CHAPTER-I

ADVENT OF THE EUROPEANS AND THE RISE OF THE BRITISH

South India had commercial relations with western countries from time immemorial and the Europeans, particularly the Greeks and the Romans, were very fond of articles like pearls, perfumes, pepper, ivory and other items from the Tamil Country. Sangam literature and subsequent writings, furnish a mine of information about the early trade activities of the Tamils with foreign countries. During the Medieval Period also, such trade activities continued and the writings of Strabo, Pliny, Marcopolo and other travel accounts provide a lot of information about the existence of trade relations between the East and the West. The ports at Tuticorin, Nagapatnam, Poompuhar and Cuddalore were the key centres of commerce where Yavanas and Asian people like Chinese had carried on their trade through sea. Besides, there was a land route to Europe through Constantinople which the Turks captured in 1453. The Turks levied huge taxes on the commodities passing through Constantinople and virtually blocked the land route between the East and the West.

The Portuguese

As an alternative route to Constantinople, the European Countries undertook a series of measures to find a new sea route to India. The
writings on the fabulous wealth of India, instigated a number of
merchants to find a new sea route to India. In these endeavours,
Portuguese were the pioneers. The Portuguese King gave financial
assistance and encouragement and enabled the landing of Vasco-da-
Gama at Calicut in 1498 after going around the Cape of Good Hope
(Africa). He was warmly welcomed by the Hindu Ruler, the Zamorin of
Calicut. Finding of new sea route to India opened a new chapter in the
annals of the political and diplomatic history of not only India but also
the whole world. In the next year, 1499, Vasco-da-Gama returned to
Portugal and then returned to Calicut in 1502. He founded a factory at
Cochin with the consent of the Raja of Cochin, who gave him all
assistance and cooperation to trade with the natives. Besides, he
established a factory at Cannanore. Alfonsa-Albuquerque was made the
Governor of Portuguese settlement and a factory was also established in
Quilon. The Portuguese Viceroy, Albuquerque (1509-1515), captured
Goa from the Sultan of Bijapur in 1510 and Malacca in 1511 and
Ormuz in the Persian Gulf in 1515 and established strong footings in
South India.¹ Goa was made the capital of the Portuguese settlements
in India. Subsequently new settlements were established at Bessein,
Diu, Daman, Ceylon, Bombay, Salsette, Hugli and Santhome.² On the

¹ Frederick Charles Danwers, Portuguese in India, Being a History of the
Rise and Decline of Their Eastern Empire, Vol.1, London, 1894, pp.52-
58.

² Ibid.
eastern coast, the Portuguese settlements were Hugli, and Santhome which was situated near the Fort St. George in Madras. Santhome settlement was created not out of political or commercial motives but out of religious motive. Cosper Correa recorded that in 1507, Francisco de Alameida, the Portuguese Viceroy of Goa, having heard from local Christians that there existed a chapel at St. Thomas on the East Coast, sent his men to trace it out. On the basis of their report, two Portuguese men visited a church that was believed to be the tomb of St. Thomas. By the orders of the King of Portugal, the church was rebuilt and walls were erected. Subsequently in 1522, the Portuguese converted the place into a settlement.\(^3\) In addition to that, they established a settlement at Porto Novo in Cuddalore and developed it as a sea port. In the south, they also established a settlement at Nagapatnam, getting sanction from Sevappa Nayak, the Ruler of Tanjore and developed the same into a big town.\(^4\) Father Pimenta, who visited the place in 1597, recorded that many Portuguese had settled there. The Paravas, an industrious people, greatly contributed to the resources of the Vijayanagar Empire but were suppressed by the Telugu Rulers and were left at the mercy of the native community people. Frequent clashes occurred between the Paravas and the Muslims and on occasion, some 7,000 among them

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died. As the Emperor of Vijayanagar refused protection, the Paravas appealed to the Portuguese at Cochin for help. In response, the Portuguese reached the Fishery Coast in 1583 and after having made themselves masters of the port towns, won over the allegiance of the Paravas. All the Paravas received baptism, accepted Christianity and recognised Portuguese jurisdiction. This made Tuticorin, a port town with some 50,000 people in 1700, a Catholic centre and a stronghold of Portuguese influence.\(^5\)

