

**CHAPTER – IV**

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER AND  
OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE  
KOLHAPUR STATE  
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### **EXECUTIVE ENGINEER AND OTHER OFFICIALS OF THE KOLHAPUR STATE (1884-1922)**

Kolhapur state achieved great progress and P.W.D. became one of the important and leading one. This Department was under the control of State Executive who was well educated and acquainted with the needs of the State. Shahu Maharaja fully supported State Engineer and carried out small and big projects in the state.

Generally all the State Executive Engineers during the period from 1884-1922 were highly educated in Engineering branch and hard worker as well as loyal to Shahu Maharaja. The first State Executive Engineer was Mr. R. J. Shannon, who was British Officer.

Next State Engineer was Dada saheb Amritrao Vichare who held this from (1896-1922) and a native person who carried out massive plans of Shahu Chhatrapati through Public Works Department. Moreover State Executive Engineer was assisted by Assistant Engineer, Overseer, Sub-overseers, Clerks, Tracers, Draftmans, Maistry all other types of labourer such as Masons, Carpenters etc.

Therefore, in this chapter an attempt has been made to study the vital role played by State Executive Engineer and other state

officials of this Department including contractors alongwith evaluation of the progress made by P.W.D. under Shahu Chhatrapati's period.

**1. Mr. R. J. Shannon : B.A.C.E. : Kolhapur State Executive Engineer (1879-1896)**

The first and important man in the P.W.D. which was Mr. R. J. Shannon who was occupying the post of State Executive Engineer for seventeen long years from 1879-1896. He joined the service in the Kolhapur state when unfortunate Shivaji-IVth was the ruler of the Kolhapur state and remained in that post during the minority period of Shahu Chhatrapati. He was the instrumental to erect and to build some magnificent edifices in Kolhapur such as New Palace, Albert Edward Hospital, Kalamba tank and massive plan of Kolhapur, Miraj railway line.

The following is the account furnished by the Administrative report of the Kolhapur state during the year 1883-84 about the Shannon and his assistant.

“Public Works this important department continued to be under the supervision of the State Executive Engineer, Mr. R. J. Shannon, B.A.C.E. He proceeded to England on 3 months privilege leave from 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1884. Mr. Marthand Waman Shrotriya, Supervisor, Public works Department and state Assistant Engineer, had charge of the architectural buildings viz. New

Palace, Albert Edward Hospital and the monumental temple with out-houses.”

“During the absence of Mr. Shannon, Mr. R. B. Tambe, as the Personal Assistant to the State Executive Engineer, had charge of the office and the minor works; whereas the other subordinate officers viz. Mr. R. R. Shirgavkar, pensioned Supervisor, Mr. Raisinva Narayan Overseer, Mr. T. P. Ranade, pensioned Overseer and Mr. Pandurang Keshav, pensioned Overseer, were held responsible for the satisfactory execution of the several works already entrusted.<sup>1</sup> As reported last year 1883-84 during the absence of Mr. Shannon the duties of his office and the four sub-division viz. 1) Head Quarter- Kolhapur Sub-Division, 2) Shirol, 3) Gadhinglaj, and 4) Malkapur Sub-Divisions were carried on by Mr. Ramchandra Balwant Tambe, Personal Assistant to the State Executive Engineer.”

In regard to the manner in which these officers discharged their duties, Mr. Shannon reports as follows :

“On my return from leave at the end of May, 1884 I minutely inspected each sub-division and found that the works had been properly and expeditiously carried on and that no arrears of works or correspondence had accumulated in my office. Mr. Tambe showed considerable energy and ability in the discharge of his various duties.”<sup>2</sup>

With regard to other Overseers Mr. Shannon further remarks:

“During the year 1884 under report, I found it necessary to inflict punishment on three of my subordinates for want of care and energy in the discharge of their work. Mr. Narayan Balaji and Mr. Gopal Govind Sathe were fined one month’s allowances and Mr. Dhondo Vishnu one month’s pay and three months’ allowances.”<sup>3</sup>

