Structure and Administration
CHAPTER V

STRUCTURE AND ADMINISTRATION

This chapter examines the structure of the revenue system and administration of the land revenue.

In Madras, the different types of land tenures are to a great extent the by-products of the attempts of the British administration to fix the responsibility for payment of land revenue.

"The ownership of land and the nature of the rights and obligations as between the members of the rural community arising as a consequence of the utilization of land are, in all countries, the product of a long evolution determined by the geographical, economic, social and political conditions and the circumstance of the community in question." ¹

The land tenure systems prevalent in Madras are,

1. The Zamindari Tenure
2. The Ryotwari Tenure
3. The Inams
4. The Malabar Land Tenures and
5. The Muli Tenure of South Kanara and Under Tenures.

The two main types are the ryotwari and the zamindari tenures.

The Zamindari system

In the Revenue Administration of the old Hindu Raja, the employment of an intermediary class of proprietors between the sovereign and the subject for revenue collection was unknown. The revenue collection then was directly undertaken by the Government through its village servants, either by taking a share of the produce or by levying a money rent, without the intervention of farmers or zamindars. Intermediaries were introduced by the Muslim rulers when they invaded India in the eleventh century.²

They occupied the country as a military colony and did not make any attempt to dismiss the old officers who served under the Hindu Kings and replaced them by their own staff. The old Hindu system of Revenue Administration involved close and constant supervision and considerable local knowledge which was inconvenient to the Muslim rulers. So they instituted a system of intermediaries who were merely Revenue farmers.

During the Hindu period there were officers known as Deshmukhs, Deshpandyas or Collectors. The Muslim rulers found them to be the most suitable persons for the purpose of enforcing revenue demands considering the power and influence they wielded in the country.³

² Ibid, p. 108.
³ Ibid, p. 115.
Therefore these public servants acquired for themselves 'a fixity of office and independence' as Revenue farmers. This paved the way for them to become zamindars and landed proprietors when the British came in. This in essence was the origin of the zamindars.⁴

The word “zamindar” means a landholder but in the early stages, the zamindar was only a collector of revenue and he had no title to the lands under his control. His functions were mainly supervision and partial maintenance of order.

He gave advances to ryots for cultivation purposes and collected the land revenue due to the Government. For the trouble of collection the zamindar was allowed a “Mallikhana” which amounted to 10 per cent of the collections made by him.⁵

Some lands were also allotted to the zamindar, revenue free, and he was allowed to enjoy some other village collections as well. Though this was the arrangement in the early days, gradually the zamindar entered into arrangements with the rulers for the payment of lump sums which was for a year or a term of years.

⁴ S. Sundararaja Iyengar, Land Tenures in the Madras Presidency, p. 54.
⁵ Letter from Government to the board of revenue 4th September, 1799; Proceedings of The Board of Revenue, 9th September, 1799; Hodgeson's Memoir on the Advantage of a permanent settlement, fifth report, Vol. III 482.
Each time a fresh contract was made, a fresh calculation was made of the income derivable from the lands under his charge and an increased jumma was demanded. The zamindar was not in any sense a local landowner. He was appointed by official warrant which was valid for his lifetime at the pleasure of the ruler. These warrants did not contain anything to indicate grant of any land rights, nor had he the power to alienate any part of the area.

But the power and position of the zamindar naturally grew. In due course the zamindaris became hereditary. There were large areas of waste land attached to each zamindari and they cultivated the same with their own tenants and virtually became owners of such lands. There was also a nucleus of farm lands called private land. The zamindars had also plenty of opportunities to buy lands by getting them in mortage and seizing properties for arrears of rent.6

As long as the central power was strong enough to control the activities of the zamindars, they continued merely as officers carrying on their legitimate duties of revenue collection. When after the fall of Aurangzeb, the Mughal Empire began to disintegrate, the zamindars, by reason of their local power and influence, became virtually independent.

6 James Grant, Political Survey of the Northern Circars, Fifth report, Vol. 3, p. 29.
The successors of Aurangazeb were unable to control the situation, and the zamindars began to assert proprietary right to the soil, and with the further disintegration of the central power, even usurped the administration of justice.\(^7\)

In Madras, the zamindari system took firm root in the northern circars, where the Muslims came first and where their rule lasted longest. In the southern portions of the Province, lands were held by a class of persons called poligars. These Poligars were of three kinds.\(^8\)

1. The descendants of the royal families of Vizianagaram, Conjeeveram and Madura.
2. The military chieftains of the sovereigns who had resisted the conquest of the Muslims.
3. District collectors who had eluded the immediate control of the Muslims and had gradually usurped the sovereignty of the districts.

The Poliam system was a result of the organization of the kingdom on a feudal basis in 1560\(^9\) by the founder of the Nayak dynasty. Poliams often comprised of a few villages.

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\(^7\) Sreenivasa Raghava Iyengar, *Memorandum on the Progress of the Madras Presidency* during the last forty years, 1893, p. 20.

\(^8\) Report from Munro, 20\(^{th}\) March, 1802.

They were called “Circar” villages or “Polipat.” They denote an alienation of the revenue of entire villages in favour of individuals called poligars for feudatory or “kaval” service on a tribute. These alienations were made for assistance rendered or required to be rendered by the poligars in men and money or materials during war.\(^\text{10}\)

The servants of the poligars who were maintained for external war or internal policing were also assigned lands in proportion to their pay portion to their pay. Practically these poliams were assignments of certain portions of Government revenue of the villages to an individual for a particular purpose in lieu of payment of a salary. There were several poliams in the Province. Kannivadi, Bodinayaknanur and Ettayapuram were some of the bigger poliams in the south and Venkatagiri and Kalahasti in the west.\(^\text{11}\)

When the East India Company took over the administration of the Province during the middle of the eighteenth century, their main anxiety was to make sure of their land revenue. They had to evolve some method out of the chaos existing at that time. They had to acquire themselves with the descendants and representatives of the old vanquished rulers including the zamindars and the rent farmers through whom the Muslim rulers had been collecting the land revenue.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^\text{10}\) Ibid, p. 57.
\(^\text{12}\) Ibid, p. 4.
Great abuses were prevalent in the zamindaris, but the zamindars were the only really well-established revenue machinery which remained in existence.

It was impossible taking into account the then existing conditions, to enter in to arrangements with the proprietors of the soil over the heads of zamindars. Even if a special staff was set up they could start only after a fresh set of village accounts were prepared.

The growth of the Zamindar’s power had resulted in the complete elimination of the village accountants who were only tools under him and the zamindar always viewed with distaste any enquiry about his village accounts.

