

DESPATCH

EAST AFR. PROT.

N^o. 21089

21089

12 JUN 08

TOYERSON No.
Miller 2000

1908

May

Last previous Paper

Govt
43677/1

42351

(Subject.)

Land Titles Order

Submit -

Share copies to library (Minutes.)

W. Riley.

Mr. Combe is now in the country & would, no doubt, be able to give you any further information which you might require on any point.

H. J. R.

25/6

~~Her best
regards~~

I have had time to have a look & I think at first it covers out the ideas outlined in 43677/1, which were offered in general terms.

Satisfactory from here, I think, been made for safe keeping, the interests of the Crown - see cop. 222 of 28. 2203 45.

With me, and to exec 24-36, I confess that I prefer the present of the Ceylon acts, see 60 x 1/1 (See cop. 222)

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
W. A. S. PROTECTORATE
1908

ext subsequent Paper

G. R.

47351

To allow a person who has obtained possession thus
by fraud or mistake to recover in respect of the
payment of damages is a very strong rule.

Considerations of res judicata and laches also
etc may give a person a right of land a special
value in the eyes of the defendant but true owner
so that his loss cannot be replaced by the substitution
of any other piece of land of equal value, and consequently
damages are however based on such affair
no adequate relief - (This is the basis of the
English doctrine of specific performance of contracts
relating to land.)

The C.R.S. recognises that morality under the code is
essential, and I agree. But probably even still
(or at least if) within the given time-limit the
true owner is entitled to sue the fraudulent
possessor, leaving the result of innocent
purchasers etc for valuable consent.

(I might here observe that form of words the
meant seems to denote the less favourable
rather than the English view on this point)
subject

There are a certain number of verbal or moral
imperfections - e.g. see Sec. 14(1) (b) (ii) (g), 42

A. J. R.
2017

A.M. July 29
at once

I think the
be held better
method, the
method and
the law and
not a single
the English
for the present
concerning
and
etc.

A.M.

1889
Governor's Office JUN 08

Nairobi,

May 16th 1908.

EAST AFRICA PROTECTORATE.

No. 240.

(Incl. 2)*

My Lord,

As desired in Lord Elgin's telegram of the 26th December, I have the honour to submit two authenticated copies of "The Land Titles Ordinance 1908", as finally passed by the Legislative Council, together with a Memorandum by the Crown Advocate.

Although the Bill passed the 3rd reading on the 6th ultimo, it was not found possible to get it through the Press till to-day: it had to be reprinted several times, and some unavoidable delay occurred in making the necessary corrections.

2. The Memorandum by the Crown Advocate fully explains the objects, scope and reasons of the Ordinance and I would limit my observations to the following points:-

Section 18 (1). Peremptory powers are taken under this Section making it incumbent on all persons having any interests in immoveable property to come forward and claim within 12 months, failing which the title lapses, subject to the right of representation to the Governor within 12 years as provided in Section 17 (2). These powers are necessary for the proper working of the Ordinance and follow the Ceylon way.

Section

H. M. PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR THE DOMINION,

DOWNTON STREET,

LONDON, S.W.

41

Section 34. This section provides for any person wrongfully deprived of immovable property by fraud or for other reasons noted in the Section, receiving damages for the same. But the immovable property itself remains with the person whose claim thereto has been adjudicated by the Court. The power taken to refine the return of immovable property to a person who has been deprived of it by fraud, allowing damages in lieu, would appear to be opposed to common law, but the matter was carefully discussed in the Legislative Council, and deemed to be necessary in order to secure that finality for orders of the Court as to title on which the whole object of the Ordinance hinges.

2228

Schedule F. The fees prescribed in this Schedule are less than those suggested in paragraphs 14 to 16 of the Memorandum by His Honour Judge Hamilton of the 27th June, which accompanied my despatch No. 565 of the 19th October 1906, and it is therefore possible that they may not pay the full cost of the enquiry. This, however, cannot be determined yet, and if they do not, we shall derive advantages in other ways as explained in paragraph 18 of Mr. Combe's Memorandum. Your Lordship will also observe that for the purposes of the Schedule no land shall be assessed at a higher value than Rs. 1,500 = #100 per acre. The land in Mombasa is actually valued at a higher rate than this, but is generally held under titles in connection with which there would be no dispute, and under these circumstances it would not be fair on the

Mombasa land owners to pay the proportion of the enquiry which would be represented by the actual difference between the value of these lands and those situated in the outside districts.

