was usually "much more permanent" than that of the Collector made the real position of the Sheristadar

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 10), September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: pp.12880-85). Note: This statement was taken from the Government Order of 22nd March, 1816.

quite different from the ostensible one.¹ As chief repository of local history and conditions, as confidential adviser and indispensable right arm, as "the sole channel of access to the Collector," this officer was accustomed to exercising a "very great authority without any definite responsibility," and was "in many respects, the real administrator."² Collectors often "avowedly devolved in their whole revenue duties on their Sheristadars."³ A Government Order circulated by the Board of Revenue on June 12, 1851, clearly reflected the towering image which this officer had come to assume:

That officer should be regarded as the Native Collector. All accounts should be open to his examination as to that of his European superior. The Board should make known to all Sheristadars that the Government will hold them responsible for every department and that it is their duty to place in writing all information of malpractice.⁴

Sheristadari control in the Madras Presidency, in the words of its critics, so effectively tied "leading strings" on Collectors that little could be accomplished without the cooperation of the Sheristadar.⁵

¹ Ricketts, ., Report on Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: 1858), p. 333.

² ibid.

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid., p.334. Note: Since 1940, the Personal Assistant ("P.A.") has supplanted the Sheristadar as the over-shadowing influence in the Kacheri.

⁵ ibid., pp.324,337.

The social composition of the upper stratas of district administration was clearly disclosed in the critical enquiry, "Is there anything about Madras Collectorates that makes them so difficult that only a Maratha Brahmin can fathom it?"¹ Castes dominating the highest cadres of district administration in Madras Presidency, as of January 22, 1855, are revealed in the following table:

Caste	Head Sheristadars	Naib Sheristadars Deputy Collectors	Tahsildars	Total
Maratha Brahmans	17	20	117	154
Other Brahmans	2	13	68	83
Other Hindus	2	3	45	50
Native Christians	0	2	3	5
Muslims	0	0	13	13
Eurasians	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	21	38	246	305

Considering the already long tradition of dominance by a Desastha elite in² Guntur, it is hardly surprising that the Huzur Sheristadar was a Maratha Brahman.

In June, 1836, Alexander Bruce reported that Ghanagam Sita Rama Rao Puntulu's health was failing and suggested that his good service should be recognized by an increase in salary and the provision of a special assistant. The salary increment scales of 1816 had been extended to Sheristadars of settled districts in 1828. Sita Ram had become Head Sheristadar on June 8, 1825 and should have received 10 pagodas-per-month

¹ ibid., p. 337.

² Ricketts, op. cit., p. 335.

increases in 1830 and 1835; however, he had been getting an extra 111 rupees per month from the zafted (attached) zamindaris since 1832, giving him a total of 321 rupees per month. Bruce felt that the Government should pay him Rs. 280 (80 pagodas) a month along with Rs. 2940 in back pay and that 71 rupees out of the 111 rupees a month taken from the zamindaris should be used to support an assistant for the ailing Sheristadar.¹⁺

The assistant whom both Bruce and Sita Ram had in mind was Nyapati Shashagiri Rao. Born the year that the British came to Guntur and nurtured when Atmuri Venkatachallam's power was at its zenith, Shashagiri Rao entered district service in 1810 (at the age of 22). He became Manager of the Magistrate Department in the early 1820's. Since his daughter was married to Sita Ram's son and since he was connected with both branches of the Manur Rao family, he was obviously a Desastha leader.²⁺ He was also closely associated with European superiors. John Whish warned him with kindly interest against attending "god's feasts" given by the Sattanapalli Zamindar lest "any indirect connection with public business be inferred in the invitation."³ James

1⁺ A.F.Bruce to BOR, June 10, 1836: GDR (5392: 162-65); July 8, ibid., pp. 222-5. Note: Salary scales as such need not concern us; however, they are included in Appendix IV.

2⁺ Daniel White to BOR reporting the conduct of Shashagiri Rao (para 67), July 10, 1845: GDR (58: 5402: 129-30). Petition of N. Shashagiri Rao to Government, No. 75 of December 23, 1845: MRP (IOL: range 280; vol. 72: pp. 7330-33). G.Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 350. Note: In talking with the present ex-Zamindar, I found that close connection still exist between the Manur Rao and Nyapati families.

3 Letters from John Whish, James Bell, Patrick Grant, A.S.Mathison, and Malcolm Lewin to N.Shashagiri Rao, Enclosures 1 to 5 of No. 75 of December 23, 1845: MRP (IOL: 280: 72: 7335-45).

Bell supplied him with English literature. Patrick Grant and A.S. Mathison approved of him. Malcolm Lewin tried to take him to Cocanada and then helped him to become Huzur Sheristadar of Rajahmundry in 1835. Less than a year later, Bruce wrote to him:

I have considered how to create a suitable opening. Sita Ram is entitled to additional salary. As he needs help, he will forego this and I purpose making it over to you ... lose no time in coming.¹

Bruce even offered to write the Collector of Rajahmundry (Grant) if necessary.

Shashagiri Rao's moves at this time cannot be understood without reference to the factionalism then raging between contending groups of Maratha Brahmans. A friend who had been his predecessor in Rajahmundry had been dismissed. Efforts to discredit him before Grant, who had approved of his work when in Guntur, were partially successful.² Lewin wrote him that "neither ability or exertion in any one man could compass such a system of scramble" as Rajahmundry District.³ An opponent, Manganuri Lakshminarsu Rao, became Head Sheristadar of Rajahmundry immediately after Shashagiri Rao and helped to "reform glaring abuses" in that district.⁴ Sita Ram's poor health may have been only one

¹ Alexander Bruce to N.Shashagiri Rao (from Bapatla), June 7, 1836: ibid.

² P.Grant to A.F.Bruce (through Shashagiri Rao), from Rajahmundry, June 27, 1836: op. cit., enclosure 6.

³ M. Lewin to N.Shashagiri Rao, from Mangalore, July 9, 1836: ibid., encl. 8.

⁴ M.Lakshminarsu Rao to John Goldingham, December 24, 1841: MRP (MRO: 1850: pp. 16999-17013), Appendix A in No. 27 of February 10, 1842. Note: Henry Montgomery, in his report on Rajahmundry of March 14, 1844, attributed the administrative failure and economic distress of the district to prolonged and bitter factionalism among district officers.

reason for the needed assistance of Shashagiri Rao in Guntur. Certainly little time was wasted in abandoning a high position in Rajahmundry for a much lower one in Guntur.

The quick return of Shashagiri Rao to Guntur was not viewed entirely with joy in Madras. Such a rapid switch in position was thought to be irregular. Lewin regretted the hasty resignation, feeling that Shashagiri Rao had not stayed in Rajahmundry long enough to have his worth appreciated.¹ Since, under a new policy being formulated in Madras, the Zamindars were to be reinstated as managers on behalf of the Government, the diminished amount of work in Guntur would make the employment of Shashagiri Rao difficult.²

Bruce left Guntur to take up a new post in Madras before sanctions for the pay increase for Sita Ram and the special assistantship for Shashagiri Rao arrived.³ In November he wrote from Madras:

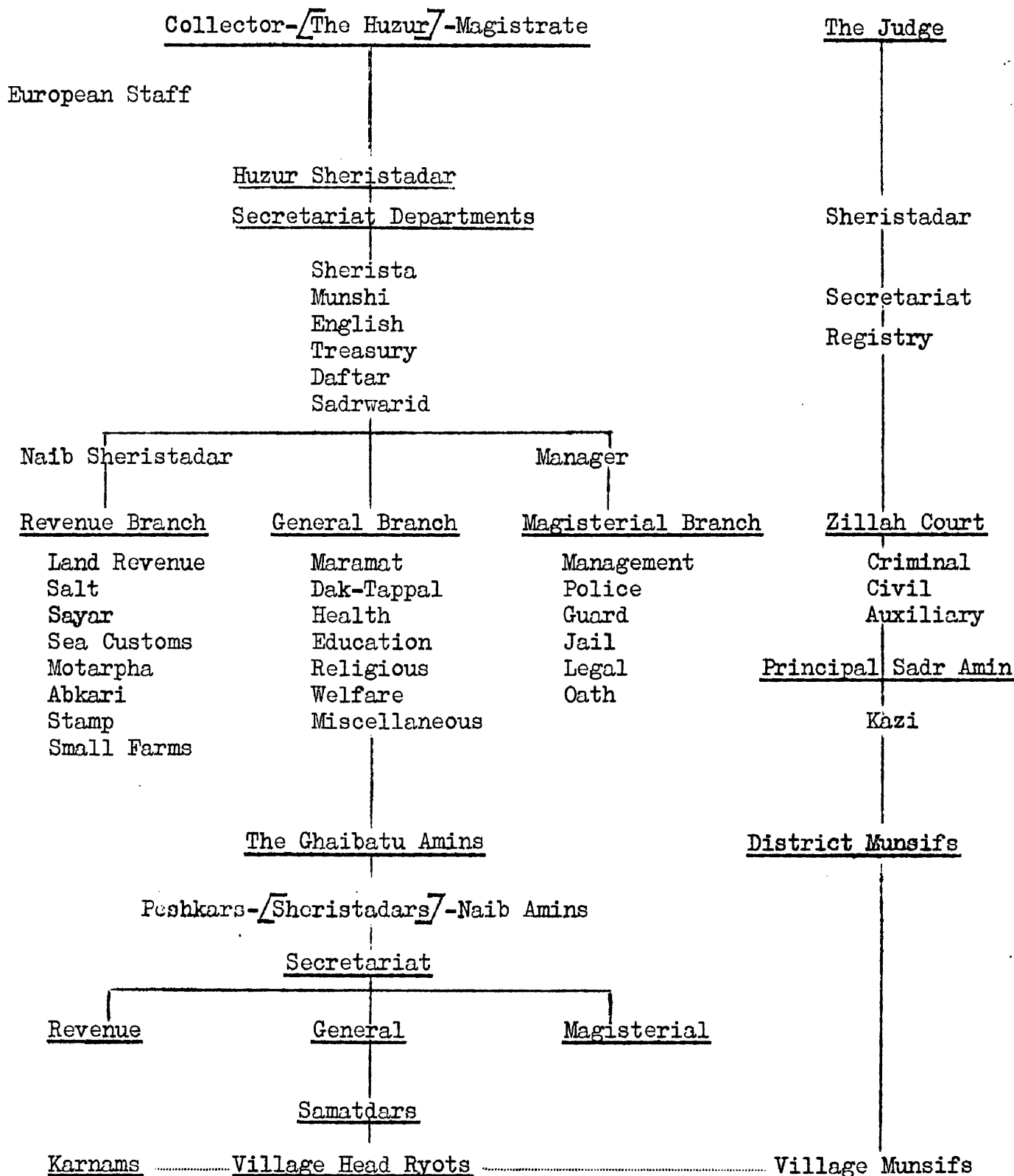
Your character is a sufficient guarantee that you will obtain employment in another Department in the Hoozoor. To me your qualifications are strictly public and of a high order. I intended to appoint you Sheristadar on anything happening to Seeta Rama Row. Your experience, sound judgement, ability and aptitude for business and your long tried fidelity are grounds on which I would have justified this choice - in Guntoor especially.⁴

¹ M.Lewin to N.Shashagiri Rao, from Ootacamund, September 14, 1836: op.cit. enclosure 9.

² A.F.Bruce to N.Shashagiri Rao, from Madras, November 21, 1836: ibid., enclosure 10.

³ Sanction for pay increase, August 22, 1836: GDR (3978: 583-85). Sanction for Assistant Sheristadar, September 15, 1836: GDR (3978: 681).

⁴ A.F.Bruce to N.Shashagiri Rao, from Madras, November 21. 1836: MRP (IOL: 280: 72: 7338), enclosure 10 in No. 75 of December 23, 1845.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF GUNTUR DISTRICT

Note: There was a department or an assignment of personnel for each subject.

Bruce went on to list kacheri leaders to whom he wished to be remembered and ended his letter by crediting Shashagiri Rao with producing "some of the very best Native Servants."¹ The stage was thus set for one Desastha to succeed another in a carefully restricted preserve of administrative power.⁺

2. The Headquarters Departments

The structure of the District Kacheri, the organization of its personnel and its functions into various departments, was large and complex. An attempt to reconstruct this organization from the materials at hand is complicated by the fact that a single coherent description was only rarely, if ever, given in writing and by the fact that the organization was constantly changing to meet expanding and contracting needs.

The central trunk of kacheri organization was the Secretariat. Presumably because accounts occupied such an important position and because the Sheristadar exercised such vast power, the Secretariat kept the name of the office out of which it apparently grew. The Sheristakhana (Sar-rishta-khana: "Chief-connecting-place") was much more than the Sherista Department (Native Accounts). Indeed, it was the hub for five other secretarial departments. The six departments of the Secretariat were: (1) the Sherista Department,

¹ ibid., p.7339.

⁺ Note: A revealing glimpse of a Desastha's climb to power can be seen in V.V.G.Row's The Life of Vennelacunty Soob Row (Madras: C.Forester & Co., 1873). See also: Ruthnaswamy, Some Influences that made the British Administrative System in India (London: Luzac, 1939), p. 87 ff.

(2) The Munshi (Native Correspondence) Department, (3) the English (Accounts and Correspondence) Department, (4) the Treasury, (5) the Record Office, and (6) the Sadarward (Material Maintenance) Department. As can be seen this central trunk of departments served as the exchange between Telugu and English and as the junction between local and central administration. Marathi was the medium in this exchange.¹

Beneath the Secretariat, departments were organized roughly into three branches. First, the revenue branch was divided functionally between land revenue (mahasulu) and other revenues (sayaru). One department drew together all the land revenue accounts from the field (ghaibatu) departments, whether from the zamindaris or from the taluks. Usually there was one Maddatgar in this department for each zamindari or one Maddatgar (Clerk) for one or two taluks. Depending upon the amount of work required, the other revenue departments were usually comprised of a Peshkar, two Maddatgars, and a Jawabnavis (Munshi). Only the Land Revenue and Salt Departments rated English Writers. Second, the police branch consisted of one department almost always located in a separate building which was divided functionally into several sections ... e.g., the secretariat, enforcement, guard, jail oath administering, and legal sections. Finally, the general service

¹ The best over-all breakdown of organization was given by H. Stokes in his letter to the Board of September 22, 1854: GDR (39: 5409: 216-225). This complete muain-zabita (establishment list) has been compared with others. See: (1) Sherista Department, September 1, 1836: GDR (70: 5392: 249); (2) Treasury, April 23, 1836: GDR (21: 5392: 129); general, June 13, 1836: GDR (41: 5392: pp.166-73); and also general, May 24, 1841: GDR (5372: pp. 213-15, 521-32). Note: See Appendix IV for a full breakdown of each department with monthly salaries.

branch was so embryonic that often, instead of there being specific departments carrying on regular programs, there were only problems or subjects which were assigned by the Collector ^{or} ~~of~~ Sheristadar. The Maramat (Public Works) Department, the District Post (Dak and Tappal) Department, and the Health Department possessed regular establishments. Such questions as (1) Education, (2) Religious Institutions, (3) Statistics, (4) Welfare, and (5) Arms were regularly and sometimes exhaustively dealt with even though there was no specific machinery for handling them.¹ (See Appendix IV for a full break-down of each department.)

3. Personnel Selection and Promotion

Entry into the district service was usually through family and caste connections.⁺ At the age of ten or twelve, after five years of learning the Hindu epics and simple arithmetic, a boy would become a volunteer in an office where some friend or relative of his family worked. Here he would labor for several years until his skill in writing and accounting, his knowledge of departmental and governmental affairs, and his personal influence were sufficient to put him on the pay-roll at 4 or 5 rupees a month. Depending upon his caste, his

¹ Since citations on each of these departments or subjects would be exhausting and pointless, only one example -- the District Dak (Post) -- will be given. See: BOR to Collector, March 5, 1838: GDR (5369: 135-175); and Collector to BOR, June 20, 1838: GDR (5394: 149-153).

⁺ Note: Occasionally a Collector adopted and educated an orphan.

connections, and his department,⁺ a person's rise in the service was determined largely by patronage, nepotism, the manipulation of influence (including money), and outright intrigue. The number of highly paid positions being very limited and the number of able officers being very plentiful, an aspiring officer usually needed more than administrative skills if he were to succeed to the post of the incumbent above him.¹

If an aspirant were a Telega, a Kamma, or a Muslim, he would be lucky to get into the Huzur at all. Most high-caste (martial) Sudras tended to be in police work and, therefore, strived for Aminships. The same was true of Muslims, except that they were not averse to handling money and, hence, also competed with Komartis in treasury work. If an aspirant were a Niyogi Brahman, he had a good chance of entering some department of the Huzur simply by the numerical strength of his caste; however, the large majority of Niyogis were dominant at the level of Karnamships and Samatdarships (close to the villages). Even some Maratha Brahmans, outside the circle of entrenched leadership in Guntur, would have trouble getting into the inner sanctum of the secretariat (sherista) departments.

⁺ Note: The level at which a person entered district service and his scope for advancement was somewhat determined by the caste stratification noted earlier. Strong preserves of interest and patronage were held by each leading community. While these overlapped at different levels, each group tended to predominate at a given level.

¹ An entertaining and revealing account of how this was done is found in Panchkouree Khan, The Revelations of an Orderly (Benares: 1848), any chapter.

A son from one of the chosen few among Guntur families would probably become a volunteer within one of the English departments having already had some private tutoring in English. As his skill and experience grew, a young Desastha and his family would scan far and wide among the kacheris of South India for some maternal uncle or paternal cousin or suitable marriage which would advance the position of the young officer. As each position was attained, favors would be bought and sold in an attempt to climb higher. As the top of the district pyramid was approached, struggles and intrigues would become more intense. It was practically impossible for a person to reach the top by himself. Only in combination with others could he hope to keep his place. Marathas jealously guarded the approaches to the highest offices in the Huzur Kacheri.¹

As years and success came to a district officer, thoughts would turn to providing for his family and for his eternal future. Notwithstanding orders from the Board of Revenue that land could not be purchased or possessed in the district where an officer was employed (unless with special permission),² he would covertly try to buy inams,

¹ V.V.Gopal Row, The Life of Vennelacunty Soob Row (Madras: C.Forester & Co., 1873), pp.1-30, 62-70. Soob Row died in 1837 after retiring from a full career in government service. In almost every district he visited, there was an uncle, a cousin, etc. who was Huzur Sheristadar, Head Munshi, Head English Accountant and so on. J.A.B.Dykes, Salem: An Indian Collectorate (London: W.H.Allen & Co, 1853), pp.322, 327, confirms this view of Maratha strength. See also: A. Prinsep, The Baboo (London: 1834), pp. 71, 289, 311, 40, 259.

² John Whish to BOR (on orders of June 19, 1826) August 7, 1826: GDR (3965: 345-48). D. White reported in 1845 that the orders were completely ignored.

usually shrotriam or agrapharam villages near the customary family seat. A venerable old officer was one who saw all his sons and nephews into good positions, held inams and made loans, kept a club over his enemies, made pilgrimages to Benares, Conjivaram, Ramesvaram, and other sacred places, and, finally, grew stouter and stouter in his palankin as he was born~~to~~ to the Kacheri each month to sign for his pension and to renew his grip on local affairs.¹ (See following sample of Pension Register.)

II. THE GHAIBATU LEVELS

Just as huzur represented "the presence" of supreme authority, so ghaibatu stood for its absence.² In contradistinction to the headquarters in Guntur, ghaibatu was the term applied to field machinery. The organization of field (ghaibatu) departments was, if anything, more complicated than that of the headquarters. This was because the number, the name, the size, and the character of field divisions and field operations tended to vary from year to year. The functions of government in the field at a particular time were constantly changing.

A. TALUKS: THE TOP LEVEL

According to the map of 1827,³ Guntur proper was comprised of 36

¹ Rules of Pensions (December 22, 1835), February 3, 1836: Fort Saint George Gazette (No. 450: pp. 73-76). An officer with 20 years service obtained a third and an officer with 30 years, a half of his average salary during the past five years (which had to be at least Rs. 10 per mensem).

² Ghaibatu:- lit., "lost," "hidden," or "missing." Wilson's Glossary, p. 172.

³ Map of Guntoor Collectorate (Madras: Surveyor General's Office, 1827), 1815-1819 by military officers under Lieut. F. Mountford.

Person from the Government of the District of Columbia under date the 22nd December 1836.

Order or name of the person	Rank or position	Signature	Office
John A. Smith	Major	[Signature]	Adjutant General
James B. Jones	Captain	[Signature]	Quartermaster
William C. Brown	First Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert D. White	Second Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas E. Green	Third Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles F. Black	Fourth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry G. Grey	Fifth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John H. Hall	Sixth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William I. Hunt	Seventh Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert J. King	Eighth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas K. Lamb	Ninth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles L. Lee	Tenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry M. Martin	Eleventh Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John N. Nash	Twelfth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William O. Oliver	Thirteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert P. Parker	Fourteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas Q. Quinn	Fifteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles R. Reed	Sixteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry S. Shaw	Seventeenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John T. Stone	Eighteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William U. Underhill	Nineteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert V. Vance	Twentieth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas W. Ward	Twenty-first Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles X. West	Twenty-second Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry Y. Wright	Twenty-third Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John Z. Zimmerman	Twenty-fourth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster

Register of an application for a superannuation prepared under the Rules passed by Government.

Full name of the person	Rank or position	Signature	Office
John A. Smith	Major	[Signature]	Adjutant General
James B. Jones	Captain	[Signature]	Quartermaster
William C. Brown	First Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert D. White	Second Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas E. Green	Third Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles F. Black	Fourth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry G. Grey	Fifth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John H. Hall	Sixth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William I. Hunt	Seventh Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert J. King	Eighth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas K. Lamb	Ninth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles L. Lee	Tenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry M. Martin	Eleventh Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John N. Nash	Twelfth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William O. Oliver	Thirteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert P. Parker	Fourteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Thomas Q. Quinn	Fifteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Charles R. Reed	Sixteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Henry S. Shaw	Seventeenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
John T. Stone	Eighteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
William U. Underhill	Nineteenth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
Robert V. Vance	Twentieth Lieutenant	[Signature]	Company Quartermaster
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Robert P. Parker
Thomas Q. Quinn
Charles R. Reed
Henry S. Shaw
John T. Stone
William U. Underhill
Robert V. Vance
Thomas W. Ward
Charles X. West
Henry Y. Wright
John Z. Zimmerman

John A. Smith
Collectors General & Co
1836

John A. Smith
Signed & Goldingham
1836

towns (kasbas), 846 primary villages, and 650 secondary villages or hamlets. Its territorial organization, built on relics of the fourteen samutus of ancient Kondavidu Sima (including Vinukonda and Bellamkonda) and on the five parganas of Murtijanagar Circar, possessed neither system nor coherence. Neither the amani nor the zamindari units were compact. Jurisdictions over-lapped both functionally and territorially. Three zamindars had villages and even shared one village within the Kondavidu Samutu. An Amin often had to pass three or four villages of other Amins before coming to one of his own.¹

Nevertheless, fourteen taluks,² sixteen if the divisions of Palnad are included, formed the most permanent elements of ghaibatu administration. In addition to these, there were two stations strictly for police work and two stations for salt industry. Because Guntur was considered to be "settled," all of these divisions and stations tended to be called thanas (police stations) and their principal executive officers were usually called Thanadars or Amins rather than Tahsildars.³

¹ Recommendations for territorial redistribution, H. Stokes to BOR, May 25, 1843: GDR (44: 5402: pp. 41-51).

² Taluk:- (from "alq") originally meant nothing more than "division" or "dependence." Ancient Hyderabad Records applied it to large provinces of the empire as well as to tiny parcels of ground. In Deccan idiom, taluks became district subdivisions, synonymous with parganas. Tahsil, literally a sheaf of village accounts, was rarely used.

³ The 14 thanas of Guntur proper are listed roughly as follows: (1) Guntur, (2) Kurupadu, (2) Chabrolu, (4) Tenali, (5) Rajapet, (6) Chilkalurpet (Kondavidu), (7) Mangalagiri, (8) Bapatla, (9) Repalli, (10) Rachur, (11) Sattanapalli, (12) Bellamkonda, (13) Vinukonda, (14) Vunglapuram. The Palnad thanas were: (1) Dachapelli and (2) Tummurukota. The Salt Thanas were Chinna Ganjam and Nizampatam. Police stations were at Polur and Gurzala.

Because all of the zamindaris were under government (amani) management, the machinery of the ghaibatu divisions had become enlarged. Those Vasireddy villages which had not been under the Collector since 1821 because of the disputed succession, had been surrendered by Ramanadha Babu in 1833. The Repalli (Manika Rao) villages had been under the Collector as Court of Wards since 1828. The Malraju divisions and both branches of the Manur Rao holdings had been taken over (zafted) for non-payment of revenue during the famine.¹

1. The Function of the Amin

Whether he was a Police Amin or a Revenue Amin -- a Thanadar or a Tahsildar -- the Amin was one of "the Native Collectors of Divisions called Talooks."² Unless specifically limited to a single function, his responsibility was just as wide ranging and comprehensive as that of the Huzur Collector in Guntur. In return for the whole work of fiscal and criminal control, together with general services, his monthly remuneration ranged between 40 and 200 rupees (settled districts: 40 to 100; unsettled districts: 100 to 200).³

A peculiarity of the Amin's pay in Guntur proper was the fact that nine out of fifteen of the Thanadars who were employed in revenue

¹ A summary table of zamindari possession and attachment is found in Appendix C of Goldingham's Report to C.R. Cotton, December 13, 1839: MRP (281: 7: 2800), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² BOR Proceedings (para 12), September 19, 1836: MRP (MRO: 1522: p.12885).

³ ibid. Also Elliot Report (para 90), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7632), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

work were paid exclusively from the accounts of the zamindaris, Although the Government had originally pledged itself to keep the peace at no expense to the zamindars, this policy had not been practiced. It was not until late in 1836, when the Zamindars were being put in charge of their own estates as Amildars (see section 3 below for fuller treatment of this subject), that Bruce's suggestion was followed. Thus, in 1837, the Amin was paid by the Government for the police share of his salary while the revenue share of his salary, paid out of zamindari accounts when these were under amani control, lapsed.¹

An excellent description of the revenue duties of the Amin was given by Henry Newill, the Head Assistant Collector of Guntur between 1841 and 1850. It was the Amin's duty to: (1) arrange for the occupation, relinquishment, and cultivation of lands under hukums (orders) from the Collector; (2) prepare the information and details for the jamabandi (annual settlement) under the control of the Huzur; (3) obtain rents for grazing and other item taxes; (4) supervise subordinates in field examinations, etc.; (5) dispose of complaint petitions preferred from below or referred from above; (6) examine the journals and accounts of each Village Karnam; (7) examine receipt books of individual Ryots to see that Karnams properly entered payments:

¹ BOR Proceedings to Collector, No. 7 of October 20, 1836: GDR (5368: 9-13) and MRP (MRO: pp. 14211-16); and Nos. 3-4 of November 21, 1836: MRP (MRO: p. 16667).

(8) prepare accounts for notarpha, sayar, abkari, and other revenues; (9) forward monthly, annual and jamabandi accounts to the Huzur according to prescribed forms; (10) remit the "public revenue" with accounts monthly to the Huzur Treasury; (11) register all applications for planting topus (groves of trees) for charitable purposes and forward returns to the Collector; (12) superintend the arrangement and preservation of records in the Taluk Kacheri; (13) examine persons receiving monthly pensions from the Taluk Treasury and forward accounts to the Huzur; (14) inspect the returns and test the work of vaccinators; (15) supervise stills and shops under abkari laws; (16) examine property tendered as security for Shroffs, Tahsildars, etc.; (17) forward applications for leave to the Huzur; (18) supervise the regulation of water from tanks and canals; (19) investigate and try cases of malversation by village and district officers (under Reg. IX of 1822 and Reg. VII of 1828); (20) report all lapsed inams; (21) settle all boundary disputes; (22) keep the Collector informed on general subjects; and finally (23) supervise the legal appropriation of pagoda funds.¹

The Amin was also the Head of Police and the Magistrate over his division. When the British entered the country, they had eliminated the extortionate Poligars and Kavalgars and introduced Darogas under the control of the Zillah Judge (1802). As already explained in chapter

¹ Ricketts, Report of the Commissioner for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: 1858), part I, pp. 345-346.

one, the attempt to separate executive from revenue power and to impose an artificial system of legal procedures was a ruinous failure. The reforms of 1816, which were a central pillar of the Munro system, united thanadari and tahsildari powers as much as possible. Thereafter, the system was only slightly modified to meet local circumstances.¹

A key administrative problem revolved around the efficiency and reliability of the Amin and the degree of support which he received from the Huzur. Munro constantly sought to defend this important officer from arbitrary treatment at the hands of the Collector. He used the case of a suspended Head Sheristadar in Tinnevely to speak out generally against inquisitorial and harsh treatment of native officers.

Vigilance is one thing, habitual suspicion is another. Nothing so destroys confidence between [the Collector] and those who act under him...and obliges him to trust to designing strangers.²

In 1835, Collectors were again told that "situations of trust and responsibility should be an object of ambition to the most meritorious" of Indians and that Tahsildars had a right to expect support for their "arduous labours."³ There were some districts where no Tahsildar had held office for more than two years. The Government argued:

¹ Essentials of the Munro system as applied to Amins in Guntur are found in BOR to Lewin, June 17, 1834: GDR (3976-A: 463-78). Note: Kavalis were villages of robbers and thieves which blackmailed the country for abstaining from plunder and for controlling crime.

² Munro's Minute of May 20, 1828, in Arbuthnot, Selections....from the Writings of Thomas Munro (Madras: 1886), pp. 583-86, para. 6.

³ Circular to Collector and Magistrate of Guntur, May 19, 1835: Guntur District Records (977: 63-64).

If a system of such changes is once established, it throws all in disorder. It should be our aim to substitute permanency for what is capricious and uncertain...Our interest is directly opposed to such a state of things...We should counteract the evils of fluctuations in our European agency.¹

The occasion of a new Collector coming to a district all too often caused general anxiety and incited factionalism among district officers.²

The fault, however, was not entirely the Collector's. Considering how often a new Collector came to Guntur and how little a newcomer could know about what was going on under the surface, there was little opportunity for determining the reliability of even Huzur officials, much less the efficiency of Amins. Considering how the amount of cultivation contracted or expanded each year, how rival claims to fields had to be resolved and each entry corrected annually, and how many minutes were available to the Amin for each field, the physical burden of supervision within a taluk demanded an exquisite degree of efficiency and gave a remarkable scope for chicanery.

Also, there was a gray area where direct supervision over the Amin was not altogether clearly defined. Magisterial power was subject to supervision through the judicial line. Departmental power in such matters as personnel selection, promotion, pensions, and discipline was exercised through the **revenue** line. Thus, while the Board of Revenue took no notice of day to day magisterial and police administration, an appeal by any district officer whatever his department had

¹ Circular to Collector-Magistrate of Guntur, May 19, 1835: GDR (3977: 63-64).

² ibid.

to be directed to the Board of Revenue. The practical results of this confused jurisdiction added greatly to the power of the Amin. Not until after the disclosures of the Madras Torture Commission in 1855 was a more refined system of police and magisterial supervision instituted.¹

Between 1834 and 1837, no more than two Amins a year were dismissed from the taluks in Guntur. Of five appeals made to the Board of Revenue by dismissed Amins, four were heard favorably and only one dismissal was sanctioned. This protection of Amins by the authorities in Madras seems to suggest that while European Collectors, flitting though the Huzur, could not gain the support necessary to enforce their authority, Amins maintained a fairly permanent grip on the countryside.²

2. The Kasba Establishment of the Amin

The taluk was organized in much the same way as the district. In miniature it contained headquarters and field departments. The Thana Kasba was the capital of the taluk. It was the town or village where the headquarters (kacheri) of the division was located. This

¹ BOR Proceedings, September 19, 1836 (para 12): MRP (MRO: p.12855). Report of Commissioners for Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture (Madras: 1855).

² The five Amins were Mantri Venkatachallam, Bodi Krishniah, Tota Krishnammah, P.Canakiah, and D. Lakshminarsu Rao. BOR to Collector, May 18; 25, 28, 1835: GDR (volume 3976-B: pp. 229, 241, 245-53, 255-63, 349-356); July 27, 1835: GDR (3976-B: 467-76). BOR Proceedings, Nos. 29 & 30 of July 21, 1836: MRP (MRO: pp. 9714-16); Nos. 28 & 29 of July 28, 1836: MRP (MRO: p. 10005 f.) or GDR (3978: 527-28).

kasba was thought of as a field station and its kacheri was rarely referred to as an institution.

Kasba establishments were much the same in their organization with only minor differences arising out of their peculiar circumstances. Guntur Thana had a Kotwal (Pown Police Chief) with a Gumashta to assist him. Stations having only police duties would naturally have smaller establishments; however, a regular Thana Kasba without land revenue responsibility still kept a fairly sizeable establishment since the other revenue and general service duties still had to be performed. (See Appendix IV for complete breakdown.)

3. The Zamindars Acting As Amildars

Having already shown how the zamindaris fell under government (amani) during the famine, we proceed to show how as a result of a novel Government policy, this amani management was entrusted to the Zamindars acting as Amildars or Revenue Collectors on behalf of the Government.

The idea was first put forward by Malcolm Lewin on September 28, 1834, when in discussing the affairs of Repalli and the soon coming of age of Jangana Rao, he suggested that it might be wiser for all the Zamindars to manage their own estates on behalf of the Government. Since all the Zamindaris were faring even worse under amani than they had under their owners, a fact not surprising in view of the famine, epidemics and a headless administration, the Collector pointed out that it would be years before conditions came back to normal. It would take longer for the revenue arrears to be liquidated, and still

longer for the estates to yield a profit. Surely the Zamindars, whose interests were closely linked with the welfare of their properties, would take greater pains to free themselves and their lands than the district officers whose livelihood depended upon a continuance of circular control.¹

Although the suggestion was favorably received, (Repalli had already been put into the hands of its proprietor), the first formal proposal for the adoption of this policy was made by the Board of Revenue on March 14, 1836. Since the Vasireddy Zamindari was considered to have fallen into its deplorable condition because of exceptional circumstances, it was decided that the person most interested in restoring these lands to normal should have control of the management.² The Governor, Lieutenant-General Frederick Adam, having recently toured these distressed areas, approved of this step shortly thereafter.³ An order to this effect was sent to the Collector in June and on August 12, 1836, Ramanadha Babu was restored to his possessions.⁴⁺ The Manur Rao Zamindaris of Sattanapalli and Chilkalurpad were also restored to their owners as Amildars before the year was out.⁵ Only

¹ M. Lewin to BOR, September 28, 1834: GDR (vol. 3990: pp. 287-95).

² BOR to A.S.Mathison, March 14, 1836: GDR (3978: 191-98).

³ Extract of Minute of Consultation (April 5), BOR to Mathison, April 7, 1836: Guntur District Records (3978: pp. 213-218).

⁴ BOR to A.F.Bruce, June 16, 1836: GDR (3978: 433); August 22, 1836: GDR (3978: 591-97, 601). Goldingham to C.R.Cotton (Appendix C), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: p.2800), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

⁺Note: Although Ramanadha Babu had been declared heir by the Sadr Adalat, the case was pending before the King-in-Council.

⁵ Goldingham's Report (Appendix C), ibid.

the Malraju possessions remained under amani control.¹

The Court of Directors, having already given tacit approval to this policy on May 16, 1837,² confirmed the decision a year later.

Their opinion was recorded as follows:

With regard to the question... as to the general expediency in cases of temporary attachment of permitting the Zemindar ... to manage the Estate as Ameen, we are disposed to think, with advertence to the frequent instances of ill success of Circar management, that it would be advisable to adopt the course which you have suggested.³

Having a knowledge of his own villages which it might take a stranger some time to acquire and having an interest to relieve his estate of its embarassments "with the least possible delay,"⁴ the Zamindar was bound to be able to exercise a more vigilant control than either a Collector or a stranger. Since each Zamindar would be "accountable directly to the Collector and subject to his orders,"⁵ a minimal risk was foreseen. Regarding the general applicability of this policy, the Court concluded by suggesting: "We think it would be wise to intimate to the Collectors generally that they are at liberty to suggest this course."⁶

¹ BOR to Mathison, December 17, 1836: GDR (3978: 847-59).

² Extract of Despatch (May 16, 1837), BOR to Goldingham, June 25, 1838: GDR (5369: 100-08).

³ Extract of COD Despatch (No. 5 of May 9, 1838), BOR to Goldingham, May 20, GDR (5370: pp. 135-37). The same may be found in Madras Despatches (IOL: vol. 90: p. 848), para. 80. Also see: paras 71-73, 79.

⁴ ibid.

⁵ ibid.

⁶ ibid., para. 80.

The implications of this policy on administrative organization and personnel and on the balance of power among various local factions cannot be ignored; for, while the organizational structure remained largely intact, the entry of the zamindars and their diwans directly into the administration was bound to be disturbing. Some government positions were also sure to become redundant while openings in the zamindari establishments were just as likely to occur.

B. SAMUTUS AND CHAUKIS: THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

District organization of judicial, magisterial, and police operations ended at the divisional or taluk level. Below the taluks but above the villages was an intermediate level which was strictly oriented for revenue operations. These subdivisions were of two varieties. The main line of territorial subdivision rested upon land revenue administration. The secondary line revolved around the levying of inland customs on commercial routes.

1. The Samatdar, or Revenue Inspector.

Circles of from 1 to 24 villages which constituted the territorial subdivisions of a taluk were called samutus (or mutthas).⁺ When these units were under amani control, each was under the executive charge of a Samatdar (or Samutudar) who was paid between 10 and 14 rupees a month and given the help of a Gumashta, a Paigasti

⁺ These samutus should not be confused with the ancient samutus which were much larger, being more equivalent to the taluk. The mutthas were the units which had been put together and sold to the Zamindars. These same units in the latter part of the 19th century came to be called firkas.

(Overseer), usually a Munshi, and two or three peons (These were paid Rs. 7,5,5, and 4 respectively).¹

With the exception of police authority, the duties of a Samatdar were almost the same as those of a Tahsildar though on a lower plain and within a smaller compass. He was furnished with circulars and forms to guide him in nearly every duty, whether land revenue, motarpha, maramat, intelligence, or general administration. His chawadi or small office building was usually located in the largest village (kasba) of his division or at the place where he lived; but much of his time was divided among the villages under his charge.²

When the growing season began in April and May, the Samatdar visited each of his villages. In counsel with village officers and leaders, he arranged terms for landholding and allotted land unoccupied due to deaths, departures, or relinquishment. Darkhasts or proposals were received from Ryots based on agreements (kaulnamas) of previous years. Before acting on these proposals, the Samatdar looked at the fields to ascertain that boundaries had not been moved, that each field was big enough for one plough only, and that all of the fields were properly divided, numbered, and marked with reference to soil quality. All this was done in the presence of village leaders. A reduced proposal required the sanction of the Amin and a check to see there was no "combination" to deceive the government. Outsiders

¹ H. Stokes to BOR (para 3), August 17, 1847: GDR (124 in vol. 5405: pp. 103-20). A complete description of the office as it functioned in Guntur is given.

² ibid.

(payakaris) could not be granted more favorable terms than village residents. Once a proposal was accepted, the Ryot signed a kararnama or contract, which was entered in a special book, and he received a kaulnama (or copy of his agreement).¹

The Samatdar sent fortnightly reports called "pandraradas" to the Thana Kasba. Based on returns from Karnams, these reports described agricultural progress in detail -- i.e. ploughing, sowing, crops, water supply, blight, insects, or anything else which might bear on harvests and revenues. In the company of village leaders, the Samatdar regularly inspected fields and described each field in detail by consecutive number in another special book. He was "strictly prohibited from making rough notes first and filling up the book afterwards."² Filled up on the spot and sent directly to the Amin, this book was supposed to include estimates of produce, evidence of fraud and pilfering, and steps taken to counter-act deception.³

During jamabandi, the Samatdar was to spare no pains in coming to early agreements on pullari or pasturage fees for each village. He was required to have the Ryots, Karnams, and other villagers on hand when the Huzur arrived. Then, as kauls or final agreements were handed out stipulating past and current obligations, he was to give a quick answer to any question and on any complaint or dispute. Karnams with their receipt books assisted him in answering the questions of

¹ Translation of a Telugu Huknama giving Samatdars their duties, Hudleston Stokes to BOR (paras 1-8), August 17, 1847: GDR (124: vol. 5405: 105-120).

² ibid., para 10.

³ Stokes Huknama to Samatdars, op. cit., (paras. 10-12).

the Amin and the Lord Huzur (Collector).¹

When the collection season arrived, the Samatdar was required to keep a sharp but aloof eye on the cutting, thrashing, and measuring of the kails (kayalu) or "heaps". With his kistubandi or tax-roll, which specified the dates and amounts of monthly instalments in each village, he was to see that village officers were not premature in their collections, that they made no extra collections, and so on. His khalas book (an abstract of demands, current and arrears, including motarpha) for each village was kept up to date. One page showed the amount for each date and the other balances still remaining from earlier dates. If any discrepancies appeared from what were supposed to be frequent comparisons, the explanations of the Karnams on why the receipt books of ryots did not tally with those of the village were to be forwarded to the Amin in another special book.²

The Samatdar was required to record daily where and how he used his time. He was to discover from local leaders all that was going on. He was to keep up with facts about deaths, departures, occupational changes (liable for motarpha), new arrivals, and so on. These facts were to be checked for accuracy. A regular account of sheep, goats, cattle and other livestock was to be kept. An eye was to be kept on

¹ ibid., (paras 13-15).

² ibid., (paras 16-20)

the weather, water supply, tanks and canals, bridges and roads, and the effects of gales and heavy rain. The number of tank diggers and maramat coolies, of bandis (carts), bullocks, palankin bearers, and portage coolies for each village was to be registered. Proclamations or notices "by beat of tom-tom" were his responsibility. All state buildings, grounds, traveler's bungalows or village choultries (rest houses), and topus (groves) were under his care.¹

If the responsibilities of a Samatdar were heavy, the circumstances under which he operated were more favorable. He was almost invariably a local Niyogi Brahman who was deeply involved and closely connected with the affairs of his subdivision, restrictions against landed or family interests notwithstanding. He was rarely promoted in Guntur District. In proportion to the number of his community at the Samutu level or below, few reached the Huzur. Also, supervision over him was very light. Hudleston Stokes wrote,

It is feared that [the position] also affords great temptation to become versed in the intrigues and corruptions of the Karnams while there is neither the same opportunity for Collectors personally to observe the character and conduct of individuals nor to teach them sound principles of action as there is in the case of the Hoozoor servants.²

What was true in 1847 was undoubtedly much more true in 1837.

2. The Chaukidar

At least forty-six chaukis (inland customs stations) and two sea

¹ Stokes Huknama to Samatdars, op. cit. (paras 20-29).

² Stokes to BOR (para 4), ibid.

customs stations blocked the flow of traffic through Guntur District. For 10 to 12 rupees a month, a Chaukidar at each station supervised a Gumashta, a Paigasti, and four or five peons in making sure that every bandi (cart) and every kavadi (pole coolie) caravan was stopped, searched, registered and made to pay. A community around each station lived by trading in food, fodder, and travel accommodations. Each one of these stations was a barrier to commerce and each Chaukidar contributed to a slowing down and eventual paralysis of the economy.

After a period of investigation, a preliminary step was taken in 1837 toward the breaking of these barriers. The number of dutiable commodities was cut down to thirty-six items and the number of chaukis within the district was reduced to twenty-six.¹ As might be expected, protests came from those communities which thrived from inland customs.² Nevertheless, gradual progress continued. The Government was faced with the dilemma of having to initiate reforms without tampering or antagonizing the society. It was not until 1844 that Chaukidars, with all that they represented, were completely eliminated within the Presidency.³

C. VILLAGES: THE BOTTOM LEVEL

Little need be said about this level which has not already been

¹ BOR to Goldingham, July 20, 1837: GDR (5368: 191-204); September 18, 1837: GDR (5368: 240-44); and August 13, 1838: GDR (5369: 151-53).

² Arzis of Trader Karnams, Banians, etc., Collector to BOR, July 15, 1837: GDR (5393: 95-115, 159-61); October 21, 1837: GDR (79: 5393: pp. 183-97).

³ BOR Secretary to Stokes, March 28, 1844: GDR (5375: 91-93). Act IV of 1844 effective from April 1st. Note: J. Norton estimated that there was one chauki for every eight miles of road in Madras Presidency prior to 1844.

dealt with in chapter one. The really significant feature about this level was the durability of its institutions and the tenaciousness of its leading groups. Following ancient customs, elders and leaders of each village gathered under a wide-spreading tree where, without any concern for time, they talked¹ and deliberated for days before deciding what was necessary to strengthen or perpetuate their influence. It was only natural that they should be the rich and the twice-born though, if they were discerning, they knew enough to realize that the poor and lowly could not supply goods and service without obtaining minimal satisfactions for their physical and emotional needs. These leaders were the strong few, the village elite, the fountainhead of local influence. In combination with the Samatdar, who was nothing more than a Pedda Ryot over Ryots, a Pedda Karnam over Karnams, and a Grand Headman over Headmen, these leaders were much more formidable than they appeared.

One must not be overly swayed by the polemics of this period which tried to show that one system or another had destroyed the whole fabric of the village society overnight. There was a tendency for Munro supporters to attack the deadly evil of the 1802 regulations by arguing that the whole fabric of village society and organization, with its weight of centuries was destroyed by appointing a single Headman and making him responsible to a Police Daroga. Opponents of the Munro system, on the other hand, argued that in treating with each individual ryot, a fatal blow was struck at the tradition of joint-responsibility which before had checked oppression of the weak.¹

¹ Dykes, J.W.B., Salem, an Indian Collectorate (London: 1853), p.28-29.
Note: Both chapter one and chapter four seek to show, in fact, how little the villages had been disturbed by what went on above them.

Government policies seem to have followed the single outstanding agreement which emerged from these opposing arguments...i.e. that village society and organization should not be disturbed. Two pronouncements which filtered down to the Collectorate in 1837 serve as examples of this attitude.

First, the Court of Directors went out of its way, digressing from comments on an extra revenue report, to warmly approve a Madras Resolution (July 21, 1835) on the "impropriety of allowing men of no property to engage as Renters."¹ Such a resolution was hardly a helping hand to a marginal cultivator aspiring to break the chains of poverty and serfdom and to enter the rarified atmosphere of financial independence.

Second, the Government circulated an order giving village panchayats power to adjudicate in cases between village ryots and saukars (moneylenders).² There was a constant tendency for poorer ryots to fall into the clutches of wealthier ryots and saukars. Village leaders tended to use district courts and court procedures (together with district officers) to weld chains of perpetual thralldom upon the poor or to fight each other whenever there was a falling out among themselves. District officers tended to meddle and to interfere in village troubles to their own advantage. The poor invariably

¹ Extract of COD Despatch No. 14 of August 31, 1836 (para 13), with Minutes of Consultation (April 25, 1837) and Board Proceedings (May 10, 1837) or the same: GDR (5368: pp. 139-41). Madras Despatches (IOL: 87: 1282-84), Draft No. 403. This item in Board's Collections has been destroyed; but the whole problem was aired by Lord Elphinstone in his minute of November 3, 1838: EC, Governor's Minute Book, Vol. 4 (Box I-E).

² BOR to Goldingham, July 20, 1837: GDR (5368: 205-207).

needed money for seed or for some other stark necessity. The rich supplied these needs and then turned to the Government for takavi (advances), thus benefiting doubly.¹ The problem of what to do about village saukars and, indeed, about the whole problem of helping the poor was summarized by Goldingham when he wrote that "a substitute [for saukars] embracing some accommodation to society without its evils is wanting."² Nevertheless, a measure which increased the jurisdiction of a village panchayat also reinforced the position of the village leaders who invariably dominated its proceedings.

As far as the administration of land revenue was concerned, village leaders were equally strong. Karnams were aware that their accounts could not be thoroughly tested, that sufficient agency for such testing did not exist, and that apart from the ryots there was no way to prove or disprove the degree of latitude which they took.

The real truth [was] that the annual settlement [was] the settlement of the Monegar and Kurnum. The Ajmaish, or testing of the Kurnam's work, [was] practically a farce.³

Neither the Collector, nor the Assistant Collector, nor the Tahsildar, nor the Samatdar could possibly attend to all or even a considerable portion of the cultivators who, according to the most extreme interpretation of ryotwari theory, were entitled to an annual adjustment and

¹ Extract COD General Despatch No. 15 of September 19, 1838 (para 42): GDR (5370: 35-39), Consultation (December 18, 1838) and Proceedings (February 11, 1839).

² Goldingham's Report to C.R. Cotton (para 121), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2572), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

³ Ricketts, ., Report of the Commissioner for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: 1858), vol. I, pp. 322, 348.

agreement for each plot of ground which they took up (even supposing that fixed field assessments existed). An occasional punishment of a Karnam or dismissal of a Samatdar was not enough to shake the slow moving and conservative village society from its traditional ways.

CONCLUSION: ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN 1837

No proper understanding of the Zillah Circar of Guntur as it existed in 1837 is possible without appreciating the economic circumstances upon which the superstructure of government was built. While it is true that there was social stratification in the villages, commercial paralysis on the roads, and industrial decline in the towns, of deeper significance is the fact that Guntur was in a period of transition between the traditional and the modern, suffering the burdens of both and fully enjoying the benefits of neither. The Chaukidars with the economic communities which surrounded them were, as we have seen, a carry-over from the old and anachronism to the new; they were only the latest of a series of occupational groups to suffer dislocation during this transition.

Prior to the British, roughly 10,000 soldiers had been stationed in Guntur and another 10,000 had been maintained by the Zamindars. Military supplies had been requisitioned locally. In the face of uncertainties, officers and enlisted men had spent their money freely, patronizing the goods and services of local artisans, tradesmen, shopkeepers, and merchants. The Zamindars had kept up a steady demand for such luxury items as jewelry from Ceylon and Burma, shawls

from Kashmir, horses and camels from Kabul, elephants from Mysore, gold thread and silk from Benares, velvets and brocades from Gujerat, and such things as watches and arms from Europe. Local looms had produced large quantities of chintz, calico, and muslin to export. Transport business had been profitable, partly because it was risky and uncertain. Armenians, Sikhs, Komartis and other bankers had reaped richly from loans which they had advanced to finance the schemes and adventures of the Zamindars and of the Muslim Nawabs.¹

By 1837, much of this was changed. A fairly small number of sepoys lived relatively quiet, comfortable, and well-ordered lives in the garrison cantonement. Secure in their salaries and pensions, they tended to save more than half of their monthly pay (of 7 rupees). Such Muslims, Rajus, Telegas, Kammas, and Reddis as had been unable to stay in the army or the police -- and there were many -- were now forced to earn their living in commerce and agriculture. Zamindari ruin had brought financial blight on the wealthy speculators and bankers, insomuch that a much larger and less wealthy trading community competed for slimmer rewards.² The high food prices of troubled times had fallen during the long period of peace and were now only occasionally disturbed by a famine or a flood.³ Though cloth was still exported in

¹ Memorandum by S.V.K. Rao on the social and economic condition of Guntur Zillah (Appendix A, Goldingham's Report to Cotton, December 13, 1839): MRP (280: vol. 7: p. 2590 ff.), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² ibid. (pp. 2612-15). Also see Appendices D and F.

³ Goldingham's Report (paras 57-63): ibid. (280: 7: 2503-09).

large amounts to Madras, Bombay, Nagpur, and other parts of India, scarcely any now left Masulipatam for foreign markets.¹⁺ European manufactures had not yet invaded the district, but their introduction elsewhere was crippling local industry.² Despite a growing taste for outside products and a declining demand for cloth from such centers as Rajapet, Vetapalem, and Mangalagiri, exports still greatly exceeded imports. This favorable balance of trade brought gold and silver into the district.³ Traditional banking facilities, such as the drawing of hundis (bills of exchange) on local Saukars was disappearing due to the lack of sound credit, while services afforded by the Accountant-General's Bills were only beginning to be utilized generally (There were as yet no other banking facilities in Guntur).⁴

Largely because Guntur was in a period of transition, an assessment of prosperity is rather difficult; however, some idea can be obtained from a comparison of levels of consumption. Rice which had not been enjoyed "even by the higher servants of the Zamindars" was now eaten by many, notably village leaders, skilled workers, and professional people, with 'even the lowest orders' having rice for festive occasions.⁵⁺ Tiled houses, which had been very rare formerly,

¹ ibid. (paras 41-49). ⁺Note: In Mackenzie's Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 119, we find that cloth export to the Persian Gulf alone had fallen from 50 to less than half a lakh of rupees per year in value.

² Goldingham's Report (para 49), ibid. (280: 7: 2495).

³ Goldingham's Report to C.R. Cotton (para 50 ff.), op.cit (280: 7:2495)

⁴ ibid. (paras 119-123).

⁵ ibid. (102). ⁺Note: Oakes and Whish encouraged rice cultivation. See Appendices.

were becoming quite common.¹ Four and five times as much of such luxuries as betel nut, cummin seed, tamarind, dry coconut, sugar, betel leaf, tobacco and opium were being consumed.² Some poor ryots were beginning to have their own stock and to wear better clothes.³

Thus, with the exception of the zamindars and rich bankers, the population as a whole seems to have been more prosperous than it had been at the turn of the century; however, this picture needs to be qualified by a closer look at the various levels of society.

Since catastrophes (see below) had prevented population increase and since the poor people had borne the brunt of the famine, a labor shortage tended to ameliorate chronic poverty to some degree. Yet, this made it no easier for a poor ryot to improve his lot. He was "kept down from attaining that position of independence which is desirable" by the elite of the village.⁴ As has been pointed out, Government grants to marginal cultivators (takavi) tended to evaporate before reaching their intended recipients and loans from the village saukar who was usually "a Ryot from their own village" held the poor in an economic bondage close to slavery.⁵ In return for subsistence and seed and implements, all production would go to the saukar (or village

¹ ibid. (103)

² ibid. (paras 104-105).

³ ibid. (para 104).

⁴ Goldingham, op. cit. (para 51).

⁵ ibid. (para 108). A.S.Raju, Economic Conditions in the Madras Presidency: 1800-1850 (Madras: 1941), pp. 142-145.

leader) on his own terms, starvation would be averted, and the special needs (weddings etc.) of the bondsman would often be cared for.¹ Even if a would-be small farmer escaped the net of the village leaders, plots of zamindari land were unsaleable due to debt, seri (small holdings) lands along the river were too few and too expensive, and inams were as tenaciously held and so eagerly sought after that his chances were nearly impossible.² Finally, reasonable credit was blocked by hazards and expenses, endless red-tape, inevitable litigation, and all sorts of laws, forms, stamp-papers, and needless delays.³

There were roughly four methods of payment for common labor which reflected, to some degree, the lowest occupational levels. Some workers received 3 to 5 tumus (5%) out of each khandi (500 lb.) of grain which they grew, plus fees on the thrashing floor. Some persons received daily portions of boiled or raw chollam (a local grain) and either 8 rupees a year or 4 rupees, two loin cloths, an upper cloth, a turban, and a pair of sandals each year. Some worked by the day, receiving what their skill and the price of food would allow. Weeding and clearing paid less than plowing, sowing and reaping. A man was worth between 1.2 and 2 and a woman between 1 and 1.5 manchas of raw grain for working from dawn to dusk. Finally, non-agricultural builders-of-mud walls, cutters-of-wood, and drawers-of-water earned

¹ ibid.

² ibid. (para 100).

³ ibid. (para 106).

anywhere from 1.5 to 2.5 manchas of raw chollam per day. A mancha was one-eighth of a tumu or roughly 3 pounds.¹

What is generally known as the Guntur Famine (of 1833) and the epidemics which followed cast a shadow over the land and its people which did not lift for many years. How many people actually died and how many fled is debatable; however, between 1832 and 1835, the population decreased by nearly one half and the number of cattle, by two thirds.² Colonel Walter Campbell, writing from Masulipatam in 1833, gave a stark description of what he witnessed:

...the famine extends over a great part of the Madras Presidency. Europeans..have subscribed liberally to feed as many of the poor wretches as possible and by this means ten thousand are daily fed in Masulipatam alone. But ten times that number are still famishing and hundreds die daily, literally of starvation...and although a strong body of police are constantly employed in collecting the dead...numbers of bodies are left to be devoured by dogs and vultures.³

Along with the drought, scorching winds, and terrible heat came plague and cholera. Alexander Bruce wrote that "a man in perfect health was hardly to be found anywhere" in the district.⁴

This "unparalleled distress" was viewed with much concern in Madras.⁵

¹ Goldingham (paras 94-99), op.cit. pp. 2544-49. Note: Above these laborers were the skilled occupational castes --workers in clay, leather, wood, stone, metals, precious metals, and cloths -- and above these came the personal, professional, military and police, and government services. No appreciable change in wages for common labor had occurred in forty years.

