CHAPTER VI
SURAPUR UNDER SEQUESTRATION

The Nizam's Claim Refuted

As the Raja of Surapur was found guilty of having risen in rebellion his principality was confiscated by the British in consequence. What is noteworthy is that the Government of India did not wait for the legal nicety of a formal verdict by the military court to convey their decision on Surapur. While the verdict was intimated to them on 11th May 1858 they had already ordered on 1st April 1858 that the principality should revert to the Nizam and that the British Government should have in it only such share or claim as agreed to by the Nizam in 1842 in accordance with the settlement effected by Capt. Greeley. They believed the claim to be worth Rs.3½ lakhs; the Nizam could either cede equivalent territory or add the amount in their accounts with him. However, their instructions were based not on Greeley's report, of the details of which they were not yet fully aware but on the faulty memo of Capt. Thornhill (1st Assistant to the Resident at Hyderabad). They imagined that the British claim to Surapur emanated from their being representative of the Peshwa and that the Nizam had agreed as such to this claim in 1842. In normal conditions it would be hard to understand how any government could claim to represent another de facto government extinguished by themselves 40 years before. At best the British Government could regard itself as the successor government of the Peshwa. But busy as they were in suppressing mutinies and
revolts in several parts of India they could not have had time enough to be punctilious in their language or precise in their understanding. It would appear that the Hyderabad Government was better informed of their position and hence advanced no claims to Surapur, at least officially.

It is not surprising if Resident Davidson misinterpreted such vaguely worded instructions. He construed them to mean that the Nizam had an equal share in Surapur and advanced several arguments for not admitting such a claim. He pointed out that by accepting Gresley's arrangement the Nizam had limited his claim on Surapur to annual payment of Rs. 40,000 in lieu of Andola-Nilogi to be paid through the British treasury. He had also thereby acknowledged British right of arbitration between Surapur and his State, and by implication British supremacy so far as Surapur was concerned. With the accession of Venkatappa IV in August 1842 the Nizam had ceased to levy nasrana from Surapur, the definite mark of vassalage, nor had he interfered with the management of the principality ever since. Besides this theoretical inadmissibility of the Nizam's claim, there were practical considerations. The Bedars had never accepted the Nizam's authority in the past without coercive measures. If the territory were transferred to the Nizam, they were likely to create disturbances, not only in Hyderabad's domains but in the adjoining British regions as well. On the other hand they had quietly accepted British management since 1842 and were doing so even now. To maintain peace it was advisable to exercise the now legitimately acquired right to annex Surapur. Lastly the Arab mercenaries in Hyderabad had aided the Raja in his revolt and though the Hyderabad Government had proscribed
their recruitment it was powerless to enforce its orders. If in spite of all this the Nizam's claim was to be admitted it was more advantageous to pay him annually Rs.3½ lakhs for it than to partition Surapur.

The Government of India took nearly 2 years to look into the Resident's arguments, Gresley's report and the connected correspondence in 1842; after having seen it, it accepted the Resident's views and added some of its own arguments to assert its exclusive supremacy over Surapur. Though by the 17th article of the Treaty of 1800 the British had acknowledged Surapur to be Nizam's tributary at the time the fact that it was also a feudatory of the Peshwa was overlooked by them. By succeeding to the rights of the Peshwa the British had acquired joint supremacy over the principality in 1823. After 1842 it had exercised exclusive de facto supremacy which the Nizam had accepted and tacitly confirmed of late by letting the British try the Raja for treason. Moreover the Court of Directors by threatening the Raja with permanent British annexation in case of maladministration had implicitly asserted the same right.

All this argumentation and assertions were merely of academic value. It helped the Government of India to modify its own immediate instructions. But in reality the Nizam advanced no claim and the forfeited principality remained in exclusive British possession till it was gifted away to the Nizam. It must be noted that the Secretary of State entirely agreed with the Government of India but remarked that delay of 2 years in announcing the decision was excessive and unexplained.
Surapur under Military Occupation and the Question of Prize Property

On 9th February 1858 the combined British forces occupied Surapur town without any resistance as it had already been evacuated by the Raja, the mercenaries as well as his other armed forces. Thereupon Capt. Campbell was immediately directed to assume temporary administration of the principality with aid from Yenkappa Jellapalli and divan Bhimrao who agreed to help. Capt. Meadows Taylor, who had been just relieved from the charge of North Berar was called to Hyderabad so that he could take over regular administration of Surapur as soon as possible. Pending his arrival the town and principality remained under British military occupation with Capt. Campbell in charge. People gradually began to return to the town. On 3rd March Campbell was ordered to issue a proclamation inviting the populace to follow their peaceful occupations and to declare general amnesty.

Meanwhile the deserted town was ruthlessly plundered by the occupation army. Not a house escaped; all valuables, and any article that merely gave the appearance of being precious was seized. Household property was indiscriminately looted and even children's toy guns or daggers were not spared. Not only the ornaments and articles used in worship but even the very idols at the Gopalswami temple at Surapur were taken away. A number of State records got either destroyed or scattered. Everything that was seized or returned by soldiers was declared as prize. A prize committee was formed with Capt. A. Wyndham as its President. Lt. Col. Malcolm immediately informed the Resident that all
property seized at Surapur would be regarded as prize. When the Resident sought clarification from the Government of India he was informed that in the Governor General's opinion all property seized in Surapur 'fort' should be regarded as prize but the decision rested with the Crown. As the property seized was not from Surapur 'fort' as such this opinion was of not real practical use.

