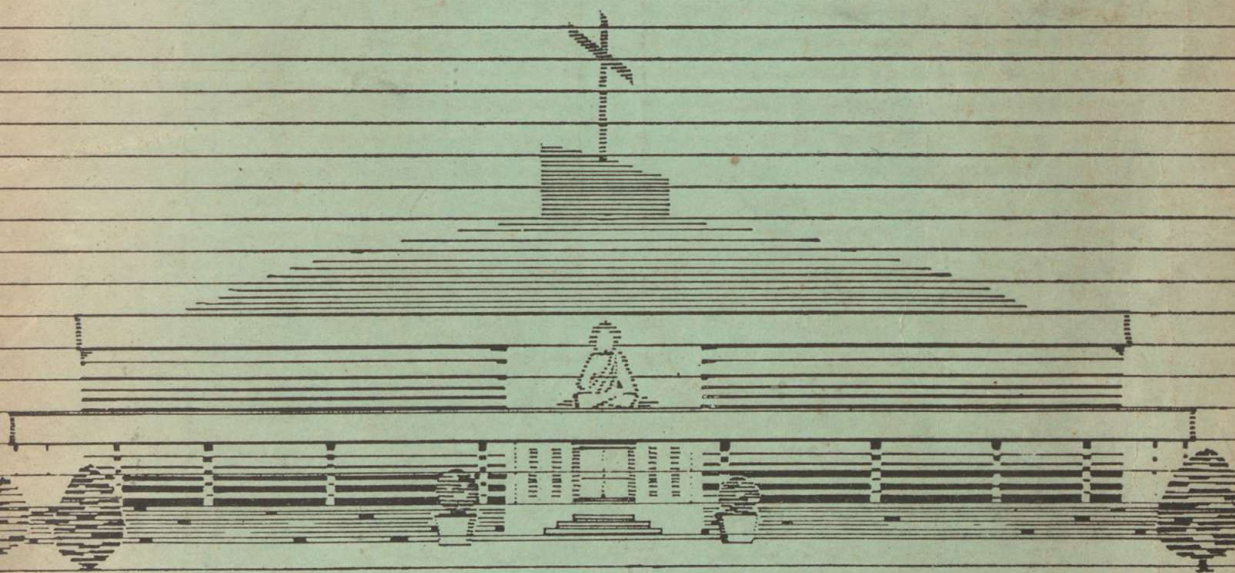


**CHURCH HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF INDIA
SOUTH INDIAN BRANCH CONFERENCE**

OCTOBER 26-29, 1989



DHARMARAM COLLEGE, BANGALORE

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THE CHURCH HISTORY ASSOCIATION OF INDIA

FREDERICK S. DOWNS

The Origins 1932-1941

Under the auspices of the National Christian Council, what was called the Church History Deputation to the Orient visited India in 1932. According to Dr. G.H.C. Angus, one of the founder members of the Church History Association of India, Burma and Ceylon (as it was then known) this visit of two eminent church historians from the United States (a third, from Britain, had been unable to join the Deputation in India)¹ was the result of a "renewed awareness" of the importance of history teaching and a "new historical sense" which was making itself felt in 1930 and was reflected in the Lindsay Report on Christian Colleges which came out in that year. Interest in the development of Church History studies in India naturally followed. It was to stimulate this interest that the Deputation was invited and a meeting at Serampore arranged on 28 January 1932.

The emphasis of the meeting was on how historically valuable materials might best be preserved, but in the process it was proposed to form a Church History Association. Its purpose would be to encourage groups in various regional centres to interest themselves in the preservation and examination of "church history records" found in their region, and "communicate the more interesting of their finds" to interested persons. It is interesting that at this

1. The historians from the United States were Prof. S.J. Case, the Head of the Department of Church History at the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, and Prof. W.D. Schemerhorn, head of the Church History Department at Garrett Biblical Institute at Evanston. The British member, who accompanied the group to China and Japan but could not come on to India was Rev. R. Morgan, Warden of the College of the Ascension, Selly Oak, Birmingham. See H. Pakenham-Walsh, "A Church History Association," *The N.C.C. Review*, LII.4 (April 1932), pp. 198-200. This and some of the other materials on which this article is based were brought to the attention of this writer by Rev. Arthur Jeyakumar.

early date there were also significant perspectival questions being asked. This was reflected in an emphasis on the collection of local materials produced by Indian Christians as well as their personal accounts. As Pakenham-Walsh put it, "even in places where the people are still mostly illiterate, and where there are almost no records, great interest can be evoked by gathering the memories of those alive as to the first beginnings of Christianity among them."² In his recollections of that meeting, Angus similarly noted that "There was a tendency among Western missionaries and their converts to put undue emphasis on European Christian traditions, history and theology at the expense of the Eastern churches . . . Above all there was the mutual ignorance about each other's work that prevailed among the different Churches and missions - a serious handicap to the growth of ecumenical consciousness. Finally there was a general realization that great changes were taking place in the Indian Church, and more were expected; history was being 'made' all the time, and should be recorded."³