² BOR to Collector, June 11, 1835 (para 4): GDR (3976-B: pp.303-323).

³ Col.Walter Cmapbell, My Indian Journal (Edinburgh: 1864), p.424. Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p. 113.

⁴ Bruce to BOR (para 2), August 5, 1836: GDR (5394: 226-242), population (para 9).

⁵ Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1242 (para 3), October 2, 1833; BOR Proceedings June 11, 1835 (para 2); Consultations, July 24, 1835: GDR (3989 & 3976-B: 217, 459).

Large sums of money were granted in remissions and in outright relief. Grain was imported. Medical help was increased. If the district were ever to recover, the migrations of people out of the district would have to be checked and people encouraged to remain. Work on irrigation canals, roads, bridges, and other maramat (public works) projects was provided for large numbers of people. The records of these years in which a slow and painful recovery was begun are filled with Relief Reports and Relief Sanctions.¹

Underlying the immediate problem of recovery lay the deeper problems of the economic paralysis which seemed to be slowing the wheels of enterprise and the still deeper transition which was bringing Guntur into the modern world. In view of the prevailing philosophies of that day, the dilemma of the Government lay in trying to break this paralysis without tampering with the local society. Goldingham, in feeling that "Government should interfere as little as possible in the internal transactions of society" and in wishing that he could break the fetters which bound the economy, seems to have been an embodiment of this dilemma.²

¹ See GDR (3974: 2-23), GDR (3976: 123-26, 183), and GDR (3978: 749-56).

² Goldingham Report (para 108), loc.cit.

CHAPTER THREE

GOLDINGHAM AND FACTIONAL STRUGGLES WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION 1837-1842

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CHAPTER THREE

GOLDINGHAM AND FACTIONAL STRUGGLES WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION

1837-1842

Once before when the continuity of British rule was broken by a rapid succession of Collectors, an indigenous system of power had grown up and in turn given rise to internecine factionalism within the Brahman elite of Guntur. Now again there had been no steady hand on the administration since 1831. Many who had been involved in the earlier conflict were still able to carry on the struggle.¹ Old animosities smoldered waiting only for a fresh breeze -- the coming of another new Collector or the demise of the old Sheristadar -- to stir them once more.

John Goldingham took charge on July 29, 1837. The son of the Presidency Astronomer, he was born at Fort Saint George (1801), brought up in South India, and recommended to the Civil Service from Madras (1818).² He was an energetic and practical person, interested in agriculture, engineering and economics and zealous for reform and for evangelical missions.³ Most of his early service had been in

¹ Elliot Report (para 60), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7634), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Gordon Mackenzie, Kistna District Manual (Madras: 1883), p. 358.

² Writer's Petitions (IOL: volume 31: number 4).

³ John Noble, Robert Noble, Missionary to the Telugu People (London: 1867), p. 125. Drach and Kuder, The Telugu Mission (Philadelphia: 1914), pp. 40-50. F.Gledstone, The C.M.S.Telugu Mission (Mysore: 1941), p. 1: "More than any other man, the founder of our missions in that area was Mr. John Goldingham, of an old established family in Madras."

Madras; but since his return from furlough in 1835, he had moved in and out of four districts before being assigned to Guntur.¹

Following in the train of the new Acting Collector was Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao. He was a Desastha from a leading family. His father, Ananta Rao, had been Diwan to the Great Vasireddy, Venkatadri Naidu. One uncle, Narsinga Rao, had been Diwan to the Nawab of Masulipatam. Another uncle, Venkata Rao, had been Huzur Sheristadar in both Guntur and Masulipatam. And a third uncle, Kasava Rao, had been involved in the earlier factional strife. Krishna Rao had been Vakil (Attorney) to the Nawab of Masulipatam since 1828 and had won the favor of George Norton, the Advocate-General. An attempt to enter district service in 1831 was stopped by a severe and prolonged fever. After recovering, he had hesitated. To "a man of independent fortune", the lower grades held "no inducement" and exposed him "to the intrigues and corruption which enter so largely into the management of a district."² Goldingham had told him in Masulipatam that one had to start at a lower position and then trust to seniority and merit for promotion. Krishna Rao followed Goldingham to Guntur and accepted an appointment as Amin of Vunglapuram Thana.

The stage was thus set for a renewal of conflict. Sita Ram was dying. Shashagiri Rao was already in the Huzur Kacheri. Krishna Rao was nearby, waiting for any opportunity. Soon after Goldingham's

¹ C.C.Princep, Record of Services of Madras Civilians (London: 1885), p.61.

² John Goldingham to BOR (para 2), November 24, 1837: GDR (5393: 221-227). An extract from a letter of G.Norton is enclosed.

arrival, factional controversy flared up and fanned out onto a broad front. First one side and then the other gained ground during the following years.

I. THE FIRST ROUND OF CONFLICT: 1837-1839.

The new Collector faced circumstances which were anything but heartening. Edward Glass, the Acting Assistant Judge and Joint Criminal Judge, was the senior officer in Guntur. Two younger officers, a Joint Criminal Judge (A.S.Mathison) and an Acting Head Assistant Collector and Magistrate (G.A.Harris), were left in sole charge of the district after July 2, 1837. But these officers were also new to the district, Harris having come only a few months before. The last Acting Collector had left the district the previous November.¹

As a result of this temporary vacancy of authority early in 1837, the Jamabandi (Work of Settlement) for 1836-37 which should have been finished by the end of May had not yet even begun. Goldingham's first task, therefore, was to settle the revenue for the past year and to begin the settlement work for the coming year. In the villages, he found that drought, grubs, and locusts had already destroyed the early crop.²

"It was apparent to me on taking charge of the district," wrote

¹ Gordon Mackenzie, Kistna District Manual (Madras: 1883), p. 358. C.C. Princip, Record of Service of Madras Civilians (London: 1885), p.60, 71, 97.

² Goldingham Jamanbandi Report, Fasli 1247 to BOR, September 6, 1838: GDR (5394: p.183).

Goldingham, "that the district had suffered greatly because of irregularities which had been going forward for some time past. I found the district depressed and the ryots dispirited. It became my duty to restore efficient management."¹ The remedy for this situation could lie only in "removing those who had brought about this state of things, who by their commanding influence in the Hoozoor were organizing instead of checking corruption."²

As more and more maladministration came to light, Goldingham became convinced that "there [had] been a mutual understanding between Huzoor and Gibut [Ghaibatu:- field] to the injury of the District."³ Ryots in several large Malraju villages refused to cultivate because district officers had not fulfilled the terms of an agreement by which outstanding revenue balances, which had not been paid by the village, were to be cancelled. False estimates for bridges and for salt platforms had been made. Merchants had been required to pay one and two rupees respectively for each hundred of white and colored cloths which they exported, in addition to the regular five percent transit duty. Receivers of stolen property had been operating under the protection, if not the cooperation, of the police. Haddanuri Bhavanarsu Rao, the Amin whom Krishna Rao replaced at Vunglapuram, had been dismissed for

¹ Goldingham to BOR (para 2), January 5, 1839: GDR (5397: 1-24).

² ibid. (para 14).

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 4), November 24, 1837: GDR (5393: 222-227).

this reason.¹ The Manager of the Magistrate Department (Akkaraju Nityanandam), the Guntur Kotwal (Town Police Chief), and a Dafadar, were removed because they had maltreated Tadiconda Nagiah and caused his death.²

A. STRIFE OVER THE SELECTION OF A SHERISTADAR

It seems clear that the new Collector received little support from members of the entrenched bureaucracy; but it seems just as apparent that without the help of an intelligent subordinate, Goldingham could not have learned so much in such a short time. Sita Ram, the Huzur Sheristadar, who was nearing death, was preoccupied with private matters. The Naib Sheristadar, who was in charge of the Salt, Sayar, and Maramat Departments, would hardly have been enthusiastic about the recent disclosures. The Head Assistant Sheristadar, whose main experience was magisterial and whose present work was in land revenue, had no reason to be happy over the implications of these disclosures. Only Krishna Rao and his friends stood to gain, and he probably did his best to keep the Collector informed.

1. The Nomination of Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao

In October, shortly after Sita Ram's death, Krishna Rao was nominated to fill the vacancy.³ A fortnight later, the Board of

¹ BOR to Goldingham (para 2), August 3, 1837: GDR (5368: 213-215); and BOR to Goldingham (para 2), June 14, 1838: GDR (5369: 112-115).

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 2-4), October 11, 1837: GDR (5393: 117-83). Goldingham to Chief Secretary (paras 1-4), July 19, 1838: GDR (5394: 11-16).

³ Goldingham to BOR (paras 2-3), October 27, 1837: GDR (No.88: 5393: 219-21).

Revenue asked for information about his experience and qualifications and requested the service records of alternative candidates.¹ The desired information was sent to the Board on November 24th. The Collector's defense of Krishna Rao's nomination was based on: (1) the unfitness of the other candidates; (2) the deplorable condition of the district; and (3) the qualifications of Krishna Rao.²

Not one of six alternatives was acceptable to Goldingham. Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, the Naib Sheristadar, was involved in corruption. Nyapati Shashagiri Rao, the Head Assistant Sheristadar who had spent most of his service in magisterial work, was not qualified; nor was his integrity unimpeachable. Tyar Khan, the Amin of Vinukonda, was a man of high character; but since he was a very wealthy Saukar with extensive dealings throughout this district, his private interests clashed with the governmental duties of a Sheristadar. For this reason, Tyar Khan's eligibility to become Huzur Shroff (Head Cash-keeper) had been questioned on an earlier occasion. The impartiality of the present Huzur Shroff, Kanchanapalli Krishna Rao, was prejudiced on the same grounds. Neither of the Palnad Amins were desirable. Mandapanti Subha Rao had been a Maddatgar only five years before and Veladandi Dasapah had been tried by the Board under Regulation IX of 1822 for malversation.³

¹ BOR to Goldingham, November 9, 1837: GDR (5368: 281).

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 1-6), November 24, 1837: GDR (5393: 222-227).

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 4), November 24, 1837: GDR (5393: 222-227).

The cornerstone of Goldingham's thinking was his conviction: first, "that both mismanagement and corruption entered largely into the causes which had brought the District into its present state;"¹ and second, that administrative efficiency and reform could only be achieved by selecting a person whose "independent fortune, character, and respectability appeared to be a guarantee that he would be above all intrigue and corruption."² Since the ruling élite in the local bureaucracy dominated the administration and were responsible for the condition of the district, it was necessary to look elsewhere for reliable officers. After "a most painful effort to procure a fit person whose ability and integrity would give full confidence for the welfare of the district," a choice had been made.³ Krishna Rao had already done much in restoring the confidence and efficiency of the administration.

In their proceedings of December 16th, the Board of Revenue disapproved of the selection of Krishna Rao. Neither a few months as Amin in a Vasireddy taluk nor close ties with the families of the Vasireddy Zamindar and the Masulipatam Nawab were reassuring qualifications for a Sheristadar of Guntur. The selection of a Tahsildar (Amin) would have been preferable; but among the various alternatives, Nyapati Shashagiri Rao was considered the best choice. The Collector

¹ ibid.

² ibid. (para 5).

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 17), January 5, 1839: GDR (No.1 in 5397: 1-24).

was urged to nominate this individual.¹

Meanwhile, the Malraju villages had been settled and the overdue jamabandi (settlement) was progressing slowly into the Mangalagiri, Guntur, and Tenali taluks (divisions). Neither the Zamindars, their Diwans, nor the Amins⁺ were disposed to produce accounts, particularly those pertaining to the details of each village. Instead of giving information on the true resources of each village and the real results of their management, these field officers did their best to make all accounts agree with what meagre abstracts they were willing to submit.² No doubt Krishna Rao worked hard to produce a creditable report; however, he worked even harder, in cooperating with Goldingham, to uproot members of the opposing faction who were in key positions and to substitute his own supporters.

2. The Transfer of Nakkalapalli Subha Rao

Both Tenali Thana and Bapatla Thana were within the Vasireddy Zamindari. When the zamindari had fallen under amani control in 1822, the district officers entering these taluks had thoroughly aroused the enmity of the many zamindari servants who had been removed from their positions and had become unemployed. Apparently their grievances had been nursed for a long time; for when Goldingham entered these

¹ BOR to Goldingham (paras 2-3), December 16, 1837: GDR (5368: 296-98).

² Goldingham (Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1246) to BOR (paras 60, 9, 21, 36-38), February 3, 1838: GDR (No. 1 in 5394: pp. 32-63). Goldingham gave Krishna Rao most of the credit for this report.

⁺ Note: Out of 13 regular Amins, 9 were supported by the Zamindars. See: A.F. Bruce to BOR (para 2), June 13, 1836: GDR (5392: 214-221).

divisions during the jamabandi, a flood of accusation rose up against the district officers who until the year before had been in authority. Komartis (Telugu Vaishyas) told of how they had been forced to pay extortionate sums of money in order to carry on their business. Village Karnams, Ryots, and leaders told of how they had been forced to pay in order to escape extortionate revenue demands. One Head Ryot, Petrigunta Subbiah, produced letters from the Naib Sheristadar, Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, and from Nyapati Shashagiri Rao demanding 310 rupees. The former Amin, Muhamad Khan, had sent M.K.Veerapah to deliver the letters and to collect the money.¹⁺

Confronted with a large amount of evidence, the Collector was faced with alternative lines of reasoning. If the charges against Nakkalapalli Subha Rao were false, then most of the Karnams and Ryots presenting the accusations were acting in concert with zamindari servants to bring ruin upon the Naib Sheristadar and his subordinates. If the charges were true, then the whole hierarchy of district officers in the taluk had been acting under special instructions from officers in the Huzur Kacheri. Either Tota Krishnamah,⁺⁺ Ramanadha Babu's Diwan, or Nakkalapalli Subha Rao -- possibly even both -- were guilty of "defrauding the public."² Both sides had martialled their evidence

¹ BOR to Goldingham (1-14), December 10, 1838: GDR (5369: 213-21).

⁺ Note: The line between extortion and bribery was so thin that each case might have originated as a bribe which was not honored.

⁺⁺ Note: Tota Krishnamah was an old and notorious officer who had held the trust of Thomas Oakes 20 years earlier and whom Ramanadha Babu had specially requested to carry on his administration.

² Goldingham to BOR (para 2), January 5, 1839: GDR (No.1 in 5397: pp.1-24).

with skill so that, on the face of it, there was little to choose between one side or the other.

In his decision, Goldingham was consistent. After hearing the witnesses and examining the evidence, he was convinced that scarcely a village in these taluks was free from systematic exactions at the expense of both the Government and the people.¹ He was determined to break the power of the ruling group in the Huzur. In accomplishing this purpose, he followed two practical policies. First, he proceeded "against as few as is consistent with efficient administration;" and second, he avoided the hazards and delays of judicial proceedings, preferring to neutralize rather than to eradicate a dangerous influence.²

Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, a tried member of the old elite, was obviously an obstacle in the path of Krishna Rao and his party and a barrier to the administrative reforms which Goldingham had in mind. The Collector wrote: "I had no desire to act against him under Regulation IX of 1822. My punishment was confined to the minor act of dismissal."³ Subha Rao was fined and removed from his position into the outer darkness of the ghaibatu where he was put in charge of a thana. Thus, without the risk of slow proceedings which would have accompanied a more serious action, Goldingham hoped to take a shortcut toward gaining control of the administration. Krishna Rao also gained at the

¹ ibid. (2-4).

² ibid. (para 13).

³ ibid. (para 14).

expense of the entrenched leaders of the Kacheri.¹

3. The Appointment of Nyapati Shashagiri Rao

During the months which followed there was no official Huzur Sheristadar. The Board of Revenue persistently turned down the Acting Collector's request that Krishna Rao might be his Sheristadar. In February, the late Jamabandi Report (fasli 1246) was finally sent to Madras; and still, the merits of Krishna Rao were not recognized. Finally, on April 2, 1838, Krishna Rao was appointed as Naib Sheristadar, stepping into the position which had been vacated by Nakkalapalli Subha Rao the previous November; moreover, in the absence of a Huzur Sheristadar, Krishna Rao was directed to carry on the duties of that office until final arrangements could be made. Meanwhile, Nyapati Shashagiri Rao, the Head Assistant, was ordered to serve as Acting Naib.²

The old leaders now began to meet this threat to their power. Nakkalapalli Subha Rao had wasted no time in sending a petition to the Board appealing against his dismissal from the Huzur. The Board sent for the proceedings on the case. These were dispatched from Guntur on May 19, 1838. On July 5th, strong objections were returned from Madras, condemning the arrangements which had been made in the Huzur Kacheri, and refusing to sanction the appointment of Krishna Rao.

Objections and protests continued to fly between Guntur and

¹ BOR to Goldingham (1-13), December 10, 1838: GDR (5369: 213-221).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 2), May 22, 1838: GDR (No.265394: 138-141).

Madras until matters came to a head. On September 6, in concluding his Jamabandi Report for fasli 1247 (1837-38), Goldingham spoke "in the highest terms of approbation" of Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao who had served as Head Sheristadar since the previous October. Giving his protégé full credit for much of the work in the last two settlement reports, the Collector explained that he had been unable to give immediate effect to the Board's order of July 5th because he and Krishna Rao had been in the final stages of the jamabandi. He added:

It is but fair to him as well as myself to bring his merits before the Board in this place as I would indulge the hope that the result of the year will place him in a favorable position before the Board and tend to show that I selected him after full consideration. I would add after much anxiety of mind... that I have no expectation of meeting with an individual who will take the same interest in promoting the real welfare of the District in its present condition, and forward my management.¹

Goldingham asked that the present arrangement, with Krishna Rao officiating as Head Sheristadar, might be allowed to continue. Finally, referring to the desperate needs of the district, he requested "the indulgence of the Board for a discretionary power in the selection of public servants."² The Collector was sure that if the Board would but send for Krishna Rao they would become convinced. Nevertheless, the Board's final orders would be "promptly obeyed."³

While it was not until the following March (March 14, 1838) that the Board of Revenue acted on this Jamabandi Report, they wasted little time in replying to the concluding paragraph. On September 27th the

¹ Goldingham to BOR (para 52 in the Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1327), September 6, 1838: Guntur District Records (5394: 182-206).

² ibid.

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 52), September 6, 1838: GDR (5394: 182-206).

Board became adamant. Krishna Rao was to be removed from the Huzur Sheristadarship without further delay. A month later (October 25), on learning that Krishna Rao's being on circuit had caused further delay, the exasperated Board sent off still another letter. In this they gave "their express desire for the nomination of a fit person to that office" and suggested that "Nyapaty Shashagherry Row should be appointed" if the Collector could not find such a person.¹ If there were any more delay, the Board itself would nominate Nyapati Shasagiri Rao. Goldingham did not delay any longer. On November 15th, the nomination of the "former Head Sheristadar in Rajahmundry to the situation of Head Sheristadar in Guntoor" was sanctioned "upon the removal of Kristna Row from that post."²

4. The Return of Nakkalapalli Subha Rao

As if the utter overruling of their Collector in Guntur on such an important selection were not enough, the Board of Revenue now added insult to injury by completely vindicating Nakkalapalli Subha Rao and ordering him to resume his position in the Kacheri as Naib Sheristadar. How strongly they supported and heeded the old elite of Guntur against the opinions of their own Collector was now apparent. Pronouncing the case against Nakkalapalli Subha Rao to be "unfounded and apparently connected with a conflict between Public Servants,"³ they blamed

¹ Goldingham to BOR (paras 16, 17), January 5, 1839: GDR (No.1:5397: 1-24).

² BOR to Goldingham (para 2), November 15, 1838: GDR (5369: 200-201).

³ BOR to Goldingham (para 12), December 10, 1838: GDR (5369: 213-221).

Goldingham for inconsistency in failing to move against the others who were equally implicated. After months of pressing for the nomination of Shashagiri Rao, now when at last their Collector had unwillingly bent before their will, they blamed him for nominating a person implicated in the accusations against Nakkalapalli Subha Rao. But in the very next phrase of the same sentence, the Board wrote:

... and the Board have reason to know that [Shashagiri Rao] has been highly esteemed for his conduct by various gentlemen under whom he has served in Guntoor and other Districts. Having a long service of years, these facts are irreconcilable with the findings of the Acting Collector and his conclusion that the truth of the charges was unquestionably established.¹

Thus that instinctive grasp of a local situation which a good Collector could have was ignored; and what personal judgment and discretion Goldingham possessed, together with the mass of evidence which he had gathered on the spot, was brushed aside in favor of the Desasthas of Guntur.

Goldingham reacted predictably. On January 5, 1839, he pointed out that the "position of great difficulty" in which he was placed by the Board's letter, the style of which "[was] deeply wounding to the feelings of a Public Officer holding a highly responsible situation" and "[cast] a reflexion which [operated] greatly to the disparaging of my character as a Public Officer of the Government and with the Home Authorities, if left unanswered."² He hoped that the Board would reconsider and admit that they had acted unjustly. He had not moved

¹ ibid. (para 13).

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 13, 16), January 5, 1839: GDR (No.1:5397: 1-24).

against others equally implicated out of caution and out of a wish to establish one solid case as an example to others and, thereby, to restore discipline, authority, and efficiency to the administration. He had recommended Shashagiri Rao as Huzur Sheristadar only because he was "pressed by the Board to do so."¹ Surely, when, after pressing him for so long to nominate Shashagiri Rao, no good word had been given in favor of this Desastha, it should have been clear to the Board that the Collector was apprehensive of this person's influence upon the administration.

Cut off from the support of his superiors and the cooperation of his subordinates alike, the Collector was indeed in a difficult position. Despite all his efforts to uproot the old guard, whom we may now call the Nyapati party or faction, they remained in control of the administration; moreover, the insurgent group, or Sabnavis party, was itself in danger of being isolated and uprooted. Thus, the interests of the Sabnavis party were linked with the purposes of the Collector while the interests of the Nyapati party were linked with the Board of Revenue.

Feeling it his duty to protest, both on behalf of himself and on behalf of the district, Goldingham directed a special appeal to the Governor-in-Council against the acquittal of Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, against excessive interference by the Board, and in favor of his nomination of Krishna Rao. He tried to vindicate his actions by

¹ ibid. (para 17).

showing how much wastage had been cut down and how much extortion and oppression eliminated. He sought to defend a wider use of discretion and initiative in the hands of a Collector.

By strange coincidence, Lord Elphinstone received a petition from Nakkalapalli Subha Rao complaining of his removal to make room for Krishna Rao at the same time that he received Goldingham's appeal. After examining the papers connected with the case, His Lordship in Council merely noted that the Board's orders should have been carried out, entirely approved of those orders, and requested that Goldingham be required to submit to them.¹

There is no evidence that Goldingham tried to press the Government further. While some officers were forever harassing the Governor for favors and for every imagined slight, Goldingham seems to have written privately to Elphinstone only twice and then only because his family's health prompted him to ask for a transfer from Guntur to Chittoor.²⁺ As a matter of course, his appeal was reported in a General Letter to the Home authorities. Three years later -- after he had left Guntur -- he learned that his conduct in delaying to carry out pre-emptory orders, which were strictly within the judicial capacity of the Board of Revenue, was noticed "with much dissatisfaction" by the Court of

¹ Chief Secretary (H. Chamier) to BOR Secretary, transmitting an extract of a Minute of Consultation, dated June 18, 1839, on BOR Proceedings of January 24, 1839. BOR to Goldingham, June 27, 1839: GDR (5370: 154).

² Goldingham to Elphinstone, December 2, 1841, and June 23, 1842: Elphinstone Collection (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.87), Governor's Letters Received, Volume 8, Box 2-D. ⁺ Note: Two Goldingham infants were buried in Guntur.

Directors.¹ This censure, however, was tucked into the middle of a General Despatch to Madras. The fact that it brought no comment from the Board of Control strengthens the presumption that the matter was routine and without special significance to the Home authorities. The paragraph from the Home despatch was simply passed down to Guntur by the Government for the information of the Collector and disappeared into the district records.²

B. STRUGGLES OVER THE REMOVAL OF OTHER PERSONNEL

Meanwhile, struggles for power had been going on between the opposing factions both in the huzur offices and in the ghaibatu stations. As intense as was the conflict in the district headquarters, so also conspiracy and intrigue over the placement of personnel was correspondingly severe in the field. With what sound ^{and} ~~was~~ fury, with what compounding of pressures and motives, and with what bitterness each local battle and skirmish was fought may be appreciated by examining some particular cases. The resistance of members of the Vetsha family to the Collector and the restoration of Vungamulu Subha Rao with the help of the Collector illustrate differing aspects of a wider struggle for power and reflect vividly on the local society of that day.

1. The Case of Vetsha Dharmapuri, Amin of Rachur Thana.

A few days after taking charge of the district, it became

¹ COD Despatch to GOM (para 8), April 27, No.6 of 1842: Madras Despatches (97: pp.441-459).

² Minute of Consultation (para 5), No. 9 of August 9, 1842: MRP (280: 24: 4108). BOR Proceedings to Collector of Guntur Zillah, September 5, 1842: GDR (5373: 360-361).

necessary for Goldingham to appoint a new Amin to Rachur Thana. Knowing little of the qualifications of the available personnel, he referred the matter to the Sherista Department. Shortly afterward, Vetsha Dharmapuri took over the administration of that taluk.

Pressures had already been rising before Dharmapuri arrived at Mangalagiri, the kasba of his division. One of the Diwans of the long deceased Great Vasireddy, the one who had supported Jaganadha Babu in the struggle for succession still pending before the Privy Council, was Sabnavis Ananta Rao. Ananta Rao had also loaned enormous sums of money to Ramanadha Babu, particularly since Jaganadha's death. As collateral for these loans, a large quantity of valuable cloth goods had been given to the old Diwan. These goods had for many years been stored in a godown (warehouse) at Amaravati. When, early in 1837, Ananta Rao had died, the cloth which was by now partially reduced by sales and the effects of long storage came into the hands of his son, Krishna Rao. A quarrel had arisen between the Zamindar and Krishna Rao over the ownership of this property. After Krishna Rao had affixed the family seal to the building, the Zamindar and his servants had come by night, broken into the godown, and removed its contents. Ramanadha Babu and some of his helpers had then been brought before the Criminal Court on charges of stealing the cloth. It was at this time that Vetsha Dharmapuri became the Head of Police in Mangalagiri.

An important key to this exceedingly complex story appears to have been a report sent by the Village Munsif of Amaravati to the Head of Police. Apparently, the report was not only crucial to the court

trial but also "stated circumstances fatal to the claim of the Zamindar" in the disputed succession.¹ Achamma, Jaganadha's widow, claimed that this was so, as did others. However, the report could not be found in the daftaramus (record files) of the thana kacheri; moreover, the Village Munsif himself "was done away with."² The case against the Zamindar fell for lack of evidence.

Meanwhile, word reached Goldingham that Vetsha Dharmapuri had delivered the Munsif's report to the Vakil of the Zamindar. Other accusations against the Amin were poured out from different quarters. The Collector went to investigate. What he uncovered prompted him to dismiss and to initiate criminal proceedings against Dharmapuri. From the mass of evidence which he collected he framed five specific charges, all of which were grounds for dismissal and each of which was sufficient to warrant judicial action. All five charges were forwarded to the Board of Revenue; but because of the circumstantial and presumptive nature of his evidence, only one charge was taken into court.

Vetsha Dharmapuri was arraigned before the Criminal Court for taking an official report out of a government record office and disposing of same. The defense of the accused rested on two arguments: (1) that the report had never existed; and (2) that, if it did exist, it must have been taken by the Police Maddatgar, Gulapati Suriah. Gulapati Suriah, a young man whose family had long served the Vasireddys, produced a letter which he had written to his family in Amaravati

¹ Goldingham to BOR (para 5), November 7, 1838: GDR (No.76: 5394: 298-311).

² ibid. (para 4).

mentioning the Munsif's report. A great profusion of testimony from both sides made it difficult for the Court to decide where the truth lay. The opinion which was finally handed down discounted the material importance of the report since several other reports of the incident were also available. Why such a report might have been abstracted -- the possibility that it might have contained material of broader implication than theft of cloth from a godown -- was not dealt with by the Court. Dharmapuri was acquitted.¹

On December 19, 1837, one day after the nomination of Krishna Rao was turned down for the first time, a petition from the former Amin appealing against his dismissal was laid before the Board of Revenue. When action on this appeal was finally taken eleven months later, the Collector was asked to forward the original proceedings on the case. These papers along with the Collector's arguments against the Appeal Petition were sent to Madras early in November (1838).²

The four other charges against Vetsha Dharmapuri which were used as grounds for his dismissal are summarized briefly as follows.

First, Dharmapuri was accused of accepting money from the staff of the Mangalagiri Pagoda so that police would look the other way "on the death of the persons ... crushed under the Cart at the Festival."³⁺

¹ Goldingham to BOR (paras 1-7 with enclosures), November 7, 1838: GDR (No. 78: 5394: 298-311).

² Goldingham to BOR (with enclosures), November 7, 1838: GDR (No. 78: 5394: pp. 298-311).

³ ibid. (para 8). ⁺ Note: Concern over loss of life at Car Festivals was a recurrent subject. Goldingham discussed the problem at length, but could see no way to legislate people into safety, on June 11, 1840: GDR (5397: 217-220).

A Komarti temple gumashta had been the go-between for Chendulaul, the temple manager. This Komarti had been captured with the damning accounts trying to escape from the district and his brother had been sent to Hyderabad "to prevent his giving evidence."¹ Dharmapuri admitted accepting money, but denied being bribed.

Second, Dharmapuri was accused of threatening to lower the nirakh (price) of rice in Mangalagiri's bazaar when troops were passing through the town and when the price might normally have risen. He was accused of threatening to open stores and to have rice sold at two damus (16 damus equal one anna) below the market price. As a result, a delegation of Komarti leaders had approached the Police Maddatgar, Gulapati Suriah, who had taken them to where the Amin was resting under a pandal (awning or porch) at the door of his house. Of the 29 rupees which they had been required to pay, two had not rung true and had been replaced. Dharmapuri admitted taking the money but explained that it was to cover losses in the bazaar. Despite the many witnesses to this charge, Goldingham did not feel that justice would be reached by judicial proceedings.²⁺

Third, the Amin was accused of making exorbitant profits in the sayaru administration. Most regular taxes had been doubled, the difference being taken to line the pockets of taluk officers. The

¹ ibid.

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 9-10), November 7, 1838: GDR (5397: 298-311). ⁺ Note: Another possible interpretation is that the Komartis might have given the money so that the normal nirakh might be raised to enable them to profit by the orders of the army detachment.

Sayar Gumashta had taken an extra rupee for each rupee rawana (license or pass) which he had issued; and the Stamp Gumashta had done the same on the rates for stamp paper. A percentage of all such illicit gains had gone to the Amin. Secret surcharges had been applied to cloth, tobacco, and many other articles of trade. It was apparent to Goldingham "that the practice which very likely was checked at one time [had] again taken root and been in force for some years."¹

The Collector was determined to prevent further injustice to merchants by being present as often as possible when large consignments of cloth were being shipped.

In replying to this charge, Dharmapuri blamed Krishna Rao for instigating the merchants to complain before the Collector. He argued that the Sayar Gumashta, Mantry Venkatachallam, who had been equally guilty, had not been dismissed. He accused the Collector of showing favoritism to his successor, Konukala Jagiah.²

Goldingham agreed that Venkatachallam had been guilty but explained that this officer had been demoted and transferred which was punishment enough. The punishment of a subordinate should not be equal to that of the superior responsible for checking corruption and inefficiency. As for favoritism, the health of Konukala Jagiah had failed; and when the Amins of Guntur and Rachur Thanas had wished to have their positions exchanged, it had been no more than common kindness to comply with their request. Jagiah's close

¹ ibid. (para 11).

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 10-13), November 7, 1838: GDR (5397: 298-311).

connection with the Nuzvidu Zamindar and with Krishna Rao had nothing to do with his efficiency as an Amin. Moreover, Jagiah had died shortly after reaching Guntur.¹

Finally, Dharmapuri was accused of extorting bribes from the weaving community at Mangalagiri in return for lowering the motarpha. While certain of the truth of this charge, Goldingham knew that the evidence was not such as would support a criminal conviction.

In summing up the case against Vetsha Dharmapuri, Goldingham made it plain that while he was able to discover what was really going on, judicial procedures tied his hands. The Appeal Petition, in his opinion, "was written with the express purpose of prejudicing the Board - which it might do- against the selection of Subneviss Vencata Kristnrow" as Huzur Sheristadar.² Several other petitions, some of them anaonymous, had been sent to the Board for the same purpose. The Collector felt that every mishap or incident was being blamed on the machinations of Krishna Rao and was being used to promote factional strife.

The Board of Revenue, acting in its judicial capacity as the administrative court of appeal, adhered strictly to procedural technicalities. The substantive aspects of the case were neglected; the importance of each charge was minimized; the veracity of the evidence was questioned; and the arguments of Dharmapuri were upheld.

¹ ibid. (para 14).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 18), November 7, 1838: GDR (5397: 298-311).

"Having attentively considered the circumstances which led to the Petitioner's removal from Office," the Board concluded that "nothing had been established to his prejudice which should prevent his re-employment."¹

2. The Case of Vetsha Lakshmiah, Salt Thanadar of Chinna Ganjam.

Chinna Ganjam was the chief center in Guntur District for the turning of sea water into salt for domestic and inland markets. The importance of this industry, in which the manufacture and sale of salt was a Government monopoly,² may be seen in the fact that it yielded a revenue of almost three lakhs of rupees in 1837.³ The Government's share was seven annas out of each rupee of gross receipts from sales in its depots (cotaurs). Both the price of salt and the amount of salt produced were carefully regulated.⁴

There were approximately four-hundred manufacturers of salt at Chinna Ganjam. Their salt pans, which were merely long strips of land hollowed out to hold sea water, were held in much the same manner as the fields in an ordinary agricultural village. The same social hierarchy -- from Brahman to Outcaste - also existed, but with one peculiarity. The Salt Ryots (Manufacturers) were divided by that ancient and bitter communalism which has separated left-from right-hand

¹ BOR to Goldingham (paras 1-7), March 21, 1839: GDR (5370: 70-74).

² Regulation I of 1805 in A.D.Campbell, Madras Code of Regulations (Madras: 1840). The monopoly was introduced on orders from Bengal, July 4, 1805.

³ Goldingham to BOR (Jamabandi Report of fasli 1247, para 27), September 6, 1838: GDR (5394: 182-206).

⁴ J.Boswell, Nellore District Manual (Madras: 1873), pp.595-625.

castes. Differences over precedence and privilege in such matters as riding a horse, going in a palankin, carrying an umbrella, building a pandal, beating a drum, or having a procession could easily erupt into rioting.¹ The wealthier quarter of manufacturers were of the right-hand caste while the larger and poorer group were of the left-hand caste. The poor majority depended on saukars for their working capital.²

Trouble between left and right-hand castes had been mounting before Vetsha Lakshmiah took charge on June 22, 1837. Ganagam Reddi Rao, his predecessor who had been transferred to a different thana, had favored the produce from the pans of the right-hand caste and had not permitted salt from the pans of the left-hand caste to be conveyed to the storage and sales platforms until much larger inducements had been offered. One group had been required to pay dearly before its produce could be sold while the other group had been required to pay little or nothing. Reddi Rao, however, had been transferred from Chinna Ganjam before he could collect his money.³

Vetsha Lakshmiah did not want to miss any of the possible benefits which might accrue to his office. He accepted 100 rupees, his Peshkar (Tota Lakshminarsu) accepted 50 rupees, his two Dafadars, 25 rupees each, and 58 rupees more were distributed among the thana staff by the left-hand caste. Shortly afterward, however, he incurred the

¹ For details see: Elliot Mss. (EOL: Eur.Mss.D.321), p.168, pp.326-66.

² Goldingham to BOR (para 4), ibid.

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 4), October 27, 1838: GDR (70: 5394: 281-89).

bitter enmity of this caste. He did not allow the caste to celebrate the ceremony of the Village Goddess as desired and he argued against their application for a special Munsif.¹

Whether or not Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao got wind of this resentment or not is difficult to determine. On November 30, 1837, five members of the left-hand caste community came before Goldingham at Vellatur, in Rachur Thana. Their leader, Guduboyana Sangareddy, complained against the Salt Amin of Ghinna Ganjam, charging him with extortion. Goldingham examined and took testimony from these men and then, because he was too busy to go immediately, sent the newly appointed Sherista Peshkar, Eduoudi Ramiah, down to Chinna Ganjam to commence the investigation. Twenty-six persons who were either salt ryots or Komartis gave evidence on oath before the Peshkar. Goldingham arrived and heard further evidence from the saukars who had advanced the money which the manufacturers had paid to the officers of the thana. The account books of the saukars, full of erasures, were taken as evidence. Tota Lakshminarsu, the Salt Peshkar, was dismissed and the Defadars, Paigastis, Navisinda and Dhalait were demoted. Vetsha Lakshmiah was suspended, charged, and ordered to appear before the Collector at Bapatla as soon as his defense was prepared.²

At Vetsha Lakshminarsu's request, the defense was written up by a Gumashta of the Huzur Kacheri. The suspended Amin came before the Collector and took the oath before the official Shastri (Oath

¹ ibid. (para 2).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 1-4), October 27, 1838: GDR (70: 5394: 281-89).

Administrator). After the evidence of the witnesses was given, he was allowed to examine the record and was permitted to cross-examine. He then made his defense. "Nothing essential to the defense was omitted."¹ Finally, acting in his judicial capacity under Regulation IX of 1822, the Collector dismissed Vetsha Lakshmiah from the service.

The ex-Amin soon sent an Appeal to the Board of Revenue. He charged the Collector with favoritism and blamed Venkata Krishna Rao, the Officiating Head Sheristadar, for bringing about his dismissal. He protested that the Sherista Peshkar was against him; that evidence had been deliberately chosen which was prejudicial to his cause; that some of the witnesses against him had been involved in gang robbery, sheep stealing, and burglary; that his defense had been improperly prepared by a Huzur Gumashta and full opportunity for making a defense not afforded; that he had experienced hardship in trying to gain an interview with the Collector by following him around the district; and finally, that after serving the Government for many years, he was being dismissed for the mischief committed by someone else (Reddi Rao) while none of the other salt servants had been dismissed.²

When on October 11, 1838, the Collector was ordered to submit the original proceedings on the case, he did his best to refute the arguments of the ex-Amin. He felt that "the real motive which dictated the appeal [was] not a sense of having been unjustly dealt with but a desire to place the then Officiating Head Sheristadar in an unfavorable

¹ ibid. (para 4).

² Goldingham to BOR (4-7), October 27, 1838: GDR (5394: 281-289).

position before the Board, "as was indicated in almost every paragraph of the appeal. During the famine, some of the witnesses had been forced to steal in order to live. Some sheep had been found on a main road and taken to the next village. It was the responsibility of the Collector to prevent wastage of salt and the sale of salt by government officers for their own benefit. Reddi Rao may have begun the subversive operations, but Vetsha Lakshmiah had carried these on and had benefited by them. Lakshmiah had been dismissed from the Guntur Zillah in 1818 and from the Rajahmundry Zillah since then. The petitioner had been requested to go to Guntur to await final orders, but instead he had followed the Collector all over the district.¹

Once again, on May 6, 1839, the Board of Revenue reversed the decision of the Collector. Inefficiency in the Salt Department was not new. Reports on trouble in Chinna Ganjam were chronic. Reddi Rao was the person who had really earned the bribe (though he had not collected and Lakshmiah had). Ignoring the recent 20 per cent increase in salt revenues,² the Board could only dwell on the suspicious nature of the evidence and conclude that "the charge was not proved."³ While "refraining from directing his restoration to the appointment from which he was dismissed," the Board nevertheless desired that Lakshmiah should "not be considered ineligible for

¹ Goldingham to BOR (paras 1-8), October 27, 1837: GDR (5394: 281-89).

²

Compare Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1246 (para 42), February 2, 1838: GDR (5394: 32-63), with Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1247 (para 27), September 6, 1838: GDR (5394: 182-206).

³

Extract from BOR Proceedings, May 6, 1839: GDR (5370: 91-95).

future employment and that he be provided with a suitable place on the occurrence of an opportunity."¹⁺

3. The Case of Vetsha Bashacharlu, Head English Writer

Before turning from Goldingham's troubles with the Vetsha family, brief mention must be made of Vetsha Bashacharlu, the nephew of Dharmapuri and Lakshmiah. Timmaraju Prakasha Rao, who had been appointed Head English Writer by Malcolm Lewin in March 1835, was transferred by Alexander Bruce to a minor post in the Magistrate Department (as a writer at half his former salary) in June, 1836. When Vetsha Dharmapuri, his successor, was moved to Valloor and when the next appointee, Kasa Rao, was found guilty of negligence in his former duties as Kotwal of Guntur, Vetsha Bashacharlu was appointed to fill the vacancy in October, 1836.²

On April 7, 1838, Bashacharlu was also demoted to a minor post in the Magistrate Department on charges of corruption and conduct unbecoming to a public officer. First, during the Deepavali Festival (in October, 1838), he had set off fireworks in the dead of night near the house of Kanakamanu Subha Rao, a delinquent caste member, with the aim of extorting money. Second, in order to assist Vetsha Dharmapuri in his court trial, he had intimidated or bribed several of the key witnesses (note: Kanakamanu Subha Rao may have been one of

¹ ibid. (para 8). ⁺Note: The case of Vuddum Venkatachallam, dismissed Salt Dafadar of Chinna Ganjam, was decided in the same way on May 16, 1839: GDR (5370: 133-34); moreover, the question of re-employment came up in the Register of Petitions, February 22, 1841; GDR (5372: 162-3).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 19), June 5, 1839: GDR (29: 5397: 49-63).

these). Third, as one of the chief officers in the district, he had procured and accepted a bribe of at least 200 rupees from Manur Venkata Gopal Rao, the Sattanapalli Zamindar, so that a special allowance which Bruce had suggested for relieving financial embarrassments might be enhanced.¹

Bashacharlu resigned his position in the Magistrate Department on July 4, 1838; but it was not until December 24, 1838, that he sent his Appeal Petition. In this he followed the same line of defense as his uncles. He stressed the machinations of the Sabnavis faction, the improper procedure of closed hearings without full opportunity for defense, the unfair discrimination of the Collector, and so on. He claimed that he was in Palnad when the fireworks had been supposedly let off and that he had not even been a district officer at the time, which he claimed to have been in October, 1836. He did not see how he could have received a bribe from the Zamindar when he was not yet a Government servant. Finally, he submitted character references from officers under whom he had served and a certificate from the Collector of Rajahmundry showing that he had been permitted to resign at his own request.²

On March 25, 1839, the original proceedings on the case were sent for. The Board was of the opinion that if the charges were true

¹ ibid. (paras 2-5). Also BOR Proceedings, October 17, 1836: GDR (3978: 717-720), on the Sattanapalli Petition.

² Goldingham to BOR (paras 16-17), June 5, 1839: GDR (No. 29: 5397: 49-63); and BOR Proceedings, March 25, 1839: GDR (5370: 75-78). The Appeal Petition itself, together with other papers on the case, has been destroyed.

"[Bashacharlu] should have been at once dismissed from Office and not merely removed to a lower situation."¹ They thought that full opportunity should have been afforded to the accused for clearing his character.

In his explanations of June 5th, which were sent along with the original proceedings on the case, Goldingham clearly revealed the dilemma of a person entirely convinced of Bashacharlu's guilt but unable to produce proof sufficient to convince the Board. Being on the spot, he felt that he was in a better position than the Board to know the truth and to judge the circumstances. In his words,

Experience has shown that the majority of sentences passed under Regulation IX of 1822 are reversed on appeal. The Collector's authority is greatly weakened by this and injury inflicted on the country. It is the unhappy lot of society that two people seldom view the same thing in the same light. Appeals have to contend against this and have the further disadvantage that the evidence as it lies before the Appellate Tribunal is little better than a lifeless map.²

The character of the individuals involved in a case, the manner in which evidence was presented, the motives by which the different parties moved, and many other vital facets could not be understood or appreciated by a Board hundreds of miles away. Goldingham felt that it was enough that his own mind was made up as to how much weight could be given to the various and contradictory stories which had come out of his careful probing. Perhaps he had been too lenient in not dismissing Bashacharlu; but "if the subject [were] closely scrutinized by the Board with reference to the important principles of upholding the character of

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 5), March 25, 1839: GDR (5370: 75-78).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 14), June 5, 1839: GDR (29: 5397: 49-63).

the office and the interests of the people,"¹ it would be understood that the removal of Bashacharlu from a responsible and potentially dangerous position was of more importance than whether or not he were punished.

The list of witnesses and the arguments which the Collector marshalled in support of his position and the depositions which he enclosed with his letter were impressive. Many obvious falsehoods and contradictions in the Appeal Petition were pointed out. The fireworks in question had been set off in October of 1837 and not one year earlier. The letter of January 21, 1837,⁺ which had been sent to the Board defending the extraordinarily high allowances set for the Sattanappali Zamindar, had been drafted by the Petitioner and indeed was written in his own handwriting. The butadunavis or private secretary of the Zamindar, a relative named Surupuram Ramalingam, and other relatives and servants (e.g. Wulgundam Appiah, Pattri Venkatadry, Pattri Rayappah, and Balanal) had given corroborative evidence which was only further strengthened by the arzi of the Zamindar. Finally, the delay of nearly six months before the petition had been presented and the machinations of the Petitioner and his son-in-law over the godown full of cloths at Amaravati confirmed Goldingham in the suspicion that intrigue and intrigue alone lay behind the petition. "[Bashacharlu]

¹ ibid. (para 15).

⁺Note: This letter has not been found and is presumed lost.

had joined the party whose sole object through intrigue was to deprive the Government of the services of the late Acting Sheristadar, knowing well that his straightforward and upright character was striking at the root of that corrupt system which had done so much injury to this district."¹

In their proceedings on the Collector's defense of his decision, the Board did not consider the explanations to be satisfactory nor the proof conclusive. While they did not think that Bashacharlu was guilty, the Board did not press Goldingham further but merely recorded their opinion that Bashacharlu was not to be barred from future service.²

3. The Case of Vungamulu Subha Rao, Peshkar in Thenali Thana

To show that all of the currents were not flowing in one direction, this case illustrates how an officer who had previously suffered at the hands of the Nyapati faction was restored to Government favor and allowed to enter Government service once again.

Vungamulu Subha Rao had been the Revenue Peshkar in charge of Chabrolu, a subdivision of the Vasireddy Zamindari within the Tenali Thana which had been zafted (or attached by Government) in 1822. In 1834, three years after the departure of Whish, Subha Rao began to feel pressure from the Huzur Kacheri. Yelta Pragada Rao was made Thanadar. An attempt by this new Amin to increase under-the-counter contributions was thwarted and the Peshkar would not be intimidated. Finally Ghanagamu Venkatasam, who was the Sheristadar's brother and the

¹ Goldingham to BOR (para 18), June 5, 1839: op.cit.

² Extract of BOR Proceedings (paras 1-3), June 27, 1839: GDR (5370: 161-3)

then Amin of Bapatla, informed the temporary Collector of that moment, Patrick Grant, that Subha Rao "was in the habit of robbing the Company."¹ Subha Rao told Grant that the Huzur officers were the ones doing the robbing. After Grant left the district, Sita Ram and his subordinates immediately formulated a complaint and laid this before the new Collector. Alexander Bruce dismissed Subha Rao on April 4, 1836.

Five appeals were sent to the Board of Revenue by Subha Rao before his case was reconsidered and the former dismissal confirmed. When ten more appeals to Madras brought no results, Subha Rao went to Calcutta. Ultimately, being promised that his case would be considered, he returned to Guntur. In 1838, beginning to despair, he again addressed the Government of India:

Trusting that you would write to the Governor of Madras telling him to give me some situation, I immediately returned home according to your orders; but I have not yet benefited from your promise. I am in great distress and do not know how to obtain the common necessities of life and shall starve unless you have the goodness to befriend me.²

This time his case was heard and it slowly moved down the ladder of authority. Early in 1839, the Collector was asked to look into the matter and to submit the papers on the case.

Goldingham found that the crops in question had not been under-

¹ Extract of a letter from T.W.Maddock, Officiating Secretary to Government of India (with excerpts of Subha Rao's petition, para 3), to the Government of Madras and sent on to Goldingham for information, December 3, 1838: Guntur District Records (5370: 22-28).

² Excerpt from Subha Rao's petition enclosed in T.W.Maddock's letter to GOM (para 4), December 3, 1838: ibid.

assessed. Due to prolonged drought, wind, and insects, the crops in early 1834 had been in a very poor condition (the Guntur Famine was at peak). "Subha Rao's permanent removal," in his opinion, "rested" on insufficient grounds."¹ On July 22, 1839, a letter was sent to the Collector of Guntur Zillah informing him that the Government was "pleased to permit the re-employment of this individual in the public service."²

The Register of Petitions during this period contained many other cases similar to the examples given here. Karnams, Samatdars, Maddatgars, Gumashtas and other district officers petitioned the Board whenever their interests were damaged or the furtherance of their purposes involved.

Some idea of the attitude which then prevailed in the Board of Revenue toward the enforcement of Regulation IX of 1822 may be gathered from a circular letter which Goldingham received on August 2, 1839. The Board noted that while some Collectors had probably been too lax, most Collectors were considered to be too free in their enforcement of discipline...often when it was not expedient. In their opinion,

Where...a charge may be supported by a reasonable prima facie evidence and susceptible of proof and is at the same time of a magnitude to require a severe penalty, the Collector should avail himself of the powers conferred...to check by a public example frauds and malversation among a class of men who possess great facilities of carrying on their malpractices

¹ Goldingham to Chief Secretary of GOM, May 17, 1839: GDR (No,26:5397: 43-45) and MRP (279:

² Chief Secretary of GOM to Collector of Guntur Zillah, July 22, 1839: GDR (5370: 172-173).

without detection.¹

But trifling cases involving no severe penalty, even if proved, were to be dealt with under the general authority of the Collector.

Attention was called to "the great want of care and regularity frequently observed."²

...the evidence was often...quite inadequate, a circumstance which would appear to have arisen from a neglect to take and record evidence forthcoming or from confusion and want of method in the manner of recording it, rather than from a real deficiency of witnesses and documents to support the charge.³

A strict adherence to forms implied no defect on essential points.

Clear and satisfactory grounds for a decision "such as would be found sufficient to support the conviction in the event of an appeal to the regular tribunals" was what the Board wanted from the Collectors.⁴

II. THE SECOND ROUND OF CONFLICT: 1839-1842

Factional struggles within the administration continued with mounting intensity throughout the remainder of Goldingham's term of service in Guntur. The Nyapati party which controlled much of the machinery of government sought to maintain its influence over subsidiary groups and village leaders and tried to prevent any disclosure of infidelity which might weaken its position in Madras. The Sabnavis party which

¹ BOR Secretary Circular Letter to Collector of Guntur Zillah (para 3), July 15, 1839: GDR (5370: 174-177), despatched 30th, received 2nd of August. The BOR Secretary was Patrick Smollett.

² ibid. (para 5).

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid. (para 6).

possessed the support of the Collector attempted to frustrate the designs, to lay bare misconduct, and to break the control of the entrenched group.

Two aspects of this phase of the conflict are apparent: one internal and the other external. Intense efforts were made by both groups to gain and keep control of the machinery within the secretariat departments. Attempts were made to bring allied forces from outside the Huzur Kacheri, and even from outside the district, into play.

A. DISPUTE WITHIN THE OFFICES OF THE SECRETARIAT

Although his authority was by-passed and his power to remove subordinates nullified by constant appeals to the Board of Revenue, Goldingham did what he could to preserve his influence and to carry on the work of government. Muhammad Gahub was brought in as Head Assistant of the Sherista Department¹ and Krishna Rao was appointed Head Munshi (or Jawabnavis).² These two officers served as a counterpoise to the old elite for about a year. The Collector continued to press for the promotion of Krishna Rao. In February, 1840, he was able to move Nakkalapalli Subha Rao to an Aminship in one of the taluks and to make Krishna Rao Naib Sheristadar.³

The Collector and the Naib Sheristadar then proceeded to dog the

¹ Elliot Report to BOR (para 55), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: p.7534), No. 39 of December 6, 1847

² Goldingham to BOR, April 29, 1839: GDR (22: 5397: p. 42).

³ Elliot Report to BOR (para 55), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7535).

steps of the Huzur Sheristadar. Each time Shashagiri Rao failed to carry out instructions, more work was delegated to Krishna Rao. By the end of 1840, Krishna Rao was performing many of the duties of the Head Sheristadar. Two voices were translating and implementing orders, cancelling each other out with their clamour. Intrigue and counter-intrigue moved beneath the surface. "A mortal enmity was produced between Krishna Rao and Shashagherry Row, who could not brook being set aside."¹ Since only Krishna Rao seemed to be carrying out the regular business of the district and since Shashagiri Rao seemed to be doing nothing, Goldingham lost patience with what he considered to be nothing more than hostility and incompetence.

Late in November, 1840, the formal positions of the two factional leaders were again reversed. Krishna Rao became Huzur Sheristadar and Shashagiri Rao became Naib. Goldingham explained his reasons for taking this action. Shashagiri Rao sent his own appeal to the Board.

The Board lost no time in disapproving of the Collector's decision, after citing the Government's previous ruling on the subject.

"Regular charges" against Shashagiri Rao would have to be proved and then submitted according to prescribed rules. Krishna Rao was not to hold any employment as "Head of the Office." Nyapati Shashagiri Rao was to be returned to his proper position of authority.²

Throughout 1841, while Goldingham worked up his case against Shashagiri Rao, the same tension remained. Each side tried to get

¹ ibid: MRP (281: 20: page 7536).

² BOR to Goldingham, December 7, 1840: GDR (5370: 238-239).

the upper hand. Each sought to prevent the other from governing the district. The Collector shuffled personnel in the Kacheri so as to give more influence and better pay to the Naib Sheristadar and the Head Munshi. The Government turned down this manipulating of the establishment (muainzabita) as violating set rules of pay and procedure.¹

1. Contention in the Sheristakhana⁺

At the end of October, 1841, a deposition from the Huzur Sheristadar with a covering report from the Collector reached the Board of Revenue. Both of these papers agreed on one point. A controversy of great bitterness had been shaking the Sherista for many months with neither side gaining much advantage.²

Whether or not the two Palnad Amins (of Dachapalli and Tummurukota) actually conspired together with the Huzur Sheristadar to secure a postponement of a substantial portion of the land revenue on false grounds, or whether or not the Collector and the Naib sprang a cleverly laid trap on the Huzur Sheristadar cannot be determined with

¹ BOR Proceedings of May 24, 1841 (on Collector's letter of March 22): GDR (5372: 213-215). Acting Secretary of BOR (P.B.Smollett) to Chief Secretary (Walter Elliot), July 29, 1841: Minutes of Consultation, September 2, 1841: BOR to Goldingham, September 13, 1841: GDR (5372: 521-32).

⁺ Note: Sheristakhana, coming from the Persian Sar-(Head or Chief) and rishta (connection or binding thread) and from the Hindustani khana (place or house), literally meant "Chief-connecting-place." It was the Central Office. See: H.H.Wilson's Glossary...(Calcutta: 1874), pp.467, 444, 276.

² Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: Guntur District Records (5399: 83-133).

finality. In all probability, however, both the conspiracy and the trap were circumstances which really occurred. Shashagiri Rao helped the Amins to prepare their accounts and assisted them in their work. After the arrangements for postponing the payment of revenue were completed, Goldingham was tipped off. A quick unannounced trip to the Palnad was made. False accounts were discovered and depositions from taluk and village officers were recorded.¹

On hearing of this development, Shashagiri Rao reversed himself. Until the disclosures were made, he had stoutly defended the Palnad accounts and declared that his inspection had revealed nothing irregular. Now he accused the Sabnavis party of drumming up grounds for removing him from office. He was sure that false accounts for this purpose had been prepared right in the Huzur Kacheri. He was no longer kept as informed as was necessary for a Huzur Sheristadar because district officers walked in fear of the Naib Sheristadar. The normal business of administration no longer was done openly in the presence of the Collector; nor were his actions approved of by the Collector. He had warned the Collector in a special hukum (memorandum) not to depend upon the Amins' accounts; and yet the Collector had sent the very orders which granted the postponement -- he had seen them in the Diary with his own eyes. Suspecting a trap, Shashagiri Rao had ordered the village leaders to put their accounts before him and he had initialed them as a special precaution. A

¹ Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: GDR (5399: pp.84, 88-97, 104: 49). Instead of paragraphs, this very long report is given a question by question treatment of answers given by Shashagiri Rao in formal proceedings.

systematic removal of his friends from district offices had been going on for over a year and now it was his turn. Walled about by secrecy, denied access to the Jamabandi Reports and to the English Records,⁺ the Huzur Sheristadar felt cut off from the normal exercise of his duty.¹

Goldingham was sure that there was no secrecy about the day-to-day business the Kacheri. Any "flying reports" and rumours heard by the Huzur Sheristadar simply indicated that he was not as much in the dark as he claimed. How could Shashgiri Rao declare that most kacheri secrets were fully known in Guntur Town and still claim that he was being kept in the dark? It was obvious to the Collector, moreover, that what supposedly had been "purposely kept back" had long been known to the Huzur Sheristadar.²

No one in the Munshi Department could help but know what was going on. One person wrote all orders. Another entered all orders in the Diary. Still another registered all orders. Others registered petitions and all other business. All the work of the department was examined by the Head Munshi. An order to the Amins could not possibly have been sent without being recorded in the Diary and in the Register. Anyone could see, wrote Goldingham, that no such orders had been sent, for none were recorded. Diaries were in the handwriting of clerks of the office. Consecutive numbering down each page and the Collector's initials at the close of each day's entries made falsification almost impossible.