It had come to a stage when the zamindar was liable to answer only for his contract sum and not for the details of his village collections. The East India Company at that time was deeply interested in making a settlement of the revenues due to their financial needs.

Opinion in England was favourable to some kind of a land settlement. The land tax in England had been made permanent by the Land Perpetuation Act, 1798.\textsuperscript{13}

\textsuperscript{13} S.Y. Krishnaswami, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 39.
Representations were also made by zamindars to Parliament by which the East India Company was commended to institute an enquiry into the complaints that had prevailed that Rajas, zamindars and other landholders within the British territories in India had been unjustly deprived of, or compelled to relinquish or abandon their respective lands and to give orders for setting and establishing upon principles of moderation and justice according to laws and constitution of India and to establish permanent rules by which the tributes, rent services of the above should in future by rendered and paid to the Company.¹⁴

**The Ryotwari Settlement**

Ryotwari Settlement means the division of all arable land, whether cultivated or not into ‘fields’ and the assessment of each field at a fixed rate for a term of 30 years. The field is generally an arbitrary area. It has no minimum size, but it is usual to fix a maximum which is at present 5 acres in wet and 10 acres in dry land. Where a survey field comprises the holdings of two or more occupants, it is subdivided to distinguish portions transferred or relinquished.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid.,
The occupant pays the revenue so assessed, on the area he actually occupies. This area may be constant or may vary from year to year with the relinquishment of old fields and the taking up of new ones.

The person with whom Government enters in to direct engagement under the Ryotwari system was called the Ryot meaning in Arabic 'subject' or 'protected'.

The occupant deals directly with the Government and is responsible only for his own holding. He was given a document called a patta, which sets forth the extent and assessment of each survey field or portion of a field in his occupation. This patta is liable to revision every year to bring it up to date in the annual Jamabandi.

The occupant thus enjoys all the advantages of proprietorship, subject only to the payment of the revenue due on the lands held during the year. The lands can be inherited, or burdened for debt in precisely the same manner as a proprietary right, provided that the person in whose name the land is registered in the Government accounts pays the revenue due to the State.

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16 Mukarjee, op. cit., p. 11.
17 Ibid.,
18 Ibid.,
RYOTWARI SETTLEMENT AND THE PRINCIPLE ADOPTED

In the year 1802 A.D. (Fasli 1212), the systematic survey and settlement of the ceded districts, a step which was rendered absolutely essential in the prevailing confusion in the tenures and assessments of the land, was taken up. According to the custom of the country, from early days the Government was entitled to a share of the produce of the land and the commuted value of such share or the assessment proper was the major source of State Revenue.19

It was conducted by Major Munro and his assistants and was completed in the year 1806.20 With the exception of hills and rocks, all land of whatever kind was measured: cultivated land was surveyed by fields and was registered under the local name by which it was known to the ryots and numbered. The method of fixation of an assessment may be best described in Munro’s own words:—21

“The business was begun by fixing the sum which was to be the total revenue of the district. This was usually effected by the Commissioner, in a few days by comparing the collections under the native princes, under the Company’s Government form its commencement, cursory estimates of the

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19 P.K. Gnanasundara Mudaliar, *op. cit.*, Madras, 1940, p. 27.
21 History of Land Revenue settlement and abolition of intermediary tenures in Tamil Nadu, Madras 1977, p. 89.
ordinary and head assessors and the opinions of most intelligent natives: and after a due consideration of the whole, adopting such a sum as it was thought fit to be a fair assessment of the district in the present stage. After fixing a certain sum for the district, it next remained to determine what share of this sum was to be imposed on each village, and this was effected by causing the lands of such villagers of objected to their assessment to be examined by ryots of other villages, and each claim was admitted or modified according to the terms finally agreed upon between both parties. As the whole district was present at the discussion, and every man ready to prevent another from obtaining an advantage in which he did not himself share, no fraudulent assessment of any consequence could possibly be concealed".22

After his assumption as Governor of Madras, he issued orders for the final establishment of ryotwari system throughout the Presidency.23 The early ryotwari system had various defects. Restrictions were placed upon relinquishment of land and heavy assessments were imposed on garden lands, i.e. lands cultivated with special crops and irrigated from wells sunk by the ryot's own capital and labour. The survey and settlement was conducted earlier so rapidly, that there were great inequalities.

22 S.Y. Krishnaswami, op. cit., p. 47.
23 Ibid, p. 49.
The assessments were largely dependent not so much on the estimates of produce as on former assessments which had been run up to a high pitch under the Mysore Government or Nabobs, as the case might be. Such rates has become unbearable when the prices of food grains went down as they did for a number of years and various devices were resorted to mitigate the burden.

In 1855, a quarter of a century after the final adoption of ryotwari as the standard revenue system of Madras, less than a fifth of the area of the Presidency was cultivated, while more than half of the area recorded as arable was left waste.24 Though population had considerably increased by then and though there had been uninterrupted peace, there had been in all these years no material increase either in the revenue or in the area of cultivation.25

The incidence of assessment was everywhere unequal, while a succession of years of low prices had the practical effect of raising the rates of assessment which were admittedly already too high. It was calculated that on an average, Government at that time took as its share 50 per cent of the gross produce of irrigated lands and 35 per cent of that of the unirrigated land, while to give the ryot any real proprietary interest in the land and to

25 Ibid.,
induce an extension of cultivation, a share ranging from 25 per cent to 30 per cent of the gross produce was believed to be the utmost that the Government could claim.26

The Presidency of Madras was the only province in which no regular scientific and methodical survey had been instituted. The early surveys, even the best of them, were defective in the sense there were no maps of districts, taluks, or villages, and no permanent boundaries, and the records of the surveys, had been imperfectly preserved.

These early surveys were extended only to a few districts and there were other districts in which the only records of the area liable to assessment were the unchecked entries in the accounts prepared by the village officers. The Government therefore, determined in 1855 to carry out a general revision of the assessments of the presidency which appeared the only right basis of a land revenue settlement (viz.) the accurate survey and more or less exact classification of soils.27

The Government of India and the Home Government concurred in the necessity of the measure and the Revenue Settlement Department was constituted in 1858 with Mr. Newill, as the firsts Director.28

26 General Reports, Vol. 27, p. 350.
27 Manual of the Revenue Settlement Department, 1952, p. 11.
The department first undertook to demarcate the village and field boundaries which was a tedious process involving much arbitration and the investigators of many disputes.

The marks erected in many areas were temporary and destructible and had frequently to be replaced by others of a more permanent nature. This work occupied much time until the year, 1864, when the fixation of boundaries was made over to the survey Department.