The cupidity of the Prize Committee knew no bounds. Lt. Col. Malcolm demanded that Capt. Taylor should be directed to hand over all personal property of the Raja. It must be noted that the British army had met with no resistance after it occupied Surapur and started sacking it. On Taylor's arrival on 1st April 1858 he and Capt. Wyndham agreed that property recovered or brought to each should be held in their respective charge, but that Taylor should supply lists and later the articles themselves if they were declared as prize. Claims of the Prize Committee extended to arms, jewels, horses, elephants, cattle, chandeliers and mirrors in Surapur palace, in short every movable item that was supposed to belong to the Raja. His personal jewellery which was taken away from him while he was confined at Hyderabad was also included in the list. The Committee went so far as to claim the jewels of the Ranis saying that the Ranis were allowed to keep them on condition that they would surrender them if declared as prize. Lt. Col. Malcolm's plea was that the jewels of the ladies of Amir of Sind had been taken as prize on British conquest of that province, whereas Capt. Wyndham claimed temple jewellery on the ground that it used to be pledged by the Raja for long periods for the secular purpose of raising money. However, the idols in the Gopalswami temple were returned with some
silver chains etc. to the brahmin priests in charge.

When Resident Davidson sought clarification whether the Raja of Wanparti had a share in the horses of the Surapur Raja seized in Hyderabad region with his help, the Government of India ignored his specific question but gave a general ruling as to what was 'prise'. All horses and other property of the Surapur principality even if captured after the Raja's flight was prise. The jewels of the Ranis, temple idols and their ornaments, grain etc. either belonging to individuals or religious trusts was not prise. Similarly property of private individuals taken after the declaration of amnesty was to be returned to them. In spite of this ruling it was not easy to categorize the numerous articles. The Ranis got back their private jewellery and were also allowed to retain a few articles as souvenirs of the Raja. The Resident felt that horses and other property captured beyond the boundary of Surapur principality were not prise but the Government of India disagreed and stated that if these belonged to the State they were so. In fact except the temple property all the other disputed items were declared by the Government of India as prise. The Prize Committee took a long time to cash the articles seized by it and its accounts could not be closed during the period when Surapur remained under British rule.

Taylor's Second Administration

Taylor assumed the civil administration of the principality as Deputy Commissioner (2nd class) on 1st April 1858. It would be unfair to compare his second administration with his first one which had proved so
beneficent to the principality. Then he was in the pink of health and at the peak of his powers. It was not now possible for him physically to achieve results similar to those accomplished in the first flush of youthful vigour and enthusiasm. He had then a long spell in which he could work out his schemes and ideas. Now the fate of the principality itself was uncertain. The time at his disposal was too short to achieve anything substantial. He could at best commence some measures of improvement leaving the future to take care of itself. His second administration thus suffers in comparison for which he must not be blamed.

Restoration of Law and Order

One of the urgent tasks before him was to restore law and order. It had already been facilitated by the declaration of amnesty. The inhabitants were rapidly settling down to their legitimate occupations. "We need anticipate no serious difficulty in ensuring the peace of the country", wrote the Resident. Immediately on arrival, Taylor repeated his former measure during his first administration of securing written agreements regarding future good behaviour from the Bedar headmen who executed them without the slightest demur. The entire population was disarmed; it was notified that anyone bearing arms publicly would be fined or otherwise punished and the arms confiscated in future. All the guns were broken up, the metal sold by the Prize Committee and sale proceeds credited to its account. The manufacture and sale of gunpowder and brimstone even for fireworks was banned. Saltpetre could be exported only under license from Taylor. Nightly vigil by villages was already in existence. This was now insisted upon particularly in villages bordering the Nizam's territory on the Bhima, which
was lawless. Twelve persons accused of having aided the Raja in his so-called rebellion were tried and convicted. Taylor suggested permanent stationing of an exclusive European Company (hundred men), 50 cavalry and 200 native infantry under European command and 2 guns with proportionate artillerymen. The suggestion appears to have been accepted.

**Civil Administration**

The Resident's immediate instructions to Taylor were to follow the same administrative system as during his former management making as few changes as possible. Taylor's original proposals for civil establishment were considered as too high by the Resident and he severely limited his expenses on salary of the staff to 1/10th of the estimated net land revenue, the norm laid down by the Government of India for the Assigned Districts. Taylor was repeatedly required to revise his proposed schedules of establishment so that the final amount to be spent on staff for collecting revenue, keeping accounts, and maintaining law and order was reduced to Rs.17,256, the estimated net land revenue being Rs. 1,74,378. Taylor's justification for increased establishment was on the basis of revenue from jagirs which the Resident saw no reason to include as these were not to be attached till the Government of India's orders were received. He was however, permitted to spend Rs.2,328 per year on the personnel of the medical, education and public works departments in addition to the civil establishment. Including Taylor's own monthly salary of Rs. 1200 + Rs.500 deputation allowance and Rs. 250 of that of his Extra Assistant Deputy Commissioner, Sitaram Rao,
the percentage on net land revenue worked out to 18½%.
A reason, though not so mentioned, for the Resident's rigidity in cutting down the establishment, might be that Taylor found the Surapur treasury empty on assuming administration. The Resident had to borrow a lakh of rupees at 5% interest from a Hyderabad banker for current expenses. Out of these he paid off Rs. 40,000 annually due to the Nizam's Government on account of Andola-Nilogi, so that only Rs. 60,000 were available to Taylor to run the administration till revenue collections could be started.