⁺ Note: See next section for a fuller analysis of the Record Department.

¹ Goldingham to BOR, ibid. (No.49 in 5399: pp. 102, 105-107, 112).

² ibid. (No.49 in 5399: pp. 102-103, 108).

The whole Moonshi Department would have to have been of one mind to effect such an object [as fabrication]. It is not to be supposed that the whole Department was tampered with. Even if they had been, my initials at the end of each day's work is conclusive evidence that the allegations are false. Surely, public time ought not to have been wasted by taking vain depositions of this character.¹

To Goldingham the idea that normal business could be carried on with deliberate secrecy was ridiculous.

Shashagiri Rao was accused of allowing unfinished business to accumulate. A total of 4,212 unfinished cases had accumulated during sixteen months between October, 1838, and February, 1840. According to the story told to Goldingham by the Naib Sheristadar and by the Head Munshi (Vinugunti Ramadas), the day had finally come when the Huzur Sheristadar had "thrown down his sunnud of appointment before the Naib,"² declared that he was unable to keep up with the work, and asked the Naib to take over the current business. During the next ten months, while Krishna Rao had tried to cope with the backlog which had fallen onto his mat, only 5 out of 104 new cases assigned to Shashagiri Rao had been disposed of. Another 110 cases given to the Huzur Sheristadar during 1841 had yet to be touched. In all, Shashagiri Rao was still holding over 200 cases of unfinished business. Paraga Ramana Rao, the Head Maddatgar, and Yeddlapalem Ramana Rao, the Head Salt Maddatgar, supported the Head Munshi, the Naib, and the Collector in this view.³⁺

¹ Goldingham to BOR, op.cit., (pp.112-113).

² ibid. (p. 83).

³ ibid. (p.84). ⁺Note: What the Naib Munshi, who was Shashagiri Rao's brother-in-law, might have testified is not recorded. (pp. 101,111).

It is apparent that the Huzur and Naib Sheristadars did not work together, as would normally have been the case, and that their relative positions were again reversed. The main business of administration was going through Krishna Rao and his assistants instead of through Shashagiri Rao. Because of this, Shashagiri Rao claimed that he had no way of knowing about irregular practices, much less having any means to remedy maladministration. Without a voice in the selection of new officers, or in the assignment of positions, or in the delegation of work, his influence was greatly reduced. It was the Sheristadar's claim that government officers no longer listened to him or obeyed him, while the Naib was much "overesteemed."¹

Goldingham did not deny the lack of cooperation in the Kacheri. He argued,

I yield that the Naib Sheristadar is the enemy of the Hoozoor Sheristadari; but I will not admit that the Hoozoor Sheristadar cannot obtain proof because the persons who might give evidence will not tell the truth for fear of the Naib.²

It was untrue to think that the Sheristadar was ignored, disobeyed, and deserted; for he was always "well attended by able Goomastahs."³

Much of the real trouble was attributed to intrigue. Plenty of Nyapati supporters were in the Kacheri and within the Sheristakhana itself. Both parties plotted and conspired against each other until the business of government came to a standstill. Pujas were performed; dark and terrible mantrams (mystical incantations or magical formulas)

¹ Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: GDR (No.49: 5399: page 36).

² ibid. (page 90).

³ ibid. (page 91).

were chanted; and awful spells were invoked. Evil spirits were propitiated with the hope of bringing Krishna Rao and his friends to harm. No doubt similar "black magic" and other psychological instruments were applied to the Nyapati party as well. Resort to methods of terror brought panic to many officers and did much to disturb the morale of the administration.¹

In still another encounter, a Sayar Gumashta named Puluri Krishna Rao was dismissed for misappropriating money in the Sayar Department. Shashagiri Rao was ordered to make further investigations into that department. Nimmagada Rama Krishnamah and Rajapati Rama Rao, subordinate officers within the department, both presented evidence against Puluri Krishna Rao. Without recording what these officers had presented, the Huzur Sheristadar reported in favor of Puluri Krishna Rao and recommended his re-employment. When the Naib laid the depositions which Shashagiri Rao had omitted before the Collector, the dismissal was confirmed.²

Finally, what undoubtedly provoked John Goldingham most of all was the discovery that Shashagiri Rao communicated secretly with the Board of Revenue and with his European friends in Madras. Using his contacts and channels in Nellore and Rajahmundry and Masulipatam, the Huzur Sheristadar kept up a steady flow of information calculated to win support for himself and to weaken confidence in the Collector.

¹ Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: GDR (No. 49: 5399: pages 85 and 119).

² *ibid.* (pp. 85, 118-121).

[Shashagiri Rao] adopted a highly improper course of conduct in forwarding in a clandestine manner through the post offices in the Nellore District to the Board, petitions relative to the state of the management in this District.¹

Whisperings and rumours seeping into the bungalows at Madras -- gossip of household servants overheard, words from a barber cutting the hair of a Dora (European) on his verandah, hearsay from some chaprasi (badge wearing messenger) at the door of an office -- could be very potent. Goldingham's mind was disturbed because these items "proceeded from a vindictive spirit without regard for the truth."²

2. Confusion in the Daftarkhana

Control of records was vital if a dominating influence was to be exerted within an administration. Rulers had to have accurate and detailed information, arranged in an orderly fashion for quick reference. Prestige, efficiency, and justice in government depended upon records. The length if not the strength of the arm of the State required an accurate and long memory. The same truth applied to any group wishing to command a dominating influence within an administration. Silent tampering and skilful manipulating could strengthen a bureaucracy at the expense of the State.

The Daftarkhana (Record Office) had already come under the disapproving eyes of the Board of Revenue on previous occasions. As recently as November, 1836, much confusion and unfinished work, a

¹ ibid. (page 85).

² ibid.

circumstance which might well encourage fraud and malpractice, was brought to light.¹ Even the Court of Directors had remarked at the "disgrace", and asked for a periodic report on the condition of the records.²

Goldingham not only found the records in great disorder but he found evidence that they were being altered. Extracts of maniam titles did not match their originals and newly made maniam titles were found inserted among old ones. The staff protested that copies and extracts from records and duplicates of titles (on stamp paper) had always been prepared within the Record Office before being sent for the Collector's signature, a procedure which made it difficult to check copies against their originals. The validity of an extract rested almost solely upon the word of the officers in the record rooms; but since there was general access to the Record Office and easy communication with the Record Keepers, even the best efforts to obtain efficiency would have been frustrated.³

As has already been noted (see preceding chapter), there were two Daftardars.⁺ The senior officer was the English Record Keeper,

¹ ibid. (page 87). See also MRP (281: 21: 8261), No. 41 of December 6, 1847).

² Extract of Dispatch No. 8 of April 19, 1837: GDR (5368: 291-93), from Court of Directors, passed on by Government and BOR to Collector.

³ Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: GDR (No. 49: 5399: page 121).

⁺ Note: The application of Munro's "double daftar" -- setting members of opposing communities or factions as a check on each other requires a full study by itself; but the practice appears to have operated under Goldingham. K. Ballhatchet, Social Policy and Social Change in Western India: 1817-1830 (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p.92, deals with this notion.

Kotamaraj Venkata Rayalu. He was a Nyapati supporter of thirty-five years experience who had been appointed by Thomas Oakes in 1818.

The second officer was the Native (Vernacular) Record Keeper, Nonsherwan, of whom we know little. The Record Office staff was divided into two sections working under the Daftardars. The Daftarband (Records Guard) of the vernacular section was a Sabnavis partisan named Sheik Maikhtum. Of the rest of the staff we know little except that the two volunteer assistants were divided, as also were the two sections, by the factionalism which prevailed throughout the Kacheri. Sri Aparapi Rao worked for Venkata Rayalu and Chidella Ramiah Rao served the Sabnavis Daftardar.¹

What went on in the Record Department was as crucial to the interests of the factions as to the power of the Government. To be able to arrange or disarrange records to suit their own purposes, to know how to reproduce records and put spurious copies either in the files or on the market, indeed, to have entire access and custody over records ; such were matters of concern to both factions. Besides, there were always petitioners, litigators, and local leaders who were willing to pay in order that the scales of justice or the balance of influence might be tipped and weighted in their own favor.

Convinced that the efficiency of management and supervision over the Daftarkhana should be increased, Goldingham put some new rules in the force within the Kacheri on July 20, 1838. Henceforth, copying

¹ Appendix F of Elliot's Report to BOR, April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 21: pp. 8170-71), No. 29 of December 6, 1847.

and extracting were not to be done in the record rooms. Original documents were to be sent straight to the Collector and he would direct the Sherista Department or the Munshi Department to take charge of reproduction. Extracts were to be made under the signature of the Head Munshi and any other chief officer concerned with the specific subject of the extract. None but the Daftardars and their staff were to enter the Daftarkhana unless given special permission by the Collector. The Daftarbands (Guards) were to register the names of persons whom they permitted to enter the Record Office.¹

While these reforms were certainly sound from an administrative point of view, they also served the interests of the Naib Sheristadar, Krishna Rao. Heretofore, his designs within the Daftarkhana had been hazardous, all operations having to pass under the suspicious and vigilant eye of Kotamaraj Venkata Rayalu. Once the records were sent up to his office, however, Krishna Rao hoped to have a free hand. In this he was disappointed. The Records staff under Venkata Rayalu's guiding hand dallied, delayed, and obstructed. Goldingham kept a close eye on documents which came up from the Record Office. Forced into more devious methods, Krishna Rao made use of one of the Daftarbands. According to both Venkata Rayalu and Shashagiri Rao, records were taken into the town at night and returned to their shelves before the Kacheri opened (probably at ten o'clock) in the morning. In this way "whole books were copied afresh" and alterations were inserted

¹ ibid. (281: 21: pp.8172-73). Goldingham to BOR (Question 122), October 19, 1841: Guntur District Records (No. 49 in vol. 5399: pp. 121-124).

freely.¹

Strife in the Daftarkhana finally broke into the open. In 1840, each side charged the other with having engaged in wholesale fraud for two or three years.² Both parties accused each other of taking records home at night. The terrible confusion of departmental work and of records was attributed by each of the Daftardars to these frequent removals and replacings. Deliberate attempts to frustrate administration had been made by both factions in their attempts to grapple with each other.

A story told by Kotamaraj Venkata Rayalu, even if false, is illustrative of the conflict. According to the Daftardar, one afternoon he had seen the son of Sheikh Maikhtum, the Daftarband, in close conversation with two Vaishnavite Brahmans under the trees outside the Kacheri. Suspecting that something was afoot, Venkata Rayalu had locked up and given the appearance of leaving for home. The Daftarband's son and the Brahmans had soon entered the building and opened a daftaramu (a file of records). Entering the room quickly, Venkata Rayalu had caught them looking over some papers, but had been unable to get satisfactory explanations. The following morning, these same Brahmans had presented a petition laying claim to four kuchelas (or about 30 acres) of land in Narainilapalli, a village in Rachur Thana. Namburi Krishniah, a Sabnavis partisan who was Amin of Guntur

¹ Appendix F of Elliot Report, op.cit. (281: 21: 8172). And Goldingham to BOR, op.cit. (No.49: 5399: page 130).

² Goldingham to BOR, ibid. (pages 123-129).

Thana, had come and ordered the necessary documents for the Naib Sheristadar in insolent language; moreover, these documents looked suspiciously as if they had been altered.¹

In looking over the confusing welter of charges and counter-charges, Goldingham could discover little more than the existence of chaos and corruption. Wholesale tampering could not have been done without support from leaders in the Sheristakhana; moreover the great backlog of work merely added confusion and facilitated tampering. He was unable to separate the guilty from the non-guilty. Finally, he considered dismissing the entire staff of the Daftarkhana and employing specially selected officers to straighten up the department and to arrange the records properly. When this suggestion was put before the Board early in 1842, it was turned down. The Board would not recommend such a measure to the Government "without the fullest conviction of its absolute necessity,"² a conviction which they did not share.

Thus, little was done to remedy the situation and the Dafterkhana continued in the same state of confusion and conflict. Both factions possessed friends in the Record Office. Records required by the Sherista Department needed only a requisition slip signed by the Sheristadar; and those needed by the Munshi and Magistrate Departments, an order signed by the Collector; but he often signed or allowed the

¹ Appendix F of Elliot Report, op.cit. (281: 21: 8173-74).

² BOR Proceedings (on Collector's letter of January 24, 1842), No. 9 of February 24, 1842: Guntur District Records (5373: 103-104).

Naib Sheristadar to sign as a matter of course.¹ Both sides were able to accomplish their purposes to the detriment of the administration.

B. ASSISTANCE FROM ALLIES OUTSIDE THE HUZUR

The result of the dispute (described above) which occurred late in 1840 followed according to the pattern of previous occasions. Given a choice between the report of the Collector and the deposition of the Huzur Sheristadar, the Board of Revenue completely overruled Goldingham and supported Shashagiri Rao. Adopting the arguments of the Sheristadar, the Board rebuked Goldingham for his treatment of Shashagiri Rao and for permitting Krishna Rao to exercise so much power within the Huzur Kacheri. Since Krishna Rao had taken advantage of the trust placed in him by the Collector, he was to be suspended while charges made against him were investigated. Goldingham was ordered not to employ Krishna Rao in the Huzur any more and to reinstate Shashagiri Rao, restoring to him the full powers of Huzur Sheristadar.² Realizing, however, that the bitter animosity between Goldingham and Shashagiri Rao could be detrimental to the administration, the Board was willing to consider a new arrangement, but only if an equivalent post were found for Shashagiri Rao and if a fully qualified person were found to take his place.³

¹ Elliot Report to BOR (para 95), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7630), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Goldingham to BOR, October 19, 1841: GDR (No. 49: 5399: pp. 103, 126-27).

² BOR to Goldingham, No. 15 of November 11, 1841: MRP (MRO: pp. 15678-16011).

³ BOR to Goldingham, No. 16 of December 16, 1841: MRP (MRO: pp. 18799-805).

1. The Attack of Kotur Rayal Naidu

Meanwhile an attack had been launched by the District Munsif of Chabrolu against Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao. Kotur Rayal Naidu had brought the enmity of the Sabnavis faction upon himself in 1830 when he had exposed a number of officers attached to the Zillah Court. The injured officers had countered by bringing charges against him in 1832 which had been dismissed by the Sadr Adalat in 1833 with the comment "that a spirit of malice existed against the District Moonsiff."¹ Further charges against him had been dismissed for the same reason by the Northern Provincial Court in 1836. Late in 1840, four persons (the brothers Petrigunta Venkiah and Subbiah, Dachamana Vuganah and Mathur Subha Rao) came before Goldingham in the Magistrate's (Public) Kacheri and accused Rayal Naidu of misappropriation. After hearing other witnesses and recalling that there had been rumours of a deficiency in the Public Cash of Chabrolu for some time, Goldingham sent Edmund Story, the Assistant Judge, to look into the matter. A deficiency was found.² In retaliation, Rayal Naidu attacked the Naib Sheristadar.

A petition was presented to the Collector charging Krishna Rao and his friends with conspiracy to bring false accusations, with malversation to the extent of 40,000 rupees, and with not paying the full

¹ Sadr Adalat Proceedings, April 22, 1833, as quoted in Elliot Report to BOR (para 56), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7540-42), No. 39 of Dec. 6, 1847.

² Goldingham to BOR (para 4), March 24, 1841: GDR (5399: 28-32). Elliot Report, ibid.

salaries of a number of officers. The Court Sheristadar (Namagadda Narasinga Ramakrishnamah), the Manager of the Magistrate Department, the Amin of Chabrolu (Tota Krishnama), the Head Assistant Sheristadar (J.A. Somayajulu Subhiah), the Huzur Maddatgar (Ambarkhana Purushothum, Shashagiri Rao's son-in-law) and others supported this charge.¹

In February of 1841, Goldingham was requested to forward information relative to the Appeal Petition of Rayal Naidu. In complying with this request, Goldingham pointed out that the petition arose out of "a vindictive feeling."² On cross-examination it was apparent that the charges had been planned in consultation with the Huzur Sheristadar, "the Monsiff having been engaged in suborning false evidence to support what he had set forth in the accusation."³ Goldingham remarked:

...it can be in extreme cases only that the conduct of a public officer in the Judicial line, as the District moonsiff is, can be justified in standing forth as a Public accuser of a high Revenue Servant, soliciting not the usual mode of enquiry...but requiring a Commission of Enquiry and all this with a personal charge only, or rather, a general statement that "charges will be preferred."⁴

He felt that the petition should "be treated as it deserved" and forgotten.⁵

¹ Goldingham to BOR (para 2), March 24, 1841: GDR (5399: 28-32). Elliot Report to BOR (para 56), April 17, 1846: op.cit.

² ibid. (para 3).

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid. (para 6).

⁵ ibid. (para 3).

However, the matter was not forgotten; for while the Board deemed it "unnecessary to pursue the matter further" and indicated their disapproval of Rayal Naidu, charges and counter-charges continued to be made.¹ Ultimately, the Sadr Adalat pronounced the charges against Rayal Naidu "to be the result of combination and intrigue" coming from acts which "justly gained him the applause of his superiors" and appointed him to a better position in another district.² In 1843, after a special investigation, the Assistant Judge of Guntur (Henry Wood) declared that the charges made against Krishna Rao by Rayal Naidu were to be "assigned to the spirit of faction existing in the district" and should be dismissed.³ By that time, however, Goldingham had been gone from the district for some time.

2. The Incursion of Manganuri Lakshimarsu Rao

The prohibition against Krishna Rao's working in the Huzur being as definite as it was, a new force was thrown into the struggle against Nyapati Shashagiri Rao and the Kacheri elite. Taking advantage of the Board's willingness to consider some other arrangement for Shashagiri Rao, Goldingham moved him to a Ghaibatu Aminship, also transferred Krishna Rao into the field, and nominated a Sabnavis ally from outside the district to become the Head of the Office.

¹ BOR to Goldingham (paras 1 and 2), April 15, 1841: GDR (5372: 451).

² Elliot Report to BOR (para 56), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20; 7541)

³ ibid. (para 56), p. 7542. See also: Goldingham to BOR, August 11, 1841: GDR (5399: pp. 50-51).

Manganuri Lakshminarsu Rao was an experienced Desastha who had "served the Company for twenty-seven years."¹ Coming into the service at the time Thomas Oakes had been trying to bring factional strife under control, Lakshminarsu had since served at one time or another in all of the revenue departments. During the salt scandals which had afflicted Guntur and Nellore in 1817, he had been Head Assistant of the Investigating Committee, composed of John Vaughan and John Anstey - he was not backward about taking credit for the work. In 1826, he had gone to Nellore and for over seven years had been either a ghaibatu or a huzur Sheristadar. Under Christopher Thompson, Edward Smalley, and John Whish, his reputation had grown. Whish had wanted him to be Huzur Sheristadar of Nellore and George Russel had recommended him to the Collector of Rajahmundry. As Shashagiri Rao's successor in Rajahmundry, Lakshminarsu had assisted Patrick Grant in uncovering "glaring abuses" in the Salt Department; but after Grant's departure, he had refused a 70 rupee writership as unbecoming to his dignity and experience and had resigned.²

the
When/unemployed Manganuri Lakshminarsu Rao was offered the Huzur Sheristadarship of Guntur in November, 1841, the cautious Desastha visited the members of the Board of Revenue to see how his nomination would be received. Receiving assurances, he set out for Guntur and

¹ Goldingham to BOR, January 28, 1842. MRP (MRO: 1850: pp.16999-17013), No. 27 of February 10, 1842. This includes letter by M. Lakshminarsu Rao.

² Appendix A of Goldingham's letter to BOR (containing history and references of Manganuri Lakshminarsu Rao dated for December 21, 1841), January 28, 1842: MRP (MRO: 1850: pp. 16999-17013), No. 27 of February 10, 1842.

arrived on December 16th. That very day, a letter was dispatched from the Board of Revenue refusing to confirm Goldingham's latest arrangements either for the new nomination or for the placement of Shashagiri Rao. Without offering any concrete suggestions, the Board simply stated that adequate provision for a person of such ability and experience as Shashagiri Rao had not been made.¹

The inexplicable action of the Board in reversing their earlier position was received by the Collector with consternation and embarrassment.⁺ He informed Lakshimarsu of the Board's decision and offered him the Naib Sheristadarship -- a position worth only 70 rupees a month. Lakshminarsu refused saying that he did not want to work "...especially under Nyapaty Sheshagherry Row who was formerly employed in the Magistrate Department for most of his whole service and is not considered a very clever revenue servant."²

In remonstrating with the Board of Revenue, Goldingham explained that he had already put the Board's suggestions of November 11th into effect. The new orders of December 16th placed him "in great difficulty." Had not the Board agreed that the services of Shashagiri Rao "could no longer be beneficially exercised in his present situation"?³

¹ BOR to Goldingham, No. 16 of December 16, 1841: MRP (MRO: pp.18799-805).

⁺ Note: A glance at the India Register of 1841 will show that there were two changes in permanent membership and two temporary members serving the Board of Revenue at this time. This problem will be dealt with more extensively in the following chapters.

² Appendix A of Goldingham to BOR, January 28, 1842: MRP (MRO: 16999-17013), No. 27 of February 10, 1842.

³ Goldingham to BOR (para 2), January 28, 1842: ibid.

Had not Lakshminarsu even been advised by the Board to be "careful and obedient" in his new appointment? How, then, could the Board have changed its mind so suddenly? "These circumstances," he wrote, "added to my responsibility for the public interest place me in a position of greatest perplexity."¹

Again the matter was appealed to the Government. He was reminded that the Government could only be consulted through proper channels. The Collector explained that Krishna Rao had only been used to counter the foot-dragging of Shashagiri Rao. Krishna Rao was now gone and if Lakshminarsu were also removed, "the public interest would be abandoned."² The fact that the Vasireddy Zamindari was about to come under amani management again made the problem particularly critical. Administration demanded more in a Huzur Sheristadar than a person who possessed "not even the ordinary qualifications."³

I beg you to appoint Mungannury Latchmenarsoo as Head Sheristadar. To reinstate Nyapaty Shashagherry Row is tantamount to the removal of responsibility from the Collector, which the Board should wish to preserve.⁴

To turn against Lakshminarsu would be unjust treatment to an old servant. To allow Shashagiri Rao to control Guntur until a proper position were found for him would be folly since the Sheristadar had no wish to leave and since no other district would employ such an officer.⁵

¹ ibid. (para 3).

² Goldingham to BOR (para 2), January 28, 1842: MRP (MRO: pp.16999-17013), No. 27 of February 10, 1842.

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid. (para 3).

⁵ ibid. (para 2).

Despite this final plea, the Board remained adamant. Shashagiri Rao's removal was unauthorized and completely out of the question. Goldingham was rebuked first for not furnishing the Board with a copy of his communication to the Government and secondly for including private conversations which Lakshminarsu had held with Board members within the appendix of an official (Government) communication -- a practice highly offensive to the Board.¹

3. The Attachment of the Vasireddy Zamindari.

The circumstances which led to the attachment of the Vasireddy Zamindari and, subsequently, of the other zamindaris will be given a fuller treatment in the next chapter. It is sufficient to say here that the Zamindars, Ramanadha Babu in particular, had not fulfilled the terms of the agreement whereby they were supposed to manage their own estates as Amildars under the supervision of the Collector. The importance of the Vasireddy attachment in this instance lies in the fact that it was the last attempt by Goldingham to unseat Shashagiri Rao before he left the district.

Early in the morning of January 8, 1842, Henry Newill (the young Acting Assistant Collector) and Lakshminarsu hurried the twenty-three miles from Guntur to the Vasireddy palace at Amaravati to complete the attachment. Coming without warning, they hoped to secure the Zamindari daftars before they could be hidden or replaced with fabrications. Having previously learned that confidential records and

¹ BOR to Goldingham, No. 28 of February 10, 1842: MRP (MRO: pp. 16999-17013). Also: MRP (280: 28: 436-39), Nos. 37 and 38 of Jan. 18, 1842.

money were kept in a small store-room adjacent to the bazaar, they went straight to this room. Ramanadha Babu had been warned, however, and was already there. Admittance was refused on grounds that the room contained the Zamindar's private "lingam" (phallic symbol of religious worship) and other personal belongings. Not wanting to violate religious prejudices but strongly convinced that daftars and money were in the room, Newill affixed seals to the door and stationed guards outside it. Entrance was still refused the next day; but on the third day, Ramanadha Babu willingly permitted a search. Nothing important could be found; but inspection showed that the beams had been cut and roof tiles disturbed. Obviously the room had been entered during the night.¹

After investigation showed that at least 57,557-12-10 rupees of revenue had been withheld during the previous year (fasli 1250), Ramanadha Babu confessed to Newill that he had been inspired to act as he had by Nyapati Shashagiri Rao who "expected daily to be reinstated in the office of Hoozoor Sheristadar," and that he had merely "yielded to ill-advice."²

Three weeks later, the Vasireddy daftars were being examined by two Maddatgars of the Sheristakhana when an envelope addressed to Ramanadha Babu by Shashagiri Rao was found. The officers, Brahmans

¹ Goldingham to BOR (Case No. 1), January 31, 1842: GDR (5399: 235-37).

² Goldingham to BOR (Case No. 1), January 31, 1842: GDR (5399: 238-41).

named Ananta Narasimhulu and Poligaraja Ramaswami, took their find to M. Lakshminarsu who apparently was still acting as Huzur Sheristadar. The envelope contained a letter asking the Zamindar to provide employment for two friends who had been carefully trained while Shashagiri Rao was Sheristadar of Rajahmundry. Although there was no date nor signature, Narasimhulu and Ramaswami who had also been volunteers in Rajahmundry at that time identified the writing as being that of Nyapati Shashagiri Rao.¹

Shashagiri Rao admitted that the writing was his. The volunteers in question had followed him to Guntur. As Sita Ram's assistant, he had not been able to find them any work; but because Ramanadha Babu had just been put in possession of his zamindari, he had sent his friends to Chintapalli in search of employment. They had been made Samatdars by the Zamindar.²

CONCLUSION

In a struggle for power between factions of district officers in Guntur, it was not possible for officers of the State, namely the Europeans to remain aloof. Any attempt by the State to implement policy or to strengthen control by measures calculated to increase efficiency was bound to involve a giving of support to the group which seemed

¹ ibid. (Case No. 2), pp.242-43.

² ibid. pp. 244-45. Extract BOR Proceedings to Collector of Guntur. No. 14 of February 21, 1842: GDR (5373: 105-107). "... There is nothing whatever to be gathered...which can warrant the belief that Sashagherry Row has exercised any undue influence over the affairs of Ramanadha Baboo."

most likely to promote this end.

It is clear that the State officers were as divided in their policies as the district officers whom they wished to control. Goldingham's efforts to bring reform and discipline to the personnel of the administration might have succeeded if he had been supported by the Board of Revenue and given a little more freedom to exercise his own judgment. In supporting the cause of the old elite, the Board of Revenue bent over backwards to ensure fairness and justice to district personnel. The Board was not as careful, during this period, in supporting their Collector or in strengthening the ties of central control over district administration. Unable to blunt the determination of the Collector or to bend him to their wishes, the Board's decisions created a stalemate and a paralysis of State control. If anything, the old bureaucratic elite became stronger as a result.

During almost five years, Goldingham failed to cope with Shashagiri Rao and his organized following. By backing Krishna Rao and by finally bringing Lakshminarsu Rao to Guntur he sought to create a counter-poise to the entrenched party. He failed to convince his superiors in Madras that the troubles of the Guntur District were attributable to administrative rather than economic deterioration.

CHAPTER FOURTHE COMBINATION OF LOCAL INFLUENCES AGAINST THE STATE: 1837-1845

INTRODUCTION

I. FAILURE OF THE EXPERIMENT WITH ZAFTI ZAMINDARS

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1. The Village of Attalur in Kurupad Thana
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CONCLUSION

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CHAPTER FOUR

THE COMBINATION OF LOCAL INFLUENCES AGAINST THE STATE: 1837-1845

Confused concepts underlying the administrative superstructure of Madras seem to have existed during this period. Political, legal, and practical ideas, together with deeper moral and philosophical views, were intermingled with varying degrees of knowledge and differing interpretations of a very complex and diverse Indian subcontinent. Information which climbed the rungs of the administrative hierarchy was hammered and bent at each level. Decisionsemerging out of disputation at the top of the ladder were twisted and mangled as they descended from level to level until they reached the bottom. The practical carrying out of decisions was the sum of this confused process added to what authority, skill, and common sense happened to be possessed (or not possessed) by the officer on the spot. The initiation, ratification, and implementation of policy were elements which were far from precise and often inconsistent.

Certain notions of land-tenure and ownership which were applied to the nature and function of zamindaris emerge from this confused process of thinking, deciding, and acting. First, there was the idea that land was (or ought to be) privately owned and that, being as natural as the laws of Nature, such ownership should be protected and yet freed from as many arbitrary and artificial restrictions as possible. Associated with this was the idea that political stability in the mufassal depended upon natural and hereditary lords who commanded loyalty from local people. Second, there was the idea that those who

were powerful enough to guarantee security so that land could be cultivated and wealth produced ought to share in the benefits of such enterprise. Associated with this was another idea that the stability of the State and the prosperity of the mufassal depended upon a wise and efficient apportioning of wealth by the Government.¹⁺

Emphasis upon one or more of these ideas was not evenly distributed within the administrative hierarchy. Roughly two streams of thought converged upon the Madras Government from below. Judicial authorities tended to think of the Proprietors and their Estates in legalistic and English terms. Rights of ownership were even occasionally imputed to Ryots and lowly cultivators. Forever faced with a backlog of litigation in cases of disputed succession, bad debts, and other claims against personal or family property, the judiciary were removed somewhat from the heat and dust of the villages. (They were often accused of ignorance and incapacity). Revenue authorities, on the other hand, possessed years of experience in managing zamindaris attached (zafted) for arrears and in trying to catch evasive village leaders. The executive were not as prone to dwell upon the sacredness of private property. The Government's share of production (one-third)

¹ A summary of these views may be found in J.W.Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company (London: 1853), pp. 202-233. A.L.Basham, The Wonder that was India (London: 1954), pp. 109-10, 191, holds that royal (state) ownership was a commonly held notion in ancient times but that laissez-faire philosophy of the 19th century tended to alter such an interpretation. B.H.Baden-Powell, Land-Systems of British India, Vol. I (London: 1892), pp. 125, 197, 201, 291, discounts land ownership as such and supports the idea of concurrent interest in agricultural produce. Vera Anstey, The Economic Development of India (London: 1952), pp. 97-100, questions whether the concept of absolute land ownership existed. As far as Guntur is concerned, I support the second view. See Chapter One. +Note: These views were sometimes blended in varying degrees, thus adding confusion to the theoretical and practical manifestations of policy.

was much too large to be thought of in more than practical and administrative terms. The problem was not who owned the land but whether a proper share of the harvest went to each party having a claim upon it. If the Zamindar, who looked more like an autonomous revenue official (an Amildar) than a Proprietor, failed in the responsibilities delegated to him, it was up to the Government to make sure of its share of what was produced.

The Governor-in-Council were buffeted by both of these streams. Both were transmitted to London. The jobbing and intrigue for which Madras was notorious would suggest that information and opinions supporting these ideas were also submitted privately (see chapter five).¹

While both the Madras and London authorities were concerned with matters of immediate and practical expediency, such as financial and political stability (the corollary ideas shown above), the Home Authorities were more preoccupied with principles and rights and the Local Authorities were more concerned with actual conditions and practices. The Madras Government was more flexible and responsive to the immediate and contingent than was the Court of Directors. What happened if a local chief was treated without due respect could be seen in Vizagapatam, Kurnool, and Malabar. What happened if a local chief was treated with too much respect could be seen in Madura, Nellore,

¹ When controversy over general revenue policy broke into the open in the 1850's, a number of polemical writings were published. J.B.W. Dykes, Salem, an Indian Collectorate (London: 1853), is the best. Ironically, a revenue officer wrote against ryotwari and in favor of zamindars and a Madras lawyer supporter ryotwari, though both denounced the Government. P.B. Smollet, Madras: Its Civil Administration. J.B. Norton, A Letter to Robert Lowe on the Condition and Requirements of the Presidency of Madras (Madras: 1854).

Guntur, and Rajahmundry. On the whole, the Court of Directors took a more tolerant view of the Zamindars, who caused disturbances and who defaulted on revenue, than did the Madras Government. At the same time, the Court was anything but tolerant with the Local Government for allowing such things to happen. In the background, it would seem that while the Board of Control failed to show the same enthusiasm for the landed Proprietors as the Court, it did not hesitate to blame the Madras Government for its failings, particularly after 1845.

It must be hastily added, however, that these broad generalizations are largely conjectural. While the general tone of despatches from London to Madras may be obtained, this is hardly more than a superficial impression of the policy-making process. An intense and thorough analysis of the way in which various elements strengthened or neutralized the force of a decision has yet to be accomplished (for the whole Presidency). Nevertheless, the formation of policy as it applied to Guntur throws light upon the broader scene; and gives us a faint glimmer of what was going on outside the district.

I. FAILURE OF THE EXPERIMENT WITH ZAFTI-ZAMINDARS⁺

It has already been pointed out (in chapter two) that the Court of Directors adopted the experiment suggested by Alexander Bruce⁺⁺ of

⁺ Zafti:- Attached or seized by Government. H.H.Wilson, Glossary... p.561.

⁺⁺ Note: Bruce was one of those whom Elphinstone shunted into a relatively harmless post as Post-Master General and, later, as Civil Auditor.

of delivering the five attached zamindars of Guntur back into the hands of their legal owners on the condition that they manage their estates as Amildars (Revenue Officer) on behalf of the Government. Two months later, on July 11, 1838, the Court explained its position further.

We entirely approve of your instructions to the Collector to proportion your demand of Government to the means which the Zamindar may possess of discharging it, leaving the outstanding balances which have been occasioned by no neglect or default on his part for future adjustment.¹

Appalled at the devastation of the famine and particularly at the two-thirds loss of population in the Sattanapalli Zamindari, the Directors argued that "whenever the Proprietors [had] shown by their past conduct that they [were] competent to perform the duties required of them, "it would be better to allow them to retain management of their estates than to put the management directly under Government officers."² It was not considered reasonable that the Zamindars should be lowered in the estimation of their people for a default which was "in no wise attributable to them but owing solely to the unusually adverse nature of the season."³

A. THE BEHAVIOR OF THE ZAMINDARS AS AMILDARS

In order to understand how the experiment of having Zamindars work as Amildars failed, it is necessary to trace briefly some of the developments of Goldingham's administration. At least a part of the explanation behind the failure of the Zamindars to behave as proper

¹ Extract of a General Despatch from the COD (paras 71-72), July 11, No. 10 of 1838: GDR (5370: 236-38).

² ibid.

³ ibid.

revenue managers lies in the unrealistic arrangements for supervision which were made.

1. Inadequate Supervision

Goldingham's first Jamabandi Report (Fasli 1246: 1836-37), which was submitted on February 3, 1838, went into considerable detail in showing the incompetence of the Zamindars, their evasive and oppressive behavior, and the utter unfitness of their diwans. He suggested that expenditure should be tightly limited, a strict accounting be required, and a careful control of the zamindari personnel be maintained. He was anything but satisfied with the direction in which the experiment was turning.¹

Seven months later, on August 2, 1838, the Board of Revenue acted upon his suggestions. After going to great lengths to defend the administration of the Zamindars and of their servants by quoting the favorable reports of Alexander Bruce and Malcolm Lewin,² the Board gave a general summary of their position. The experiment had been entered upon with consideration and an awareness of the difficulties; but "under certain restrictions and with a proper superintendence on the part of Officers of the District, the system might still be carried out with advantage."³ The orders given for insuring an efficient administration, however, were anything but

¹ Goldingham (Jamabandi Report) to BOR (paras 11-42, 60), February 3, 1838: GDR (No. 1: 5394: 32-63).

² Extract BOR Proceedings (paras 19-31), August 2, 1838: GDR (5369: 123-45).

³ ibid. (para 32).

reassuring. For, after agreeing that the expenses of management and family subsistence should be fixed and "placed under strict control" and after stipulating that a prospective estimate of receipts and disbursements was to be required at the commencement of each season, "which should on no account be exceeded," the Board added:

It will be the duty of the Collector to see that this is sufficiently liberal but at the same time not unnecessarily profuse and that the Servants to whom the Zemindars entrust the administration of their Estates are competent and trustworthy. The details of the Zemindar's management should not be interfered with; but the Collector by a personal visit to and inspection of the Estate during the course of the year should satisfy himself of the mode of administration pursued and should see that the collections realised are accounted for.¹

The Collector was instructed to take care not to press the Zamindars too closely. After all, considering their former opulence and prosperity and the present condition of their country, which exhibited "a destruction of life unprecedented in any District in this Presidency,"² these "Ancient Zemindars"⁺ were not to lose all hope of obtaining help from the Government. The Board concluded their proceedings by urgently requesting that the arrears should be written off and that a progressively increasing peshkash (demand) should be fixed until the zamindaris were restored to normal.³

The Governor-in-Council approved of the Board's sentiments and felt that the Zamindars were not so incompetent or evasive as the

¹ ibid (para 33).

² ibid (para 34). ⁺Note: Guntur Zamindars were not officially so classified.

³ ibid (para 35)

Collector had reported.¹

In the meanwhile, another fasli had passed with much the same results. Although the Collector had spent a good deal of time in each of the zamindaris and was able to report on his observations in great detail -- he was prying into every corner and probing deeply into the history of the district --, the Zamindars continued in refusing to show their accounts. Total collections for the year were less than half of the peshkash (Rs. 6,08,358 vs. Rs. 12,25,458).²

The next fasli (1248: 1838-39) was the first in which Goldingham tried to carry out the recommendations of the Board. He had also been ordered by Charles Cotton, the Second Member of the Board who had been deputed by the Government on the orders of the Court of Directors to conduct a sweeping enquiry into the economic and financial decay of the Presidency, to make a thorough investigation of the social and economic affairs of Guntur.³ Thus, doubly armed, the Collector renewed his efforts and, after the most penetrating examination which he had so far undertaken, he produced two remarkable reports.

Goldingham's report to C.R.Cotton is not of concern here since it

¹ Extract Minute of Consultation (para 8), September 11, 1838: GDR (5369: 174-83).

² Goldingham Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1247 to BOR (paras 11-27), September 6, 1838: GDR (No. 54: 182-206). Extract BOR Proceedings (paras 12-24), March 14, 1839: GDR (5370: 51-68). Extract Minute of Consultation (paras 3-6), May 23, 1839: GDR (5370: 142-45).

³ Extract BOR Proceedings, July 30, 1838: GDR (5369: 121-122). Minute of Consultation, July 20, 1838. COD Despatch, No. of August 30, 1837.

did not come under scrutiny for another sixteen months; however, his Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1248 was also a prodigious achievement, particularly when the opposition which he met both from his Huzur officers and from the Zamindars is considered. In spite of protests, an attempt was made to confine subsistence, management (sibandi and sadaravarudu), and ceremonial allowances within reasonable limits. At least some idea of Kamatamu land, that richest and most productive land reserved for the private cultivation of the Zamindar, was obtained. The Repalli Zamindar alone admitted that he personally saw to the cultivation of over 9,000 acres of kamatamu land along the river. Many other extra sources of income for the Zamindars were uncovered; but it was impossible to arrive at any exact estimate as to total real income of the Zamindars. Although Goldingham was able to give detailed descriptions of the zamindaris enumerating and classifying the villages, the soils, the sources of water, and the people, he was not successful in obtaining zamindari accounts. By pointing at various irregularities and excesses of expenditure -- the Chilkalurpadu family admitted spending Rs. 22,977 for subsistence and the Sattanapalli Zamindar incurred and paid heavily on private debts -- Goldingham was able to show that the Zamindars had no intention of keeping faith with the Government for their stewardship.¹

In summing up his general views on the present condition and future prospects of the zamindaris, Goldingham observed that while

¹ Goldingham [Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1248] to BOR (paras 12-55), October 29, 1839: GDR (No. 60: 5397: 110-74).

cooperation in the details of management had not been received, he had been able to draw his own conclusions. There was an obvious tendency to depart from the makta (fixed money field assessment) system and ijara (renting) system for the kailu (sharing "heaps") system. This enabled the Zamindar to take full advantage of high prices and bountiful harvest to the detriment of both the cultivators and the Government.

The working and ultimate tendency of the Zemindary Principles have been fully developed by the History of the last 38 years of Revenue administration in the District. It remains to be seen what the ultimate effects of the administration of the Zamindars as Managers under a peculiar crisis of their financial obligations is to be.¹

Annual collections from any one zamindari had yet to reach 70 percent of the permanent settlement. The Zamindars had not only failed to stay within their fixed allowances, but they had resorted to all of the various kinds of extra exactions (nazrs, darbari kharch, gifts to gods, etc.) which were traditional. Finally, a comparison with previous expenses of amani management or the current expenses of amani for the Malraju Estate showed how costly the Amildari experiment had become.²

When the Board of Revenue dealt with this report eleven months later, on September 10, 1840, they were anything but pleased. After remarking on the lack of specific accounting and on the departure from the scale of expenses which the Collector had set, they observed:

The Board are still of the opinion, however, that with firmness and energy on the part of the Collector, the views which they have so frequently mentioned and repeated might easily be carried out in practice.³

¹ Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1248 (para 70): op.cit.

² ibid (paras 68-73).

³ Extract BOR Proceedings (para 19), September 10, 1840: GDR (5371: 168-191).

Accounts from villages ought to have been easily obtained showing results for the year which could be compared with the outturn of former years, "which must be forthcoming in [the Collector's] Cutcherry."¹ For any obviously great deficit, an officer should have been deputed personally for an investigation.

Abstract Village Accounts at the beginning and at the close of each year should be peremptorily insisted upon and full explanation required upon any discrepancy between the real and the supposed accounts. If to this be added conciliatory bearing toward the Zamindars themselves and a desire to assist them...in the difficulties of their position..., it is not doubted but that a sufficient control might be established upon the Zamindars' management for all practical purposes.²

Noting that arrears of revenue had now reached the enormous sum of 43 lakhs, the Board called for some extraordinary remedy. In their anomalous position, holding and managing their lands at the simple pleasure of the Government, liable to be ejected at any moment, deeply in debt, and hopeless of retrieving their affairs, the Zamindars should be prevented from diverting a large portion of the revenues to their private purposes.³ If the zamindari system was to be continued, either the peshkash (demand) should be lowered and the Zamindars allowed only a fixed percentage of amani revenues, or the zamindaris declared inalienable by sale for private debts and fully restored to their families. Some step was urgently called for.⁴

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings (para 19), September 10, 1840: GDR (5371: 168-191).

² ibid. (paras 20-21).

³ ibid. (para 43).

⁴ ibid. (paras 44-47).

No substantial change in policy occurred. The deterioration of control in the zamindaris continued throughout the remainder of Goldingham's administration. The following table shows the percentages of the permanent peshkash which was realized during the five years from 1838 through 1842.

TABLE SHOWING ROUGH PERCENTAGES OF PESHKASH REALIZED: FASLIS 1248-1252

Zamindaris	F. 1248	F. 1249	F. 1250	F. 1251	F. 1252
Repalli	66%	75%	73%	64%	68%
Sattanapalli	48	45	73	68	60
Chilkalurpad	55	62	62	58	41
Vasireddy	55	67	80	52	49
Malraju (<u>Amani</u>)	51	66	68	64	61

1

In spite of the Collector's efforts behind which there was the constant prodding of the Board and the Government, statements that "none of the four managing Proprietors rendered up their accounts of the administration of the year"² or words to that effect followed in dreary succession.

The failure of the Government in providing adequate supervision over their experimental amildari zamindars is not simply explained. It seems clear that the Government and the Zamindars were fundamentally at

¹ Figures obtained from several Jamabandi Reports and from Proceedings on the same. See: Extract BOR Proceedings (para 7), August 26, 1844: GDR (5375: 297-337). Extract BOR Proceedings (para 8), July 11, 1842: GDR (5373: 275-291). Detailed tables giving total figures for each years since the famine are to be found in each report and each proceeding.

² Extract BOR Proceedings (para 2), August 26, 1841: GDR (5372: 383-415).

cross-purposes and that understanding was lacking on both sides. It was not enough simply to order the Collector to procure the accounts as if from ordinary district officers. The Collector had no final sanctions to apply; nor had he any hand in the selection and certainly no power to remove recalcitrant zamindars. The Zamindars continued to retain more than ordinary amildari powers over their territories. Their uncertainty about the future in the light of their enormous public and private debts seems to have made them reckless. Instead of cooperating with the Collector to recover the financial independence of their territories, "they [turned] the remaining period of their temporary authority as much as possible to their own advantage."¹

2. Inordinate Malversation.

What neither the Collector, the Board, nor the Government had the means of knowing at the time were the great lengths to which the Zamindars had gone to enrich themselves. The details of their malversation did not come to the surface until 1845 when Walter Elliot, the Board Member who was deputed as a special commissioner to Guntur, conducted a village by village investigation into the minutia of district affairs. These details are so profuse that only a few will be given to illustrate the general nature of zamindari operations.

Money exactions, called nazrs or nazranas, were taken from the villages on every sort of pretext. These may generally be divided

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings (para 7), August 26, 1841: GDR (5372: 383-415), on the Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1249, November 21, 1840: GDR (5397: 277 ff.).

into those which were of a personal, family, or religious nature and those which were of an agricultural nature.

Extraordinary levies for personal, family, or religious and ceremonial purposes were very indefinite, varying according to the size and strength of each village, the kind of occasion, the temper of the people, the economic conditions of the season, and the urgency of the Zamindar's need. Anywhere from 10 to 800 and even up to 1,600 rupees were taken/for each occasion. The marriage of a daughter of a Zamindar or of his diwan, the end of a Zamindar's minority, the birth of a child (of a son in particular), the inauguration of a child's education, the investiture of sacred thread, the rebuilding of a palace (e.g. Sattanapalli) or repair of a fort-gate (e.g. Repalli), the purchase of elephants and horses, the manufacture of gold and silver plate, and countless other large and small demands for katnamu (presents) and nazrana (offerings) were made. Whether the occasion for exaction were invented to meet a particular need or whether the exaction so procured were disbursed for its supposed object, a zamindar invariably found some reason to ask for more.¹

Exactions at various stages of agricultural production and upon various kinds of land and produce were much more regular. Usually about 2 rupees for cutting and 2 rupees for thrashing (called kat-kata) with an additional nazr of 4 rupees, making a total of 8 rupees, would be levied from each village in the zamindari. A fee called

¹ Elliot [Commission of Enquiry] Report to BOR (paras 30-32), April 17, 1846: MRP (IOL: 280: 20 and 21: 7485-95), No. 39 of December 6, 1847. Appendix A and B contain a large number of detailed examples taken from among the 882 villages of Guntur proper.

putti kharch was charged for measuring, usually at a rate of 1 rupee for each putti (or kandi: 20 tums). Pressure on current payments or on old arrears in any of a wide variety of categories of land or production could be relaxed simply by making an extra contribution. A favorable kaul or darkhast (contract for land rent) would not be granted until induced by a special gift nor be honored without another gift. Nazrs were accepted from villages in order that the makta (fixed money assessment) and the ijara (renting) systems might be abandoned for the older and less reliable kailu or sharing system. [The more imprecise, difficult to record, or indefinite a system was, the more a village stood to gain.] The wealthiest villages in all five of the zamindaris were made to pay for no specified reason. Revenue collections were often taken and then never credited to the villages in the accounts of the Zamindars, being marked under such innocent headings as gifts and expenses. The whole of the richest wet lands in many of the large and wealthy villages were simply appropriated on one pretext or another; moreover, income from these assessed state (seri or circar) lands was not recorded. Usually these lands were claimed as old savarams or kamatams (private or personal lands) of the Zamindar's family or of his servants. A zamindari diwan, a favorite dancing girl, a family priest, mendicant, teacher or temple, a pressing creditor, a demanding relative: the number of grasping hands could not be counted. In addition, the Zamindars hid original accounts and leases and then rented villages out under fictitious names or under the cover of the names of their relatives and servants; moreover, these leases were

skillfully antedated and then filled with sleeping clauses which would benefit the Zamindar at some future period. The artifices employed were exceedingly varied and subtle.¹

A possible reason for the disparity between the theory and the operation of what defenders of the zamindari system called "the universal law of self-interest" apparently resulted from the habits and outlook of the Zamindars. Brought up in a period of profuse expenditure, nurtured on lavish extravagance, schooled to consider themselves rajahs by divine pleasure, the Zamindars were seemingly obliged to continue the ostentation necessary for supporting their personal assumptions or suffer social embarrassment and a painful loss of face. That prolonged recklessness, mismanagement, and short-sighted extortion might have added to the crushing force of natural calamities and that sustaining the outward appearance of more prosperous days by borrowing and by evasion and extortion might ultimately bring a day of reckoning obviously did not deter the Zamindars. While private creditors began to descend upon them like vultures and while the Government began to growl more loudly as its patience ran out, the Zamindars lived in a world of unreality. If self-interest was their

¹ Walter Elliot's Report (paras 32-34) with Appendices A and B, April 17, 1846: op.cit. Some of the villages are as follows: Nanakimavu, Gundlapalli, Chennapalli, Warukuchlapad, Nadenalenupudi, Unawa, Managadapurana, Uplapad, Vellatur, Pachelu, Tadipuru, Patibunda, Bapatla, Collepara, Uppatur, Komonur, Donapudi, Pedda Kondur, Kotapalli, Jalalapur, Tadikonda, Kumapadu, Madenala, Jalari, Mulpur, Nandigam, Golapadu, Irlapad, Kaniparu, Ippurapalem, Waragami, Patera, Penamudi, Kurupadu, Buddam, Nizampatam, Pedda Ganjam, etc., etc.

guiding principle, their policies were decidedly those of a myopic self-interest.¹

Of course the Zamindars were not always successful in obtaining what they wanted from the villages. It was necessary for them to reach down for increasing amounts of money without raising the alarm and calling down upon their heads the wrath of the Government, a task calling for the delicacy of a tight-rope artist. The village leaders had to be brought into consideration; for unless the independent and the sturdy were reconciled, a voice of protest would be heard. Hence, the Karnams, Munsifs and other influential villagers shared the benefits of extortion with the Zamindars to the detriment of the poorer people and to the loss of the State. Walter Elliot wrote that "it [was] not assuming too much to reckon that illicit gains must at the lowest computation have easily [exceeded] one-third of [the Zamindars'] actual receipts."²

B. THE SURRENDER OF THE ZAMINDARI SANADS

Meanwhile, deep heart-searchings had been going on for some time over the economic and financial plight of the Presidency. On August 30, 1837, the Court of Directors had ordered a thorough enquiry into the causes of decay in the country.³ On July 30, 1838, Charles Cotton

¹ Elliot Report (para 35), April 17, 1846: op.cit.

² ibid. (para 31)

³ COD Despatch to GOM (para 56), No. 13 of August 30, 1837: Madras Despatches (89: 443-519).

Acting Second Member of the Board of Revenue, had been deputed to undertake the investigation and all Collectors were ordered to cooperate.¹

Cotton had wished to make an extensive personal tour to obtain first-hand information from the districts. Lord Elphinstone, on the other hand, had felt that such a tour should only be undertaken for problem districts and that the benefits of the records and the trained staff in the Board's Kacheri at Madras would make it advisable to direct the investigation from the Presidency. It had been the Governor's opinion that a properly conducted general tour of inspection would have been an endless task, quite beyond the intentions of the Court of Directors.²

1. The Making of the Decision

After more than a year of gathering information, Goldingham dispatched his report on the condition of Guntur. He showed that the Zamindari Settlement had been a failure. The settlement had achieved little more than the realization of revenue for thirty years, and this, only by cancelling huge private debts and by constantly nursing the zamindaris back to health. Good seasons and high prices had merely delayed the inevitable day of reckoning. Although market prices had never fallen to the level at which the very light State demand

¹ BOR Proceedings, July 30, 1838: GDR (5369: 121-,22), with COD Despatch and GOM Minute of Consultation (July 20, 1838) included.

² Elphinstone to Henry Chamier (Chief Secretary), January 6, 1839: Elphinstone Collection (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.87), Governor's Letters Sent, Volume I, No. 85.

(peshkash) had been computed, neither the prosperity of the country nor the happiness of its people had been achieved.¹

Goldingham was certain that there was no way to control the Zamindars. Too much authority was delegated with too little justification or supervision. If the ryotwari system was destructive or inefficient, then it was the ^{Government's} Governor's fault and there were at least some tools for locating and correcting the trouble. If the machinery was weak or inefficient, direct remedies were available. If frequent transfer, natural inaptitude, or lack of support from Madras paralyzed the exercise of power in the Huzur, reforms could be made easily.

An efficient administration under the Ryotwari is always attainable under the Government; but an efficient administration of Zemindary is never attainable, because it depends on the Zemindars alone, whose moral qualities and principles of management are at variance with a prosperous state of the district.²

Zamindars were interested only in plans "to rack-rent the tenant, to overreach the Government, and to play the fool at Weddings, funeral obsequies, and poojahs."³

Before he could do more than make some preliminary observations on the Goldingham Report, Cotton's health failed and he was forced to leave India. John Sullivan, a member of the Council and a person who had known Munro and supported the Munro tradition, took charge of the

¹ Goldingham Report (paras 37-40), December 13, 1839: MRP (280: 7: 2537), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

² ibid. (para 90).

³ ibid. (para 91).

enquiry.¹

On December 24, 1840, Sullivan submitted his views on Goldingham's "very intelligent report." He fully agreed. Bad seasons, poor irrigation, irregular assessment, faulty management, frequent changes of Collectors, and harmful judicial procedures had certainly contributed to the condition of the district, but zamindari maladministration was the cardinal defect. The decay of Guntur District, which was more pronounced than that of any other district, had been epitomized in the words of local ryots who had said that "British Government [esteemed] the prosperity of the Ryots to be their treasure while the Zamindars [considered] the funds in their bags to be the same."² Had the Madras Regulations been strictly applied, the estates would have been sold long ago. One had but to compare the results of amani rule in Palnad with zamindari rule in Guntur proper to be convinced of the superiority of ryotwari principles. To Sullivan, the irretrievable embarrassment of the zamindars and the ruin of the ryots were "entirely owing to maladministration."³ He supported Goldingham and Cotton in the view that the zamindaris should be abolished and a ryotwari settlement introduced.

The Board of Revenue favored a plan by which the zamindaris would be purchased by the Government and then reconferred on the same

¹ Minute by Lord Elphinstone, October 28, 1840: Elphinstone Collection (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.87), Governor's Minutes, Volume III (Revenue Department: 1837-1842), pp. 212-214.

² John Sullivan to Chief Secretary of GOM (para 18), December 24, 1840: MRP (280: 7: 2351-2426), No. 30 of April 16, 1841.

³ ibid (para 20).

Zamindars with new sanads (deeds) which would stipulate that the estates were not liable for private debts contracted under the old sanads and which fixed the payable revenue below that of the permanent peshkash gradually raising it as local resources improved until it reached the old level.¹ The Board took the view that the permanent assumption of the zamindaris by the Government would be generally unpopular in the district.²

On April 16, 1841, the Governor-in-Council entirely endorsed the opinions of Sullivan over those of the Board. A general economic improvement together with an escape from uncertain seasons could only be achieved by a broad development of irrigation, something which the Zamindars would be neither willing nor able to do. Realizing the reluctance of the Court of Directors to the total abolition of the Guntur Zamindars, the Madras Government nevertheless could see no other solution. Further delay would only confirm the growing notion that zamindaris were never to be sold for arrears into a precedent. While "a respectable maintenance should be allowed to these ancient families," the Government should also be secured from loss and the people from ruin.³

By this time events in Guntur had moved a step closer to a final foreclosure. Manur Venkanna Rao, who had been co-proprietor with his

¹ BOR Proceedings (paras 44-45), September 10, 1840: GDR (5371: 168-191).