The political and commercial position of the Portuguese on the Coromandel Coast began to decline during the later half of the Seventeenth Century when the Nayak Ruler, Raghunatha Nayak of Tanjore, in support of the Ruler of Jaffna, attacked the Portuguese. Though it ended in failure, the Portuguese lost their influence in Tanjore. The Dutch occupied Nagapatnam and created other settlements by 1658 and gained control over the markets on the East Coast. Due to these circumstances, the Portuguese influence on the Coromandel Coast declined.

Among the European settlers in India, the Portuguese were the first to establish Archives at Goa during the time of Albuquerque, the Viceroy of Portuguese Settlements in India. In 1596, Diogo-de-Couto, the first Archivist of the Portuguese in Goa, made systematic attempts to collect the scattered records in different Portuguese settlements for

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establishing the Archives. The Viceroy at Goa and the Portuguese Sovereigns, provided unstinted encouragement and assistance to establish the Archives. Thus the Portuguese records of different settlements were centralised at Goa towards the close of the Sixteenth Century. A considerable number of Portuguese records were taken to Portugal by the Viceroys when they left India for writing their biographies or chronicles. But still the Goa Archives is one of the well-organised and informative Archives in India, holding information not only about the Portuguese settlements but also their commercial and political relations with other European settlements as well as the native people.

The Dutch

After the fall of the Portuguese power in the Coromandel Coast, the Dutch emerged as a big power in trade and politics till the establishment of British in the Coromandel Coast. The sea-borne trade of the Portuguese with India and the carrying trade of Indian commodities in the European markets, attracted the Dutch to proceed with their commercial endeavours in India.

The United East India Company of the Netherlands (Holland) was founded in 1602 from an earlier group of competing provincial companies. It commanded very large financial resources and was very

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closely linked with the Dutch Government. After making some exploratory measures, the Dutch established headquarters at Batavia where spice trade flourished. Commercial rivalry between the British and the Dutch cropped up and the Massacre of Amboyna settled the matter. The British turned their attention towards India.⁷ The Dutch established a settlement in India at Masulipatnam (1605). With the permission of Krishnappa Nayak of Gingee, they built a factory at Devanampatnam in 1608, which later became a British settlement known as Fort St. David. Subsequently they established factories at Pulicat in 1610, Surat (1616), Cassimbazaar, Patna, Balasore, Tuticorin (1658), Nagapatnam (1659), Quilon, Cananore and Cochin (1663).⁸ Having captured Tuticorin from the Portuguese, the Dutch obtained permission from Tirumalai Nayak of Madurai to establish factories at Punnakayal, Alandalai, Kumbu Kirayur, Manapad, Cape Comorin and Jonagapatnam and to build a fort at Tuticorin and appoint a Resident at Alwarthirunagari.⁹ Commercial rivalry among the European settlers in India paved the way for the decline of the Dutch power in India. British treaties and engagements with the ruling families in India and their intrigues with other European traders and settlers, swept away the rival European settlers in India. The early Dutch records furnish mine

of information about the early commercial and cultural intercourse with the natives as well as with other European traders in India.

The Danes

The Danish East India Company was established in 1616 during the reign of King Christian IV of Denmark. In 1620, a factory was established at Tranquebar (Tarangambadi) in Tanjore District on the Coromandel Coast and called the settlement as Denesberg. Subsequently, they established a factory at Serampore near Calcutta in 1755. Their trading prospects at Tranquebar was not encouraging but their Danish Lutheran Mission, established at Tranquebar, emerged as a centre for Protestant missionary works in India and presented a powerful challenge to the missionary activities of the Jesuits. When the supply of money and the arrival of ships from Denmark began to decline, their position in India also declined.¹⁰

The Danish records furnish wealth of information about the judicial proceedings, Tranquebar accounts of commercial transactions, accounts of ships, details about the sailors and passengers of the ship, protocol of mortgage and title deeds and Tranquebar police personnel.¹¹

The British

After the establishment of the European trade with India by Portuguese and the Dutch, the British merchants in London wanted to establish their commercial contact with India. The fabulous wealth amassed by other European traders and flooding of Indian articles in European markets, attracted the British merchants. They approached Queen Elizabeth-I to give them permission to launch a commercial expedition to India.