The period of five years for which the State Executive Engineer, Mr. Shannon’s services were engaged by the State having expired on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1884, a fresh agreement for entertaining his services for a further period of three years on the present salary and fixed travelling allowances present salary and fixed travelling allowances viz. Rs. 800 and Rs. 150 per mensem respectively was entered into during the year 1884-85 of report.<sup>4</sup>

With a view to enable the State Executive Engineer to exercise a better control over the subordinates in the State Public Works Department, the following powers were conferred upon Mr. R. J. Shannon :

1. “Power to retrench the travelling allowances of subordinates either in whole or in part whenever the State Executive Engineer may consider necessary for carelessness in charge of their duties, indifference to orders, in subordination, or in any case in which he considers their action has, in any way, been prejudicial.

2. Power to appoint, dismiss, reduce to a lower salary, or punish by fine or suspension any subordinate drawing Rs. (ten) per month and under. provided that this clause shall not apply to the dismissal of subordinates who come under the above class, but are holders of lands for services, such cases to be referred to the Divan.
3. Power to fine subordinates drawing above Rs. 10 upto one month's pay should the State Executive Engineer consider their conduct merits it.
4. Power to suspend subordinates drawing above Rs. 10 per month for neglect of duty and in case the punishment allowed in Clause 3 be inadequate, reporting the matter at the same time to the Divan pending and investigation of the case.
5. Power to appoint the acting successor when a subordinate drawing Rs. 20 and under per month is absent on leave.
6. Power to grant leave of any description to subordinate upto one month.
7. Power to transfer subordinates from one division to another without reference to superior authority.”<sup>5</sup>

Mr. Shannon, the Engineering staff and office establishment had maintained their wonted energy and efficiency, not withstanding the fact that in addition to their ordinary duties, they had to work on the construction of the Kolhapur State Railway

which was in progress 1880-90 and opened for traffic in the month of April, 1896.<sup>6</sup>

### **Water Supply in the Districts :**

Want of sufficient of good drinking water in the towns of Shirol and Kagal has engaged the attention of the Council for some time past. Mr. Shannon, the State Executive Engineer was requested to inspect the location and submit any feasible schemes for improving the supply. Mr. Shannon after personally inspecting all the high lands and taking levels & C recommended in the case of Shirol that of the two disused tanks, the smaller one being on a higher level might be utilized to carry water into the town by gravitation, if the area of the gathering ground were increased by placing a dam across the large Nalla that supplies the larger tank and diverting this water into it (the smaller tank). To try this experiment, the Council has sanctioned a sum of Rs. 1,000 and if proved successful, Mr. Shannon has been asked to submit plans and estimates for final approval and sanction.

As regards Kagal, Mr. Shannon has succeeded in finding out a suitable site for constructing a new tank as a reservoir for supplying the Chief's mansion as well as the town by gravitation with good water, but before a scheme can be drawn up it is necessary to ascertain the area of the gathering ground, the capacity of the tank and the nature of the sub-stratum on which the

paddle trench will rest. Instructions have therefore been given to the Kagal Overseer to supply the necessary information on the aforesaid points and it is hoped that the project will be taken in hand as soon as the monsoon is over. Roughly speaking the tank itself will cost about a lac of rupees and sum of Rs.50,000 has been provided for the work in the Budget for the Fasli year just commended.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Resignation of Mr. Shannon :**

Chhatrapati Shahu invested with full powers on 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1894 and a new dawn was opened in every field. Shahu was not only a de-ju ruler but was trying to become de-facto ruler, therefore there were clashes between young Shahu Chhatrapati and old bureaucrat like Shannon and others who enjoys full powers previously. The circumstance leading to the resignation of Mr. Shannon is described by Prof. A. B. Latthe in the following word :