² ibid. The same is also in MRP (280: 7: 2323-350), No. 29 of April 16, 1840.

³ Minute of Consultation (para 33, also 25-32), April 16, 1841: GDR (5372: 213-229) or MRP (280: 8: 2782-2793), No. 31 of April 16, 1841.

murdered brother's widow since 1832, had died in November, 1840; moreover, there being no heirs and the widows being entirely incompetent, the estate had been attached a few days later. The assumption of the Vasireddy and Sattanapalli villages, "pending the receipt of final authority from the Home authorities,"¹ was proposed by the Board of Revenue on August 26, 1841; but the Government preferred to wait for the arrival of decisions from the Queen-in-Council and from the Court of Directors unless it should become "absolutely necessary" to go ahead with the zafting (attaching).²

Such a necessity soon occurred. On January 8, 1842, having watched the behavior of Vasireddy Ramanadha Babu with increasing anxiety for several months, Goldingham learned enough about the Zamindar's misbehavior to enable him to take over the 333 villages of this huge zamindari (see part II-C below and chapter three, part II-B,2.). Before the immense task of transferring control could be completed, however, Goldingham left the district.

The Court of Directors dispatched their decision on the Guntur Zamindars on June 21, 1842.³ While they did not adopt the suggestion of the Revenue Board that uncontrolled administration by the Zamindars should be restored on more favorable terms, the Court also were opposed to any harsh measure against the Zamindars or to any action

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 8, August 26, 1841: GDR (5372: 383-415)).

² Minute of Consultation (para 6), October 4, 1841: GDR (5372: 416-426).

³ COD Despatch to Madras, No. 14 of June 21, 1842: MD (97: 783-811). Also Board's Collections (Vol. 2272: Collection No. 116, 221), Draft 48 of 1849.

which might arouse strong local resentment. The Court would have preferred to have the Government nurse the zamindaris back to health and then, freed from public and private debts, to have restored the estates to their owners; however, the Board of Control insisted that the Collector could not possibly administer the zamindaris properly unless "a full surrender to Government of Proprietary interests" were obtained.¹ The zamindaris were not to be restored until a thoroughgoing reform and reorganization of their administrations was accomplished. Then, new sanads (title deeds) and kabuliats (agreements signed by the Zamindars) were to be put into effect "restraining them from interfering with any of the arrangements and rates of assessment which they may find in force in their Zemindaries without the express consent of your Government."² The biggest difficulty, what to do about the private creditors, was left entirely to the discretion of the Madras authorities.

Under the prodding of the Board of Control, the Court of Directors also directed a severe rebuke to the Madras Government for its personnel policies. After noting Goldingham's opinion that the frequent change of Collectors in Guntur had had the effect of leaving the district to take care of itself and after marking Sullivan's statement that without a doubt Goldingham's opinion applied with equal truth to all the districts

¹ ibid., (para 12).

² COD Despatch to Madras (para 8), No. 14 of June 21, 1842:
op.cit.

Madras, the Court wrote:

We have on more than one occasion expressed our disapprobation of these frequent changes which must often have the effect of causing the removal of the Collector just at the moment when he has acquired that degree of local experience absolutely requisite to enable him to obtain a proper insight into the wants and capabilities of his district and without which his services lose a great portion of their value. We are equally averse to the system now so prevalent of creating an unnecessary large number of acting appointments for the purpose of supplying a single temporary vacancy...To supply one vacancy, no less than four acting appointments were made.¹

The despatch ended with a general attack on irregular proceedings and deviations from established practice. Before the despatch could be sent, however, a provision specifically suited for Guntur was inserted by the Board of Control to the effect that the Collector of Guntur should be offered such extra allowances as "might induce the officer entrusted with the re-settlement...to remain in the District until its completion."²

2. The Enforcing of the Decision

Meanwhile the deterioration of Guntur had continued. Only one estate remained outside the direct control of the Government.³ What appeared to be a general tendency to encroach upon old assessments, to withhold collections of revenue, to relinquish unfavorable lands, and to evade administrative control was becoming more apparent.⁴

¹ ibid., (para 12).

² ibid., (para 11).

³ BOR Proceedings (para 4) July 9, 1842: GDR (5373: 275-291), on the Jamabandi Report for F. 1250. BOR Proceedings, July 11, 1842: GDR (5373: 267-73).

⁴ GOM Minute of Consultation, August 8, 1842: GDR (5373: 347-353).

On November 21, 1842, the Court's Despatch, the Government Minute of Consultation, and the Board's Proceedings for the enforcement of new policy were forwarded to Guntur. Stokes was ordered to enforce the surrender of the sanads of milkiat-istemari (possession in perpetuity) from the Zamindars,⁺ to decide upon a maintenance allowance for each Zamindar, and to uncover the private indebtedness of each Zamindar. In view of "the just rights of their creditors, public and private, it [was] imperative that the means for magnificence and luxury should not be provided" to the Zamindars, though they should have enough to support themselves respectably.¹ After the surrender was effected, a complete field survey and assessment was to be introduced. Papers illustrative of the most recent surveys in Bombay and Agra, copies of Munro's writings, and the Board's own views on the practical problems of introducing the system already prevailing in the Palnad were promised. The Board was anxious to prevent "vexatious and inquisitorial systems of Revenue" and "annoying interference of public servants" which were an increasingly chronic problem in amani administrations.²⁺⁺ Until a proper survey and assessment had been concluded, rents were to be

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 2), November 21, 1842: GDR (5373: 436-471).
 + Note on terms of surrender: an adequate living allowance, administrative reorganization, improvement of resources (irrigation) to be charged against future proceeds, a settlement of private debts with the estates no longer to be liable for such debts, and restoration of the estates on condition that new arrangements were not to be tampered with.

² op.cit., (para 4). ++Note: Not only did Stokes complain of the inquisitorial interference of district officers in village administration (as will be seen in part III of this chapter in chapter five), but such descriptions were commonly given in the Presidency. They were thought to be an inevitable danger of the ryotwari system. See the Torture Commission Report (Madras: 1855).

concluded annually with village leaders for the whole of each village and not with each village ryot (the old joint-rent system).¹

The Malraju, whose villages had been under amani since 1832, was the first Zamindar to surrender his sanad (on January 15, 1843). The widows of Chilkalurpad submitted a few days later (on January 25). Vasireddy Ramanadha Babu, Manur Venkata Gopal Rao, and Manika Janganna Rao, however, were more stubborn. Their intransigence was reported to Madras. Orders were returned that if negotiation failed their estates would be put up for auction.² The Sattanapalli Zamindar yielded (on April 3). On hearing of the intransigence of the Vasireddy Naidu and the Manika Rao (Repalli had been taken over by district officers on April 17), the Government sanctioned the sale of their estates. Not until the sale advertisements had been published did Ramanada Babu and Janganna Rao give in, the latter agreeing to surrender only two days before the day of the sale (June 30). Even then, further urging was required before the actual documents, the sanads which had been bestowed more than forty years earlier (see part II of chapter one), were obtained.³

II. COLLUSION OF THE CIRCAR SERVANTS UNDER SHASHAGIRI RAO

The removal of John Goldingham to North Arcot in February, 1842,

¹ ibid., (paras 3-5).

² BOR to Stokes, March 13, 1843: GDR (5373: 89-93).

³ GOM Minute of Consultation, May 16, 1843: GDR (5374: 153-157), BOR Secretary to Stokes, May 22, 1843: GDR (5374: 219-22). BOR to Stokes (paras 2-3), July 6, 1843: GDR (5374: 272-274).

could hardly have occurred at a more awkward time. Not only was the administrative policy for Guntur being reviewed in Madras and London, but local influences were combining with disruptive and even dangerous portent. Nyapati Shashagiri Rao and his following had regained control of the Huzur Kacheri, but not without arousing acute bitterness and alarm from the opposing faction (see chapter three). With the surrender of the Vasireddy villages and the imminent surrender of the Repalli and Sattanapalli villages, the whole district was in a state of disorganization. Factional strife which had so beset the administration was spreading into the zamindaris where there was much scope for patronage and power in the selection of new personnel. Within the amani villages (the Malraju and Chilkalurpet divisions and the taluks of Palnad), silent and invisible forces were moving restively and straining to loosen the bonds of central control.

The two months which followed Goldingham's departure served only to hasten the deterioration which was already well advanced. Arthur Hathaway, a junior officer who had only been in India for two years, was scarcely a match for the wily Sheristadar. After a month, Hathaway was succeeded by Archibald Mathison, a friend of Shashagiri Rao who had served in Guntur before and who was not likely to obstruct the purposes of the Huzur elite.

The new Collector arrived on April 21, 1842, and was soon joined by a new Head Assistant. Hudleston Stokes, the son of a Vicar (Henry Stokes of Doveridge, Derby) and the nephew of a Company Director (John Hudleston), had joined the service in 1826. After

working briefly in Tinnevely and Canara, his first decade had been in Kurnool. He had returned to Kurnool from his furlough in 1841. His next ten years, broken only by a year's sick leave to the Cape (1844-45), were to be spent in Guntur. Henry Newill, his Head Assistant and successor in Guntur, had served his apprenticeship under Goldingham in 1841-42. Like Goldingham, both Stokes and Newill were staunch evangelicals, and missionary supporters, practical and systematic, and eager to apply the latest scientific techniques to administration and agriculture.¹

By the time Stokes arrived on the scene, however, Shashagiri Rao had gained so much ground that he was soon fully in charge of the affairs of the district. The triumphs which he had experienced in his struggles with the Sabnavis faction and in his resistance to Goldingham, the support which he had invariably received from the Board of Revenue, and the immense opportunities for patronage which were opening up with the collapse of the zamindaris encouraged the Huzur Sheristadar to even greater boldness.

A. THE SELECTION OF PERSONNEL

Shortly before leaving the district, Goldingham selected Sabnavis partisans to administer the more than 400 villages which had recently come under amani. The Sheristadar, not intending to allow such a huge block of patronage to slip from his grasp without a struggle immediately

¹ Writer's Petitions, No.15 in Vol. 39 and No. 3 in Vol. 56. Lists of Madras Civil Servants: Covenanted (IOL: Vol. 6). CCC. Prinsep, Record of Services of Madras Civilians (London: 1885), pp. 72, 97, 134, 192. Henry Newill, recommended to Sir Richard Jenkins by the Earl of Powis, was born in Welsh Pool (Montgomery County) and seems to have been connected to the Clive family.

countered by sending a petition to the Board of Revenue against this action.

The Board of Revenue was informed that Goldingham had abused his position by continuing to show favoritism to Sabnavis Venkta Krishna Rao. Specifically he charged the former Collector of having given a sheaf of signed but blank Appointment Orders to the Naib Sheristadar, Manganuri Lakshminarsu, and to Krishna Rao. He accused these individuals of having used these blank slips in order to fill the zafti-establishments with their own followers and of having fomented trouble throughout the administration.¹

At the same time, Shashagiri Rao applied his persuasive powers in bringing Mathison, the Acting Collector, around to his own views. On April 11, 1842, Mathison sent a much altered and reduced list of muain-zabita (establishment account) to Madras. The personnel selected by Goldingham for the Vasireddy, Chilkalurpad and Malraju thanas and samutus were removed because they were considered new and untried. Manganuri Lakshminarsu was ^{removed} /from the Huzur and from his charge over the Vasireddy estate. His brothers, Lakshminarain and Chenchuramiah, were removed from Aminships in Chilkalurpad and Tenali. Krishna Rao was dismissed from his post as Amin of Rachur. Mathison

¹ Elliot Report (para 55), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7538-40), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

also dismissed two other prominent members of the Sabnavia faction, the Amins, Namburi Krishniah and Bundaur Rajaswaram. On the other side, Nyapati partisans were selected to fill the key positions which had just been made vacant. Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, who had been the Amin of Bapatla Thana, was brought back into the Huzur Kacheri as Naib Sheristadar and put in charge of the Vasireddi Zamindari. Tota Krishnamah, who had been the Diwan of Ramanadha Babu, became the Amin of Chebrolu Thana. Finally, Shashagiri Rao's son-in-law, Purushothum Rao, became Head Gumashta in the Sheristakhana of the Huzur, thus freeing the Sheristadar's hands for exerting his influence throughout the district.¹

The bitterness caused by this wholesale substitution of personnel can be seen by the fact that a considerable number of petitions were submitted to the Board against the actions of the Acting Collector, A.S.Mathison.²

In dealing with this maze of charges and counter-charges, the Board of Revenue asked for a fuller and more careful investigation. While Mathison's selections were sanctioned, Stokes was ordered to report on the various petitions. Thus, in addition to the normal problems of administration and the special problems involving the reorganization of the zafti-zamindaris, Stokes had to track down the

¹ Elliot Report (para 56), April 17, 1846: op.cit. Daniel White's Report to BOR (paras 39-42, 61), July 10, 1845: GDR (No. 58: 5404: 79-139).

² BOR Proceedings of May 2, 5, 9, 1842: GDR (5373: 171-73, 177, 179). BOR to GOM Chief Secretary, June 9, 1842: GDR (5373: 255-57), and BOR Proceedings.

evidence for charges against Shashagiri Rao, Krishna Rao, and Ramanadha Babu, to name just a few.¹

Stokes' first report on this matter was not made until August 18, 1842. The only clear fact to emerge from this report was that a "violent party spirit" prevailed throughout the district which was disrupting the whole administration. Stokes could find no evidence to support Shashagiri Rao's accusations against Goldingham. The former Collector's list of candidates to be selected for managing the Vasireddy Zamindari showed signs of being partially altered; however, many of the selections had been made by Lakshminarsu personally and therefore could not be attributed to Goldingham.¹

On the basis of this report, the Board exonerated Goldingham of any knowledge or participation in irregularity and delivered for the first time a severe rebuke to Shashagiri Rao for making such serious charges against the former Collector on the basis of nothing more than a rumour. At the same time, recognizing the dangerous consequences which might follow if the "violent animosity prevailing between the two factions" were allowed to continue, the Board reaffirmed their disapproval of Krishna Rao and strongly forbade the employment of either Krishna Rao or Lakshminarsu in the Guntur District in any capacity whatsoever.²

¹ Stokes to BOR August 18, 1842: (in Elliot Report, paras 56-58): op.cit.

² BOR Proceedings September 8, 1842: ibid.

B. THE SYSTEM OF ADMINISTRATION

An understanding of the practical problems which were regularly encountered in administering a district can hardly be obtained without some appreciation of the stubborn conservatism and tenacious striving for continuity which characterized the whole system of revenue management. The admissions which were made by many responsible authorities during the 1850's that the Madras Government was "still collecting the revenue inherited from the most oppressive of native governments"¹ came close to the jugular vein of the matter.

The Madras administration was an Indian administration. No amount of theorizing and policy-making in London could gainsay the essential and hard truth that Indians gathered the revenue and that they gathered it in the time-honored ways. Whatever system was adopted and however benevolent were its aims or logical its conclusions, it had still to run the gauntlets, first of the British bureaucracy, then of the Desastha bureaucracy, and finally of the village leaders.

Specific examples of this neutralizing process may be taken from the general working and application of the ryotwari (Munro) system. Foremost among these was the freedom of labor and cultivation which had been laid down by the Court of Directors as a cornerstone of the ryotwari settlement. All compulsion or restraint on freedom was supposed to cease under the new system. This was the declared policy and an essential ingredient of the ryotwari settlement as it was formulated.

¹ J.W.Kaye, The Administration of the East India Company (London: 1853), p.231. "The Land Revenue of Madras," Calcutta Review (volume 17: pp. 291-333), June, 1852.

But this was not the applied policy at the local levels. The natural tendency of cultivators to abandon those lands which gave them a poor return because it was too heavily assessed was curbed for the sake of the revenue. The ryot did not have the freedom to pick out the fields which best suited him and to leave the remainder waste. James Dykes, the Collector of Salem, wrote that this practice gained greater strength during and after the disastrous Guntur Famine when "there was no water to assuage the universal thirst."¹ In 1835, he was told that "the ryot has no right to pick fields;"² and in 1844, he was informed:

If any ryot wishes to relinquish...he should be allowed to do so provided it is a whole field...and so situated that it can be conveniently cultivated by another or that he gives up bad and good portions together...he should on no account be permitted to throw up bad lands alone.³

Kaye wrote that whenever it was resolved that this outrageous practice should be suppressed, the revenue authorities admitted the evil of enforced tenancy but explained that reform would severely damage State finances.⁴

The essential feature of the ryotwari system was a multiplication of individual fields and a minute dividing up of responsibilities beyond the reach of European officers. Under the direct and skillful

¹ J.W.B.Dykes, Salem, an Indian Collectorate (London: 1853), p. 302.

² ibid., p. 307

³ ibid., p. 320. Also see p.317.

⁴ Kaye, op.cit., pp. 228-229. J.Norton, A Letter to Robert Lowe... (Madras: 1854), p. 77, wrote: "Every Revenue Officer knows that if rule were observed, the Government would scarcely receive half the revenue it now does."

administration of hosts of Indian subordinates, cultivation was forced, improvements were punished with double and triple taxation, incentive was stifled, land was abandoned, and torture was applied by local leaders to extract the last dub (copper).¹

Increasingly, however, voices were being raised against the oppressive practices operating under the toleration of the Government. They argued that the ryotwari system was failing because it had never been properly tried. The evils of the Madras revenue system might be eliminated if Munro's ideas were realistically applied. A scientific survey, a reduction and equalization of assessment, strong inducements on capital improvement, and a firmer control of the army of Indian officials who preyed "upon the very vitals of prosperity" were needed.² By reducing taxes and allowing free cultivation, vast quantities of land which were waste would again come under the plow. There was no reason to assume, went the argument, that the revenue would necessarily decrease; indeed, it would probably increase. Most important of all, it was felt that good faith, optimism, and a spirit of liberty would transform the administration from the dark and fearful thing that it was.³

Stokes was a proponent of these reforming ideas. Accordingly, on

¹ Kaye, op.cit., pp. 226-232. Report of the Commission for the Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture in the Madras Presidency (Madras: 1885), pp. 1-71 (see para 60), with tabular summary on page 72. Stokes gave evidence. Appendix C., No. 5 (pp. lxix-lxxv). Appendix D (pp.ccxii-ccviii).

² J.Norton, op.cit., p. 178.

³ ibid., pp. 319-322.

October 25, 1842, he proposed certain practical changes which he felt would improve revenue management. ^{Four} Three innovations, departures from established procedure, were advocated. First, full freedom of cultivation without any restriction or coercion should be allowed. Second, the anchana (the custom of estimating the value of standing crops) should be abolished where there was a fixed field assessment (makta) since it was both unnecessary and conducive of oppression. Third, the requiring of a dumbala (a certificate of permission) before grain could be cut, thrashed, or stored was inconsistent with a makta (ryotwari) system and should be abolished. And fourth, fixed money instalments of revenue (kists) should not be required until after time had been given for the marketing of produce. These preliminary reforms, the Collector thought, would clear away unnecessary suspicion and remove some of the scope for oppression, interference, and intrigue by local officers.¹

Stokes was frank in showing that Shashagiri Rao opposed his ideas. He expressed his fear that he would not be able to accomplish much "without the assistance of a servant trained in a better school than the Northern Circars and capable of more enlarged objects than the success of his private intrigues."² He wrote:

The present Head of this Office is clever and possessed of much experience of a certain kind; but he is utterly incapable of appreciating sound revenue measures and is so wedded to the crooked and oppressive practices now in force that nothing but opposition is to be looked for at his hands in any departure from them.³

¹ Elliot Report (para 57), op.cit.

² Extract from Stokes' letter of October 25, 1842: Elliot Report (para 57), ibid.

³ ibid.

It seems clear from this statement that Stokes had come to the same conclusion regarding the root of his troubles in Guntur as had his predecessor, Goldingham.

In their reply, the Board of Revenue concurred with the general principles of revenue administration laid down by Stokes; but they urged caution in practical application. "Where a wrong and impolitic system [was] confirmed by long usage, it [was] necessary to use circumspection in introducing even wholesome innovations."¹ Only such modifications as local circumstances warranted should be introduced. Complete liberty of cultivation would be too instantaneous an abandonment of restrictions. The Bellary District rules of 1824, which were sent for the Collector's guidance, required that land could only be relinquished if good and bad land were given up in equal proportions.⁺ The proposals for abolishing anchanas and dumbalas on lands having a fixed money rent were sanctioned; but caution was urged in allowing crops to be removed from the threshing floors without restriction "lest the realization of the revenue should be endangered by improvidence on the part of some Ryots and chicanery on the part of the Knavish."² On the whole, the Collector was advised to delay his reform measures until after he had gained a longer experience in the district. Finally, the Board noted that Shashagiri Rao's objections to reform

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings (para 1), November 10, 1842: GDR (5373: 451-457).

² ibid. (para 4).

⁺ Note: Even this permission for a limited freedom of cultivation appears to have been a considerable concession (see below section D).

had been tendered to the Collector in "that confidence which is so highly desirable" and remarked that while there was "some matter of a contrary character" in the Sheristadar, there was also "a good deal that was practical and judicious."¹

A second proposal for administrative reform was submitted by the Collector on May 25, 1843. Since the zamindari sanads were being given up and a complete reorganization of administration over the zamindari villages had received the sanction of the Home authorities with a view to increasing the prosperity of the district, Stokes recommended that a new territorial division of Guntur proper and a thorough revision of huzur and ghaibatu establishments should be done as quickly as possible in order to tighten up the lines of control.²

Specifically, Stokes wished to untangle the maze of conflicting jurisdictions and blurred responsibilities which existed. He went into detail to show how hopelessly confused the territorial divisions were, trying vainly to distinguish between parganas, simas, circars, vantus, samutus, muthas, and so on and trying vainly to sort out the villages belonging to the different zamindari families. In place of fourteen Revenue Amins, five of whom were without police authority, two Police Amins ("Heads of Police" exclusively), and two Salt Amins -- some of whom had jurisdiction over the same villages -- the Collector proposed twelve Tahsildars each of ^{whom} ~~which~~ was to exercise both revenue and police authority within his respective division. The twelve new

¹ BOR Proceedings (para 5), November 10, 1842: GDR (5373: 451-457).

² Stokes to BOR Secretary (paras 2-3), May 25, 1843: GDR (No. 44: 5402: 41-51).

taluks were to be formed without reference to zamindari ("proprietary") divisions on a principle of compactness or of proximity to the kasba or field station of each Tahsildar.¹

Stokes also wished to reorganize the ghaibatu and huzur personnel of the district so as to tighten up the lines of control and clarify responsibility. Three grades of Tahsildars, receiving 120, 100 and 80 rupees per month respectively were to be employed according to the size and the work of a given taluk. The eight larger taluks were to have Deputy Tahsildars or Peshkars. The higher grades of officers in the Huzur Kacheri were to be put on the same footing as similar officers in unsettled districts; furthermore, instead of the office of Assistant Sheristadar there was to be a Translator, thus freeing the Head English Writer to perform his proper duties, and instead of two Native Record Keepers there was to be one Native Record Keeper and one English Record Keeper, "there being no such officer at present."²

Two objections to the redistribution of territory were foreseen by the Collector. First there was the problem of legal liability in the event of the zamindaris being restored to their families; and second, there was the difficulty of keeping accounts for each zamindari separate so that the cost of a survey or of any improvements in irrigation which might be made could be easily recovered.³ Stokes was

¹ Stokes to Acting BOR Secretary (paras 4-9), May 25, 1843: op.cit.

² ibid (paras 10-12).

³ ibid (paras 13-14).

sure, however, that the district could not be worse off than it already was and that separate statements of collections and expenses for each estate could be prepared out of individual village accounts sufficient to meet both objections.

These proposals were not sanctioned by the Board of Revenue. In view of the difficulty already experienced in obtaining the sanads of the Zamindars, the Board were loathe to try something even more drastic. Until information on the private debts and on the probable future production of the zamindaris was available and until some theoretical and practical arrangements for the introduction of a field survey and assessment were worked out, no extreme measures would be taken.¹ Undoubtedly this decision gave further comfort to the Sheristadar.

C. THE STRENGTH OF THE OLD GUARD

By September 1843, the steady resistance which Stokes had been encountering from officers under the influence of Shashagiri Rao was more than he could tolerate. The employment of extra establishments for the zafti-zamindaris during the previous months had greatly added to the strength of the Nyapati party; and, in August, still a further addition to these establishments had been sanctioned.²

The Board turned down yet another attempt to modify the administration in mid-October. No general revision of the administration for the sake of efficiency would be considered, they

¹ Acting BOR Secretary to Stokes, June 22, 1843: GDR (5374: 161-167).

² Acting BOR Secretary to Stokes, August 3, 1843: GDR (5374: 285-286).

declared, 'until they had been favored with the information on private debts and probable productivity of the zamindaris which had been requested on previous occasions.¹

On November 10, Stokes tried hard to have the prohibition against the employment of Sabnavis Krishna Rao dropped. He wrote:

It is my deliberate conviction ... that the virulent clamour against V. Krishna Rao...resulted solely from the vindictiveness of a faction whose share of patronage in the district and of the perquisites of office had been abridged through his influence. ²

Krishna Rao and his followers had not been faultless, being as interested in patronage as their opponents; but Stokes did not feel that this should preclude his being employed in the Kacheri.

In their reply, the Board refused to consider the Collector's request or to heed the petition which Krishna Rao had sent therewith. Indeed, Krishna Rao's very presence in the district was looked upon as highly objectionable.³

The submission of a long awaited report on December 4, 1843, concerning the malversation of Vasireddy Ramanadha Babu, deeply implicated the Amin of Chebrolu, Tota Krishnamah. This Telaga, who had more than a quarter of a century of experience in the district administration, had been seconded to the Vasireddy Zamindari as its Diwan

¹ Acting BOR Secretary to Stokes, October 16, 1843: GDR (5374: 365-66).

² Stokes to Acting BOR Secretary, November 10, 1843: Elliot Report (para 57), op.cit.

³ Acting BOR Secretary to Stokes, November 30, 1843: GDR(5374: 455-457).

in 1836. During the following years, Tota Krishnamah and his son, Tota Chinna Krishnamah, had cooperated with the Zamindar, taluk officials, and huzur personnel under the direction of the Huzur Sheristadar in extorting huge sums of money from the population. Then, after being removed from power by Goldingham in January 1842, he had been appointed Amin of Chebrolu in place of the Amin selected by Goldingham.¹

The Board of Revenue recognized the fact that unauthorised exactions of this nature were altogether too common in the Northern Circars. While the obvious guilt of the Zamindar and his diwan was acknowledged, "such acts [were not to] be viewed in the same light as if committed by an ordinary public servant."² The Board left it to Stokes to take action against Tota Krishnamah, "to dismiss him or continue him in employment in the Vasyreddy Zemindary or elsewhere as shall be most conducive to the public service."³ Since Henry Newill had been collecting evidence for eighteen months already, the Board saw little advantage in pursuing the investigation further.

Stokes' last attempt to shake off the paralyzing hold of Shashagiri Rao was made on February 1, 1844. Mang^anuri Lakshminarsu was appointed as Huzur Sheristadar and Shashagiri Rao was demoted on the ground that he had been using his influence openly to obstruct the Collector's

¹ Stokes to Acting BOR Secretary (paras 1-7, with enclosures), December 4, 1843: GDR (5402: 76-91).

² BOR Proceedings (para 6), February 15, 1844: GDR (5375: 45-63)

³ ibid (para 8).

actions. Since there was no tangible evidence of misconduct, the Board was anything but satisfied. On February 10, Stokes was reminded that the removal of Shashagiri Rao had not been authorized and ordered his immediate reinstatement.¹

By this time it had become manifestly clear that no work could be satisfactorily accomplished while such heart-burnings and jealousies continued. For over seven years the district had been torn by continual factional strife. Each side had tried to strengthen itself to the utmost and had sought to weaken its opponents.

Both [sides] were possessed of considerable local influence independent of the service, the one descended from the most trusted dependents of the Vassreddy family, the other connected by marriage with the Manoorwars of Satanapilly [and Chilkalurpadu]. Each had numerous dependents and partizans and these they increased by every means in their power.²

Nevertheless, a decisive break in favor of the Old Guard of Desasthas under the leadership of Nyapati Shashagiri Rao had occurred in 1842 when Mathison had replaced with Nyapati supporters the various zafti-establishments appointed by Goldingham. The preponderance of patronage and influence which had swung to the Sheristadar at that time had all but paralyzed the Sabnavis faction and, eventually, the Collector as well. This preponderance had been further increased and confirmed when more Nyapati followers took over the remaining zamindari divisions during 1843. So numerous had Shashagiri Rao's

¹ Acting BOR Secretary to Stokes, February 10, 1844: GDR (5375: 41-43).

² Elliot Report (para 58), April 17, 1846: MRP (280: 20: 7545-7547), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

followers become that, by 1845, Walter Elliot obtained a list which showed that "seventy-four servants of all grades were [Shashagiri Rao's] own relations or connected with him by family ties, independent of a still larger number attached to him by friendship or the bonds of gratitude and common interests."¹

D. THE SCOPE OF AGGRANDIZEMENT

The crowning exhibition of local power in Guntur was a carefully laid plan which was at once a scheme of aggrandizement and a conspiracy to bring discredit upon the Collector, thus effecting his ultimate removal from the district. The essence of this plan was to keep back, delay, and finally divert the revenues of the district from the State to the Desastha-run organization of district officers.

Acting under orders from the Huzur Sheristadar, the Amins with their field organizations neglected to enforce the collection of revenues from the villages and then reported that the villagers were unable to pay because of the poor season and bad market. In return for this service to the villages, district officers received a percentage of what they should have collected as payment, the rest of the uncollected revenue going to the Ryots, or village leaders. At the same time, by taking advantage of Stokes' provision⁺ for a limited

¹ ibid.

⁺ Note: It seems clear that the concession which the Board had made had been loosely interpreted in the hukum (order) issued by Stokes and that the district officers and villagers chose to interpret the hukum even more loosely (see above, section C).

freedom of cultivation, large quantities of land were declared to be thrown up by the village leaders; and then new offers for the same lands were made on greatly reduced terms accompanied by another round of donations to the district officers. Then, fixed field and money assessments (makta) were abandoned for the old system of collecting an estimated share of the grain harvested. Officers sent by the Collector to verify these circumstances and to inspect the conditions of land cultivation were invariably connected to the Huzur Sheristadar and to the Kacheri elite; consequently, the truth of reports from the ghaibatu stations was always confirmed and the revenue proposals would be accepted. No sooner were leases on the proposals (darkhasts) secured than the relinquished lands were immediately reoccupied and made to yield clear profits to the villagers.¹

How this systematized corrupting of central authority escaped the detection and control of the Collector is not difficult to understand. Without the cooperation of his district establishment, there was little that the Collector could do to enforce his will over a thousand villages. In trying to curb the Sheristadar, it was almost impossible for the Collector to find an infraction definite enough to convince the Board of Revenue; furthermore, "the whole of his servants were in league against him...and made common cause with the

¹ Elliot Report (para 37), April 17, 1846: MRP (280: 20: 7503-06), op.cit. How these events were seen in Madras may be seen in the BOR Proceedings on the Jamabandi Report for F.1252 (paras 2-20), August 26, 1844: GDR (5375: 297-337).

people, both parties participating in the advantage gained at the expense of the revenue."¹

Unfortunately for the administration, but fortunately for Shashagiri Rao, Stokes' health failed at the very time when it was most essential for him to cope with the designs of the district officers. The Sheristadar's conspiracy "to get rid of Mr. Stokes with whom he could not get on"² proved to be unnecessary. When, in mid-August, the Collector's physical strength finally gave way so that he was forced to leave the district, Henry Newill, the Head Assistant, took charge until the arrival of the new Collector a month later.

Walter Elliott Lockhart was completely without experience in the Northern Circars and totally ignorant of the intricate affairs of Guntur. The Acting Collector was entirely deceived by the words of the Huzur Sheristadar. The troubles of the district were attributed to the unwise policies of his predecessor. Instead of following the Board's instructions that only annual rents were to be accepted until more accurate information on resources of the district could be obtained, Lockhart accepted Shashagiri Rao's recommendations that the villages should be given out on three year leases. These leases, concluded on low terms, climbed until the terms for the

¹ Elliot Report (para 50), ibid.

² Elliot Report (para 26 and 59), ibid. Statements about the effort to have Stokes removed were most frequent at the village level.

final year were almost up to pre-famine levels. In this way, Shashagiri Rao hoped to fill his own pockets, confirm the notion that Stokes' innovations had been destructive, strengthen his own reputation as a revenue officer by bringing collections back to their old levels, and revert to the old, traditional ways of administering the land revenue.¹

III. PRESSURE FROM VILLAGE LEADERSHIP

A thorough and clear picture of how local influences combined to subvert central authority and to divert revenues away from State treasuries can hardly be obtained without looking at the soil and the roots from which such influences sprang. Of course it would be impossible, but also unnecessary, to look at all of the 882 villages of Guntur proper. The Elliot Commission of 1845 investigated the affairs of 547 villages and drew together the findings of these investigations. The generalizations of the Commissioner's Report are not sufficient, however, to give a magnified view of the activities of village leaders within their particular local circumstances. A more extensive scrutiny of one village, selected at random, together with a brief glimpse of several other villages, should provide some idea of how local influence was exerted.

¹ Elliot Report (para 59), April 17, 1846: op.cit. White Report on the Conduct of Nyapati Shashagiri Rao (paras 33, 36, 38-40), July 10, 1845: GDR (5404: 79-139). Revenue Collections in Guntur had now fallen to a record low of 5,54,298, against the permanent demand (beriz) of 12,25,458 rupees.

A. THE VILLAGE OF RUDRAVARAM IN KURUPAD THANA

The three dominant, high-caste communities of Rudravaram were the Niyogis, the Rajus, and the Kammas. The strong influence of the Niyogis can be seen by the fact that the Ijaradar who rented the village from Vasireddy Ramanadha Babu from 1836-37 to 1841-42 was Chamurthi Venkata Ratnam, that the Merasi Karnam, who had taken over the karnamship in 1839 on the death of his cousin and on the infancy of his cousin's son, was Chakkaraya Chatambram, and that the Samatdar was Ananta Ramiah. All of these Niyogis were related to each other. The Rajus of Rajula-Rudravaram were numerically strong and a force to be reckoned with. The leading family of the Rajus were the Conda Rajus. Conda Raju Ranga Raju was "the Pettandar of the village" and a Police Dafadar. His father and his nephew, Venkata Raju and Chenchu Raju, supported him in trying to strengthen the power of the family. The Kammas, such illiterate and less wealthy cultivators as Gunta Shashu and the Guddum Venkata Naidu brothers, ran a poor third, but were strong enough to make loud noises of dissent when their interests were threatened.¹

The Niyogis, Chamurthi Venkata Ratnam and Chakkaraya Chatambram, held the whip hand until 1842 when the zamindari was attached. In co-operation with each other, if not with the other leaders of the village, they deceived the Zamindar as to the real productivity of their village,

¹ Depositions of Chakkaraya Chatambram, Guntu Shashu, Guddum Venkata Narusu Naidu, and Conda Raju Ranga Raju before Walter Elliot, April 16 to May 7, 1845. Elliot Report (Nos. 2-5, Appendix B), April 17, 1846: MRP (280: 21: 7841-7893), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

rented the village for 401 rupees, and then defaulted on payments as much as possible. Although large amounts of revenue were outstanding against the village, the exact amounts could not be discovered since no one would say what had happened to the village records for the period prior to 1842.¹

After the village came under the Amin's (amani) management, a good deal of maneuvering went on. Eventually a coalition between the Niyogis, Rajus and district officers emerged out of the confusion. Chamurthi Venkata Rutnam and the Conda Raju family joined together in a plan to deceive the newly constituted administration. After declaring that much of the village land was vacant and waste, district officers received gifts according to custom (mamool), which were as follows:²⁺

1. Amin (Vetsha Lakshmiah)	Rs. 25
2. Peshkar (Ramanujacharlu)	6
3. Peshkar's son (Appalacharlu)	3
4. Samatdar (Ananta Ramiah)	10
5. Maddatgar (Shastrulu)	2
6. Karnam (Chakkaraya Chatambram)	20

Total	Rs. 66
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An ijara-darkhast (rental proposal) for a greatly reduced revenue was submitted by Chamurthi Venkata Rutnam and accepted by the Amin.

¹ Depositions of Chakkaraya Chatambram and Ranga Raju, April 16 and 20, and May 6, 1845. Elliot Report (Nos. 2 and 3 of Appendix B) op.cit.

² Deposition of Chakkaraya Chatambram, April 22, 1845. Elliot Report (No. 2 of Appendix B), ibid. ~~†~~ Note: These figures are only what the Karnam would admit and, hence, are probably below what was given. It is noteworthy that every one of these district officers was a Brahman.

Details of this settlement for 1842-43 came in two series; for when one set of accounts were proved to be false, a second set were produced from the Karnam's memory, for the reliability of which there is no standard of judgement. In the first set, exclusive of wandra (special privileged land for high castes), the village was rented for 401 rupees. Total collections (dastu) for the year (f.1252) were 401-14-0 rupees. Broken down into kists from individuals, but not into sub-kists, the collections were as follows:¹

1. Conda Raju Venkatarama Raju	Rs. 75- 4- 0
2. Guddum Venkata Naraina Naidu	101- 0- 0
3. Mukala Ranga Reddy	55- 0- 0
4. Tuladala Narayana	16- 2- 0
5. Chakkaraya Cotappah	33- 0- 0
6. Gunta Shashu Naidu	38- 0- 0
7. Ambadi Pudailahara Venkiah	30- 0- 0
8. Pushapari Amanah	14- 0- 0
9. Pushapari Venkiah	7- 8- 0
10. Vannada Rao	3- 0- 0
11. Chenchu Raju (Conda Raju)	3- 0- 0
12. Chakkaraya Venkiah	6- 8- 0
13. Mundapalli (a hamlet)	15- 0- 0
14. Gullapalli (a hamlet)	4- 8- 0
	<hr/>
	Rs. 401-14- 0

From these collections, 272-13-3 rupees were dispatched to the Circar treasury. The remaining 129-0-9 rupees of the demand (beriz) were deducted as follows:²

¹ op.cit.

² ibid.

1. Extra <u>wandra</u>	Rs. 39- 9- 1
2. Karnam's Inam	15- 0- 0
3. Kist of Guddum Venkata Naraina Naidu.	13-12- 0
4. Kist of Gunta Shashu Naidu.	6- 0- 0
5. Kists of Pushapari Amanah & Venkiah	6- 0- 0
6. Waste land cultivated without kists	48-11- 8

Rs. 129- 0- 9

The second set of accounts showed that, while the village was rented for 359-2-3 rupees, only 272-3-3 rupees were collected and only 248-10-0 rupees were sent to the Circar treasury. The balance of which was diverted as follows:¹

1. Money never sent to Circar treasury	Rs. 23- 9- 3
2. Balance unpaid on Raju <u>kists</u> (Rs.156-10-3)	27- 1- 6
3. Other <u>kists</u> (Rs. 173-8-0) not credited	59-13- 6

Rs. 110- 8- 3

In short, village leaders (Ryots or rayulu) drove other ryots from land, declared that land waste during Jamabandi in order to gain a light assessment and favorable rent, impelled the other villagers to work that land, and finally pocketed the yield which should have gone as revenue; moreover, after obtaining a greatly reduced rent, the village leaders not only failed to pay their own shares, but appropriated for themselves the revenue which had been paid by the other villagers. District officers permitted them to do this and shared in the profits.²

¹ Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 27, 1845, op.cit.

² ibid (April 22, 1845).

The under-cover operations of the year were so rewarding that a struggle developed over the spoils of the succeeding year, 1843-44 (f. 1253). Where the Rajus (Conda Raju Venkatarama and Chenchuraju) had previously sub-rented from Chamurthi Venkata Ratnam, now Ranga Raju secretly sent gifts to the Vetsha brothers at the thana kasba and submitted an ijara-darkhast in the name of his father (Venkatarama). The Kammas, Guddum Venkata Narain and Venkata Narusu Naidu, reacted with alarm and offered a higher bid than the one tendered by the Rajus.

In the face of this pressure from the other high-caste communities of Rudravaram, the Brahmans (Niyogis) acted very shrewdly, Instead of countering the threat of the more numerous Rajus directly, they apparently gave way gracefully and then resorted to behind the scenes maneuvering and intrigue. It is altogether likely that they provoked the alarm of the Kammas. Then, when tension between the Rajus and Kammas was at a high point, they openly worked to mediate the strife while silently they swung the balance of power toward the Rajus. The Karnam, the Samatdar, and the former Renter acted as go-betweens between the village communities and between the village and the higher authorities. When the Amin, Vetsha Bashacharlu, informed his Dafadar, Ranga Raju, that the Samatdar and the Karnam were acting under superior orders and should not be hindered, the Conda Raju family exerted further influence so as not to be excluded from any forthcoming arrangement.¹ Chakkaraya Chatambram then

¹ Ranga Raju to Walter Elliot, May 6, 1845, op.cit.

advised the Karnmas not to rock the boat of village affairs but to reach a good bargain with the Rajus. Village matters, after all, were best kept in the village. The payment of a higher rent or the disclosure of irregularities would only help outsiders to harm the village. The Karnam then accompanied the Kammas and Rajus to Kurupadu to tender the darkhast for the village. Under his influence, a written agreement was made in front of both communities and was duly signed.¹

The outcome of these arrangements was good for the Brahmans and Rajus. Chamurthi Venkata Ratnam became a Maddatgar in the Thana Kacheri. The Karnam took four kuchelas (about 100 acres) as his maniam. Gifts to the district officers were as follows:²

1. Amin (Vetsha Bashacharlu)	Rs. 30
2. Peshkar (Ramanujacharlu)	6
3. Samatdar (Ananta Ramiah)	12
4. Karnam (Chakkaraya Chatambram)	20
6. Peshkar's son (Appalacharlu)	3
7. Maddatgar (Shastrulu)	2
8. Maddatgar (Chamurthi Venkata Rutnam)	1
9. Huzur Gumashta (Kaliana Hanumuntha Rao)	2
	<hr/>
	Rs. 76
	<hr/>

In return, the village was rented for 364-10-3 rupees; but only 256 rupees reached the treasury. The balance of 108-10-3 rupees remaining due to the Government broke down as follows:³

1. Amount paid but not credited to ryots	Rs. 69- 8- 3
2. Amount not paid by Rajus	27- 1- 6
3. Amount which failed to reach treasury	12- 0- 6
	<hr/>
	Rs. 108-10- 3
	<hr/>

¹ Gunta Shashu Naidu to Walter Elliot, April 20, 1845, ibid.

² Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Eliot, April 22, 1845, op.cit.

³ ibid (April 27, 1845)

The Kammas did not fare so well. The general agreement which had been made in Kurupad proved to be no good since the Raju who had signed the Kabuliat was not the Ijaradar, Venkatarama Raju. After agreeing to pay a kist of 45 rupees for his small plots of ground, Gunta Shashu Naidu found it necessary to give 54 rupees to the Karnam and his son-in-law, Subbramaniam, 34 rupees to Ranga Raju, and 35 rupees to the Amin. Even so, Gunta Shashu's kaul was not reduced and, with a warrant from the Amin, he was driven from his land by Ranga Raju as soon as the sowing was finished. Gunta Shash attributed his misfortunes to the influence of the Karnam and the Samatdar whose words he had not heeded.¹ Similar misfortunes befell the Guddum Naidu brothers. At least 110 rupees were extorted from them; but they were too powerful to be deprived of their land. The Rajus in coalition with the Niyogis and the village officers in collusion with the district officers broke the bargain which had been made with the Kammas; moreover, the petitions of the Kammas were simply referred to the Thana Kacheri where they were conveniently filed and forgotten.²

If the Kammas fared badly, other villagers fared worse. Other members of the Raju community, such as Timma Raju and Tugadubi Raju, assisted the Ijaradar in making extra exactions above the kists and in trying to alter the dastu chittha (journal of total collection). An

¹ Gunta Shashu Naidu to Walter Elliot, April 20, 1845, ibid.

² Guddum Venkata Narusu Naidu to Walter Elliot, April 20, 1845 (No. 5 in Appendix B), op.cit. Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 21, 1845, ibid.

extra levy of 12 annas was taken on every kunta (slightly less than half an acre) of land. While the Rajus and other privileged communities rarely paid their full kists, much less anything extra, less fortunate ryots not only paid extra but had no way of knowing whether what they had paid was credited to them in the village accounts.¹

When the next season began, Vetsha Bashacharlu pressed Ranga Raju to rent Rudravaram for three years from 1844-45 through 1846-47. Reminded by the Dafadar that it was against the rules for a government officer to own or to engage in financial transactions over land, the Amin told Ranga Raju to take the village in the name of his father, Venkatarama Raju. Although the Dafadar's father was too old for such responsibility, the Amin promised to help in every way. There was nothing to fear. The village was in good condition and the rent, which would be profitable, would be divided ultimately between the Amin and the Dafadar.

On this understanding, Jaggada Raju tendered a darkhast in the name of the elderly Venkatarama Raju. The rent for three years was to be 291, 321, and 357 rupees progressively. Special remissions to the high-caste communities, called wandra, were to be increased by as much as 35 percent, the extra additions in wandra-bhumi (remission-land) being registered under the "Rajooloo ". A half kuchela (more than

¹ Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 22, 1845, ibid.

12 acres) of land was added to the maniam of the Karnam. Surpluses of village production remaining after the payment of revenue to the Circar were to be divided equally between the Dafadar and the Amin. These terms were "solemnly agreed...both in a verbal manner and by [each] striking upon the hands of [the] other."¹ How much was given to district officers by the village leaders is not known. The darkhast was accepted by the Amin on behalf of the Government; and when he came to the village on Jamabandi, the Naib Sheristadar, Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, sanctioned these arrangements and signed the kabuliat (contract).² The Kamma people, who had also put forward a bid and who had even gone to the Huzur Kacheri in Guntur, were hushed up with generous leases (kaulnamahs) on their lands and a share in the wandra benefits.³

An interesting and indeed revealing sequel to the story of the affairs of this village is to be found in some of the statements of the Karnam to the Commissioner, Walter Elliot, at the time of the investigation in 1845. When, after cross-questioning of witnesses had uncovered much falsehood in his earlier testimony, Chakkaraya Chatambram was repeatedly called upon for more evidence, it behoved him to tell all -- that is, as much as Elliot already knew and as much as was necessary to plead mercy, but to tell no more. The

¹ Ranga Raju to Walter Elliot, May 6 and 7, 1845. Elliot Report (No. 3, Appendix B), op.cit.

² Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 21, 1845, ibid.

³ Ranga Raju to Walter Elliot, May 7, 1845, ibid.

following are a series of statements made on successive occasions:

1. I prepared the accounts as I was directed to do and gave them to the Ameen under the fear that, by disobedience to high functionaries of the Talook, I could not get on at all as Curnum of the village.¹
2. I wrote as I was dictated to by both of the parties [Rajus and Kammass]. This I confess; but I have not been guilty of any irregularities in the transaction.²
3. If, on subsequent enquiry, it be proved that I have withheld other accounts from you, I will forego my merassy Curnumship and submit to any punishment that may be inflicted.³
4. I did not commit any frauds of my own will, nor did I appropriate for my own use the money derived from it.⁴
5. Being apprehensive of the punishment I would have to incur by refusing to [give the truth], I have voluntarily come before your cutcherry and stated what are the facts. I, therefore, beg you to forgive all my past conduct.⁵
6. I before refrained from divulging these circumstances being of the opinion that it would be imprudent to bring to light the irregularities of the Circar authorities and so I suffer them to escape the Circar. Notice that I never committed frauds of my own accord and that I did not appropriate the money so derived for my own. I therefore request that I will be kindly pardoned and protected.⁶

¹ Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 21, 1845, op.cit.

² ibid (April 22).

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid

⁵ ibid

⁶ ibid (April 27).

7. As it is the practice in every Talook to prepare false accounts and deliver the same with a view to obtain rents on low terms, I have been following the same example.

Considering that, in Ranga Raju's words, Chatambram was "desirous of obtaining the village on favourable rent in his own name"² and that the influence of the Niyogis of Rudravaram was a fundamental element in the operations of the village, these explanations and justifications seem particularly important as reflecting common notions of and attitudes toward State authority.

Finally, a catalogue of the village records which were surrendered to the Commissioner and which formed the basis of much of the detailed information in the depositions is given to show, in some measure, the framework around which the administration of the village was conducted.

CATALOGUE OF VILLAGE RECORDS³⁺

1. Kistu Zabitas:- statements of assessment classified by crops, by productivity factors, and by exemptions (e.g. inam, agrapharam, shrotriam, maniam, wandra, pagoda, choultry, and other lands).

¹ ibid.

² Ranga Raju to Elliot, May 7, 1845, ibid.

³ Given by Chakkaraya Chatambram to Walter Elliot, April 22, 1845. Elliot Report (Appendix B, No. 2), April 1y, 1846: MRP (280: 21: 7851-53), No. 39 of December 6, 1839. +Note: These records which are defined in John Whish's Glossary of Revenue Terms, submitted to the Board of Revenue on March 10, 1826: GDR (3982: 38-52), have been checked against similar entries in H.H.Wilson's Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms (London: 1855).

2. Dastu Zabitas:- statements of actual collections giving aggregates of kists gathered for each year.
3. Dastu Chitthas:- summary statements of total collections.
4. Dastu Kharchu Chittha:- debit and credit account of current collections.
5. Grama Kharchu Chittha:- debit and credit account of current village expenses.
6. Wasulbandi:- roll or statement of payments remitted to the district treasury.
7. Kistabandi:- list specifying instalments paid on kaulnamahs issued to each cultivator or cultivating community and containing the karanamahs (or kabuliats) signed by the same.

B. THE OPERATIONS OF OTHER VILLAGES

Four more cases have been selected to show some of the variety of ways in which village leaders moved. A glance at these villages serves further to confirm the conclusion that constant pressure was exerted from the villages upon the levels of political and administrative authority immediately above them.

1. The Village of Attalur in Kurupad Thana¹

Regular records, dating back to the Guntur Famine, showed that until 1843, the village usually paid a rent of 1080 rupees a year. Bellamconda Ramiah, the Ijaradar, prospered exceedingly on this rent. After Ramiah's death, a controversy developed between his son,

¹ Padmaraju Veeriah to Walter Elliot, April 12, 1845 (No. 1 in Appendix B of Elliot Report): MRP (281: 21: 7826-41), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

Venkiah, and the village leaders over the disposal of the village revenue. Venkiah's offer to pay off old balances was not accepted. The Karnam of Attalur, Padmaraju Veeriah, was successful in inducing the Samatdar and Amin to manage the village directly.

Polapeddi Nagiah, the Samatdar, received 39 rupees in order that the anchana-kabuliat (confirmed estimate of annual produce) for the 1843-44 season might be lowered. The Amin and the Peshkar, Vetsha Bashacharlu and Vetsha Venkatacharlu, also received 65 rupees. Extra exactions (takesims) amounting to 140 rupees were taken from the poorer ryots in order to cover these gifts to the district officers -- the balance of 36 rupees was pocketed by the Karnam. As a result of these arrangements, the Government demand (beriz) was lowered to 930 rupees. This figure was reached after the very good harvest had been cut, thrashed, measured, and divided in heaps -- a short count going to the Government heap -- by setting the conversion rate on the Government share below the real market value of the grain. Then, on the grounds that market values on grain were too low, the Government grain was not collected by the district officers but was stored in the village pits until such time as would bring a better price on the market. In the end, only 680 rupees were paid into the treasury.

The same process was repeated the following year (1844-45). Complicated negotiations over a reduction of the harvest estimates went on between the village leaders and the district officers, with Burriah, the Village Shroff, acting as the mediator. In return for

a reduction of nearly 50 percent in the Circar beriz, the Anin received 50 rupees, the Peshkar received 26 rupees, and the Samatdar received 13 rupees. The Government grain, which was again stored in the village pits, was reported as spoiled and the revenue declared to be irrecoverable.¹

2. The Village of Bhimavaram in Kurupad Thana²

Beginning with 1841-42, Damacherla Kotappa rented Bhimavaram from Vasireddy Ramanadha Babu for five years; but when the zamindari came under amani, district officers demanded security. His friend, a merasi Karnam named Abur Bungaru, from the nearby village of Abur, provided the necessary security and took over the village. Despite attempts by Vetsha Bashacharlu and his district officers to stir up intrigue and to frighten the villagers of Bhimavaram, Bungaru succeeded in conciliating the villagers and in paying off both the current rent and the arrears (765 and 112 rupees respectively), but not without borrowing 60 rupees from Nandigama Akkanappah, a Bhimavaram sub-renter.

Whether it was the district officers who aroused the Ryots of

¹ Elliot Report (para 41), April 17, 1846: op.cit.

² Abur Bungaru to Walter Elliot, April 22, 1845 Appendix B, No. 67 : ibid.

Bhimavaram against him because he was too strong to bend to their wishes or whether it was the villagers who aroused the district officers, Bungaru faced more trouble than he wanted. He decided to give up the village as an altogether unprofitable venture. However, when Kotappah came to him with a written assurance that he would cooperate, Bungaru was persuaded to stay on. Still the trouble continued. On his next visit, Bungaru found that Kotappah had neglected his land and had persuaded others to do the same. A number of sub-renters, Guraju Lakshmi Narain, Damacherla Ramanah, and Cherkur Butchannah, sided with Bungaru; but the Amin sided with Kotappah. The dissidents were advised to desert the village. Bungaru was ordered to pay the whole of the Circar's share, including that from the untilled fields. Clearly, Vetsha Bashacharlu wanted the village under his own control.

Damacherla Kotappah sold his possessions and crossed the river into the Nizam's dominions; but he regularly returned to Bhimavaram, often at night, in order to stir up trouble. Other ryots also gave up their lands and the village deteriorated.

Bungaru went to the Huzur Kacheri and asked the Huzur Sheristadar to cancel his securityship and obligations in Bhimavaram. He wanted only to manage his two merasi villages in peace. Shashagiri Rao, however, turned a deaf ear and Bungaru's two arzis to the Collector were merely referred back to the Amin. Bungaru was informed by the Sheristadar that if he gave up his two merasi villages, then the Amin would cancel his obligations for Bhimavaram. Later, when it was clear that the Abur Brahman would not let go of his ancestral villages,

Bashacharlu offered to help Bungaru for 100 rupees. This sum was paid out of the income of the two merasi villages (Abur and Kalaverlapadu).

Again the Bhimavaram question ascended into the presence of the divinity in Guntur. Janikiram Puntulu, the Jawabnavis, took 20 rupees and Paregai Ramannah, the Assistant Sheristadar, took 10 rupees. Yet, at the next Jamabandi, Bungaru was ordered to pay the revenue for all three villages. Another trip to ^{the}/thana kasba was made; and there Bungaru was informed that if he paid one more gift he would need to care **only for** his two ancestral villages. The Samatdar would then deal directly with the Bhimavaram Karnams, ^{and}/with Guraju Lakshmi Narain, who was the real leader of the village.

Abur Bungaru paid another 30 rupees out of the profits (koru) of his home village and obtained an order of release (dumbala) from his obligation for the rent of Bhimavaram. Receipts showing that the current demand of the village had been discharged and that the security money had been returned were given to him. He was told to await the return of Janikiram Puntulu from Guntur in order to obtain a document formally cancelling his securityship for Bhimavaram. Here was a refractory Ijaradar who was made to feel his dependence upon the local authorities, whether they were the village leaders of Bhimavaram, the district officers, or both.

3. The Village of Cherukuru in Chilkalurpad Thana¹

Palapurti Ramachandrulu, Andukur Baviah, and Kora Veerunah were the Daskhat Karnams of the large village of Cherukuru. Their dastu chitthas and other records, dating from the famine (1833-34), showed not only total collections made under the Manur Rao Zamindar and under the Circar (since 1840-41) but also extra collections made for village expenses.

Under the usual seemingly innocent listings such as Grama Kharchu, Batta Kharchu, Dharma Kharchu (Religious Expenses), Denta (Charitable) Kharchu, and Jamabandi Kharchu, Cherukuru's leaders were remarkably successful in bending the instruments of administration to their own purposes. In the words of the Karnams,

We have paid Circar servants...in order that they may enter favourable Jamabundy accounts without Takesim and that they may use no severity in collecting old balances.²

Payments were not charged to district officers by name but under necessary items of village expense, village deities, pseudonyms for district officers, mendicant Brahmans, or simply under such vernacular words as "padu" (Telugu:- "time" or "occasion"), "bhojanam"

¹ Cherukuru Karnams to Walter Elliot, May 8, 15 and 20, 1845
[Appendix B, No. 26, Elliot Report]: MRP (280: 21: pp. 8060-8070),
No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

² ibid., p. 8066.