On December 31, 1600, Queen Elizabeth-I granted the Charter to the Governor and Company of Merchants of London to establish East India Company with exclusive rights of trading in the East Indies. At the outset, the merchants of the Company made separate voyages because each voyage was financed and fitted out by a group of individuals from within the Company and they divided the profit among themselves. A ship of the third voyage reached Surat in 1608 but the Portuguese influence foiled their attempts to establish a factory at Surat. Then the Company sent Captain William Hawkins to India with a letter from James-I, the King of England. Hawkins came to the court of Jehangir, the Mughal Ruler, in 1609 for securing commercial concessions to establish a factory at Surat. But his mission ended in failure and he left India in 1611. In 1612, two British ships under the command of Thomas Best defeated a Portuguese fleet at Surat. The diplomatic dealings of Sir Henry Middleton, a British Captain, with the
Gujarat merchants and officials resulted in the grant of right to trade at Surat. Early in 1613, the right was confirmed by the Imperial firman. Surat thus became the seat of future Presidency of Bombay. In 1615, the British again defeated the Portuguese in the sea and in 1622 captured Ormuz, the Portuguese settlement and weakened the Portuguese position. In 1615, James I sent Sir Thomas Roe as his ambassador to Jehangir and the latter stayed at Jehangir's court for three years. He succeeded in getting commercial concessions for the British who established factories at Surat, Agra, Ahmadabad and Broach. All these were placed under the control of the President and Council of the Surat Factory who had also the power to control the British trade with the Red Sea ports and Persia. British factories were established at Baroda. In 1668, Bombay was transferred to the East India Company by Charles II who received it from the Portuguese as part of the dowry from his Portuguese wife, Catherine of Braganza, at an annual rent of £10. Bombay gradually grew more and more prosperous and became Presidency in 1687, commanding the Western Coast. Towards south, Anjengo and Tellicherry became British settlements.12

When the British found little prospects on the Western Coast, they began to concentrate on the Eastern Coast where the Portuguese and the Dutch had already established their factories and carried on

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lucrative trade. The first place at which the British traded on the Eastern Coast of India was Nizampatnam, a sea port in the Kistna District. Captain Hippan in the ship “Globe” landed there on August 20, 1611. At first he had touched Pulicat but the Dutch Governor Van Wersicks refused to allow him to trade. On August 31, 1611, Captain Hippan arrived at Masulipatnam where he established a factory. Masulipatnam became a well-established factory and laid the foundation for the British trade in the East Indies. Subsequently in 1619, the British established a factory at Pulicat by the side of one already established by the Dutch in 1609. This was realised under a treaty concluded in 1617 between the East India Company, the Dutch States General and the Sultan of Golconda. But the British settlement at Pulicat was not flourishing due to mutual rivalry and jealousy of the Dutch. In 1625, two years after the massacre of the British by the Dutch at Amboyna, the British agents at Bantam in Java suggested to the authorities the expediency of directing their attention to the trade on the Coromandel Coast. At the close of the season, they despatched a vessel from Batavia to a place called Armegam, forty miles north of Pulicat, where a small trading centre was established. It was named after one Arumuga Mudaliyar, the local curnam. In 1628, the Masulipatnam factory was transferred to Armegam. Armegam was the first place fortified by the British in India. In 1632, the Masulipatnam factory was re-opened under a firman from the King of Golconda. In
1634, a small place called Veeravausaram, eighteen miles north of the Port of Narsapore in Godavari District, was occupied for the purpose of a factory. During this period, the great preponderance of the British trade was on the Eastern or Coromandel Coast. The natives had brought the art of painting calicoes to a high pitch of perfection and these commodities were in demand not only in Europe but also in countries eastward like Burma, Siam and what was known as the Spice Islands in Indian Archipelago.\textsuperscript{13} In the eastern part of North India, British factories were set up at Hariharpur in the Mahanadi Delta and Belasore in 1633 and Hugli in 1651. Other factories were opened at Patna, Cassim Bazaar and Dacca. Fort St. George acted as the headquarters for the settlements in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the Coromandel Coast from 1658. In 1696, Fort William was built in Bengal. In 1700, the settlements in Bengal were put under the control of a President and Council of Fort William.\textsuperscript{14}