The Government of India took long to sanction even this small establishment. Meanwhile Taylor had divided the principality into 2 taluqs and put Extra Assistant Deputy Commissioner Sitaram Rao in charge of one of them vis. Surapur. The other taluq headquarter was at Ijeri (in Andola taluq) but Taylor was not permitted to spend any money for building it. Instead, he was asked to utilize any available structure temporarily. His establishment charges were also temporarily sanctioned and he was allowed to engage a few more policemen than proposed in the final schedule of establishment. While according final sanction the Government of India observed that staff for policing a region comprising 3200 square miles and collecting revenue thereof appeared to be so inadequate as to be inefficient. They would agree to more personnel if asked for. The Government of India also pointed out that though the jagirdars might be enjoying revenue from their jagirs the charge of managing the whole region fell on the Government and thus increased the cost of establishment. But this liberal attitude on their part was made known to the Resident
so late as not to be of much use except for the few last months during the British administration of Surapur.

Revenue Administration and Expenditure

Taylor was not empowered to make any change in the basic structure of revenue administration. He could increase the state revenues only by systematising the administration, keeping regular accounts, removing laxity in collections by natwaris and in remittances to the State treasury. His report for 1858-59 shows a gross revenue of Company's Rs. 5,63,989.3.10 and a gross expenditure on all heads of Rs. 509,708.2.3. Thus he could show a surplus of Rs. 54,281.1.7 which was partly applied for returning the loan advanced by the Residency and the rest retained for current expenditure. He encouraged the cultivation of oilseeds and continued his experiments with cotton commenced during his previous administration. He obtained fresh cottonseed from Berar and Dharwar and produce from this New Orleans variety of seed was highly commended by Messrs Robert Strong & Co., prominent cotton exporters of Bombay. He offered 10 years kowl at lower rates for ryats who proposed to repair old wells and even 20 years kowl to those who would dig new ones. But as the ryats were not sure that British administration would continue not many persons came forward to cultivate waste lands. Almost half the khalsa lands though arable remained fallow. Even with the inadequate staff he managed to register in the Revenue Department all the holdings of the ryats but was not sure of the returns. "None of the returns obtainable in Shorapore represent the actual holdings and it is notorious that all ryots and especially all enamdars hold land,
largely in excess of what they own or are entitled to". Within the brief period of his administration he was neither empowered nor was it possible to carry out any regular, detailed survey or settlement. The bewildering varieties of land tenure continued as before and though he considered that the rate of assessment was lower than in Raichur Doab despite the better quality of soil and products in Surapur it could not be changed. All the same Taylor carried out a census of population, cattle, houses and wells in Khalsa villages. He reassured the ryats of their tenures and removed illegal exactions and cesses. However, he appears to have tried to increase the State land revenue by reducing the number of traditional village water tankas for which he had really no authority.

Among the other sources of revenue taxes on traders, baluti collections, salt and saltpetre, continued as before. Introduction of a tax on grazing was a new feature and it was farmed out for Rs. 4000 in Fasli 1269; so was the tax on arrack. The Town Fund for Surapur was also a new feature introduced at the suggestion of the Resident. It was not easy for Taylor to collect all dues exactly and punctually as in the lax administration of the late Raja people were accustomed to irregular and variable demands. But the contract for collecting sair and akkari was auctioned at a much higher rate. Taylor abolished the tax on vegetables and betel-leaf.

There could not be much alteration in items of expenditure either. Endowments to temples and annual charitable grants to brahmins were continued as in the previous regime. Removal of the royal family did mean a saving in all items of expenditure connected with it. But
provision for the Ranis and the royal family's poor but near relatives and old dependents, had to be made. It does not appear that Taylor secured or was required to secure separate sanction for expenditure except that on establishment. Possibly so long as it did not exceed the income he appears to have had a free hand. The State revenues, however, were not enough to clear the debts incurred by the Raja or to pay off the arrears of pay of hereditary servants for which separate arrangements had to be made.

Clearance of Arrears of Hereditary Servants, Raja's Debts and Other Claims

As a result of the British takeover most of the hereditary servants of the State were thrown out of employment. During the Raja's administration they had faithfully carried out their routine duties, even though they did not get their allowances regularly. Now their condition became most pitiable. As the Resident had rigidly cut down Taylor's schedule of establishments very few of them could be re-employed. The remaining large number became not only jobless but destitute. Taylor gave some trifling relief in extreme cases of destitution and suggested small pensions for these hereditary servants. The Resident was prepared to consider grant of some subsistence. But when Taylor pointed out that the arrears of pay of these hereditary servants during the 5 years of the Raja's regime were estimated at Rs. 2,20,000 the idea of pension or subsistence allowance receded into the background and Taylor had to plead passionately for at least payment of these arrears. The Resident was not at
all prepared for so heavy a demand and suggested that it should be reduced. In the absence of allowances the servants must have got at least some daily ration or other means of existence, he thought. But the most careful enquiry revealed nothing of the kind. It is indeed a matter of great wonder how they had managed to survive. A few had hereditary lands, but could neither cultivate them themselves nor rent them out. They had lost even their household property during the sack of Surapur and could not think of living by distress sale of household articles either. Taylor insisted on full discharge of arrears of jobless servants while those re-employed could be paid half of their claims. The jobless ones could then take to cultivating their lands or rehabilitate themselves in other ways by using the arrears as capital. The question dragged on till the Government of India authorized the Resident to advance a loan of Rs. 2 lakhs at 6% interest from the military treasury at Lingsugur. The loan was to be utilized not only for clearing off the arrears of the hereditary and other servants but debts incurred by the Raja and all other claims against the State. Taylor had devised a plan to compound the claims. Though the Raja's gross debts ran into a huge sum thorough investigation reduced the actual amount to be paid since double charges, exorbitant interest, excessive rate of exchange, false claims and those without documentary proof got rejected. The settlement and adjustment took nearly 2 years; private creditors of the Raja preferred to have at least 7 annas in a rupee than nothing at all. Even the hereditary servants lost 4 to 6 annas in a rupee. All the same, with compounding of the claims, surplus revenue from
Surapur which Taylor managed to save, and loan from the Government of India, all arrears and claims were settled before the State was handed over to the Misan.