(Telugu:- "food"), or "nahahm" (Arabic: "cancelled" or "ambiguous").¹

During the five years from 1840-41 to 1844-45, no level of the district hierarchy escaped the careful application of Cherukuru influence. Offerings, which were given with proper respect for station and dignity, were as follows:²

1. Huzur Sheristadar	Nyapati Shashagiri Rao	Rs. 400
2. Huzur Naib	Sommayyajulu Subbiah	50
3. Huzur Gumashta	Pataraju Ramaswami	31
4. Huzur Gumashta	Kalyanam Hanumantha Rao	22
5. Huzur Gumashta	Ambarkhana Purushottum Rao	20
6. Thana Amin (1841)	Devaraju Dassappa	111
7. Thana Amin (1842)	Devaraju Lakshmi Narainappa	Rs. 126
8. Thana Amin (1844)	Akkaraju Buchiah	130
9. Thana Peshkar	Gotati Kanakaraju	178
10. Naib Amin	Mantri Subbiah	30
11. Naib Amin	Krishniah Puntulu	16
12. Thana Gumashta	Pataraju Subbiah	6
13. Thana Jawabnavis	Golamudi Venkataswami	12
14. Samatdar	Vydeyam Subha Rao	10
		<hr/>
		Rs. 1,142

In return for 1,142 rupees in gifts, 18,360 rupees of land revenue was not collected, a more than tenfold return on the village investment. Another 32,729 rupees of revenue stood against the village as unpaid for the years between 1833 and 1840.

For one year alone (1843-44), an enormous 8,000 rupees were written off against waste-land. The negotiations for this relinquishment of land, which was usually cultivated, were carried on with the Amin, Akkaraju Buchiah. Petitions (arzis) with supporting

¹ Elliot Report (para 44), April 17, 1846: op.cit.

² Cherukuru Karnams to Walter Elliot [No.26, Appendix B, Elliot Report]: ibid., pp. 8060-63.

recommendations from the Amin were sent to the Huzur, even though Henry Newill had already given the lands their usual assessment during the Jamabandi. When no reply came back on these petitions, Buchiah told the village leaders, "As no hookum has been received from the Hoozoor, you may cultivate as much or as little as you like."¹ As a result, land was listed as waste, then cultivated, while the Circar servants simply never collected the revenue which was due upon it.

Thus, by skillful negotiation, deception, evasion, propitious gifts, and by every imaginable device, revenue was kept back, assessments were reduced, rents were obtained on very low terms, and land was thrown out of cultivation, recorded as waste, and quickly re-cultivated as village influence was thrown against central power. But such encroachment required cooperation from the district hierarchy. Custom (mamul) demanded a sacrificial offering to divinely instituted authority. Wrath could be averted and favor gained only if the human gods were propitiated. As the Cherukuru Karnams explained it:

When anything happened that required the interference of the Hoozoor Servants to be settled, the Peishcar used to carry us to the Head Sheristadar and settle our business favourably to us. We therefore continued to pay through the Peishcar.²

All was done through proper channels. Proper channels led to

¹ Cherukuru Karnams to Walter Elliot, May 20, 1845, op.cit., p. 8063.

² ibid., p.8069.

Shashagiri Rao.

Shashagiri Rao was so strong after 1842 that he could command a higher nazr. Attempts to curb his power or to by-pass his control were difficult since they were bound to meet resistance if not retaliation. The fact that the Madras authorities had supported the Sheristadar against Goldingham and against Stokes on several occasions not only enhanced the prestige of Shashagiri Rao but led to the belief that Stokes also could be discredited and removed. It was well known in Cherukuru that district officers acted "with a view to bring the Collector into the unfavourable opinion of the higher authorities."¹

4. The Village of Punagapad in Rajapet Thana²

The story of this village, as related by Punagapad Appiah who was a member of the Karnam family, was a tale of famine, death, desertion, and harsh rents; however, ingeniously hidden accounts told of extra collections and of gifts to district officers under fictitious or divine names. When finally deciphered, these records listed payments in the usual ascending order: e.g. Samut Peon, Samatdar, Thana Peon, Thana Maddatgar, Thana Shroff, Thana Peshkar, Thanadar (Amin), Huzur Peon, Huzur Jamadar, Huzur Maddatgar, Huzur Naib, and Huzur Sheristadar.

Appiah willingly implicated his cousins and close relatives in these village activities, but most of his blame was reserved for

¹ Cherukuru Karnams to Walter Elliot, op.cit., p. 8070

² Punagapad Karnams to Walter Elliot, May 27 and June 6, 1845
Appendix B, Nos. 7 and 8: ibid., pp. 7904-14

district officers. Kotapalli Achiah, the Anin, deliberately took the village away from its leaders and rented it to the indigent (nadar) community led by Krosur Kotappah. The village élite, who could easily pay the full revenue, permitted this arrangement. The Nadars (or poor people) were not difficult to control and paid large gifts both to village leaders and to district officers out of the balances of revenue which they withheld from the Government. Achee Raju and Achee Venkiah, who were Appiah's cousins, did the bookwork. Since the Nadars possessed little property or money which might serve as collateral for the rent, the Government revenue was almost wholly lost.

.....

CONCLUSION

Stokes had the misfortune of coming to Guntur at a time when local forces were well advanced in their designs to combine silently and to enrich themselves at the expense of the State. Partly because he lacked facilities for obtaining information from the villages, partly because he failed to obtain the cooperation of his Indian (Desastha) subordinates, partly because he was unable to receive support from Madras, but probably because all of these factors worked together against him, Stokes could scarcely discover, much less control, what was going on beneath him. His words did not carry the weight of authority which was necessary. He was the chief executive over the district administration in little more than name.

District officers, notably the Maratha Brahmans under Shashagiri Rao, supplanted the Zamindars. In the name of the Government, these officers inherited not only the decentralized administrations and delegations of authority -- free from superior supervision and control -- but also the perquisites and dignities which the Zamindars had enjoyed. The aura of divinity, the borrowed glow of the huzur, clung to them so that they could walk like giants on the earth. A Desastha's daughter being married or the erection of a special shrine by a Desastha was cause enough for special contributions from the villages. If the Cherukuru Karnams could admit to giving the Sheristadar 100 rupees a year, one can begin to imagine what he must have received from over a thousand other villages in the district.

At the same time, however, the villages probably gained the

better part of most bargains with district officers. If a subordinate district officer accepted village money, he shed much of his own responsibility for corruption as soon as he brought his superior into the transaction. He passed the blame and shielded himself from any wrath which might fall. The higher the corrupting influence of the villages spread in the administrative hierarchy, the more shields there were between the village officers (and lower district officers) and the retribution which must inevitably fall. Level by level, higher officers became prisoners of those who were below them and risked exposure to still higher authority. The district hierarchy became caught in the webs and nets of village influence. Much as in the story of Gulliver, the strength of district administration was tied down by countless tiny threads and pegged to the earth, a captive of Lilliputian villages.

Since the Huzur Sheristadar was at the top of the hierarchy, his position was the most vulnerable. Blame stopped with him. When revenues dried up and questions were asked, he had to supply the answers. He could plead bad climate, disease epidemics, and poor market conditions for only so long. The gullability, inefficiency, wrong judgement, or laziness of the State rulers could last only so long. Then, inevitably, the blow would fall and there would be a number of vacancies, particularly at the top levels of the administration. But most of the Guntur district officers in the high positions had gone through this process several times before. Their very vulnerability combined with uncertain tenure encouraged

them to make the most of their moments of power. Loyalty to family and to caste demanded such action. Village leaders and low level district officers, such as Samatdars, who were not very vulnerable but who were just as loyal to their families and castes and villages, were ever keeping up a steady pressure. In addition to this, it was usually possible for dismissed district officers to enter district administration again, if not in Guntur then in some other district.

CHAPTER FIVE

ELLIOT AND THE RESTORATION OF CENTRAL CONTROL: 1843-1848

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CHAPTER FIVE

ELLIOT AND THE RESTORATION OF CENTRAL CONTROL: 1843-1848

Born in Edinburgh on June 10, 1803, Walter Elliot was recommended to the service of the East India Company by his aunt, Lady Elphinstone (widow of the 12th Lord), and nominated by his grand-uncle, William Fullerton Elphinstone, in January, 1819. He graduated from Haileybury with an honorary certificate of "highly distinguished" and a reputation in sports. On June 14, 1820, he landed in Madras. The record for his two years at the College of Fort Saint George, where he learned Indian languages, history, law, and administration, was equally brilliant. An honorary award of 1000 pagodas was given to him for his proficiency in Tamil and Hindustani.¹⁺

After two years as Assistant to the Collector and Magistrate of Salem, Elliot asked for an assignment in a "non-regulation" territory and, through the influence of "powerful friends,"² was appointed an Assistant to John Thackeray, the Political Agent of Dharwar (in Bombay). Here he was caught in the Kittur uprising a year later. Thackeray was killed and Elliot himself was imprisoned for six weeks. The experience with the local inhabitants of the country at this time taught him lessons about Indian society which were later to be very useful. The gentle

¹ Writers' Petitions, Vol. 30, No. 19. Robert Sewell, Sir Walter Elliot of Wolfelee: A Sketch of his Life and a few Extracts from his Note Books (Edinburgh: 1896), PP. 1-5. +Note: Elliot was apparently one of those rare individuals who delight in languages for he later absorbed Telugu, Marathi, Persian, and even Arabic.

² ibid, p. 5.

treatment which he received as a prisoner, the kindness and cordiality of several of his captors, the love of intrigue, the ferocious and merciless revenge aroused in persons who felt themselves humiliated, and the strength of caste discriminations and loyalties which he witnessed "must have combined to influence his ideas...and to enable him to understand the Hindus as few other administrators have done."¹ His desire to know more of their customs and feelings, their languages and their history provoked a warm response from local leaders in Dharwar; ^{but} he was still remembered there 70 years later. Even though he was a Madras civilian in Maratha country, Sir John Malcolm would not let him go, even making a special appointment in order to keep him. By the time he went on furlough in 1833, his reputation as a shikari (hunter), archaeologist, historian, antiquarian, and linguist was established.²

Elliot's adventures next took him across the Egyptian desert, down the Nile, across another desert to Damascus and Jerusalem, through Turkey, and finally into many parts of Europe. After 17 months at home, Elliot wrote to his cousin, Lord Elphinstone:

I see a report in the Courier that you are to have the Government of Madras. I trust it may prove to be the case and if so I shall be very happy if you can make any use of me. You know I have been out there for the last 13 years and am pretty well acquainted with the state of affairs both public and private.

¹ op.cit., p.12

² ibid., 13-39. Col. Walter Campbell, My Indian Journal (Edinburgh: 1864), pp.vii, 69-86, 136, 256. By 1840, he was the leading orientalist in South India and a contributor to the Royal Asiatic Society, Asiatic Society of Bengal. He helped to found the Madras Journal of Literature and Science.

What I should like would be to go with you as your private secretary. It is the only situation that (not being a military man) I could hold about you.¹+

Elliot and Elphinstone sailed on the Prince Regent, a yacht which Britain was presenting to the Imam of Muscat, and arrived at Madras in February, 1837.

Between 1837 and 1843, Elliot was exceedingly active both in public and in private affairs. He was soon Third Member of the Board of Revenue, a College Board Member, Canarese Translator, and Acting Persian Translator. On November 24, 1838, Elliot wrote from Suez describing hostilities between Wahabis and Egyptians.²⁺⁺ Three weeks later he was married to Maria Hunter-Blair (of Blairquahan) who had come out from England to meet him in Malta. In 1839 he began excavating at Amaravati and in 1840 he investigated "cromlechs and Cairns" of the Nilagiri Hills.³ On March 5, 1841, after negotiating all morning with the Governor-General in Calcutta, Elliot wrote to the Governor:

Lord Auckland did not commit himself to any precise declaration; but I think he will adopt the whole of your plan and abolish the whole of the transit duties, the town duty of Madras, the Malabar tobacco monopoly, and the salt monopoly, retaining only the duties on the frontiers."⁴

Thus, it would appear that Elliot was probably the closest adviser, friend, and agent of the Governor. One doubts whether he spent much of

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, April 1, 1836: EC (Box 10-A.)
+ Note: This offer was accepted by Lord Elphinstone.

² Elliot to Elphinstone, November 24, 1838: op.cit., No. 11. ⁺⁺ Note: Elliot obtained leave to go to Malta to get married.

³ Sewell, op.cit., p. 46.

⁴ Elliot to Elphinstone, March 5, 1841: op.cit., No. 14 (Box 10-A).

his time in his office at the Board of Revenue; however, a special appointment, the Temporary Fourth Member who was supposed to help rid the Board of its heavy backlog of work, undoubtedly took up some of the slack while Elliot was away on other errands. Lord Tweeddale, the next Governor (from September 24, 1842), found Elliot acting as the Revenue and Judicial Secretary and "Lord Elphinstone's guide in everything."¹

I. THE PREOCCUPATIONS OF THE PRESIDENCY

How the administration of Guntur was allowed to deteriorate to such a point that it was a menace to State authority must be seen in the light of the broader stream of events flowing in the Madras Presidency (if not in India as a whole). Unfortunately, a comprehensive history of this "Cinderella of the East," as it was called,² has yet to be written. A yawning chasm must be filled before there is a proper understanding of South India during this period; however, for the purpose of this study, it will be sufficient simply to demonstrate briefly that the Madras Government was so preoccupied, particularly after 1842, with other matters that an emergency was required to bring about an awareness of the problems of Guntur. In this want of vigilance and efficiency, it seems apparent that the British rulers were to some degree prone to the same failings as their Muslim and Hindu predecessors.

¹ Tweeddale to Ellenborough, November 26, 1842: TC, Home Private Letter Book, Vol. I, p. 179.

² John Norton, A Letter to Robert Lowe on the Conditions and Requirements of the Presidency of Madras (Madras: 1854), p. 179.

A. THREATS WITHIN THE TERRITORY

After 1839, wars became a recurring theme for discussion and decision in all three Presidencies. The Kabul disaster, attempts to restore the prestige of British arms on the North-West Frontier, operations against the Amirs of Sind, a gathering of forces along the Sutlej, and the supporting of British trade in the Far East were parts of this theme. Since its position was mainly one of support and reserve, the weight of Madras military power faced north. Some regiments went to Secunderabad, Jubbulpore, Nagpur, and other northerly ^acontonements while others embarked at Madras for Sind, Singapore, and China. Madras troups were stationed so as to hold the lines of communication and take care of emergencies which might arise within British dominions and dependencies.

The Madras Army was occupied from 1832 onward putting down revolts within the Presidency. The Parla-Kimedi and Gumsur rebellions in Vizagapatam and Ganjam led to campaigns in jungles and hills and tied down two regiments in desultory and costly guerilla fighting.¹ There was a rising of the Mappilas in Malabar,² an insurrection in Canara,³ and difficulty in trying to eliminate meriah (human) sacrifices among the Khond tribes of Ganjam and Orissa.⁴ When the Nawab of Kurnool gathered war material and was implicated in the Wahabi conspiracy, a

¹ D.F.Carmichael, A Manual of Vizagapatam District (Madras: 1869), pp. 230 ff. T.J.Maltby, A Manual of Ganjam District (Madras: 1918), pp. 145-151.

² Innes and Evans, Malabar District Gazetteer (Madras: 1908), pp.83-89.

³ Letters on Canara Insurrection: EC (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.87), Miscellaneous File I, Box 3-C, Nos. 8-13.

⁴ Maltby, op.cit., pp. 154-159.

brief encounter ensued and the jagir was annexed.¹ A rumour of conspiracy against the Company was also investigated in Mysore.²

Internal administration was also disturbed by subversions and scandals in the districts. George Casamajor was sent to Nellore in 1839 to resolve differences between the Collector, Stonehouse, and his Sheristadar.³ John Dent was sent as a Special Commissioner to South Arcot in 1841 to stop the deterioration of authority in that district.⁴ George Drury was deputed to Madura in 1842 where collusion between the Diwan of the Ramnad Zamindar and the Huzur Sheristadar resulted in scandalous corruption.⁵ Sir Henry Montgomery was ordered to discover the causes of the deterioration of Rajahmundry District in 1843.⁶ Still later there was a heated controversy over religious discrimination by Government officers in Tinnevely.⁷ These and other similar troubles in the mufassal caused concern in Madras enough to require remedial action.

¹ N.G.Chetty, A Manual of Kurnool District (Madras: 1886), p. 41.

² Shashagherry Row to Commissioner, October 15, 1838: EC (op.cit.), Box 3-D, No. 39.

³ Elphinstone to Casamajor and Stonehouse, July 10, 1839: EC (op.cit.), Box 3-A, Nos. 126, 127, and letters in Box 3-B.

⁴ W.Francis, Gazetteer of South Arcot District (Madras: 1906), p.214.

⁵ Elliot to Elphinstone, March 23, 1843: op.cit., Box 10-D, No. 41.

⁶ Henry Morris, A Descriptive and Historical Account of the Godavery District in the Presidency of Madras (Madras: 1878), pp. 291-296.

⁷ A Memorial from the Hindu Community of Madras to the Court of Directors (IOL: Tract 633), printed in 1846.

B. INTRIGUES WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT

A thorough knowledge of the Governorships of Elphinstone and of Tweeddale is not necessary in order to become convinced that a large amount of time and energy was expended in intrigues, some serious and others trifling. Considering the fact that the European community in South India was small, particularly the official community, it is not surprising that a small-town atmosphere developed in which each hungered for the latest gossip and thought himself his brother's keeper. But, deeper than this, there was constant struggling for power. Within the trappings of bureaucracy, influence was gathered and dispensed in whispers on the verandah and in scratching pens under the punkah.

Without any pretense of establishing accuracy or of tracing policy, two mirrors may be set up to reflect the intrigues which played upon the Government. Walter Elliot was an acute and responsible observer who represented and, indeed, was virtually an embodiment of the ideas of the Elphinstone regime. This was an easy-going, warm-hearted, broad-minded, and far-seeing regime in which authority was readily delegated to trusted officers for long terms. It was a regime which gave serious and optimistic attention to liberal reforms and even tried to meet the desires of bothersome officers. In contrast to the flexible rule of Elphinstone, that of Tweeddale was rigid and almost brittle. Tweeddale put his emphasis on what he considered to be sound thinking. Because his notions were somewhat fixed, closed, and determined, Tweeddale found trouble in bending his theories to meet realities. Sent out to clean up the mess in Madras, he was suspicious and

pessimistic. Unable to give trust, he would not delegate work and tried to do too much. Gradually he cut himself off from those whose support he needed and worked himself to a state of exhaustion.

The following are the views of Elliot and of Tweeddale as they reflected upon the preoccupations of the Presidency and especially upon the intrigues within the Government.

1. The Elliot View

Elliot's first impression of the new Governor was that he was slow and not very clear-headed, a person of "partial and incorrect views... maintained against reason and persuasion" who was "tenacious both of his opinions and privileges."¹ In Elliot's words,

Tweeddale is as afraid of responsibility as the other two Pillars Lushington and J.Bird... If you had seen the burst of pious horror that re-echoed round the Council Table when I brought forward a two penny half penny bit of expenditure, you would have been amused.²

One thing seemed plain, Tweeddale smelled "popery, treason, and gunpowder in everything connected with the late administration."³

After the death of the Nawab of the Carnatic in 1825, Chepauk Palace and Darbar affairs were entrusted to the Naib (Diwan), a brother of the deceased, until the infant heir should come of age. When the young Nawab came of age in 1842, it became apparent that the Naib had squandered Darbar money. In recognizing the possibility that the

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, October 19, 1842: EC (IOL: Eur. Mss. F.87), Box 10-D, No. 41.

² ibid.

³ ibid., October 23, 1842.

Government might have to make good any loss to the Nawab, the Governor called for a full explanation from the Naib and entrusted the enquiry to Charles Lushington, the retiring Council Member. The Chief Secretary, Henry Chamier, was ordered to show why the Naib's extravagance and mismanagement had not been brought to light during his 15 years in the Secretariat. Being a shrewd and cautious officer, Chamier brought out papers which revealed "some shocking and undeniable proofs that Stephen Rumbold [Lushington] had entirely relinquished all control over the Durbar before being relieved by F. Adam."¹ Thus:

One great attempt of the present junta, that of glorifying the said Stephen, brother of a Councillor and of a Chairman [of the Court of Directors] is thereby blown up and ruined and he must share in the reputation of carelessness and stupidity charged against his successors.²

Chamier brought out another collection of papers showing that the Adam Government had been aware of the Naib's misbehavior but, seeing no better person in the Nawab's family, had made the best of a bad situation. Affairs of the Circari Carnatic, meanwhile, were in complete confusion, no pay having been disbursed for months, the Chepauk household being filled with alarm and distrust, and the young Nawab himself going the way of most Nawabs of that day.

Lushington's parting contribution was to assist in opening a breach between the Governor ("Old Dum") and the new Council Member, Chamier. Lushington called upon Chamier to produce all the cancelled

¹ Elliot to Elphinstone, December 18, 1842: op.cit.

² ibid.

drafts and public papers which he had been secretly hording through the years for possible use as weapons. "Some very offensive remarks ...regarding Chamier" were recorded in a minute by the Governor.¹ Having thus tied a tin kettle on the tail of the Government ("animal"), Elliot saw Lushington depart "chuckling at the disturbance he had left in Little Piddlington."²

The new regime was now in full sway. At the suburb of Guindy, away from the turmoil of the city, Tweeddale held court, surrounded by a "Privy Council" of fawning friends and scheming advisers of whom the leader was William Underwood, Collector of Sea Customs. These individuals, having "hooked Leviathan" and "bamboozled" him, played upon their advantage with insolence.³ Affairs at the Fort were just as depressing:

Old Bird is such a poor devil, so good, so meek, so funky, and Chamier such an insincere, shifty, uncertain prig that there is neither credit nor advantage to be obtained under their auspices, controlled and guided by the leaden sceptre of King Dum. Chamier has a good place if he could keep it and remain quiet. But he cannot.⁴

The new Chief Secretary, John Thomas, was "an able and upright man"⁵⁺

¹ Elliot to Elphinstone, January 8, 1843: op.cit.

² ibid., January 8, 1843.

³ ibid., February 8, 1843, and April 24, 1844.

⁴ ibid., January 17, 1843.

⁵ ibid. ⁺Note: In order to avoid confusion due to the very complex game of musical chairs which had been going on in the Secretariat, it should be mentioned that Elliot was Acting Chief Secretary for Chamier as well as Acting Revenue and Judicial Secretary, that Clerk was the senior officer in the Secretariat, and that Thomas was not a favorite but a known evangelical.

but his appointment was a deliberate and unjust supercession of Robert Clerk, whose seniority and experience in the Secretariat made him the logical choice. Clerk resigned and went home, (meeting Elphinstone in Cairo). Elliot, wishing to have no part with an office in which there was little hope of doing something constructive, gladly went back to the Board of Revenue, which he had "never particularly desired to leave."¹ There, according to Maria Elliot, he remained quiet and watchful.²

From the Board of Revenue, things looked no better to Elliot. Doubts, suspicions, fears, plots, and narrow-minded views made the atmosphere oppressive. Drury was in Madura and Blackburn (the Collector) was suspended. Cameron was ousted from the Chepauk Agency. John Thomas worked without relief or assistance in the Secretariat, all his petitions being in vain, until he was worn to a shadow. After nearly fretting himself into a fever, Montgomery was removed from his Acting Membership on the Board of Revenue, was appointed to Tanjore, and then, because protests against him from Home had come to Tweeddale, was sent to investigate Rajamundry District.³ Elliot wrote:

All this is bad and will do harm. There are a lot of intriguers about /Tweeddale/; it is evident. Who they are I don't exactly

¹ Maria Elliot to Elphinstone, January 19, 1843: op.cit. Two notes from Tweeddale, enclosed, informed Elliot that his services were not required and that he would not be confirmed as Chief Secretary.

² ibid., April 21, 1843.

³ Walter Elliot to Elphinstone, ibid., February 8 and March 25, 1843.

know; but from questions I am asked, I see that someone has furnished information.¹

...there has been a strong influence at work against you at home...Before I left the office, I saw indications of the same spirit of attack evidently founded on false grounds, derived from unofficial sources. In fact, there is no doubt that Sir James Lushington has been acting with decided hostility toward you on account of his brother. Sim (who corresponds with the present Chairman) told me you would not have been relieved but for Sir James' persevering efforts. You never made any counter statements, so those of your enemies passed current. You would do well I think to look into this and see that no permanent damage has been done to your reputation.²⁺

A scandal in the Accountant General's Office, open war in the Sadr Adalat and the Supreme Court, and a blowup in the Military Board were among the main centers of dispute during 1843; but it was the Military Board which made the loudest noise. When Elphinstone had superseded the incompetent Secretary, Moberley, by appointing McNeill to the Board, Moberley had complained. The Court of Directors had replied to his memorial by authorizing his appointment but without referring to any specific vacancy.

Tweeddale wanted to know why Board Members interfered with the Secretary's duties. The Board answered that the stock books giving the official value on all military equipment had merely been transcribed from the entries of the previous year and that the Secretary had not even been aware of the fact; moreover, after Moberley had made alterations of 23,000 rupees and returned the books marked as

¹ ibid., February 8, 1843.

² ibid., March 25, 1843. + Sim was a Member of the Military Board.

corrected, another 70,000 rupees in omissions and under-charges, not to mention 50,000 rupees worth of steel scabbards for cavalry swords, were found to have been completely over-looked. Further searching in the commissariat, gun-carriage, and ordinance departments, showed the error to be 5 out of a total of 105 lakhs.

The whole question went before the Government in September, 1843.

Elliot wrote:

Sim and McNeill have had the whole battle to fight. Ketchem, the old ass, leant to the Secretary and Hitchins, tho he concurred entirely with the other two, got a sick certificate to the Cape...There is nothing in the least affecting Moberley's integrity or that of his Clerks. It only shows him to be a very stupid, thick-headed, obstinate man, entirely in the hands of his servants.¹

Two months later, the Governor dismissed McNeill, explaining that the act was not his as he was merely obeying orders, and ordered McNeill to rejoin his regiment.²

With this event, the fat was in the fire. In the early stages of the struggle, Elliot felt that McNeill would obtain no redress from the Court of Directors. The Home authorities seemed to Elliot to be actuated mostly by personal feelings as could be seen in their recommendation of Lushington's relations, in their advocacy of Astell's friend (Moberley), and in their treatment of the important decisions of Elphinstone's Government. Recent Court despatches "could only have been written from private information because there was nothing of the sort on record."³

¹ Elliot to Elphinstone, September 22, 1843: op.cit.

² Elliot to Elphinstone, November 25, 1843: ibid.

³ ibid.

All of these circumstances coupled with the very constitution of the Court itself make me hopeless of redress from that quarter, and unless the Board of Control take it up, the game is up. Chamier who is a dirty dog fully concurred with the Governor and even out-Heroded Herod...He hates McNeill. Some personal slight. Some breach of etiquette that occurred years ago has long caused them to meet without acknowledging each other...Chamier is also friendly with Moberley.¹

However, as the affair simmered and bubbled through the next year, Moberley's incapacity became so apparent that the Court found itself embarrassed.² Facts brought to light combined with pressure in England forced the Court to trim their sails and Tweeddale was ordered to reconsider arrangements in the Military Board.³ In this manner, one affair in Madras went full circle.

Elliot's opinion of the Governor hardened and his disgust increased as he observed the plots and counter-plots.

If only [Tweeddale] had enough ability to think for himself. But his conscious ignorance, his vanity and Scotch cunning drive him to seek the aid of irresponsible advisers and he is thus led into erroneous and wavering conclusions. He is horribly suspicious and always thinks there is some underhanded object in what is told him.⁴

Lane and Underwood "[pulled] the wires;" but Lane, as Private Secretary, was at least the open and acknowledged adviser while "William Underwood [was] a dirty, low, intriguing fellow."⁵ John Thomas seemed to be the only highly placed person who was still generally respected;

¹ ibid.

² ibid., May 20, 1844.

³ ibid. June 11, 1844.

⁴ ibid., March 25, 1843.

⁵ ibid., May 13, 1845.

but his voice was little heard at Government House. Henry Chamier, that bitter and hypersensitive Councillor whose vanity would have made him most easy to conciliate, was excluded from Guindy and, as a result, was allowing his natural wit and his great knowledge of the Secretariat to "add gall to his ink" in writing a contrary minute on almost every issue.¹ A decision had only to mis-fire or go wrong and Chamier's minutes would rise from the records where they slumbered and explode underneath the Governor.

Word of a flickering of mutiny in the 6th and 47th Light Cavalry Regiments, was followed by news that Lord Ellenborough had ordered all of the advanced units of the Madras Army back to their stations within the Presidency. This embarrassment, reflecting as it did upon the whole Presidency, provoked Elliot to write:

Had Lord Tweeddale been a man fitted to carry out the obnoxious order regarding batta, without injuring the temper and character of this army, there would have been an excuse; but he has done more to create discontent during the last 12 months than all the obnoxious orders of the Home Government in their dissimulation.²

Elliot could not reconcile the Duke of Wellington's disposal of his Indian patronage with his reputation for honest dealing. In gloomy words, he wrote:

[Wellington] has sent out a man whose notorious unfitness he must have known... I fancy, however, that few people trouble their heads much about the minor Presidencies and, after all, there is an elasticity and resilience in a long established system of administration that prevents the spread of any

¹ ibid., October 22, 1843.

² ibid. February 17, 1844.

general disorder or injury.¹

There is little doubt that Elliot blamed the Commander-in-Chief (Tweeddale) for the mutiny and the unrest in the army.

Meanwhile, paralysis had spread into many fields which had been the pride and joy of Elphinstone and Elliot. Not only had construction on the Western Road and on the Wallajanagar Railroad come to a stop, but plans which had been made for the development of education, especially in the university, the medical and engineering colleges, and the proposed provincial schools, were held up; and progress was at a standstill. Vacancies in the colleges had not been filled. All communications from the Government on the subject had ceased. Permission even to print the second Annual Report on education, that for 1842, had been denied.² Summarizing the troubles of education late in 1843, Elliot remarked:

I hear the Government was safely delivered a few days ago of a minute on the affairs of the university, the gist of which was "I have watched the progress of National Education in Europe for the last 20 years."³

Finally, in January of 1844, Elliot was so discouraged by the damper which the Court's latest despatch had put on the university that he resigned from the College Board. John Norton, the Advocate-General, was

¹ ibid., January 23, 1844. Elliot may not have known that Tweeddale's three daughters were married to the 2nd Lord Wellington, Lord Ripon, and Lord Dalhousie (the future Governor-General).

² ibid. September 22, 1843.

³ ibid., November 25, 1843.

ready to follow Elliot's example.¹

2. The Tweeddale View⁺

Soon after he took charge of the Government, Tweeddale wrote to the President of the Board of Control, Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey, that he was having trouble finding out what was going on. "When a new Governor arrives," he remarked, "people lay on their oars, waiting to learn what the system is to be [and] it is difficult to see the exact colour of things."² From the newspapers and the public it was apparent that jobbing had been rampant. It was obvious that the system would not do; therefore, civil and military personnel had been told from the beginning that, while "the road to Patronage [was] kept fairly open," no one was to expect any advancement unless they could demonstrate a thorough knowledge of their duties.³ The only obstacle which the Governor could see to his plan of "stirring up the Service,"⁴ was the system of Home patronage.

Tweeddale's first collisions were with the Secretaries. What had filled him with consternation upon his arrival in Madras had been the discovery that his predecessor had filled up the high positions with

¹ ibid., January 23, 1844.

⁺ Note: The Marquis of Tweeddale was primarily a soldier, having served in Canada during the War of 1812 and under Wellington in the Peninsular War. He hoped for a chance to see action in India.

² Lord Tweeddale to Lord Fitzgerald and Vesey, October 20, 1842: Tweeddale Collection (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.96). Home Private Letter Book - Volume I, p.8.

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid.

acting appointments, which left him "the odium of not confirming them."¹ Chamier had been sent on sick leave to Bangalore, "which was all an excuse" for he was living all the time at Guindy,² in order that Clerk could be made Acting Chief Secretary. Elliot had been made Acting Revenue and Judicial Secretary. As he put it,

These are recommended as the most perfect Servants in the Presidency who I am satisfied are not trustworthy after a few minutes conversation. I hope you will remember if I am condemned for not paying attention to what are called "powerful letters."³

The Secretariat threw cold water on his enquiries, denied responsibility for previous actions, and withheld information and official documents in their offices.

One example of the unreliability of officers in the Secretariat was considered to be the maladministration of the Darbar's affairs during the minority of the Nawab, affairs for which the Company was responsible. It had been difficult for the Governor to obtain the necessary information and but for the help he had received from Charles Lushington he might not have been successful. The Masnad Agent, whom Elphinstone had appointed only the week before Tweeddale's arrival, had been replaced of necessity in order to have "a confidential person about the Nawab."⁴ To Fitzgerald he wrote:

¹ ibid., November 26, 1842.

² ibid., November 26, 1842, and April 23, 1843.

³ ibid., October 20, 1842.

⁴ ibid.

I hope you will agree to my view of the Secretaries neglect in the Nawab's business. I will undertake to say no business can go on if such conduct is sanctioned. Great jobbing has taken place amongst the European Servants, which loosens the steadiness of the Natives, and hence is the cause of so much roguery.¹

Another example given by the Governor against the Secretariat was its handling of troubles in the Accountant General's Office. A Court despatch of 1841 ordering an enquiry into the outstanding balances in this office, together with all other outstanding balances, "was kept secret from Tweeddale."² The Accountant General had come to the Governor and asked that 3,70,000 rupees might be written off.³⁺ When Tweeddale had written a minute expressing shock and concern over the unbusinesslike and ignorant methods of accounting which prevailed, a despatch had been produced to show that old balances were to be inquired into and irrecoverable balances struck off. To James Lushington, the Court Chairman of the previous year, the Governor wrote:

You will agree...that the Secretary should have supplied me with the letter. It is the least he could have done. The consequence has been that I have called for all letters addressed by the Court of Directors to this Government which have not been complied with. This is tantamount to my saying to the Secretaries, "I will know what is in your offices whether you choose to tell me or not."⁴

¹ ibid., February 23, 1843, p.79.

² Tweeddale to James Lushington, April 23, 1843: ibid., p.130.

³⁺ Note: Elliot wrote Elphinstone that one deficiency (a half lakh) was found to have existed since 1804 (in his letter of September 22, 1843: EC, op.cit.).

⁴ Tweeddale to Lushington, April 23, 1843: op.cit., p.131.

The result of this dissatisfaction with the working of the various departments in Madras was a predictable reshuffling of appointments and a general shakeup of the central administration. Lushington's departure from the Council, a fact which Tweeddale constantly bemoaned, left the Governor with Bird, who supported him, and Chamier, who was only lukewarm at best. Tweeddale would have preferred Drury or Thomas instead of Chamier in the Council. Instead, he brought them into the Secretariat. For much of 1843, while Drury was Commissioner in Madura, Thomas carried the whole load. Expressing his satisfaction with this arrangement, Tweeddale wrote:

As Clerk thinks so much of his own qualifications, I rather think if you ask Mr. Melville, he will tell you Mr. Thomas who has succeeded him has put more business through his hands single-handed, in charge of two Secretary's duties, than his predecessors have done in any month since they have been in office.¹

After five months in office, the Governor wrote a general treatise in which he defined the problems and requirements of the Presidency. He was determined to put people in their proper places, establish discipline, and improve methods in the offices and boards so that the distance between Madras and London would not be felt. "I feel that there is no reason," he wrote Fitzgerald, "why your interests here should not be easily managed, as my Estate is at home."² At Yester House, fixed rules were laid down which were known both to the Marquis and to his Factor. Tweeddale supposed that the same rules applied in Madras. "I see no business or work here," he commented, "that I have

¹ Tweeddale to Fitzgerald, February 23, 1843: ibid., pp. 84-85.

² Tweeddale to Fitzgerald, February 23, 1843: op.cit., p.85.

not seen under a different name at home, whether agricultural, engineering, bookkeeping, building, irrigating, or whatever."¹

The great object of any Government was to relieve people of unnecessary burdens. Natives had good reason to complain of exactions from Native Servants. If these officers were to obtain regularly twice the chargeable transit and port duties, amounting to 17 percent on the value of articles in commerce, amounts paid above the stipulated land revenue were probably proportional. Observing that there was no lack of Tahsildars who were guilty of irregularity but who were kept in office by Collectors, "because they were clever fellows," Tweeddale argued against more Indians in revenue work and against their elevation to higher positions in the Collectorates.²

The arguments have a liberal sound, are very catching, and plausible for those who are not responsible for the Collection of Revenue. Everyone must see that this country, when civilization has been established, must be governed by descendants of the former sovereigns. In the meantime, it is our duty to establish a feeling of honesty as the guiding principle of a Native Servant's conduct to the administration of his office.³

Just as wise regulations in the past had checked the improper exactions made by European officers, so more wise rules would be necessary to check current bad practices.

Tweeddale could see much that was wrong with the European servants as well. Members of the Council and of the Boards, together with the other officers in Madras, were, in his opinion, against discipline.

¹ ibid.

² ibid.

³ ibid., p. 87.

Feelings for friends and relations in the mufassal ("country work") surmounted feelings of responsibility for the whole administration. Instead of trying to improve his ability when in the districts, an officer spent his time trying to manipulate his influence with the Governor.¹

I am convinced that unless as much pain is taken to give the young civil servants as thorough a practical knowledge of their business as Collectors as their education at Haileybury gives them classical and scientific knowledge as gentlemen, no great improvements will take place in the country. You may see a Sir Thomas Munro occasionally; but you will never see the number of such persons at one time that is absolutely necessary for doing justice to the inhabitants.²

If Europeans were taught in the practical duties for which their Indian subordinates were employed, they would be able to take practical steps to stop pilfering. Not until the Company's Civil Servants were equal to their duty in the districts would it be wise to employ more Indians. Tweeddale went as far as to suggest that periodic examinations, as were used in the British army and navy, might well be introduced as the best means for promotion in the service.

By May and June of 1843, however, Tweeddale's ambitious plans for sweeping reforms in the administration were running into heavy weather. His attempts to "ransack" and "remodel" every office were being met by "one gentleman in Council who [gave him] more business than [was] either convenient...or necessary."³ His wish "to expose everything

¹ ibid., pp. 88-90.

² ibid., pp. 140,145. June 12 and May 12, 1843.

to daylight" and his determination that the Governor and not the Secretaries should govern was not proving to be so easy. To James Lushington he confessed:

I am astonished with what I see here. They are excellent people; but between ourselves, have been let loose. Unfortunately, I am the one to draw them up into their places.¹

What puzzled the Governor was the notion of responsibility commonly held in Madras. He could see no distinction between his Factor's responsibility to himself and to his private estate and his Collector's responsibility to himself and his Government. He equated the District Collector with the Estate Factor. As Upper-Factor, the Governor was to carry out the letter of the Court's instructions. As Under-Factor, the Collector was to carry out the letter of the Governor's orders. Apparently, Tweeddale expected a close correlation between thought and action, between policy and practice.²

One month later the Marquis, while sticking stubbornly to his theories and his expectations, was showing signs of fatigue. Working from six in the morning until five o'clock in the evening, trying to mark every paper so that his subordinates would see that there was no excuse for failure, and entertaining during the evenings so that officers whom he upbraided would know that he bore them no ill-will, the pace was beginning to tell (upon the Governor and Commander-in-Chief). He wanted to hold the key to every office so that he could open each door and see for himself that every department was in order.

¹ Tweeddale to Lushington, June 12, 1843: ibid., p.148.

² ibid., p.149.

Office work was to be looked upon as no more than a mechanical arrangement. All depended upon how smoothly the machinery was operated.¹

From this time onward, intrigues and designs against him were the increasing concern of Tweeddale. As he put it:

I used to think how delightful it must be to carry on the duties of Government in the Indian fashion, in a Secret Council. I have quite changed my mind. Experience has taught me now to prefer an open assembly of gentlemen where there is a check... on intrigues.²

If only, in addition to the army and civil lists, "a list of consanguinity, family connexion, and favors received by Servants of the Company [were] also published," the Home authorities would have been able to understand the difficulty which the Governor was meeting on every turn.³ Intrigue, "for which Madras [was] so famed,"⁴ became the recurring theme of the Governor's letters for the rest of his service in India. Writing to Lord Ripon, who succeeded Lord Fitzgerald as President of the Board of Control, he complained:

You cannot be aware of the difficulties I have met with since I have been here from intrigue and still have to contend with. Madras has long favored and well it deserves the name. They have got into such habits and have so lost the European views of Government that one is obliged always to be on his guard with them.⁵

¹ Tweeddale to Fitzgerald, July 10, 1842: ibid., p. 151.

² ibid., p. 151.

³ ibid., p.150.

⁴ Tweeddale to Sir Charles Napier, October 13, 1846: ibid., Vol.II, pp. 211-212.

⁵ Tweeddale to Lord Ripon, October 2, 1844: ibid., Vol.1, pp.360-62.

In 1845, similar thoughts were expressed to the Duke of Richmond:

The difficulties of getting anything done here, however much approved of, requires half a Governor's time. The intrigue is insufferable. [It] is encouraged by the power of memorials to the Court whenever a servant or officer finds things not going to his taste.¹

The opposition and secret intrigue of influential persons reached a stage in 1846 when the Governor did not feel he could carry out a measure without first going minutely into it, a procedure which almost brought the making of decisions to a standstill.²

Already, by 1845, Tweeddale was writing that he had no chance of anything in India, no chance for the field command which he so ardently desired and no chance for anything beyond a monotonous life at Madras of which he expected soon to be very tired.³ Thereafter, references to intrigue and occasions for pressure against the Governor increased. He became the regular target of the local press; he was criticised in England; and he was attacked in the House of Lords. The two most important causes of antagonism, in both of which private interests were arrayed against him, were blame for permitting religious discrimination in Government supported schools and responsibility for mutiny in the

¹ Tweeddale to the 5th Duke of Richmond, February 23, 1845: Richmond Collection (Chichester: County Record Office: Goodwood Archives).

² Tweeddale to Lord Ripon, September 19, 1846: op.cit., Vol. II, p.206.

³ Lord Tweeddale to the Duke of Richmond, April ?, 1845: Goodwood Archives (Chichester: County Record Office).

Madras Army and harshness against officers of the Madras Army.¹⁺ However, all of this pressure developed after steps were taken to deal with the decay of administration in Guntur and, therefore, is not material to this study.

C. ARREARS IN THE BOARD OF REVENUE

Having thus obtained two by no means comprehensive interpretations of events in Madras which establish the virulent intrigues of the British rulers, it is important to discover how the membership and the business of the Board of Revenue were influenced by these happenings. The departure of John Sullivan and Charles Cotton for Home in 1841 had led to Charles Lushington becoming President and George Drury becoming Second Member. Walter Elliot had remained as Third Member and Alexander Maclean, as Temporary Fourth Member.

Maclean's position was anomalous. In 1838, after 21 years in India without a furlough, Elphinstone put him on the Board of Revenue as Temporary Fourth Member in order to assist in eliminating arrears of work and to fill in for Walter Elliot who was busy as his Private Secretary. This acting appointment was only one of a series by which

¹⁺ Note: It should be mentioned that Tweeddale was an evangelical and a supporter of missionary activity. His correspondence from 1845 to 1848 is filled with his views of the religious controversy. His leading critic and opponent both in India and later in England was Malcolm Lewin. Tweeddale strongly opposed government interference with indigenous religions; however, his private support in Tinnevely, aroused opposition. See: Proceedings at a Public Meeting of the Hindoo Community of Madras, on 7th October 1846 (Madras: The Hindoo Press, 1846). IOL: Tract 633.

Maclean had managed to stay away from his district (Chingleput)⁺ since 1835. His reputation for jobbing and gaming at the Presidency, instead of hard work in the mufassal, and his incessant pressure upon the Governor for promotion was tolerated with remarkable restraint. He scorned the offer of the Collectorship of Malabar. He protested against Drury's appointment to the Board. He made jealous references to Elliot's being his junior. He detailed the faults of his seniors in arguing for his own permanent appointment to the Board. He lamented against his own continual supercession.¹

In 1843, two vacancies occurred in the Board. Drury, who had been deputed as a Special Commissioner to Madura, became a favorite of Tweeddale and upon his return to Madras replaced Thomas as Chief Secretary to the Government. Montgomery, the Acting Second Member who had taken Drury's place, was deputed as a Commissioner to the Northern Circars (specifically, to Rajahmundry). Andrew Robertson, "a very gentlemanlike agreeable colleague" but one whose health unfitted him for work and whose "want of mofussil experience [hindered] him from being of much use even in discussion," became Second Member.² The

⁺ Note: Under Tweeddale he was Principal Collector and Magistrate of Cuddapah though he never went up to his station.

¹ Maclean to Elphinstone, February 13, 17, 20, & 24, 1840: EC (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.87), Governor's File of Letters Received, Vol. VI, Nos. 44, 51, 55, 57 (in Box 2-E). Elphinstone to Maclean, February 13, 14, 18, 21, & November 23, 1840, February 14 & December 8, 1841, and February 22 and July 22, 1842: ibid., Governor's File of Letters Sent (Box 3-A).

² Walter Elliot to Elphinstone, May 13, 1843: ibid., (Box 10-D), No. 41. Walter and Maria Elliot, March 25 & April 21, 1843, also.

Temporary Fourth Membership was left vacant when Maclean obtained a position as Acting Second Judge of the Sadr Adalat, Dickinson having gone to the Hills on sick leave.

Seeing the Board's capability to do its work thus endangered, "Old John Dent,"¹ that "very soft good fellow" whose own failing health made it difficult for him to carry his share of the load, approached the Governor about a secretary for the Revenue Board Office, going so far as to suggest Thomas Pycroft who was just back from furlough.² The First Member was almost told that he was jobbing and the Board, in consequence, were "saddled" with Edward Lowell.³

What had for long been a chronic problem, however, now aroused alarm. There began a protracted series of arguments in the Council -- actually a continuation of argument from 1837 -- about how to solve the problems of the Board. In these, John Bird set the tone on one side and was joined by the Governor while Henry Chamier took the opposite side.

Chamier brought up the matter on May 5, 1843. Arrears of work were much heavier than had been supposed previously and it was imperative that the Board should be given every possible assistance. He thought that the suggestion made by the Board itself in 1837, that they be permitted to divide their labor instead of reaching all their decisions collectively, should be permitted. He was also of the

¹ Walter Elliot to Elphinstone, March 25 and July 14, 1843: ibid.

² ibid.

³ Walter Elliot to Elphinstone, March 25, 1843: ibid.

opinion that the strength of the Board should be kept up to the authorized level of four members until the arrears were wiped out. Either the Temporary Fourth Member who was acting as a Judge of the Sadr Adalat should resume his duties on the Board or someone else should be appointed to act for him.¹

Chamier's minute was followed the next day by a minute from Bird. Bird did not feel that the Council should prescribe rules by which the Board should dispose of its business. Board Members themselves were the best judges of how their work should be done. It would be better, he thought, to supply the Board with another Deputy Secretary or an efficient Assistant than to interfere with the practical working of the Board as a collective body. He agreed that it was not right that a Temporary Member of the Board should receive pay for that office when doing duty in the Sadr Adalat.²

Tweeddale defended the arrangements which already existed. In view of the fact that a Commissioner to the Northern Circars had been appointed, it was not wise to increase the number of members on the Board; moreover, since Maclean's previous experience showed him to be more fitted for the duties of the Sadr Adalat, it would be better to keep him there and to abolish the Fourth Membership.³

¹ Minute by Henry Chamier, May 5, 1843: MRP (280: 37: 5038-42), No. 7 of July 11, 1843.

² Minute by John Bird, May 6, 1843: MRP (280: 37: 5042-44), No. 8 of July 11, 1843.

³ Minute by Lord Tweeddale, June 10, 1843: MRP (280: 37: 5045-48), No. 9, of July 11, 1843.

Chamier wrote another minute in which he adhered to his original position. He felt it was a pity to abandon the object of keeping the Board numerically complete as long as a salary for a Fourth Member was drawn from the Treasury and as long as the Board's work was so far behind. An extra Assistant in the Secretariat of the Board would not meet the need adequately, as Chamier saw it. Furthermore, as far as Maclean's fitness was concerned, the Junior Member of Council preferred not to give an opinion at all. He merely stated that if the position were going to be abolished as proposed, then the Civil Auditor would be obliged to apply to Maclean the rules for granting deputation allowances to persons out of employ.¹

While Bird agreed with Chamier that the Fourth Membership of the Revenue Board should either be filled or abolished altogether, he expressed his opposition to its abolition for as long as the salary of the position was being drawn by Maclean.² Tweeddale agreed with Bird and the opinion of the Government was recorded in a minute of consultation on July 8, 1843, as follows:

His Lordship in Council is of the opinion that the most efficient and expeditious mode of conducting and performing the business of their office may be left to the consideration and judgment of the Board of Revenue.³

In this way the pen of Tweeddale's troublesome Junior Councillor was

¹ Minute by Henry Chamier, June 17, 1843: MRP (280: 37: 5049-52), No. 10 of July 11, 1843.

² Minute by John Bird, June 19, 1843: ibid (p.5053), No. 11.

³ Minute of Lord Tweeddale and of Consultation, July 8, 1843: ibid., No. 12.

stopped...at least for a time.

The Governor, in the meanwhile, had been assiduously courted by John Dent whose concern for the work of the Board would not allow him to become dismayed at Tweeddale's first rebuffs. Dent was successful in winning the Governor's friendship and, consequently, in obtaining the services of Thomas Pycroft as Acting Sub-Secretary to the Board. Elliot was happy that someone on the Board had the ear of the Governor, thought that Dent was doing good for the administration, and was especially glad for the help of Pycroft, "a very efficient clever little fellow" who deftly took charge of the Revenue Office and did most of the paper work.¹

As a result of the Board's deficiencies, Elliot had little time for leisure during 1843 (nor in 1844). He wrote to Elphinstone in September:

I have attended much more sedulously than I used to do to the business of the Board as I think I am in duty bound; and this year have written nearly all the settlement reports besides some other reports having general subjects connected with the transit duties, cowles, surveys, &c.²

Nevertheless, the work of the Board slipped further and further behind.

Heavy arrears in the Board of Revenue moved Chamier to record another minute on May 17, 1844. Unless the work of the Board done jointly were divided among the Members by a regular system of allotment and the decisions of individual Members were recognized and sanctioned

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, August 19, 1843: EC (IOL: Eur. Mss. F.87), Miscellaneous Letters, (Box 10-D), No. 41.

² Elliot to Elphinstone, September 22, 1843: ibid.

by the Government, all calls by the Government for reports would be utterly useless; moreover some reason would have to be given to the Court of Directors as to why the problem remained unsolved.¹

Bird regretted as much as Chamier that the arrears of business in the Revenue Board were so great but he was not prepared to condemn the Board. He was willing to see work divided as much as possible but he did not think that joint responsibility should be abandoned. If it was considered desirable, he could see no objection in adopting the Board's request for the services of a Fourth Member until the arrears were eliminated.²

The Governor noted that this was not the first time that his Government and previous Governments had dealt with the problem -- and probably not the last. He pointed out that one of two facts should be established. Either the individual Board Members had neglected their duty or the Revenue Board's system was altogether inefficient. Whether the inefficiency was inherent to the system or capable of practical remedies had to be discovered. The tremendous **arrears** should never have been allowed to accumulate; moreover, the very existence of such arrears made it all the more difficult to determine where the real fault lay. The Governor had not yet been able to form a confident opinion of how to solve this most difficult problem or of how to revise

¹ Minute by Henry Chamier, May 17, 1844: MRP (280: 53: 6297-6303), No.4 of September 24, 1844.

² Minute by John Bird, June 15, 1844: ibid., No.5.

the system. He added:

But in justice to the Members of the Board, I must declare my conviction that I believe they are zealous in the discharge of their duties and I have reason to believe that they have made every exertion to get rid of the arrears.¹

Still, delays in forwarding to the Government certain reports from the districts were surprising. For example, the Report on the Revenue Administration of Madura which the Board ought to have known about without much reference had yet to come before the Government although it had been sent down to the Board more than twelve months before. There could be no doubt but that the Board's regular work was both overwhelming in amount and very complicated in form. In addition, during the past two years, "most important and [special] subjects requiring the deepest consideration [had] come under discussion...which must have engaged much of the individual as well as collective attention of the Members and which naturally [caused] considerable delay in bringing up the ordinary business of the Revenue Department."² These extenuating circumstances had called for patience and restraint from the Government. The Governor concluded his defense of the status quo with the words:

The more I have become acquainted with the general system of revenue, the greater are the difficulties of a change which present themselves to my mind and which would also deter me from hastily assenting to a proposition for defining the system of conducting business in a Board so constituted.³

¹ Minute by Lord Tweeddale, August 3, 1844: Tweeddale Collection (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.96), Governor's Minute Books, Vol. III, No. 82, pp.400-404. Also in MRP (280: 53: 6315 ff.), No. 6 of September 24, 1844.

² Minute by Lord Tweeddale, August 3, 1844: ibid.

³ ibid.

In this way, the lid was put on the subject once again.

What is important here is not how the problem of arrears in the Board of Revenue was solved -- the problem was still chronic and serious over a decade later.¹ It is sufficient simply to establish the fact of these arrears; for this provides one reason why the administration in Guntur was allowed to slip beyond the proper control of the State authorities.

A Board is by its very nature a cumbersome and slow instrument of administration; moreover, by its very nature it is conservative in its operations. Continuity, tradition, deliberative decisions, and unanimity brought about by compromise are necessary and logical features of a Board. When the intrigue of Madras and the extraordinarily complex and heavy duties of the Revenue Board are combined with those qualities which are inherent to a Board, it is not surprising to discover that the Madras Board of Revenue was not able to accomplish enough to satisfy the demands of government.

II. THE INVESTIGATION OF THE DISTRICT

It is clear from what has been shown above (I, A.) that special investigations into the affairs of individual districts were far from strange or rare phenomena in the administration of Madras; moreover, as early as February 1843, the Council had been unanimous in the opinion that the causes of the rapid decline of revenue in the Northern Circars

¹ Ricketts, Report of the Commission for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments (Madras: 1858), Vol. I, p. 160 ff.

and of the large outstanding balances against the Zamindaris of the region should be ascertained without delay. For this purpose, Sir Henry Montgomery had been sent to look into the condition of Rajahmundry District, to discover its causes, and to suggest the remedies which would be required to restore the administration of the district to a healthy condition.¹

Rajahmundry was another Telugu district which, lying at the mouth of the Godavery River, was identical in almost every way to Guntur. George Smith, the Collector, had spent almost all of his twenty years of service in the district (a very rare circumstance for those days). The wife of James Thomas, the Zillah Judge, was probably referring to Smith when she gave her remarkable definition of "a crack Collector" as one who makes a point of keeping up the revenue in defiance of impossibilities.²⁺ Montgomery found that Smith had all but abandoned the administration of his district to the tender mercies of the Desastha elite in the Huzur Kacheri and that this in turn had led pressures from ghaibatu and village officers. Montgomery's discovery of lax management and irresponsibility on the part of Smith led to a head-on collision "which ended in Smith's removal and Sir Henry as Commissioner

¹ Minute by Lord Tweeddale, February 20, 1843: op.cit., Vol.I., p.245. Also MRP (280: 33: 2376), No. 30 of March 7, 1843.

² Julia Thomas, Letters from Madras, During the Years 1836-1839 (London: John Murray, 1846), "By a Lady" anonymously, No. 26, p.144 (November 5, 1839). Note: "There may be a famine, a hurricane; half the cultivators may take refuge in another district in despair; there may be no possible means of obtaining the money: but still the Collector bullies, tyrannizes, starves the people - does what he pleases, in short - and contrives to send in the usual sum to the Board of Revenue, and is said to be a "crack Collector."

being ordered to take charge of the District."¹

The Montgomery Report was despatched from Cocanada on March 18, 1844.² On May 17th, the Governor observed that the materials which were necessary to furnish the Government with a report on the Rajahmundry District, which had now been furnished so ably by Sir Henry Montgomery, had been in the records of the Board all the time. He had no doubt that the Board could produce reports for all the districts and zamindaris of the Northern Circars. The report was sent down to the Board for their observations; and, at the same time, the Board were requested not to keep it for nine months as it had done in the case of the Drury Report on Madura.³

The Board's review of the Montgomery Report lasted from May 28, 1844, to July 14, 1845, a period of fourteen months during which the entire membership of the Board was changed. In his minute on the report, dated January 6, 1846, Henry Chamier observed:

But all the measures that can be devised for this and other Districts will be fruitless so long as an inefficient Board of Revenue is permitted to postpone to any indefinite period the consideration and disposal of important questions.⁴

On April 17, 1846, three days after the Government disposed of the Montgomery Report, Walter Elliot submitted his report giving the results

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, August 19, 1843: EC (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.87), Miscellaneous Letter File (Box-10-D), No. 41.