With the advent of the European Powers for trade in the Seventeenth Century, a new era began. While the British were establishing their trade settlements on the western region of India, they also established settlements on the Coromandel Coast. They wanted something more than a factory- a territory, which they could fortify and defend. Hence in 1639, Francis Day was deputed to travel

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ibid.}
southwards to find out some place suitable for trade and settlement. The locality on the Coovum, Francis Day thought, would serve the settlement purpose. The narrow strip of sandy land on the northern side of the Coovum River appeared suitable for trade because it had water on three sides, natural facilities for trade and access to the internal markets as well as the Portuguese Settlement at Santhome.

After becoming a friend of the Nayak, the local chief, Francis Day succeeded in securing the grant of a tract of land to the north of Santhome, measuring five miles in length along the seashore and one mile in width on land. The Nayak desired that the station might be styled as 'Chennappa Patnam', after his father Chennappa, though the royal grant enjoined the use of the name "Sri Ranga Raya Patnam". Francis Day also obtained permission from Sri Ranga Rayalu, the Raja of Chandragiri to build a fort for protection against the threat of attack from the local powers. He commenced forthwith the construction of a fort without securing the sanction of the Company and christened it 'Fort St. George' after England’s patron saint on St. George’s Day, (April 23, 1640).15

The arrival of the British in Madras in 1640 paved the way for the establishment of settlements, acquisition of territories and the evolution of a regular administrative set up. The Raja of Chandragiri empowered the British to govern Madras and mint money on the

condition that they should pay him fifty per cent of the revenue and customs of the port. The agreement between the Raja and Francis Day was drawn upon a plate of gold, dated March 1, 1639.\textsuperscript{16}

The first harbour was on a sand bank at the mouth of the Coovum River to provide a safe place for the ships and exploit the natural advantages for defence. The first port was a small square, with a bastion at each corner for defence, containing the Company’s warehouse. Officers were lodged in huts outside.

Fort St. George was founded in 1640 and it took thirteen years to construct a small size fort. It was gradually built up with stone and brick. The settlement had increased and expanded by 1671. After thirty years, substantial houses were built at the northern corner of the fort and the walls were erected on the north, south and the east. A native settlement called at first Hindu Town, and afterwards Black Town, named after the colour of its inhabitants, came into existence.\textsuperscript{17} The Black Town was provided with a centrally located temple and market. The residents belonging to various castes were allocated separate streets.\textsuperscript{18} The residents of the Black Town consisted of mostly the Tamils, the Telugus, the Jews and the Muslims.\textsuperscript{19} As Madras was well situated for trade, merchants preferred to have their residence in this

\begin{thebibliography}{9}
\bibitem{Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George, 1712, Madras, 1929, p.14.}
\bibitem{Frank Penny, \textit{Fort St. George, Madras}, London, 1900, p.12.}
\bibitem{Henry Davison Love, \textit{op. cit.}, Vol.II, p.90.}
\bibitem{Krishnaswami Naidu, W.S., \textit{Old Madras}, Madras 1965, p.4.}
\end{thebibliography}
city. Many of the inhabitants of Madras built their houses and it rendered the streets very uneven and irregular. It was, therefore, ordered that no house should be built without the prior permission of the Governor. If anybody built a house contrary to the order, the house would be pulled down. William Jearsey, a free trader, proposed to raise a third floor in his house but his request was not granted because no house was allowed to be raised above certain height to avoid obstruction of the view of the surrounding country from the Fort House. Thus the British enforced certain order in house building activities in their commercial settlement.