“In one case, it was found that the budget estimate of a few hundred rupees for the repairs of a well was executed by several thousands and the Huzur office called for an explanation from Mr. Shannon, the Executive Engineer, what a sacrilege it was for the layman of the Huzur office to question the work of the Veteran head of the P.W.D. straight goes Mr. Shannon to His Highness and asks him what expert wisdom in the H.O. dared to find fault with

the expenditure which he had incurred and thought necessary. The poor Overseer who was in charge of the P.W.D. daftar in the H.O. trembled in his shoes and the Executive Engineer expected that he would demolish for good the audacity of his ex-subordinate, now in the central office, by thus remonstrating with the new Maharaja. Coolly did, the Maharaja receive all these protests from his Executive Engineer and his equally cool reply was that he – the young ruler of the State- himself felt dissatisfied with an estimate which worked out at many times the anticipated expenditure when turned into actuals and that his office only asked for an explanation which the Maharaja himself required. Mr. Shannon quietly walked out without uttering a word.”<sup>8</sup>

The official record gives the following information about the retirement of R. J. Shannon from the service of Kolhapur.

“Mr. R. J. Shannon B.A.C.E. State Executive Engineer who was on leave at the commencement of the year 1896 returned and resumed charge of his duties on 7<sup>th</sup> September, 1896 from Raosaheb Ramchandra Balwant Tambe who officiated for him during his absence owing to household difficulties Mr. Shannon was obliged to resign his post by the end of the same month. Consequently Raosaheb Dajirao Amrit Vichare, L.C.E. who had already been engaged as an attach to Huzur office was appointed State Executive Engineer.”<sup>9</sup>

## 2. **Mr. Marthand Waman Shrotriya, Supervisor :**

Mr. R. J. Shannon B.A.C.E. proceeded to England on 3 months privilege leave from 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1884. Mr. Marthand Waman Shrotriya, Supervisor, Public Works Department had charge of the architectural buildings viz. New Palace, Albert Edward Hospital and the monumental temple with out-houses.<sup>10</sup>

About august 1883 a reference was made on certain points to the Superintending Engineer, Southern Division, who recommended that for several reasons it would be advantageous in the interests of the Darbar to place the architectural works exclusively under the Assistant Engineer, Mr. Marthand Waman Shrotriya whom he considered quite competent to handle separate charge thereof and that he Mr. Marthand Waman should be handle separate charge thereof and that he Mr. Marthand Waman should be held respondent for executing and finishing the two big architectural works namely the New Palace and hospital according to the late Major Mant's design and estimate. The services of Mr. Marthand Waman were specially lent to the Kolhapur Darbar by the Bombay Government for the execution of these important and costly works. Mr. Marthand Waman was accordingly put in special charge of the architectural buildings and he corresponds in all matters direct with office of the Divan who controls the Public Works Department.<sup>11</sup>

As reported in the year 1882-83, Mr. Marthand Waman Shrotri, Supervisor, Public Works Department and State Assistant Engineer, continued to hold special charge of the important Architectural Buildings namely the New Palace, the Albert Edward Hospital and the Monumental Temple in memory of their Highness, the Late Babasaheb Rajaram and Shivaji Maharajas. The New Palace had made a considerable progress under the vigilant supervision of Mr. Martand Waman Shrotriya who took the greatest interest in the works of which he had got special charge.<sup>12</sup>

**3. Raosaheb D. A. Vichare L.C.E. Kolhapur State Executive Engineer (1896-1919) :**

Due to the differences with Shahu Shannon, retired from the Kolhapur State Service and D.A. Vichare was appointed as the new State Executive Engineer on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 1896.<sup>13</sup> previously Vichare was employee as an Attache to the Huzur Office. But his appointment as a State Engineer was an important step which Shahu had taken. Shahu's social policy was that non-Brahmin boys should recruit to the Kolhapur State. Many grand plans, buildings, projects were completed by Shahu through D.A. Vichare who was very faithful to his master.<sup>14</sup>

About the appointment of D. A. Vichare, Dhananjay Keer, the biographer of Shahu Chhatrapati gives the following information :

“Shannon went on leave and resumed work in September 1896, but he resigned his post at the end of that very month on account of domestic difficulties, Vichare was, therefore, appointed in his place, although Col. Wray, who was appointed officiating Political Agent in March 1896, was opposed to his appointment. Shahu was criticised for this appointment by some newspapers.”