It was three years later that the Church History Association of India, Burma and Ceylon⁴ was actually formed at a meeting held in Calcutta on 1 February 1935. Bishop Foss Westcott was elected President, and Dr. C.E. Abraham Secretary, positions which they held for many years.⁵ The stated aims and objects included the preservation of source materials in central depositories, preparing catalogues of documents available at various places, stimulating research in the history of Christianity in India, perpetuating "the memory of pioneers and leaders of the Church in India," forming groups in various centres for study and discussion, and to promote the teaching of Church History in India. From these beginnings until the 1960s the leadership of the Association came from the Calcutta region. The headquarters were in Serampore. The Association was Protestant, with the majority of its officers coming

2. *Ibid.*, p. 200.

3. Quoted in an editorial by M.A. Laird in the *Bulletin of the Church History Association of India*, Special Number (Feb. 1962), p. 3.

4. In either 1959 or 1960 the name was changed to its present form, Church History Association of India. See D.A. Christadoss, "Church History Association of India. A Statement of Work: 1941-1961", *Bulletin* (Aug. 1961), p. 4.

5. The tenure of these two men was very long. Foss Westcott served as President until his retirement in 1950 (15 years), and C.E. Abraham until his retirement from Serampore in 1959 (24 years). See *ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

from the Anglican tradition.⁶ In addition to the officially adopted aims and objects, from the very beginning there was also talk about another project: the writing of a History of the Christian Church in India.⁷ It was also decided to publish an Annual Bulletin to inform its members concerning the work of the Association, but only four issues were brought out between 1936 and 1941.⁸

Quiescence 1941-1961

Due mainly to the Second World War and the tragic events following Partition, especially disruptive of life in the Calcutta area where the work of the Association was centred, as well as the departure from the scene of some of the important founding members there was little activity in the two decades after 1941. No serious effort seems to have been made to recruit a larger membership. At least if it was made it was not successful. Though this problem and the desirability of reviving the *Bulletin* were discussed by the Executive during the early 1950s, even the Executive was meeting with less frequency and the Association was for all practical purposes defunct.

Concerned about this situation on the eve of his retirement as Principal of Serampore College in 1959, Dr. C.E. Abraham sought to revive the Association through the reconstitution of its Executive. D.A. Christadoss, on the Serampore faculty, was appointed to succeed him as Secretary and Bishop R.W. Bryan as President. Though their numbers were small – one estimate indicates that the

6. A significant exception was the Mar Thomite, C.E. Abraham.

7. This proposal for a three-volume history was made at the first meeting of the Association's Executive Committee on 19 February 1935. It was also proposed that smaller volumes on the lives of saints and biographies of Indian Christians should be published. See D.A. Christadoss, "The Church History Association of India: A History of the Association from 1935 to 1960," *Indian Journal of Theology*, (1960), pp. 166-7. In a report on the work of the Association up to 1960, Christadoss said that during the first six years "Plans for writing a History of Christianity in India were set afoot and invitations to write sections of it were given to eminent writers like Bishop Stephen Neill." *Indian Journal of Theology*, (1960). p.167. Nothing seems to have come of these plans, though they may have started Neill on the road that led him to publish several books on the history of Christianity in India many years later.

8. 1936, 1937, 1938, 1941. *Ibid.*, p. 167.

membership of the Association in this period was limited to the membership of the Executive! – it at least began to meet regularly. It was during this time that the name was changed and, of far greater significance, a decision was made to hold an informal meeting of persons who might be interested in the Association in conjunction with the Convocation of Serampore College. The revival of the Association can be dated from this meeting which was held on 20 January 1961. Shortly prior to that meeting a brief history of the Association written by Christadoss was published in the *Indian Journal of Theology* and afterwards the *National Christian Council Review* published a brief report. One of the decisions of the January meeting was to organize a CHAI conference in Nagpur in December of that year, presumably with the support of the NCCI which is headquartered there. In the end the Executive decided "that the time was not yet ripe for a full-scale conference, and that many of its aims could be achieved by the publication of these articles in the 'Bulletin,' at much less cost in time and money."⁹ While that may have been somewhat discouraging to those who had hoped for a revitalized organization truly national in scope, over against this was that the publicity generated contributed towards an increase in those interested enough to become members. From the low point of 5 members in 1959 the number had increased to 24 by the middle of 1961, and to 60 by February 1962.

Revitalization 1961–1971

The events of 1961 did in fact usher in a new era in the Association's history. It began to develop very rapidly, involving more significant activity in the following decade than there had been in its entire history. The *Bulletin* was revived. The growing interest in the historical study of Christianity in India is demonstrated by the fact that though the *Bulletin* was supposed to be an annual, nearly every year between 1962 and 1967 it brought out "Special Numbers" in which papers of increasingly high quality were published. So encouraging was this development that it was decided, early in 1966, to bring out a more substantial scholarly journal from the next year. In 1967 the first issue of the *Indian Church History Review* was brought out under the

9. Editorial by M.A. Laird in *Bulletin* (Feb. 1962), p. 2.

Executive Editorship of Dr. Kaj Baago of Bangalore.¹⁰ The ICHR has become one of the main projects of the CHAI, with almost all of the amount received in membership fees going into its publication. Initially and once or twice subsequently subsidies were received from donor agencies both in India and abroad, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, but it is now entirely financed by the Association's membership.