² Sir Henry Montgomery, Bart., to George D. Drury (Chief Secretary), March 18, 1844: MRP (280: 48 & 49: pp.2090-2292), No. 8 of May 28, 1844.

³ Memorandum by Lord Tweeddale, May 17, 1844: TC (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.96), Governor's Minute Book, Vol.III, No. 52, pp. 272-273.

⁴ Henry Chamier's Minute, January 6, 1846: MRP (280: 79: 2765-75), No. 36 of April 14, 1846.

of his enquiries into the causes of decay in the Guntur District.

A. ELLIOT'S APPOINTMENT AS COMMISSIONER

Both the Government and the Board of Revenue had good reason, as can be seen from the Montgomery Report, for anxiety over the condition of Guntur. Revenues had dropped to less than half their normal level. The Jamabandi Report for 1842-43 (Fasli 1252) had not been sent in until May 31, 1844, and virtually nothing had been done to put into effect the instructions which the Government had issued on November 21, 1842, for the reorganization and renovation of the zamindaris. Despite repeated requests for information, little was known about the private debts of the Zamindars or how they should be resolved and even less was known about the probable future output of the zamindaris. Maintenance allowances had only just been sanctioned for the Zamindars whose villages were under amani management. A scientific survey and assessment of the zafted (attached) estates, under the charge of an Engineer was to take three years and cost approximately 75,000 rupees. There was known antipathy among the district officers against the Collector and more recently there had been charges accusing Stokes of missionary activities.¹

On August 15, 1844, news that the health of the Collector of Guntur had broken and that he was going to the Cape on Sick Certificate

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings, August 5, 1844: GDR (5375: 237-248) and MRP (280: 52: 6164-6175), No. 42 of September 10, 1844. BOR Proceedings, August 26, 1844: GDR (5375: 297-337), on Jamabandi Report, MRP (280: 64: 2994-3024), No. 1 of May 27, 1845. Note: Both Stokes and Newill subscribed from their own pockets to support an English and Vernacular School recently started by a Lutheran missionary, Rev. Heyer.

was submitted to the Government. The Board took pains to point out the peculiar circumstances under which the district was placed by this event. The public debts of the zamindaris stood at 68 lakhs while the private debts were not even known. Measures for strengthening the district administration which were urgently needed required "the exercise of much talent and experience attended with unwearied zeal."¹

A succession of minutes followed. The Governor asked that Stokes be called upon to explain rumors that he was engaging in missionary activities to the neglect of his duty.² A few days later, the Governor asked the Board what measures would be needed to restore the district administration to efficiency.³

On September 7, Chamier declared that the Board did not know enough to solve the problems of the five large zamindaris of Guntur. Since Lockhart was a complete stranger to the Northern Circars and would be of little use for some time, Chamier suggested the appointment of a Commissioner, some person of experience, as the best way of halting the deterioration. What Stokes might or might not have done in missionary work was "a matter of little moment compared with the evils that needed to be rectified."⁴

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings (para 4), August 15, 1844: MRP (280: 52: 6176-78), No. 43 of September 10, 1844.

² Minute by Tweeddale, August 27, 1844: ibid., No. 44, or TC, Minute Book, Vol. 3, p. 425 (No. 91).

³ Memorandum by Tweeddale, September 2, 1844: ibid., No. 45 (or No. 95).

⁴ Minute by Henry Chamier (para 29), September 7, 1844: ibid., No. 46.

Bird wanted a Collector with experience in Guntur or at least of the Northern Circars to be employed on an increased allowance such as the Court had suggested in 1842; but if this could not be done, he had to agree with Chamier.¹ Tweeddale agreed with Bird and the matter was shelved pending further information from the Board.²

In their answer, the Board explained that they had merely tried to urge Stokes not to delay. Although the causes for Stokes' delay were not known, no reprimand had been intended. The Board, in seeking to assist the Government in selecting a good successor to Stokes, had no wish to ascribe the troubles of Guntur to him; moreover, no news of missionary activity by Stokes had ever been received either publicly or privately. In the absence of any evidence to this effect, therefore, Stokes would not be asked for any explanations. Finally, since the Acting Collector and Head Assistant had their hands full with the regular administrative work, the appointment of a special officer to deal with the urgent problems was needed. Since any extra allowance -- the Board suggested 500 rupees a month -- to induce a good officer to stay in Guntur would have required the approval of the Supreme Government, the appointment of a Commissioner was seen as the simplest solution.³

In view of the arrears of work in the Revenue Board, Tweeddale wanted to send a Collector rather than a Member of the Board. He

¹ Minute by John Bird, September 9, 1844: op.cit., No. 47.

² Minute of Consultation, September 10, 1844: ibid., No. 48.

³ BOR Secretary to Chief Secretary, September 12, 1844: MRP (280: 54: 7235-39), No. 5 of November 19, 1844.

regretted that the ruined condition of the district had not been brought to the attention of the Government long ago. He thought that this ruined condition was probably due to the hurricane which had struck the district the previous year. While agreeing that it was impossible for a Collector to do what was necessary to redeem the situation, Tweeddale pointed to the Rajahmundry and Madura Commissions as examples of delay. Surely the required information was right in the Board's Record Office. He added:

If the Board have failed hitherto to obtain the information from the late Collector not previously in their records, I cannot acquit them of neglect.¹

Nevertheless, the Governor concluded, if the other Members of Government still pressed for a Commissioner, he would not hesitate to select a Member of the Board for the task.

Bird adhered to his earlier view. Stokes, he felt, had failed in his duty. Lockhart was bound to do even worse. Collectors were preferable to Commissioners. Only Dent had any experience in the Northern Circars and he would soon be taking Bird's seat on the Council. The selection of a special Sub-Collector might, in his opinion, have been a good alternative were it not that this action also required the sanction of the Government of India.²

Finally, but without enthusiasm, the decision was made.³ Dent

¹ Minute by Tweeddale, October 21, 1844: MRP (280: 54: 7239-44), No. 6 of November 19, 1844.

² Minute by Bird, October 31, 1844: ibid., No. 9.

³ Minute by Tweeddale, November 5, 1844: ibid., No. 10.

would be sent as a Commissioner to Guntur. Another Acting Collector would be appointed lest the Government should seem to be condemning the administration of Stokes; and Lockhart would be moved over to the Judicial Department. An enquiry into the causes of distress in Guntur and a survey of one or two taluks as a model by which the Collector could survey the rest of the district should not take long. A special Assistant and Commissioner's (Board's) Native Establishment might even be left behind to give extra help. Then when Dent came into the Council, his practical knowledge would be invaluable.¹

This plan did not work out so simply. Dent had been ailing. After receiving "a very unceremonious notice from the Private Secretary,"² he sent in a Sick Certificate.³ "He really was ill and went off to Calcutta in a precarious state" where he died six weeks later.⁴ Robertson, the next person ordered to go to Guntur, "had never been efficient and sent in a Sick Certificate immediately."⁵ He went to the Cape of Good Hope and then returned to England.⁶ The assignment next fell upon Elliot.

Elliot was long overdue for his two months leave. He and Maria were preparing to meet Elphinstone in Colombo. On Christmas Eve,

¹ op.cit. Minute by Chamier, November 8; Memorandum by Tweeddale, November 14; Minute of Consultation, November 16, 1844: op.cit., Nos. 11-14.

² Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, January 5, 1845: op.cit.

³ ibid. J.Dent to GOM, November 21, 1844: MRP (280: 55: 7750), Nos. 43-44 of December 10, 1844.

⁴ Elliot to Elphinstone, ibid.

⁵ ibid.

⁶ A.Robertson to GOM, December 18, 1844: MRP (280: 56: 8122), Nos. 55-56 of December 24, 1844.

however, he received the bad news. His feelings were expressed as follows:

About two months ago, Government took it into their heads to send a Commissioner to Gunttoor to report on the state of the Zemindaries which everyone thought was sufficiently well known already... At any other time, I should have liked this very well, but that it should come at the very moment that I wanted to meet you /Elphinstone/ is provoking. But there is no help for these things and I must fulfill my destiny. Maria is much disappointed too... she would have remained at Colombo whilst we knocked over Elephants.¹

Maria was not so tolerant:

I am so angry with everything and every person at present... Walter will tell you all about his own affairs. He does not talk much about them, nor do I; but it is very galling to have Mr. Maclean put over him in the Board after so long a time. Had Lord Tweeddale done it at first, I should not have been astonished; but now, I think it is very hard. He has done it too in such a way that he has affronted the Macleans mortally... far worse than ever you did... Mr. Maclean says he will go home, but he has taken his seat at the Board nevertheless. He ought to go home if he wishes to save his character.²

What tempered the feelings of the Elliots still more at this time was the fact that they were expecting their second child; for although Elliot hoped to finish the work in six months, some thought it might take as much as two years.³⁺

The appointment of Walter Elliot -- indeed, of any person from the Board -- cannot be entirely separated from the intricate intrigues and pressures which were existent at the time; nor can it be seen apart from the problems of the Board of Revenue. The departures emptied

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, January 5, 1845: op.cit.

² Maria Elliot to Elphinstone, January 20, and February 12, 1845: ibid.

³ ibid. ⁺Note: "Montgomery did not get back for 18 months though most anxious to escape from Rajahmundry," Elliot to Elphinstone, February 26.

the Board and, thereby, increased the scope for jobbing and patronage.

Of this Maria Elliot wrote:

I cannot help thinking this Guntoor business is put upon Walter ... For they can ill spare him in the Board. None of the other Members do anything; and the arrears of business will be fearful when Walter comes back. They are bad enough anyhow.¹

George Drury was made First Member, leaving John Thomas as Chief Secretary. Alexander Maclean became Acting Second Member and John Goldingham became Acting Third Member. It is the appointment of Maclean and Goldingham which calls for further explanation.

The anomalous place occupied by Maclean was further complicated when, on October 11, 1844, he was appointed Collector and Magistrate of Cuddapah but ordered to continue to act as Third Judge of the Sadr Adalat "in the public interest."² For over a year Maclean had been doing battle with an intriguer as fully accomplished as himself. This rival was Malcolm Lewin, the Second Judge. Maclean had also got himself "into a great scrape in his Turf affairs," having been shown up by the Bangalore Turf Club and declared a defaulter.³ In December, 1844, when Henry Dickinson returned from a long sick leave in the Hills, Maclean was removed from the Sadr Adalat. This was done despite the fact that a permanent vacancy was going to open up on January 1st. Outraged (as he had so often been with Elphinstone), Maclean wrote to the

¹ Maria Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, February 12, 1845: op.cit.

² Chief Secretary to A. Maclean, October 11, 1844: MRP (280: 53: 6787-88), Nos. 8-9 of October 15, 1844.

³ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, August 20, 1844: op.cit.

Governor:

I have laboured in that Court on a salary much below that of the other judges for the last two years. To have my hopes and expectations thus crushed in the eleventh hour is most painful and what few public men in my own service have ever been subjected to. The peculiar disadvantages under which I have labored for the last six years are...well known... I shall suffer severely in Rank and Station as well as aggrandizement...worse, I shall be lowered in the eyes of others.¹

Having no wish, he said, to return to the Board of Revenue, Maclean assuaged his mortification by threatening to leave the country.

While it thus seemed for a moment that Tweeddale was going to treat Maclean worse than Elphinstone had treated him and while Maclean's own acrimonious conduct in the Sadr Adalat and his tarnished private reputation made him eligible for such treatment, the wheels of favor again turned in his direction. Tweeddale, in explaining Maclean's transfer from the Sadr Adalat to the Board of Revenue, indicated that Maclean was unqualified for judicial work and concluded with the words, "This I did as the next best thing."² Even so, Maclean was soon complaining because the abolition of the Temporary Fourth Membership of the Board had meant a retrenchment in his salary to that of Collector and Magistrate of Cuddapah.³

Finally, there was the appointment of John Goldingham to the

¹ Alexander Maclean to Lord Tweeddale, December 28, 1844: TC (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.96), Miscellaneous Letter Book.

² Lord Tweeddale to Lord Haddington, January 25, 1845: ibid., Home Letter Book, Vol. II., p. 35. Also: Elliot to Elphinstone, January 14, 1845: op. cit.

³ A.Maclean to Government, March 22, 1845; MRP (280: 63: 2201-06), No. 1 of April 22, 1845.

Board. As far as can be determined, Goldingham was a quiet, hard-working, and able officer who had left the scrambling after station and privilege to others. With hardly a break, he had been in two of the most stricken stations of the mufassal for almost eight years (ten years, if Nellore and Masulipatam are added). Nevertheless, his recall to Madras aroused the jealousies of the intriguers. Goldingham became the target of protest and innuendo.¹⁺

The first person to cry out against the appointment of Goldingham was Alexander Bruce. This former Collector of Guntur who was now Civil Auditor had sorely tried the patience of the former Governor, Lord Elphinstone, by his continual efforts to capitalize upon their family relationship. Like Maclean and Lewin, Bruce was one who wormed and squirmed his way upward but who could not be satisfied even when a good position was offered to him.² Now, in a letter to Government, Bruce referred to a verbal intimation which the Governor had given to him promising him the appointment, appealed against the appointment as militating against his prospects, doubted whether he would receive from the Governor in writing what he had received in word, and submitted a memorial to the Court of Directors.³ Two months later, Bruce

¹⁺ While the Elliots were distressed that Walter was put under the orders of the "chuckle headed" Drury and two Collectors and that his being junior to Goldingham might hurt prospects for promotion, neither of them said anything against Goldingham's ability.

² Lord Elphinstone to A.F. Bruce, November 15, 1838, and October 11 & 12, 1839: EC (op.cit.), Governor's Letters Sent, Vol. I, Nos. 72 and 135 (Box 3-A).

³ A.F. Bruce to Government, January 28, 1845: MRP (280: 60: 1087), Nos. 61-62 of February 25, 1845.

reconsidered his rash action, begged to withdraw his former letter and memorial, asked that his leave might be cancelled, and requested that he might be allowed to stay on at his post. This the Governor permitted and the matter was dropped.¹

B. ELLIOT'S WORK IN GUNTUR

Little time was wasted by Elliot in preparing for his mission to Guntur. In January, 1845, he asked for and obtained the services of Appa Rao, the Huzur Sheristadar of Cuddapah and one of the most able Desastha officers in the Presidency. He obtained permission to employ an establishment costing 600 rupees a month, together with two properly educated Surveyors, a Medical Subordinate, a Dresser (named Ettaraju), and a quantity of stationery, camp equipment, and supplies. The Board were informed by the Government of the instructions which were being sent to the Commissioner and to the new Acting Collector, Daniel White. Finally, on January 17, the Government's Minute of Consultation was transmitted to Elliot and he was ordered to proceed at once to Guntur and to correspond directly with the Government on all matters of importance.²

Elliot left Madras on February 3rd. Just before leaving he

¹ Memorial by A.F. Bruce, March 17, 1845; Letter from Bruce to Government, March 28, 1845; and Order of Government, April 12, 1845: MRP (280: 61-62: 1382, 1403, 2173), Nos. 36, 37, 55, 56 of March 18, and Nos. 51 and 52 of April 15, 1845.

² See: MRP (280: 59: pp. 84, 266-79, 284, 323-25, 573), Nos. 40-41 of January 7, Nos. 7-9 of January 21, and Nos. 50-51, 67-68 of January 28, 1845.

commented on the fact that the whole hot season lay before him -- "the hottest time of the year in the hottest district in India."¹ Marching all the way nearly from Nellore, he followed a dreary road along the barren coast and then across "extensive plains to black cotton soil which are the characteristic feature of the district." The picture he drew was anything but heartening:

It is seared and burnt up and so there will be nothing for the eye to rest on, save an interminable expanse of black-maidan, bounded only by the horizon. The villages are built of mud and thatched huts. There are few trees and topes, scarcely any tanks and generally great scarcity of water....even for drinking. In a month the scene will be worse. You need not suppose...that I shall prolong my stay here. ²

Soon after the Commissioner's arrival in Guntur (February 16), however, there was little time to worry about heat or surroundings.

Assuming that nothing could be taken as true unless checked first hand, the Commissioner by-passed huzur, zamindari, and ghaibatu records and dug straight at the roots whence all information was basically derived. Karnams from the 100 villages nearest to Guntur and belonging to all the zamindaris were ordered to appear before the Commissioner's Kacheri and to submit their accounts for the past twelve years.³

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, February 2, 1845: op.cit.

² Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, February 26, 1845: EC (IOL: Eur. Mss. F.87), Miscellaneous Letters (Box 10-D), No. 41. Note: Elphinstone wrote back from Galle on September 29, 1845 (Box 13), "Your account of Guntur is even more disagreeable than I expected. I knew it was a flat district, but I did not know that it was a black treeless plain. I heartily wish you were out of it."

³ Elliot Report (para. 24), April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 20: 7474), No. 39 of December 6, 1847.

Various excuses drifted in from the villages explaining why it was impossible to come to Guntur. The assistance of the Acting Collector, Daniel White, helped to enforce the order. Village leaders appeared and dutifully presented themselves before the Pedda Huzur ("Big Authority": Commissioner). But when they were asked to show their records, they merely responded with gestures and sounds of sorrow. The Zamindar had requisitioned the books. Fire had burned the chawadi (village office or choultry) and all papers had been destroyed. Thieves had broken in and stolen. Storms, winds, and floods had come. White ants and silver fish had eaten. Another man had been Karnam (a close relative). Sometimes things just disappeared, were misplaced or lost. It was indeed unfortunate. "Without an exception," reported Elliot, "they declared that no such accounts existed."¹

In a letter to Madras, Elliot explained that he was meeting with severe obstruction, complained of inability to enforce orders, and asked for the powers of a Joint Magistrate.² The Government objected;³ but they did order White to put peons at Elliot's disposal and to be as helpful as possible.⁴ Elliot replied that White was being very helpful but that unavoidable circumstances would necessitate the absence

¹ Elliot Report (para 24), April 17, 1846: op.cit.

² Elliot to GOM, February 26, 1845: MRP (280: 61: 1203), No. 4 of March 11, 1845.

³ GOM to Elliot, March 5, 1845: ibid., No. 5

⁴ GOM to Daniel White, March 5, 1845: ibid., No. 6.

of White and Newill at times when prompt action was needed to deal with Karnams who were evasive or withheld their accounts.¹

After three weeks of floundering around in a sea of suspicions and without enough solid facts to make headway, weeks in which formal depositions were taken from the Karnams so that they would be liable to punishment for perjury if their statements were proved false, Elliot finally obtained information regarding the hiding place of records for the village of Takkalapadu, only two miles from Guntur Town. The officers who were sent to execute the warrant of seizure were too late, however, and the records disappeared. Nevertheless, enough solid evidence came to light from this village for the conviction of its Karnams. They were sentenced (under Regulation IX of 1822) to heavy fines and imprisonment for having concealed official documents, misappropriated State funds, extorted money from cultivators, and connived with officers from the Huzur to have their revenue reduced. The example of punishment meted out at Takkalapadu was sufficient to induce several other Karnams to bring out their hidden accounts. This was undoubtedly accompanied by further gestures and sounds of sorrow.²

At this, the district officers under the leadership of the Sheristadar and the Desastha elite in the Huzur Kacheri took alarm. Acting

¹ Elliot and White to GOM, March 10, 1845: ibid., Nos. 73-74 of March 18 and Nos. 39-40 of March 25, 1845. White indicated that Lockhart had given peremptory orders to district and village officers that they were to obey the Commissioner.

² Elliot Report (para 24), op.cit. Daniel White to BOR, March 10, 1845: GDR (5404: 38-40). BOR Secretary to GOM, March 20, 1845: MRP (280: 63: 2297-2300), Nos. 55-56 of April 22, 1845.

as a group they bent every effort to stifle the investigation and to counteract the work of the Commissioner. "They were at once able to act with vigor and concert throughout every part of the district."¹ Obstacles of every sort, often small, insignificant and time-consuming irritations, were thrown in Elliot's way. As the first effects of the Commission wore off, the Karnams who had confessed took courage and began to show a contumacious spirit. Promises, bribes, threats, and other more subtle pressures were applied to coerce and persuade wavering individuals to hold the line. New disclosures were checked and fresh complaints prevented from reaching the Commissioner.

It was necessary just at this time for the Jamabandi of the previous year (1844-45) to be conducted. White and Newill had to go to opposite ends of the district. Elliot found himself isolated. Without direct magisterial authority he was unable to act on intelligence as it reached him quickly enough to catch the wily local officers. White's specific oral and written orders to the Huzur officers to do as they were directed by the Commissioner were either circumvented, delayed, or ignored altogether. Requests were given every sign of outward respect; but nothing was done. A smoke-screen of obeisant deference obscured for a while the fact that every order was being countermanded and every move neutralized. The ^{Commissioner}~~Collector~~ became convinced ultimately that the prevailing deterioration was "the result of a general and well organized combination of the Collector's Establishment."²

¹ Elliot Report (para 25), op.cit.

² ibid.

White and Newill completely agreed with Elliot. They also found that village leases had been given on low terms through the connivance of district officers; moreover they too encountered an organised resistance by local forces against their authority. To White it was plain that some secret influence had been at work to impede his exertions and the obvious inference which he drew was that it could not have worked so long and so successfully in the district without the knowledge, the support, and indeed the leadership of the highest Indian officer of the district, the Huzur Sheristadar.¹

Late in March it was discovered that Nyapati Shashagiri Rao, Ambarkhana Purushothum Rao, Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, and many of the other district officers had been steadily acquiring land in the district in violation of the Regulations and of the Board's orders of June 19, 1826. Land was not allowed to be owned by district officers within the same district where they worked unless it was registered and permitted in a special dumbala. Both Elliot and White demonstrated from copies of the regulations and orders which were found in various kacheris that the district officers were well aware of the rules on land ownership; moreover, they found copies of a circular order issued by Stokes on October 28, 1843, requiring every officer to make a correct, up-to-date statement of his landholdings. Not a single officer had made a return. Indeed, they all denied ever hearing of the rule.²

¹ Daniel White's Report to Secretary of BOR, July 10, 1845: GDR (No. 58 in 5404: pp. 79-139).

² ibid., (para 66-70). Elliot Report (para 25), op.cit. Daniel White to BOR, March 22, 1845: GDR (5404: 63-64).

Elliot's impressions of the situation in Guntur were sent to Elphinstone on April 2nd. To him the district was full of corruption and rottenness. "The reckless improvidence of the Zemindars [had] been exceeded," he wrote, "by the rapacity of our own native servants since the surrender of the Estates."¹ More than half of the last year's revenue remained uncollected. Ryots had regularly purchased the forbearance of the Tahsildars in order that they might obtain rents on favorable terms with reference to the supposedly reduced condition of their villages. "Such are native revenue servants and such they will continue," thought Elliot, "as long as their responsibilities are so disproportionate to their emoluments."² He was somewhat surprised that Stokes had allowed matters to come to such a sorry state. Undoubtedly Stokes had become thoroughly disgusted and had lacked the energy to face up to the difficulties so that when he received a strong rebuke from the Board he had simply fallen sick and "chucked up altogether."³ In "Dan" White, Elliot felt he had a person who, though he knew nothing of ryotwari and could not speak a word of Telugu, was a "sensible accommodating good fellow."⁴

On April 26, 1845, White suspended the Naib Sheristadar, Nakkalapalli Subha Rao, and on May 2, 1845, Nyapati Shashagiri Rao was also suspended. Both men were charged with seeking to undermine State authority within the district, with organizing the district and village

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, April 6, 1845: op.cit.

² ibid.

³ ibid.

⁴ ibid.

establishment to this end, with diverting State revenues and endeavoring to enrich themselves at the expense of the State, with acquiring land unlawfully and holding it in violation of administrative rules, and with having received gifts and bribes in return for official favors.¹

Both of these Desastha leaders, however, were undismayed by this turn of events. In fact, because of their more critical position and because they were free from their usual duties in the Huzur Kacheri, they were able to give all of their time and energy to resisting the danger which threatened them. The Nyapati house in Guntur became the focal point for intrigue and subversive activities during the next four months. All the disaffected officers and leaders assembled around the Huzur Sheristadar. Every Karnam and Ryot who went to the Commissioner's Office was summoned before him and questioned. Local leaders were told that Shashagiri Rao would be reinstated. After all, they were asked, had he not been removed from the Huzur twice before? Yet, "his powerful influence at the Presidency had always restored him."²

Men were sent out into the taluks to bolster up support and to make sure of the hold of the Desastha organization. At the same time, a number of persons who earlier had voluntarily given information to Elliot were made to retract their statements and to send petitions to the Board of Revenue declaring that their former evidence had been cruelly and violently extracted as a result of the harsh treatment

¹ Daniel White to BOR, April 26, May 2 and 20, 1845: GDR (5404: 46-61). White informed the Board that he was acting upon information received from Elliot and that a full report on the conduct of the Sheristadar would be forthcoming. See also: Elliot Report, Appendix A, op.cit.

² Elliot Report (para 26), ibid.

meted out to them by the Commissioner and the Acting Collector.

Success was confidently predicted by Shashagiri Rao and his followers.¹

At this time, the very peak of the hot season (April and May), Elliot and Appa Rao, his Sheristadar, decided that evidence of the subversive and collusive operations which obviously had been going on in the district for many years could not be obtained unless they went personally to the fountainheads of all information, namely, the villages. They determined to make a systematic village by village search of the district.

It must be remembered, however, that the Commission was not shackled by the crushing load of regular administrative duties, financial restrictions, and the constant beck and call of the Board of Revenue -- circumstances which had to some degree hampered earlier efforts by Robertson, Oakes, Whish, Goldingham, and Stokes to do the same thing. Moreover, there can be no doubt that Elliot and Appa Rao were an extraordinary team, possessing untiring stores of energy and deep insights into the mentality of the village leaders.

Under a sky of brass and on earth of iron, with the shimmering glare of white tents or in the stifling air of dak bungalows and chawadis (or choultries), the work moved forward. Endless and tedious droning voices; steadily scratching pens from Munshis and Maddatgars on grass mats; huddled groups of village leaders in earnest discussion; throngs of idle and curious sitting on their heels in the scarce

¹ Elliot Report (para 26), op.cit.

patches of shade; peons and servants coming and going; pale smoke rising from small cooking fires; parched tongues and soaked clothing: such are the scenes conjured up of the Commission at work. Elliot commented:

This is the hottest plain I have ever been in. The thermometer for the last month has been constantly at 104 and yet I have never felt better in my life. On office days that I was obliged to be out at some of the bungalows on the roads or in tents in places where my inquiries led me, the tables and chairs were so hot...that it was hardly possible to touch them. At night my bed was so glowing that the sheets felt as if they had just been under the warming pan...¹

But there was little time for thinking of the discomforts. The daylight hours were filled to capacity. The Commissioner seldom dismissed his kacheri until half past eight in the evening.²

The Karnams and Ryots of the villages invariably tried to withhold and to hide their true records. Numerous attempts to palm off false records were detected and some records were accepted which defied the closest scrutiny. False accounts were found which had been written years before and kept ready to meet unforeseen emergencies. True accounts were found immersed in tanks and wells, hidden in grain pits, torn up, and burnt. On one occasion when one of Elliot's most active Gumashtas stopped for the night in the chawadi of a village, the house was set on fire. With some difficulty, the Gumashta escaped. The village accounts did not.³

¹ Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, June 5, 1845: EC, op.cit.

² Maria Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, May 8, 1845: ibid.

³ Elliot Report (para 27), op.cit.

Elliot proceeded on the assumption that no accounts could be considered as original documents until their authenticity had been tested and retested. Even when second sets were produced, he would continue to probe to make sure that these were not fabrications prepared to deceive the Zamindar. Examples of punishment had to be made of some of the more stubborn village leaders in order that the more timid and reticent officers would take fright and show where their original records were hidden. Often Elliot and Appa Rao would divide a Karnam's or Ryot's family into two groups and, according to a fixed plan, would question or cross-question the groups simultaneously. After finding chinks in the shield of village resistance, whether it arose from discrepant stories or from ill-will within the village, they would use their powers of persuasion so as to arrive at the truth. Even so, in the last extremity, some village Karnam would try to hand over something spurious swearing that it was the bed-rock of truth and again would be caught because the writing on very old paper was with evidently fresh ink. "Long practice and frequent detection," reported Elliot, "have made the Curnums expert in keeping [the records] in such a form as to cancel their true import in the event of discovery."¹

The Sheristadar, meanwhile, began to realize that the Commissioner was making steady if undramatic headway in his enquiries. At last, he took the extreme step of going out into the villages himself so that he could bring his own personal influence to bear right on the spot. He blamed his suspension on betrayals which had been fomented by ill-will

¹ Elliot Report (para 44), op.cit.

from the Sabnavis faction and he made dark threats against any who would dare to disobey his orders.¹

This action on the part of Shashagiri Rao, however, apparently backfired; for by deigning to descend from the heights without his full authority, some of his influence over the villages was hurt. Also, by now, other district officers who were being put in charge of taluk stations as quickly as evidence against the incumbent Amins could be uncovered were beginning to counter his influence. Finally, although a threat was made that the Sheristadar might have to be put under a peon if he continued to obstruct the administration, Elliot and White wisely relied entirely on words rather than on physical force. As Elliot put it in his report:

Neither this measure [putting him under guard] nor any other of the slightest restraint was employed and he was treated throughout with a degree of consideration of which his conduct showed him to be little deserving.²

Probably this restraint and the impact which Elliot's and Appa Rao's words upon the leaders in the villages did more to restore the authority of the Government in Guntur than taking the sword out of its scabbard would have done.

Simultaneously with the minute examination of village affairs by the Commission, as information was sent by Elliot to the Huzur, the Collector worked to rid the administration of all its subversive elements. This was not an easy task; for the removal of one layer of officers

¹ Elliot Report (para 26), op.cit. White Report (paras 8-9), July 10, 1845: GDR (5404: 79-139).

² Elliot Report (para 26), ibid.

would soon reveal that the next layer was also connected to the bureaucratic elite of the district. For example, when Dhumul Lakshminarsu Rao and Manur Venkata Krishna Rao, the Amin and Naib of Sattanapalli Taluk, were removed because they were relatives of the Zamindar and the Sheristadar, it was soon discovered that those below them who would have succeeded to their positions were none other than the Zamindar's brother and another near relative. Likewise, after the Amin and Naib of Chilkalurpad were replaced on similar grounds, the new Peshkar who had been carefully selected from a remote taluk turned out to be the sons-in-law of the Amin who had just been removed. The very fact that the Sheristadar alone had 74 relatives within the district service made it clear that unusual steps would have to be taken if the power of the old elite of the district ever were to be broken.¹

A Maratha Brahman by the name of D. Srinavasa Rao was brought from Poona to take over the Huzur Sheristadarship of the district.² About the new Naib Sheristadar we know little more than that his name was Chekkkrishna Rao. Quite probably he too was from far away in the hope that no local ties of family or of property would weaken his efficiency or sway his loyalty to his British employers.³ What is significant, however, is that the tradition of employing Maratha

¹ Elliot Report (para 58), op.cit.

² Daniel White to BOR, May 15, 1845: GDR (5404: 63-64), reporting his appointment as a temporary measure. White to BOR, June 2, 1845: GDR (5404: 71-73), insisting on confirmation, ibid., June 19, reporting that D.Srinavasa Rao resigned from his job in Poona.

³ White to BOR, May 16, 1845: GDR (5404: 64-65).

Brahmans for managing the district secretariat was maintained.

Elliot pressed forward with the investigation into village affairs until every village in the Vasireddy, Sattanapalli, Chilkalurpad, and Repalli Zamindaris together with 30 villages of the Malraju Zamindari, a total of 577 villages in all, had been scrutinized and their original records taken for use as evidence.¹

Writing to Lord Elphinstone about the results of his investigation, Elliot made the following summary of the district's condition:

From the effects of long misgovernment, [Guntur] is now in a worse condition than when we received it fifty-seven years ago from the Nizam -- probably the most grinding ruler in the peninsula. I was going to say "in India" but I fancy his brother of Oude beats him. From the same causes, the people are the most demoralized I have ever dealt with; and for lying, cunning, forgery, deceit, perjury, I will back them against the most accomplished scoundrels of her Majesty's dominions, Norfolk Island not excepted.²

In just over six months, Elliot not only completed this immense village to village investigation, but he gathered information upon the debts of the Zamindars and upon the future productivity of the district, and, finally, he supervised a pilot survey and assessment of the villages of Guntur Taluk to serve as a model by which the Collector could complete a survey and assessment of the whole district.

C. ELLIOT'S RETURN TO MADRAS

It was the pilot survey and assessment which hastened Elliot's

¹ Elliot Report (paras 27-28, 43-48), op.cit.

² Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, August 5, 1845: EC (op.cit.), Miscellaneous Letters (Box 10-D), No. 41.

return to Madras. Although the uselessness of throwing away any more money on the old survey (Munro's) system and ^{the} advisability of applying the scientific (trigonometrical) system already being used in Bombay had been agreed by the Board, Elliot was ordered to do in Guntur what was in defiance of the very papers he had drafted in Madras. Of the two professional surveyors which he ordered to join him, the one which finally arrived was fit for nothing more than checking the measurements of the ^mGumashtas. Ten Gumashtas sent from Kurnool because of their surveying experience took such a dislike to Guntur that they went home. Consequently, Elliot himself worked with village blacksmiths in making (35 foot) measuring chains. Confessing his profound ignorance of the art of surveying, Elliot taught a dozen umedwars (jobless men) how to survey.¹ At the end of June he reported that the surveying establishment working under him was "precisely on the same footing in every respect as that employed in the Ceded Districts."²

Ironically, the Third Member on deputation could make no modifications on his own but had to submit to a Board composed of Collectors.

¹ Elliot to Elphinstone, February 26, 1845: op.cit. Elphinstone to Elliot, September 29, 1845: "I thought that the trigonometrical survey was the basis upon which your Revenue surveys were made and that you only had to fill up the spaces laid down by the Surveyor General's people and class and assess the lands. As for sending non-professional men who have other duties...and are paid for performing those duties at a far higher rate than are surveyors to measure land with a chain, it seems to me preposterous and extravagant."

² Walter Elliot to BOR (para 4), June 23, 1845: MRP (280: 68: 5016-22), No. 71 of September 5, 1845.

His report that such ancient classifications of soil as still survived were different in every village and by no means correct was not accepted, his simplified system was declined, and a further examination ordered.¹ Tweeddale, looking upon the project "as one of first importance not only [for] the future well-being of Guntur, but...for the whole Presidency,"² thought it might be advisable for Elliot to come down to Madras for further discussions on the principles he employed. The Board agreed and on September 3rd Elliot was ordered down to the Presidency.³

Hoping to write his reports in Madras and to be with his wife during her confinement, Elliot had already acted on his own. On August 19th, he had sent a letter informing the Government that the investigation of the various subjects contained in his instructions was completed, that the survey of a division of one of the zamindaris was finished, that he wished to consult the Board's records before submitting his report, and that he requested permission to defer his report until after his return to the Presidency.⁴ He had left Guntur immediately taking with him the results of his labors in 37 daftars and

¹ Extract BOR Proceedings, June 16; Walter Elliot to BOR, June 23; and Extract BOR Proceedings, July 3, 1845: MRP (280: 68: 5005-43), Nos. 70-72 of September 5, 1845. Maria Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, July 9, 1845: op.cit.

² Minute by Lord Tweeddale, August 18, 1845: TC (IOL: Eur.Mss.F.96), Governor's Minute Book, Vol. V. No. 16, pp. 39-47. MRP (ibid.), No. 73.

³ BOR Secretary to GOM, September 1, and GOM Minute of Consultation, September 3, 1845: MRP (ibid., pp. 5077-80), Nos. 89-90.

⁴ Walter Elliot to GOM, August 19, 1845: MRP (280: 69: 5490), Nos. 32-33 of September 23, 1845.

3 bundles of cadjans and had arrived at Madras on August 31st. His son was born less than a week later; and on September 8th he reported his return to the Government.¹

When Daniel White fell ill and had to leave Guntur a few weeks later, a sharp and bitter controversy developed over who should take charge of the district. Henry Dickinson, who had now been Junior Council Member since July, had already expressed the view that a person of such judgement and talent as Elliot, whose work was so highly valued, should finish surveying the whole district.² Tweeddale now followed up this view with the opinion that Guntur should not be left solely in the hands of a Head Assistant (Newill) and that Elliot should take charge of the district without delay.³ Chamier dissented sharply. He objected that sending Elliot back was inconsistent with the original object of his mission and that the Board could not conclude its important discussions about surveys without its most competent Member.⁴ Dickinson concurred with the idea of sending Elliot back without delay.⁵ The Governor, considering the

¹ Elliot to GOM, September 8, 1845: MRP (280: 69: 5572), No. 93 of September 23, 1845. Elliot to GOM, October 20: 1845: MRP (280: 70: 6122), No. 41 of November 4, 1845. Elliot to Elphinstone, September 14, 1845: op.cit. It cost Rs. 73-9-8 to have these records moved to Madras.

² Minute by Dickinson, August 21, 1845: MRP (280: 68: 5043), No. 74 of September 5, 1845. He had been Provisional Member since April.

³ Minute by Tweeddale, October 27, 1845: MRP (280: 70: 6208), No. 12 of November 11, 1845.

⁴ Minute by Chamier, October 20, 1845: ibid., No. 13.

⁵ Minute by Dickinson, November 2, 1845: ibid., No. 15.

circumstances of Guntur, the dangerous influence of the suspended Sheristadar, and the extensive local knowledge which Elliot possessed, thought that the duty of Government to provide efficient management during this emergency could best be met by putting Elliot temporarily in charge.¹ Accordingly, on November 6th, Elliot was instructed to return to Guntur immediately.²

Elliot remonstrated: first, because his health also had given way upon his return to Madras and he was under the care of Dr. Sanderson; second, because he had not finished his report; and third, because it was not fair that he should be reduced to the grade of a Collector after his Commission was over.³ Explaining his position to Elphinstone, who had hoped to meet the Elliots in Ooty, he wrote:

But I have no doubt I shall have to go...and, having entered a protest, I shall not hesitate to proceed. Stokes, the permanent Collector returns /from the Cape/ next month and there is a steady Head Assistant in charge so that the measure is as unnecessary as it is unfair. People say that there is an object in keeping me out -- that the dominant party may keep one of their own body in. That I am unwilling to believe...At any rate here is the stopper to our hills schemes.⁴

Maria added that Walter would not be allowed to return to the Board "as they were determined to keep John Goldingham."⁵ She could not believe that the Government could be so wicked or imprudent as to send the

¹ Minute by Tweeddale, November 5, 1845: op.cit., No. 15.

² Minute of Consultation, November 6, 1845: ibid., No. 16.

³ Elliot to GOM, November 10, 1845: MRP (280: 70: 6403-10), No. 18 of November 18, 1845.

⁴ Elliot to Elphinstone, November 13, 1845: op. cit.

⁵ Maria Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, ibid.

oldest Member of the Board back to Guntur.

When his protest was rejected, Elliot made another appeal pointing out that while Dent and Drury had held the offices of Collector and Magistrate simultaneously with their Commissions, he was being sent back solely as an Acting Collector.¹ Tweeddale answered that the Government would not consider the Commissioner's duties fulfilled until an approved survey and assessment was introduced in the whole district (a task which all agreed might take three years).²

The Governor's words called down a furious reply from Chamier who felt that if anyone from the Board should go it should be an Acting Member, preferably Goldingham whose five years in the district made him the logical choice. He declared:

... there is no necessity for [Elliot's] return to the district nor can I foresee any result in re-deputing him thither beyond that of keeping Mr. Goldingham in the Board to the detriment of Mr. Elliot and, as I think, of the whole public service.³

Sending Elliot back was contrary to the original purpose of his mission. It would leave the Board without a Member competent enough to discuss the survey question. Chamier even went so far as to hint that Goldingham might have been the cause of the district's sorry condition, a factor which made it even more improper that he should sit in judgment upon Elliot's actions.⁴ In fact, if Goldingham were sent back to North

¹ Elliot to GOM, November 19: MRP (280: 72: 7017), No. 52 of December 9, 1845.

² Minute by Lord Tweeddale, November 24, 1845: MRP (280: 72: 7018), No. 53 of December 9, 1845.

³ Minute by Chamier, (para 2), November 26, 1845: ibid., No. 56.

⁴ ibid. (paras 4-7).

Arcot and if Lovell and Cotton returned to their proper stations, the deputation allowances for three acting appointments could be saved.

At this Tweeddale, while emphatically repeating that he would not rest until steps had been taken to rid the district of its evils and to bring it back to health, informed Elliot that he should be prepared to resume his duties as Commissioner to Guntur in a few weeks.¹ "To this," commented Elliot, "I can have no objection beyond the needless trouble it entails on me, for there is no earthly necessity for my doing so."² However, the urgency was by then gone, for Stokes had returned to Guntur.

Throughout the cold weather, Elliot remained in poor health; but he improved as the weather grew hotter and so was able to submit his huge report on April 17, 1846. Three days later, he wrote to Elphinstone:

I hope to meet you as you pass Madras...I am still under orders to return to Guntoor but do not think I shall be sent after all; for instead of the improvements in the survey which I carried out there in a few villages, under instructions to follow the rules of the Ceded Districts, the Government...are meditating the introduction of the Bombay system under scientific officers and in that case there will be no pretext for my going.³

All of Tweeddale's attempts to quell invidious comparisons between officers had in the meantime failed;⁴ and vicious attempts were made, apparently by Maclean, to prevent Elliot from re-entering the Board.

¹ Minute by Tweeddale, November 28, 1845: ibid., No. 58.

² Walter Elliot to Lord Elphinstone, December 10, 1845: op.cit.

³ ibid., April 20, 1845.

⁴ Minute of Consultation, April 23, 1846: MRP (280: 79: 2915), No.3 of May 5, 1846.

Nevertheless, on April 23rd, Elliot was ordered back to the Board. Maclean protested loudly at being made Acting Third Member and Goldingham prepared to return to North Arcot. On May 1st, Dickinson suggested that Goldingham should stay on as Temporary Fourth Member to help rid the Board of its arrears of work.¹ There is little doubt that some officer, either Chamier, Lewin, or Maclean, used this as another club against the Governor by leaking official extracts to the local press. The Spectator sardonically referred to Elliot's anomalous mission to Guntur and to his return to the Board, adding:

Has the Board received of late an accession of business so great as to render its wonted strength unequal to the task imposed upon it? Or does the Noble Marquis think that the mass of habitual arrears will disappear more rapidly when nibbled at by four than hitherto it has done under the operation of three?₂⁺

D. ELLIOT'S REPORT ON GUNTUR

The results of Elliot's investigation were revealed in an immense report of over 400 pages. This report presented the causes behind the decay of the zamindaris, the deterioration of the administration, and the economic depression in the district. It laid bare what had happened to the uncollected balances of revenue which had been accumulating through the past twelve years. It gave facts and figures about the economy, the society, and the administration at great length. It traced the development of the district during the previous sixty years.

¹ Minute by Dickinson, May 1, 1846: MRP (280: 80: 3341), No. 56 of May 12, 1846.

² Madras Spectator (vol. 10: p.476), May 19, 1846. ⁺Note: Soon after this, Maclean was implicated in a loan of 1,75,000 rupees to the Nawab of the Carnatic. He retired before action could be taken against him. See MD (111: 413), Political Despatch, Jan. 24, 1849.

Seven voluminous appendices enclosed letters between Elliot and White, evidence taken in the villages, correspondence of former Collectors, and other material to back up his arguments. A large number of statistical abstracts were also added. In all, the Elliot Report was a monumental piece of work - a goldmine for the historian. Even the precis which the Government requested came to over 20 pages.¹

Elliot attributed the distress of Guntur District to maladministration. He showed that on former occasions natural calamities and depressed markets had caused hardship but had not permanently crippled the condition of the district. Protracted misrule, first by the zamindars and then by the district officers, had brought misery and destitution which was unparalleled. The district was worse off than when it first came under British rule. The crowning misfortune, in Elliot's opinion, was a combination of district officers with village leaders which was organized by the elite of the Huzur Kacheri. This combination had for years systematically diverted revenue from the State treasuries and had exacted extra revenue from the people, deliberately weakening State authority and enforcing its own will upon the district. Admitting that he was scarcely scratching the surface of the total peculations which had occurred, Elliot could prove that at least 572,801 rupees had been taken from villagers without authorization or acknowledgment and that at least 51,458 rupees of revenue had been diverted into the pockets

¹ A detailed description of the 37 daftars and 3 bundles of cadjans which were the raw material for this report is found in MRP (280: 79: 3174-3200), No. 12 of May 5, 1846.

of huzur and ghaibatu officials (not counting 202,902 rupees proven to have gone to the zamindars prior to 1842).¹

After showing in detail that such combinations of district officers were by no means unprecedented, Elliot took pains to point out the causes lying behind such a tradition of subversive organization. He was of the opinion that the same causes would always produce the same effects. In his words:

We must not however infer from these facts that the people of the district are naturally more prone to falsehood and dishonesty than those of other provinces. The fault is in the system under which they live.²

Whenever there was a great zamindar ready to purchase the influence which a district officer might have with a Collector; whenever the pay of a district officer was low and his tenure and prospects for promotion precarious; whenever large balances were allowed to collect or large remissions were granted by the Government; whenever there was a frequent alternation between amani and zamindari administration; whenever changes in Collectors ^{were} ~~was~~ frequent or the powers of Collectors (as in settled districts) were limited so as to leave them without adequate authority; whenever district and village officers were free to act with impunity because of the difficulty, under Regulation IX of 1822 and of 1802, of obtaining sufficient evidence; whenever from want of information and for lack of an accurate survey and assessment the

¹ Elliot Report Precis, April 17, 1846: MRP (281: 21: 8208-8231), No. 40 of December 6, 1847.

² Elliot Report (paras 60-61), op.cit.

Government was ignorant of the real resources of an area: then the situation was only too inviting for the perpetuation of old customs by which local forces would organize to undermine the authority of the State.

Eight reforms in the district administration were recommended by Elliot as being essential for the immediate restoration of central control: (1) A proper survey and a complete revision of the assessment under improved methods for conducting the jamabandi should be brought into effect. (2) A correct and complete register and description of all lands was necessary if the machinations of village leaders and district officers were to be checked. (3) Village institutions needed to be restored and the excessive power of the Karnams checked. Out of 882 villages in Guntur proper, only 46 Headmen had been found variously answering to such titles as Head Ryots, Pedda Kapus, Pedda Naidus, Pedda Rajus, Pedda Reddis, or Peddathanadars. These remnants of the hereditary offices of Headmen, together with the Munsifs whom Elliot thought to be "mere ciphers," were without much authority. All power seemed to be vested in the Karnams.¹ (4) The institution of Grama Kharchu (Village Expense Account) would either have to be abolished or strictly regulated. (5) All rent-free tenures (inams lands) would have to be examined and those with invalid titles resumed. (6) A new territorial redistribution of the villages without reference to the boundaries of zamindaris was imperative for the sake of efficiency. (7) Vernacular and English records needed to be arranged and con-

¹ Elliot Report (para 82), op.cit.

trolled. The Daftarkhana of Guntur was in utter chaos, with no lists of entries, no drafts fair-copied in books, and 4,000 daftars of accounts unsorted. Papers taken from arranged bundles were simply tied up in cloths and thrown haphazardly into the record room.¹ (8) The strength of the district establishment needed to be increased, both in numbers of officers as well as in pay. Salaries of district officers should be put up to the level of those in ryotwari districts. It was unrealistic to expect a Collector and one (Head) Assistant not only to carry the overwhelming burden of current duties in such a terrible climate but to carry out the reforms and keep a severely watchful eye on district and village officers. Little would be gained by stretching the powers of the Collector to the breaking point. More European subordinates were required. Indeed, such subjects as inams and the survey required special officers. Finally, and most important of all, Elliot was convinced that "means should be adopted to secure...the continued services of the same officers for a length of time in the District."² Never had Guntur flourished as it had under Oakes and Whish. Perhaps the suggestion of the Court of Directors for a higher salary to the Collector of Guntur should be heeded.

The Commissioner could see no alternative than that the zamindaris should be sold to the Government and the Zamindars granted a liberal living allowance. After an intensive study both of the history and of the present character of each family, he could see no probability that their habits of extravagance, improvidence, inefficiency, or

¹ Elliot Report (para 95), op.cit.

² ibid., (para 96.)

corruption would change; nor could he see that they would be better able to cope with Karnams and village leaders than they had been before. No matter how indulgent the Government was, they would merely confuse indulgence for weakness and stupidity. Elliot could find no evidence that the abolition of the zamindaris would be unpopular. On the contrary, he found that responsible people wanted a system of administration which would protect them from oppression. Feelings of loyalty for the families of the Zamindars did not reach beyond their immediate households; moreover, tried and faithful hereditary retainers and servants as were possessed by truly ancient families such as those in Ganjam were not to be found. Since the Zamindars had no claim to liberality, Elliot felt that a liberal allowance of eight per cent of what would have been their net profits would fully suffice in settling the whole question.¹

The final words of the Elliot Report were devoted to commending the services of Appu Rao, the Huzur Sheristadar of Cuddapah. Though he had never met Appu Rao before that officer met him at Guntur, the Commissioner never regretted his choice. It was freely admitted that, but for the hard work, patience, and insight which this Maratha had exercised, the task of the Commission could not have been accomplished.

¹ Elliot Report (paras 100-105), op.cit.

III. THE REACTION OF THE AUTHORITIES

A turning point both in the career of Walter Elliot and in the administration of Guntur District was a direct consequence of the Commissioner's investigation. The information brought to light created enough alarm to jolt the ponderous wheels of State machinery out of their normal ruts. Little dissent arose over the decisions which followed. The operations of local leaders were exposed to the searching scrutiny of the highest authorities. Local influences were numbered, weighed, and found wanting. While years would pass before all the effects of Elliot's investigation would be felt in Guntur, still inertia was broken and the wheels started to move slowly.

A. REMEDIES APPLIED IN GUNTUR

There was no longer so much trouble in gaining a sympathetic hearing in Madras when Stokes returned to Guntur at the end of 1845. The Kacheri had been swept. Huzur and Ghaibatu personnel whom White had appointed with Elliot's advice now worked for him instead of against him. With Elliot and Goldingham sitting on the Board, immediate remedies were applied with the cooperation of the Board of Revenue.

Between May and December 1846, the initial steps were taken to put the district administration back upon a sound footing. The zamindaris were purchased by the Government for 5,000 rupees each. Guntur proper was divided into twelve compact taluks (making a total of fourteen with Palnad). No village was more than two or three hours' walk from its Taluk Kacheri. It became possible for village officers to be assembled easily and for district officers to act quickly and

thoroughly, thus lightening the work load by more than one fourth. Village Munsifs (Headmen) were appointed in 640 of the most important villages and given pay and privileges sufficient to make their position a real counter-poise to that of the Karnams. A standardized set of forms and procedures in accounting was introduced which made deception much more difficult. Because of Elliot's pilot survey, the number of makta (fixed land assessment) villages was increased to 467; moreover, restrictions on the disposal of crops in makta villages were relaxed, with the result that revenue collections became more punctual "than in any other former year on record."¹ Survey accounts in the Palnad were revised in anticipation of a complete register of fields by the Naib Sheristadar, with the result that more concealed cultivation was uncovered and more inams measured. Thus, within two years, land revenue had so recovered that it surpassed the permanent peshkush (tribute) by more than 10,000 rupees. But for a scandal in the Salt Department, revenue might have approached an all-time high.²

It is apparent that the administrative reforms which Stokes had proposed in 1843 became operative during 1846 and 1847. Problems remained, of course; but at least the Collector was supported by the Board pending the decisions of the higher authorities. Probably the most pressing of these problems was the question of how to recover the enormous balances of revenue outstanding against the villagers and

¹ Hudleston Stokes [Jamabandi Report for Fasli 1256] to BOR Secretary, para 39, October 30, 1847: GDR (No.159: vol.5405: pp.215-262).

² ibid. A detailed history of administrative recovery is contained in the 58 paragraphs of this report.

the zamindars, not to mention the amounts which had been misappropriated by the zamindars and district officers. The records of this period are filled with the evidence of court cases as process after process was served in attempts to recover what for the most part had been squandered or hidden. Eventually, on October 22, 1849, Elliot who was by then the Commissioner of the Northern Circars suggested that the total amount, 74,14,378-14-5 rupees, be written off as a loss.¹

B. DECISIONS MADE IN MADRAS

A period of twenty months elapsed between the submission of the Elliot Report and the minute of consultation by the Government upon it. What is remarkable about this delay is the fact that during the interval much of the material content of the report was doled out gently in letters to the Court of Directors, usually after the necessary remedial actions related to each disclosure had been taken.²

It is only necessary here to examine the dismissal of Nyapati Shashagiri Rao and the disposal of the Elliot Report.

1. The Dismissal of Shashagiri Rao

On July 10, 1845, Daniel White sent a voluminous report of 81 paragraphs to the Board of Revenue in which he outlined the charges against the suspended Sheristadar and presented detailed information (given to him by Elliot) to support each charge. His case against

¹ Walter Elliot (Commissioner of the Northern Circars) to Collector of Guntur Zillah, October 22, 1849: GDR (5417: 75-77).

² Board's Collection, No. 116, 221, Vol. 2272, Draft No. 48 of 1849, "Affairs of Guntoor."

Shashagiri Rao was summarized as follows:

After a careful examination of all the evidence, I am myself perfectly satisfied that Sheshagerry Row has knowingly and willfully encouraged the Talook Authorities in the non-collection of the revenue...that the same has been done with a view to injure the character of Mr. Stokes. It is further fully established ... that he has knowingly allowed rents of villages to be given below their real value... I further consider it to be fully proved that the Head Sheristadar has been guilty of holding lands...¹

White considered these offenses "so flagrant and heinous" that no words by the Government would be too severe. After pointing out that both Goldingham and Stokes had repeatedly pronounced on the unfitness of Shashagiri Rao, White concluded by saying that the Sheristadar was unworthy ever to be employed by the Government again.

The Board was so alarmed by the contents of this report that they felt that dismissal alone would be insufficient. Legal proceedings against the suspended Sheristadar under Regulation IX of 1822 were called for. Final orders upon the case were consequently withheld until the misconduct could be more fully investigated, evidence obtained, and a sentence passed upon Shashagiri Rao.²

When White replied that the case was not one which could easily be used for punishment because the risk of failure was too great, the Board decided "to erradicate the baneful influence of the Head

¹ Daniel White to BOR Secretary, (para 77), July 10, 1845: GDR (58: 5402: 79-139).

² Extract of BOR Proceedings, September 25, 1845: MRP (280: 71: 6577-99), No. 6 of December 2, 1845.

Sheristadar" by dismissing him without delay.¹ The failure of White's health leaving only Newill to cope with the whole administration strengthened the conviction that it would not be expedient to prosecute, though there was no doubt that "systematic attempts to undermine the European Authority in Guntoor" had been made.²

Tweeddale felt that corrupt conduct from district officers needed strong action. Shashagiri Rao especially should be punished because he was still exercising a subversive influence in the district.³ To Dickinson, the case showed forcibly what could happen when the Board of Revenue failed to heed warnings from its Collectors. Had Goldingham and Stokes been heeded, such corruption and oppression might not have occurred. In his words:

Until recently I know that this was the subject of general complaint with Collectors and I have no reason to suppose that the system has since been improved. It calls loudly for the interference of Government.⁴

Since there was little hope for Shashagiri Rao's being successfully convicted and punished, Dickinson felt that both Nyapati Shashagiri Rao and his son-in-law, Ambarkhana Purushothum Rao (the Head Gumashta), should be permanently barred from ever entering government

¹ Extract of BOR Proceedings (para 5), October 27, 1845: MRP (280: 71: 6605), No. 7 of December 2, 1845.

² ibid.

³ Minute by Tweeddale, October 17, 1845: ibid., No. 8.

⁴ Minute by Dickinson, November 5, 1845: ibid., No. 9

service again.¹ Henry Chamier was convinced that, when systematic corruption was found to be pervading a district establishment, a severe example should be made of any member of the higher classes of officers against whom charges of malversation could be proved. In his opinion, it was important that every effort be made to bring Shashagiri Rao to punishment before the Criminal (Sessions) Court.² Finally, the question of punishing these Desastha leaders was sent back to the Board for further consideration in hopes of obtaining a criminal conviction.³

On hearing of his dismissal, Shashagiri Rao hastened down to Madras to defend himself. Lewin could not believe that the dismissed Sheristadar was less than "an honorable man" and wrote him a note:

I shall not consider myself precluded from seeing you occasionally when you call at my house; but I cannot do anything which would lead to the opinion that I would or could support you beyond the strictest bounds of propriety.⁴

An Appeal Petition was sent to the Government by Shashagiri Rao. A full investigation by two impartial officers was requested, "not with any desire or ambition of getting back the situation of which he had been improperly deprived," but only to restore his "fair name."⁵ His 35 years of honest and zealous service, many of which were "in the most

¹ Minute by Henry Dickinson, November 5, 1845: op.cit.

