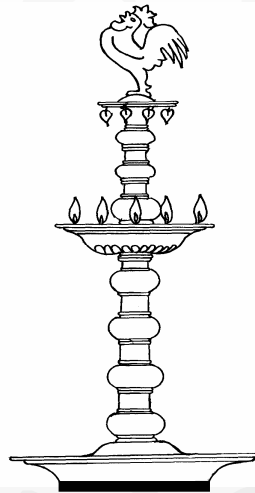


THE CEYLANKAN



Journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia

Journal Number 39 (Vol X No 3) August 2007

Editor: Sumane Iyer

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EDITORIAL



The count down begins.

The next Journal, No: 40 - hand numbered Collectors' Issue of *The Ceylankan*, a 48 page book bound presentation will go out to members in the first week of November. This is the last call for articles to be selected for publication in the issue to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the founding of The Ceylon Society of Australia. Some of you have already responded splendidly to my previous calls and I do have a 'starter pack' so to say for the special issue. But more are required. The Editorial

Team envisages a smorgasbord to delight, entertain and educate all the members. So, keep my E-mail box full. Enclosed with this issue is a Special Gift Sub form. Give your loved ones or good friends an unusual, valuable collectors item gift this season. Your one off gift will also help defray the extra expenses we have to incur in printing and delivery of this issue. Those who receive this Journal as a gift from a member are quite welcome to nominate your own gift recipient. Just fill up the form and send it to the Hon Treasurer with your remittance—he will do the rest.

When I set out to develop a theme per issue, I did not expect such overwhelming support from members. Thank you all. This issue leads with three selected articles on the theme "places that touched your heart and mind". Two new subscribers, Muller and Nadarajah join regular contributor Pathiravitana to share their emotional resonances with three familiar towns of Sri Lanka. Time has not dimmed the memories of these writers, nor their passion. These, along with the rest of the fare, meet the attributes we strive to retain in this Journal - inform, educate, entertain and enthuse. If the contents have kindled your small flame of enthusiasm to share your verse, prose, pictures, cartoons or sketches, this Journal has a long life.

Its in your hands, make it happen.

19th Century Image



Queen's House Lascreeen

Burghers, Bandarawela and me

by J. B. Müller

Author of "The Burghers" © 2006

Upon arriving in Bandarawela the effects of the bracing air...are again apparent...of a place that possesses so fine a climate...it has an unrivalled climate.

So said H. W. Cave in his book "Golden Tips," published by Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., of London in 1900. Perhaps, it is this Mediterranean climate, warm and sunny with an ever-present coolness that attracted so many Burghers and their European cousins who chose to settle down there. For one thing, it was a compact little town made up of Main Street, (which was also the Badulla-Colombo highway), Welimada Road, Poonagala Road, Pansala Road, Esplanade Road, Upper Drive, Grange Road and its extension, the Three Mile Drive back to Esplanade Road, and Ettampitiya Road. It had a railway station, a post office with telephone exchange attached, a police station, a government dispensary (with dental clinic attached), an agricultural office with veterinary surgeon's clinic attached, an irrigation department office, a magistrate's court, extensive railway quarters both to the east and west of the town, the de luxe Bandarawela Hotel, the Bandarawela Tennis Club and the exclusive 'Europeans Only' Haputale Bow Club, and right opposite, the Chinese Union Hotel. The major department store was Millers where the well heeled shopped. The public market had sections for fresh vegetables, fresh fish, groceries, beef, mutton, and chicken, all in one long building in the heart of town adjoining the bus stand and the Shell petrol shed.

The citizens worshipped at the Buddhist temple, the Hindu kovil, the Muslim mosque and at St. Anthony's R. C. church, the Anglican church of the Ascension, the Methodist church and latterly, at Bro. Linnae's Finnish Pentecostal Mission, all of which together looked after their spiritual needs. The leading schools were the Catholic St. Joseph's College, Little Flower Convent & High school for girls, and St. Thomas' prep school a little bit out of town. The Methodists ran the Wesleyan School and Roman Catholic nuns ran

both St. Mary's and Nazareth schools for girls and boys, mainly from the tea estates around the town. Bandarawela had a well-equipped engineering workshop run by Walker, Sons & Co., Ltd., along Welimada Road, catering to the plantation industry and two good automobile garages: Motor Service Station, commonly known as the 'Ford Garage' and Ceylon Motors, below the Sunday Fair grounds. The town also boasted of a subway leading from the Colombo-Badulla Highway to the railway station constructed in 1894 and a massive tunnel constructed by the railway through which ran Pansala Road as it twisted its way to the south and west of Main Street.



Bandarawela Hotel, in the golden glow of a sunset on a balmy afternoon

Above the Ford Garage was Royal Talkies, one of the two cinemas in town, the other being the Sigiri, which evolved from a tent into a regular building near the Sunday Fair. It featured mainly Tamil, Sinhala, and Hindi movies and ran to packed houses on Sundays when estate workers and villagers both came to town to buy, sell, and be entertained.

My father, the late L. T. (Terry) Muller settled here in 1931. He bought a bungalow at Haputale (Rosemont), and then "Greystones" at Diyatalawa, during the 1930-31 period. He took a dislike to the constant mist and chilliness of Haputale and to the Tommies and Tars stationed at Diyatalawa, whose entire attention seemed to be focused on my sister Bussy, who was too good looking for her own good not to mention my mother, Ethel. He had also developed a thinly veiled contempt for the Brits whom he had worked under for 31 years. From amongst them he had few friends or acquaintances that he deigned to speak with: Mrs.

Malaby and her sister Miss Grigg; Mr. and Mrs. Haynes, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Knight, Mr. Taylor, Mrs. Marshall, her son and daughter and the Manager of the enormous 3,400 acre Poonagala Group, 13 miles up the road on which we lived, Mr. R. Gorton-Coombe who tried his damndest to persuade Papa to release me to be a *'creeper'* on his estate. Of course, nearly all the estates had British planters of varying temperaments who we came across at Millers and the Bandarawela Hotel managed by Mr. Pat O'Shaughnessy, an Irishman.

The fathers of Philip Bridge, Lily Sladen, Newton Nevis, Percy Unwin, Andrew Balfour, Cedric Inch, Franz and Leslie Atwell, Hamish Ross from Oodoowerre, Capts. Anderson and Payne, James Bowie, Pansy Hamilton, Archibald Leitch, Gibbs and George Taylor, Alfred Bowie-Richardson, Bussy, Merle and Cyril Rogers, Dr. Hepponstall, his sister's husband Mr. Gogerley, Mr. Woods, Mr. Crofton, Mr. Williams, Mr. Downall, Mr. Eaton, Brian and Bob the Wilson brothers, the Dunsford sisters, and Mrs. Strong's husband, were all Britons. Mrs. Van Rooyen's and Mrs. Nolthenius' husbands were Dutch; the father of Earl, Mavis and Helen Henry was an Italian, Signor Vicaresso who changed his name to 'Henry' to escape internment as an enemy alien during WWII.

The Burghers of Bandarawela mixed freely with all these people, generally designated 'Eurasians' in the Census of Population. They also mixed well with Sinhalese, Jaffna Tamil, Moor, Chinese and Malay families - Dimbulanes, Senaratnes, Molli-godes, Divitotawelas, Dambawinnes, Rambukpotas, Goonetillekes, Pereras, De Silvas, Fernandos, Rajamanthris, Ratnavibushanas, Karunanayakes, Rajapakses, Ranasinghes, Thambirajahs, Arun-achalams, Johnpulles, Gopala Pillais, Vallipurams, Subramaniam, Ratnasinghams, Selladurais, Khans, Bagasrawallahs, Badurudeens, Lis and Kaos, Jamals, Bongsos, Aniffs, Morseths, and so on without distinction as to race, caste, or religious affiliations. By-and-large, all these families were English-speaking and middle class with shared values that made social interaction effortless and agreeable.

The Burghers who had settled in Bandarawela formed an unobtrusively influential group but they were never ghetto-minded or clannish in the way some ethno-linguistic or religio-cultural groups have become in a progressively more polarized polity.

If my memory serves me right, Fred Aldons was PD on Nayabedde; Altendorff was a retired DIG of Police; the Anghies, Drs. Trevor and Ruth were both very good GPs; Arnolda was the retired wharf manager of Millers; Barbut was a telecommunications inspector; Bartholomeusz—one was a dentist, D.A. Bartholomeusz, SD on Demodera Group and the other a RMP attached to Kahagolla Estate; Blazé was a medical doctor; the other, V.L. Blazé was SD on Haputale; Bulner and Carney were both in the Railway; Christiansz was a head tea maker on Craig Estate; Congreve was PD of Newburgh Estate, Ella; Crutchley was a railway guard; Cruz also worked in the railway; one Van Cuylenberg was an inspector of police and the other, M.L.C. Van Cuylenberg was the PD of Hingurugama; D.L. Eb-bels was SD on Nayabedde; bodybuilder Ebert was in the Air Force; Edema was a retired railway guard; Elias was a moneylender; Ephraums was a piano tuner; E.H.F. Felsing was PD on Oakfield; Ferdinands was an engine driver; Forbes was a civil draughtsman; Forster was a retired railway guard; Gauder was the sanitary inspector; the Gomez brothers were public servants except for Christie; P.A. Herft was the PD of Ambatenne Estate and the other, Rex Herft was the Booking Clerk at the Railway Station; Miss Lottie Jansz was a spinster; Keyt was an auctioneer; T. LaBrooy was SD on Nayabedde; Van Langenberg was head tea maker on Haputale Estate; K. V. Ludvigsen was a SD on Nayabedde; Martensteyn was a civilian clerk attached to the police office; one Martin was a SD on Attampettia Estate and the other Jas. G. Martin was the PD of Udaveria Group; W. L. Meikle was SD on Nayabedde; Melder was in the railway; Moreira was electrical engineer at Diyatalawa; Muller was a van salesman with Nestles; Nathanielsz was a dentist; Mrs. Van Rooyen owned Wye Estate and Farm; one Scharenguivel was a medical doctor and the other was an engine driver; Mrs. May Schueling was the owner of Sutherland Estate



The Railway, the Burghers, and Bandarawela form an indelible link. Here the "Udarata Menike" (Upcountry Belle) in the misty tea country just outside Bandarawela

and her husband, Rajah (B. T.) was the PD; Stork was an engine driver; Mrs. Strong was a widow; A.H. Gordon Tissera was PD on Ballagalla Ella; Toussaint was a retired agricultural officer; of the two Van Twests, one was the ASP at Badulla and the other was an army doctor; and De Zilwa was a retired estate head clerk. They were law abiding to a fault and set an excellent example to their compatriots. The other Burgher families I can recall without too much effort are: Berenger, Colin-Thômé, Fernando, Flamer-Caldera, Frugtneit, Kelaart, Landers, Mack, Mauritz, Meyer, Pappili, Payoe, Rooy, Smith, Solomons that's a lot for one small town in the Uva Downs of south eastern Sri Lanka.

Dropping in for a chat and a cuppa of the finest (mornings and afternoons, or a mug of hot soup in the evenings) or perhaps, a dram or two of arrack, Martini Rosso, or a glass of Martell's Three Star brandy, was commonplace. Folks also dropped in on Sundays—late mornings and were always invited to share lunch, which generally included either chicken (the famous 'fowl' curry) or seer fish curry. For the young teens, it was 'Sunday Choice' on the Commercial Service or Radio Ceylon and we eagerly waited for our names to be announced and to listen to our favourite vocalists. Today, those lovely songs with their heart warming lyrics and melodious tunes go as 'Golden Oldies'!

Papa and I used to go spend the day on some Sundays, once in about two months, at Sutherland Estate, Ella, with the Schuelings, Aunt May and Uncle Rajah. The surroundings of their beautiful bungalow were a veritable zoo with Indian Zebu cattle, rabbits, and all kinds of birds that kept me thrilled. I used to love the smell of fresh baked buns and bread, cup cakes and croissants and followed my nose right up to the feet of the ebony-hued, white-moustachioed and uniformed head appu who indulged me with some of his baked items. Uncle Rajah had a brother, Bertie, I think his name was who lived out in the Eastern Province at Rukam Tank and he used to delight me with his stories of elephants and near mishaps with angry wild buffaloes. Uncle Rajah loved to go hunting in the Dry Zone jungles in those days looking for leopard and bear, wild buffalo and deer and he had quite a number of trophies mounted on the walls of the bungalow.

On my own, I used to spend Sundays with my cousins, the Försters and Van Landenberg's at Elatota, at the small waterfall and pool, frolicking

in the water and having a whale of a time. Aunt Kalu, that is, Mrs. Primrose Förster [my mother's younger sister] gave me lunch after which I joined Bunkey (Frederick) to go look for other boys and we loafed on our bikes through village and estate having a damn good time of good, clean fun, until tired out, we went to our homes for supper and sleep. Sometimes, a good telling off from the 'Old Man' for staying out of home for so long!