In addition to the introduction and regular publication of a scholarly journal, the second important development in this remarkable decade was the development of ecumenical interest and membership. As early as the inaugural meeting in 1935 hope had been expressed that Roman Catholic scholars would cooperate with the Association,¹¹ but for all practical purposes until the 1960s it had been a Protestant and Anglican affair with some Mar Thoma involvement. That began to change. When the South India branch was established at a conference held in Bangalore in 1963, the Archbishop of Bangalore, Rev. Dr. Thomas Pothacamury, was made Honorary President. This was the first time that a Roman Catholic had held office in the Association or one of its branches. In 1966 a Catholic, Dr. Fr. E.R. Hambye, was elected Vice-President of CHAI. From this time forward Catholic and, eventually, Orthodox historians began to play an active role, both holding office and contributing articles for publication. This was the beginning of those developments which have made the Church History Association of India not only the most active of the "theological" professional organizations in the country, but also among the most ecumenical.

The third significant evidence of the growing dynamic of the Association during this decade was the holding of conferences for the first time. Though at the time of his retirement from the Secretaryship in 1969 Christadoss had expressed regret that it had not been possible to hold the often proposed All India conference,¹² there had been a number of important regional conferences held

10. It was originally to be called the *Church History Association of India Review* and was to be published quarterly. The Executive decided that it should start out on a half yearly basis and changed the proposed name to *Indian Church History Review*. See report by the General Editor in the *Bulletin* (Nov. 1966), p. 1.

11. "The Church History Association of India, Burma and Ceylon", *NCCR*, LV. 4 (April 1935), p. 211.

12. *ICHR*, III.2 (Dec. 1969), p. 169.

that did much to contribute to the developing shape and perspective of CHAI. Apart from the small conferences that had been held in the Calcutta area in 1961, the first important meeting was that organized by what became the Northern Branch in March 1963 at the Christian Retreat and Study Centre, Rajpur. In June of that same year the Southern Branch was formed at a conference held at the United Theological College, Bangalore. By the end of the decade branches had also been established in Eastern and Western India. At none of the branch conferences was the attendance very high, but they generated enthusiasm and raised, particularly in the case of the Northern and South India conferences, important questions concerning the appropriate perspective for the writing of Church History in India. While at first the Northern branch was one of the most active, in the course of time the centre of branch activity has tended to shift to the South—perhaps not surprising in light of the heavy concentration of India's Christians in that region as well as the long history of the church there. In the CHAI, as in other organizations, these developments had much to do with the presence in one area or another of well qualified and interested historians of Christianity.

Consolidation 1971–1989

During the last eighteen years the Association achieved two goals that had been set many years before. It finally began to hold all India conferences and it started publication of what had from the early years been referred to as a "standard history" of Christianity in India.

The first general conference (as distinct from branch conferences) of the Association was finally held at Pachmarhi in Madhya Pradesh between the 4th and 7th of October, 1971. The organization of that first conference left much to be desired and only 14 members showed up. Nevertheless it was a significant beginning. The second general conference was held at Dharmaram College, Bangalore, in 1973, and from that time onwards general conferences have been held every three years. Branch conferences continued to be held in the intervals, but their importance declined with several of the five branches¹³ now holding meetings infrequently if at all.

13. The five branches are: South India, West India, North India, East India, and North East India.

Though primary importance now tends to be given to the general conferences, they are seldom attended by more than 50 of the some 400 members of the Association. Those attending tend to be either members living near the place where the conference is held, the location rotating among the branches, officers of the Association or those on the staffs of institutions which are prepared to pay their travel. Local organizing committees raise the funds necessary to provide hospitality for the delegates. The funds of the Association as a whole are almost entirely utilized for publishing the *ICHR*. There has also been a more frequent turn-over of office bearers during this period with the result that some of the continuity that gave strength to the Association in the 1960s is lost.

Without question the single most important achievement of the CHAI during these years has been the formation of an Editorial Board for the production of a multivolume series on the History of Christianity in India. The Board was appointed at the Bangalore general conference in 1973, with Dr. D.V. Singh as the General Editor. Over the years the membership of the Board has changed due to death or members leaving the country,¹⁴ but it has continued to maintain an ecumenical and regional balance. As Dr. Fr. A. M. Mundadan, the present General Editor, has put it, "The working of the Editorial Board for more than fifteen years has been and continues to be an enriching experience of sincere and cordial ecumenical co-operation." While the work has not been able to progress as rapidly as the overly optimistic delegates to the 1973 conference anticipated, two substantial volumes have already been published (and have gone into second printings) and a third¹⁵ is in the press.