D.A. Vichare's early life was very interesting. He came from very poor family. He was born in 1865 and his birth place was Bakheli Taluka, Chiplun, Dist. Ratnagiri. He completed his education from Poona and after matriculation he obtained L.C.E. Degree from Poona Engineering College in the year 1898.<sup>15</sup>

For some time he served as an Overseer in Karwar District but he left that job and joined service of Kolhapur state. Where many non-Brahmin persons like B.V. Jadhav, A. B. Latthe, R.V. Sabins were serving.

His service to the Kolhapur state was memorial. He started “Maratha Deen Bandu” along with the help of B.V. Jadhav. He played leading role in establishing Maratha and Muslim Hostels in Kolhapur state. Not only construction of Radhanagari Dam was under his supervision, but estimate and original plan of this Dam was drawn by D.A. Vichare himself. The big projects, bridges in the Kolhapur state, roads, Dharmashalas, public offices were constructed and supervised by D.A. Vichare.<sup>16</sup>

The administrative report of the Kolhapur state for the year 1897-98 A.D. gives the following information of D.A. Vichare.

“The Executive Engineer Raosaheb D.A. Vichare deserves special mention as he has conducted the relief works both efficiently and economically amidst a deal of opposition from within and without the department. The system of payment by results was strongly opposed not only by the relief workers, but also by the subordinate staff and perfect with which the policy was carried out the opposition would have assumed a more serious aspect.”<sup>17</sup>

“The big project of Shri Laxmi tank at Fejivade was surveyed during the year at a cost of Rs. 2,147. This was shown to His Excellency, the Governor of Bombay during his visit to Kolhapur in March 1908 and met with His Excellency’s approbation His Excellency took the trouble of personally visiting the site of the tank.”<sup>18</sup>

The total outlay on public works fell from Rs. 4,14,825 to Rs. 3,65,437 of which Rs. 1,70,479 were spent on original works.”<sup>19</sup>

He served Kolhapur state for 23 long years successfully from 1896-1919 A.D. and retired from the service of Kolhapur state in 1919. During this period Kolhapur state achieved great progress in all fields. After retirement he stayed in his native place in

Ratnagiri. Subsequently he became the member of Legislative Council of Bombay Presidency. He also worked as a President of District Local Board, Ratnagiri District. For some time after retirement he also started newspaper called 'Shahu Prabha' and advocated the cause of non-Brahmin movement, when the foundation stone of Shivaji Memorial in Pune in 1921 was laid down by the hands of Prince of Wales D.A. Vichare at that time was Chief Engineer who supervised the memorial work. Lastly he breathed in 1927.<sup>20</sup>

**4. Appointment of S. S. Gupte As State Executive Engineer, 1919 :**

After the retirement of D.A. Vichare Mr. Shankar Sakharam Gupte appointed as Executive Engineer as a Kolhapur State. The order runs as follows :

“Mr. Sankar Sitaram Gupte, Assistant to Executive Engineer was appointed as Executive Engineer from 1-12-1919. His pay and allowance are as per his pay. But from 1-12-1919 Rs. 30 are given as promotion. Further his payment upto P.M. Rs. 300 per year, Rs. 30 is given as increment. These were sanctioned. The allowances as per Ex-Engineer rules are allowed.”<sup>21</sup>

Previously Gupte was Overseer in the Kolhapur state since 1896. Kolhapur administrative report gives the following information his first appointment in Kolhapur State.