I had several surrogate mothers: there was Kala (Claudia), then Alice (Podi Hamine) and Baby Nona, who were all ayahs employed by Papa to look after me. However, our neighbour Mrs. Rajamanthri, really mothered me. She had two sons, Henry (who was my brother Maurice's friend and schoolmate) and Marcus (who was my best friend), and several daughters - Mavis, Sylvie, Margie, and Indra, all of who went to the Convent with my sister, Bubsy. Mrs. Rajamanthri, who I used to call 'mummy' died a few years ago at the grand old age of 105 years. Her husband, Mr. Rajamanthri was the pharmacist at Millers. The wives of all our tenants - Emily Dimbulane, Carmen Rajapakse, Marie Senaratne, and Edith Mendis, were my 'aunties' in succession, and their servants scraped coconut, cleaned the paddy husk from the rice, washed it free of stones and taught me how to cook a decent rice and curry. Even a beef '*istoo*' (stew) for dinner. They taught me to make a delicious dessert with peaches, boiled with some cardamoms, cloves, and a small piece of cinnamon, then sugar and salt, to be served with cream topping or condensed milk. Papa loved it. I learned to do the same with rhubarb stems, too. Our tenants in the three bungalows rented out by Papa were like a large extended family. At the bottom of the opposite hillside adjoining Mrs. Rajamanthri property was Dingiri Banda's sister, Somie-akka who supplied us with fresh string hoppers, hoppers or pittu in the mornings, complete with *kiri hodhi* (coconut gravy) and *katta-sambola* (chilli sambal). Adjoining "Lone Star Lodge" there lived the manager of Muthiya Sons & Co., transport agents - Annaikuttupulle, [which means 'baby elephant'] a huge man appropriately named. He grew fresh vegetables and raised some poultry and his daughters, Vimaladevi and Saraswathi, brought us fresh eggs, some still warm, for 10 cents each! Below our property was a man as black as coal, *Dhali* Banda [*Dhali* means 'soot'] who kept four cross bred cows and supplied us fresh milk at 30 cents a bottle. The other was Muthu Samy from Nayabedde Estate who carried a large round tank (with small brass tap fitted) on his head and two bags of bottles slung

from each shoulder. That milk too, was 30 cents a bottle and better than *Dhali* Banda's because my Papa said that the fellow adulterated his milk with water.

As the head of a Burgher family I saw to it that my five children became proficient in all three languages—reading, writing, and speaking Sinhala, Tamil, and English - and we have no problems communicating across ethnic/linguistic or cultural 'borders.' Nine of my 11 grandchildren are also growing in this milieu (two are in the UK) where there is an increasing demand for this Island's natural English speakers - the **Burghers**.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Memories of Diyatalawa

by Srikantha Nadarajah

In the early years of my life, I lived with my family in the idyllic town of Diyatalawa nestled in a valley between Haputale and Badarawela in the hill country. It is also in a relatively dry part of the hills, and in view of the topography and availability of flat land with little scope for agriculture, is a convenient location for setting up training camps for the armed forces and surveyors.

It was in the mid 1940's and we lived in the Survey Camp, where my father was Superintendent of Surveys in charge of the camp. There were two main areas in Diyatalawa where people lived for short periods of a few years, based on their occupation: one was the Survey Camp and other was the Army and Navy Camp as it is even today. What was fascinating about Diyatalawa at that time was that outside the camps mentioned, the town centre was very small. There were only two grocery stores, Abraham Sahibo and R M Fernando & Co, also known as the Army and Navy Stores. Apart from that, there was a Chinese garment shop, a barber saloon, post office, cinema called Wavel Theatre (later changed to Regal Theatre), the police station and the railway station. As such, after some time people in the town and camps had no difficulty in getting to know each other. The owner of the garment shop also doubled up as a chef, and one day my father arranged for him to prepare a banquet for a party, and he produced an authentic Chinese meal which was enjoyed by all. The owner of the cin-

ema occasionally gave us complimentary tickets, and as children we looked forward to these movie outings.

In view of limited scope for shopping, most people traveled to Bandarawela or Haputale to purchase meat fish and other essential items. Also, there were no medical facilities in Diyatalawa, and we either had to visit our doctor in Bandarawela or the hospital in Haputale for treatment. Bandarawela was a much larger town with several shops. It is reputed to have one of the most salubrious climates in the country. They had a large tennis club where there was an annual open tournament which attracted many contestants from other parts of the country. My parents also took part in such tournaments, and we enjoyed going to Bandarawela to participate in such events. Haputale was somewhat of a foggy place due to misty weather derived from the Gap in the Haputale Pass. It had a good hospital and several shops. All these towns including Diyatalawa had the Sunday fare known as the *Pola*, where produce from nearby villages was marketed in an open space near the town.

The Survey Camp was itself a beautiful place with several cottages housing families and bachelors quarters. Electricity and water service was available with limited facilities for drainage. There was luxuriant vegetation in most parts and an orchard with several varieties of guava and avocado trees. A luxury house located on top of a hill, called the Circuit Bungalow was almost exclusively reserved for visits by the head of Department. There was also a large playground where they had cricket matches from time to time. The Army and Navy Camp had a large square for parades and sporting activities. I remember a colorful parade to mark the visit of the Earl of Caithness to the Camp during the colonial days.

Despite the small size of the place, there was considerable social activity, centered around two clubs. One was in the Survey Camp and the other was the Public Services Club. President of the Public Services Club was Mr. Mallory Wijesinghe who was an engineer in public service and later became a business tycoon in Colombo. Another interesting feature was the dog races sponsored by the Public Services Club which attracted a large number of punters.

In the Survey Camp, club activities were more wholesome with outdoor games such as tennis, volley ball and badminton, and indoor activities such as bridge and billiards, attracting many occu-

pants of the camp. The Camp came alive during two periods, when surveyors from various parts of the country came annually for what was known as the "Recess". There were considerable celebrations taking place at that time. Also Diyatalawa was a holiday resort for families in the government departments/ forces occupying the town especially during the April school holidays, and there was much activity in the clubs at that time.

There were interesting places nearby to go on excursions such as Fox Hill (named after the visit of sailors from HMS Fox in colonial times) and several other hills such as Anchor Hill and Squirrel Hill. Fox Hill is now the venue of stock car racing in Sri Lanka. There was also a notorious place nearby known as Little England, reputed to have off spring of British military men and women from surrounding villages.

There were also some exotic residences, such as Arcadia, a large resort bungalow owned by Mr. D R Wijewardena of Lake House. This property had one of the most beautiful gardens (with manicured lawns), I have ever seen. Another interesting place was called Mountain Rest owned by Mr. Victor Dhanapala, reputed at the time to be a colourful character who entertained Prime Ministers and other dignitaries. A news paper correspondent described him as being dressed in Saville Row suits and speaking 'Mariakade' (equivalent of Billingsgate) English.

There were a few small villages of local inhabitants outside the camps. One interesting place was a Muslim village on the road to Bandarawela called Kahagolle. Children from that village along with other villages nearby attended a vernacular school where they were taught basic subjects in Sinhala and Tamil at primary school level. The school had rudimentary facilities such as benches and desks with a few blackboards in a small building. There were about three teachers in both mediums. However, most of the children who attended school were destitute and came to obtain their mid day meal which was a quarter loaf of bread with jam or sambol. Kahagolle also had a native physician who was competent in treatment of broken bones. In view of the absence of proper educational facilities, most parents in the Camps sent their children to boarding schools. I had a brief stint at St Thomas' Prep School Bandarawela when Dr W T Keeble the famous educationist was principal.

I always enjoyed the scenic beauty of the hill country in driving to Diyatalawa through Balangoda, Belihul Oya, Pelmadulla, Hali Ella, Haldamulla and on through Haputale Pass. The view from Haputale into the lowlands on a clear day was breathtaking.

The train trip through Nanu Oya, Ambawela, Pattipola, Ohiya, Idalgashinna and Haputale to Diyatalawa was also fascinating.

During colonial times, there was good discipline in the respective Camps with high standards maintained by the British. The last British Surveyor Generals were Ms Wilson and King. They were succeeded by Mr. N S Perera, who became the first Ceylonese Surveyor General. He was the brother of Dr N M Perera. Colonel Roy Jayatillake, Commander of the Singha Regiment at the time was a good friend of our family.

Diyatalawa will always remain in my memory as a beautiful place with several interesting features including a playground where, during my childhood days I came to know a lot of other children and made many friends.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Looking back on Point de Galle

by S.Pathiravitana

When I tell my friends that my first job was as a trainee attached to the Range Forest office in Galle, they ask me at once, 'But, there are no forests in Galle, are there?' 'Good question,' I tell them, and go on to explain that Galle has practically everything except palmyrah. That's true; Galle produces a good part of our major exports like tea, yes tea, rubber and coconut and citronella oil. The tea estates, for instance, begin at Walahan-duva - just about five miles from the sea! It also trained youths in the management of tea estates.

The forests start from Kottowa, not to be confused with Kottawa which is virtually in Colombo. This Kottowa forest starts from a little beyond Walahan-duva. It spreads over an area of 10,000 acres and crosses over to the other forest area known as Kombola. On one side of the Kottowa-Kombola forest range runs the road to Hiniduma and on the other is the road to hilly Deniyaya.

Now that we have got in order the geography of the places we are talking about, let us now enter the forests. For a city bird like me visiting the forests was like entering a solemn cathedral. Tall, stately trees all round, trying to reach up to the heavens and man, weak man crawling on the ground below like an ant. Fortunately, this forest range has no

fierce animals and there is no need therefore to carry a gun. At the time I was there, over 50 years ago, there used to be a picnicking spot in the Kottowa forest close to the main road where those living in the town of Galle could come to experience briefly the spirit of the place. I wonder whether this picnicking spot caught on and functions still. My sweetest memory of the Kottowa forest, however, is about a strange fruit I encountered there. The Forest Guard who accompanied me on this tour asked me whether I have eaten *mee amba*. (a variety of mango)

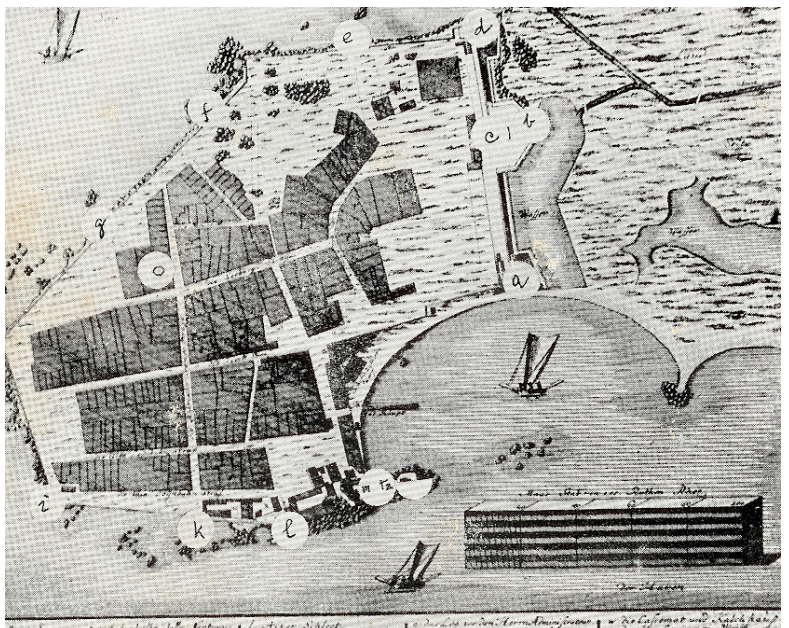
I had heard of this fruit but never seen it before. I imagined it to be a fruit as large as a *karthacolumbum*, (a highly desired variety of mango) but to my surprise and disappointment it turned out to be a tiny fruit hardly bigger than a berry. No knife was needed for that job. All that you had to do was to pop it into your mouth like a ju-jube, suck in the juice and spit out the tiny seed. No mango, I must say, had tasted up to that time ever so sweeter than this pip. Returning to the town of Galle where I resided, the other site that attracted me was the landmark of this town - its Fort. For a historical site it had a rather neglected look at that time. As they say it in Sinhala, even the red coxcomb of a rooster begins, after a time, to look white. However, for an outsider like me, not only is this lonely sentinel now standing guard in a lovely place, with a harbour on one side and the open sea on the other, it beckons to you to explore its past.

Had the passage through the Suez Canal never been opened, Galle may have become the commercial, if not the administrative capital of this country. America, for instance, installed its first commercial counsellor to Ceylon in Galle. Until the end of the 19th century most of the visitors to this country coming from the West, disembarked at the port known as Point de Galle, for that was how Galle was known to the world up to the end of the 19th century. According to Henry Heusken, an American who was on his way to join the newly opened US embassy in Japan as its First Secretary, this is how the name Point de Galle originated:

"About three hundred and sixty years ago, the intrepid Vasco da Gama, with a handful of men, went ashore in the long boat when he saw the smooth beach of this Spice Island. Setting foot on ground he heard the familiar crowing sound of a great many roosters and for that reason he called it Punto di Galle, meaning Roosters' Point. This handful of heroes immediately started working and built a fortress whose

solid wall has resisted so far the ravages of time. For one hundred and fifty years the glorious descendants of Albuquerque and Vasco da Gama knew how to maintain their positions on the 'Pearl of the Indies,' but another sun was rising on the seas of the Indies before which all others were going to wane." This, of course, was Britain who took over not only Vasco da Gama's Punto di Galle but also the entire country and changed the Punto into Point and later dropped the Point altogether leaving Galle naked.

I wonder how this story narrated by Heusken would go down with the Dutch. All along we have been told by our historians that it is the Dutch who built this fort in Galle. Heusken, though an American citizen, is Dutch by descent and unlikely to let the country of his birth down. And now the Dutch government has



Plan of Galle Fort circa 1744 courtesy Wolfgang Heydt

taken charge of preserving their handiwork and may not have touched it if the Portuguese had a hand in it. There is a picture, both in paint and in print, given by Wolfgang Heydt, a German artist who worked for the Dutch government, of how the Fort functioned in the 18th century. It was big enough, he says, to accommodate about 4 to 5 thousand soldiers, but only about a 1000 would have been needed in an actual battle, because the natural formation of the place favoured the defenders.