Jagirs and Rent-free Lands

(a) General. - As soon as Taylor took over he began to compile a list of all jagirs in the principality so that a definite policy towards them could be formulated. If all of them were resumed and brought under direct British administration revenue could be substantially increased and mismanagement by jagirdars prevented. The jagirdars could be paid suitable cash stipends in lieu of their jagirs. The only exception to the general resumption would be a few jagirs held in lieu of stipends by some old, hereditary servants of the State and those given as endowments and charitable grants. However, as most of the jagirdars were the Raja's near relatives and looked upon their jagirs as much a mark of status as means of subsistence they would resent such a measure. Taylor, therefore, proposed to resume only those jagirs worth Rs. 70,350 freshly granted by the late Raja and to continue the rest whose estimated revenue was Rs. 1,10,000. Pending the Government's decision about this proposal, he sought permission to attach all the jagirs in the meanwhile. The Resident immediately negatived it and recommended that with Taylor should only settle the jagirdars the leviable amount and let them manage their jagirs under his supervision until final decision. Taylor informed that as in the past he would levy dharapatti and report on the actual amount later. Taylor proposed to resume the jagirs granted by the late Raja because he considered that these were granted
for unworthy or unnecessary purposes and because income
from them was 'excessive' in proportion to the State
resources. The latter reason is as fallacious as
tendentious, the estimated revenue from ancient jagirs
being much more than that from the later ones. One can
discern in this reasoning an underlying tone of Taylor's
hypercritical attitude towards the late Raja and all his
doings. The Resident on the other hand was objectively
reasonable. He considered that since the ancient jagirs
were continued during former British management such
jagirdars had earned a prescriptive right to retain them
in accordance with their sanads. But the late Raja also
had a right as much as his predecessors to grant jagirs.
These should be continued for lifetime of the holders with
the customary levy of dharanatti. Though the Government
of India regarded this alienation of lands by way of jagirs
as out of all proportion to the resources of the State they
approved the Resident's proposals. But they ordered that
every ancient jagir must produce his sanad the terms of
which should be honoured. These orders arrived rather late.
Meanwhile Taylor had completed his list of jagirs which
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totalled up to 239 villages. Of these he resumed 58 jagir
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villages, yielding a revenue of Hyderabad Rs. 70,838-4-5 and
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the rest worth Hyderabad Rs. 86,130-11-9 were continued to
the holders. Except the 2 villages granted to temples all
the rest were subjected to dharanatti, which amounted to
Rs. 16,699-11-4 in 1859. It was less than the full value
of the tax but Taylor preferred to be lenient as the
jagirdars had severely suffered in the previous regime. As
there was no complete survey Taylor could only estimate that
lands in jagir villages measured 4,95,470 bighas.
(b) **Special Cases.** - We had noticed earlier that the late Raja had resumed the jazira of his cousins, the sons of Divan Pid Naik and promised to pay them instead Rs. 900 p.m. in cash. The Court of Directors had directed the Resident to mediate between the Raja and his cousins. The latter now renewed their petition for restoration of their jazira. Some of them had been granted by the late Raja to others, the remaining did not equal the value of the stipend. But since they were satisfied with these the Government of India authorised restoration warning that no other claims of this family should be entertained. They, however, rejected the petitions of some other relations of the Raja whose lands had been similarly resumed and assigned to others. The ground for rejection was that these relations could not produce titles while the new assignees could. Even though the resumption by the late Raja might have been unjust the Government of India would not take cognisance of jazirdars ousted by a previous regime.

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(c) **Ranis.** - The jazira held by the nine widows of the late Raja were again treated differently. Some of these were inherited by the Ranis while others were granted by the late Raja. The Ranis had incurred debts and according to Taylor were unable to realize the full revenue of their jazira which amounted to Rs. 64,783. Most of them were lapsed to the State issueless and on that account their jazira would have/after their death. Three of the Ranis were not married to the Raja in a regular manner. Taylor proposed to pay the eldest Rani Rangamma Rs. 10,000 per annum and annual allowances ranging from Rs. 1,200 to 3,500 to the rest, the aggregate to all the nine Ranis amounting to Rs. 26,800 per year.
Though this amount appeared less than the value of their jasirs, the Ranis could not have collected even this amount had they managed the jasirs themselves. Besides, Taylor deducted the stipends given to their relations and arranged to liquidate their debts by instalments. The Resident agreed with Taylor that the Ranis should not be allowed to enjoy a false position and empty vanity by retaining jasirs, but directed that their private debts should not be refunded by the State. The Government of India approved of the cash stipends to the Ranis in lieu of jasirs proposed by Taylor much before passing their orders respecting other jasirs.

(d) Rent-free Lands of the Bedars. - The revenues of the principality were considerably decreased by the rent-free lands of the estimated value of Rs.1½ lakhs held by many classes of Bedars. In theory they were liable to military service in return for those lands, but in actual practice they had not been called upon to do so for several past decades. During Taylor's previous administration his proposal to register their lands had been dropped as force would have had to be employed against the Bedars who would have resisted the measure. The Government of India continued the policy of letting them alone as before on the recommendation of the Resident.