14. The past and present membership of the Editorial Board is as follows:

Dr. A.M. Mundadan, CMI (General Editor) 1973-

Dr. D.V. Singh (General Editor) 1973-1984

Dr. E.R. Hambye, SJ 1973-1988

Dr. T.V. Philip 1973-1982

Dr. J.C.B. Webster 1973-1982

Dr. H. Grafe 1973-1975

Dr. F.S. Downs 1975-

Dr. V.C. Samuel 1982-

Dr. J. Thekkedath, SDB 1982-

Dr. J.W. Gladstone 1986-

Dr. S.K. Mitra 1986-1989

Dr. A.K. Mondal 1989

15. Vol. IV, Part 2 on the History of Christianity in Tamilnadu during the 19th & 20th Centuries by Dr. H. Grafe.

It may be fortunate that work on the "standard history" did not begin earlier, because it was only in the conferences and some of the writings that began to be done in the 1960s that new perspectives began to emerge. Anything published earlier would most probably have been of the traditional type that Dr. Mundadan describes as "written ... by western authors and published in the West for a western readership ... histories of the missions and missionaries from the West and not of the Indian Church." Incorporated into the guidelines for the CHAI history these new perspectives are likely to make the work of far greater significance than it would otherwise have been. The project has provided a model which has aroused considerable interest in other Third World countries. It was not to be a history of the missionary activities of the western churches in India, but of Indian Christians living among the Indian people as a whole and thus sharing a common history. Thus the perspective is that the Church's history in India is seen as part of the history of India, not an appendix to the history of the Church elsewhere. In the words of the Editorial Board's guidelines, "The history of Christianity in India is viewed as an integral part of the socio-cultural history of the Indian people rather than separate from it. The history will therefore focus attention upon the Christian people in India..."

If the Church History Association of India does nothing more than publish a History of Christianity in India from this perspective, its existence will have been justified. However, it plans for more. While continuing the publication of the *ICHR* and the multi-volume history, and bringing those interested in the history of the Christian movement in India together for conferences from time to time, the CHAI has given thought to future projects including bibliographies of sources available in Indian languages, autobiographies of important Indian Christians, and the condensation of the multi-volume history into a single volume work.

A SHORT STORY OF ST. MARY'S BASILICA, BANGALORE

A. SIMO

The stately edifice that rises from the centre of the present Shivajinagar and attracts large crowds of devotees has been known, and is still known, by a variety of names: "Kanickamada Kovil", "Annai Arockiamarie", "Black Pally Church", "St. Mary's Church/Basilica". It has had a checkered history of two hundred years and more.

About the year 1685 when Kempa Pagi Gavounden (Kempa Gowda) abandoned old Bangalore (Kadookkoopally), situated about seven miles to the west, to found the city of Bangalore, Blackpally, where St. Mary's Basilica now stands, was almost a desert. At that time some people came from Ginji. They included Kalla Thimian, Kuppaiyan, Olivan Sinnian and Savarimuthoo Kavoodan. They cleared the area (which is today known as Shivajinagar) and settled down there. They built a small village which was gradually surrounded by a mud wall. The village took the name Beliakkipally (which became Blackpally) because, they say, the rice cultivated there had whitish husk; or because of a great number of white birds (*kokkres*) that came into the rice fields there. The accountant of the village (*senaboga*) was Kariapan and the headman (*thalariary*) was Sengayan. In 1830 remnants of the old mud wall could still be seen.

Humble Beginnings

To the west of the mud wall enclosure the Hindus built a small temple dedicated to Hanumantharayan. In 1895 it still existed. To the east, Sonappan built another temple dedicated to Somaswaran. Between these temples the Christians set up a small chapel thatched with straw and facing east. They called it "Kanickamada Kovil". Its location would have been where the northern wing of the present church stands.

In those days (1685-1877) it was rare for Catholic priests to visit this place. The local Christians had to travel some twenty miles south-east to meet a priest at Anekkal where missionaries used to come more frequently. Kartanather, Mikelnader, Rasendran, Arulnather, Armirthanather and Kullarayan Pottusamy were some of the priests who visited Anekkal from time to time. Their memory was cherished by the people for a long time. In 1807 the Bangalore Cantonment was established. After that Abbe Dubois occasionally came from Srirangapatnam to visit the Blackpally Christians and celebrate Mass in which both Indian and European Christians took part.