There were quite a few people of different persuasions and faith living inside the Fort. Let Heydt describe this in his own words: *"It (the Fort) is built over with many but very poor houses in which the Europeans are the least seen, but in it dwell Costizos and Mestizos, Moors, Malabars, Sinhalese and Chetties mostly mixed together"* and presumably in great harmony. Costizos is not in the

Shorter Oxford but Mestizos is there. and means offspring of 'Spanish and American Indian.' Here it would be offspring of Dutch and any other people from the above mentioned communal group. And in the same breath Heydt goes on to say, *"These (Europeans) who have decided to remain here find everything fully according to their desires in this place, for the private soldier can manage very well on his ration - and travelling allowance, as also the good monthly pay which he draws three times a year; and with that keep also a black maid servant who serves him instead of a wife, and in addition enjoy a table such as no craftsman in Europe could ask for better, seeing that fowls, eggs, pork, beef, fish and such eatables are to be had there for a low price."*

Point de Galle was a memorable experience for most visitors to this country. As the ship enters the harbour what is laid before the travellers is a colourful picture-post card. The blue waters of the bay and its white beaches with row upon row of waving palms fading into the bluish hills in the background and overtopped by a remarkably beautiful conically shaped peak held sacred by people of all faiths as either Adam's Peak or Samanala Kanda. Among the visitors to this country in the 19th century was Andrew Carnegie, the man who laid the foundation for America's supremacy in steel production. A self made man who succeeded in becoming a multi millionaire and a great philanthropist as well. A most well-informed man, Carnegie knew more about Ceylon than most of us. He admired the Gam Sabha system of rural government that existed once. Deplored its destruction by the British at the start of their rule and praised its restoration by the same people around 1871. A subject he knew even better was of the high quality of iron ore which exists, he said, in large quantities in this country with a quality that rivals the Swedish product. Some day when transport becomes cheaper, Britain, he said "may import this unrivalled stone." He also said of local iron that "it has been worked from remote times and that the native articles of iron are preferred even today to any that can be imported." His visit to Ceylon was made memorable for him, he says, when he rode in a coach from Galle to Colombo.

"Future travellers," he has said, "will soon miss one of the rarest treats in Ceylon. The railway will soon be completed from Colombo to Galle and the days for coaching will cease for ever. We congratulate ourselves that our visit was before this passed away, as we know no drive equal to that we have now enjoyed twice, and the last time even more than the first."

ΩΩΩΩΩΩΩΩ

The Duke of Edinburgh and the Sinhalese Beauty

by The Rambler

Much has been written about Prince Alfred the Duke of Edinburgh and his visit to Ceylon in 1870. Prince Alfred, the second son of Queen Victoria the reigning monarch of the far flung British Empire, was 26 years of age at the time. In that day and age a visit from a member of the British Royal Family was something unusual and extraordinary. It was an age when the sun never set on the British Empire, whose monarch had supreme rights over the lives of all her subjects. The impending visit by Prince Alfred to India and Ceylon among other countries of the Empire had caused tremendous excitement and plans were afoot many months in advance, to entertain the Prince in right royal fashion. The Governor of Ceylon at the time was Sir Hercules Robinson, formerly the Governor of New South Wales in Australia, and he together with the tens of thousands of British families living in the island at that time were determined to make the Prince's visit a memorable one. Several books have been written on the Prince's tour, and among these was John Capper's book devoted exclusively to the Prince's tour of Ceylon called: *The Duke of Edinburgh in Ceylon – a book of elephant and elk sport – London 1871.*

The Duke's 5 week tour in the island from 30 March to 6 May 1870 was marked by the levees hosted by the Governor in Colombo, receptions by the British planters in Kandy, the reception by the De Soysa family in Colombo, and several excursions into the jungles of the country for elephant and elk shooting. The reception by the De Soysa family in Alfred House (named after the Prince) has been well documented and famous for its opulence and grandeur where the Duke and his party were served dinner in gold plates and gem encrusted cutlery.

Among the main items of "entertainment" for the Royal visitor was the elephant kraal conducted in Labugama, only 30 miles away from Colombo but at that time teeming with wild life including many large herds of wild elephants. It was at the Kraal that the Duke first met the young Sinhalese beauty who no doubt made a favourable impression on him. She was Miss Iddamalgodan an 18 year old daughter of a Kandyan chieftain. In Cap-



Miss Iddamalgotoda, the Sinhalese Beauty and the Prince Alfred the Duke of Edinburgh

per's words "The charming Miss Idulmagodde, followed by her long retinue of serving men and maids, was borne slowly along in her Kandyan palanquin". In describing the young lady Capper says : "Among the many visitors present at this kraal, and favoured with admission to the Royal Stand was a most interesting group- an aged Kandyan woman of the better class, the wife of Idulmagodde, a chief of the Saffragam or Ratnapoor district, and principal director of the kraal arrangement, who, with her daughter and some female attendants and a punkah bearer, came to see the kraal somewhat, and the Prince a good deal. Miss Idulmagodde is a splendidly formed classical beauty, and an heiress into the bargain; she was just entering upon the ripening development of oriental eighteen; her limbs would have formed studies for a sculptor; her features would have charmed Correggio; her rich black glossy hair, dark as midnight, falling in clusters over her bare shoulders, and looped up here and there with threads of gold studded with jewels, might well have been the envy of any queen. This jungle beauty, though brought up far removed from the world and its gaieties, was as self possessed and as much at ease, when addressed

by His Royal Highness, as though accustomed to courtly society from early youth. Miss Idulmagodde is believed to have received no instruction in the English language, but we could not help observing a quiet smile steal over her fine features whilst the Prince conversed by her side with one of his suite, as though she had comprehended somewhat of his remarks. There was however, ordinarily a settled melancholy on her face, and we learnt afterwards the cause; the poor girl was engaged, against her will, to be married to an ugly old Kandyan Chief! Have the days of chivalry passed so completely away, that there is no young knight to rescue this fair damsel from the clutches of the indigenous ogre?" The Duke was to meet the young lady again at a reception in Kandy a few weeks later. Says Capper "His Royal Highness had here an opportunity of renewing his acquaintance with Miss Idulmagodde, of the Avissawella kraal, or, as she is usually designated amongst her people, Idamulgoda Menika. Attired in her richest gala dress, and bending beneath the weight of ponderous jewels, she surpassed all the other native beauties, and was looked upon by all as the Queen of the assembly."

Who was this beauty that caught the Royal eye?

The photo that appears with this article of Miss Iddamalgodu was taken in 1870 by the pioneering firm of Scowen and Co, but it is not certain whether it was taken during the time of the Duke's visit. Another photo of Iddamalgodu Kumarihamy after her marriage to J.A.C. Rambukpotha which appeared in the book by Sunil Madugalle : *Four Kandyan Families Colombo 2005* shows an older Iddamalgodu Kumarihamy with her husband and daughters. (not included here) It would appear that Miss Iddamalgodu had been previously married to Ekneligoda Nilame of Ekneligoda Walauwa in the province of Sabaragamuwa. In view of her two marriages it is not possible to identify the persona that was described by Capper as an "ugly old Kandyan Chief". Another interesting assertion is that the marriage of J.A.C. Rambukpotha to Iddamalgodu Kumarihamy was briefly an 'associate marriage' between Rambukpotha and his third brother Kuda Bandara Rambukpotha. Such were the polyandrous customs prevalent among some Kandyan families in that era.

The progeny of Iddamalgodu Kumarihamy and their descendants were associated with the running of the subsequent elephant kraals culminating with the Panamure kraal, the last, held in 1950. The late Dissawe Samuel Alexander Iddamalgodu Elapata or Sam Elapata who was one of the principal organisers of the Panamure kraal was the Kumarihamy's grandson.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Ceylon Volunteers of the Burma Campaign: The Forgotten Veterans of the Forgotten Campaign (1941-1945)

Part 3 - concludes

by Sergei De Silva-Ranasinghe

By June, 1944, the Japanese had been forced out of many positions around Kohima. Bonaventure's unit was subsequently involved in combat with the rear guard elements of the retreating Japanese Army. "After 4 months rest and with reinforcement we started after the Japs again, and marched about 1,000 miles over mountains and jungle. We were in the Kabaw Valley." On February 24th

1945, his battalion prepared for a renewed advance, in a risky night operation to capture a key island in the middle of the massive Irrawaddy River. His section, almost immediately, was hit by Japanese machine gun fire from across the river. When disembarking near the shoreline, Bon's boat was hit and he sustained a serious leg wound. As he recalled, his 'Mae West' life jacket prevented him from drowning, while he sat helpless in the water up to his armpits for hours: "I managed to drop my ammunition vest off to stop the weight pulling me down. I just sat there and hoped for the best. I was many hours in the water with an open gash in my thigh. I could feel things eating at the open wound. I was so thirsty I drank pints of muddy river water."

Hours later, he was rescued by two unknown British soldiers in a motor boat: "They threw me into the boat and took me back across. I never knew who they were." For Bon, the war was over. He was taken to a field hospital and then transported to India for treatment spending 10 months in hospital, and was bedridden for seven of them. After recovery, he was discharged and returned to Ceylon on December 17th, 1945. After the war Bon migrated to Australia in 1949, where he has since lived. Bon was awarded the Burma Star, War Medal, 1939-1945 Star and Defence Medal.

CRNVR in the Burma Campaign

Outside the participation of individual Ceylon volunteers in the 14th Army, the presence of the CRNVR off the coast of Burma is another historic and intriguing case of the overseas deployment of Ceylonese servicemen during Burma Campaign. In early 1945, while the allied reconquest of Burma was steadily progressing and the Japanese Army in full retreat, the South East Asia Command (SEAC), Supreme Allied Commander, Lord Louis Mountbatten and his staff planned to retake the Arakan and Rangoon by land and seaborne offensives. Due to the general shortage of ships available, the CRNVR's Commander, Captain Beauchamp, offered resources, providing two Motor Fishing Vessels (MFVs) with crews to logistically assist the allied offensives.

The special mission consisted of two ships, MFVs 185 and 186, inclusive of 17 crew members. The crew on each ship was as follows: MFV 185 - Lieutenant D. V. Hunter; Sub-Lieutenant Ivan de Livera; Leading/Seaman S. A. Fernando; Leading/Seaman A. A. Fernando; Able Seaman Pon-nuchamy; Leading Stoker Attapattu; Stoker N.

Abeydeera; Stoker Tony Fernando and Yeoman of Signals E. P. Wickremasinghe. MFV 186: Lieutenant Raja Proctor; Sub-Lieutenant George Ekanayake; Leading-Seaman F. Sabamalai; Leading-Seaman G. A. Fernando; Able Seaman S. V. Mariam; Able Seaman Weerasingham; Stoker Pi-



Rear Admiral D V Hunter

yasena; Stoker Saranelis.

Fortunately, Lieutenant D V Hunter, kept a personal account of his mission, entitled 'A Passage to Burma', which was published in Somasiri Devendra's book, *A History of the Navy in Sri Lanka: The Ceylon Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (1937-*

1950), (Colombo: Sri Lanka Navy, 1995), pp. 37-42: "We were ready to proceed in the stipulated week and had made contact with the Commanding Officer of the ML that would escort us, and planned our movement. We were to go through Pambam Pass, the passage between India and Ceylon at Adam's Bridge and stop at Madras and Vizagapatnam before crossing the Bay of Bengal to Akyab. We reported to the Chief of Staff who took us into the 'Old man', Capt. Beauchamp, the then boss of our outfit. 'Well, Proctor and Hunter, here's something exciting for you to do. I suppose you know that at this moment the Jap front line is 5 miles from Akyab. They've just been thrown out, but haven't gone far'. We knew that, of course, and also that they were on the run; but that did not prevent my heart from missing a beat at what 5 miles meant. I made a quick calculation - Fort to Bambalapitiya. I swallowed hard and looked sideways at Proctor. The SOB was grinning. He was enjoying the prospect of being shot at! I smiled weakly and tried to look brave.

"Any questions or problems, now before you take off?', said the Big Boss. There was only one thing troubling us and that was that we had no independent communications and if we got separated in the Bay we'd be in real trouble. 'Well, don't bloody well get separated then' was the answer to that one when we pointed that out, and there was nothing to say but 'Aye, aye, sir'; and then he softened and said 'Don't worry, we'll find you if you get lost. Well, good luck! And take care of yourselves', were his passing words and we knew he meant it. We were like one big family

then and we knew that he was worried that he was sending some of his 'sons' into danger. But he also knew there was a war on!

"The passage through Pamban was uneventful but when 100 miles from Madras my ERA reported on the bridge one morning and said we had to stop engines. There was something wrong - a knock - in the engine, he said, and we must stop, open up and inspect. After signalling 1285 what we had to do, all ships stopped and waited for us. In half - an hour the ERA was back and he said one word 'Kaput', 'No go, Chief?' said I. 'No go, sir', said he. Towing was the answer and 1285 took us for a few hours and the HM Indian ship (as they were called then) Cuttack towed us the rest of the way to Madras. We were stuck for a week under repairs and the escort and Proctor's ship had to leave me and proceeded on their own.

"Repairs completed, I was sailed to Vizagapatnam where I was to pick up a new escort to cross the bay but after re-fuelling and topping up with water and food the XDO (this was the short title for 'Extended Duties Officer' and I don't know why 'Extended' but anyway he now appeared to be, full!) sent for me and said he had no escort and could make the last leg of my passage alone? At that time I had one hell of an opinion of myself as a navigator and my reply was that it would be no problem. I conveniently forgot about the communications. There is a saying that to be a good captain one must also be lucky and I was certainly lucky on that occasion. Calm seas, clear days and nights, and the enemy off the immediate sea and far away. It was a picnic and we made our landfall on the dot. Proctor came to me in 186 and showed me where he was parked and I secured alongside him.