In 1674, there were 188 houses in the White Town within Fort St. George. 20 The White Town began to expand and houses were built along the road leading to St. Thomas Mount. Roads were in a damaged state and hence the Company initiated programmes to make the road perfect. 21 The British civilian population of Madras was estimated at about 114 in 1700. Twenty seven of them were company's servants, twenty nine freemen, thirty nine sailors, eleven widows and eight maidens. 22 The addition of the British soldiers brought the total nearly to 400. 23 On July 2, 1702, Madras was described in the list of the stock of the two East India Companies as "Fort St. George, with the castle

20 Ibid.
21 Despatches to England 1701-1702 to 1710-1711, Madras 1931, p.28
22 Henry Davison Love, op.cit., Vol.II, p.64
and fortifications and territory there to belonging, upon which a large city was built, consisting of houses, which were held of and pay rent to the said Governor and Company, together with the said city and its dependencies. 24 There were seventy-five houses in the Black Town in 1674 and it increased to 8,700 in 1750, which clearly indicated the rapid growth of the natives of the Black Town which was later on called ‘George Town’. 25

The British began to realise the importance of possessing the surrounding villages to safeguard their trade settlement against possible invasions, mainly from the Muslim Rulers and the French. The British began to negotiate with the Nayak and Muslim Rulers for more territorial area in order to improve the security of the settlement, to bring additional villages of weavers under their control and to augment their source of revenue.

In 1672, Muja Khan, who succeeded Neknam Khan as Governor in the Carnatic under the Sultan of Golconda, confirmed all the privileges in a cowle* under his signature and seal. In the same year, the Sultan of Golconda granted a firman** to the British allowing them to trade freely throughout his dominion. 26 The British agreed to pay the

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* Cowle is a promise on the part of superior, especially a document granted to the holders of land specifying special terms of tenure.
**Firman means a mandate or charter. 26. Letters from Fort St. George, 1711, April, Madras 1931, p.43.
Sultan of Golconda about 1,200 pagodas per annum as rent for the site of Madras. Triplicane came under the control of the British by 1658, though it was actually granted to them in 1672 for an annual rent of fifty pagodas by Muja Khan, a chief under the Sultan of Golconda. The British let out the village of Triplicane to their chief merchant, Kasi Viranna and then to Pedda Venkatadri. Acquisition of more villages rendered better communication a necessity. Access to the south was made easier by the construction of the Triplicane Bridge.* A firm stone bridge over the river was constructed at a cost of 1000 pagodas on the road going to Triplicane from the Island. Contributions from the inhabitants paid for the cost. The Sultan of Golconda granted a general firman in 1674 confirming all the ancient privileges through a royal edict to the British in Fort St. George. In course of time, the British extended their territory to include fifteen villages around Madras.

Between 1672 and 1679, Fort St. George rose from an insignificant settlement into a seat of political influence. Sir Streynsham Master, Governor of Fort St. George, consolidated the

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*Triplicane bridge was the predecessor of Willington bridge. At present it is called Periyar bridge
31. Letters from Fort St. George, 1711, Madras 1931, p.40 Sallabad means Sannad or royal edict issued by the Muslim rulers.
32. Frank Penny, op. cit., London, 1900, p.82.
influence of the British by increasing the trade and showing a firm front to the native rulers and thereby increased its status. He resisted the demands made by Lingappa, the Nayak of Poonamallee. In 1690, Elihu Yale, Governor of Fort St. George, persuaded a large number of families of weavers to come and settle in Madras. He assigned separate grounds for building their houses and afforded them facilities for their trade and worship. A despatch from England carried the message that “the city of Madras may in a few years come to be the greatest city in Asia for strength, as well as for commerce, clearness and ornament”.

On January 30, 1693, Nathaniel Higginson, the Governor of Madras (1692 – 1698), wrote a letter to the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb that the British had placed their dependence on him and prayed to have his firman. Accordingly, in 1693 the boundaries of Madras were enlarged by the grant of three adjoining villages of Tondiarpet, Purasawakkam and Egmore, approximately 8.8 sq. miles in area. They were acquired by a charter from Asad Khan, the Grand Vizier of Aurangzeb.