Improvements and Modifications

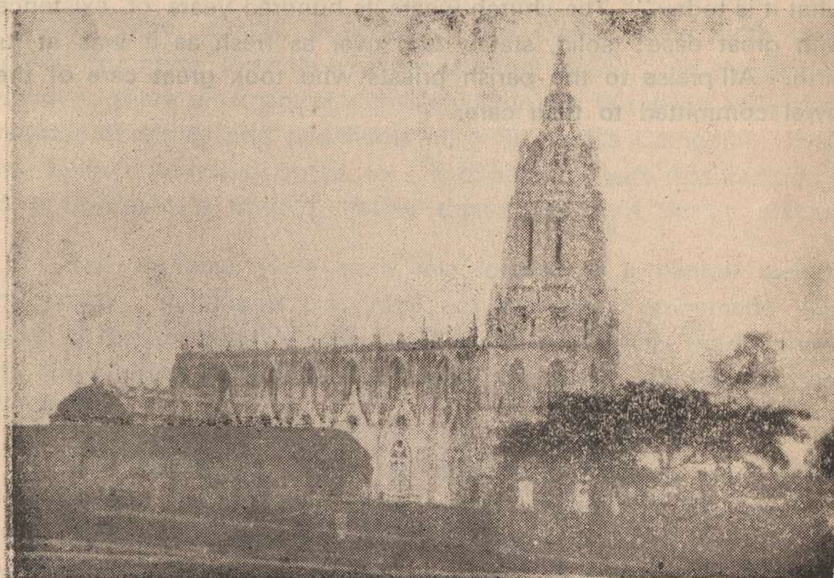
Dubois took the initiative for rebuilding the chapel which was in a pitiable condition. He had Fr. Andrew brought from Pondicherry who, with the help of Gnanamuthu, the catechist of Dubois, replaced the chapel with a newly built church with a tiled roof. It was built in a cross shape: the main nave lay east-west and the two wings north-south. In 1813 Father D'Souza enlarged the church by extending the nave and one of the wings, built the dome over the sanctuary and a façade on the northern side. Later further extensions were made by Fr. Donatus who received generous help from the local Christians, especially from Subedar Lazaar of the 14th Regiment M.I. In 1822 Fr. Jarrige, the priest in charge, built a portico.

Muslim Attack

The Muslims did not take the defeat of Tipu Sultan (1799) in good grace. Even before the revolt of 1857, Muslim rage against the British surfaced now and then in quite a few places. One such incident took place at Bangalore in 1832, in which the Christians and the Blackpally church became targets of attack. A certain Mohamed Ali, a naik of the Indian Regiment contrived to foment the emotions of Muslims against the Christians. In a fury the Muslims trooped to Blackpally, ransacked the church and destroyed holy pictures and statues. The legend has it that when they came to the statue of Mary they were blinded and ran out of the church in panic.

The New Church

As the Catholic population increased the Blackpally church proved too small for the whole congregation. A second church was built in 1841 and christened St. Patricks. In 1845 the Mysore Mission was raised to the status of a vicariate apostolic and Mgr. Charbonnaeux was appointed its first vicar apostolic. He chose Bangalore as his residence and wanted to elevate the Blackpally church as the cathedral. But since there was not enough room there for his residence, St. Patricks was made the cathedral.



The community of Christians belonging to Blackpally was divided into four parishes. With 3,436 members it was too large for the existing church. Proposals were made for building a new, larger one. Fr. Eugene-Louis Kleiner conceived plans for the church – using as his models the gothic churches of Europe with which he was familiar such as the cathedrals of Reims, Strasbourg, Cologne and Notre Dame of Paris. The new church based on those models took ten years to complete. On 8 September 1882 the new church was consecrated by Msgr. Coadou, the then vicar apostolic of Mysore. For a long time the people of Bangalore cherished the memory of the solemn ceremonies of the consecration on the feast of the Nativity of St. Mary. It was with a sense of pride and joy that the people of Blackpally looked on the new

church. The cost of construction had been Rs. 29,649, Annas 3, and Paise 7. All that remained of the old church was the small dome and the two aisles.

In the souvenir published in 1973 in connection with the church being raised to the dignity of a Minor Basilica, there is a photo of Msgr. F.X. Celestine with the caption: "The great Parish Priest, whose wisdom and zeal has made St. Mary's what it is to-day." But as I look at the photo of the church taken on the day of its consecration and compare it with the church of today I find little difference. One can well say: "Father Kleiner has made it what it is today." The church wears its hundred years of existence with great ease: solid, stately and ever as fresh as it was at its birth. All praise to the parish priests who took great care of the jewel committed to their care.

CHURCHES OF BANGALORE

Among the conspicuous and typical institutions of the cantonment township – and among the important architectural symbols of the British Raj – were the church and the cemetery. Both had an assured place in the spacious layout of the station, alongside the “Company” gardens – with their band-stand and tennis courts – the club and the hospital. While all the other buildings were in the European-Classical – or Palladian – style of architecture, the churches were usually designed in the Gothic style, with their arches “pointing towards a higher spiritual plane.” In Bangalore, however, there are many churches styled in the European – Classical tradition of domes and pediments – like St. Mark’s Cathedral. Even the belfry – whenever opted for – is of a piece with that tradition – as in St. Patrick’s Church – rather than a system of Gothic arches.