"When we were on talking terms again after securing, I asked him what the score was. 'Just fiddling around' said he 'running ammunition and stores to warships and river craft, from the ammunition and stores ships over there.' 'Where are the Japs?' I asked. 'Not far. You'll hear them soon enough tonight when they pass over here to bomb the airfield, but you won't see them.' And there was his silly grin again. 'What's funny?' said I. 'This is the life' said he, 'and I am going to volunteer to go up the river.' He was a senior and if he went I would have to follow. The bloody idiot had forgotten the old rule - never volunteer: it will come soon enough. 'We can see some action. Nothing's happening here' - and the enemy only five miles away! 'Better report yourself to the NOIC. He must be expecting you', said Proctor. And this didn't take

long. It was as Proctor advised, maid-of-all-work in the harbour. That night we heard heavy guns firing to eastward and knew the fight had commenced. They seemed to prefer to fight in the dark and expected you to sleep by day. As prophesized, the bombers passed over that night for their usual strafing of the air-field and we opened fire with our main armament – four 9 mm Lanchesters! Couldn't see them, of course, but they must have been close overhead as the roar of their passing was deafening. 'Don't shoot, sir' pleaded a seaman at my elbow, 'they'll see you and drop something.' 'Go to hell' I retorted, 'how do you think I am going to expend this ammo otherwise? We are not going up the river-unless somebody volunteers' – and I felt the butterflies fluttering madly about in my innards as I thought of what passed between Proctor and me earlier.

"Three months were we in Akyab. They didn't send us up the river although Proctor volunteered, as promised. They reckoned, quite rightly, that we'd be sitting ducks and wanted us in one piece to work in the harbour. We saw prisoners and wounded coming in daily and had to help out from time to time. Air raids at dawn and dusk became routine even though the Japs were soon pushed far into Burma. One of the finest fireworks displays I have seen took place when they hit our ammunition ship in harbour during a dawn raid. One moment she was there and the next she was gone forever. Everything inside her went up and she herself went the other way. The concussion was terrific and our little ships were bobbing about for an hour afterwards. I gulped when I remembered that I was to have been alongside her in an hour to unload ammo. Shortly after this I hit a marker buoy which was not 'watching' properly and nearly sank before I put my ship on the beach. A damaged stern gland due to the blow let the water in. This was soon plugged and 186 towed me alongside a salvage vessel and we were pumped dry in ten minutes. However, the accident placed 185 'hors de combat' and we were taken into an inlet of the river near by and beached. War receding, our usefulness had gone and the powers-that-be were not going to worry about repairing my little vessel. We were all taken off one day and returned home soon afterwards in a British warship."

Retrospective

Clearly, the veritable contribution of Ceylon volunteers to the Burma Campaign is another outstanding example of Ceylon's involvement in the Second World War. My research so far indicates

that 24 Ceylonese served in the Burma Campaign, (17 CRNVR; 5 CLI; one RAF and one British Army). Interestingly, several of Ceylon's Burma Campaign veterans later served in the post-independence armed forces, with two particularly rising to the rank of Commander: Major General A. R Udugama (1964-1966) of the Ceylon Army and Rear Admiral Victor Hunter (1970-1973) of the Royal Ceylon Navy. Although it is estimated that at least 200 Ceylonese or perhaps more were awarded the Burma Star, it is more than apparent, considering the broad eligibility regulations of the Burma Star, that many servicemen had not served in Burma itself, which is an important distinction to clarify.

Indeed, these historical revelations open a new chapter in colonial Ceylon's military history, which until now remained under-researched. As such, I am hopeful that in time, I will be able to expand on this article with new sources of historical information, to reveal further, the involvement of Ceylon's volunteers in the Burma Campaign.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Acknowledgements: This article is a revised version of the original, which was first published as a three part series in *The Sunday Times Plus, Sri Lanka* - "Forgotten Campaign, Forgotten Veterans" (November 5, 2006, Vol. 41-No. 23); "Surviving Amidst Dying Men and Muddy Swamps" (November 12, 2006, Vol. 41-No. 24); "CRNVR's role in the Allied Reconquest of Burma" (November 19, 2006, Vol. 41- No. 25). The author also wishes to thank the following people who provided assistance to this article: Somasiri Devendra, Dawn Waring, Victor Melder, John de Silva, Charles Amaresekere, Ian Grimwood and Lieutenant General Denis Perera.

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God made relatives;
Thank God we can choose our friends.

Some Memories of my Years in Jaffna

Part 4

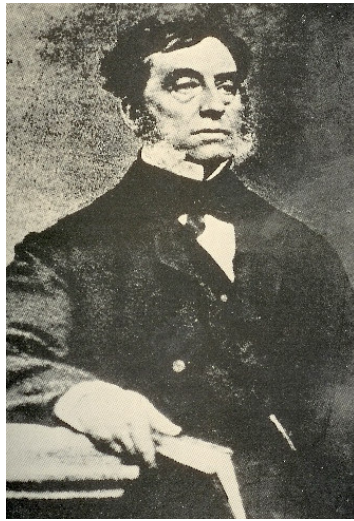
by *Neville Jayaweera*

Percival Acland Dyke

Dyke had been a grand and flamboyant personality, the archetypal Victorian gentleman and aristocrat, and was rightly called by the locals as the **Rajah of the North**, so much so that even as late as the mid 1960s, a hundred years after he had passed away, his name was a part of the local folk lore. He was the youngest son of an aristocratic family from Devonshire in England, whose lineage reaches back to the Baron of Devonshire in the 16th century. In the early 1800s Acland Dyke had enlisted as a midshipman in the Royal Navy, but sometime in 1820, when his ship docked at Trincomalee, he opted to domicile in Ceylon rather than continue in the navy, and in 1822 was recruited to the nascent Ceylon Civil Service. He rose rapidly to be Auditor General in Colombo and in 1833, to be the first GA of Jaffna, remaining in that post till he died in harness, in 1867. His remains were buried in the Chundikuli Churchyard Jaffna, where an elaborately engraved gravestone to his memory still stands.

So wedded was Dyke to Jaffna, that in the intervening years, he refused several appointments in Colombo, including the post of Colonial Secretary which was the highest post to which a Civil Servant could aspire in those times, and thereafter even declining an offer from the Secretary of State for Colonies, in Whitehall, to serve on the Executive Council, which was the highest governing body in Ceylon, next in power only to the Governor himself. He also refused promotion as a Governor elsewhere in the Empire. The Governors who came to Colombo during his later years were so far junior to him in the Civil Service that he ran the Northern Province virtually as an independent colony and even corresponded directly with Whitehall bypassing the Governor in Colombo. He seems to have

been very arrogant at least towards his Civil Service peers, on one occasion even taking the Governor to task for venturing into his domain on an elephant-shoot without asking him first! During all those years Dyke visited Britain only once and even then, boarded a return ship after only three months there, although his period of leave extended to 18 months, complaining that he much preferred his beloved Jaffna to his native England. He also mentions in his diary how appalled he was, when upon arrival by train from Southampton at the Victoria rail station, he found that there was no one at hand to open his carriage door, nor porters to carry his bags.



Percival Acland Dyke

Dyke was able to run the Northern Province virtually as his private fiefdom primarily because, north of Medawachchiya, as far as the peninsular itself, the land was one vast and impenetrable forest. There were neither rail nor even road traffic between Anuradhapura and Jaffna. Even as late as 1904 when Leonard Woolf had to travel to Jaffna to assume duties as the magistrate there, he had to travel by "Mail Coach", on a dusty dirt track, which was the only road connection between Anuradhapura and the North, and it took the mail coach three days to reach Jaffna. The "mail coach" in question was only a double bullock cart on

which the mail bags were stacked, and which Woolf used as his bed for three days.

Dyke was the classic benevolent dictator. Quite literally, he was the legislator, head of the executive, judge, fiscal, head of the police, collector of customs, superintendent of prisons and much else besides, unconstrained by politicians or superiors in Colombo. Except the power to hang convicts he had almost total power within the province, i.e. over all that territory now covered by the districts of Jaffna, Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu. However, though armed with all those awesome powers he seems to have run a very fair, just and benevolent administration, as the warmth with which the people of Jaffna spoke of him even 100 years later, testified. He travelled all over the province on horse back and elephant, dispensing justice and seeing to the welfare of his people. When he went on circuit to Mannar or Vavuniya or Mullaitivu he would be away for about four weeks at a time and was accompanied by an entourage of about 20 staff, consisting of Kachcheri clerks, a doctor, two police officers, several cooks and *mutthus* to look after the horses and elephants, and he was received in those areas as a Rajah.

A write up about him in the *Colombo Observer* published at the time of his death (quoted in J.R. Tous-saint's, "*Annals of the Ceylon Civil Service*") has this to say. "Mr Dyke was in every sense a Rajah and the people treated him as such.....At the appearance of Mr Dyke, the most forward Jaffna youth, would subside into awe, and as the great man always travelled in state, his visits to an outlying part of his province were events to be dreaded, though appreciated and long remembered"

Dyke's diaries convey an image of a man who was absolutely disciplined, authoritarian, and a workaholic. He rose at 5 in the morning and by 6 was on his horse, riding round the town, ensuring that the streets were swept and free of garbage. He would then inspect the police station and talk to anyone who had been locked up for the night and read the Incidents Book which recorded all entries of incidents and complaints from the public. He would then ride down to the Fort and inspect the prison and talk to the prisoners. All this before he returned to the Residency for breakfast by 8 am. His breakfast was invariably some local preparation. There were no fridges or any way of preserving food in those days and therefore he had to forego his favourite breakfast of kippers and bacon. By 9 am he was at his desk and most of his daily work consisted of listening to people who had walked for days through jungle and scrub just to meet him and get some redress. During his time there were not more than 4 white officials in Jaffna - two doctors, an Asst Supdt. of Police and the Prison's Officer, but there were at least 10 - 15 white missionaries engaged in teaching or on medical activities. For two mornings in the week Dyke also sat as Magistrate and Judge. Throughout the Northern Province, from Jaffna, to Mannar, Vavuniya and Mullaitivu, Dyke's word was law but throughout his tenure of over 30 years there wasn't a single reported instance of a civil or political protest as there was in the South in 1848, when some Sinhala leaders staged a serious rebellion. The Tamil leaders of those days seem to have been quite content with the authoritarian dispensation Dyke gave them.

Dyke was a bachelor throughout, and lived virtually a recluse in the enormous mansion he built for himself. In the recesses of the Kachcheri record room I found a lavishly framed painted portrait of him which I retrieved from the dust and hung in the GA's conference room, along with a similarly framed portrait of his successor Sir William Twynham. In the portrait Dyke is shown wearing luxuriantly blond side burns right down his cheeks while Twynham also wore an impressive beard which made him look like an Old Testament

prophet. I understand from the current incumbent that both those wonderful portraits were also among the casualties of war.

In his Last Will, Dyke had left the Old Park and the Residency, which were his private properties, in trust to his successors in office. As late as the 1960s, when I was GA, the Dyke Trust was still valid and had about Rs 2000 lying to its credit. The Trust had been recognised and acknowledged by successive governments since 1860, but in the 1970s, under Mrs Bandaranaike's second administration, along with similar trusts elsewhere in the country, it was abolished by law, thereby rendering the Old Park and the Residency government property. During my tenure I donated 30 perches from a corner of the property to the Jaffna branch of the Ceylon National Association for the prevention of Tuberculosis, (CNAPT) on a notarial deed, to house their regional headquarters.

Sir William Twynham

Sir William Twynham who succeeded Dyke in the 1867 remained as GA till the late 1896. Twynham had been Dyke's Office Assistant in Jaffna for some time and later his AGA in charge of Mannar, and was very much a protégé of the great man. As Dyke lay dying in his tent while he was touring Kopay (a few miles from Jaffna town), it was Twynham he sent for, post haste, from Mannar to be by him and take over the reins of office. However, Twynham was not at all a flamboyant character or as authoritarian or endowed with an overbearing presence, as Dyke was. He too administered the province with great sensitivity to the needs and feelings of the people, so much so that the locals who were used to the somewhat autocratic though benevolent ways of Dyke, loved Twynham even more, and held him in high respect as they would a man of religion, which he was, above being merely an administrator. Twynham's remains were buried in the St John's College church burial ground as were the remains of his daughter, who lived well into her late nineties and passed away only around the late 1950s.

From what I have written so far, I may have given readers the impression that my work in Jaffna had only to do with the ethnic conflict and had little to do with much else besides. That is a wholly wrong impression. Indeed, maintaining law and order, dissolving prejudices and misunderstandings, and building bridges between the government and the Tamil leaders, consumed a large portion of my time and energies, but my work as GA involved much else besides. Indeed, it involved the whole panoply of a GA's nor-

mal duties - land development, irrigation, agriculture, forestry, co-operative development, food control, price control, customs and smuggling control, illicit immigration control, responsibilities as the Fiscal, serving as ex-officio president of a half a dozen or so voluntary organisations and associations in the district, co-ordinating the activities of all government departments in the district and not least receiving Ambassadors and High Commissioners who visited the district officially. Naturally, I cannot recount my work in all, or even in most of these sectors, but in the next chapter I shall recount some exciting and even some hilarious experiences connected with my work in a few limited areas.

More to come in the new year ..Ed

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Congratulations

Harry

The Society's Public Relations Officer Harry de Sayrah is on the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2007 with an award of OAM in recognition of meritorious service through Lions Australia for "Service to the Community and as a Supporter of Humanitarian Aid Projects in Sri Lanka."