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33 Ibid., p.77.
34 Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George, 1690, Madras, 1911, pp. 15-16.
Acquisition of Cuddalore

During the period of the rule of Golconda, exactions and impositions levied by the officials caused difficulties to the British at Fort St. George. To escape from this oppression, they contemplated upon a settlement in Gingee in the South. In 1674, Mohammed Khan, the Bijapuri Governor of Gingee, invited the British to settle near Porto Novo and Valundavur to free him “from the importunities of the French and the Dutch.” The Directors of the Company approved the treaty made with the Khan but Fort St. George took no active steps to establish factories in the Gingee region till 1683. Elihu Yale, who was deputed to Harji Raja, the Maratha Chief at Gingee, in 1681, procured for the British a cowle to settle at Porto Novo, Cuddalore and Kunimedu. But the Maratha Chief imposed additional duty on all the cloths. In 1684, Gary was sent on a mission to Sambhaji, the Maratha King who “from the fear of the British and in the hope of gaining the island of Bombay for himself treated Gary with much attention and granted a factory at Cuddalore and Devenampatnam with the ‘ancient’ immunities allowed to the factories at Kunimedu and Porto Novo”. The Mughal disturbances in subsequent times compelled the British to fortify Kunimedu, Porto Novo and other depots. But in 1689, the

41. Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George, 1681, Madras, 1911, p.71
42. Srinivasachari, C.S., The Inwardness of British Annexation in India, Madras, 1951, pp.242-255.
British had to close down this factory at Porto Novo and move to Kunimedu and Cuddalore which were better protected against external threat. 43

At Cuddalore, a sea port in South Arcot, about one square mile in area, a factory was established. 44 The Council of Fort St. George sent Davis as Chief of the proposed settlement. As the next step, Rober Freeman was deputed to Gingee, with a present of five yards of scarlet, a looking glass and a piece of sandal wood, to gain more privileges. Every native official was approached, bribed, threatened and loans were offered, interest was excused and nothing was left untried. Virampatnam, Cvelong, Armegon, Ramapatnam, Krishnapatnam and Gangapatnam were in turn named as the chosen sites. 45 The contest with the free traders was waged hotly over Cvelong. It had smooth landing place in the spring and summer months of the year. However, the Directors did not like to have any more factories to avoid charges to the Company. 46 The Company ordered that two of the three factories in the Gingee region were to be dissolved and the other to be fortified. 47 Attempts were made to settle a factory at Kunimedu. The subhedar of Kunimedu demanded a loan of 3,000 pagodas. As the

43 Ibid., p.251.
44 Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George, 1683, Madras, 1894, p.35.
45 Ibid., pp.22
47 Ibid.

*Pagoda, a gold coin in circulation, was equal to rupees three and a half time. The pagoda was in use till 1818.
British expected to gain by it, they wished to favour him. In Kunimedu, on the coast of South Arcot District, ten miles north of Pondicherry, a factory was established in 1683. In 1688 Rama Raja, the Maratha Ruler, granted a firm a for fortified settlement and liberty of trade on a present of 800 pagodas.* But the mounting of guns at Kunimedu had provoked some of the Maratha officers to pick up a quarrel with the British. But the British told them that it was for their own defence during the troublesome times. The Directors of the Company confirmed that a fort to be built in Gingee Region was “a right, wise and politic design and will be proper means to keep always the King and Court of Golconda fair to you (Company).”

Establishment of Fort St. David

In 1690, the British purchased Tegnapatnam, ten square miles in area, a part of Cuddalore in South Arcot District for 1,20,000 chakrams* from Rama Raja. The Governor in Council of Fort St. George, in the consultation dated on December 4, 1689, resolved to send the Chief of Kunimedu to Gingee to negotiate with Rama Raja and accordingly a settlement was made. Hatsell was deputed to take possession of the fort. “Random shot” was to be fired, which was to be done with the best brass gun from Madras that was sent specially for

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* Chakram was an ancient silver coin once in currency in South India.
the purpose. Hatsell was instructed that “it lies in the gunner’s act to load and fire it to the best advantage” and to carefully fix the marks and boundaries at the points where the shots should fall.50