The churches were as a rule located in a central area of the station, nearabout the ‘Mall’, as the main promenade was called (‘Thandi Sadak’ or the ‘cool walk’ in Northern India, where the town-bhisti kept it cool by sprinkling water in the summer evenings).

The cemeteries, unlike the practice in England, were rarely close to the church: they were usually located at the edge of the cantonment layout. The Englishman, working in difficult conditions thousands of miles away from home, must have decided that while keeping up with his Sunday church-going – in fact looking forward to it as a social occasion – he could do without the too-visible intimations of mortality.

St. Mary’s Basilica

Shivajinagar

Perhaps the most Gothic among the ecclesiastical edifices of the City and remarkably baroque in its florid and fanciful ornamentation, St. Mary’s Basilica, in its present form, was built in 1875–82 at a total cost of about Rs. 30,000. The original structure, a small chapel which was later pulled down, was completed in 1813 by Abbe Dubois, a Catholic priest who came over to Bangalore from Srirangapatna after the fall of Tippu. The locality

was then known as Blackpally (biliakki-pally – the village of white rice). (It is remarkable how Abbe Dubois acquired his standing among his largely-British flock, though he was a Frenchman and the French had been locked in a long conflict with the British).

The interior of the basilica is a feast for the eyes – pointed windows filled with stained glass; transepts and ogee arches; multiple-columns with rich Corinthian capitals of moulded leaves-and-grape-bunches motif, supporting stately arches vaulting towards the ceiling.

The setting has been completely spoilt by a recently – built church which besides proclaiming its total disregard for architectural integration, almost touches the basilica. Not much further away is the administrative block in the style of an apartment-house. The structures are a veritable lesson in what not to do in such a special setting.

St. Luke's Church

Pampa Mahakavi Road, Chamrajpet

A well-composed and appealing structure of brick and stone-facing, built in 1935, its elevation is distinguished by tall, rectangular windows and matching square openings which constitute the theme, varied with a circular ventilator on each side. The 80-feet high central tower, carrying a cross, is composed of tapering square-shaped blocks.

The entrance lobby has two semi-circular arches with wooden doors leading to the two aisles. In the centre is another arched opening with stained-glass. The altar has the backdrop of an impressive picture of Jesus in fellowship-meal, inlaid with ivory and stained wood. The apse has wooden panelling and some more stained-glass.

The Church is set in a well-maintained garden with flowering plants and big-canopy trees.

Hudson Memorial Church

Corner of Cenotaph Road (now Nrupathunga Road) and at the northern end of the Shri Narasimharaja Square.

This stone building was built in 1904 in a mixture of Gothic and Classic styles. It has all the features of a medieval Christian

church, with well-defined transepts, buttresses on the sides of the nave, 3 entrance doors on the west with gables, a rose window above the doors, steep gabled roof, and a single western tower with a bell. The interior is furnished with traditional church furniture of fine woodwork. There is a large stained-glass window behind the altar which is enclosed with a wrought-iron railing. The teak-wood pulpit is embellished with intricate design.

The building has a well-laid garden with gulmohur, tamarind and coconut trees. It was for a long time obscured by large-sized hoardings, which have, happily, since been removed.

St. Andrew's Church

Cubbon Road

A Scottish 'kirk' consecrated in 1867, the Gothic lines of this church have a strong resemblance with the elevation of other 'period' buildings like the Central College, which was built around the same time.

A remarkable cast-iron gate admits the visitor to the vast compound of the church, with its battlemented parapets and steepled turrets springing from the tiled roof and making an impressive appearance on the skyline. The tall doors, windows and circular ventilators are all framed by rusticated slabs painted in contrasting white against the 'oxide-red' of the building. The satellite and service buildings, including the diminutive ladies toilet, are perfect compositions in themselves, thoughtfully integrated with the main building and the setting. The garden, though, could do with a little more investment of funds and tending.

St. Patrick's Church

Originally built for Irish soldiers in 1841-44 by Gail-Hot, military chaplain, with a grant of Rs. 4000, to which he added another Rs. 4000 from private collection. The church was rebuilt in 1894-98 at a cost of Rs. 1.5 lakhs.

The elevation of the church is composed of fluted pilasters resting on pedestals, circular ventilators of floral glazing, sunlight-arched windows and dormer windows in the sloping Mangalore-tiled roof. The twin-belfries are of imposing height, styled in Corinthian pilasters and double-pediments (The belfry design—except for the

Gothic pinnacle – seems to have inspired the design of the central tower of the Indian Institute of Science, built about two decades later).

The setting is marred by a recently-added commercial block of faceless and pointless architecture in total disharmony with the church which is still the focal point.

St. Joseph's Church

The corner-stone of the structure was laid in 1852 at Briand Square on the Bangalore-Mysore national highway. An underground vault containing life-size images of St. Joseph, Jesus and Mary attracts a large number of pilgrims. (It is the only church in Bangalore with a crypt). A well-composed and imposing stone-faced building whose elevation is distinguished by a large semi-circular arch and twin square towers covered with cupolas, behind which is a ribbed dome. A Kannada inscription in the modest pediment between the twin-towers invites people to come and pray.