3. I trust the Ordinance will meet with Your Lordship's approval should it do so it will be brought into effect as soon as it has been assented to.

I have the honour to be,
with the highest respect,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,
affectionate servant,

H. A. Thynne

INCLOSURE NO. 2

In Despatch No. 200 of May 15, 1908.

C. O.

21089

12 JUN 08

MEMORANDUM
THE LAND TITLE & OWNERSHIP 1908.

Reasons for enquiring into the validity of titles to land in the Coast Strip.

1. The reasons for enquiring into the validity of titles to land in the Coast Strip have already been given before the Secretary of State, and convenience we repeat in this Memorandum.

A large area of land in the Coast Strip is privately owned, but the greater portion is claimed by the Government. Green or East Indies. At the present moment it is not possible to ascertain what proportion of these lands the Government is really entitled to.

All waste land and land not hitherto cultivated as well as land which has been cultivated in the past but is not definitely claimed by the Government, but until it is possible to separate from the total area claimed by private owners, the Government is not only not aware of the extent of its own concessions but it is in many cases unable to communicate with them in the best way. This is particularly true in the case of larger farms, the number of which under the most shadowy claim of right or basis of right at all are extending and placing to which, if the Government has no title, will in course of time acquire a good holding title.

This system of extending plantations which commenced some 8 years ago, has during the last 2 or 3 years, particularly in the neighbourhood of Changmooe and Channing, rapidly increasing, as the number of years necessary to acquire a possessory title is only 12, it will shortly become impossible in many instances for the Government to affirm its right to its own property which is thus slipping through its hands.

Apart from the question from the Government's point of view as the owner is the great uncertainty of private title. And the danger that a purchaser runs of having to pay the costs of an expensive law suit in order to retain his purchase together with a risk of failure, makes the investor and particularly a European investor very wary of putting his money into such a doubtful venture. Consequently the value of land is usually appreciated, and what might and should be a sound investment on good security becomes in many cases a more risky speculation and almost a gamble.

These remarks apply to plantation land on the coast equally with garden or building land on the Island of Penang or in the immediate neighbourhood.

At the present time there is a considerable number of planters who are turning their attention to land in the neighbourhood of Malindi with the object of growing cotton, rubber, fibres, coconuts, etc., and investing in connection therewith a large amount of capital, but owing to the insecurity of title offered by native owners and the inability of the Government to lease them the land they require owned to their not knowing what is Government and what is private land, there is considerable concern of the

resolving a distinct check at the outset.

In short it may be said generally that the insecurity of title to land on the coast does and will materially retard the economic development of the country if the difficulties that are now observed are not removed from the path. There is however no doubt that if they are removed great attraction will be held out to the profitable and secure investment of European capital and the Government will benefit both in being able to utilize their own lands to the best advantage and in the general development of the country.

H. The manner in which it is proposed to settle titles to land under the Ordinance.

10. In Ceylon and I believe elsewhere where it has been found necessary to employ extraordinary methods for settling the title to land a law has been enacted requiring all persons who claim to be entitled to land or any interest in the land to come forward and prove their titles within a specified time. To the persons whose claims are upheld by the Court an enquiry into such claim a certificate of title is granted by the Court. Whilst the claims of those persons which are rejected by the Courts are henceforth barred. All land in respect of which no certificate of title is granted is deemed to be Crown land and is dealt with accordingly.

11. The method adopted in Ceylon has been followed in this Ordinance. The Ordinance requires all persons who claim any interest in land within the areas to which the Ordinance may by translation be applied shall send to the Recorder of Titles a statement

setting forth the description of the land and interest therein which they claim. Such claim to be made within 12 months from the date on which the Ordinance is applied to the area in which the land the claim or interest is situate. The period allowed for serving in claims is longer than that allowed in Ceylon and longer than would be necessary if all persons owing land or having an interest in land were resident in this Protectorate. It is however believed that a considerable number of persons whose interest will be affected by the Ordinance are resident in Zanzibar, Muscat and elsewhere and therefore sufficient time must be allowed to permit the requirements of the law to be properly advertised in those parts where persons interested may be resident.