In the proceedings of the Government Order the advantage of an accurate survey and careful settlement of the land revenue was given. The Madras Survey and Boundaries Act was passed in the year 1923, which is now in force.\textsuperscript{29} Time and test have shown that this Act has met adequately people's requirements regarding survey of land and its mapping besides settlement of boundary disputes.

Periodic resettlement at intervals of 30 years was meant for updating of revenue records. With the abandonment of survey and resettlement as a matter of policy since the year 1937, resurvey work fell in arrears.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{29} Government proceeding, 1\textsuperscript{st} August 1855, No. 951.

\textsuperscript{30} History of Land Revenue Settlement and abolition of intermediary tenures in Tamil Nadu, Madras 1977, p. 122.
The Survey and Land Records Department was resurrected from 1949 when it undertook the gigantic task of surveying and mapping of an area of 15,000 sq. miles under the various land reforms, Acts, abolishing the intermediaries.\textsuperscript{31} This has contributed an addition of nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ of the area of the State for permanent maintenance of Revenue Records and Registration. When the partition of the Andhra State was effected in the year 1953, the strength of Survey parties in the residency State was increased to 5, so as to accelerate survey work.\textsuperscript{32} Adequate number of draftsmen had been recruited to attend to the office process of survey records.

2. Principles and Methods of Settlement

The Broad principles enunciated by the Madras Government for fixing the assessment are:\textsuperscript{33}

1. That, though exact accuracy is unattainable in the classification of lands, the classes should be few and based on real and distinguishable differences of soil, and that both are surface soil and the sub-soil should be carefully considered.

2. That an estimate of the productive power of the land should be stated in quantities of some one of the ordinary grain crops as approximately

\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Ibid.},
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Ibid.},
\textsuperscript{33} History of Land Revenue settlement and abolition of intermediary tenures in Tamil Nadu, Madras 1977, p. 91.
as possible; paddy being taken for irrigated lands, and cumbu, cholam
or some other staple grain of the district or tract to the settled, for the
unirrigated. These estimates are called "grain outturns".  

3. That the valuation of the land should be effected in consideration of its
nearness to the village site and consequent facilities for manuring,
cultivating and guarding the crop; proximity to a road or market;
facilities for irrigation and other accidental rather than inherent,
conditions, whether affecting the value of the crop or its quantity; the
field or the village, as the case may be, being placed in a higher or
lower class of assessment, according to the aggregate of the
circumstances mentioned above.

4. That the share of the produce, to be taken as the Government demand
should be half of the net produce.

5. That the said share should be paid in money, the money value being
calculated at the average price of the standard crop and such average
being calculated from the recorded prices of twenty years or such
number of years as Government may from time to time determine,
 omitting years of famine and great scarcity. This average prices is
called "the commutation price".  

34 Ibid.,
35 Ibid.,
6. "That the assessment thus arrived at should remain unaltered for such period as the Government may, in respect of each district or portion of a district, notify.

7. That the introduction of a settlement on this basis should not be carried out pedantically nor with any pretence to mathematical accuracy, but with due regard to practical fairness in the rates and modes of assessment.

3. Essential processes of settlement

Following the main principles indicated above, the operations of the Settlement Department cover the sub-joined processes:36

1. The classification of soils

2. The determination of grains to be adopted as standards.

3. The gradation of soils, in standard grains, or as they are technically termed, grain outturns”.

4. The determination of commutation prices and the conversion of grain outturns into money.

5. The determination of the allowance to be made for vicissitudes of season and unprofitable areas.

6. The calculation of the expenses of cultivation.

7. The determination of money rates.

36 Ibid, p. 92.
8. The grouping of villages in respect of dry lands.

9. The grouping of sources of irrigations, as judged by the certainty and efficiency of water-supply for wet lands.

10. The merging of soils into tarams.

11. The preparation and submission to Government, through the Board of Revenue, of a scheme report containing proposals for the fixation or revision of assessments.

12. The introduction of Settlement.

13. The compilation of settlement registers in English and the principal language of the district hence called the Diglott Registers.37

4. Method of Cultivation

It is impossible to lay down with any pretension to accuracy the actual expense of cultivating each “sort” of soil. The practice, therefore, is to work out separately for wet and dry lands the expenses for the best soil, and then proportionately diminish this standard in the case of the lower sorts.

This method of discounting the cultivation expenses in the case of the sorts lower down in the scale is open to the objection that the cost of cultivating poor soils is relatively greater than that required for superior soils.

37 Ibid.,
But it has to be borne in mind that the cultivator, being content with a smaller relative outturn from inferior soils, does not pay the same attention to them as he does to the superior lands. For instance, he does not plough the inferior soils as often as he would plough a superior plot or land, nor does he so highly manure them. Weeding and hoeing too are less frequent.\textsuperscript{38}

The straw is usually taken as a set-off against the item “feed of bullocks” and no separate provision is, therefore, made for it; nor does it find place in the matter of ryots assets. Where however, the cattle are fed on grain and the allowance of straw is not considered sufficient to meet the charge, the item may be specially provided for.

All these elaborate processes were observed in calculating the cultivations expenses in the early settlements but in the light of the experience gained at the settlement of several districts\textsuperscript{39} the Government in their order directed that the cultivation expenses need no longer be calculated in this elaborate manner, but that the average of the cultivation expenses of the adjoining or similar districts already settled should be adopted, and this rule had been followed since the said date. Detailed calculations may, however, be made, when they are considered necessary and so ordered in special cases.

\textsuperscript{38} History of Land Revenue settlement and abolition of intermediary tenures in Tamil Nadu, Madras 1977, p. 95.

\textsuperscript{39} G.O. No. 944 Dated 6\textsuperscript{th} September 1882.
5. Calculation of Money Rates

The next step is the calculation of money rates. The grain outturns are sometimes given in local measures by experimenting officers. As the capacity of these local measures varies in different districts and in different taluks of the same district, they should be converted into Madras measures, the capacity of which is 120 tolas or into kilograms since the inception of the weights and measures Act.40

The commutation rates arrived at in the manner described earlier are then applied to the grain outturns. From the money value thus obtained the allowances for vicissitudes of season remains is the net value of the produce, one-half of which is the share due to Government.41 In the earlier settlement, i.e., those in vogue before the constitution of the department in 1858 the rates of assessment were based generally on 50 per cent of the gross produce for wet and 33 per cent for dry land. When the revision began, the maximum was reduced to 30 per cent, the average being about 25 per cent. But in the course of time a gross produce percentage was not considered sufficiently accurate and the net produce was ordered to be ascertained by deducting the cost of cultivation, etc. and in 1864 the Government share of the revenue was fixed at one-half of the ascertained net produce.42

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40 History of Land Revenue settlement and abolition of intermediary tenures in Tamil Nadu, Madras 1977, p. 98.
41 Ibid.,
42 Ibid.,
In fixing the actual rates of assessment, it is usual to round off the half net so as to produce an even gradation from one rate to another. Each separate money rate as finally fixed is called a ‘taram’.  