St. Mark's Cathedral

The church was originally "raised in 1808 and enlarged in 1901", largely to meet the needs of worshippers among the British army personnel, besides some civilians, who had just shifted to Bangalore from Srirangapatna. It is a "High-Renaissance" structure modelled on St. Paul's Cathedral and other churches of the 17th century which bear the stylistic stamp of Sir Christopher Wren – an imposing piece of architecture with well-defined transepts and a porch of grand Ionic columns with a richly-carved entrance-door. The general elevation-scheme is composed of Ionic pillars and pilasters, deeply-moulded cornices and balustraded parapets. The choir wings, subsequently added, are impressively pedimented on the outside. There is a circular vault on the apse. A majestic dome dominates the sky-line.

Portions of the church have been rebuilt from time to time after a series of disasters struck it: there was a fire in 1923 and a roof-collapse in 1924. It was in the re-building that the structure acquired much of its present-day beauty. Its major restoration and facelift came in 1927. Stained glass in floral motif adorns the sun-rise arches of doors, large windows and ventilators. Some of the memorial tablets and plaques date back to 1843. The wooden furniture inside is remarkable for its workmanship.

The setting is largely unspoilt with new structures thoughtfully tucked away in a corner and a biggish garden which contains some glorious big-canopy trees, including cassia, gulmohur, temple-lily, umbrella tree, jacaranda, rain tree and silver oak.

Holy Trinity Church

A landmark visible from a distance at the east-end of M.G. Road (the section of the road was earlier known as Trinity Road), the Church was built in 1848-51 in the English Renaissance style, with an Ionic portico at its entrance on the west. It is regarded as the largest "military" church in southern India: it can accommodate 700 persons. The crossing has a tower in two stages.

The Church is noteworthy, among other things, for its wood panelling and stained glass windows. There is a fine garden around the building with some big-canopy trees. The edifice is often obscured by a batch of large hoardings.

St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral

St. John's Road

The original structure was built by Father Chevalier, the first parish priest of St. Francis Xavier, in 1851. Father Sarvanton, a successor, found the church too small. The foundation-stone of the present church was laid in 1911. The architecture was designed by Father Vissac, an architect-engineer-priest, and the work-contract was executed by one C.R. Ratna Singh. The church was completed after a long interruption because of the First World War. The cost in 1932 came to a little over Rs. 1 lakh.

A quaintly impressive facade composed of a central pediment resting on twin Tuscan pillars, and pedimented windows with pilasters on the first-floor and on the second-floor tower block. The central pediment frames a conspicuous lotus-like motif, carved in stone.

Laid out in the form of a cross, the structure is made entirely of granite with its roofing covered with Mangalore tiles. The huge dome above the sanctuary is among the notable features of the church. The facade-plan includes two belfries which have not yet been raised to the height originally contemplated.

All Saints Church

*Junction of Hosur Road and
Richmond Road*

Set in a compound behind a high stone compound wall, the 'Latin-Cross' church has transepts aligned east-west. Its entrance is through a porch on the west. The nave is covered by a tall, steep roof. On the north and south sides are tall twin gables perpendicular to the main roof. There are two dormer windows on either side in the roof slopes. Transepts, too, have steep gabled roofs. There is a steep gable over the east-window.

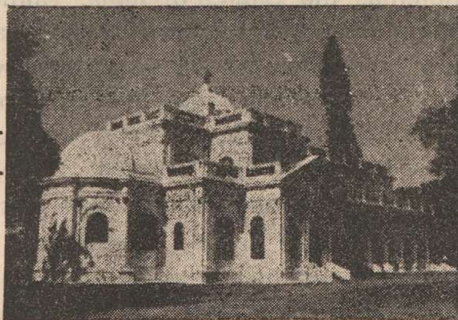
This is a very unusual church building of exposed stone-work, in Gothic style, with steep gables and tall pointed windows.

(Indebted to *The City Beautiful* by T.P. Issar)

ST. MARK'S CHURCH

175 YEARS OLD AND STILL GROWING

St. Mark's is the oldest church (?) in Bangalore. After the fall of Mysore to the East India Company's forces, troops were stationed in Bangalore which became a Cantonment. It was then that a need was felt to have a place of worship for the troops, both British and "Native". The East India Company was required to appoint chaplains to minister to the spiritual needs of the soldiers. Around 1809 two chaplains were appointed to Bangalore. The church was then a "Garrison Church" where parade services were held. The Rev. William Thomas who served from 1811 to 1820 saw the building and opening of the St. Mark's church, the need for which had been felt for some time. The work was started on the recommendation of the then Commander-in-chief in 1807 and was completed in 1812: It was a plain, rectangular, low-roofed building on the site on which the present Cathedral stands. It was considered "the ugliest building ever erected". It could accommodate only 400 persons. The congregation consisted of European and Anglo-Indian soldiers and officers.