1. On receipt of any claims to land the Recorder of Titles can immediately proceed to enquire into the claims and he is given the powers of a Judge of a Subordinate Court for that purpose. In the event of the Recorder of Titles being of opinion that the claim has not been made out he may give judgment accordingly and such judgment unless appealed against and reversed on appeal is binding for all times on that claimant. In the event of the Recorder of Titles being satisfied that the claim has been made out, he may, if 12 months have elapsed since the application of the Ordinance to the land claimed, give judgment accordingly and grant to the claimant a certificate setting forth a description of the land and the interest to which he is entitled. No final judgment or certificate of title can be entered or granted in favour of a claimant until 12 months have elapsed and until the claims of all persons claiming to be interested in the same land

have been heard, & otherwise there would be danger of the Recorder of Titles entering judgment in favour of a person who appears to have a good title, and of some other person afterwards putting in a claim superior to that of the first claimed.

13. After the expiration of 12 months all land in respect of which no claim shall have been made or if made shall have been upheld will be deemed to be Crown land.

14. The Ordinance provides that this shall be granted to the persons entitled thereto one of the three kinds of certificate according to interest to which he has been found to possess: Namely

1. A certificate of ownership to be granted to the freeholder.
2. A certificate of Mortgage to be granted to a Mortgagor.
3. A certificate of interest to be granted to the person proving interest other than those mentioned above.

On every certificate of ownership there will be endorsed all Mortgages and other interests in the land, the subject of the certificate proved by any person. It was originally intended that only certificate of ownership should be granted, Mortgages and other interests being sufficiently evidenced by endorsement on that certificate. But it is considered that as this Ordinance should be followed by another Ordinance applying what may be termed as the Torren's system of registration of transactions in land to all land brought under this Ordinance, and as it has not yet been determined as to whether under such Ordinance separate cer-

certificate should be granted to Mortgagees, lessees and other having interest in land other than freehold that it would be advisable to issue separate certificates under this Ordinance, thus following the procedure laid down by the Ceylon Act. As the only extra work entailed by granting separate certificates of Mortgage and Interest will be the filling in of the printed forms and attaching the signature of the Recorder of Titles the Ordinance makes no provision for any fee being charged for those certificates.

The Ordinance prescribes that a fee at the rate of 1 percent on the value of the land the subject of a Certificate of ownership shall be paid by the person entitled to receive such Certificate.

Provision is made whereby the land shall not be valued for the purpose of this fee at a higher value than £100 an acre.

This provision has been inserted in the interest of the owners of land in Mombasa which land is of considerable value and is generally held under titles with regard to which there is no dispute. It is thought that but for a provision to this effect such land owners would be required to pay too large a proportion of cost of the working and of an Ordinance from which they will derive little if any, benefit.

It is difficult to estimate the revenue which may be expected from these fees as it is not known to what extent land is privately owned or what is a fair value to place upon land not in the immediate neighbourhood of the important centres or the railway. It may however be taken that the fees paid under the Ordinance will not pay the whole of the cost of the working of the Ordinance and that therefore some portion of that cost

cost will have to be met by general revenue. When however the immediate advantage which will be derived by the Government in ascertaining what land is Crown land and can be dealt with as such, and by the prevention of the encroachments which are now being made on that land by Indians and Swahilis and the ultimate advancement of the increased revenue from stamp duties and registration fees on land transactions are taken into consideration it would seem but just that the whole of the cost of the working of this Ordinance should not be put upon the land owners other than the Crown.