² Minute by Henry Chamier, November 8, 1845: ibid., No. 10.

³ Minute of Consultation, November 28, 1845: ibid., No. 11.

⁴ Malcolm Lewin to N.Shashagiri Rao, December 14, 1845: MRP (280: 72: 7351), Enclosure No. 11 in No. 75 of December 23, 1845.

⁵ Appeal Petition of N.Shashagiri Rao to Lord Tweeddale, December 14, 1845: MRP (280: 72: 7330-57), No. 75 of December 23, 1845.

important office which the State has opened to the Natives of India,"¹ were supported by twelve letters of commendation from his former European superiors. Manganur Lakshminarsu Rao and Sabnavis Venkata Krishna Rao whose "notorious intrigues" were still fomenting strife in Guntur were blamed for having put false accusations before European officers who were prejudiced against him. "The intrigues of a few designing men," he declared, "have been a matter of surprize not only to your Excellency's petitioner, but to every honest thinking man in Guntur and its neighboring Zillahs."² The enmity of Stokes, Newill, and Goldingham, the partiality of Elliot and White, and the failure of the Board of Revenue to act as a "protector of its Native Servants, especially those in high office," were submitted as reasons why he should be given proper justice.³⁺

By May of 1846 it had become plain that it would not be expedient to initiate further proceedings against the dismissed Head Sheristadar and Head Gumashta.⁴ Communications between Madras and London upon the subject, in which all the papers on the case including the petitions of Shashagiri Rao were sent to the Court of Directors, continued for two more years; however, there was no disagreement over the guilt of the

¹ op.cit., (para 2).

² ibid., (para 3).

³ ibid., (para 5). ⁺Note: He claimed that six previous petitions "slumbered in the records" of the Board. He pleaded that his prosecutor was now his judge (Goldingham was on the Board) in violation of a rule which was strictly observed in the judicial branch.

⁴ Extract of BOR Proceedings, May 28, and Minute of Consultation, June 27, 1846: MRP (281: 1: 4050), Nos. 26-27 of June 30, 1846.

officers and the rulings of the Government were confirmed. The final disposition of the case was sent to Guntur on June 1, 1848.¹

2. The Disposal of the Elliot Report

In their minute of consultation of December 6, 1847, the Government dealt at length with the problems of Guntur as revealed in the Elliot Report of April 17, 1846. The opinions which were given may be divided roughly under three headings: namely, what caused the distress, what was to be done with the zamindaris, and what should be done with Elliot's eight recommendations.

There was full agreement with the Commissioner that maladministration lay at the bottom of all Guntur's trouble. The Permanent Settlement was considered never to have had a fairer trial than in Guntur. Although the assessment had been moderate and the payments light, family dissensions and litigations, amazing extravagance even during poor years, severe calamities such as famine, pestilence, flood, and storm, and finally a parasitic collusion of district officers with village leaders had dragged the district to depths of poverty such as had never been known before.² Clearly, the failure of the zamindari settlement was not, in the opinion of the Governor-in-Council, a failure of Government (though Government had originally made the settlement). The failure of amani (government) management was not so easy to slough off. There was cause for regret that the efforts of

¹ Madras Revenue Letters (para 11) of March 7, 1846 (No.10), and (paras 7-8) of September 27, 1847: Board's Collections (No. 116,221, Vol. 2272), pp.119, 451. GDR (5379: 124-5).

² Minute of Consultation (para 20), December 6, 1847: MRP (281: 21: 8231-8270), No. 41 of December 6, 1842.

Goldingham and Stokes to prevent the pernicious subversion of authority had not been supported in Madras and that most of the delinquent district officers had escaped the full penalties for their actions.¹

After the experiment of using Zamindars as Amildars failed and the zamindari sanads were surrendered in order to facilitate a thorough reorganization of administration and improvement of economic resources, an arrangement with which the Zamindars were not to tamper once they were restored to their estates, nothing constructive was accomplished. The disclosures of the Commissioner made it clear that the policy of the Government was at variance with the purposes of the Zamindars and that no confidence could be placed in a future delegation of authority to the Zamindars. Subject to the confirmation of the Home authorities, the zamindaris were bought, their public and private liabilities assumed, and provision for the families promised.²

Three alternatives confronted the Government in providing for the Zamindars. (1) The zamindaris might eventually be restored; (2) a muttha or several villages might be granted (in a jagir or an inam) to each family; and (3) money pensions might be granted in perpetuity. Elliot's report strongly opposed restoration and favored a money allowance. The only rights which the Zamindars had possessed prior to those which British Government had bestowed upon them were, in his opinion,

¹ ibid., (paras 13 and 17). Average annual misappropriations of the revenue were fixed at 8 per cent, which was proved.

² Minute of Consultation (paras 2-8), December 6, 1847. ibid.

rights to compensation for their administrative services. Since services were no longer performed, rights no longer existed. Elliot advocated that one lakh, ~~eight percent of~~ the peshkush, be given to the ex-zamindars as an annual pension in perpetuity. This allowance "would place them in a position of great respectability which would be appreciated by their countrymen and in more easy and affluent circumstances."¹ The Governor-in-Council adopted this suggestion, pending orders from the Court of Directors; but they cut the pensions down to what was already being drawn by the ex-Zamindars -- a total of 34,800 rupees per year.²

All of the eight remedies recommended by Elliot were supported by the Government. Among these remedies, those applying greater control to the villages were emphasized. A complete register of land, inam land in particular, had yet to be made. Caste privileges (see chapter one, Part I-B) in revenue assessment (wandra) needed to be cut back to manageable limits. It was calculated that 1100 Munsifs, 1100 Karnams, and 1500 Taliaris (Watchmen) were needed and that all of them should be paid only in money from the district and taluk treasuries. The Grama Kharchu was to be abolished by proclamation and even the receiving of batta from other than the treasuries was to be made punishable. Many of these improvements depended, of course, upon an

¹ op.cit., (para 50).

² ibid.

exact survey which was to be made. In the meanwhile, the Government commended the system of joint-village rents on makta assessments which had been improved by Stokes.¹⁺

Finally, after endorsing all of the specific proposals which Elliot had made for the district organization, such as higher salaries for top district officers, a thorough renovation of the Daftarkhana, and an increased number of European staff (another Junior Assistant was allowed), the Government gave special attention to the measures which would be required for the economic development of the district. In this, irrigation was the main concern. An Assistant Civil Engineer was to give his whole time to the Engineering (Maramat) Department of Guntur. The construction of an anicut across the Krishna River was seen as the best way to escape the unpredictable seasons and unreliable water supply. A constant water supply would bring economic stability and improvement.²⁺⁺

C. POLICIES RATIFIED IN LONDON

Another year elapsed before the Court of Directors dispatched its reply to the letter from Madras which contained the Elliot Report and the Government minute thereon. There is no doubt from the tone of this despatch and from the sarcastic comments pencilled in the margin of the

¹ ibid., (para 28). G. Mackenzie, Kistna District Manual (Madras: 1883), p.355. +Note: This mixture of the ryotwari and village systems in actual practice has been noted in chapter one to have been what really took place in the Palnad.

² ibid.; (para 46). Ricketts, Report of the Commissioner for the Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: 1858), pt.I., p.284.
++Note: The Collector was given an additional allowance of Rs.2000 a year as compensation for going to such a hardship station.

copy which went to the Board of Control that the authorities in London were jolted by what they had learned.

Back-pedaling on its despatch of June 21, 1842, in which the Court had stood for the Zamindars against the advice of the Madras Government, if not the inclinations of the Board of Control as well, the Court wrote: "Had we been then aware of the true causes...we should not have hesitated to accede to your recommendation that the Estates should be brought to sale, purchased, and permanently retained by Government."¹⁺ All the measures which had been carried out regarding the abolition of the zamindaris were ratified. There was much more concern in London than in Madras, however, over the political implications of this action. In the words of the despatch:

It is important, in order that we may be relieved from any imputation of a breach of faith towards them, that the reasons which have led us to alter that intention should receive equal publicity.²

The Court pointed out that all the Collectors in the Northern Circars "should explain to the Zemindars and other classes of the community the proceedings in Guntur."³ This was important, they thought, because of the apparent notoriety which had attended the surrendering of the sanads and the proposed ultimate restoration of the zamindaris.

¹ COD Despatch (para 8), January 31, (No.1) 1849: MD (111: 455-530).
⁺ Marginal pencil note: "I would like to know whose fault it was that you did not know and ought not the Government to have known." The COD laid stress on Elliot's words: "These instances of bad faith leave room for considering how far the [zamindars] are entitled to claim the terms of the surrender the conditions of which they have so wantonly broken."

² ibid., (para 14).

³ ibid.

The measures which were being taken to restore prosperity, protect the people, and ensure the future stability of revenue were dealt with next. Only with regard to the process by which inam tenures were proposed to be investigated was there a sign of wavering. Elliot's recommendation, based on evidence that the bulk of inams were invalid, was that all inams should be summarily resumed and that claimants wishing to recover their inams should substantiate their titles or lose their privileged position. A pencil note in margin remarked:

This is reversing the order of things. It is for the Government to prove these titles. The proposal shakes my confidence in Mr. Elliot's opinions and recommendations. It is a breach of faith.¹+

The Court also echoed the view which had now been repeated and repeated by authorities on every level for more than six years, namely, that the survey and assessment of the district should be accomplished as quickly as possible;² however, twenty more years were to pass before this purpose was finally brought to fruition.

Finally, the Court of Directors touched upon a subject which was painful to them. Sufficient attention had not been paid to maladministration for a long time. This was partly due to the frequent changing of Collectors; nevertheless, it seemed unbelievable that "not one [case of misconduct]/should have forced itself on the notice of any of the persons who successively filled that office, so far at least

¹ op.cit., (para 19). ⁺Note: The inams were not summarily resumed, nor was an inam enquiry begun until 1854; but there is no evidence of this pencil note in despatches.

² ibid., (para 16).

as to excite his suspicions that the depressed state of the district and the defalcation of the revenue arose from causes more deeply seated...than those which had been assigned."¹ The Court felt that a general conspiracy was conclusively established; but while Elliot felt that the organized secrecy of the conspiracy was some excuse for the ignorance of the Collector, the Court saw in it a sign of feebleness and inefficiency. Disputes between Collectors and the Board of Revenue over the appointment of Sheristadars were looked upon as showing a lack of vigilance in Madras. Shock was expressed that district officers should have outdone zamindars in mischief even to the extent of "founding charitable institutions with the fruits of their plunder."²⁺ When the Court hoped that Elliot's disclosures might have "a salutary effect," a Member of the Board of Control pencilled:

I do think that such a notice of such gross misconduct is a most inadequate expression of the disapprobation of the Court.³

Considering that the arrears of the district amounted to nearly 80 lakhs, the Court felt that the Madras Government had not registered surprise and indignation in proportion to the magnitude of the offenses. They wrote:

No effort at all commensurate with the greatness of the abuses which have brought about such a lamentable state of things or with the importance of the interests which they have so deeply injured has been made to correct them. The survey, registration, and reassessment of the District have yet to be begun.⁴

¹ ibid., (para 25).

² ibid., (para 27). ⁺Marginal Note: "Surely all this takes away from our strong condemnation of the Zamindars."

³ ibid., (para 28).

⁴ ibid.

Last of all, the long delay between the submission of the Elliot Report and the date of its consideration by the Government (April, 1846, to December, 1847) was noted with displeasure.¹

CONCLUSION

The situation in Guntur which was revealed by Walter Elliot so alarmed the authorities in London that they took a second look at the condition of the Northern Circars as a whole. While the condition of the other Zillah Circars did not seem bad enough to demand any immediate investigation, it did seem bad.²⁺⁺ Almost nothing had been done to implement the recommendations -- similar to Elliot's -- made by Sir Henry Montgomery in Rajahmundry. It was decided that in order "to secure a more vigorous and energetic action and a closer and more searching supervision,"³ the Northern Circars had better be placed under one of the Members of the Board of Revenue. The Commissioner

¹ ibid. ⁺Marginal Note: "This is unpardonable neglect on the part of Government. Certainly the Government is greatly to blame."

Note: By the time that this dispatch was sent, the Government was almost entirely changed. Tweeddale was already Home, Chamier had retired; and Dickinson was soon to retire.

² ibid., (paras 29-31).⁺⁺Note: Arrears in the Northern Circars:

<u>Circars</u>	<u>Arrears Due - 1839</u>	<u>Arrears Due - 1846</u>
Guntur	Rs. 43,76,332	Rs. 74,37,106
Rajahmundry	12,13,863	14,25,605
Masulipatam	17,07,059	28,08,855
Vizagapatam	3,07,441	4,04,325
Ganjam	2,69,308	9,00,058

³ ibid., (para 32).

of the Northern Circars was to receive a special deputation allowance in addition to his present salary of 1000 rupees per month. The Government of India was to be ordered to make a special legislative enactment giving the Commissioner sufficient powers to enforce his authority.

"The singular ability displayed by Mr. Walter Elliot...rendered it desirable that he should be employed in a manner for which he had shown himself to be so peculiarly fitted."¹

The Government of Madras, which was now headed by Sir Henry Pottinger, wasted no time in following the Court's suggestions. A copy of the despatch was sent to each district of the Northern Circars. Pending a legislative enactment from the Government of India, charge of the Northern Circars was committed to Elliot by the Board of Revenue (under Section XXIII, Regulation I of 1803). Pending an exact definition of the powers of the Commissioner, Elliot was given most of the responsibilities of the Board of Revenue, with the exception of the Maramat (Public Works) Department. This meant that the burden of the Board of Revenue was lightened by more than one fourth.²

The same letter which informed the Home authorities of these changes, conveyed news of the rapid recovery of Guntur District and of the restoration of central (State) control within its administration. The latest Jamabandi Report (for Fasli 1257) from Stokes, which together with the reviews of the Board of Revenue and Government was enclosed in this letter from Madras, showed that the population, the resources,

¹ ibid., (para 33).

² GOM to COD, May 22, No. 27 of 1849: Madras Revenue Letters (27: pp. 357-69).

and the revenues had almost reached the level which had existed before the great famine.¹

The general censure which had been levelled at the Collectors of Guntur in the Court's despatch of January 31, 1849, brought an immediate response from John Goldingham who, having advocated all along the measures which were only now being put into effect, could not allow his reputation to be clouded. Long passages from his report to Charles Cotton (of December 13, 1839) were quoted to show that he had been strongly opposed to the maladministration of the Zamindars and that he had proposed the necessary remedies. In bringing this to the attention of the Court, the Madras Government pointed out that, although unwarranted stress might have been placed upon the effects of calamitous seasons, the maladministration of the Zamindars had been mentioned, and the resumption of their estates strongly advocated in their letter of April 16, 1841.²

The Court of Directors showed, in their despatch of June 18, 1850, their satisfaction with the rapid recovery of the district and with the steps which had been taken to put a Commissioner in control of the Northern Circars. Goldingham who by now was permanent Third Member of the Board of Revenue, was completely exonerated of any blame for the depression and maladministration of Guntur.³

¹ ibid., (paras 12-13).

² ibid., (para 14). GOM to COD, April 16, 1841.

³ COD Despatch (paras 1-6), June 18, No. 2 of 1850: Revenue Despatch (vol. 16: pp. 273-281).

The career of Walter Elliot ended as remarkably as it had begun. He remained in charge of the Northern Circars until August 16, 1854, when he was appointed to succeed Sir T.V.Stonehouse as a Member of Council. During the Mutiny, when the health of Lord Harris broke, Elliot became Provisional Governor. (His cousin, Lord Elphinstone, was then Governor of Bombay.) He read the Royal Proclamation which announced that authority over India had passed from the Company to the Crown. He resigned in Madras on December 27, 1859, and was knighted for his services six years later.¹

¹ Robert Sewell, Walter Elliot of Wolfelee (Edinburgh: 1896), pp. 53-60.

CONCLUSION

Two things which are found in India, one of them natural and the other artificial, typify symbolically the localizing and centralizing tendencies which have been the theme of this study. These are the white ant and the white umbrella. The white ant is a creature of great energy and silence which, by combining its efforts with those of countless other tiny brothers, can make a hollow shell or empty crust out of the stoutest wooden structure -- as many a Collector has discovered to his sorrow upon sitting in a chair long left in some neglected dak bungalow. The white ant principle speaks of what happens when an energetic and silent local leader, by combining his efforts with countless other tiny leaders, makes a hollow mockery out of the stoutest administrative structure. The white umbrella (with scarlet and gold trimming) is a proud and lofty structure. It is that invention of human ingenuity which shades and shields those who hold it from the elements. The white umbrella principle speaks of all that power and glory which is the State, of the diligence and care with which it is constructed, of the system by which it is sustained, and of the protection it gives to all who dwell within its shadow. The white ant and the white umbrella are, we suggest, part of the tradition of India.

But the white ant and the white umbrella are hardly compatible. A gulf is fixed between the abased and the exalted, between fierce energy and confident repose, between subversive action and flamboyant display, between silent influence and noisy authority, and between the dust and

the sky. The extreme contrast and disparity between these two symbols is apparent. Within the narrow compass of a single district and within a limited span of time, an attempt has been made to show how these two principles encountered each.

Put into other words, at each level of administration, local interests sought to resist interference and non-local interests sought to interfere in the district. Conservative forces within the district, arising out of the villages, attempted to thwart what they considered to be radical and predatory forces from outside. Centralizing agents were bound to try to bring about compliance from local leaders. Localizing energies were bound to try to corrupt and undermine "foreign" agencies.

The arena in which these forces collided was the intermediate area. The clash occurred in the levels between the villages and the State. The zone of conflict was within the institutions of district administration. The struggle revolved around the go-betweens. Whether or not the district officers and subordinate servants located between the Huzur and the villages could be corrupted or kept loyal was a matter of importance to both sides.

Localizing and centralizing forces were pitted against each other in the actual elements of administration, in the structure and functions of government. Their struggle left its marks in organization and reorganization, in red-tape and black-ink, in channels of communication and accessibility, in changing staff and personnel, and in countless rules and regulations which were set up to control

this machinery. The side which most thoroughly and effectively controlled the machinery of government within the district saw its own interests advanced. It seems quite clear that from the departure of John Whish in 1831 to the coming of Walter Elliot in 1845, this side was not State Government.

I. THE WHITE ANTS OF LOCAL INFLUENCE

"A remarkable feature of local influences in Guntur," one observer has stated, "is the ability seemingly to submit to high authority while at the same time achieving their own ends."¹ This statement seems to sum up the paradox of acceptance and resistance coming from local elite groups which provided a baffling dilemma for State authorities.

These elite groups of the district were those light varnas or castes who dominated the high positions in the local hierarchy of power. Whether or not they struggled among themselves over the spoils, the high castes (usually Brahmans alone or Brahmans in coalition with high Sudras) monopolized power in the villages and in the district administration. For the twice-born, there was no definite sense of right and wrong, no beginning or ending, no complete or incomplete apart from their own joint-families and castes. Humanity ended there and suspicion and hostility began there. Whatever public spirit, whatever community of values, interests, and motivations, whatever

¹ This statement was made to the author by Dr. A.T. Fishman, a member of the faculty of Andhra Christian College, Guntur, who was drawing upon more than 40 years of experience as a missionary, teacher and scholar in Telugu country. Field Notes, November 5, 1959. See A.T. Fishman, Culture Change and the Underprivileged (Madras: 1941).

sense of nation, and whatever cohesive feelings of loyalty and responsibility existed: these revolved around the family and the caste. While this horizontal stratification of castes and vertical fragmentation of families into socially and ethically isolated compartments was common to the whole population, it was the élite groups at each level who benefited. The élite groups wielded the religious, social and economic sanctions by which they maintained the status quo. These groups were the white ants. These were the local influences.

Yet, these white ants were not all of one specie or of one feeling. Some were more local and earthbound. Others were lodged up in the supporting pillar and struts of the umbrella. The Niyogi Brahmins and other allied groups which were on the ground were not as committed to a particular umbrella as a Desastha (Maratha Brahmins) and other groups who benefited most and who risked losing most if the structure collapsed. Niyogi Karnams had seen one regime succeed another with relative indifference since their positions in the villages were not much altered. Desasthas had also managed to keep their strength as district officers during more than one regime; but they stood to gain more by maintaining stability and peace.

Perhaps no statement so aptly fits the relationship of the higher and the lower white ants, of one élite caste to another élite caste, and indeed of local to central institutions, than the quotation which Percival Spear has taken from Augustine's description of society without the Church (in describing social

organization in North India). "The State is a great robber band; for robber bands, what are they but little states?"¹ The Desasthas must be seen in this light, as a tribe of robbers dealing with other tribes of robbers. Their crowning achievement during our period was to unite under the leadership of Shashagiri Rao with the village leaders against Hudleston Stokes. By so doing they carved out, secretly and silently, a state within a state. But since they possessed no sentimental attachment to the general good or to the social and economic welfare of the less fortunate communities, who were after all to be viewed as intrinsically inferior, and since their opportunity for aggrandizement might slip at any moment, local leaders were more oppressive both in design and in practice than the State. They took what they could while the taking was good; and the district suffered.

It is the dependence of the European rulers upon the traditional élite groups of the locality and upon the traditional institutions and customs for acquiring the revenue which is significant. Just as the country was conquered and held largely by an Indian army led by European officers, so the country was administered, by an Indian bureaucracy - sometimes only nominally under the control of European officers. Of this bureaucracy James Dykes wrote:

It is perhaps the wonder of the world, this Indian empire. Whilst the native soldiery give their heart's blood on the battlefield...and dying bless the power over them, that same devotion to a strange race sitting in the seat of the

¹ T.G.P.Spear, Twilight of the Mughuls (Cambridge: 1951), p. 126.

rulers is equally shown by men of the priesthood, the hierarchy of Hindostan. And the secular members of that body which has ruled the political destinies of the country since the days of Menu, no matter who held the sword, whether Mussulman, Mogul, Hindoo, or Mahratta, have from our first assumption of power ever striven to their utmost to fill the coffers of the State.¹+

While these Brahmans were at times a little short-sighted, thinking more of the day's revenue than of the morrow's resources, thousands and thousands of remarkably able Desasthas in South India could point to generations of government service.

The subversion of authority in Guntur (and in other districts) must not blind us to the fact that the Maratha Brahmans were go-betweens. They were neither wholly local nor wholly central in their loyalties. Indeed, they apparently followed their own best interests with consistency.

The Mahratta Brahmins who served Tippoo and administered the affairs of all eastern princes, are equally eager to swell the revenue of the English Government. A Brahmin never considers himself of any nation; he is "twice-born" and by virtue of this...is bound by no such ties. If asked what countryman he is, the reply invariably will be...that in his family such a language is used. He and his fathers...have had nothing to do with one nation more than another. And whoever may rule India, he fully believes that all financial affairs will be administered as hitherto...(in the south) through those "twice-born" that speak the Mahratta language.²

As go-betweens, the Desasthas were efficient, secretive, and demanding. They made sure of as much revenue as could possibly be milked from the villages. By using the Marathi language as their

¹ J.B.W.Dykes, Salem, an Indian Collectorate (Madras: 1853), p.324.

² ibid., p.323.

medium of exchange for almost all information, they were able to keep the right hand from fully knowing what the left hand was doing. By their enormously bulky and complex accounting (Bourdillon wrote that taluk and district accounts contained 1,200 columns of figures), and by their endless duplication of Marathi and English forms, they were able to smother their European superiors with facts and to cloud essential truths.¹ Finally, if their pay were not such as would benefit their role as go-betweens, they readily took advantage of what means they possessed for enriching themselves. This type of corruption, however, was not remarkable; for few Western countries are immune from corruption in local government even today.

The tendency of Desastha Brahmans in charge of a Huzur Kacheri to combine in a subversive manner was not confined to Guntur but was general throughout South India. Ricketts wrote:

...in every district, in a greater or less degree, the whole body of public servants form a combination, bound together by strong ties of interest (not only out of hope of gain but out of fear of injury) and often of family or caste connection, to maintain abuses.²

The Naib Sheristadar in Nellore had 56 relatives in key offices within that district administration. Out of 388 officers in the district establishment of Bellary District, 235 were Brahmans and most of them were Desasthas.³ When Walter Elliot went to Masulipatam in 1849

¹ ibid. John Norton, Letter to Robert Lowe on the Condition and Requirements of the Madras Presidency (Madras: 1854), p.136. A verbatim report by James Bourdillon, Collector of North Arcot, is quoted.

² Ricketts, Report of the Commissioner for the Revision of Civil Salaries and Establishments (Calcutta: 1858), Part I, p. 343.

³ Report of the Commission for the Investigation of Alleged Cases of Torture in the Madras Presidency (Madras: 1855), p. 38.

as Commissioner to the Northern Circars, where Richard Porter had been Collector since 1842, he found over 4000 unanswered letters in the Huzur and the administration entirely in the hands of Sundaragiri Ramanuju Rao, the Huzur Sheristadar. In his fall from power, Ramanuju Rao assured the ruin of the Collector and the Army Surgeon; but of 116 officers tried, almost every one was acquitted and escaped punishment.¹ Ricketts reckoned the average annual siphoning of revenue into the pockets of district officers at a minimum of 40 lakhs of rupees a year for the whole Presidency.²

The problem of combinations of Indian officers subverting European authority was not confined to civil administration. Such combinations also existed within the Madras Army. Governor Tweeddale, whose professional interest and skill was primarily that of a soldier, wrote:

The Madras Army has been in a state of covert mutiny during the last eight years (1837-1845). We have had all degrees of Mutiny. Every punishment has proved a failure for one simple reason: that the Ringleaders have received no punishment. They have dextrously escaped while the dupes of their intrigues have suffered.³+

In discussing the problem with the Duke of Richmond, Tweeddale pointed to the non-commissioned officers (Jamadars and Subadars, etc.) as

¹ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883), p.352.

² Ricketts, op.cit., Pt.I, p.336.

³ Lord Tweeddale to the Duke of Richmond (5th), March 13, 1845: Goodwood Archives (Chichester: County Record Office). +Note: The Governor did not think that the other Presidencies should gloat over the embarrassments of the Madras Army. He had heard that infantry regiments at Meerut were also in a state of mutiny.

being the heart of the problem and blamed the incompetence of European officers for permitting such feelings of unrest to develop.

Another idea arising out of our knowledge of the strength of the Indian administrative class which supported the British Raj in South India is the cautious suggestion that the Maratha Brahmans may have had something to do with the Madras Presidency remaining steadfast during the Mutiny. The very strength of their hold and the profits which they derived therefrom strengthens the notion that they had more to lose than to gain by bringing about a collapse of the umbrella.¹

II. THE WHITE UMBRELLA OF CENTRAL AUTHORITY

The first half of the 19th century saw the faint beginnings within the Presidency of the introduction of English language and education, the setting up of enterprising schemes in transportation, communication, credit and banking, irrigation, famine relief, and public health, the entrance of progressive technology and equipment, the rise of a market economy, the application of English legal procedures in courts, and the infusion of new practices and ideals of administration into government. All of these devices were brought into play by the agents of central authority in dealing with the traditions and customs and leadership of the old order. The collision between the new world and the old took place at the district level.

¹ Note: Of course, the very fact that the Madras Army had its troubles, made the European officers more alert to signs of trouble. Also, as noted earlier, Salar Jung of Hyderabad served as a barrier between Madras and the infected areas to the north.

These new devices do not alter the fact, however, that central authority in Madras was very Indian in its character. By this we do not mean that government was swift, terrible, personal, or direct; for indeed it was often very slow, seemingly weak, impersonal and evasive. We mean that the structure of State authority at the Presidency was surfeited with entrenched and time-serving bureaucracy. Jobbing and intrigue, multiplying of offices so that drones would do the least harm, and paralyzing frustration and caution were too apparent in Madras. Many of those who had spent thirty years in the mufassal, even those who had not been up-country for so long, showed the marks of a lifetime in India. Having arrived as youths, unmarried, impressionable, and full of energy, they had aged in the Indian sun. Those who survived the climate were not immune to Indian ways. Just as Walter Elliot found himself thriving in the extreme heat of the Guntur plain and sickening with the cool weather (as so many Indians do), so reforming zeal and youthful ambitions thinned in the veins of many so that they became hardened and cynical.¹

In short, the entrenched bureaucracy of Madras became in many respects similar to the entrenched bureaucracy in the district. The Chief Secretary became much like the Huzur Sheristadar in his position, his functions, and his power. Other Secretaries became like Naibs and

¹ John Norton wryly remarked that "promotion should depend more on merit and less on senility," that the drones were "pitchforked" into the judiciary ("Refuge for the Destitute"), and that if a man hung a witness instead of a prisoner by mistake he could still be made Post-Master General. op.cit., p.322.

Diwans and Dubashes. The various Boards, which would have functioned much more efficiently if they had been reconstituted as single executive Commissionerships, were filled with those who did not want to rock the boat and who wanted to finish off their few remaining years before retirement without undue disturbance. A deep conservatism bordering upon contrariness and reaction seems to have characterized the mood of this bureaucracy. Their deliberations were prolonged, infinitely slow, and couched with all sorts of protective minutes, provisions, and escape clauses. As a result, Board Members became irritated with the daring proposals of upstarts in the districts whom they hardly knew, while their sympathies became identified with those Indian servants whom they had known during their mufassal days and whom they were sure fully deserved the fruits of long service.

Viewed from below, from a station in the mufassal, a pattern of action and reaction, of checks and balances, and of progressive and conservative behaviour emerges. When applied to the problems of Guntur, an identification of interests seems apparent. A line of progressive interest seems to connect the District Collector, the Governor-in-Council, and the Board of Control with the poor, voiceless masses of India. A line of conservative identification from agencies which were constitutionally subordinate at each level to the authority of the first line (i.e. in London, in Madras, and in Guntur) seems to link local influences (i.e. the Zamindars and the Desasthas), the Board of Revenue, and the Court of Directors. This produced a leap-frog effect in which each level in the chain of command was in

opposition to the levels immediately above and below it.

Thus, the Board of Control had a voice in the selection of a Madras Governor; but the Court of Directors selected the Council in Madras with little direction from above, though the Governor's influence was felt, especially in appointing members to the Madras Boards and the Secretariat. At a lower level, the Governor selected the District Collector; but the Board of Revenue had a final voice in the selection of the key Indian district officers. There is much evidence that this dual alignment, with opposing views interspersed at successive rungs of the administrative ladder, produced a great deal of private or secret bypassing of authority. It is not, then, altogether strange -- if this argument is followed -- that Madras should have been notorious for its intrigue and for paralysis of policy.

It becomes apparent that the white umbrella of Madras was not without its structural and functional weaknesses. Since the administrative decisions of the Board of Revenue were rarely between a clearly right and wrong or an obviously wise and foolish alternative, their language was often equivocating and uncertain. Worse, by coming down softly on one side of an argument after months of delay, they would simply pass the burden of deciding to someone else. When a decision finally arrived back from London, years after its initiation, the problem was often so altered or so advanced as to render the decision useless. A policy then only needed to meet some normal bureaucratic resistance to suffer its death-blow.

Becoming more specific, revenue policy for Guntur failed. Assuming that the primary object of revenue policy is the prompt and regular realization of revenue and that the secondary object of revenue policy is the promotion of prosperity and the improvement of resources which yield revenue, neither of these objects was achieved during the period under examination (1837-1848).

Two courses were followed in attempting to gain these objects. First, sweeping and unsupervised authority was delegated to the local leaders who were the direct heritors of such authority granted by pre-British regimes. This policy was proving to be mistaken before its final authorization returned from London. The Zamindars enjoyed the privileges of their position without its responsibilities. They neglected to pay the revenue and attempted to oppress those who produced it. Instead of long range development of their resources, they preferred to squander what they had with reckless abandon. Erecting for themselves little umbrellas, they were soon consumed by the white ants within their own organizations and left in ruin. The Government's policy failed by misjudging the strength and ability of these local leaders, by leaving them too much to the tender mercies of the white ants, and by taking no steps to avert their ultimate ruin. How much, or whether at all, the Government could have shored up the position of these Zamindars is a debatable question.

Second, the policy of acquiring the revenue directly from its source of production also failed. All of the reasons for this failure are not clear and simple; but some are. The basic and underlying

reason for failure was that the Government lost contact ^{with} ~~at~~ its Indian officers in the district. By losing contact, it became ignorant of what was really going on. And when a Collector finally stayed long enough in the district to learn what was going on, his warnings went unheeded. By failing to support their Collector, a person whose ultimate objects were the same as those of his superiors though his methods may not have been the same, the Board of Revenue ignored the best warning signal which it could have had. The fact that a devastating famine had recently occurred there, together with a natural sympathy for the local leaders, deluded the Board of Revenue into thinking that they could justifiably put their trust in the old and experienced Desasthas of Guntur. Presumably out of their own knowledge, the Revenue Board Members must have had reasonable grounds for making the assumptions which they did.

It is clear that without the good services of countless members of Indian officers, of Desasthas in particular, the British could not have easily or successfully administered the country. The ability to garrison troops in the country was not enough to inspire genuine respect and loyalty from local leaders or to keep intricate government machinery running smoothly. It was necessary for the British to provide the necessary inducements for procuring the essential manpower, skills, and equipment for administering the country. Some degree of cooperation had to be won and some degree of confidence inspired from local leadership, which a simple threat of naked violence could not have achieved. The weaknesses of Desastha officers had to be

balanced by their undeniable assets. Indeed, just as surely as Shashagiri Rao brought chaos and subversion to the administrations of Goldingham and Stokes, so also did Appa Rao's remarkable assistance make possible the success of the Elliot investigation. While one Maratha Brahman short-sightedly ended his career by organizing the white ants, another perhaps more wisely shored up the white umbrella.

In both policies, the failure of the authorities to decide wisely was not a failure intrinsic to one system of administration over another. Rather it was a failure in judging men. The choice was not simply between one class or caste of subordinates and another. The real choice rested in the selection of the right individuals. Men, not methods, lay at the heart of the matter. The authorities failed to trust the right persons. To plead that the right persons could not be found was not excuse enough. By failing to place proper persons in positions of power, the authorities courted disaster.

Some hint as to the reasons why authority was not delegated to the right persons may be suggested. Not enough confidence was placed in the man on the spot and too much confidence was placed in the machinery. As John Norton put it:

Men should be put more on the qui vive by being freed from the casting-net of centralization...which has been gradually closing around them, until the up-country Collector dare hardly shave without a circular order authorizing him in the Gazette.¹

¹ John Norton, A Letter to Robert Lowe on the Condition and Requirements of the Madras Presidency (Madras: 1854), p. 319.

Collectors were not allowed enough freedom. Had they been given more power of discretion to exercise their own judgment and their own ability, they would have had a greater interest in the success of their work. Had they been responsible for more of the decisions, particularly in the selection and removal of their Indian subordinates, at least some degree of teamwork would have been achieved in district administration. Instead, the Board of Revenue trusted to its endless paper-work and its own judgment while the personal impressions of their man-on-the-spot were largely wasted.

The commonly held notion of the British District Officer was being an all-wise, all-knowing, ever-efficient philosopher-king with a thorough grasp on the reins of power in his district is open to serious doubt. K.N.V. Sastri recently described the personal rule by which District Collectors captured the hearts and heads of their people, rendered government popular by their benevolence, and enhanced the dignity of their office. He writes (in 1957):

...the people of the 19th century believed that everything good in every department of government was the fruit of the Collector's hard work and under his coordination and supervision, with the cooperation of all departments, ... nothing was impossible under the sun, including the proverbial streams of milk and honey.¹

Judged according to what happened in Guntur between the great famine of 1833 and the investigation of 1845, the Collector appears more as a dangling and stumbling puppet tied to strings which were held in Madras. As a result his actions became as rigid and as circumscribed

¹ K.N.V.Sastri, Principles of District Administration in India (Delhi: 1957), p. 18.

as those of the Board of Revenue; moreover, he was deprived of that degree of flexibility which was needed in dealing with the very astute and sophisticated struggles for power. The very rapid turn-over of Collectors in Guntur prior to the coming of Lord Elphinstone further weakened the role of the Huzur. Perhaps Thomas Oakes and John Whish may be described as masterful and godlike huzurs and doubtless Stokes and Newill, not to mention some of their successors, fulfilled this historic image. But the idea that there was an abiding divinity watching over the district pales in the light of events during our period.

Ironically, much of the position and prestige, which was nominally the Collector's, in reality fell to the Huzur Sheristadar. A definite and observable continuity of power in the hands of this officer and of the inner elite which he represented can be seen. As much as they fettered the Collector, the Madras authorities freed the Huzur **Sheristadar**. While Collectors came and went, the Huzur Sheristadar remained. He became the all-wise, all-knowing, ever-efficient prime-minister of the district. His words were taken with respect in Madras while those of the Collector were not. Time and time again, almost without exception, his Naib and his Amins were upheld and restored to their positions by the Board of Revenue. His authority over the district was personal, direct, and crucial (even if often hidden). Even when he or one of his people were found guilty of misbehavior, punishment was extraordinarily light or it was waived altogether.

III. THE EPILOGUE

Two features of British rule may be seen as factors which brightened the rather dark picture of district administration given in this study. First, there was a growing awareness and concern over the problems of maladministration, an evident tide of good intentions, even on the part of incompetent European officers, toward Indian People in general, and a self-critical, self-corrective, and analytic faculty imbedded in the fabric of the white umbrella.¹ Second, British resources and persistence had a relentless, almost machine-like quality so that, while the rulers were very slow in correcting the problems which came to their attention, they were ultimately able to devise very thorough and lasting solutions.

The ability of local influences to blunt revenue policy was due primarily to the skill with which they joined together in combinations and, thereby, to the control which they obtained over information (or intelligence). By holding back or fabricating vital information, they were able to keep the rulers in ignorance or what is perhaps worse, in partial ignorance. It is for this reason that the ryotwari system in operation was a different creature from that which was formulated in the minds of policy-makers in Madras and London.²

¹ Note: A thread of sympathy for the lot of the poor ryots runs through the writings of Oakes, Whish, Goldingham, Stokes, Newill, Elliot, and many others. Interest and concern for leaders, such as the Desasthas, is also evident.

² J.D.Bourdillon, Remarks on the Ryotwar System of Land Revenue as it exists in the Presidency of Madras (Madras: 1853).

As soon as that most indispensable ingredient, information, became available and accurate, it became possible for problems to be ground into dust and for solutions to be molded in their place. The paralysis of State policy in Guntur was finally broken by the timely sending of Walter Elliot to find out the reasons for the drying up of revenue. The information which he uncovered made possible certain counter-measures. His most important disclosure was the degree of ignorance which had existed regarding the district's administration. It was clear, for example, that little was known of the true resources of the district, that there had never been an accurate survey, that virtually nothing was known about inam lands, and that the making, arranging, and preserving of records had not been done properly.

During the next twenty years, a series of decisions ^{was} ~~were~~ made which completely altered the nature of district administration and of the personnel within it. Village Munsifs became strong both in their power and prestige while the position of Village Karnams waned. The Record Office in Guntur was completely reorganized and put upon a sound footing. Marathi accounts were abolished. A painstaking enquiry into inam lands was held. A fixed and scientific survey and field assessment was introduced (in 1868) at greatly reduced rates and the annual settlement gave way to the periodic reassessment. The great anicut across the Krishna River was completed and a network of canals turned the delta into a rich green carpet. English schools were established and the first Western educated candidates for district service were put forward. In short, between 1850 and 1870, a revolution in district

administration occurred.¹

Certain steps were taken which finally broke the hold of the Desasthas upon district administration. It will be recalled that since 1826 there had been a ruling against a district officer's holding land in the same district in which he worked. In 1859, another ruling was made whereby no two members of the same family could be employed within the same district; moreover, no two members of the same caste could hold the top positions in an administrative office or department. Specifically, if a Maratha Brahman was the Huzur Sheristadar, then the Naib Sheristadar could not be a Desastha and vice versa. The same year, examinations for entrance and for promotion into specialized branches of the administration were introduced which made it possible for any individual, ^{of} no matter what social background, to enter district service. Finally, a year later, ^{the removal of} the bar prohibiting Indians from entering the covenanted branch of the Indian Civil Service made it possible for ambitious Desasthas to climb higher and higher.²

These changes in rules seem to have had a revolutionary effect upon the society of the district. The breaking of the Desastha monopoly in the Huzur and their subsequent diffusion into the higher levels of administrative service left the way open for the Niyogis.

¹ A summary of these developments are found in G. Mackenzie, A Manual of the Kistna District (Madras: 1883). See W. Wilson, Guntur Settlement Report of September 10, 1868 (Madras: G.O., 14th May 1872, No. 798F). Also, Kistna District Census Report (Madras: 1871).

² T.G.K. Pillay, The Revenue Compendium of Madras Presidency, Volume I, (Madras: 1873), pp. 120-123.

Since the Niyogis and other Brahmans were losing some of their strength in the villages to Non-Brahman Munsifs and since the barriers against their rising higher were being removed, it is natural that they became district officers; moreover, after acquiring English education, it was possible for them to follow the Desasthas into the higher levels of government. Following after the Niyogis came the Vaidikis (priestly Brahmans), who were the other numerically strong Brahman caste in the district. Finally, about 1930, communal representation according to a selection roster based on fixed proportions was applied to district administration.¹ This rule caused the number of Brahmans in district service to drop from 67.32 percent in 1922 to 28.74 percent in 1958, though the number of Brahmans in the Tahsildar cadre is still strong (six Brahman~~s~~ Tahsildars out of a possible ten places)².

Maratha Brahmans still live in Guntur (I was told that some 500 families live in the city). Both the Potturi Rao and the Sabnavis Rao families, which became so wealthy as Diwans to the Vasireddy Zamindars, are prominent locally. The Nyapati family has distinguished itself. One member, Nyapati Madwa Rao, was the Diwan to the Maharaja of Mysore; and another member, I understand, has played a leading role in Andhra University. The present Manur Rao ex-Zamindar, Venkata Krishna Narasimha Rao, informed me that his family still return to Poona for their education and for their wives.

¹ The Manual of Revenue Subordinate Service: 1931 (Madras: Government Press, 1947), para. 6.

² District Establishment Lists (Guntur: District Press, for 1922, 1930, 1939, and 1959).

APPENDIX I. GLOSSARY⁺¹

- Abkari (U.), Abukari (Tel.):— Revenue derived from toddy, liquors, drugs, and etc.
- Adalat (U.):— A court of law.
- Agraharam (Tel.):— Village or part thereof held by Brahmans on a quit-rent or free of assessment.
- Amani, Amanee (U.):— "Held in trust." Lands or other sources of revenue held in trust under the direct management of Government.
- Amil, Amildar (U.):— A collector of revenue on the part of the Government. Also a farmer of or contractor for the revenue under the native system.
- Amin, Ameen (A.):— A police and/or revenue officer in charge of one thana or taluk. A Tahsildar.
- Anchana (Tel.):— An estimate or appraisement of probable amount and value of crops on a field.
- Anna (U. & S.):— The sixteenth part of anything but commonly of a rupee.
- Arzi, Arji, Urzee, Arzee (A.):— A petition; an address; a memorial; a respectful statement or representation whether oral or written.
- Asara (Tel.):— In Northern Circars, revenues paid in kind.
Asar-sistu: fluctuating amount.
- Badmash (U.):— A bad character. A hooligan. A ruffian.

⁺ Note: Key to abbreviations within brackets as follows:

(A.)	-- Arabic
(U.)	-- Urdu and/or Hindustani
(P.)	-- Persian
(S.)	-- Sanskrit
(Tel.)	-- Telugu
(Mar.)	-- Marathi

¹ H.H.Wilson, Glossary of Judicial and Revenue Terms (Calcutta: 1855).
John Whish to BOR (Revenue Glossary), March 10, 1826: GDR (3981: 38-52).

Bandabast (U.):- The arrangements or agreements for any business or undertaking.

Batta, Bhatta, Bhatyamu (Mar. & Tel.):- Additional or expense allowance (or per diem allowance) for extra service.

Bazar, Bazaar (P.):- A market, A market place. A shopping center.

Beriz, Berij (Mar.), Beriju (Tel.):- A gross assessment, total sum, aggregate demand of revenue (same as jama). Usually applied to amount payable by a Zamindar.

Butadu (Tel.):- Household expenses. A butadu gumashta was a private secretary and accountant belonging to the Zamindar.

Chaprassi (U.):- A messenger or courier who wears a badge (chapras) of office.

Chauki (U.):- A police, frontier, customs, guard or watching station of post.

Chaukidar (U.):- An officer in charge of a chauki.

Chaukidari (U.):- Of or pertaining to the office of a chauki.

Chawadi (Tel.):- A public lodging place, a shelter for travelers (same as choultry).

Chenchuvardu (Tel.) :- A man of the Chenchu tribe (aboriginal).

Chittha, Chittah (Tel.):- A memorandum, a rough note or account, rough journal or daybook.

Circar (P.):- Government, organization, administration. See Sarkar.

Dabbu (Tel.):- Money in general. A quantity of dabs (dubs). A copper dub is valued at 20 kasu.

Dacoity:- Gang robbery.

Dafadar (U.), Daphedarudu (Tel.):- A police officer.

Daftar, Daftur (U. & P.), Daphtaramu (Tel.), Daphtar (Mar.):- A record, account, official statement, report, archives.

Daftardar:- Record Keeper. Daftarband: Guard of Record Office.

Daftarkhana:- Record Office.

Daftram, Daphtaramu (Tel.):— A public document or record of a district or office.

Dak (Mar.):— Post, post-office, or establishment for conveying letters and/or travelers. Relays along the road for this purpose.

Dar (P.):— A holder. One who possesses. Usually a suffix. A Zamindar is a land-holder. A Nadar is a person who holds nothing.

Darbar, Durbar (U.):— A court, a royal court, an audience or levee.

Darbari:— Of or belonging to a darbar.

Darbari-Kharch:— Expenses of a darbar.

Darkhast, Dhurkast, Durgast, Dirgast (U. and Tel.):— A contract; a tender; a representation; an application; a petition. In Madras, an application to land rent; a tender.

Darogha (U.):— A superintendent or overseer. A manager, especially of a police or customs station.

Dasabhandamu (Tel.):— A deduction of revenue in compensation for improvements in irrigation wells, tanks, canals, etc.

Daskhat (U. & P.):— Handwriting, signature.

Dast, Dust (U. & P.), Dastu (Tel.):— lit., "The Hand". The portion of revenue actually realized by some head man, but not paid to the government.

Dastak (U. & P.):— A hand signature. A passport, a permit. A free transit permit. A summons, a writ, or a warrant. Especially a process served on a defaulter to compel payment.

Dastur, Dastoor (Mar.):— Handwriting, signature, the signature of a clerk or amenuensis. The form of an official paper.

Daul, Dowle (Mar.), Davulu, Daulu (Tel.):— Mode, manner, shape appearance, form, estimate, valuation. A statement of particulars of gross revenue levied from an estate or district. An estimate of amount which estate should yield.

Daul-band-o-bast:— Detailed estimate.

Daul-nama:— Extract from detailed estimate.

Desastha (Mar.):— One of a tribe of Maratha Brahmans who consider themselves superior. A secular Brahman. In the South, a Maratha Brahman in general.

Desmukh (Mar.), Desmook, Deshmukh:- Hereditary officer exercising supreme police and revenue authority over a district.

Despandi, Deshpandi, Despondi (Mar.):- Hereditary revenue accountant of a district.

Dhalait (U.):- An armed attendant or peon. (from dhal: "shield".)

Dhobi:- A washerman. One who washes clothes.

Diwali, Divali, Deepavali:- Hindu festival of lights. Occurs in late October.

• Diwan, Dewan (P.):- A minister; a chief officer; and/or a financial and revenue chief minister.

Dora (Tel.):- A master, a ruler, a prince, a European. Honorific title: Doragaru.

Dubash, Dubashi, Dubasi (Tel.):- An interpreter. An Indian in the service of a European. A person who speaks two languages (do-bashi).

Dumbala (Tel.):- An order for giving up the government share of produce to the cultivators.

Ennadi, Yennadi:- A caste of the jungles known for their skill in crime.

Erukala, Yerukala:- A caste of the jungles and hills. Aboriginal gypsies having skill in hunting, crime, and in fortune-telling.

Fasli (U.):- The harvest year -- a mode of computing time in India from July 1st. By adding 590 to the Fasli year, one may gain a rough calculation of the year Anno Domini.

• Faujdar (U. & A.):- Army Officer (Fauj: army or military: dar: keeper, holder, or official). He was often given charge of all military-criminal matters in a district.

Garisa, Garce (Tel.):- A measure of grain equal to 400 markals. 185.2 cubic feet. 9860 lb. avoirdupois.

Ghaibat, Ghaibatu (Tel.):- Hidden, concealed, missing lost. Extra. Distant -- as an outstation. The opposite of huzur. Any office in the field.

• Godown:- A warehouse.

Grama, Gram (Tel. & S.):- Village. Of or pertaining to a village. Grama-Kharch: Village Expenses.

Gurdi (Tel.):— A place of worship. A temple.

Gurdikattu (Tel.):— An equivalent to a village Domesday Book giving details of village boundaries and measuring all lands, burial and burning grounds, topes and wells.

- Gumashta, Gomasta, Gumasta, Goomastah (U. & P.):— An agent, a steward, a representative; an officer employed by a Zemindar to collect rents. In Madras, a native accountant in the Revenue Department; an agent or subordinate clerk, or accountant.

Havali, Haveli, Hawali (Tel. & A.):— Household lands. Khas lands. Lands under direct government management for government needs.

Hawaladar, Hawaldar, Havildar (U.):— A chief of a company of guards, guides, messengers: a police officer; a native officer of the Indian Army.

Hukum (Mar.), Hukm (A.):— An order, a command.

Huk-nama, Hukm-nama:— A written order or command. A written award or judgment.

- Hundi (U.):— A bill of exchange.

- Huzur (U. & A.) Hujur (Mar.), Hujara (Tel.):— The presence; the royal presence; the presence of superior authority such as a Judge or a Collector. Also, the place where he resides, the hall, the office, the court. Abstractly, the state, the government.

Inam (A.), Inamu (Tel.):— Land which is free from revenue. There are many kinds: A maniam is for a village servant. A savaram is for a revenue officer or zamindar. An agraharam or shrotriam is an inam village for Brahmans. A devadasi inam is for religious prostitution. There are numerous other varieties for religion, arts, crafts, favors, etc.

Ijara (Mar.):— A contract. A farm or lease of the revenue of a village or a district. Price, profit; a lease or farm of land at a defined rent or revenue, whether from government direct or from an intermediate payer. Also spelled Izara.

Ijaradaru:— A renter. A farmer of public revenue.

Itlak-navis (U.):— Summons-writer.

Itlak-kharaj (U.):— Full subsistence.

Izhar (A.):— Making manifest, publishing, a deposition or declaration in court, an affidavit.

Izhar-navis:— A writer of depositions, and officer of the court.

Jama (A.):— A "gathering" or "collecting". Amount, aggregate, total, -- as applied especially to debit or receipt side of an account and the rental of an estate. Also total amount of rent or revenue payable by a cultivator or Zamindar including all cesses, as well as land tax; sometimes only revenue on land. Usually compounded with another term.

Jamabandi (U.):— The annual settlement made under the ryotwar system.

— Jamadar, Jemadar (U.):— The chief or leader of any number of persons; military subaltern, second to Subhadar; an officer of police, customs, etc., usually second in command.

Jarib, Jareeb (U. & A.):— Special resources to support ryots in time of calamity. Jarib lands are special Circar lands used to support ryots in time of calamity.

Jodi (Tel.):— Land assessed at half-rates -- for temples or in consideration of service. An easy or quit-rent. A personal tax on district officers.

Jodi-inam:— A grant of land held on quit-rent.

Kabuliat, Caboolat (U. & A.):— A written agreement; a counterpart of a revenue lease; deed. "A written agreement, especially one signifying assent as the counterpart of a revenue lease...or the document in which a payer of revenue whether to Government or to Zemindar or to Farmer, expresses his consent to pay the amount assessed." A written contract -- the counterpart of a revenue lease or a license.

Kachcha (U.):— Crude, raw, rough. The opposite of pakka.

— Kacheri (Mar.), Kachahri (U.), Cutcherry:— A court, a hall, an office, the place where any public business is transacted.

Kaifayat, Kyfeeyut (U.):— Statement, description, deposition, report, account of particulars, story. Any authenticated document or voucher.

Kail, Kailu, Kayalu (Tel.):— A heap. The actual measure of a crop after it is threshed and before its division between the cultivator and government.

Kaildar, Kailudaru, Kyledar:- A weighman or measurer. A superintendent of the measurement of the crop.

Kamatamu, Kamatam (Tel.):- The cultivation which the cultivator carries on with his own stock but with the labor of another. The land which the Zamindar, Jagirdar, or Inamdar keeps in his own hands, cultivating it by laborers, in distinction to that which he lets out in farm.

Kamma (Tel.):- A high caste (Sudra) in Telugu country. This caste sometimes claims to be even higher than Sudra by virtue of their martial history.

Kapu (Tel.):- A caste in Telugu country which is high, combining cultivating and martial traditions. A high caste Sudra. A Reddi. Often the Head Ryot of a village.

Karnam, Karanamu, Curnum (Tel.):- A Village accountant. A chief officer and leader of a village by hereditary. Almost always a Brahman and usually a Niyogi Brahman.

Kasu, Cash (Tel.):- A small copper coin, current at Madras, made equal in 1832 to the Calcutta and Madras paisa and rated at 64 to the rupee. (4 to the anna). It was formerly rated at 80 to the fanam, a small silver coin.

Kasba (A.), Kasuba (Tel.):- A small town or large village, the chief or market town of a district.

Kat-kata (U.):- Cutting and thrashing fees (chippings, cuttings, scraps).

Kaul, Kowle, Cowle, Kavulu (Tel.):- A word, a promise, an agreement.

Kaul-nama:- A written voucher granted to the revenue payers specifying terms. A contract. Kararnama: A written contract or engagement.

Kavadi (Tel.):- A pole for balancing burdens on the shoulder with a rope at each end from which burdens are slung.

• Kazi:- A Muslim Judge. An authority of Muslim law.

Khalisa, Khalasa (U.):- Exchequer or treasury.

Kham (U. & P.):- Raw, unripe, crude, gross. Gross as distinguished from net, in revenue. Opposite of Khas.

Khana (U. and P.):- A house, a dwelling a place.

Khandi (Mar.):— A measure of weight and capacity, commonly termed Candy. In Madras, it is 20 maunds or 500 pounds.

Kharaj (U.):— A tax. A tribute, particularly on infidels. Khirajibhumi (Tel.):— Land tax.

Kharch, Khurch (U.), Karchu, Curchoo (Tel.):— Expense, disbursement, outgoings. Debit. Grama Kharchu is the expense of keeping a village levied upon cultivators.

Khas (A.):— Select, eminent noble; also private, peculiar.

Kist, Kistu, Sistu (Tel.):— Instalment, portion; the amount paid as an instalment to government and the period fixed for its payment. As a revenue term it denotes the portion of the annual assessment paid at specified periods in the course of the year.

Komarti, Komati (Tel.):— A caste in South India who consider themselves to be pure Vaisya. Hence, they are shopkeepers, merchants, bankers, etc.

Koru (Tel.):— A part, a share; as a revenue term, it applies to the share of the crop which belongs to the cultivator.

Kostugutta (Tel.):— The joint renting of a village by all of the cultivators.

Kotharu, Cotauru (Tel.):— A salt pan, a salt works.

Kotwal:— The chief of police in a town.

Kuchela, Coochala (Tel.):— Telugu for "a heap of cut corn": a measure of land in the Northern Circars...equal to 8 Gorrus or 1000 Kuntas. (40 Kuntas make an acre).

Kulwar (U.):— Each -- tribe, caste, family, etc.

Kunta (Tel.):— A Telugu measure of land equal to 1089 square feet. 32 Kuntas or 19,600 square feet make a Katti. A Katti is equal to 14 acres.

Kuppa (Tel.):— A heap or stack of grain. Kuppa-anchana: an estimate of grain. Kuppa-jabita: list of grain stacks by owners.

Lambardi, Lumbardi, Lambadi (Tel.):— One of a migratory community of traders. A gypsy. A Banjara. They deal in salt and grain. They operate as transporters. They steal with skill.

Lungarkhana:- A hospital, a place for the sick.

Maddatgar, Madadgar (U. & Mar.):- Helper, assistant, clerk or writer.

Madiga (Tel.):- An outcaste leather worker.

Mahal (U. & A.):- A place, a house, an apartment, a station.
A province, or district, a department. A division of a taluk or district yielding revenue. An estate or any parcel or parcels of land which can be separately assessed with the public revenue.

Mahsul (U. & A.):- Collected, levied, revenue, public income from any source...as land, customs, excise, etc. The produce or return on anything.