Introduction of the Company's Currency

Introduction of currency of its own is as much indicative of a country's sovereign power as of its economic strength. Taylor instinctively made use of this characteristic when he proposed to introduce the Company's rupee in the principality where it was never in use before, and during
a period when the final disposal of the territory was under consideration. Though Resident Davidson says in support of its introduction that the rupee in general use was that of Gadwal mint which had closed for some time, he does not substantiate this. In actual practice it would appear that the Hyderabad rupee was more current than the Gadwal rupee. Davidson agreeing to the proposal in principle directed Taylor to clarify the date of introduction and the rate of exchange with local currency. Taylor had originally proposed 15% the then prevailing market rate of exchange. But as demand for Company's rupees rose the exchange rate too increased to 18% and was likely to rise higher. Taylor could not apply as suggested by the Resident, the conversion rates used in Hyderabad Assigned Districts, as these were not uniform. Though the Resident regarded the intrinsic value of the local currency as the right basis for fixing the exchange rate he felt that it might involve loss to the Government in fresh conversion of Government's claims into Company's rupees of local coins already assessed in the Company's treasury. As the Company's currency was unknown before there could be no average of exchange rates in the past for fixing it nor was the fluctuating market rate the right basis. Taylor wriggled out of the difficulty by insisting upon receiving only Company's rupees so far as payments to the Government were concerned. At the time of jamabandi the following year he decided upon 112 Hyderabad Rs. for 100 Company's rupees as the exchange rate in consultation with village patwaris. Preparation of accounts, however, was thereby delayed in spite of employing extra hands for calculations. Though the measure received the Government of India's sanction it must be observed that the introduction
of Company's currency was not formal, nor officially proclaimed but used only for receiving the Government's dues and for purposes of accounting. Whether it found general circulation and acceptance, say in trade, is not known.

**Judicial Administration**

Taylor announced his intention of following the judicial pattern in Hyderabad Assigned Districts. The actual judicial Department at Surapur comprised just 4 clerks, with different designations whose total salary did not exceed Rs. 62 p.m. and 3 menial employees with a total salary of Rs. 36 p.m. In the tahsils revenue and judicial duties of the *tahsildars* were combined. Similarly in villages police *patils* were vested with magisterial authority, to order simple imprisonment for 4 days and fine upto Rs.2 for petty offences. They were to familiarise themselves with relevant rules in Wadurg District. Sitaramrao was afraid that they would abuse their power but Taylor was confident about them.

So far as civil suits were concerned the *tahsildars* dealt with cases involving upto Rs.300, the Extra Assistant Commissioner of those limited to Rs.1000, and the Deputy Commissioner cases above that sum. These courts started functioning from 1st October 1858. There were 42 suits for recovery of debts (total value Rs.16,655) of which only 9 could be disposed of within a year. There were 8 suits for hereditary offices which remained undecided. Procedure in these courts was the same as in Assigned Districts. A charge at the rate of 6 pies per *anna* for
issuing summons, executing decrees etc. was levied on each civil suit which helped to maintain two extra clerks in the tahsils. But stamp duty was not introduced, so the government had to bear the entire establishment charge. Taylor recommended its introduction; alternatively a percentage fee on suits could be charged. This would lead to lessening of vexatious litigation and more settlements out of court. It is surprising to learn that when the Deputy Commissioner used to be absent the Military Officer Commanding at Surapur was allowed the civil charge of the Sadar station at Surapur.

Taylor single-handedly dealt out what looks like common justice. However, he forwarded the trial proceedings to the Resident who in turn enquired from the Government of India the procedure to be followed and forwarded correspondence in 1848 which required the Resident to confirm death sentences passed by the panchayats. The Government of India replied that the Resident must confirm all death sentences before execution, but that no further reference to higher authorities was required. They clarified that rules in Hyderabad Assigned Districts regarding administration of criminal justice could not be applied to Surapur which was a confiscated territory. When Taylor conducted another murder case applying provisions of the (Indian) Penal Code, the Secretary of State remarked that, besides the Resident Taylor also ought to have been informed of the inapplicability of the Penal Code to Surapur. He advised the Government of India to reconsider their decision regarding confirmation of death sentences by the Resident, that is, suggested further reference to higher authorities. Neither the Secretary of State nor the
Government of India, however, cared to clarify what code was applicable to Surapur. The Secretary of State only remarked that the criminal court at Surapur resembled Political Criminal Court in Bombay Presidency and other parts of India, where such courts had been functioning well.

So far as administration of criminal justice was concerned, under Act XVI of 1877 the Resident issued the commission constituting the Deputy Commissioner as a Sessions Judge. He could pass sentences upto 7 years imprisonment but those above required the Resident's confirmation. Powers of the Extra Assistant Commissioner and the tahsildars were confined to passing sentences upto 6 months and 1 month of rigorous imprisonment and fines upto Rs.200 and Rs.20, respectively.

Crime statistics for the six month period from April to October 1858 which are available make interesting reading. There were just one murder, one armed assault and four highway robberies. Number of thefts was 34, smaller crimes 29 and petty offences 126. Conceding that many small offences might have gone unnoticed in the irregular conditions prevailing immediately after British occupation the ratio of crimes to a population of 2,21,797 is surprisingly low.