16. No hearing fee will be charged for the Enquiry held in the Court of the Recorder of Titles and in the event of disputes a successful claimant will not ordinary receive any part of the expenses he may have been put in proving ~~fair~~ claim, from an unsuccessful claimant. As however it is necessary to put some check on frivolous or vexatious claims provision is made whereby the Recorder of Titles shall order an unsuccessful claimant to pay Court fees to any sum not exceeding 2 percent on the value of the property claimed. With that limitation the amount of the fee to be paid is left to the discretion of the Recorder of Titles in order that he may in any case in which he believes that the claim is put forward in the honest belief that the claim is a good one order the claimant to pay a small Court fee only, but that when he believes the claim to be a frivolous one that he may order the claimant to pay the full fee allowed by the Ordinance. Further to protect land owners from having to defend their title to their land against frivolous

vexatious claims provision is made enabling the Registrar of Titles to order an unsuccessful claimant to pay the whole or a portion of the expenses incurred by the unsuccessful claimant in meeting ~~him~~ a frivolous vexatious or fraudulent claim.

17. A certificate of title granted under the Ordinance is conclusive evidence of the facts stated in the certificate and cannot be set aside except in a case when it is proved that the certificate has been obtained by the fraud and the property the subject of the certificate has not been transferred to an innocent holder.

18. Provision is made whereby persons deprived of land through fraud may recover damages from the person or persons who have perpetrated the fraud, and the Ordinance provides for penalties to be imposed on persons making fraudulent claims.

19. Provision is made protecting the rights of the Crown and the public in the land to which the Ordinance may be applied. As it would be found impossible to induce natives to come forward and prove rights of way and rights of water the Ordinance enacts that nothing in any certificate of title shall derogate from any rights to or over water or rights of way subsisting at the date of the issue of such certificate.

20. The provisions of the Ordinance are more particularly dealt with in the Schedule attached hereto, and in some respects follows the Ceylon Land Registration Ordinance 1907 (No. 3 of 1907). A copy of that Ordinance was not received until after the Ordinance under consideration had been introduced in the Legislative Council and was therefore only used for the purpose of improving upon or adding to the provisions.

of the Ordinance as introduced.

21. This Ordinance should be transmitted to the Secretary of State for his approval and should not be assented to by His Excellency the Governor before such approval has been notified.

Sd/ R. M. Gamble

Nairobi,

CROWN ADVOCATE.

16.08

THE LAND TITLES ORDINANCE 1906.

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REMARKS.

SECTION 1.

Short Title.

Section 2.

This Ordinance to come into force in such places and at such time as may be proclaimed.

Section 3.

Definition.

As the term "immoveable property" is used in all Indian Acts which have been applied to the Protectorate and also in the existing local Ordinances regarding the registration of contracts relating to land that term has been retained in this Ordinance.

The definition of that term is the same as that in the Indian Acts with the addition of the words "(other than coconut trees)" which have been added as necessary in the consequence of the number of cases in which the coconut trees are owned by persons other than the owners of the land.

Section 4.

A Recorder of Titles to be appointed.

Section 5.

Anything which may be done by the Recorder of Titles may be done by the Deputy Recorder of Titles.

Section 6.

Jurisdiction of the Land Registration and Court.

In the Ceylon Act (No. 5 of 1905) the Court constituted to decide claims to land under that Ordinance have sole jurisdiction to try any action (excepting Mortgage suits) which may be brought relating to land between the time of the application of the Act to the land and the registration of the Title to the land. In the East Africa Ordinance the Land Registration Court merely inquires into and decides claims made under the Ordinance. It would be quite impossible for the Recorder to perform his duties under the Ordinance with the jurisdiction required if his jurisdiction were to be enlarged. Provided the Recorder is kept informed as to any action relating to land within his jurisdiction no complaint should arise on account of his jurisdiction being thus limited.

Section 7.

Judgments of Recorder of Titles to be final and conclusive unless appeal be preferred within 30 days.

Under the Civil Procedure Code a Judge is required to take down the evidence verbatim. To save a waste of time it is required by this Section to record only the names of the witnesses unless required by the either of the parties to take a full note.

(2) Procedure to be adopted

Section 3 & Sub-sections (2), (3) & (4)

(3) Procedure to be adopted in respect of the Ceylon Act.

(4) Consolidation of claims.

Section 9. In the majority of cases and especially Court will sit at such time there is any dispute as to boundaries, such as the Recorder or will fix it necessary to hold of Title and determine his Court or not in the land in subject of the case.

Section 10.

A cadastral Survey of the land to be handed over to the Registration Court.

Section 11.

Survey to be taken by the Recorder of Titles or Deputy Recorder.