Harry, who is a Life Member of Lions International, holds the Melvin Jones Fellowship, the highest award in Lions International. He joined Lions in Sri Lanka as a member of the host club Colombo, and was elected the inaugural President of the Kollupitiya Club. He transferred to Bankstown on arrival in Australia in 1988 and in 1995 was installed as its 39th President. His 'pet' project "Sight Conservation" kept him busy for many years, organising the collection, cleaning and packaging of used spectacles in Australia for less fortunate citizens of Sri Lanka. Says Harry "this was a very rewarding experience, to assist the visually impaired to enjoy a bit more of life". After the tragic tsunami of 2004 Harry was once again in the driving seat organising funds. Through Lions Australia he was able to marshal a donation of \$ 50,000 – the largest ever by an Australian club. Some of the other major community aid projects in Sri Lanka spearheaded by Harry are: gift of 250 hospital stretchers, restoration of a Catholic School down south, Lepers home and Prithipura Home, construction of a new Ward named " Bankstown Ward " at the Lions Eye Hospital Panadura and 3 new houses.

A Speaking Picture: The Centenary E.F.C.Ludowyk Memorial Lecture 2006 3rd and Final Part

by Yasmine Gooneratne

The readings with which Professor Ludowyk accompanied his explication of texts provided his students with a living demonstration of his deep enjoyment of good writing, and his own 'personal commitment to the experience of literature'. I can say this despite the fact that, entering the University during Professor Ludowyk's final terms on its staff, as I did, I was not among the fortunates whom he guided through the entirety of some the plays of Shakespeare, and by whom memories of his teaching have been passed down to us as the stuff of legend. According to the stories I had been told by my elder sister, who had preceded me to the English Honours class at the University of Ceylon, and whose entire university career (like that of her classmates Dennis Bartholomeusz and Mervyn de Silva) had been consequently blessed and brightened by Professor Ludowyk's presence, his classroom readings from *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Troilus and Cressida* were nothing short of magical. Still, I was privileged to be in Ludowyk's tutorial class for the whole of that first year at Peradeniya, and six years later, by a stroke of great good luck, my former tutor was appointed my supervisor during the final year of my doctoral studies at Cambridge.

This came about because, at my father's suggestion, I had abandoned my first intention of writing my PhD thesis on the subject of Dickens, and taken up instead the idea of researching Ceylon's nineteenth century books, newspapers and journals. The Cambridge University Library was, and probably still is, what is called a repository library, so that I would have no difficulty in locating material there which related to Ceylon. But the English School at Cambridge was quite unprepared at that time to advise on, or supervise research into, the literatures of the Commonwealth countries. Consequently the University came up with a typically ingenious 'Cambridge' solution: instead of arranging affiliation for me with the University of Leeds where (though Cambridge probably didn't know it) a major research field of the future,

‘Commonwealth Literature’ (and later, ‘Postcolonial Literature’) was already a gleam in the eye of the late Professor Norman Jeffares, I remained at Cambridge, and was assigned a different Cambridge supervisor each year, chosen according to the direction my studies were currently taking. And so, while I was outlining my topic in my first year, I was supervised by Dr John Holloway. When I was looking at missionary activity in Ceylon’s schools in my second year, I was assigned to the care of Dr Geoffrey Best. And in my final year, when I was due to pull it all together and write my thesis, I was informed by my Director of Studies, Dr M.C. Bradbrook, that Professor E.F.C. Ludowyk, whose own doctoral thesis at Cambridge had focused on English education in Ceylon, had agreed to be my supervisor.

Oh, joy! I took the train up to town the following week, and called on Professor Ludowyk and his wife Edith in their London flat. The intervening years had not changed them much – it was a cool day in late autumn, and he was wearing a brightly coloured Fair Isle jumper of the type Mrs Ludowyk had insisted on knitting for him in Ceylon. She smiled benevolently on us as she presided over the cakes and coffee, just as she had done at DramSoc meetings in Peradeniya. It was evident to me that he had not lost his famous sweet tooth – he talked affectionately of Love Cake and Breudher, which Edith Ludowyk, despite her skill as a cook, was clearly not up to making, and I decided that at our next supervision, which would be in Cambridge, I would provide one or both of these articles. So that was to be the arrangement – we would meet every four weeks for a supervision, alternately in London and Cambridge. At our third supervision, which was in London, Professor Ludowyk suggested that, rather than talk about my most recent chapter over coffee and cake, we take a bus to Camden Town, where he knew of a homely little restaurant run by a Ceylonese couple that served ‘an excellent rice and curry’. We did this for all the remaining London supervisions. And the arrangement worked very well, right up to the end, when I submitted my thesis at the close of the year.

I hope you will forgive me this brief venture into autobiography, and I think you will because though the Ludowyks hosted many Ceylonese visitors during these years of retirement, not many of these visitors met them regularly over extended periods, as I did. It was of Ceylon that we talked at the end of each supervision, for in common with many expatriates, he found that his homeland remained the source of his creative inspiration. In 1958 Allen and

Unwin had published his book *The Footprint of the Buddha*, an account of Sri Lanka’s history before its encounter with the West. An extraordinary thing happened: the importation of his book into Sri Lanka was banned because of a statement it contained that there is no evidence to prove that the Buddha ever visited the island. This statement, true in itself and essential to an objective examination of the subject, had been deemed by official authorities to be damaging to Buddhist sensibilities (and doubtless also to the tourist industry). It is not unlikely that the incident deepened the painful emotions with which Ludowyk had left Sri Lanka.

“By the fifties [writes his friend and colleague C.W. Amerasinghe], he was depressed with gloomy forebodings of the future of both country and University. He could see them both in danger of being destroyed by the jingoism that was rampant at the time as well as by political opportunism and corruption. He decided to leave because he could not bear to remain to witness its decline.”

Although he continued to act while resident in England as a supervisor and examiner of post-graduate students working on Sri Lankan subjects, Ludowyk’s own literary activity turned, following this incident, in other directions. Cambridge University Press published his *Understanding Shakespeare* in 1962, and during the next six years he edited six plays in the “New Shakespeare” text for Cambridge: *Twelfth Night* in 1963, *Macbeth* and *The Merchant of Venice* in 1964, *Julius Caesar* in 1965, *Henry V* in 1966, and *Richard II* in 1968. During this period he maintained his interest in the creative and academic work of former students and colleagues, assisting in preparing for posthumous publication Upali Amarasinghe’s *Dryden and Pope in the Nineteenth Century*, corresponding with Patrick Fernando on the subject of his poetry and with numerous others about the work in which they were engaged, and contributing forewords to the books they published. In the last two books that he published, he returned to the subject of Sri Lanka, this time taking up the island’s historical, political, colonial and post-colonial development in *The Story of Ceylon* in 1962, and *The Modern History of Ceylon* in 1966.

I owe to our good friend Mr Sam Wijesinha, who has very kindly loaned me copies of Ludowyk’s ‘Ceylon’ books (my own copies being still in Sydney) the fact that I have been able to trace again

in them the ‘creative design’ of his classroom discussions to which reference is made in the account of his work that accompanies the print of this lecture. In *The Story of Ceylon* we can recognise Ludowyk’s instinct for shape and design in the image of the ‘mango pattern’ devised and used by Indian craftsmen that he employs to bring forth his examination of the ways in which the civilization of India has left its stamp upon the island. In *The Modern History of Ceylon* we see it again as he applies to the island the image of a house in the various stages of its building: chapter by chapter, he takes the reader through the ‘process’ of choosing the site, ‘raising the structure’, installing the tenants, repair and renewal, ‘the first cracks’, redecoration’, ‘the new façade’, and ‘a recent conversion’.

It is sad that a mind so lively, active, and *poetic* in the way it used word and image, should have had to dwell so consistently in the last years of its owner’s life on matters that could not, by their very nature, exhilarate or inspire. After my return home to Ceylon, throughout the remainder of my ten-year service on the English Department staff at Peradeniya, and long after we moved to Australia, Professor Ludowyk kept up a regular correspondence with my husband, Dr Brendon Gooneratne, and myself, as I know he did with many of his former students. Our correspondence was chiefly about books. Living in Britain as he did, he made a point of reading my book *Alexander Pope* almost as soon as it emerged from Cambridge University Press in 1976, and expressed his pleasure at the diversity of the six books I published in the 1970s and 1980s. But the discussion of books ceased sharply when, in 1983, it was displaced by events in Sri Lanka.

I have with me still a letter that Professor Ludowyk wrote to me in the December of 1983. It is a very sad letter, but I’d like to read you a brief extract from it because, although he was writing from thousands of miles away, it reminds us of the love he felt for his country, and the insight he had into the essential nature of its society:

Lamarsh December 1983

“This is summer vac time in Australia, so I expect you will be travelling around. Will you be going to S(ri) L(anka)? I don’t believe ‘race relations’ – to give the subject its legalistic title – can improve. As long as both a caste system and racial hatred are built into the consciousness & the upbringing of the young, the most

one can hope for is an attempt to control their consequences. Education as one thinks of it will have to start with parents & grandparents as well as with infants...”

I don’t believe ‘race relations’ can improve. Looking back in 1971 over his years as a teacher and man of the theatre in Sri Lanka, E.F.C. Ludowyk, then resident – some might say ‘self-exiled’ – in Britain, had written with equal frankness of his failure to use his influence as director of the University Dramatic Society to promote or encourage the presentation of plays written by local playwrights or the writing of original plays in English by his colleagues and his students. In a letter that he wrote from London in September 1970, which Shelagh Goonewardene and I published in the second issue of *New Ceylon Writing*, he expressed regret that this should have been so.

I remember Robert Nicholl Cadell telling me, as we talked on the lawns of King George’s Hall after a performance of *Lady Precious Stream*, that he’d have been better pleased at seeing something written by a contemporary playwright in Ceylon. He was right. I remember his remark with keen regret, because ... I learned to value it all too late. I think this was something which the Dram Soc should have tried to do. It has, I think, to be put down to the debit side.

This so-called ‘debit’, I may say, was not recognised at the time as a lack. I think it was only when *Manamē*, composed by Professor Ludowyk’s colleague Dr Sarachchandra and acted by students, was presented in the open-air theatre at Peradeniya that realization dawned as to what we had so far been missing.

The late Mr Ian Goonetilleke, our distinguished former University Librarian and the originator, I believe, of the Ludowyk Memorial Lecture itself, once described to Brendon and myself how difficult it had been in the 1950s to institute change in the University Library. Ian was at that time an Assistant Librarian, youthful and energetic, bright-eyed and eager, brimming with innovative ideas for the improvement of every aspect of the Library, from reader services to cataloguing, and he would bring these brilliant ideas to lunch time librarians’ meetings, and put his case for each of them with his usual eloquence. Mr Somadasa, the Librarian, would hear him out patiently until, at one o’clock, a bell would ring signalling the start of afternoon lectures. ‘Thank you, Ian,’ Mr Somadasa would say; and then, looking round comfortably at their

colleagues who were putting their notes away and preparing to leave, he would get to his feet. 'And so, ladies and gentlemen, after due consideration and discussion we are agreed on this matter, are we not, that ... on the whole ... let it be as it is.'

I wish very much that the world of 1950s Peradeniya too, like Mr Somadasa's library, could have been left 'as it was'. Such dreams being, of course, untenable, it has been a joy to discover that the writing of fiction occasionally gives one a chance to re-enter lost worlds; and I hope that, for the space of an hour at least, I have been able to recreate for you too, through fiction and what has been called 'the art of memory', the atmosphere and flavour of Peradeniya in my time.

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Silva, Professor Halpe, Professor Parakrama, Professor Perera, friends and former colleagues at Peradeniya, students of the University, ladies and gentlemen, let me thank you not only for the honour you have conferred on me by inviting me to deliver this Centenary Ludowyk Memorial lecture, but for the pleasure it has given me to share with you my memories and impressions of an outstanding teacher and a great humanist. By virtue of his cultivated mind and liberal outlook, his kindly personality, the plays he directed and the printed words that have kept his memory and influence alive long after he left Sri Lanka for Britain in 1956, E.F.C. Ludowyk represents for many people to this day the best and most admirable aspects of English education in Ceylon.

He certainly does so for me. Looking back today from the vantage point of 2006, I remember Ludowyk and the rich intellectual life that he and his colleagues created for us during the "Golden Age" that the University experienced in his time; and I can paraphrase the words of Harry Judge, who once immortalised in an unforgettable speech an England-Australia Test Match of the 1960s, to say to the world that we too know what it means to have trod in our youthful days the high slopes of Olympus, and held converse, however briefly, with gods and heroes.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩΩΩ

John Updike (1932 -) American Novelist
in "London Life" 1969 - of England

A soggy little island huffing and puffing to keep up with western Europe.

Canoeing down the Kalu Ganga

by Capt Elmo Jayawardena

The trip had been on my mind. The trick was to find a matching dullard to come along. Wild goose chasers these days are hard to come by. Ananda came from far, all the way from Melbourne. Left his legal paraphernalia and pleaded guilty to join me in canoeing down the beautiful Kalu Ganga, from Ratnapura to Kalutara.

Forget the planning. There is no planning. Our lives are too full of plans to carry it to the river. This one was pure spasmodic, take it as it comes



Ana (left) & Elmo shake on it, standing by the lovable *Solitaire*

stuff. The boat was there, the lovable *Solitaire*. We were ready; Ana Jayasinghe and I and the Kalu Ganga would surely flow. That's all you need to melody moonbeams.

It would take three days, that's what I reckoned. In age, Ana and I added to a fair amount over hundred years. He's never canoed before, but he runs full marathons. Knew what discipline was. That's what you need in the river, a plodder who will hang in there when the going got rough. The days would surely crawl from tiring to very tiring. We would stop two nights. Friends would put us up.