6. Classification of Irrigation sources

The sources of irrigation in a given tract are generally divided into the following classes:

First Class: All irrigation under perennial rivers such as the Cauvery, the Periyar, the Tambaraparani, and the like, and the tanks fed by such rivers. In grouping under this class the Channels issuing from rivers like the above the advantages of irrigation and drainage should be carefully considered. Channels fully possessing these advantages should be placed in the lower classes, which may be raised when the defects are removed. The facility of moving up wet lands from a lower to a higher group, without which irrigation schemes might prove failures from a financial point of view, is an important consideration in adopting this method of discrimination. The right to do this should always be reserved in settlement notifications.

Second class: Rain fed tanks containing a supply of not less than eight months.

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43 Ibid.,
44 Ibid., p. 102.
**Third class**: Spring head and other channels yielding a good supply of water but requiring much labour in clearing: and rain-fed tanks of from three to five months capacity.

**Fourth class**: Spring head and other channels yielding a good supply of water supply as well as under rain-fed tanks of less than three months capacity.

**Fifth class**: All irrigation under small jungle streams with a precarious water-supply as well as under rain-fed tanks of less than three months capacity.

Ryotwari settlement was made for a period of 30 years from 1893 to 1923. After the expiry of the settlement, Government of Madras introduced another settlement called Resettlement. G.H. Jackson was appointed as special settlement officer.\(^45\)

3. The Inam Tenure

Inam is an Arabic term signifying, favour reward or gift.\(^46\) It is a beneficial tenure known originally by the Sanskrit name manyam can be traced to a very remote antiquity of India.

\(^{45}\) *Ibid*, p. 423.

During the time of the Hindu rulers it was the custom to grant assignments of land revenue free or at low quit – rents for all kinds of purposes like payment to troops, civil officers, maintenance and support of temples and their servants, charitable institutions and rewards for public service.

The Muslim rulers also continued this custom of granting beneficial tenures for various purposes. These assignments were called jaghirs. The jaghirs, however, reverted to the State on the death of the grantee, unless renewed by a new grant, as it was the established policy of the Muslim rulers not to alienate the rights of the Government in the soil in perpetuity. The only exceptions were when lands were alienated for religious endowments and as grants to holy men and celebrated scholars.

These were called milk grants which gave perpetual title to the grantee. During the early period of the East India Company rule, the Government of the day, following the custom of the country, adopted the practice of rewarding meritorious service by grants of jaghirs.

The custom gradually fell into disuse under instructions from court of Directors in 1829, who directed that money pensions should be preferred to grants of land on all ordinary occasions and that grants of land should be made only under special circumstances.47

47 Blair’s Report dated 30th October 1869.
In the earlier periods these grants were made by the sovereign only, but towards the end of the Mughal period when the central authority disintegrated, various petty chiefs assumed the power of granting beneficial tenures for numerous miscellaneous purposes. Inams were obtained even by collusion with Revenue officers.  

**Kinds of Inams**

Inams are found scattered in ryotwari as well as in zamindari areas.  

There are three types of Inams in the zamindaris of this Province, the excluded Inams, post-settlement Inams and included Inams. The excluded Inams are those Inams excluded from the assessments of the zamindaris during the time of the permanent Settlement, under section 4 of Registration XXV of 1802.

The post-settlement Inams are those created by the landholders after the permanent Settlement. The last is the “Included” Inams. These Inams were taken into the assets of the zamindari during the Permanent Settlement. They formed part of the Permanent Settlement.

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Though provision was made for the validation of the Inams in clauses 2 and 3 of Regulation XXXI of 1802, no action was taken for a long time to investigate the titles. The necessity for the investigation arose only at time of the settlement of the ryotwari lands when it was necessary to exempt these Inam lands from assessment.51

In 1858 during the administration of Lord Harris G.N. Taylor was appointed as an Inam Commissioner to investigate into Inam titles and grant title deeds. But between 1802 and 1858, a number of disputes had arisen. Inams granted for special purpose were not utilized for the purpose for which they had been granted.

It was necessary to prevent such misuse, and Regulation IV of 1831 was passed which prohibited such misuse and Regulation XXXI of 1836 extended the provisions of this enactment to the grants made by earlier rulers or native Governments.52 The Inam Commissioner compiled an Inam register. As a result of various enquiries, the Inams were classified as follows:

1. those held for the support of religious institutions and for services connected therewith,

2. those held for the purpose of public utility,

51 Ibid.,
52 Ibid, p. 196.
3. those held for the support of works of irrigation yielding public revenue.

4. those held by Brahmans and other religious classes for their personal benefit,

5. those held by the families of poligars and those who filled hereditary offices under former Governments,

6. those held by the kinsmen, dependants and followers of former poligars and zamindars,

7. those held by persons connected with the former general police of the country,

8. those held for village revenue and police service, and

9. those held by artisans of various descriptions for services due to village communities.

After the appointment of the Inam Commissioner in 1858, the Board of Revenue issued a rule regarding the basis for the investigation of the Inams. It stipulated that the Inamdars should have been in possession of the Inam for a period of 50 years before 1858 to constitute a valid title.53

53 G.O. No. 1531 Dated 16th November 1858.
Thus the principle of the Inam settlement was “long possession.” Long possession both afforded an evidence of right and also constituted a motive for the Government not to interfere. In the conversion of the various imperfect Inam tenures the rate of commutation was fixed with reference to the benefits conferred.

When Sir Charles Trevelyan was a Governor of Madras he propounded certain rules in his minute, issued on 13th May 1859. The basis of his proposals was that when it shall be proved that land had for fifty years been in the possession of a person, without the payment of land tax, such length of possession should be held to be a good title for that land as Inam, whatever might have been the origin of the possession.54

The settlement of the Inams and the general survey and settlement then in progress were closely inter-related. The land revenue of a village could not be fixed until the claims for exemption of land tax had been examined and adjudicated upon, while on the other hand, the Inams could not be considered as finally settled until it had been ascertained by actual survey that the tax free land corresponded with what had been admitted to be entitled to be so held.