Section 12.

Record to be done by the Recorder.

Section 13.

All documents pertaining to the transfer by the Recorder of Titles to be submitted so soon as possible the contrary be done.

Section 14.

Recorder of Titles may the sanction of the Governor or other forms required by the Ordinance.

This is advisable as experience has proved the pro forma forms to be unsatisfactory.

Section 15.

The reason for holding a meeting 12 months earlier which claims may be made to the Auditor in regard of the same will be given herewith.

For the convenience of all the Auditor should be in the District Commissioner's office.

This Section imposes upon the Governor the duty of notifying the provisions of the Ordinance in such places within and without the Protectorate as he may consider, and the persons who may be affected by the Ordinance may be residing and other required Native or Indian to explain the requirements of the Ordinance to native in their districts to assist them in making their claims.

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Section 16. Sub-section (1) on Act 1908 states that land with regard to rights or title to land or in respect of any land which is given over to Indian lands. Under this Ordinance the Crown is not required to put in a claim, but has the right to do so and claim, and any land with regard to which a certificate of ownership ~~is given~~ is granted is deemed to be Crown land.

Sub-section (2) is Section 57 (3) of the Ceylon Act, with the substitution of 12 years for 40 years, the former being the period of limitation in the Coast Strip.

Section 17. Sub-sections (2) & (3) of this Section ~~are~~ the persons interested Sub-sections (2) & (3) of Section 28 of the time and place the Ceylon Act, and where he will ~~be~~ determine disputed doubtful claims.

Section 18. There will certainly be a number of cases in which there will be disputes between Indians and Natives the law of whom will in many cases be unable to engage professors of Native Aboriginal assistance in placing their cause before the Court, and provision has therefore been made enabling Government Officer to have a right to assist Natives by conducting their business and any whenever it may be deemed necessary in the interest of justice.

Section 19. This Section is explained in paragraph 14 of the Memorandum herewith and is based upon Section 53 of the Ceylon Act.

Section 20. Any certificate of title issued in the Ordinance shall be conclusive evidence of the several matters therein contained.

The value to the Government of the
service to be one under the Ordinance would
in some cases be considerably diminished if
the boundaries of the land are not marked in
the land itself. The serious question
which arose was as to whether the cost of
the erection of the boundary marks should
fall upon the adjoining owner of the land
or should be borne by the Government and
paid for out of the revenue derived under
the Ordinance. It was contended that the
owners of small shambas could not find the
money necessary to erect substantial and
permanent boundary marks. As the result of
an investigation which was made into this
contestation by a Special Committee of the
Council the Council were advised that it
would be impossible for a very large propor-
tion of the small shamba holders to erect
such boundary marks as would be necessary
to mark the boundaries between their land
and Crown land and it was recommended that
a discretion should be left to the Receiver
of Taxes to order boundary marks to be
erected at the expense of the Government
whenever he thought fit. It may be assumed
that owners of land abutting upon land
privately owned will erect boundary marks
or otherwise mark their boundaries for their
own protection.

Section 22.
Instrument of Title
be deposited with
Registrar of Titles
before the issue of a
Certificate.

Section 23.
certified copies instru-
ments may be returned
by proprietor after
examination of such
titles or relates to the
property included in
Certificates of Title.

Section 24.
case of default entit-
ed to a certificate
signed before the
Registrar for grant.
The certificate of title
certificate to be
entitled to the person
whom the property
shall have devolved.

Section 25.
The Receiver of Taxes to keep a
list containing a
list of all certifi-
cates issued.

tion 27. The provisions of Sub-sections (2) (3) and (4) are necessary if this Ordinance is to a Certificate of Title be followed by an Ordinance applying the "Torrens" system of registration.

tion 28 (1)

Certificate of Title
to confer rights
of mines, minerals
mines or water
is expressly mentioned.

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Rights to and over
ter and rights of way explained in paragraph 19 of the Memorandum
serve.

ction 29.

Certificate deemed to be
istered when marked
th the folium and
lume as embodied in
e register book.

tion 30.

Certified copies to be
ed on receipt of
cribed fee.

tion 31.

Section of Register
book.

tion 32.

I claims to be authen-
cated by the claimant.

tion 33.