The village, which fell within the random shot, marked the limits of the British territory. Such villages are known even today as Gundu Gramam or Cannon Ball Villages. As the random shot fell on Manjakuppam which was then held by the Dutch on three year lease, on an annual rent of 300 chakrams, it was feared that the Dutch might give some trouble. Surprisingly, they helped in the transfer of the fort to the British. Rama Raja wrote to Madras Governor that Manjakuppam was out of their limits and directed them not to disturb the Dutch and their business. The Dutch should enjoy their factory and trade at Tegnapatnam as before. However, the Madras Governor instructed Hatsell to seize Manjakuppam from the Dutch through peaceful methods. Towards the end of August 1691, the British took possession of Manjakuppam. The Dutch chief of the Tegnapatnam factory threatened to repossess it and hoist the Dutch flag. Thereupon, the Madras Council sent a Union Jack with orders that it should be pitched in the villages of Manjakuppam and a guard mounted over it to defend it by force, if necessary. In 1694, Nawab Zulfikar Khan granted a

firman for the eleven villages included within the limits covered by the random shot permitted by the grant of Rama Raja.\textsuperscript{51}

The fort was named as Fort St. David at Cuddalore probably in honour of the Welsh Saint whom, Elihu Yale, the Governor of Madras (1687-1692), himself a Welshman, wanted to honour.\textsuperscript{52} The Directors were glad to hear that Fort St. David was a promising settlement. By reason of many natural advantages, it was capable of being made equal or superior to Fort St. George. It had a territory larger than that of Fort St. George.\textsuperscript{53} The inhabitants, who reaped the benefit, should defray the charge of their security.\textsuperscript{54} Fort St. David was strengthened as it lay so near to the Dutch at Tegnapatnam. Besides the houses of the British and other Europeans, it contained the town of Cuddalore, inhabited by the Indian merchants and two or three populous villages. Though the fort was small, it was felt that it was stronger than any of its size in India.\textsuperscript{55} It served as the second line of defence. In fact, it served as a toehold on the Coromandel Coast. In 1746, when the French captured Madras, Fort St. David became the seat of the Company’s Government on the coast.\textsuperscript{56}

\textsuperscript{51} Srinivasachari, C.S., \textit{op.cit.}, pp.280-285.
\textsuperscript{52} \textit{Ibid.}, p.251.
\textsuperscript{53} Despatches To England 1694-1696, Madras, 1919, p.40.
\textsuperscript{54} Despatches From England 1696-1699, Madras, 1929, p.11.
\textsuperscript{56} Guide to the Records of South Arcot District, 1708-1835, p.2.
The growth of Fort St. David was an eyesore to the Dutch. They urged Rama Raja to rescind the order and induced him to resell the fort. But the British were strong enough to oppose any move against the firman and they were prepared to use force to defend their fort. Thereupon, the Dutch agreed to pay to the British the same rent they paid the Nawab for their possession of Tegnapatnam.\textsuperscript{57} However, when the Dutch made peace with Ekoji, the Maratha Ruler of Tanjore, they planned to hoist the Dutch flag at Manjakuppam but the British managed to avert the controversy with the Dutch.\textsuperscript{58}

Started with the purchase of the site at Madras in 1640, the British began to set up a settlement with fort and fortification. Subsequently the motive for trade and political considerations urged them to go for expansion of territories, resulting in further acquisitions in Madras and Cuddalore and other places. The presence of a large number of powers, big as well as small, offered them good opportunities. Thus they dealt with the Mughals and the Marathas as well as the Nayaks and the Nawabs. They presented gifts to the rulers, sent bribes, gave objects of curiosity, extended hospitality and even offered aid in arms. But they experienced difficulties when the other European Powers competed with them or carried tales against them. Yet, through successful diplomacy and display of strength, they

\textsuperscript{57}Diary and Consultations of Fort St. George, 1691, Madras, 1917, pp.33-41.
\textsuperscript{58}Letters from Fort St. David, 1693, p.8.
managed to gain possession of territories, win commercial rights, exemption from payment of customs and privilege to erect walls. Organization of administrative system and establishment of military posts added political back up to their commercial settlements and transactions.