54 G.O. No. 421 Dated 22 January 1859.
Therefore the enquiry into Inams preceded survey and the re-assessment of the land revenue. The Inam Commissioner validated titles and issued title deeds to Inamdars lawfully in possession for fifty years before the appointment of the Commissioner and reserved others or commuted them for money pensions. One of the main functions of the Commissioner was the "enfranchisement" of Inams.55

In the case of Inams held for personal benefit, it was left to the option of the holder to retain it, if he chose, subject to the terms of the tenure, but he was allowed to "enfranchise" it and convert it as his personal property by paying a quit-rent, i.e., a favourable rate. Inams were thus divided into:

1. Unenfranchised Inams,
2. Enfranchised Inams,
3. Enfranchised but liable to jodi or quit-rent, and
4. Enfranchised, rent being commuted or redeemed.

After the enfranchisement of all the Inams, the Inam Commissioner issued title deeds for the Inams and they were passed and validated by the Inams Act IV of 1802 and 1866. By the enfranchisement the Government surrendered its reversionary right, for a quit-rent of jodi, and transferred the indefeasible rights of property to the grantee.56

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55 G.O. No. 337, Revenue Dated February 21st, 1871.
56 G.O. No. 905/R/8/7/1859.
4. The Malabar Tenancy System

The land tenures prevalent in Malabar are peculiar to that tract. It is the only part of the Province where a really complicated tenancy problem exists. It may therefore be examined in some detail. The main division was between the landlord called "Janmi" and the tenants of whom there are several descriptions with varying rights. Of these the principal ones are in local terms called "kanam", "kuzhikaman" and "verumpattam". 57

The use of technical terms cannot easily be avoided in the discussions connected with Malabar tenures, as their ultimate foundations are set on legal conceptions and form the very spirit of the rural relationship between landlord and tenant. "Kanam" is described as mortgage with possession, the mortgage, i.e., the kanamdar recovering interest on the money he has advanced to the landlord from the produce of the land and paying a portion of the net profits as rent to the landlord. It thus partakes of the character of a lease and a mortgage. 58

Sometimes the one character predominates, sometimes the other. In a kanam lease, the lease is the substantial thing, the security being a minor matter as in South Malabar.

In the case of a kanam mortgage, the amount advanced was substantial, the “michavaram” or rent being but a trifle as in north Malabar Kanam was generally a lease for 12 years. The tenant on the expiry of the term takes a renewal from the landlord after paying a fee and is entitled to hold on for another period of twelve years.\(^{59}\)

According to the provision of the Malabar Tenancy Act, 1930, it was obligatory on the part of the landlord to grant a renewal on payment of a fee which is also fixed by the Act. Kuzhikanam was mortgage of waste land with a view to its being planted. In the event of the tenant failing to reclaim the land, plant trees, or otherwise fulfil the conditions of the deed, he can be dispossessed by the landlord before the expiration of the period specified.\(^{60}\)

But for this, there is no difference between this and the kanam tenure. The tenant has the right to take a renewal on payment of a stipulated fee. Verumpattam is the name for ordinary lease for a year.

The majority held the view that there was no evidence to show that the Janmi or the landlord was the absolute owner of the soil and the kanam holder a mere tenant-at-will. As the kanam holder was the occupier, he must have been the original owner.

\(^{59}\) Ibid, p. 244.

In tracing the history, they suggested that the kanamdar must have acknowledged allegiance for his own safety to some Rajah, Local chief of Devasthanam (God) or Nambudiri Brahman and that the Janmam right might have originated in that way and might have meant only a sort of overlordship and not absolute right to the soil. The fact that all the lands in Malabar originally belonged in janmam to the Rajahs, Devasthanams and Nambudiris gives strength to this conclusion.\footnote{Ibid., 128}

They could not have actually occupied and cultivated such large blocks of land and therefore original occupation could not have been the basis for janmam.

The existence of strained relationship between the landlord and the tenant was common the world over and Malabar was never an exception to the rule. The genesis for all the troubles lay in the several unwritten "customs" prevalent in Malabar governing the relationships between the janmi and the kanamdar. These began to be misused and the relationship between them became strained. It had been mentioned earlier that the kanamdar took a renewal from the landlord after paying a fee after which he is entitled to hold the land for another period of twelve years.
The janmis in the early days began to misuse the position and granted leases to strangers. The landlord’s power of ouster was widely used and in many cases, the tenants’ improvements were not properly assessed or paid for. The kanam tenants have therefore to have recourse to law courts leading to uncertain judgments and delayed compensations.

The tenants started agitation for the protection of their interests by the State. The tenancy enactments in the neighbouring states of Travancore and Cochin, where the tenures were similar to those prevalent in Malabar, acted as eye openers to the tenants of Malabar.

By an order issued by His Highness, the Maharaja of Travancore in 1829 has declared that by established usage in the country, the Kanamdar was entitled to remain in possession of the land as long as he paid the rent and other customary dues to the Janmi.

The order also directed that the tenant should pay the Janmi his usual ordinary and extraordinary dues and that the Janmi should receive the same and let the tenant remain in possession and enjoyment of the property. This was reaffirmed and reiterated by Royal Proclamation in 1867 and by the Janmi-Kudiyan Regulation of 1896.

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62 Ibid.,
63 S.Y. Krishnaswami op. cit., p. 63.
64 Ibid.,
This last enactment chiefly aimed at conferring on the Kanam tenant fixity of tenure by checking capricious evictions and restricting the demand for exorbitant rents and renewal of fees on the part of the Janmis and securing to the latter, punctual payment of rent and other customary dues. In the Cochin State an enactment on similar lines was passed in 1914.65

In Madras the first Act governing landlord-tenant relations was passed in 1887.66 It provided for the payments to the tenant on eviction of the full value of the improvements carried out by him. This Act, however, did not check the growing practice of evictions.

On examining the position the Government came to the conclusion that the failure was to some extent due to the inadequacy of the compensation awarded to the tenants.

The Act was replaced by Act I of 1900, which provided for adequate compensation. The new Act did no improve the position either, because what the tenant wanted was not compensation on quitting but the right to continue in possession of the land in peace by paying a fair rent.67 To remedy this unsatisfactory situation a bill was introduced in the Legislative Council in 1924.68

65 Ibid, p. 64.
67 Ibid.,
68 Ibid.,
It was intended to confer fixity of tenure on all kanamdars and on all cultivators of the soil of certain categories. The bill was passed in 1926 but the Governor withheld his assent, as the bill as passed contained “various inconsistencies, ambiguities and other grave defects of form which would seriously increase litigation and indeed render the bill unworkable in practice if it became an Act”.  