No sooner than Taylor took over he had to try a murder case. It was a crime passionnel on 19th March and proceedings started on 7th April 1858. The trial was conducted under Section 300 of the Penal Code prevailing in Hyderabad Assigned Districts. Taylor himself put questions to the witnesses, acquitted one of the accused who was falsely implicated and passed death sentence on
the murderer who had confessed his crime. There was neither a jury nor any other judicial assistance.

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Police

To save the cost of establishment Resident Davidson had suggested that the Bedar militia who held rent-free lands could be formed into a police corps for Surapur township. When Taylor pointed out that they were suspected of being involved in the revolt, nor could any saving be effected as they would have to be paid customary daily allowances and rations if called upon to perform police duties, the idea was dropped. All the same Taylor did propose to induct some idle Bedars (not from the holders of rent-free lands) as town policemen for duties at the treasury, 4star, at the gates of Surapur and in his escort, and those formerly in the siband for duties at the frontiers. Originally the number proposed was 250 men at 3 Rs. p.m. each. These were to be paid out of a separate Town Fund, as suggested by the Resident (to be subscribed to by inhabitants of Surapur township). Taylor's experience showed him that more policemen were needed at the gates, and in some pettas of Surapur which were centres of trade and manufacture. The extra establishment costing more than Rs.3,000 was temporarily sanctioned by the Resident and approved by the Government of India. In addition to the town police for general policing of the entire region it was divided into 4 thanas covering 800 sq.miles each and costing Rs.8,352 per year. When the Resident insisted on reduction in establishment Taylor decided not to have a separate police department as such, curtailed the number
of men, proposed to attach them to the tahsildar’s office
and have just 2 thanadars as subordinate assistants to the
thanadars. The pay of the thanadar being just Rs.20 p.m.
the position did not attract qualified men and real police
authority got vested in the tahsildar. The annual salary
bill of police in tahsil was Rs.9300. The reduced
establishment was temporarily sanctioned. The Government
of India considered this strength too moderate for efficient
functioning but their remark was received too late to have
any effect on the police establishment during the brief
British regime.

Taylor had also to reduce his original salary bill
of Rs.160 p.m. to Rs. 105 p.m. for his 20 mounted police.
He provided them with horses seized during the revolt on
condition that they must replace the animals if these died.
The Resident directed that the policemen must pay for them
and the sale proceeds be given to the Prize Committee. Taylor
boasts in his annual report for 1859 that on his arrival he
organized village policemen on the pattern of his former
Maldurg District. As a matter of fact rural police partly
paid by baluti collections and partly through grant of lands
was already in existence.

It appears from his report that he also posted extra
policemen at Kundoli (on the road to Hyderabad), Naikal
(opposite Yadgir), Ruddawagi (opposite Firozabad) and
Milinga, at an additional cost of Rs.566 for which he does
not appear to have secured previous or even inso facto
sanction. They were undoubtedly useful in checking plunder
of fields by the Bedars on both sides of the river.
Particularly on the northern frontier beyond the Bhima where
some Rohillas and others had been defying the Nizam's authority they could prevent the passage of armed mercenaries. The police on the frontiers along with those in the villages proved adequate when the rivers were full. But when these became fordable only partial vigilance was possible. It is surprising to find him recommend reduction in the rural police in spite of this. Possibly he wanted to resume their lands for the government. However, he did not agree with Sitaramnath that mounted and frontier police could be reduced. He recommended instead merger of Surapur police with one of the adjoining districts of Hyderabad recently assigned to the British. The recommendation had no chance of even being considered as the principality was soon gifted away.

Public Works

From Taylor's schedule of establishments we learn that he proposed to spend Rs. 900 annually towards the salary of just 7 employees like mistries etc. in the public works department. Fifteen other persons in this department would be thrown out of employment but Taylor could not help it as the Resident had severely and rigidly restricted the total salary bill of establishment. This small staff was to inspect the tanks, repair public buildings and the like. Rs. 67,326 were spent in 1858-59 on public works, but these were really speaking military works such as quarters for European soldiers and officers and accommodation for military stores, guns etc. Taylor prided himself that the military works provided jobs as building labourers for destitute retainers of the Raja who had become unemployed. The only public works proper undertaken by him
were the roads. A mile-long road outside Surapur town towards Hyderabad and another within the town itself were constructed both fit for carriages. Contracts were also given for constructing roads leading up to the Krishna and Bhima rivers. Taylor's enthusiasm for irrigation works was not matched by the superior authorities. The available funds were spent mostly on military works. This did not deter him from putting his dreams on paper. "In the whole of my experience I know of no district of the Deccan more admirably adopted by nature for works of irrigation, whether by canals or large tanks". He not only urged the completion of the tanks at Kashakur and Sirval (commenced in 1851-2 but abandoned thereafter) and the repair of the anicut at Benkanhalli which had been breached by the floods, but also outlined the scheme for another anicut over the Krishna which could irrigate 700 sq. miles in Surapur region alone, and 2 crops a year would be possible. The produce would find easy market through the railway from Sholapur to Bellary which was then in blue-print stage. "It is seldom that a railway and apparently feasible irrigation project exist together". If he elaborated his projects it was only for record, fully aware that nothing would be sanctioned in the near future.

Medical and Education Departments

The small amounts proposed by Taylor for the staff of these departments (Medical-Rs.1188); (Education-Rs.20 p.m. for a single school teacher) were sanctioned by the Resident without demur. An apothecary, a couple of vaccinators, and a curious appointment 'leechman' at Rs.5 p.m. besides three menial servants comprised the 'Medical
Department. The vernacular Marathi school at Surapur was expected to attract students from brahmin families. Taylor utilised the surplus money from the Town Fund to set up a school each at Ijeri and Malhalli. He would have established more vernacular schools had funds permitted.