Reserves of Titles. This Section is explained in the
order and unsuccessful paragraph 16 of the Memorandum.
aliant to a court
is not exceeding
per cent on the value
the property claimed.

tion 34.

A action for damages
in certain cases be brought
a person wrongfully
privied or irrecoverable
property.

tion 35.

Action must be brought
thin 12 years from the
te of such desrivation.

Saving as to infants
Persons of unsound

tion 37.

Title which should be
at under this Ordinance
be barred if not made
thin the prescribed

Section 38.
Saving as to the rights
of the Crown and the
public.

Section 39.
Recorder of Titles may in
certain cases summon persons
to exact a certificate or

This provision is inserted to enable
the Recorder of Titles to correct errors
made in the filling up of a Certificate
of Title or in a Memorandum on
the Certificate also to obtain posses-
sion of a Certificate which is in the
hands of a person by whom it has been
obtained by fraud.

Section 40.
Where refusing to produce a
certificate of Title when
called to do so by the
Recorder of Titles may be
committed to prison.

This is a usual provision in Acts
which make provisions for the issue
of Certificates of Titles.

Section 41.
Recorder of Titles
may issue a Certificate
to replace one lost etc.

Section 42.
Notice to be given before
issuance of such certificate.

Section 43.
Remedies.

Section 44.
Section under Section 43
shall affect remedy of
any injured.

Section 45.
Recorder of Titles may issue
a certificate of possession in favour
of the Crown.

Section 46.
Obstructing, resisting,
or obstructing execution of writ
may be called upon to show

Section 41 of the Ceylon Act.

Section 47.
Obstructing
or hindering the
execution of writ.

Section 42 of the Ceylon Act.

Section 48.
Laws relating to the
registration and record of
titles is not to apply to
certificates of titles.

Section 49.
Penalty under this

ction 50.

when fee for certificate
ownership shall be payable.

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ion 51.

Recorder of Titles not
able to any action for
matter bona fide done
or omitted to be done.

ion 52.

Power to make rules.

Sw. Dr. M. Connel

CROWN ADVOCATE.

36. Sat. EST
21.8.85.

31 July 48

Mr.

DRAFT

S. A. P. N^o 361

Mr. J. J. Weston

MINUTE.

Mr. Evans 3d per
Mr. Neale 6.31

Mr. Just.

Mr. Antrobus.

Mr. Cox.

Sir C. Lucas.

Sir F. Hopwood.

Col. Scotty.

The Earl of Orkney.

Sir, I have the honor to
transmit you recd. N^o 240
of the 15th May, containing
transcripts of the Land Titles
Ordinance 1808, as farmed after
legislative Council.

2. The ordinance is made
to make satisfactory but it
is not the intention of
any but the title of
an existing title as Sec. 34-36
stand at present.

3. It is not in my opinion
just that a factor should be
allowed to buy off his claim

of land by paying a sum total
which he allowed him to

you will remember that Neale
has adopted a similar provision
for money compensation or course
of friends to Neale who became
cross roads & dealt with this case
Do not know whether this fact
alters the position at all of
not what is said for Mr. Neale
needs to be repeated.

On the day he goes
before he could be recompensed
in action in my opinion
for damages

remain in possession of it on
behalf of Farmers. Continuation
of neighbourly accommodation,
just etc. may give a place or
block of land a special value
in the eyes of the dispossessed but
true owner, so that to lose
cannot be remedied by the
substitution of any other piece of
block of land. (and given H Farmers
an known that a scale without
adequate whip, and his
privilege in the form of the
English doctrine of strict
interpretation & contracts relating

to land. Not to say
4. You will finally
under the Ordinance is ~~granted~~ granted

Land will finally can still be
obtained if within the given time-
limit the true owner is enabled
to sue the fraudulent lessor,
saying the rights of his own
purchasers etc. to valuable
improvement

5. I have therefore argued
that the Ordinance may be
amended by the substitution
for Sec 34-36 of the corresponding
provisions of the Cyprus Ordinance
(Secs. 60 & 62), which instead
the 19th Law. of the law
Advocates' report seems the
more applicable than the
provisions of the measure
permitted to be brought

6. Here are a certain