Then, there was Hemal, the support man who would follow us by van. We were no Robinson Crusoes. A touch of civilization was a must, especially considering how young we were. It was a mandatory ruling given by the family tree, from every single branch.

Day one was from Ratnapura to Kiriella. I do not

know what the river distance is, but it is a lot more than by road. Kalu Ganga meanders all the time. Three hours of steady rowing, from three to six in the evening, brought us to Kiriella. Out there, the river is narrow and it jangles fast, makes it a bit rough, but easy paddling for old shoulder blades. Ana, the novice, tested out well. We packed the boat ashore, and went back to stay the night at Ratnapura.

The next morning we started out early. By seven we were in the river. The idea was to go as far as possible, to lighten the third day. It was beautiful. Words do fail me in my best attempt to describe. How can I punch buttons on a ThinkPad and relate something I feel deep inside. I'll try. The Kalu Ganga flows, misted in the middle, and the far banks filled with flora in all shades of green. From the beginning it is a well-laid buffet for the eyes. It is serene and silent. Only the birdcalls disturb the quietness. The skies put out a sheet of blue, dappled with various shapes of white clouds, dots of cirrus and dashes of stratus. The wind blows, soothing the soul. The world stands still as we row, just as nature intended.

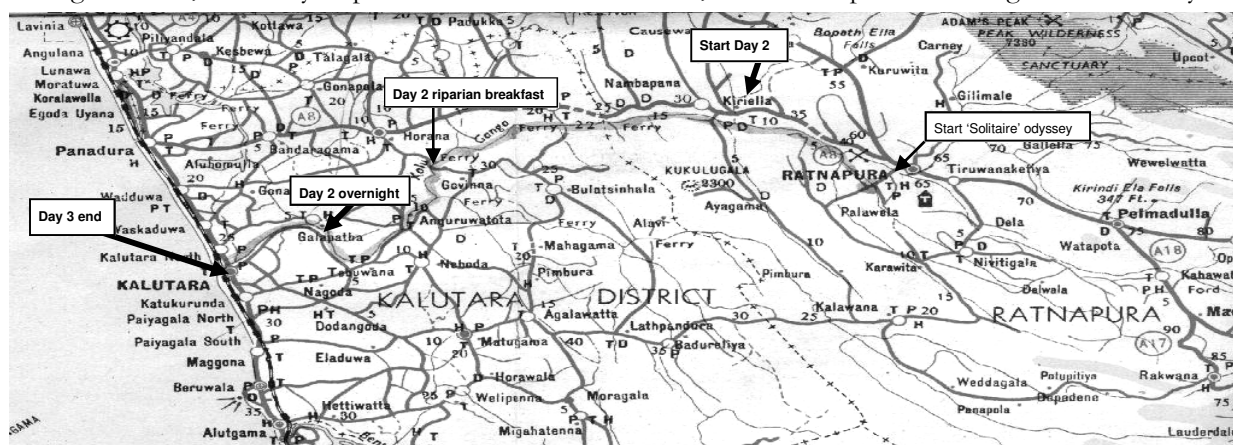
We came from Kiriella passing Pahala Dumbara, Bodinagala, and Bulathsinhala, to the bridge across the Horana Govinna road. three hours 50 minutes. We had breakfast on the riverbank, a feast of hoppers and bananas. Took a few breaks, and came to the bridge by noon. We carried the boat under the bridge. The jagged rocks there are for Rambo types, certainly not for two ancient pelicans. From the bridge we rowed to Veherawatta, Kotapotha, Narathupana and Thebuwana. Kotapotha was the best I saw. We bathed in natural granite bath tubs, installed on the river by the gods themselves, where the water "jacoozeed" around you. Smoked a cigar and talked of life. We both agreed we couldn't change our lots, too many responsibilities. The law-

yer and the aeroplane driver would remain. Too far ingrained. But, we sure were thankful for this interval.

Thebuwana was a stop for lunch. We ate two rice packets and rested on a sand bank under a *bo* tree. It is the people you meet that give the varnish to the trip. A kind woman, living with her two small children in a shanty, gave us plain tea. The boatmen, the river dobbins making their meagre living, were ever so friendly. We stopped and chatted. Broke their monotony, ours too. They wished us well, we wished back for the fish to bite, hello and good bye. The best were the sand collectors we met, or should I say the saddest. Jayantha is 29. He dives and digs sand from the riverbed. Only job available, works from six to six. Makes 150-200 rupees. Starts the day with a gulp of moonshine and continues to warm himself from the brew all day long. "Otherwise too cold" he tells me. End the day with a full bottle, pauperised ecstasy of the poor. He is not the odd one. It is the norm among the sand diggers. No solution. No way out, perpetual penance in the concert of the downtrodden. The names of the actors did alter, but never the parts.

From Thebuwana we rowed to Galapatha, a pleasant afternoon's work. It was six again when we came ashore. Total rowing time for the day; eight hours and 40 minutes, only three more hours to Kalutara.

The next day was the grand finale. The river gets wide after Galapatha and there is hardly a flow, hard work for worn old muscles. Solitaire moved along, as graceful as ever. Our paddles dipped, and our hearts sang, as we inched our way to the destination. We came around the last bend and there loomed in all its majesty, the shining white *dagaba* of the *Kalutara Pansala*. It is a sight to remember, the two bridges linking the banks, the sea in the far horizon, and the temple dominating a clear blue sky.



The route taken by the lawyer and aeroplane driver, riparian meals and natural jacoozees to boot.



Journey's end - Gangatilaka Vihara (Buddhist Dagoba)
Kalutara in the background

The wild goose chase was over. “*Oru Ana*” packed his bags and flew off to Melbourne, to yell in his courtroom, whilst I crept back to my flight deck to drive aeroplanes. But we treasure the remembrance. We’ll surely take some moments and think of Solitaire and the Kalu Ganga, the journey, the people, the totality, all adding to the beauty and serenity of a distant world. We certainly will be thankful for the little intermission. A break from our daily drudgery, to sing our hearts on an odyssey, that others possibly may call eccentric and absurd.

At times, in life, such moonbeam melodies do make a difference.

ΩΩΩΩΩΩΩΩ

Nuggets of Wisdom

"Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover!"

"All you need in this life is ignorance and confidence; then success is sure".

"When angry, count to four, when very angry, swear"

"Man is the only animal that blushes. Or needs to."

"Truth is the most valuable thing we have. Let us economise it"

Mark Twain 1835-1910, American Humorist, Writer

BOOK REVIEW



Betwixt Isles : The Story of the Kandyan Prisoners in Mauritius. By

Raja Bandaranayake. Vijitha Yapa Publications. 2006. ISBN 10 955-1266-41-2. Hard cover 360 pp

Professor Raja Bandaranayake has achieved a formidable international distinction as a medical educationist and a superb teacher of Anatomy. His service as a peripatetic consultant was eagerly sought by organisations such as the WHO and medical and health science schools world-wide. His approach as an advisor was learner-friendly, practical and devoid of jargon. In Sri Lanka he has guided all the state medical schools and the Postgraduate Institute of Medicine to develop and implement curricula and learner assessments along internationally accepted lines.

With the publication of **Betwixt Isles**, (October 2006) Professor Bandaranayake has shown us another facet of his talent and skill. His book is the product of prodigious historical research over a 15-year period on four continents and the island of Mauritius, where Maha Nilame Ehelepola died in exile in April 1829.

The author writes that the inscription on Ehelepola tombstone in Mauritius had “a profound and lasting effect” on him, igniting a flame that has apparently kept burning vigorously through long, toilsome and often dreary hours, days and months of labour demanded of any serious researcher into history. The opening sentence of his book, tells us why the flame burned so bright for so long: “This book was born out of a deep love for my motherland, primarily inculcated in me by my parents”.

Betwixt Isles is an account of the life and death of Kandyan prisoners in exile in Mauritius between the years 1819 and 1834, a mere twinkling in the expanse of human history. But it is a matter of consummate importance to us Sri Lankans, when examined (as the author has done) in the context of the British capture of the Kandyan kingdom in 1815, terminating one of the longest surviving kingdoms in the world at the time. The book has 25 compact chapters, six charts summarising facts that would have been tedious to describe textually, 12 figures including the signatures of Dr James Barry, Ehelepola and Pilmatalaue, the Powder Mills and two prisons in Mauritius, two maps (19 Century Ceylon and the relevant Districts of Mauritius) plus four interesting and crucially important plans of buildings in Mauritius.

A concise Introduction takes the reader through antecedent events that led to the fall of the Kandyan kingdom, emphasising the internecine jealousies and knavery that pervaded the Kandyan nobility, and the quintessentially British amalgam of counterfeit diplomacy, cunning, perseverance and disciplined military might of the invader. The first four chapters give a brief biographical sketch of Ehelepola, his capture in Kandy and incarceration in Colombo for seven years, until he was banished to Mauritius

without any charges being ever framed against him. They also contain, among other intriguing things, three vintage ghost stories set around the Kandy Lake and around two “haunted” houses, one in Vellore and the other in Mauritius, all connected in one way or another with the story of Ehelepola, the fascinating story of Dr James Barry who attended on Ehelepola during his last illness, and the enigma of the mysterious hand that lays regular tribute at Ehelepola’s tomb in Mauritius up to the present day. The author writes:

“Although it is established that he (Ehelepola) had no known living progeny either in Mauritius or in Ceylon at the time of his death, a mysterious hand places a lighted candle, a posy of flowers, an incense stick or a clay urn at frequent intervals on the monument. I have seen these tributes..... myself, and was particularly intrigued to note that they often coincided with the anniversary of important events, such as his birth, his death, or the entombment of his mortal remains. In spite of repeated efforts the identity of the owner of this hand remains a mystery” [page 25].

The author’s diligent and tenacious search for the location of Ehelepola Mauritius residence is a detective story of its own. Its precise location, rectifying several previous incorrect assertions, is one of the large number of new findings and insights that the author has in store for the reader.

Professor Bandaranayake records that Ehelepola appears to have had a busy social life in Mauritius, often visiting the local elite by invitation or entertaining them at his residence. He wore the headdress (*toppi*) of the Kandyan Adigar, and insisted on being provided with the finest clothing made in Europe. In time, Ehelepola was allowed to use a horse drawn gig, purchased with his own funds, and he rode it proudly, accompanied by his interpreter Don Bastian, whose attire was apparently no less strange than that of his master. So it is little wonder that the local whites began to refer to Ehelepola as the “Prince”.

In research methodology, drawing conclusions from his explorations and reporting them, Prof. Bandaranayake, true to his twin vocations as medical educationist and scientist, has displayed accuracy and objectivity. These attributes are as important for the historian as they are for the scientist. For both, accuracy and objectivity are duties, not virtues. As the distinguished historian E. H. Carr has remarked, “It (accuracy) is a necessary condition of his work, but not his essential function”. What then is the function of a historian? In the 1830s Ranke stated it shortly thus: “.....simply to show how it really was,” but that aphorism begs many questions. Rather than venturing into a philosophical discussion of the nature of

history, I choose to quote Marx and Carlyle. First, Marx:

“*History* does nothing; it possesses no immense wealth, fights no battles. It is rather *man*, real living *man*, who does everything, who possesses and fights”

As for Carlyle, he is given the dubious distinction of having asserted that “history is the biography of great men”. Professor Bandaranayake’s story of the Kandyan prisoners exiled to Mauritius is assuredly focused on its “star”, the Maha Nilame Ehelepola. But it is set against the backdrop of the sad saga of the last days of the Kandyan kingdom, with its rebellious denizens and knavish nobility that se-egues into the social life and contemporary times of Mauritius. In so doing the author has combined biography with an imaginative understanding for the minds of the Kandyan people and their actions. He has fastidiously avoided his love for the motherland and interest in history from turning the book into an exercise in antiquarianism. The extensive list of references bears witness to his diligence and relentless pursuit of all sources of evidence, even ones with a remotely possible link to the subject.

Professor Bandaranayake’s writing is stylish, interpretation is persuasive, and his attention to detail is thorough without being trivial. The product is an authoritative and compelling read. He ends his book with this characteristically piquant quotation of Oscar Wilde: “The one duty we owe to history is to rewrite it”. That duty Professor Bandaranayake has amply done.

Professor Colvin Goonaratna

Understanding Engineers (*being one, I could not resist sharing these ...Ed*)

One:

Two engineering students were walking across a university campus when one said, "Where did you get such a great bike?"

The second engineer replied, "Well, I was walking along yesterday, minding my own business, when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike, threw it to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."

The first engineer nodded approvingly and said, "Good choice, the clothes probably wouldn't have fitted you anyway."

Two:

Normal people believe that if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Engineers believe that if it ain't broke, it doesn't have enough features - yet

SYNOPSIS OF MEETINGS

Sydney 15th April 2007

Prof. Yasmine Gooneratne

The President invited the first speaker for the day, Prof. Yasmine Gooneratne. She introduced her new novel *The Sweet and Simple Kind*, Prof. Gooneratne stated that the story took form through one character (that of Tsunami Wijesinghe) who appeared in seven of her short stories written in 2004. Some time after commencing work on the novel, she abandoned writing because it did not meet her intention to create a story that was neither melancholy nor lighthearted. The treatment had to be better than that!

Some years later husband Brendon suggested she get back to her novel and this time, she found the story develop smoothly, writing was easier and words flowed without interruption. The two main characters Tsunami and her cousin Latha are good, simple and nice girls. The story is set during a happy period in the author's life of the 1950s and 1960s, during her days in Colombo and Peradeniya University. She chose this setting and period for her fiction, and not contemporary times, because of her intimate knowledge of the period and the people, so that she maintained credibility and authenticity to the story.