**Summary Up of Taylor's Administration**

In concluding his annual report for 1859-60 Taylor wrote, "So far I earnestly trust I have fulfilled in some part, the expectations of the Resident in nominating me to my old district, for which my sympathies and interest are as active as ever; and I gratefully acknowledge his support of me in all measures of local importance, and in the independent and responsible situation he has permitted me to occupy". As a matter of fact Taylor's old seal was lacking nor could it be expected to last for ever. In August 1859 Raichur Doab was added to his charge without extra remuneration. He was looking forward to leave and retirement. His health was no longer good enough. He became anxious over his furlough. He was left with little time for Surapur and towards the last months of his service he was in a holiday mood and undertook a pleasure tour of the regions adjoining his charge proper. Most of the real work of administration was left to Sitaram Rao, the Extra Assistant Commissioner. Taylor gratefully acknowledged his services as well as those of Sourappa and Bhimrao, tehsildars brought by him from the Assigned Districts and of hereditary daftardar Venkatrao. Taylor's annual report itself is proof enough of his declining health and interest. To make it look impressive he padded it considerably with gazetteer-like information on Surapur's geology, climate,
land tenures etc. Though quite useful otherwise the annual report was not the fittest place for it. He made all kinds of recommendations which had no chance whatever of being even considered as the final disposal of the principality itself was uncertain. To enlarge and embellish his own achievements he filled the report with the most adverse remarks and reflections upon the administration of the late Raja, who had been his ward earlier and of whose administration he had no direct knowledge. These were pardonable lapses in an administrator who had done his best for Surapur in the past. His regret at having to leave many measures for advancement unfinished looks real and heartfelt.

The Principality Gifted Away to the Nizam

On 26th February 1860 Taylor received a farewell address in Marathi from the residents of Surapur recognising and recording all the fine work he had done for them and the principality. After his departure J.H. Bullock succeeded him as Deputy Commissioner in charge of Surapur but the actual administration was carried on by Sitaram Rao whose reports, on the guidelines given by Taylor, earned him commendation by the Government of India. Nothing of importance, however, took place during this period.

Meanwhile another treaty with the Nizam was being negotiated with a view to rewarding him for the support and assistance given by him to the British during the Great Revolt of 1857-58. Surapur once again became a mere pawn in the game of power politics. If we are to believe Taylor the people of the principality would have preferred the British to the Nizam as their new masters. But in the
British empire in India firmly rooted in after the Revolt there was no place for popular will. It would appear that the Government of India argued to establish its exclusive sovereignty over Surapur only with a view to making it look like a reward to the Nizam. Just 2 months after the assertion of their claim to Surapur the Government of India communicated their decision to gift it away to the Nizam. "His Excellency in Council is further pleased to cede to His Highness in perpetuity the State of Shorapur, which by the rebellion of the late Rajah lapsed to the British Government whose title thereto has been shown in my letter No.1680 dated 7 May last to be absolute and indefensible". This gift was embodied in the 2nd Article of the Treaty of 1860 with the Nizam. Any surplus revenue was to be applied to clear the late Raja's debts for the rest of which the Nizam was to be responsible and the creditors were to be told that the British would no longer either stand guarantee for payment or intercede on their behalf later.

Surapur was formally handed over to the Nizam's taluqdar on 11th February 1861. But arrangements for actual and final transfer were completed by 28th February 1861. Surplus cash in the treasury amounting to Rs. 37,691 was transferred to the military chest at Lingsugur and finally credited to the Government of India's accounts. The Raja's debts had been paid off by then and arrangements made to pay the allowances of the Rani's upto the end of February 1861. The British Government took no guarantee for the continuance of these allowances or of the presents given by British officers. Though the Prize Committee was not yet able to close its accounts these would have nothing to do with the Nizam. The temple property had not been claimed...
as yet and was to be held in deposit by the Prize Committee. Short term prisoners were released on security. The rest were to complete their term under the new regime. Detachments of the Hyderabad Contingent stationed at Surapur returned to their respective headquarters. The English records at Surapur were transferred to Hyderabad Residency. Naturally there was to be no longer any payment to the Nizam on account of Andola-Nilogi.

Thus ended the British connection with the principality of Surapur. An article in a treaty between the British and the Nizam 60 years before had started the relationship. Another article in another treaty between the same two powers ended that relationship 60 years later.

Notes and References:

2. Idem, No.165.
3. Resident Davidson to Govt. of India, 11 May 1858, FDP, Part A, July 1860, Nos.556-69.
4. The Peshwa was conquered in 1818 but Surapur chauth due to him was relinquished by the British only in 1833.
5. Idem, Govt. of India to Resident at Hyd., 7 May 1860.
6. PDFS, 24 June 1861.
7. FPSP, 30 Dec.1859, Nos.170-1.
8. Idem, No.177.
9. Idem, No.209. Contrast Story (p.408) "I issued a general amnesty".
10. Taylor to Thornhill, 5 Aug.1858, para 10, FDP, Part A, July 1860, Nos.556-69; Story (p.409). The few that survived are either in possession of present descendants of Surapur Rajas or deposited in State Central Archives, Hyderabad. Aurangzeb's panja letter, however, is framed and still hangs in the Durbar hall at Surapur. It has all the outward marks of authenticity but the date therein indicates that it was issued in his first regnal year. In Sir Jadunath Sarkar's voluminous Aurangzeb there is no reference to issue of such a letter during the emperor's first regnal year; but Shri Kapatral believes that it was drafted during Aurangzeb's vicereignty of the Deccan but issued after his coronation.