In order to re-examine the whole question the Government appointed a committee in 1927 to enquire and report on the disabilities of the tenants in Malabar, the extent of unjustifiable evictions by the janmis and the necessity for protection to “Kanamdars” and on the best means of remedying their disabilities.

The Committee after elaborate investigation prepared a careful report and a draft Bill. Their main recommendations were accepted by the Government with some variations and a Bill was introduced in the local legislature and passed as the Malabar Tenancy Act, 1930.

The Act in the main conferred fixity of tenure on cultivating verumpattamdars, subject to their paying what has been fixed as fair rent, and paying one year’s rent in advance or otherwise furnishing security for the same.

69 Ibid.,
71 Ibid.,
Fixity of tenure was conferred on Kanamdars, Kuzhikanamdars and other intermediaries by enabling them to get renewals as a matter of right on payment of a renewal fee prescribed under the Act. In effect the Act secured for the tenant fixity of tenure and fair rent.\textsuperscript{72}

Within a few years of the working of the Act, however, certain defects in the enactment became apparent. The Government actually gave notice of introduction of a Bill to amend the Act but on reconsideration decided on a more comprehensive legislation. The Malabar Tenancy Committee in 1940, examined and reported on the general question of tenancy reforms in Malabar.\textsuperscript{73} The question was however postponed for the duration of the war.

The provision of the various enactments mentioned above give an idea of the relations which existed between landlord and tenant in Malabar prior to those enactments and how the relations have since been improved. The present consensus of opinion is that further legislation is necessary to make their relations more cordial.

5. The South Kanara Tenancy System

The land tenure obtaining in the South Kanara district is the same as the ryotwari tenure obtaining in other parts of the Province but there are certain special features. The landholder is called wargadar. He may cultivate the land himself or give it on lease to tenants.

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid, p. 16.
\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.,
The tenancy may be for a year in which case it is called chalgeni lease, for a term in which case the lease is called vayudageni lease or in perpetuity called mulgeni lease.\textsuperscript{74} In all cases, the rights between the landlord and the tenant are governed by the instruments creating the lease. In the absence of special provisions in the document the principles embodied in the Transfer of Property Act apply. Chalgenidars and vayudagenidars have no substantial rights in the land which can be mortgaged or alienated in any manner. The mulgenidars’ right is ordinarily heritable and has a market value in the same way as the occupancy right of ryots having kudiwaram rights in other districts but there may be cases restraining alienation or imposing conditions involving forfeiture. In such cases the rights of the mulgeni lessee may not be worth much. Only a very small portion of the area in the district is covered by the mulgeni lease.\textsuperscript{75}

**Under Tenures - Mirasi Tenure**

The term Mirasi\textsuperscript{76} tenure is applied in South India to denote the tenure of villages held jointly by cosharers who, as a body, constitute the proprietors thereof and enjoy the produce according to their respective shares in what is known as “Marakkal Koottu”. It is, in fact, the relic of the system of village communities.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{74} S.Y. Krishnaswami, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.,

\textsuperscript{76} Miras is an Arabic Word but it reached the language of India through persian and in Tamil it is mirasi.

\textsuperscript{77} F.H. Ellis, Mirasi papers, Madras, 1862, p. 2.
These villages where village Communities exist are known as mirasi villages and those where they do not exist are known as non-mirasi villages.\textsuperscript{78}

The rude shocks which village communities received at different times, did not efface them altogether in the Chingleput district, but considerably weakened them.

At the time when the district came under the control of the East India company, they were in a decaying condition. The aim of the earlier administrators was to infuse into them fresh strength and to raise them, but the later school of administrators led by Sri Thomas Munroe deliberately wanted to put an end to them, and by a series of administrative acts succeeded in establishing direct contact of the ryots with the Government in the payment of land revenue.\textsuperscript{79}

The introduction of this policy put an end to the principle of co-operation and the self contained organism on which the village communities were essentially based. The distinctive feature of Mirasi tenure, a feature which is as old as the tenure itself and it still survives.

\textsuperscript{78} Mirasi papers, Madras, 1862, p. 39.

\textsuperscript{79} Place’s Report, Mirasi papers, Madras, 1862, p. 53.
It is the division of the village into pangus or shares, each made up of lands yielding an equal amount of produce and each including a proportionate share of all the benefits of common property such as the use of the village waste, mines, quarries, fisheries, forests and pastures. The village is divided into Karays and Karay comprises many pangugal.  

The lands constituting a pangu are not situated in one place forming a compact whole, but are distributed throughout the village having regard to the superiority and inferiority of the soil and facilities for irrigation. They comprise both Nanja or wet lands and Punja or dry lands, and the possession of a pangu carries also a right to a proportionate share of all the benefits of common property. This division into shares is supposed to have been made at the original settlement of the village, the number of shares apparently corresponding to the number of settlers who first occupied the village or of the labourers which each settler brought with him.  

All villages are not divided into the same number of shares. One village is divided into 4 shares, another into 30, a third into 160, and so on the number of shares representing the number of shares that initially settled there. The number of shares according to the original distribution is never forgotten.

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82 Ibid.,
When one original share held by a family is divided or a portion of its
alienated, such fraction is never reckoned with as an independent share but
only as a fraction thereof. Conversely, when one family acquires one or more
shares of other families, it is said to own a plurality of (so many) shares.\textsuperscript{83}

**Karayedu System**

Villages held jointly by Co-shares in the districts of Madurai, Tirunelveli and Tanjore went by the name of Karay villages. In estate
villages granted in Inam to several persons, the melwaram right was known
by the term pangus the right to the share of the produce due to the
landholder; whereas the tenants’ occupancy right was known by the term
“Karais”. While the landholders divided their dues between themselves
under the system known as “Marakkal Kottu”.\textsuperscript{84}

The Karaidars jointly tilled the land by supplying a special number of
ploughs and bullocks and workmen for each karai in a village. The co-shares
in these ryotwari villages were known as Karaikarers and the origin of the
system may be traced to the village settlements.

\textsuperscript{83} C.S. Crole, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

\textsuperscript{84} Ellis *op. cit.*, p. 230.
According to Nelson, the author of the Madurai District Manual, the origin of Karay villages is traced to various and totally different causes. It was in an instance a sort of partnership entered into by the owners of lands agreeing to hold them in common for the purpose of guarding themselves against the rapacity and injustice of the State. This form of common enjoyment was known as karayedu.\textsuperscript{85}

It may be doubted whether there were not other means of origin of Karay villages. Karay literally means division and is applied to a division of lands in a village. Karay land is a land which was in cultivation at the formation of the village or at the introduction of the system and included in the original division of lands, as distinguished from waste which was subsequently brought into cultivation though the karaidars had a limited interest in waste lands also.