The author was immensely influenced by reading Indian and English writers like Dickens and Jane Austen and Naipaul. One should not use fiction to make political analysis, Prof. Gooneratne emphasised, rather infuse politics of the times with how it affects the people in the story. When looking for a publisher, she was very much disillusioned by Sri Lanka's publishing industry and fortunately for her, Yasmine met the two young publishers of Perera Hussein Publishing House.

Prof. Gooneratne suggested that new expatriate authors avoid present day Sri Lankan themes and settings, write only about things they experienced first hand. Become great readers – good literature can be great teachers, she emphasised. And listen carefully to others speak. That way one can glean ways of making dialogue plausible and interesting. The important qualities of a writer are Stamina, Strength and Commitment. Have a strong theme to drive you to the end. She was haunted with feelings of regret for actions missed and idealisms not pursued. That can be a strong motivation for a writer.

Mr S Mutiah

The President then invited S Mutiah—former editor

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BOOKSHOP AND WEB RESOURCES BOOKS/MAPS/COLLECTIBLES

This column is a regular feature for the benefit of members who publish works, and others who wish the Society to sell material on their behalf. No charges apply to members but donations will be gratefully received. Others pay a handling charge. Please e-mail the editor if you wish to take up this offer.

Blossoms of Wisdom on Peace and Environment – by Erika Dias. This is an anthology of 123 poems, illustrated with 39 colour photographs. Hard cover with dust jacket ISBN: 955-599-403-X; 133 pp.; Published: April 2005; US\$ 30.00. Available from Wisdom Gift Publications, email: hideva@sltnet.lk

Also by Erika Dias

A Wisdom Gift, (Jointly with Pierre Wittmann), Amarín Printing Group Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand; December 1993 (book of poems), First Edition - December 1991, Third Edition - December 1993; ISBN 974 887 1681; Price US\$10.00

Oneness In Duality, (Jointly with Pierre Wittmann), Amarín Printing Group Co., Ltd., Bangkok, Thailand; November 1993 (book of poems); ISBN 974 8361608; Price US\$10.00

Presents de Sagesse (French translation of 'A Wisdom Gift', book of poems; jointly with Pierre Wittmann); Contact Pierre Wittmann pierrewittmann@wanadoo.fr

Meditation: Many Methods Through Watching the Mind, First Edition - 1997, Third Edition; Sarvodaya Vishva Lekha Publishers, Ratmalana, Sri Lanka; May 2003; ISBN 955-599-320-2; Price US\$6.00

Fully Awakened: or Sleep-Walking? Sarvodaya Vishva Lekha Publishers, Ratmalana, Sri Lanka; November 2002; ISBN 955-599-300-9; Price US\$8.00

Books by S Muthiah: Contact author

smuthiah.mes@gmail.com OR 'Vijay Gardens', 2-F Vijayaraghava Lane, Vijayaraghavachari Road, T. Nagar, Chennai – 600 017, India.

Indo Lankans, 320pp, East West Books (Madras) Pvt 125 by airmail, A\$ 200 courier.

The Chettiar Heritage (English) 288pp –The Chettiar Heritage, Chennai. A\$ 100, by airmail, A 225 courier.

Tamil—subsidised, A\$ 75 by airmail, A\$200 courier.

Madras that is Chennai, 260pp, Ranpar Publishers, Chennai. A\$60 by airmail, A\$ 100 courier.

Betwixt Isles : The Story of the Kandyan Prisoners in Mauritius. By Raja Bandaranayake. Vijitha Yapa Publications. 2006. ISBN 10 955-1266-41-2. Hard cover 360 pp US\$ 12 + p&h, www.vijithayapa.com

(Continued from page 23)

of the Sunday Times to speak on ***“Indolankans— story of the 200 year saga of people of Indian origin in Sri Lanka”*** Mr Muthiah stated that Indo-Lankans, commonly known as Indian Tamils but who also included others from India, migrated to Sri Lanka from the 1790s and were seen as a separate entity, who were disenfranchised overnight soon after Independence. Though often unrecognised, the Indian Tamils made immense contributions in nearly all facets of the development of Ceylon.

Migrants from India were used for the clearing of forests for coffee plantations and working on the coffee estates during the coffee boom. When coffee gave way to tea later on, Indian labour in large numbers were settled in the hill country to work on the plantations. They led a primitive life, working for a pittance and suffered disease and plunder. At one time their death rates were 40%. They were exploited by the Kanganis who brought them over as well as the plantation owners, usually individuals in the early days. Rubber and coconut estates also depended on Indian labour. The three commodities, which drove the Ceylon economy till the 1960s, depended entirely on the efforts of Indian labour. This, however, never got the recognition it deserved for its contributions.

These commodities would not have become the major economic successes they did if not for transport. The failure of Rajakariya (service to the State) especially in road building, led to the use of Indian labour, particularly the Pioneer Corps, to build roads. 80 000 carts a year were plied by Indian labour and Indian cattle to Galle, carrying coffee.

The railway network, built in the 1860s, was once again laid with the help of Indian labour. And in 1869, Colombo Harbour was built, also with the use of Indian labour. Both the railways and harbour depended considerably on workers from Kerala for skilled labour. The Pearl Fisheries too saw seasonal migration of divers from South India, once again working for a pittance, with the dealers and government making the profits. Merchants from different parts of India also migrated to Ceylon to establish commercial establishments and trade with neighbouring countries. The earliest were the Bharathas who settled on the west coast. The Machados, the Gomeses and the Victorias, for example, were members of that community and set up liquor and provision stores which catered to the Europeans and Westernised tastes. The Nattukottai Chettiars by setting up trading posts and ‘banks’ in the wilderness helped villages, hamlets and towns to grow. They began trading on credit. Money lending followed. South Indian Moors followed the Chettiars, then went

into the gem business in different parts of the country. Kerala and Tamil Nadu sent out numerous qualified teachers. The Parsis were prominent in several professions, particularly as architects. Independence Hall was designed by one of them. The Borahs, the Memons, the Gujaratis and the Sindhis arrived in the late 19th Century to establish themselves as merchants and are now into Industry. The film and music industry as well the trade union movement all owed much to Indians who settled in Ceylon for long periods.

Despite strong anti-Indian political sentiments expressed by the island’s political leadership during the 1920s and 1930s, Indian Tamils, Malayalees and some Telugus continued to remain the prime force on the labour front. The irony was that despite all of these drawbacks, Indian labour never wanted to go back to India.

Doug Jones

Melbourne 22nd April 2007

The Chairman Dr. Srilal Fernando introduced Mr. Subbiah Muthiah as a prolific writer, author of several books and a regular contributor to the Press, as well as a lecturer in journalism, print production and South Asian history in universities in Tamil Nadu. Mr. Muthiah spoke on the subject ***“The Nattukottai Chettiars, their influence on Ceylon, South and South East Asia”***. *The Indo-Lankans* is the most prominent among his many publications. In 2002 he was awarded a MBE by the Queen for his work on heritage and environment conservation.

Mr. Muthiah pointed out that Chettiar was a hated term in 19th and 20th Century in Ceylon and the other countries they went to. But did they deserve such dislike?

The Chettiars derived their name from the Sanskrit *Sreshthi*, meaning an honoured member of a guild of traders. The Indian caste system identifies them as Vaisyas. In Tamil Nadu, there are over 20 Chetty communities. The ‘ar’ suffixed to the Chetty was a term of respect or an honorific. The Nattukottai Chettiars (the speaker is one) prefer to be called the ‘Nagarathar’. (the town dwellers). Today there about **125,000** Nattukottai Chettiars.

Chettinad, 250 miles south of Madras and near Trichy, is the land of the Chettiars. Historically, there were 96 villages, today 75 are left. Nattukottai Chettiars derive their name from *nattu*- land and *kottai* - fort. In their heyday they built massive man-

sions that looked like fortresses. They preferred the Nagarathar appellation because they lived urbanised lives in small rural villages.

Their documented history is from British times. Oral tradition and legends tell the story of their earlier times. The influence of the Chola Empire during the 10-11th centuries stretched from the Philippines to the Ganges, which was also a peak period in Chettiar history, according to tradition. The Chettiars were the merchant princes of the Cholas. Some Chettiar names correlate with their jewellery tradition. In the 13th Century, when Chola supremacy gave way to Pandyan power, the Chettiars migrated from the Tanjore coast to Chettinad, east of Madurai, the Pandyan capital. Around nine temples granted to them by the Pandyan king, they established their villages. All of them are non-Chettiar villages, but when Chettiar wealth dominated them, they became known as Chettiar villages.

The Chettiars in ancient times in South India, according to legend, were fearless traders. With their pack bull caravans and a few helpers carrying rice, salt and textiles they traveled coast to coast in South India on little used trails to trade with rural people. Selling on credit was initiated with trading. Later, Chettiars acquired wealth through moneylending based on trust. Lending to local rulers and selling gems and jewellery to them, they received patronage from the local rajas. On the recommendation of the rajas, the British invited the Chettiars to become middlemen as the British spread out from India. In the 1790s, the Chettiars came to Ceylon's plantation country, supplying the necessities for the labour on credit and lending money to the planters. Venturing virtually alone into what was then wilderness, the Chettiars showed great courage at the time. Most plantation villages grew into towns with the Chettiar contribution. In Ceylon, Chettiar contributions to the coffee, early tea and, later, rubber and coconut industries was vast. As a pious community, they also built 80-90 temples in Ceylon.

It was as moneylenders that the Chettiars became wealthy. Many of the major landowning families in Ceylon grew on money lent to them by the Chettiars. Trusted by the foreign banks, a Chettiar would get his capital from them as well as richer Chettiars to add to his small contribution. But since he had to repay both bank and other Chettiars, his returns were nowhere as much as was generally thought – such thinking responsible for the unhappy name they got wherever they went. During the 1930s, Chettiars invested 1500 million rupees in various countries including Ceylon, Burma, Malaysia, Sumatra and Indo-China, in much of which their contribution was the same as in

Ceylon from the early 19th Century.

In 1890 and 1906 with banks crashing, the smaller Chettiar firms lost business and the bigger firms began to dominate. The Depression in 1939 caused more Chettiar firms to be wiped out. The bigger Chettiar firms began operating on Western norms, with loans demanding guarantees. Subsequent foreclosures on land got the Chettiars a bad name, particularly in Burma, where thousands of acres of paddy fields were taken over by them. When Independence came to the countries the Chettiars did business in, the Chettiars had to leave them. With Burma and Indo-China their biggest holdings, the largest part of the community became impoverished when these two countries forced them out.

Education has enabled the Chettiars to restart their lives and move to other fields. Today, with their innate acumen for numbers, many have prospered in India in business, though in Chettinad itself there remain many poverty-stricken families. Nearly 10,000 Chettiars now live in the Western world, playing significant roles in the IT and banking sectors. But in Sri Lanka there are only three Chettiar families left. Mr. Muthiah showed striking photographs of Chettiar traditions, Chettiar temples and Chettiar mansions, once elaborately decorated but many now derelict. The meeting concluded with Mr. Muthiah willingly responding to questions posed by an enthusiastic audience.

Dilhani Kumbukkage

A CORDIAL WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS



Patrick & Dinoo Kelleghan

Illawong, NSW

Chandra & Rohana Jayaratne

Colombo, Sri Lanka

Valentine Ratnayake

Bendigo, VIC

George & Maureen Rupesinghe

Belmore NSW

...who have joined since publication of Journal # 38

...we also welcome the following gift subscription recipients of four issues of *The Ceylankan* awarded by members

Dilo Pillai

St Ives, NSW

Ranil Ratnayake

Bayswater, WA

Ian Shrimpton

Harpenden, Herts UK

Dallas De Soysa

New Rochelle, NY USA.

CSA Colombo Chapter Inaugurated on the 2nd June 2007

The efforts of the conveners over the past few months came to fruition and the Colombo Chapter of CSA was launched. Thirty four persons were present:

Ransiri Menike Silva, Luke Peries, C. J de Saram, M.V. Theagarajah, Jayantha Jayawardene, Asoka Perera, Nimal Sanderatne, Frederick Medis, Mark Marcelline, Channa & Thaniya Gooneratne, Brendon & Yasmine Gooneratne, Brian Elias, Selvie & Lalith Perera, Lakshman Samarasinghe, Vinitha & Tennyson Rodrigo, Lalin Fernando, Terence Sundaram, Prof Hiran & Erica Dias, J. B. Muller, Dr. L. P. Mendis, Dr. Lakshmi de Silva, Chandra & Rohana Jayaratne, Mihiri Devendra, Nalaka Devendra, Daya Wickramatunga, Mike Udabage, Somasiri & Dayadari Devendra,

The President of the Chapter, Somasiri Devendra, opened proceedings at 6.30 p. m. sharp, welcoming the founder members of the Chapter and their invitees. He announced that he now formally assumed office as President with Daya Wickramatunga and Mike Udabage as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. He ended by giving notice of the next meeting, which would be on September 1st. at the same venue and time.

Mike Udabage Outlined briefly how the CSA came to be born 10 years ago, with a meeting of seven members at the residence of Hugh Karunanayake (first President of CSA) in Sydney, Australia. Amazingly, the original idea of the CSA was mooted by an Australian scientist by the name Chris Puttock, to bring together people with common interests in the historical heritage of Ceylon/Sri Lanka. A Chapter was later opened in Melbourne and the total CSA membership to date stands around 350 across 6 countries. He said that, as in Sydney, arrangements could be made, for the sale of books, authored by members, or the display of old books and other memorabilia on Ceylon/Sri Lanka at Chapter meetings. He suggested that 15% or so of proceeds be donated to the Chapter.