11. FPC, 16 Apr.1858, Nos.84-6.

12. Ibid. and No.87.

13. FPC, 30 Apr.1858, Nos.109-10 and FPSP, 30 Dec.1859, No.205. Even stocks of rice belonging to Rani Rangamma were sold off by the Prize Committee: FPSP, 30 Dec.1859, No.207.


15. FPSP, 30 Dec.1859, No.190. According to Story (p.405), 3rd April. Taylor says that he covered 500 miles in 3 days from Hyderabad to Surapur, which is improbable. There is a highly colourful account of his arrival in Surapur. (Ibid., pp.405-7).


18. FDP, Part A, June 1860, No.418. There are no documents to indicate whether the trials took place before or after Taylor's arrival, though Taylor reports in Ibid. and Story (pp.409-10) as if these were conducted by him. But Sidi Jehar, one of the accused, was certainly tried by Capt. Campbell, who recommended mercy but was overruled by the Resident's additional consideration that the trial itself was irregular. The Govt. of India upheld the legality of the trial. FPSP, 16 Mar.1859. Tusaduk Hussain, leading Arab jamadar (whom Taylor simply calls 'a Musalman of Hyderabad') was hanged at Surapur in early Aug.1858. Hyderabad Affairs, Vol.III,p.220.


22. Taylor's letters, 12 May, 14, and 25 June 1858, and Thornhill's replies, 31 May and 22nd June, 1858.

23. Ibid., Resident to Govt. of India, 3 July 1860.
24. FPC, 8 Apr. 1859, Nos. 351-3.
25. As per Trigonometrical Survey it was only 2264 sq. miles, FDP, Part A, July 1860, No. 420. Taylor appears to have exaggerated to secure as much establishment as he could.
26. FDP, Part A, July 1860, Nos. 556-69, Govt. of India to Resident, 7 May 1860.
27. FDP, Part A, June 1860, Nos. 418-33.
29. Population - 1,426,16; cattle (including bullocks, buffaloes, horses, asses, sheep and goats) - 1,874,02; Houses - 28,825; Wells - 1,196.
32. Rs. 5,21,724.
34. Khalsa villages numbered 326.
35. Presumably these were jagir villages belonging to the Ranis which Taylor was allowed to resume in lieu of each stipends. Their value in Company's Rs. was 64,783-4-3.
36. Break-up of the rest:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of villages</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Class of jagirdars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>73</td>
<td>52,280</td>
<td>Raja's relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>6,000</td>
<td>Hereditary sillehars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>13,810</td>
<td>Charitable grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2,690</td>
<td>Temple grants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
38. FPC, 31 Dec. 1858, Nos. 86-8.
39. Contrast Story (p. 142), "I recommended that the Ranis should have theirs [i.e. estates] restored to them".
41. 

42. For E.I. Company's efforts to secure permission to set up a mint at Calcutta in mid-1750 see Fort William - India House Correspondence, Vol.I, p.xlviii; they secured it only after the battle of Plassey.

43. By 'Hyderabad rupee' is meant the coinage current in the Nizam's dominions. The actual varieties of rupees in usage there, were 'Halea', 'Ganj-bukar', 'Marayappett' and 'Bagh Chalni', all varying in value and composition of silver and alloys but roughly equivalent to .13/1 of the Company's 'kaldar' rupee. S.N. Prasad, Paramountcy under Dalhousie, p.211.

44. FDP, Part A, June 1860, No.420. 45. Idem, No.419.

46. FDP, Part A, July 1860, Nos.556-69, Taylor to Thornhill, 25 June 1858. The designations were Rukka-navis, Izkarna-vis, Nasir, and Head Karkam.

47. FDP, Part A, June 1860, No.420.

48. FPC, 11 June 1858, Nos.80 and 84.

49. PLS6, 16 Mar.1859, paras 33-41.


52. FPC, 11 June 1858, No.81.


54. Sitaram Rao, in charge of Surapur division also asked for larger strength and Taylor agreed with him.


56. FDP, Part A, June 1860, No.420. All the same Taylor took the trouble of sending surveys, level sections and specifications for these.


59. Story, pp.421-41. Chapters XVI and XVII contain just a few paragraphs on his second administration.

60. FDP, Part A, June 1860, No.420.


63. FDP, Part A, April 1861, Nos.413-7.

64. Story, p. 442.
65. This gift of the principality was announced in a letter exclusively written for the purpose of mentioning awards to the Nizam and his officials. FDP, Part A, Nov.1860, Govt. of India's letter to the Resident at Hyderabad dt. 7 July 1860. Capt. Hastings Fraser argues (Memoir of James Fraser, p.420) that it could not be regarded as a reward to the Nizam since it was his 'recognized fief'. The fallacy of this view need not be stressed. It is enough to say that Surapur had never rendered any feudal services to the Nizam, his exaction of tribute was an arbitrary demand and after 1842 he ceased to have any claim to the principality except receipt of Rs.40,000 on account of Andola-Wilogi.


68. FDP, Part A, Nov.1860, Govt. of India to Resdt. 7 July 1860, para 5.

69. FPP, A, March 1861, No. 295.

70. 4th Mar. as given in HPMK, I, p.255 without any proof or reference is an instance of editorial carelessness.

71. FDP, Part A, April 1861, Nos. 413-7.