From the earliest times Kaniachikarens were also known as Karaikarens, with practically no distinction between them. Among Kallars, an aboriginal tribe, a certain tract of country was the property of a karai, the membership of a karai being upon the heads of families in the tribe in a settlement and when the lands of a karai are to be disposed of, the consent of all the owners of the karai must be obtained.\textsuperscript{86}


\textsuperscript{86} C.S. Crole, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 222.
The term karai is also used to denote the division of channel-fed lands into blocks for the purpose of kudimaramat, so that the incidence of the levy of grain tax or labour may be shared equitably by the landholders. The earliest form of common enjoyment of landed property by village communities is known as Samudayam (in Sankrit), or Pasankarai (in Tamil), known also as Sumohi. This comprised two categories (viz) absolute Samudayam or samudayam property so called, and Karaiyedu.

Under the latter form of Karaiyedu, which literally means putting or effecting division, lands were temporarily cultivated in separate shares by the co-shares forming the members of the community, subject to redistribution at stated intervals once in 30, 27 or 12 years.  

Free Hold Tenure

The origin of the freehold tenure is traceable in the Government orders in which then Government permitted the grant of free hold tenure.  

The commutation of the existing land tax on occupied lands on payment of twenty times the annual Government rent or tax was levied. The intention being to grant absolute freehold rights in the lands used, or which may be used, for building purposes without any reservation of Government rent.

87 Ibid, p. 224.
88 G.O. Ms. No. 1053 (Revenue), dated 5th August 1859.
It is absolute only against that demand of Government which represents the share of the Government of the produce and gives no immunity from other Government demands. Its holder has got the right of alienation; and his lands are liable to attachment and sale under the Revenue Recovery Act.

The redemption in no way affects sub-tenures, viz. right of occupancy or other similar rights and the freedom conferred is absolute only as against Government. These lands are neither Inam nor ayan. The abolition of this tenure is also under the active consideration of the Government to bring these lands as well on a par with the rest of the ryotwari lands in the State.\(^{89}\)

**Leasehold Tenure**

During the earlier British administration the Government granted certain villages on lease for 99 years and some permanently.\(^{90}\) The leaseholds covered 13 whole villages, which were supposed to have devolved on the British Government with full ownership rights.

\(^{89}\) The Tamil Nadu lease holds (Abolition and Conversion into Ryotwari) Act 1963 Act 27 of 1963.

\(^{90}\) *Ibid.*,
### TABLE: 5.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District (1)</th>
<th>Taluk (2)</th>
<th>Name of the Leasehold (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chingleput</td>
<td>Saidapet</td>
<td>Grant Lyon Mukthapudupattu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ponneri Karadiputhur</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kannankottai</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Thervoi</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kandigai</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pappankuppam alias</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alamelumangapuram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madras</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ikkattuthangal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>Harur</td>
<td>Hunisanahalli</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sillarahallai</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regadahalli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mottankurichi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


These leaseholds were exceptions to the British Land Revenue System and were motivated by favouritism. The Government have since abolished this tenure by legislation⁹¹ and introduced ryotwari settlement as is obtaining in the rest of the State.

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ADMINISTRATION

ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY

In Madras State the administration of the Revenue Department was in the hands of Board of Revenue during the period of our study. The present administrative machinery grew around the ryotwari system that was deliberately adopted in this state. The present set-up has been reached as a result of years of experience and trail and error. The Land Revenue Department is capable and willing to undertake new and undefined duties and responsibilities facilitated many changes in the past and gave those reforms or measures a good start which otherwise might have been lacking. It also lent stability to the administration, particularly in times of stress and strain.

There is no uniform administrative practice with regard to the number of intermediate links between State Government headquarters and the districts. Talking strictly in terms of the number of these links, there are two broad ‘modes’ – the Tamil Nadu model with only one intervening link and the non-Tamil Nadu model with two links. The Tamil Nadu model comprising Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala has only one intermediate revenue agency, viz., the Board of Revenue, there being no Divisional Commissioner.¹⁹²

The Board of Revenue was the creation of the East India Company in the year 1786. The latter formed the Board of Revenue to relieve it of the detailed work in the field of both revenue administration and general administration. As H.H Dodwell wrote: 'The Bengal Board of Revenue acted largely as the government of the province.'

The principal advantages of the institution of the Board of Revenue were of two. It pools at one place the experience and wisdom of senior officers and makes this institutionalized advice readily available to the Government. Secondly, it acted as the highest tribunal, ensuring impartial decisions, judicially arrived at. This, in fact, was what people expect from the Government.

The land revenue system was along with other subjects controlled by the Board of Revenue. The first duty of the Board was to secure the punctual collection of the Revenue. In addition to that they manipulate and record statistics with regard to population, agriculture, exports and imports, health conditions and advancement of the country; they manage the expenditure of special funds; they take charge of the estates of minors as a court of wards.

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93 G.O dated 20th June 1786.
95 Ibid.,
The Board of Revenue consisted of four commissioners, two of whom were to deal with revenue, one with separation revenue and one with settlement and agriculture. The posts of the commissioners of salt and akbari and the Director of Revenue settlement and agriculture were abolished.96

The functions of the Board of Revenue in Tamil Nadu were as follows:

1. To advise the government on administrative matters.
2. To coordinate the activities of different departments.
3. To the head of the revenue, commercial taxes, land reforms, civil supplies, food and prohibition departments.
4. To supervise the developmental activities of the State.
5. To have both judicial and executive functions.

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

The basic territorial unit of administration in India was the district, and 'district administration' is 'the total management of public affairs within this unit.97 It was at this level that the common man comes into direct contact with the administration. The difference between good and bad administration was, consequently, made-and felt-at this level.

96 G.O. No. 137 Revenue dated 7th February, 1887.
97 S.S. Khera, op. cit., p. 21.
This district had been placed under the charge of a district officer-called either Deputy Commissioner or District Collector-who virtually acted as the eyes, ears and arms of the State Government.

The present office was the creation of the British in India. It dated back to the year 1772, when the East India Company had made the historic decision to (in the words of the Board of Directors of the company) 'stand forth as diwan and to take upon themselves, by the agency of their own servants, the entire care and administration of the revenues', and appointed collectors 'to superintend the revenue collector's and to courts.' Steadily, the District Collector's authority and power increased, and before long he emerged as the pivot of district administration, representing the State Government in its totality. The duty of assessing and collecting the land revenue, which originally imparted to this office its title, was by no means his only duty, which has always remained more undefined than defined.99

The District Collector belonged to the General Administration Department of the State Government. While the officials over whom he exercised control and supervision belong to a variety of departments, in the district hierarchy of which he could not have a formal assignment.