The Rev. William Thomas was also concerned about the welfare of the Anglo-Indians and founded the local "Mission" to go "beyond the worship services to express the concern of the Church for the total welfare of all Christians. Though the first concern was for the Anglo-Indians, it was the seed that was to grow and spread to the concerns of the society as a whole and to spread in many directions.

Before long need was felt for enlarging the church premises to accommodate more worshippers as the number was growing with an increase in the military personnel and a growing number of civilian officials and their families joining the congregation. The Church was British and Anglican. It was consecrated in 1916 according to some accounts. The need for enlargement was felt for some time and several attempts were made periodically without much success. In 1894, the Rev. F. Fenny, the senior chaplain with the help of the British Resident succeeded in obtaining money from the Government and started the work in 1901 and it was completed in 1902. The building was complete with a central tower, a chancel and transepts. This building was beautiful compared to the first one. But the building soon met with two tragedies. In 1921 a fire set ablaze by a thief by design or accidentally, destroyed the whole of the inside. Restoration work was started and before its completion, the roof of the nave fell on Feb. 8, 1924. The church started a Restoration Fund Committee and also with great difficulty persuaded the Government to grant the money required for the rebuilding. The rebuilding of the church which began in October 1926 was completed in August 1927.

In 1935 when the Anglican Church in India was made a self-governing Church as the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon, and the Bishoprics of Bombay and Madras were created under the Bishop of Calcutta, the churches in Bangalore which included St. Mark's church came under the Bishopric of Madras and remained so until the Church of South India was formed in 1947 when the Bishopric of Mysore was formed. The Rev. Premaka Gurushanta of the British Methodist Church who was chosen to be the first Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Mysore, chose St. Mark's church which was the mother church of Bangalore to be the Cathedral Church of the Diocese. St. Mark's which all along played an active role in the Christian life of Bangalore assumed a greater role and responsibility, and became more and more involved in the witness and service and ecumenical programmes of the diocese. The Cathedral also cooperated with, supported by and became involved with other groups and organizations such as the SCM, YMCA, YWCA, Bible Society, CISRS, UTC, etc. from whom also came support and leadership for the various projects the church undertook from time to time.

During this time the composition of the church membership was also undergoing a change. The church which was exclusively European and Anglo-Indian, became more cosmopolitan with Indian Christians serving in Government, commercial and industrial establishments attending the services. The Church which had originally Parade Services, included "Voluntary Services" and later changed to "Parish Services", especially after Independence and the formation of the C.S.I.



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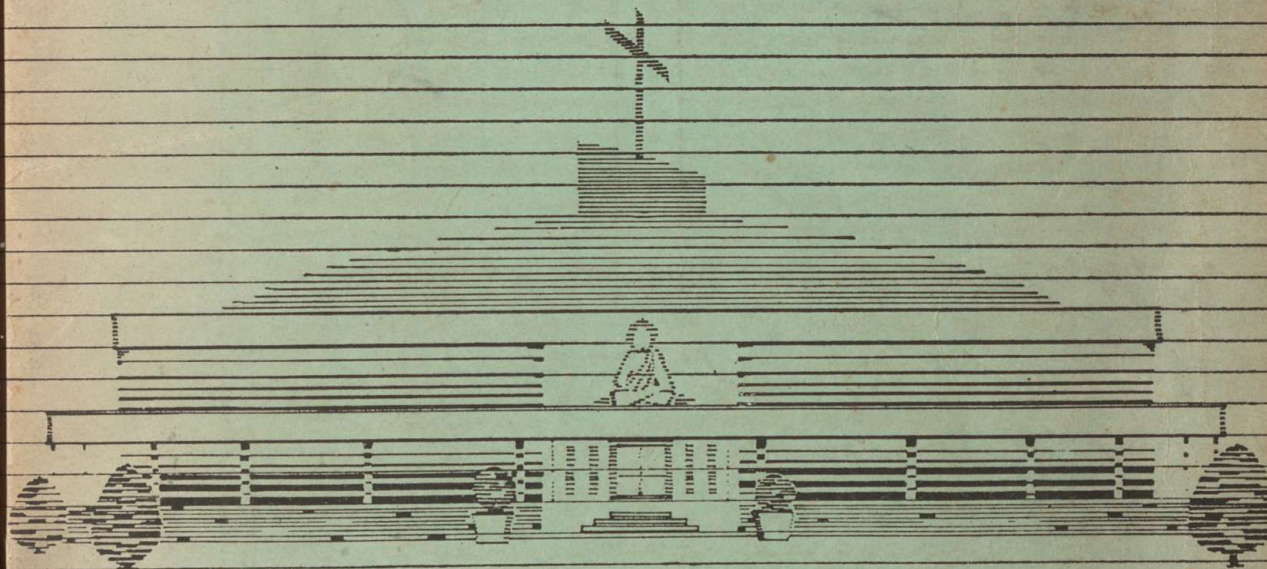
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