Mahasulu (Tel.):- Produce of land; the harvest, the crop.

Mahasulu-darudu (Tel.):- Officer employed to secretly remove crop before revenue is paid.

Mahsuldar (Tel.):- Yielding or having profit: a collector or receiver of taxes.

Mahtadi (U.), Mohtadu, Motadu (Tel.):- A Head Village peon or watchman. A village messenger or peon employed on errands. An inferior revenue servant.

Mahzar-nama (P.):- A written collective attestation, a roll, a joint petition from a village.

Majumdar, Mazumdar, Majmudar (Mar. & Tel.):- Hereditary auditor and registrar of a district. He kept a check on government revenue and expenditure.

Makta, Mucta (Tel.):- A fixed rate or rent.

Makhta-shistu (Tel.):- Fixed rent.

Maktakaulu (Tel.):- An agreement for annual quit-rent.

Mala (Tel.):- The Telugu equivalent of the outcast, Pariah. Malas and Madigas are the large outcaste communities between which there is deep enmity.

Mamul, Mamool:- Established custom. Tradition. What is done.

Man, Mancha (Tel.):- A measure of capacity equal to one patha and a half seer (or $2\frac{1}{2}$ seers). Sixteen manchas make a tumu or maund.

Manauti (U.):— Bail, security, surety. Especially becoming a surety for payment of revenue.

Manavari, Manawary (Tel.):— Rice crop depending solely on rain... not irrigated.

Maniam, Manyam, Mannium (Tel.):— Land held free of assessment by village servants as emoluments for service.

Mannavar (Mar.):— Hereditary officer having police authority over a district.

Mantra, Mantram, Mantramu (S. & Tel.):— A prayer. A mystical incantation. A magical formula. A means of invoking evil or harm.

Marakal, Markal, Mercel, Marrakkal (Tel.):— A measure of grain equal to 12 seers or 8 padis. 12 marakals make a kalam and 400 marakals make a garisa. As of Oct. 20, 1846.

Maramat (U. & A.):— Public Works. Expenditure on Public Works.

Marammatu-Zabita (Tel.):— Account of particulars of cost of repairing roads, tanks, other public works.

Mashal (A.):— A lamp, lanthorn, torch.

• Mashalchi (U.), Mashalgar (Tel.):— Torch or lamp bearer. A domestic servant under superior table servants for cleaning plates, dishes.

Mashatudaru (Tel.):— A measurer of land, a surveyor.

Maund (U.), Manugu (Tel.):— A measure of weight of general use in India. The South Indian maund was fixed at 25 pounds. A maund was the same as a tumu and was equal to 16 manchas, 20 pathas or 40 seers. 20 maunds made a khandi (500 lbs.).

Milkiat-istemari (U.):— Possession in perpetuity. "Proprietary Right".

Mirasu (Tel.):— Inheritance. Inherited right to a share of the produce of village lands or inherited right to perquisites of a village office, such as Karnam. A Mirasi is an hereditary right.

Mirasidarudu:— A holder of hereditary rights or offices. In the Northern Circars, especially, a hereditary village officer.

Modi, Mod, Mor (Mar. & Tel.):— lit., "to break or separate". The common business hand; the broken or cursive writing used by Marathas on ordinary occasions.

- Monigar (Tamil & Tel.), Maniyakaran or Maniyadadu:- The Headman of a village. In Telugu country he is usually called by his caste name, i.e. Pedda Kapu (Big Kapu), Pedda Raju etc. Later, the Headman was called the Munsif.
- Moplah, Mappilla:- A native of Malabar who is descended from the Arabs.
- Motarpha, Motarapha (Tel.), Mutarafa (A):- A tax or taxes levied on trades and professions, on village artificers, as on weavers' looms, shops, stalls, and sometimes upon houses. It is properly a poll-tax.
- Mua-in (A.):- Established. Fixed.
- Muainzabita, Muain-zabita:- Established rule. Table of wages or allowance. List of public servants of any establishment. Fixed or legal charges.
- Muchchi (Tel.):- The name of a caste in South India or a member of it who is a worker in leather and saddlery, but is also a cabinet or furniture-maker and a portrait painter.
- Muchche-vardu, Muchi-man (Tel.):- Employed in public offices to make pens, provide paper, seal letters, and bind books etc.
- Mufassal (A.):- "Separate". "Distinct". "Particular". The country, the provinces, the outstations. The opposite of Sadr.
- Mufti (A.):- A Mohammedan law-officer whose duty was to expound the law which the Kazi was to execute. The latter in British India usually discharges the duties of the Mufti also.
- Muharrir (U. & P.) :- A clerk, a scribe, a writer.
- Munshi (U. & A.):- A writer, a secretary. Applied by Europeans usually to teachers of Vernacular languages.
- Munsif (U. & A.), Moonsiff:- An Indian civil judge. Village Munsif. District Munsif. Principal Sadr Amin. The Village Munsif in Guntur was Headman of the village and was known as the "Munsif".
- Muttha, Mutah, Mootah (Tel.):- The sub-division of a district; in the Northern Sirkars a large estate including several villages and corresponding with a zamindari in Hindustan. An inconsiderable Zamindari. A division of a large zamindari.
- Mutthadar, Mutahdar:- Headman of a village or group of villages; a small-scale zamindar.

✓ Naib (A.):- A deputy, a representative, a lieutenant, a viceroy.
Examples: Naib-Sheristadar, Naib-Amin, Sub-(Naib) Collector.

Naidu, Nayudu (Tel.):- The title or surname used by a Kamma, a highcaste Sudra. Traditionally warriors and cultivators.

Nanja (Tel.):- Wet ground or soil, especially for rice cultivation. The opposite of Punja or dry.

Navis, Navisinda, Nis (U. & P.):- A Writer, a clerk, a secretary, a transcriber. Khush-navis: a good writer, a professional. Jawab-navis: a writer or answers to petitions. Wasil-bahinavis: a writer of accounts, receipts.

Nayaka (S.), Naik:- A leader, a chief in general. The head of a small body of soldiers. A corporal in the Anglo-Indian army.

Nayak-vardu (Te. & Mar.):- Village police officer. Petty officer in police station of 10-15 men.

✓ Nazir (A.):- An inspector, a supervisor. An officer of the court charged with serving summons or taking depositions or making enquiries.

Nazr, Nazar, Najar (U.), Najaru, Nazrana, Nazranalu (Tel.), Nuzoor, Nuzzur:- A gift, a present, an offering, especially one from inferior to a superior, a holy man, a prince.

Niyogi (Tel.):- A Telugu secular Brahman similar to the Maratha Desastha. Taken from "Niyoga" (Sanskrit) which means "an appointment, a delegated duty or office," it covers many of the Brahmans in Government Service. He is the opposite of Vaidiki, although Vaidikis now are also entering Government Service. To call a person an "Aruvelu-Niyogi" is to call him sly and cunning.

Pagoda:- Hindu Temple. Also, the gold coin formerly coined at Madras...from its having the device of a temple on its face... but called Hun and Varaha by natives. The star-pagoda of Madras was valued at 45 fanams or roughly three and a half rupees.

Paigasti (Tel.):- A Superintendent or Overseer.

✓ Paisa, Pice (U. & Mar.):- A copper coin valued at four to the anna and sixty-four to the rupee.

Pakhali, Puckally (U.):- A water-carrier.

Pakka (S.):- Ripe, mature, cooked, dressed, correct, exact, complete, perfect, substantial. Opposite of Kachcha.

Palem (Tel.):— A residential area of a town or village for the outcaste communities, usually segregated and often outside of a village.

Paleru (Tel.), Palalu:— A hired cultivator or laborer working with equipment not his own. A serf. An agricultural slave attached hereditarily to the land.

Palki:— A palanquin or palankeen.

Panam, Fanam (S.):— A unit of money. A small silver or gold coin (called fanam by Europeans). The gold coin was one sixteenth of a Hun (Pagoda). The silver coin minted by the Company was equal to 80 Kasu, at 12 fanams 60 kasu to an Arcot rupee, and at 45 fanams to a star-pagoda.

Panchala (S.):— An aggregate of five. In South India it denoted five castes:

(1) goldsmith		(1) carpenter
(2) carpenter		(2) weaver
(3) blacksmith	or	(3) barber
(4) brazier		(4) washerman
(5) worker in stone		(5) shoemaker

Panchaman:— Outcaste...fifth caste. Pareya or Pariah.

Panchayat, Panchayet:— A council. A village council. A caste council. A family council. A council of leaders, traditionally five in number, convened to decide on any question.

Pandal (Tel.):— A temporary, porch-like structure (awning) for sheltering dignitaries on ceremonial occasions. Any shed.

Pandra-Raddu (Tel.):— Samatdar's semi-monthly report on crops.

Paraiyan, commonly Pariah (Tamil):— A man of low caste, an outcaste, a menial. One whose duty is to beat the village drum. Scavenger, messenger.

Parakhai (Tel.):— Inspection, investigation, verification, assay, analysis, trial, by ordeal.

Patta (Tel.):— A deed or lease...given by a receiver of revenue to a tenant...specifying conditions of tenure and the value of proportion of produce to be paid.

Payakari, Paikari (Tel.):— A cultivator of lands in a village where he is not resident. A stranger. A migrant. A non-resident.

- Peon:- Commonly used by Europeans for Hindustani Piada. A footman, a foot-soldier, an inferior officer of police or customs or courts of justice, usually wearing a badge and armed with a lance or sword and shield. A kind of local militia. A running footman, courier, messenger. (Harkara).
- Peshcar, Peshkar, Peishcar (U.):- An agent, a deputy, a servant (Peish: "in front of")...someone who stands before or below someone else.
- Peshkash, Peshkush (U.):- Tax, tribute. lit., "what is first drawn". First fruits. In Madras, revenue exacted from the great Zamindars in the Northern Sarkars and from the Poligars of the South.
- Phansigar (U.):- A strangler, a robber and murderer who strangled his victims by throwing a turban of cloth around their necks when off their guard; the same as a Thag or Thug, Phans, Phansa, Phansi, Phas, Phasi: a snare, noose, halter.
- Pie:- A small copper coin. The smallest part of a rupee rated at 3 pies to a pice, 4 pice to an anna, and 16 annas to a rupee. A pie is the twelfth part of an anna.
- Puja (S.):- Worship. Religious ceremony. Invoking magic. Pujari is a priest of a temple or a person who is engaged in puja.
- Pullari, Poolary (Tel.):- A tax on grazing land.
- Punja (Tel.):- Dry ground or soil, especially for millet crops.
- Punkah:- A fan. A large fan hanging from a suspended beam which is pulled back and forth across a room.
- Purohit (S. & Tel.):- A village, caste, or family priest. An astrologer or soothsayer, who sets auspicious days.
- Putti (Tel.), Pooty, Poottie:- A measure of capacity equal to twenty Tums. The same as a khandi.
- Raj (S.):- A kingdom, a state, a principality, a regime.
- Raju (Tel.):- A high caste of Telugu cultivators claiming to be Kshatriya (the second or military-regal caste).
- Rasm (A.) Rusum, Rusoom:- Customary fees, perquisites, gratuities, commissions.

Rawana (U. & P.): - A passport, pass.

Rayudu, Raidu: - The title or surname of a Velama, or highcaste Sudra.

Reddi (Tel.): - The name of a principal caste of Telugu cultivators having a martial tradition. This high caste community predominates in Palnad, Rayalusima, and Telengana.

Rupiya, Rupee (S.-rupya): - A silver coin. The general currency of India. Remodelled in 1835, the Company's rupee was given a standard weight and fineness with English inscriptions and the head of the British sovereign. The older Arcot rupee was almost the same value as the Company rupee. The rupee was valued at roughly two shillings or about three and a half rupees to a pagoda. It was divided into 16 annas, with 12 pies to the anna.

Ryot, Raiyat (A.), Rayutu (Tel.): - A subject, a cultivator, a peasant. This term is confusing because: (1) it does not distinguish between the highcaste cultivator, the wealthy leader and member of a village elite and the indigent cultivator who may be a bondsman; (2) its similarity to rayadu or rayalu or rayudu (prince, leader, or highcaste) have led to its being confused and identified with village leaders, and with serfs.

Ryotwari: - A revenue system in which, theoretically, an agreement is made between government officers and each individual cultivator actually tilling the soil once a year for a money tax.

Sabnavis, Sabnis (Mar.): - "All Writer." Secretary.

Sadr, Sudr (U.): - Chief, supreme, central. Opposite of mufassal.

Sadrwarid (P), Sadaravarudu (Tel.), Sadarward: - Charges for equipment in a government office, such as ink, paper, oil, repairs and the like.

Samasthanamu (Tel.): - Hereditary (Ancient) Hindu fief.

Samat, Samutu, Samoot (Tel.): - A subdivision of a district. Formerly more the size of a taluk, it is now known as a firka. Under Hindu rule, a samutu was a division of a sima.

Samatdar, Samutdar, Samutudar (Tel.):— A subdivisional officer. An officer having charge of a samutu. This officer is now called a Revenue Inspector.

Sar (P.):— Head, chief, principal. Often a prefix.

Sarkar, Circar (P.), Sarkaru (Tel.):— The State, the Government, Supreme Authority. The Organization, the administration, the management, the department, the province. The "Northern Circars" were a province comprised of district administrations.

Sar-rishta (P.):— "Chief connection, thread, line, or relation." That which binds. A record, register, office, employment, or account. From Rishtadar: kinsman. The root for Sherista, Sheristakhana, Sheristadar, etc.

Sarva (Tel.):— All, entire, whole. Tax on everything.

Satani:— A caste of Vaishnavite Sudras living chiefly on alms and music.

Saukar, Sahukar (U. & Mar.):— Banker, dealer in money, money lender.

Savaramu (Tel.):— Zamindari lands.

* Sawari (U.):— Horsemen.

Sayaru (Tel.), Sair (P.):— The remaining or all other sources of revenue in addition to the land tax. All extra revenues above the land revenue (mahasulu). Under the British, the meaning was also narrowed to apply to internal and frontier transit duties.

^ Seer:— A measure of weight varying in different parts of India. A fortieth of a maund.

Seri (Tel.):— Land cultivated by Ryots paying revenue directly to the State. Small estates privately held by prosperous cultivators.

Sharakhatu (Tel.):— Partnership, coparcenary, joint occupancy.

Shastri (S.):— An authority and an expounder of Hindu law.

^ Sheristadar:— Chief Secretary of a District Collector. The highest ranking Indian official in a district. The ministerial and managerial head of the Huzur Kacheri.

Sheristakhana:- lit., "Chief connecting place". Central Office. Secretariat. Accounts Department.

Shroff (U.):- A money-changer or banker.

Shrotriam (Tel.):- Land or village given to learned Brahman or to an Indian public servant as a reward in recognition of the same.

Sibandi, Sibbandi (Tel.):- Irregular troupes and/or police.

Sima, Seema (Tel.):- The ancient term for district. Guntur District was once the Kondavidu Sima. Thus, in modern times, the Ceded Districts have been known as the Rayalusima or Chieftans' districts.

Sunni:- The more orthodox of the two major divisions of Islam, as opposed to the Shia.

Tahsil (A.):- Collection. Revenue collected from land. Revenue from a group of villages. Connoting a sheaf of village accounts from which revenues are determined.

Tahsildar:- Chief revenue and police officer of a division of a district called a taluk. A subordinate Indian Collector. An officer subordinate to a Talukdar or District Collector (in Hyderabad).

Takavi (U.):- Advance of money from Government for seed or on account of calamity.

Takid (A.):- An order (Madras). Reminder. An injunction. An order from a superior to an inferior officer enjoining strict observance.

Taksim, Tukseem (U. & A.), Takisamu (Tel.):- An extra contribution taken from villagers. An apportioning of an improper subscription among the inhabitants of a village. An extra appropriation.

Talari, Taliari, Tullary (Tel.):- A village watchman.

Taluk:- A subdivision of a district. One of the divisions under the administration of a Talukdar. In the Nizam's dominions, a magistrate or revenue officer over a district (or Sarkar) of Taluks is a Talukdar.

Tank:- A reservoir for water. An artificial (at times natural) lake.

Tappal, Tappalu (Tel.):— Mail, Post. The carriage and delivery of letters. The stage. A halting place (Tappa).

Tappalkhana:— Postoffice.

Taram, Taramu (Tel.):— Sort, kind, class. Especially applied to designate different kinds of village lands...under village accounts.

Taramdarudu, Taramdar:— An assessor, surveyor, classifier of land.

Telaga:— A relatively small but high caste of Telugu Sudras with a tradition of military and police employment. They are also, of course, cultivators.

Thag, Thug:— See Phansigar.

Topu (Tel.), Tope:— A grove of trees.

Tumu (Tel.):— A measure of capacity, varying in value but always one twentieth of a khandi. The same as a maund and equal to 40 seers, 20 pathas, or 16 manchas.

Umedwar (U.):— An unemployed person seeking work.

Uppu (Tel.):— Salt.

Vaidiki:— Religious Brahmans as distinguished from Niyogi or official (secular) Brahmans. During the past 50 years, this caste has given more and more competition to the Niyogis, for places in government service.

Vandra, Wandra (Tel.):— Land granted at an easy rate of assessment to privileged castes or families of a village. Regular and customary remissions and privileges to highcaste communities.

Velama:— A relatively small, highcaste community of Sudra cultivators which has traditionally contributed to government service, particularly under Hindu rule.

Visabadi (Tel.):— A village where revenues are divided amongst the principal sharers, the proportions being fixed by land, so that a distinct portion of gross revenue is fixed on every field or lot of land. A Visabadi Settlement: settlement by field and individual cultivator is the same as Ryotwari settlement.

- Vyapari:- A caste of officers who came to Guntur from Golconda, claiming to be Brahmans. They are still known as Golconda Vyapari though their name would imply a Vaisya origin (Vyapara: business, affairs, profession).
- Wakil, Vakil, Vakeel (A.):- An agent or attorney. A court pleader. A representative. Among Marathas, the hereditary assistant of a Desmukh.
- Wasul (Mar.):- Collections, revenue, rent, etc. Money annually received (realized) by government proprietors, or bankers.
- Wasulbaki (Mar.):- Collection and application. The administration of the revenues.
- Wasuldar:- A collector of revenue.
- Wasulwasul:- Revenue, rent, collection, and management.
- Yadast (U.), Yaddasht, Yadastu (Tel.):- A note; a memorandum; a petition; a certificate.
- Zabitah, Jabita (U. & Tel.):- A list; a roll; an account. A rule; a statute; a law. Established practice or usage.
- Zabty, Zapti, Zafti (U.):- Sequestered, attached; applied to lands taken possession of by the Government Officers, or to rent-free lands which have been subjected to assessment.
- Zamindar (P.):- A land-(zamin) holder (dar). In Guntur, one of five hereditary Hindu revenue officers who became self-styled Rajas just prior to the arrival of the British and who were made into landed Proprietors over their huge estates in 1802.
- Zillah, Jillah, Zila (A. & Tel.):- A division or district. A Collectorate. The territorial extension of a tract. A territorial jurisdiction and limitation. A part of a whole. A province.

APPENDIX II. LIST OF ZILLAH COLLECTORS AND JUDGES⁺

A. COLLECTORS

Nathaniel Webb		1791
George Andrew Ram	March 24	1794
William Gordon	January 25,	1800
Peter Cherry	July 9,	1800
Arthur G. Blake (in charge)	August 21,	1800
Andrew Scott	September 10,	1800
William Mainwaring (resigned)	August 9,	1802
Mark Gilbert Hudson (in charge)	June 17,	1803
Daniel Crawford	October 16,	1803
Mark Hudson (in charge)	June 28,	1805
Gordon Smith (died)	July 18,	1805
Mark Hudson (in charge)	June 19,	1807
Thomas Jarrett	August 22,	1807
Francis W. Robertson	December 11,	1809
Thomas Jarrett	April 11,	1810
Francis Robertson	December 18,	1810
Thomas Alexander Oakes	October 24,	1811

⁺ Gordon Mackenzie, A Manual of Kistna District (Madras, 1883), p. 350.

George W. Saunders (in charge)	May 16,	1814
Thomas Oakes	July 16,	1814
St. John Thackeray (in charge)	July 16,	1816
Thomas Oakes	November 10,	1816
Joseph Clulow (in charge)	September 20,	1821
John Clinton Whish	October 24,	1821
Joseph Clulow (in charge)	June 23,	1825
John Whish	August 27,	1825
William Elphinstone Underwood (in charge)	January 13,	1827
John Whish	January 22,	1827
John Orr (in charge)	April 27,	1827
John Whish	October 1,	1828
Alexander F. Bruce	July 21,	1831
William Mason	January 3,	1832
Charles Philip Brown	December 21,	1832
Charles Dumergue (in charge)	March 25,	1833
John Blackburn	April 9,	1833
Archibald S. Mathison (in charge)	December 25,	1833
William Lavie	March 13,	1834
Malcolm Lewin	June 12,	1834
A.S.Mathison (in charge)	May 19,	1835.
William A. Neave	September 26,	1835
Patrick Grant	November 1,	1835
Archibald Mathison (in charge)	January 11,	1836
Alexander Bruce	April 30,	1836

James H. Bell (in charge)	October 10,	1836
George A. Harris (in charge)	October 14,	1836
Edward Binney Glass	November 11,	1836
George Harris (in charge)	July 3,	1837
John Goldingham	July 29,	1837
Arthur Hathaway (in charge)	February 15,	1842
Archibald Mathison	March 3,	1842
Hudleston Stokes	April 22,	1842
Arthur Hathaway (in charge)	November 24,	1842
Hudleston Stokes	December 24,	1842
Henry Newill (in charge)	August 19,	1844
Walter Elliott Lockhart	September 16,	1844
Daniel White	February 17,	1845
Henry Newill (in charge)	October 11,	1845
Hudleston Stokes	February 9,	1846
Alexander G. Tweedie (in charge)	November 21,	1849
Henry Newill (in charge)	November 23,	1849
Hudleston Stokes	January 17,	1850
Henry Newill (in charge)	August 13,	1850
Hudleston Stokes	December 12,	1850
Arthur Purvis (in charge)	March 13,	1851
Hudleston Stokes	November 11,	1852
Arthur Purvis	January 1,	1853
Henry Wood	September 23,	1854
James R. Gordon (in charge)	August 13,	1855

Henry Newill	December 10,	1855
Robert R. Cotton	August 3,	1857
Henry Wood	November 23,	1857
Charles G. Master (in charge)	November 2,	1858
Henry Wood	December 2,	1858
Charles Master (in charge)	May 7,	1859
James W.B.Dykes	June 15,	1859
Charles Master (in charge)	October 24,	1859

B. JUDGES

Thomas Townsend	1802
John Byng	1806
George Travers	1815
Arthur Gregory	1816
Charles Woodcock	1818
(No Judge)	1820
Francis Robson	1828
(No Judge)	1831
Anthony Angelo (Assistant)	1832
Thomas Pendergast (Assistant)	1833
George Bird (Assistant)	1834
William Lavie (Assistant)	1834
Anthony Angelo (Assistant)	1835
Charles Oakes (Assistant)	1836
Henry Phillips (Assistant)	1836

Archibald Mathison (Assistant)	1836
Edward Glass (Assistant)	1837
Edward Newberry (Assistant)	1837
William Jellicoe (Assistant)	1839
George Beauchamp	1840
Edmund Story	1840
Henry Wood	1842
John Horsley	1843
Patrick Irvine	1849
James Hamilton Bell	1850
John Rohde	1851
Patrick Irvine	1854
Rowle, Chatfield	1856
Thomas Onslow	1857

CRAWFORD'S LIST: GRAMA KHARCHU ITEMS TO BE CONTINUED OR
DISCONTINUED

A. Items to be continued:

1. Pay to Tahsildars or Peons employed in collecting kists from ryots who must be forced to render what is due.
2. Batta of Kapus and Karnams absent from village for Jamabandi, to the mutual advantage of the whole village.
3. Pay to Pygasti Peons who oversee Mahasuldars (paid by Circar) in seeing that crops and grain are kept safe.
4. Zatra celebrations, including sacrifices to village goddesses, rewards to jugglers...a religious institution in which whole village partakes.
5. Charitable gifts to travelers, distressed and needy.
6. Russums or commissions to Village Shroff for trouble of changing money.
7. Batta to tappal runners, treasure carriers, and bearers.

B. Items to be Discontinued:

1. Supplies for powerful Indian and European travelers - "scandalous abuse".
2. Principle and interest on money loans for kists. Village leaders should not use village funds for this purpose.
3. Batta to village peons sent to summon Ryots to attend Amins or Circar business. Amins have their own peons employed for all government work.
4. Batta to Mohtadus for taking messages, letters and parcels to other villages. Poor ryots should not have to pay for the errands of the rich. Each person should pay for the service he himself requires.
5. Nazaranas and fees to district servants and others.
6. Expenses incurred when troops camp near village. Army officers should see to it that all supplies are paid for on the spot.

7. Returns for bad coin rejected out of the village revenue. The Shroff is paid to see that coin is good. He should not have the opportunity to pass bad coin on the pretence of its being part of the kists, nor should he be reimbursed when such coin are rejected by the Huzur Shroff.
8. Anchanadars, paid entirely or at least in part by the Circar. Their work is for joint benefit of village and government. But no payments should be made until random measurements of grain heaps determine the fidelity of their work.

Donald Crawford / 17 July 1805

QAKES' FIND: ACCOUNTS FOR THREE VILLAGES OF CHILKALURPAD: 1816-1817I. Accounts of Pedda Cherukuru:-

pagodas, fanams, and kasu

A. Beriz	(Demand)	6,283-28-43
B. Dastu	(Collections)	2,543- 8-78
C. Kistu	(Payments to Zamindar)	1,991-22-40
D. Grama Kharchu	(Village Expenses)	<u>370- 6-12</u>

1. Batta for bad coin 16-11-65

2. Gumashta Wages:

(1) Gopal Rao - 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ months	65-00-00
(2) Mulupu Jenkanah - 3 months, 8 days	24-18-00
(3) Peons who collected from Ryots	119-26-57
(4) Mohataadus ("Mahataudies")	15-28-21
(5) Mahasuldars to care for produce	42-30-50
(6) Daily batta to Tahsildar	1-34-59
(7) Anchanadars to appraise crop	1-17- 1
(8) Zafidars to take delivery of crop	10-10
(9) Supplies to Company troupes (<u>sibandi</u>)	7-27-00
(10) Batta to peon bringing dastak from Chilikalurpet	1-10

3. Sadaravarudu Charges:

(1) Paper, pens, sealing wax, thread to tie up cadjan circar accounts	2-26-80
(2) Making ink	4-74
(3) Lamp oil for village chawadi	1-15-37
(4) Repair of kacheri (chawadi)	16-36
(5) Gunny bags for holding dubu	9-00
(6) Loss of dubu	45
(7) Lampoil for Sahabang Mamul	10-77
(8) Cloths for tying up daftarams	1-55
(9) Vettyman attending Mahasuldars	34
(10) Batta for tom-tom beaters	79
(11) Russum to Tadikonda Puttiah, Shroff	4-00-00
(12) Dak batta for sending money and letters to the Huzur	2-22-74
(13) Batta for sending Karnams to the Huzur during Jamabandi	54-00-78
(14) Ceremony for Village Goddess	1-24-60
(15) Charity to "Byragies and Sumasulu"	2-19-55
(16) Charity for god	1- 4- 6
(17) Charity for Calendar Brahmans	10-32
(18) Annual Mamul for Carpenters	1-00-00
(19) Annual Vuttum to C.Chetty Buchiah	1-00-00
(20) Cutting crops for poor ryots	<u>26-35</u>

E. Balances of Dastu Remaining

101-16-58

II. Accounts of Prattipadu: 1816-17

A. Beriz	(Demand)	9,239- 7-36
B. Dastu	(Collection)	7,254- 2-40
C. Kistu	(Payments) to Circar	6,763-27-56
D. Grama Kharchu	(Village Expenses)	438-16-11

1. Batta

(1) Inferior coin	95-28-10
(2) Performing of God's feast	14- 6-15
(3) Rice to Venkana Purushotum who examined Village Accounts	6-25-27
(4) Bearers for Puttri Chumiah	12- 6
(5) Rice to Karnams attending Huzur and Chilkalurpet for Jamabandi	12-29-23

2. Gumashta Wages

(1) Sabnavis Appiah, $9\frac{1}{2}$ mo. 3/mo., part	26- 9-00
(2) Nilakanta Subiah, $9\frac{1}{2}$ mo. at 3; part.	13-21-52
(3) Badi Gopal Kistna Rao, 2 mo. 2 at 3.	6- 7-25
(4) Chillara Appiah - Kailudaru	1-40-10
(5) Khan Mohamed, Subadar, & 9 peons $9\frac{1}{2}$ mo. at $10\frac{1}{2}$ /mo., in part.	74-30-28
(6) Mohamed Khan & 6 peons, in part	20-35- 4
(7) Mohtadus, in part for $9\frac{1}{2}$ months	15-20-79

3. Russums -

(1) Mamul to Huzur Shroff	5-00-00
(2) Mamul to Village Shroff	4- 1-32
(3) Mamul to Panchala castes and to Calendar Brahmans.	3-00-22
(4) Mamul to Vetty People	8-35
(5) Mamul Russums to Karnams	25-00-00
(6) Gift to Shaik Badda, Tahsildar ?	

4. Sadaravarudu -

(1) Miscellaneous	2- 3-50
(2) Gumashta to wrote Regulation	11-20
(3) Peon of Minor Zamindar	3-19
(4) Maramat (repair village tank)	14-29-31
(5) Sending kistu and letters	20-76
(6) Charity for traveling Brahmans	26-41
(7) Anchanadars under Bolla Venkatadry	5- 5-50
(8) Mahasuldars	39-35-58
(9) Ceremony of Village Goddess	5-00-25

5. Losses to Company Sepoys

(1) Batta for Coolies	12-14-50
(2) Articles not paid for	20-10-32
(3) Batta for peons sent for cattle	11-6-53

E. Total Disbursements (Kistu and Kharchu)

7,202- 7-67

F. Balance Remaining

51-30-58

III. Accounts of Gudawada: 1816-17

A. Beriz	(Demand)	469-19-55
B. Dastu	(Actual Collections)	379-10- 9
C. Kistu	(Payments to Zamindar)	63-24-15
D. Kharchu	(Village Expenses)	314-16-79
1. Boundary Dispute		
(1) Nazr to Cotty Kistniah, brother of the Zillah Court Nazer	18-00	
(2) Nazr to Amin sent by Court to move boundary stones.	13- 4-40	
(3) Nazaramulu to Amin's peons	3-00-00	
(4) Nazr to peons bringing Court summons	19-12-75	
(5) Mamul nazrs to Village Panchayat	34-33-26	
(6) Batta for navis; stamp paper	1-31-40	
(7) Batta for Ryots going to Guntur	103-22-18	
(8) Fine levied by Zillah Court	21-00-00	
2. Sadaravarudu Batta and Russums		
(1) Pindari plunder (Tribute)	42- 4-40	
(2) Batta for Ijaradar, Manur Ramaswamy	6- 6-43	
(3) Ceremonies of gods.	1-26-74	
(4) Bringing of Kistulu to Huzur	1- 7-70	
(5) Ceremony of village goddess	17-44	
(6) Batta to peons under Daroga collecting supplies for sepoy	1-17-35	
(7) Articles lost to sepoy	6-60	
(8) Mahasuldars	5-34-59	
(9) Tappal carriers (letter)	1-21-10	
(10) Bad coin	1-11-65	
(11) Tahsildars of Manur Conda Rao	11- 6-19	
(12) Mohtadus	5- 3-75	
E. Total Disbursements		378- 5-14
F. Balance Remaining		5- 5

copy / signed / Thomas Oakes
September 3, 1818

APPENDIX IV; BREAKDOWN OF DISTRICT ESTABLISHMENT OF GUNTUR: 1837-1848.I. THE HUZUR KACHERIA. THE SECRETARIAT (SHERISTAKHANA)

Monthly Scale:

1. Sherista Department (Native Accounts)

(1) Huzur Sheristadar	Rs. 210 - 700
(2) Naib Sheristadar	120 - 175
(3) Assistant Sheristadar	100 - 120
(4) Head Gumashta	70 - 100
(5) Maddatgars: six to eight	20 - 40
(6) Munchis: six to eight	12 - 15

2. Munshi Department (Native Correspondence)

(1) Head Jawabnavis or Munshi	70 - 85
(2) Assistant Jawabnavis: one or two	21 - 30
(3) Maddatgars: three or four	10 - 14
(4) Assistant Maddatgars: one or two	5 - 7
(5) Volunteers: no set amount	unpaid

3. English Department (Accounts and Correspondence)

(1) Head English Accountant	100
(2) Head English Writer	70
(3) English Translator	70
(4) Deputy Accountant	60
(5) Deputy Writer	40
(6) Writers: five to seven	17 - 30
(7) Volunteers: no set amount	unpaid

4. Treasury Department

(1) Cash Keeper	Rs. 80 - 100
(2) Assistant Cash Keeper	28
(3) Head Shroff	40
(4) Assistant Shroff	14
(5) Gumashtas: two to three	10 - 20

5. Record Office (Daftarkhana)

(1) English Record Keeper (Daftardar)	35
(2) Native Record Keeper (Daftardar)	30
(3) Gumashtas: two	15 - 20
(4) Daftarbands: two	7 - 10
(5) Volunteer Assistants: two	unpaid.

Appendix IV (continued - ii)

6. Sadarward Department (Material and Maintenance)

(1) Jamadars: about three	10 - 20
(2) Peons: five or six	15
(3) Dhalaits (armed attendants): a dozen or more	6 - 15
(4) Munchis (book-binders, pen and paper providers doing odd jobs requiring manual skills): three	7 - 17
(5) Water Pandal Brahmans: two or three	9
(6) Inkmakers: two	7
(7) Mashalgars (light-keepers): about four	3
(8) Sweepers: four to five men, women, and boys	2

B. REVENUE BRANCH

1. Land Revenue Department

(1) Peshkar	35
(2) English Writer	30
(3) Jawabnavis: two	25 - 30
(4) Maddatgars: eight	15 - 30
(5) Assistant Munchis: two	7
(6) Volunteers	unpaid

2. Salt Department

(1) Peshkar	35
(2) English Writer	30
(3) Jawabnavis: two	25 - 30
(4) Maddatgars: two	20 - 30

3. Sayar (Inland Customs) Department

(1) Peshkar	35
(2) Maddatgars: two	12 - 20
(3) Jawabnavis: two	10 - 15

4. Motarpha (House and Professions Tax) Department

(1) Maddatgars: two	12 - 20
(2) Jawabnavis:	10

5. Abkari (Liquor and Drug Excise) Department

(1) Maddatgars: two	12 - 20
(2) Jawabnavis: one or none	7 - 10

Appendix IV (continued - iii)

6. Sea Customs Department

(1) Maddatgar	12 - 14
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7. Stamp (Paper) Department

(1) Maddatgar	12 - 14
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8. Sundry Small Farms (Misc.) Department

(1) Maddatgar	12
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C. MAGISTRATE BRANCH

1. Secretariat Section

(1) Manager	Rs. 70
(2) English Writer	35
(3) Jawabnavis (Munchis): six or more	14 - 35
(4) Pakhali: (Water-carrier)	12
(5) Inkmaker:	5
(6) Mashalchi (Light Keeper):	4

2. Enforcement (Sibandi) Section

(1) Sardar	20
(2) Hawaldars: two	10
(3) Naiks: two	7
(4) Peons: 30 to 40	5

3. Guard Section

(1) Daffadar	10
(2) Dhalaits: 12 to 15	6 - 7
(3) Peons: 20 to 30	5

4. Jail Section

(1) Jailer	14
(2) Lance Naik	7
(3) Peons: 23 to 34	5

5. Oath Administering Section and Legal Section

(1) Brahman Sastry	10
(2) Mulla Koran	10
(3) Jangam	7

Appendix IV (continued - iv)

D. GENERAL BRANCH

This branch was still largely nebulous. As far as we know, only three departments were definitely organized, the rest being subject assigned to various Kacheri personnel.

1. Maramat (Public Works) Department: Superintendents
2. District Post (Dak & Tappal) Department: Post Master
3. Health Department: Dressers, Vaccinators, Helpers.

2) Maddatgar
3) Jamadar
4) Hawaldar

II. THE GHAIBATU ORGA

A. TALUK KASBAS

Monthly
Scale

Fourteen regular stations combined revenue, police and general functions; two were police stations only; and two were salt stations.

1. Tahsildar	(2) Naib Amin	{ Three three offices	
	(3) Sheristadar	{ could be rolled into	
(1)	(4) Peshkar	{ one.	200)
(2)	(5) Head Maddatgar		Rs. 60 - 100
(3)	(6) Maddatgars: two to three		30 - 50
(4)	(7) Jawabnavis: two to three		14 - 35
(5)	(8) Mashalgar (Mashalchi)		20 - 30
(6)	(9) Sweepers		12 - 17
(7)	Jawabnavis: two to three		10 - 12
(8)	Mashalgar (Mashalchi)		7 - 10
(9)	Sweepers		3
			2

2. Thanadari Branch

(1)	Police Amin	40 - 100
(2)	Maddatgar	10 - 12
(3)	Jamadar	15 - 20
(4)	Hawaldar	10
(5)	Naik	7
(6)	Peons: 30 or so	5
(7)	Guard Daffadar	7
(8)	Guard Peons: 30 or so	4

3. Salt Branch

(1)	Salt Thanadar	40 - 60
(2)	Peshkar	20 - 30
(3)	Gumashta	15 - 20

Appendix IV (continued - v)

(4) Maddatgar	12 - 14
(5) Navisindas (Jawabnavis or Munchis): two	10 - 12
(6) Shroffs: two or more	10 - 14
(7) Measurers: two or more	5 - 7
(8) Daffadars: two or three	7 - 15
(9) Peons: 30 or so	5
(10) Mashalchi:	3
(11) Kharimarrakkals ("carrymercals"): three	14 annas - 2.5
(12) Salt Cutters: three or more	2.5
(13) Sweepers: two	2

B. SAMUTU CHAWADIS AND SAYAR CHAUKIS

1. The Establishment of a Samutu Chawadi: (105)

(1) Samatdar	10 - 14
(2) Gumashta	7
(3) Paigasti (Overseer)	5
(4) Munshi	5
(5) Peons: two or three	4

2. The Establishment of a Sayar Chauki: (46 land and 2 sea)

(1) Gumashta	8
(2) Peons: four to six at	4

III. THE JUDICIAL ESTABLISHMENTA. THE ZILLAH COURT

1. Civil Branch

(1) Sheristadar	100
(2) Nazir (Inspector)	45
(3) Civil Record Keeper	35
(4) Head Gumashta	24
(5) Gumashtas: five or so	10 - 21
(6) Head Writer (English)	70
(7) Writers: two or three	21 - 35
(8) Shroff	10
(9) Munchi	7
(10) Head Messenger	10
(11) Messengers	5 - 7
(12) Masalchi (Light Keeper)	3
(13) Sweepers: two	2

Appendix IV (continued - vi)

2. Criminal Branch (There is over-lap between branches.)

(1) Criminal Record Keeper (also Interpreter)	30
(2) Jawabnavis	28
(3) Gumashta	18
(4) Translator	50

B. THE SUBORDINATE (AUXILIARY) COURTS

1. Principal Sadr Amin (C.Venkata Ragavarcharlu)	500
2. Kazi or Mufti Amin (Haji Maulavi Muhammad Yakub Ali Sahib).	200

C. THE DISTRICT MUNSIF'S COURTS

1. First Class Munsifs	140
2. Second Class Munsifs	115
3. Third Class Munsifs	100

APPENDIX V. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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A. OFFICIAL SERIES OF RECORDS

1. Guntur District Records. This series is in the Madras Record Office (abbr.: MRO). It must be broken into two sections for descriptive purposes:
 - (1) The section from 1795 to 1835 is catalogued and well preserved.
 - (2) The section from 1836 to 1859 is deteriorating rapidly. The series is a parallel one, one set containing letters to the Board of Revenue and the other, communications to the Collector. Where no entry number in a volume is shown, the serial number of the volume is shown first in a citation, e.g.: GDR (volume: pages).
2. Madras Revenue Proceedings and Consultations, abbr.: MRP
There are three separate sets which may be described as follows:
 - (1) The set in the India Office Library (abbr.: IOL) is, in reality, a set of the consultations of Government and contains only such Board proceedings, Collector's letters and reports, and extracts of other material as came to the Government's notice. The citation form is: MRP (range: volume: pages), Number and date.
 - (2) The set in the Madras Record Office is the Board's set and contains both Government consultations and Collector's letters. Citation form: MRP (MRO: volume and/or pages). Indexed.
 - (3) There is a set for the 18th and 19th centuries in the Krishna District Record Office (abbr.: KDRO) which is not used in this study; however, this is useful for a study of Guntur after 1859.
3. Madras Despatches. This series contain all original drafts of despatches sent to Madras from London in the India Office Library. Citation abbr.: MD (volume: page).
4. Madras Revenue Despatches. Copies of final drafts (in IOL). Citation abbr.: MRD (volume: pages).
5. Madras Revenue Letters. A series containing letters from Madras (in IOL). Citation abbr.: MRL (volume: pages).

6. Letters from Court of Directors to Board of Control. Series is kept in IOL. Citation abbr.: COD to BOC (volume: pages).
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B. PRIVATE COLLECTIONS OF PAPERS

1. The Broughton Collection. This collection is contained in the Home Miscellaneous Series of India Office Records (abbr.: HMS). Citation abbr.: Broughton Collection (IOL: HMS volume: pages). Volumes 833 to 843 relate to the period, 1835-1841, and volumes 844 to 863 cover the period 1846-1851.
2. The Elliot Collection. Citation abbr.: Elliot Mss. (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.46, F.47, F.48, and D.330). There are three volumes of local history and a volume about left and right-hand castes which are of particular interest for this study. The papers of Walter Elliot are in some respects connected to the larger collection of Colonel Colin Mackenzie; indeed, the local histories must have been collected by Mackenzie.
3. The Elphinstone Collection. Citation abbr.: EC (IOL: Eur. Mss. F.87), volume (Box), pages. This collection contains private correspondence and official writings of the Governor. The Minute Books are indexed by department, as also are the private letter books; but most private letters are still in their envelopes. Some books are in a delicate state.
4. The Goodwood Archives. This collection of the Duke of Richmond and Gordon is housed in the County Record Office, Chichester. A number of important letters from Tweeddale are in it. The letters are in packets.
5. The Tweeddale Collection. Citation abbr.: TC (IOL: Eur.Mss. F.96), volume, pages. This collection is in good condition, bound, and indexed. It consists of Governor's Minute Books and Private Letter Books.

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- (1) The Fort Saint George Gazette. This daily official publication recorded all official news such as rules, regulations, appointments, scheduled ship sailings, and so on.
- (2) The Guntur District Gazette. This performed the same service within the district. This does not seem to have come into operation until later in the century.

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IV. MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

A District Bungalow. A water-color sketch by John Gantz, signed and dated 1811, this illustration is without a name; however, there is little doubt but that it is the bungalow of a European officer in the mufassal (IOL: Western Drawing, No. 477).

East View of Bellamconda. A water-color of an original sketch by Colin Mackenzie which, although made in 1788, was finished by one of his draftsmen at Calcutta in 1816 (IOL: Western Drawing, No. 663).

Guntur District Map. (Made for the use of touring Officers, this revised print was made under the direction of Sri. R. Krishna Iyer, Assistant Director of Survey and Records in-charge of the Central Survey Office, Madras, in 1957.

Map of the Guntoor Circar including that of Nizampatam. This copy was reduced at the Surveyor General's Office, Calcutta, in October, 1827, from the original sections of the survey executed in 1817-19. It is signed by the Surveyor General of India, J.A.Hodgson (IOL).

Map of the Guntur Collectorate. Surveyed partly by officers of the Military Institution and afterwards by a party of Assistant Surveyors under the Superintendence of Lieutenant F. Mountford in the years 1815, 16, 17, 18 and 19, this map was made in the Surveyor General's Office, Madras, and is dated 22nd December, 1827, It is signed by D. Montgomerie. (IOL).

Register of a Pension Application. This document was signed and submitted to the Board of Revenue by John Goldingham on July 19, 1838; and is found in the Guntur District Records (No. 2 in vol. 5394: p.10).

signed in the presence of
the Police 1874

To find the situation of any place, the *Geographical Nomenclature* is referred to this same manuscript, and by means of the notation of the

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*Register of the Villages in the
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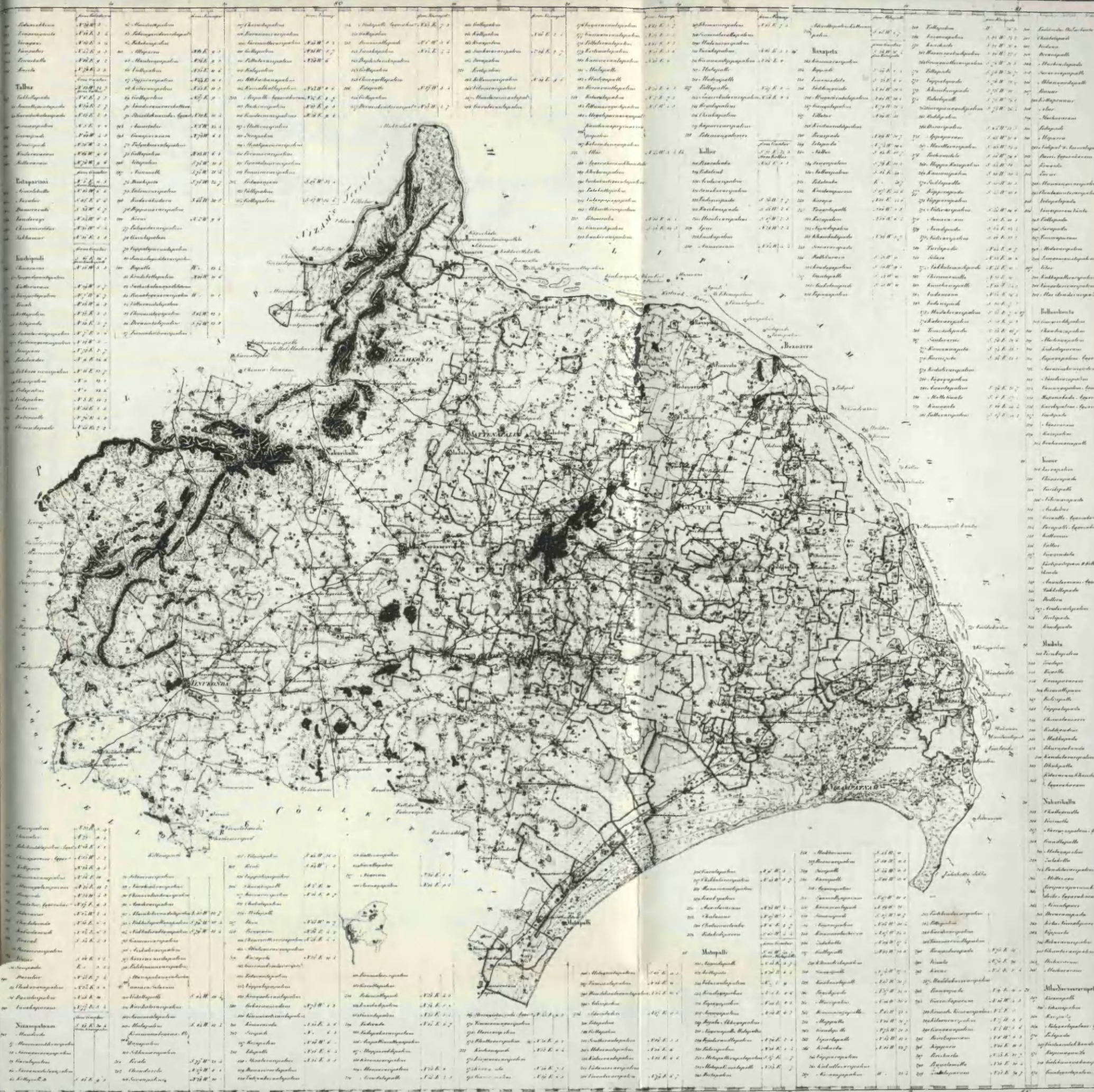
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191. Bandoeng	192. Bandoeng	193. Bandoeng	194. Bandoeng	195. Bandoeng	196. Bandoeng	197. Bandoeng	198. Bandoeng	199. Bandoeng	200. Bandoeng

APPENDIX VI. MAP No. 3:

"GUNTUR DISTRICT MAP" (Madras: 1957)

N A L G O N D A

GUNTUR DISTRICT MAP

(WITHOUT HILLS)
FOR THE USE OF
TOURING OFFICERS

Scale 1 Inch = 4 Miles 353440

Area 5771.47 Sqr. Miles

K R I S H N A

K U R N O O L

N E L L O R E

B A Y O F B E N G A L

REFERENCE

ONGOLE

Tank name
Collector's head quarters (underlined thin)
Divisional officer's head quarters
Talukdar's head quarters
By Talukdar's head quarters
Villages above 5000 inhabitants & 10 wards
Other Important Villages
Municipality, Registration office
Post office, Police station, Police sub post
Hospital, Dispensary, Encamping ground
Urban areas under the jurisdiction of Panchayat (Basti)
Talukdar's office or other than By station
Local land choultry, Private choultry
Inspection choultry
Traveler's bungalow or L. F. rest house
P. W. D. inspection bungalow or rest house
Forest bungalow or rest house
State boundary
District boundary
Taluk boundary
Sanctified area
Town area

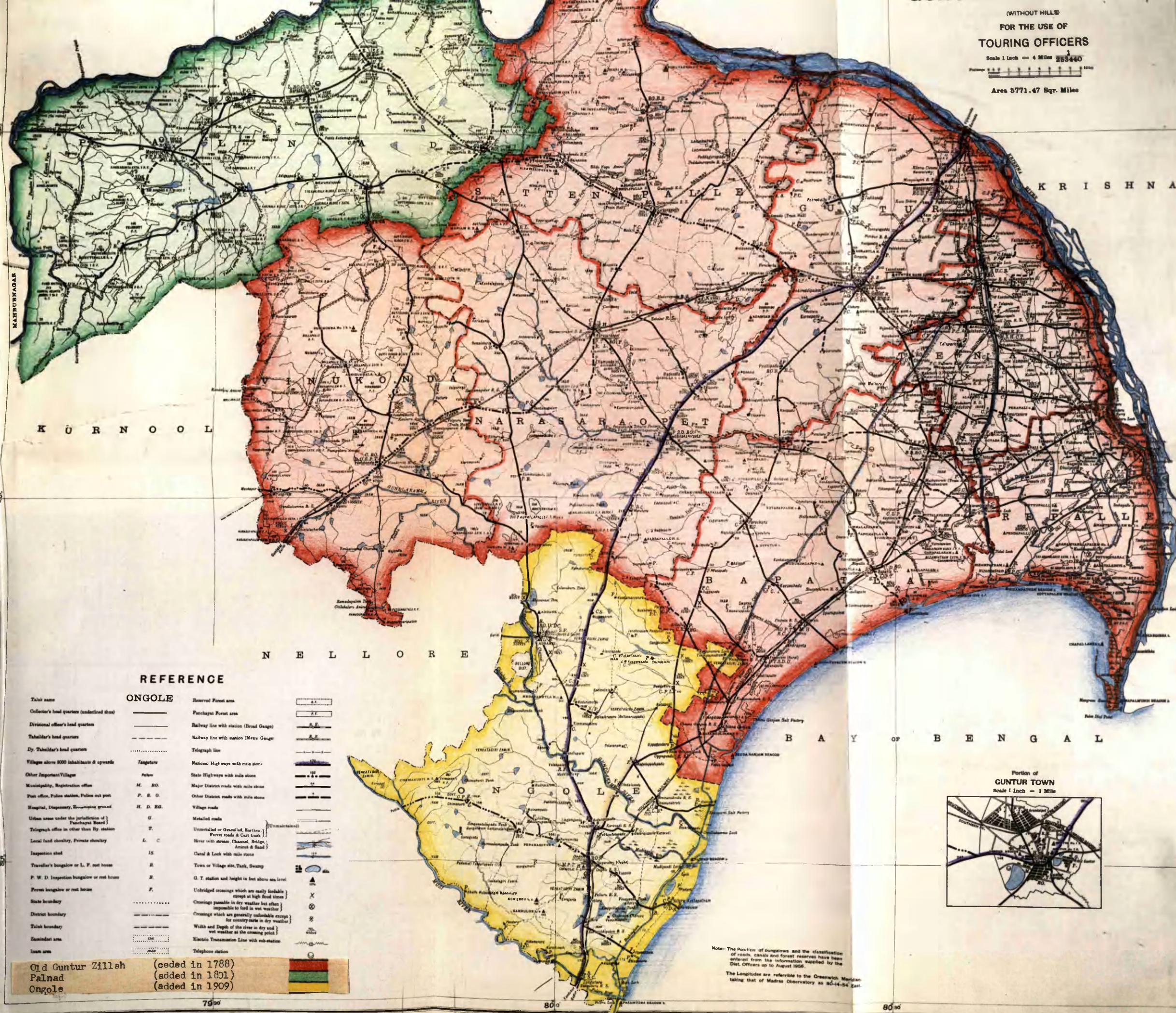
Reserved Forest area
Panchayat Forest area
Railway line with station (Broad Gauge)
Railway line with station (Meter Gauge)
Telegraph line
National Highways with mile stone
State Highways with mile stone
Major District roads with mile stone
Other District roads with mile stone
Village roads
Metalled roads
Unmetalled or Gravelled, Earthen
Forest roads & Cart track
River with stream, Channel, Bridge, Anicut & Sand
Canal & Lock with mile stone
Tews or Village site, Tank, Swamp
G. T. station and height in feet above sea level
Unbridged crossings which are easily fordable except at high flood times
Crossings passable in dry weather but often impossible to ford in wet weather
Crossings which are generally unfordable except for country carts in dry weather
Width and Depth of the river in dry and wet weather at the crossing point
Electric Transmission Line with sub-station
Telephone station

1/2
1/4
1/8
1/16
1/32
1/64
1/128
1/256
1/512
1/1024
1/2048
1/4096
1/8192
1/16384
1/32768
1/65536
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(WITHOUT HILLS)
FOR THE USE OF
TOURING OFFICERS

Scale 1 inch = 4 Miles 353440

Area 5771.47 Sqr. Miles

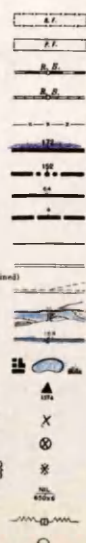


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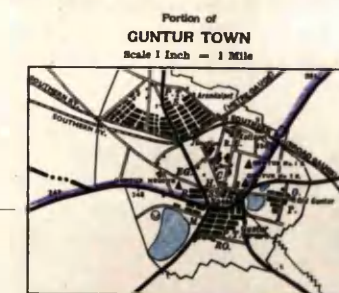
ONGOLE

- Taluk name
- Collector's head quarters (underlined those)
- Divisional officer's head quarters
- Talukdar's head quarters
- Dy. Talukdar's head quarters
- Village above 5000 inhabitants & upwards
- Other Important Villages
- Municipality, Registration office
- Post office, Police station, Police out post
- Hospital, Dispensary, Encamping ground
- Urban areas under the jurisdiction of Panchayat Board
- Telegraph office in other than Ry. station
- Local head choultry, Private choultry
- Inspection shed
- Traveller's bungalow or L. P. rest house
- P. W. D. Inspection bungalow or rest house
- Forest bungalow or rest house
- State boundary
- District boundary
- Taluk boundary
- Sanitary area
- Isam area

- Reserved Forest area
- Panchayat Forest area
- Railway line with station (Broad Gauge)
- Railway line with station (Metre Gauge)
- Telegraph line
- National Highways with mile stone
- State Highways with mile stone
- Major District roads with mile stone
- Other District roads with mile stone
- Village roads
- Metalled roads
- Unmetalled or Gravelled, Earthen
- Forest roads & Cart track
- River with stream, Channel, Bridge, Anicut & Sand
- Canal & Lock with mile stone
- Town or Village site, Tank, Swamp
- G. T. station and height in feet above sea level
- Unbridged crossings which are easily fordable except at high flood times
- Crossings passable in dry weather but often impossible to ford in wet weather
- Crossings which are generally unfordable except for country carts in dry weather
- Width and Depth of the river in dry and wet weather at the crossing point
- Electric Transmission Line with sub-station
- Telephone station



Old Guntur Zillah (ceded in 1788)
Palnad (added in 1801)
Ongole (added in 1909)



Note: The Position of bungalows and the classification of roads, canals and forest reserves have been entered from the information supplied by the Dist. Officers up to August 1958.
The Longitudes are referable to the Greenwich Meridian taking that of Madras Observatory as 80°44'54" East.