He was assisted by Sub Collector who was also a Magistrates, had generally larger charges and were more independent than any other Assistants to the Collector. His position is illustrated by the following diagram.\textsuperscript{100}

\textbf{ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node[draw] (state) {State Government};
  \node[draw, below of=state] (chief) {Chief Secretary};
  \node[draw, below of=chief] (board) {Board of Revenue};
  \node[draw, below of=board] (district) {District Collector};
  \draw[->] (state) -- (chief);
  \draw[->] (chief) -- (board);
  \draw[->] (board) -- (district);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{A COLLECTOR}

An attempt is made here to list the functions and responsibilities entrusted to the Collector in the field of Land Revenue administration.

1. Collection of land revenue.
2. Collection of canal dues.
4. Distribution of taccavi loans.

\textsuperscript{100} In Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, where the institution of Divisional Commissioner does not exist, the Board of Revenue comes in direct contact with the District Collector.
5. Recovery of taccavi dues.


7. Distribution of distress taccavi.

8. Relief of fire sufferers.

9. Control over land records establishment.

10. Control over land records establishment.

11. Collecting and furnishing multifarious agrarian statistics regarding rainfall, crops, etc.

12. Land acquisition work.

13. Supervision of treasury and sub – treasuries.


15. Payment of Zamindari Abolition Compensation and Rehabilitation Grant.


17. As ex-officio Deputy Director of Consolidation of Holdings, hearing appeals against the orders of the lower authorities.

18. Taking relief measures in case of scarcity conditions caused by natural calamities such as fire, drought, flood, water logging, excessive rains, etc.


The District Collector is head of the administration in the district and for the performance of his function he has a well-knit hierarchy in the district\textsuperscript{101} which may be illustrated by the following chart:

![Image of a chart illustrating the hierarchy of TALUK OFFICERS]

**TALUK OFFICERS**

The District was divided in to Taluks under a Tahsildar.\textsuperscript{102} The number of Taluks in the district, excluding the Madras and Nilgiris districts varied from three to ten or more. An average Taluk was 700 square miles in

\textsuperscript{101} Report of the (Madras) District Revenue Administration Enquiry Committee, Madras, 1955, p. 64.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.,
extent continued 200 villages, a population about 150,000 and yielded land revenue of about 3,50,000/- Taluks were divided into five grades according to their importance.  

The Tahsildar's establishment consisted of an Accountant, Clerks, Revenue Inspectors and Servants. The Accountant was in immediate charge of the Taluk Treasury as also of accounts, abstracts, registers and periodical returns. The clerks, of whom there were eight or nine, prepared the accounts, bills, abstracts, cultivation statements, season and other returns village abstracts of demand, collection and balance, settlement accounts registers and attended to correspondence.

The Revenue Inspectors of whom, there were three or four, were in charge of portions of Taluks and toured constantly from village to village seeing that the work of the village officers was properly performed and conducted such local inquiries as may be considered necessary by Tahsildars. He is in charge of revenue administration and land records of every village within his area. He is the first line supervisor in the chain of revenue administration in the States.

103 S.S. Khera, op. cit., p. 181.
104 Ibid.,
105 Ibid.,
Every Tahsildar was also a Sub-Magistrate. In this capacity and also to a limited extent in his revenue work, he was assisted by officers styled deputy Tahsildar and Sub-Magistrates who were engaged in important towns and outlying portions of Taluks.\textsuperscript{106}

\textbf{VILLAGE OFFICERS}

The stability of the entire Revenue Administration of the State was mainly due to the village establishment manned by the hereditary officers and menials with loyalty to the Government and honest work to their credit on a nominal pay and eagerness in service. In no other sector of public administration it is possible to secure such a cheap but efficient service to the Government. The basis of the system of Revenue Administration was found in the village corporations which has existed from time immemorial and in many respects retain their vitality. In almost every Hindu Village there were twelve village servants\textsuperscript{107} who performed all needful services. They were 1. Headman, 2. Karnam or Accountant, 3. Shroff or Notagar, 4. Toty or Taliary, 5. Potter, 6. Smith, 7. Jeweller, 8. Carpenter, 8. Barber, 10. Washerman, 11. Cobbler and 12. Astrologer. The first five only rendered service to Government or were recognized as parts of Revenue Administration.

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{107} C.D. Maclean, \textit{op. cit.}, Pp. 148-149.
The Headman was variously known such as Monigar, Potail, Naidoo, Reddy, Peddacaupoo, Nautamcar. He was an important officer; he represented the Government in the village; collected the revenue; and had also magisterial and judicial powers. As a Magistrate he punished persons for petty assaults and affrays and as a judge he tried suits for sums of money or other personal property up to Rs. 10/- value during the period of study. With the consent of the parties he could summon a Panchayat. The headman was generally one of the largest landholders in the village and as a rule exercised much influence over the inhabitants.\textsuperscript{108}

The Karnam was the village accountant and was a very important ministerial officer. The shroff was found only in certain villages, his duty was to test money paid in by villages to the headman on account of Government. The neeregunty had a charge of the irrigation of village lands where there was irrigation from tanks or channels.\textsuperscript{109} Some villages, however, had irrigation but no neergunty, the work being done by the village peon or by the cultivators themselves.

The village toty, otherwise taliary, vetty or ograuny was simply a village peon acting under the orders of the headman. The office was generally held by the lower class of the community.\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{108} S.S. Khera, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 183.
\textsuperscript{109} C.D. Maclean, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{110} \textit{Ibid.},
The taliary was sometimes a separate official acting in the capacity of headman. When village offices were hereditary, as was in the case in most localities, heirs succeeded in the usual course, under the terms of the native law of inheritance. The non-Governmental village servants were almost wholly paid by fees from the villagers directly. In some cases, the Government had given Inam lands to such servants.

In each village, a number of duties other than revenue devolve upon the village officers such as public health, village statistics, protection of the Government property, law and order, food accounts and procurement, etc. apart from the maintenance of village accounts and the collection of revenue and the safe remittance of the same to the Treasury. The village officers at present are duly trained and equipped for village administration and service. In the interests of the general administration of the state, this institution of village officers and menials with hereditary rights should continue and it should also be introduced in districts where such hereditary system does not exist to-day.