Somasiri Devendra then delivered the first address for the day on the topic **“Colombo: Capital city and Port – Past – Present - Future?”**. Using 47 slides, he took the listeners on a voyage through time, starting from pre-Christian times when the Kelani Ganga, was the original port site and route to the interior. After dealing with early Arab merchants,

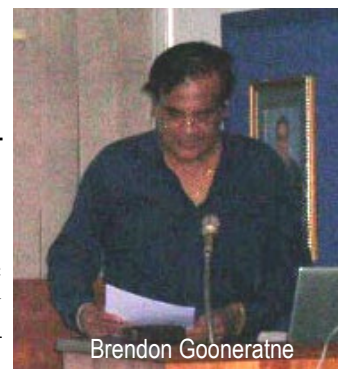
who called this place “Kalanbu”, he dealt with the coming of the Portuguese, whose involvement with the internal politics of the Kotte Kingdom led to the shift of the capital to Colombo. From here he presented a series of

maps showing the physical growth of the Fort and Port, accompanied by photographs showing the oldest structures yet remaining. After detailing Dutch and British improvements to the port – particularly with its expansion – he dealt briefly with the Future. He mentioned the newest studies of the impact of global warming, sea level rise and climatic change on the Sri Lankan coastline, and presented the plan of the South Colombo Harbour Development. Leaving this doomsday scenario he showed 19th century photographs of the images a traveler to Colombo would have seen of the city, and port before embarking.

He then introduced the next speaker Brendon Gooneratne.

In his talk on **“Robert Knox in the Kandyan kingdom: with illustrations from the title pages of the various editions of Knox from his Collection”**, Brendon sketched the salient features of Knox's life before and after his enforced stay in Ceylon in the 17th Century. Knox's book, first

published in 1681, was a remarkable work written, after his escape, from memory, on board a Dutch vessel bound for London. His work was an instant success in view of its first-hand information, illustrations, and prevailing interest in Ceylon. Many reprints followed and many pirated editions in German, Dutch and French, in Amsterdam and in Lyon. Brendon showed slides of the title pages of these editions together with that of PHILALETHERS' own edition of Philalethes' Knox of 1817, (which led to the discovery of Philalethes' identity) ; the Hatchard Edition of 1818 and the James Ryan Edition of 1911 containing the text of the Knox's Autobiography discovered in the Bodleian Library in Oxford in 1900. Knox, a Puritanical Christian, led a celibate life and never married, unlike the other captives. After 19 years in captivity Knox saw fit to captain a slaving vessel.





(Left) Somasiri Devendra in the centre flanked by Mike Udabage on his right and Daya Wickramatunga inaugurating the Colombo Chapter. Pic on right—some of the invitees and guests who share the Society's values, all in all, a memorable meeting.

Questions and comments, by an interested audience followed..

Daya Wickramatunga thanked Somasiri and Brendon for the excellent presentations and called for a standing ovation, which was readily given. He indicated the deadlines for contributions to *The Ceylankan* to reach the editor by the 10th Jan for the February issue, 10th April for the May issue, 10th July for the August issue, and 10th October for the November issue. All present were asked to make sure that they filled in their postal addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses if available. All invitees were warmly thanked for their attendance in spite of their busy schedules. The business of the day was followed by fellowship & social with old acquaintances being renewed and new ones made.

Popular Sri Lankan snacks washed down with traditional “Elephant Ginger Beer” closed the evening on a happy note. All present showed a keen interest in the ‘flagship’ of the Society - *The Ceylankan*.

It was rewarding to note that several invitees had shown appreciation of the presentation and objects of the Society by making anonymous contributions towards the cost of the meeting. The CSA acquired one new member, who also made a handsome donation.

It was, all in all, a memorable and an even more successful meeting than we had hoped for.

Daya Wickramatunga
Hon. Secretary

Sydney 15th July 2007

President Tony Peries introduced Prof. Raja Bandaranayake as an eminent medical educationist turned historical researcher and author. His book, *Betwixt Isles*, subject of his talk today is reviewed elsewhere in this Journal. Some copies of this book was available for purchase by the members at the end of the talk. Following is a synopsis of the talk.

The signing of the Kandyan Convention on the 2nd of March, 1815 marked the downfall of the Kandyan Kingdom, one of the longest surviving kingdoms in the world. The most powerful man in the Kingdom at the time, Ehelepola Maha Nilame, accepted the title “Friend of the British”. The discontent resulting from the curtailment of the chiefs’ powers and the erosion of the people’s traditions led to two Kandyan rebellions in quick succession. The leaders were captured and Ehelepola was taken prisoner on suspicion of collusion. While many rebels were executed, some had their sentences commuted to banishment. Several of the latter, and later Ehelepola himself, were sent to Mauritius. This talk deals with some aspects of their lives in Mauritius.



Prof Raja Bandaranayake

The state prisoners’ stay in Mauritius spanned a period of 13½ years. They were accommodated in the Powder Mills in the district of Pamplemousses. Convicts sent for crimes other than rebellion were probably accommodated in barred cells nearby, and served as servants to the prisoners. The superintendent, Henry Bates, spared no efforts to make their stay comfortable. English doctors attending them submitted detailed

disappeared, as did new tyres so the Army, Navy and Air Force operating out of Ceylon needed retreaded tyres, and the company was able to operate its machinery for 24 hours a day, the resulting profits contributing to their massive post war growth. Rutnam's foresight led to the company's retreading machinery being versatile enough to handle several sizes of tyre unlike other equipment available in Ceylon pre-war. By 1950, Richard Pieris & Co. employed around one thousand people. They were by then Peugeot agents and the Car Sales Manager of the day, George Phillips, raced the make successfully, helping it to acquire great repute. The company had a multi hoist service station and sold all the popular makes of tyres. They imported Pirelli tyres, then unknown in Ceylon. They also made rubber carpets for cars, bushes, toys, table mats, and balloons, sold prefab aluminium buildings and imported Murphy Radio chassis, to install in locally made cabinets. Richard was very accommodating about employing sons of his friends and relatives, as well as connections of his senior managers.

We should perhaps explain that pre WWII, car ownership was confined mostly to the wealthy and repairs carried out mainly by the importing agents: most owners had chauffeurs who "serviced" cars at home; that is to say, they changed the engine oil and greased the chassis. With the post war boom, car ownership took off and with it, the servicing of vehicles. At the time, an every 1000- mile service and oil change was considered desirable, bringing another bonanza to Richard Pieris & Co.

Although this article is about Richard Pieris, his partner, Walter, was the initiator of technical progress which brought financial success, a fact acknowledged by the former in writing a tribute to Walter, (who had died shortly before) in the Company's house journal (Arpico Times Xmas 1963). Richard wrote- "*the achievements and present position of the Company are due entirely to his vision and untiring energy*". By about 1951, the Ford Motor Co., who had hitherto owned all their distributors worldwide, made a major policy change and sold many distributorships. The established European, mostly British makes of cars were sold by well known firms like Rowlands, Walker Sons and Colonial Motors so Richard Pieris & Co. were really the favoured candidates for the Ford Agency. Ford, however, drove a very hard bargain and for instance, wanted all their stock of spares, including many obsolete lines purchased at book value. Although Richard Pieris & Co. had a long established relationship with the Chartered Bank, and enormous positive cash flow, the bank behaved in a fashion typical of British banks at the time, refusing to advance all the necessary capital. The company therefore issued cumulative redeemable, prefer-

ence shares which were snapped up by the investing public, to the value of 3 million rupees, a VERY large sum then. The Korean war had caused a mini-boom so cars could be sold as fast as they were imported. The Ford 'Anglia' was then one of, if not **the** cheapest car on the market, priced at just over Rs. 5000. It was fairly reliable if crudely engineered and sold very well indeed. Also at the time, Ford U.K. introduced the four cylinder Consul and the six cylinder Zephyr which were competitively priced and rolled out of the showrooms as did truck chassis.

Around 1950/51 the Company brought on to the Board, from the Ceylon Finance Co, the very clever Eardley de Silva who started Arpico Finance, to retain the financing of cars and radios within the group.

The Company went from strength to strength and by 1963 was producing expanded polystyrene, "*Rigifoam*" for insulation and steel framed furniture. They were by then making a huge range of rubber products at a large facility in Nawinna. Walter Rutnam died in 1963, at a relatively early age, severing a partnership of nearly 35 years with Richard Pieris, whose younger son, Henry was by then a Director, as too, Percy's son Ian, an accountant (and well known cricketer). Ian's younger brother, David, worked in the Motor Department for many years but later quit to start a very successful enterprise selling/servicing trishaws.

The Company today has, so far as we know, no members of the founding families on its board and control was acquired by others but the firm remains well known with interests in supermarkets and plantations: the last named to ensure supplies of rubber unaffected by market vagaries. Its size and existence today are a tribute to the founders.

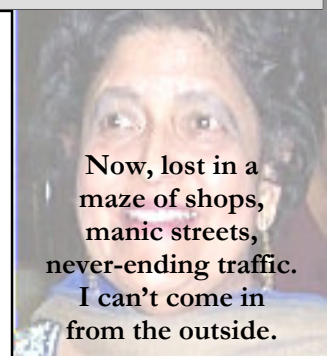
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The Immigrant ...

a poem

by Srin Peries

Arriving from a
war-torn land, full
of conflict and racism
expecting welcome
and hope
I find
strange places,
unfamiliar people,
no shared memories.



Now, lost in a
maze of shops,
manic streets,
never-ending traffic.
I can't come in
from the outside.

My Adopted Country

by Clive Meares

I, too, love a sunburnt country
Alien child that I am
I've seen the Waratahs blooming
The reefs and the giant clam
The Marlin that bears no taming
High tides that wash the shores
I have marvelled at all the vastness
The seed that burns ere it grows

The steaming heat of the forest
The crystal streams that flow
I've seen both drought and tempest
Grey skies that quickly glow
The rock that dwarfs all others
The roos the land has reared
I've heard the cry of the homeland
For the tracts its sons have bared

I've seen the birds and the possums
The dingoes and wombats too
The eagles gracing the heavens
Alas! They are but few
Let's join to beat pollution
That harms both land and sea
And save this sunburnt country
For the ones that are yet to be!

This poem is repeated from Journal 38. Inadvertently we lost line 3 in transcribing from typed copy. Our apologies to the author who was rather upset and to our readers who would have missed the important line. Ed

REMINDER MEMBERSHIP DUES

2007 subscriptions are now overdue. Kindly draw your cheque/MO in favour of the Ceylon Society of Australia and mail to Srikantha Nadarajah 50A - The Esplanade - Thornleigh NSW 2120. Please note subscriptions are for a calendar year.

Annual subscriptions are:

All Members	AU\$ 30.00
Pensioners	AU\$ 20.00

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NEXT SYDNEY MEETING

TBA

Thornleigh Community Centre
Cnr Pennant Hills Road & Phyllis Avenue
Thornleigh NSW 2120

NEXT MELBOURNE MEETING

TBA

Venue: Holy Redeemer Church Hall
Cnr of York Street and Mont Albert Road
Surrey Hills VIC 3127
(Melways Ref: 46 H10)

Shelagh –AH 9808 4962
Or Srilal –AH 9809 1004

NEXT COLOMBO MEETING

Saturday 25th August at 6.15 p.m.

**"Parangiya Kotte Giya Para" (The Road
by which the Portuguese were taken to
Kotte)
by Fred. Medis**

and

**"The 'Kastane' sword of Sri Lanka"
by Anandalal Nanayakkara**

Venue: Auditorium of the Organization
of Professional Associations
Stanley Wijesundera Mawatha Colombo 7

Contact: Somasiri - 2737180
Mike - . 0775412420 Daya - 2786783

AN IMPORTANT DAY TO REMEMBER

KEEP THIS DATE FREE

Saturday 1st December 2007

**6.30 p. m.
AGM followed by**

**Dinner & Social to
celebrate the 10th
Anniversary of CSA**

**This is the big one and it happens at
Thornleigh Community Centre
Cnr Pennant Hills Road
& Phyllis Avenue**

Thornleigh NSW 2120

How to become a member of the Ceylon Society of Australia

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50A The Esplanade Thornleigh NSW 2120
Ph: 02 9980 1701

E-mail: vsnadarajah@bigpond.com
and request an application form

"THE CEYLANKAN is published quarterly. Every effort is made to print material that is relevant and correct, but we do not take responsibility for errors. The editorial committee would appreciate if inaccuracies are brought to its attention. Original material is sought, preferably of an anecdotal, historical nature, but any material will be considered provided it contributes to the Society's ideals of being non racial,

The Editorial Committee of THE CEYLANKAN, at its discretion, now accepts advertisements for products and services suitable for our members. Those related to genealogy, antiquarian and contemporary books, maps, art, memorabilia, and other collectibles are welcome. For further details and rates please contact Publications Officer Mike Udabage at Int + 61 2 9978 7728, E-mail: mike_udabage@itechne.com

**Advertisement from 1930's in Silumina—premier Sinhalese Newspaper.
Sent in by member Sergei de Silva Ranasinghe.**

Read all about this Trade Mark (Caves)

This is an unbelievably low price. We categorically say that no one in Lanka can offer this price.

“GREYHOUND”

This 'vehicle' has been fully made in England. These 20", 22" and 24" vehicles with R Frame are fitted with Dunlop tyres & tubes, Dunlop Steel rims, Reynold chains, Dunlop saddle. All shining parts (lasting several years) have been Super Chrome plated. Painted black enamel with two red stripes and one gold stripe. It is complete with inflator, tool bag with spanner and oiling equipment. (reference to an oiling can)



H W Cave & Co Colombo

Production of this Journal is generously supported by

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