“Rao Saheb Raghunath Ramchandra Shirgaonkar, Overseer, having become too old for active service retired from the State service and Mr. Shankar Sitaram Gupte, L.C.E. was appointed his successor.”<sup>22</sup>

Mr. S. S. Gupte was the senior man in the Public Works Department and served in the Kolhapur state from 1896 as a Overseer and ultimately became the Chief State Executive Engineer in the year 1919. When Shahu Chhatrapati expired on 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1922 Gupte was the State Executive Engineer and efficient and able officer of Kolhapur state.

#### **5. Mr. B.P. Jagtap, L.C.E.M.R.S.I.**

Another important Officer in the Public Works Department one Mr. B.P. Jagtap who was in the Kolhapur state from 1913-1919 and appointed as a Special Engineer to look after the work of Mahalaxmi tank at Radhanagari.

The following is the important information furnished by administrative report 1913-14.

“Mr.B. P. Jagtap, L.C.E.M.R.S.I. was appointed as Executive Engineer in charge tank works during the year 1913-14.”<sup>23</sup>

Mr. B. . Jagtap, L.C.E.M.R.S.I. P.W. Secretary joined British Service on 3.3.1919.”<sup>24</sup>

“As mentioned in the last year’s report (1913-14), the big project of the Radhanagari tank work is carried out under the direct supervision of Shri Pirajirao Bapusaheb Ghatge, C.S.I.C.I.E.

Jahagirdar of Kagal senior. The establishment consisted of 5 Supervisors, 15 Clerks, 5 Accountant Clerks & C. The expenditure incurred during the year amounted to Rs. 2,07,968 and the total amount spent from the commencement of the work was Rs. 6,94,076.<sup>25</sup>

It is interesting to note that P.B. Jagtap was sent to foreign for receiving training in Engineering and water supply, when he was in the State service. The expenditure was incurred by Kolhapur state and in this connection agreement was concluded. B.P. Jagtap completed his training in abroad in 1917, and produced necessary Certificates to the Kolhapur Darbar.<sup>26</sup>

#### **Contractors of the State :**

Generally there was a practice in Kolhapur state that any big or small works were completed through the recognised contractors. The Supervising Authority was Public Works Department but there was a need of contractors to speed up the work.

The following were the some of the contractors who carried out state works.

1. Narayan Babaji Rane : He had done the work of Town Hall and Khasbag Rs. 4,000/- as advance for work.<sup>27</sup>

2. Mr. Parashram Eshivra Ghatge, Contractor had given the work of pitching of Vadgaon Tank.<sup>28</sup>
3. Mr. Kalkute Contractor had done the work of building the temple of Late Shri Shivaji Maharaja in Nej Kumbhoj Rs. 3,000 paid to him for this work.<sup>29</sup>
4. Shri Appaji Balkrishna Shirke, Contractor had given the work of Vadgav Tank development.<sup>30</sup>
5. Mr. Balkrishna Ganesh Pandit Contractor had given the work of trial pit of Kandalgao tank.<sup>31</sup>
6. Mr. Narayan Contractor had given the work of New Bungalow and Dharmashala of Kushire village.<sup>32</sup>
7. Mr. Bapu Amin Shirgavkar had given the Monopali of Motor Service, Shirol road to Wadi.<sup>33</sup>
8. Tender of building the Temple of Mr. Chimsaheb Maharaja was given to Jay Shankar Popat Bhai Company for Rs. 7,500.<sup>34</sup>
9. Work of Chita shed Bungalow compound was given to Dadoba Dyandev Chavan, Contractor.<sup>35</sup>
10. Mr. Tayad Ali Contractor had given some small works of repair and other small construction.<sup>36</sup>

These are some important contractors who done the work and helped the Kolhapur State.

To sum up the staff of the Public Works Department was played vital role to erect big buildings, roads, construction of public offices and school and planning the trees on road side. At initial stage Shannon was State Executive Engineer and lastly S.S. Gupte was State Executive Engineer. But the important man who had lion's share in building activities was Rao Dajirao Amritrao Vichare. But unfortunately very scanty information is available about D.A. Vichare who was a State Executive Engineer of the Kolhapur state from 1896-1919.

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