Bribes and presents were very common from the very beginning of the settlement in Fort St. George. Gifts and compliments were given for various motives. It seemed to be a way of life for both the British and the native rulers. On some occasions, the presents were offered as bribe and thus the native rulers had been bribed into silence. But the profit always went to the British.

During the Seventeenth Century, the British impressed the native elements with the importance of British sea power. The British founded a new city in Madras, and thereby, introduced a new kind of life. The British introduced new occupations in trade and industry on the Coromandel Coast. The British merchants and 'dubashes' held social influence and political authority. They were granted powers over revenue, commercial and judicial matters. The fort became the centre of meeting place for the leading natives of Madras. Their personal interests were closely intertwined with the interests of the British.
The French

Among the European settlers in India, the French came last. The French East India Company was established in 1664 by Jean Colbert, the Finance Minister of Louis XIV of France. The French established factories at Surat in 1668 and Masulipatnam in 1669. In 1674, the French acquired possession of Pondicherry and made it their capital. Further, they established factories at Chandranagore, Mahe, Yenam and Karaikkal. At first, the French Settlement in India was fully devoted to trade. \[59\] Mutual rivalry and antagonism in Europe between the British and the French paved the way for the outbreak of Anglo-French Wars in the South Indian soil in general and Carnatic Wars in the Tamil soil in particular.

The British-French Conflict in Carnatic Region

The outbreak of hostilities with the French and their allied Indian powers set the stage for the growth of the British Power. In this crucial period, South India became a centre of political conflict and it determined the destiny of European Powers which were involved in the conflict. The commercial and political interests of the European nations made this region the centre of diplomacy and intrigue.

Between 1746 and 1748, the British and the French fought the first war in the Carnatic. This war led to three far reaching, though

indirect results. About 1748, the British raised a body of Indian sepoys. This sepoy army was destined to play a major role in the British campaigns. Secondly, an incredible victory, gained by a French battalion over the Nawab’s army near Adayar, revealed the superiority of European drill and discipline over the Indian multitudes in the field of battle. This discovery fired the military ambitions of the British. Thirdly, the Europeans found the strategy of ‘aid and alliance’ with the Indian Powers, to be an effective tool for wresting commercial and political advantages. They pursued this policy so relentlessly that in the long run, the rulers of the land were either destroyed or reduced into powerless pensioners or eliminated from the political field.60

The Second Carnatic War broke out in 1749 and continued up to 1754, in the course of which the foreign and local powers fought one of the most significant battles at Tiruchirappalli. After the first round of conflicts, it appeared that the French gained a definite edge because of their allied princes, Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jang, seized power at Arcot and Hyderabad respectively. In a desperate bid to regain the lost ground, the British decided to rush to the aid of Mohammed Ali, son of Nawab Anwar-ud-din who was slain in the battle with Chanda Sahib on the plains of Ambur. The scope for successful intervention appeared to be bleak. Tiruchirappalli, once the capital of the Nayaks of Madurai and an

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invincible fort, provided Mohammed Ali a strong position. The bitter struggle for the citadel began in March 1751. The combined forces of the French and Chanda Sahib began a relentless siege which continued in varying degrees of ferocity and changing fortunes until June 1752. Eventually, assisted by the forces of Mysore and Tanjore, the British troops vanquished the French and killed Chanda Sahib. This great victory marked a turning point in British expansion. At one stroke, the triumphant British administered a devastating blow to the French aspirations, political as well as commercial, and established their firm grip over the Carnatic. The resources of the Country, which they mobilised for their subsequent wars, contributed to the vigorous prosecution of their political designs. Inspired by this momentous victory, Robert Clive led an expedition from the Carnatic to Bengal and defeated Siraj-ud-Daula in 1757 in the Battle of Plassey. Tossed in the cross-currents of the strife at Tiruchirappalli, resources of Mysore were exhausted. Since its military and material potential were crippled, Mysore could not realise its expectation of obtaining concessions in the Carnatic Region. Consequently the State of Mysore, fell an easy prey to the invasions by the Nizam and the Peshwa and found itself embarrassed in its subsequent wars with the British also.