



The Ceylankam

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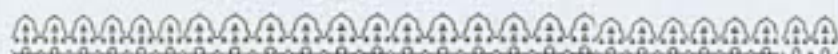
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From the Editor...

Commencement of any venture can be invigorating. Like the beginning of a New Year or for that matter, the start of designing and producing a fresh cycle of this journal for the upcoming year. There is something undefinable that gives the exercise impetus, enthusiasm and the urge to get on with it. Getting this issue ready for the printer was no different. To help it along, we had the pleasure of a choice of articles this time with members positively responding to our appeal for contributions. That is a great omen to the coming year. Maintain the generosity.

Dr Tony Donaldson was afforded the great opportunity of recording conversations he had had with his good friend the late Tony Peries. Tony who was CSA President for three years from 2003, sadly passed away in August last year. Here Dr Donaldson in "Remembering Tony Peries" faithfully records the thoughts, insights and vast knowledge of his subject in a probing interview he shares with the readers.

In his insatiable hunger for knowledge and thirst for research, Thiru Arumugam is once again at his best while looking into how the Victorian village Baddaginnie got its Sinhala name. In doing so, Thiru unveils the story of J.G.W. Wilmot (the man who actually named the village Baddaginnie) who spent his time in Ceylon as a surveyor in the Dambulla area. When gold was discovered in Australia, Wilmot returned to Australia as a prospector. His knowledge of Sinhala came to the fore as he went around giving

Sinhala place names to various Victorian towns and villages. Thiru weaves his studiously fascinating tale as only he knows how.

Hugh Karunanayake sheds some light on a quirk on the side of British Justice as he engagingly relates the story of how C.J.R. Le Mesurier, a prominent member of the Ceylon Civil Service in 1875, was sacked for joining the Islam religion in order to marry the woman he loved.

Tissa Devendra writes interestingly about the Jews who left their mark in Ceylon, while S. Muttiah (of Madras Miscellany fame) contributes brief notes on renowned Sri Lankan Tamils and we begin with that on Arumuga Navalar, the first of many of those sketches.

Tony Saldin, Secretary of the CSA Colombo Chapter, was speaker at a recent Chapter general meeting. He provided us with the complete script of that talk on "Keris - mystic fighting weapon of the Malays and Javanese" where he details how and what materials are used and who can make these weapons.

Manipay Memorial English School is the topic of Samuel Tevabalan Arnold's article where he highlights the outstanding contribution made by the Protestant Christian Missionaries from America and England to English education in Sri Lanka in general and Jaffna in particular. The author also fondly recollects his own contribution made to the Manipay Memorial as a Science teacher for ten years from 1959.

On the back cover of this issue we feature excellent photographs of Adisham Manor - The Benedictine Monastery in the Haputale hills submitted by Sanjiva Wijesingha. A brief note is on page 20.

All this and the usual features are included for your enjoyment.

About the Ceylon Society of Australia

The CSA is a non-profit organisation, incorporated in Australia. Its main objectives are to foster, promote and develop interest in the cultural heritage of Sri Lanka, especially the post-medieval period when this country was first exposed to, what we now call, globalisation. Apart from publishing the journal - **The Ceylankan** which has attracted much international appreciation - the Society holds meetings quarterly in Sydney, Melbourne and Colombo. Most importantly, it is non-political and non-partisan and studiously steers clear of political and similar controversial issues. CSA is not a formal, high profile Society but rather, a gathering of like-minded people, open to receiving and imparting new ideas, who greatly enjoy a quarterly meeting in reasonably modest

and intimate surroundings. While Sydney is home to the parent body and looks after the needs of the society in all of NSW and the ACT, the Melbourne Chapter covers members and others residing in and visitors to Victoria; the Colombo Chapter caters to CSA members in and passing through Sri Lanka, and the Sri Lankan public! Members of the public with an interest in the study of Sri Lankan history, culture and heritage - the young members of the public are especially welcome! - are invited to attend. Admission to these meetings is free, while donations to defray expenses are much appreciated.

Our Readers Write

Many thanks

Thank you for a copy of the quarterly publication [*The Ceylankan*]. I read with great interest your contribution below. Since meeting with all the distinguished members of Ceylon Society, life has been quite hectic with official visits to New Zealand and later Darwin and Melbourne, not to mention the many events here.

We staged for the first time a Sri Lankan Festival at the Mission's premises in Canberra on 12 November that exceeded even our most optimistic expectations.

The contribution we had from the community and the untiring efforts in the planning and execution by the Mission's staff made it an event we will all remember.

I have to thank Sunimal [CSA Secretary] for a mirror image recollection of my address to your members!
S. SKANDAKUMAR, High Commissioner for Sri Lanka in Australia, Canberra ACT.

Highly valued

I very highly value and enjoy *The Ceylankan* – which is unfortunately the only service of the Society I can access, living here in Thailand. I would like to add my vote to the many members who must acknowledge and appreciate the excellent articles published and the effort and research that goes into compiling them. By lucky coincidence most of them (the articles) seem to be of particular interest to someone of my vintage. I do also appreciate and recognise that all this comes together due to the hard work and effort of the many volunteers on the committee of the Society. My sincere thanks to them all for the interest and pleasure I derive from having the journal sent out to me.
AUBREY KOELMEYER (Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand)

"All Governments are evil, one way or another"

Thiru Arumugam's comprehensive and carefully researched article (*Ceylankan*, Nov. 2016) is a gift to all writers and scholars who wish to venture into any of the different areas of the life of Leonard Woolf. The public recognition of this fact was given by The Island newspaper of Sri Lanka, which, unsolicited, eagerly sought to, and published it in all of its three parts.

In the article the author refers to my play, *The Government of Beddegama*, derived from Woolf's "The Village In The Jungle". Because it has yet to be published very few will know how it differs from the original novel.

In my play, for technical/artistic reasons, Woolf has already left Ceylon having done most of

"The Village In The Jungle", with only the end left unfinished. His fictional successor in my play, Andrew Arthur Millington, decides to complete the novel.

On the last night of Millington's period at Hambantota (he is to leave for Colombo and England the next day) Silindu finds his way to Millington's bungalow to give himself up for his crimes of shooting and killing corrupt Babehami, the headman and Fernando, the lecherous money lending exploiter. He is motivated to surrender because of a holy man he met while hiding in the forest, who convinced Silindu that it would be a peaceful Buddhist way to acknowledge what one has done and take the consequences.

However, Silindu works it out that to surrender to the Police would not lead to a peaceful departure into Samsara. Silindu believes that his son-in-law Babun was beaten to death in prison. Silindu fears the same fate if he surrenders to the Police. He finds his way to the veranda of the AGA's bungalow in Hambantota and exhausted, lies there till Millington turns up. But before that, the Ceylonese Civil Servant Wickremanayake comes to Millington's house accompanied by Police Sergeant Ramanathan, on some other business, and are surprised to find Silindu lying inert on the veranda floor. Leaving Ramanathan standing over Silindu, Wickremanayake goes looking for Millington. Ramanathan orders Silindu to stand up, in respect. When Silindu pleads that he has no strength to get up, Ramanathan boot kicks him hideously, in the head. Silindu dies, lying on the veranda.

When Millington arrives at the veranda, and discovers that Silindu had been murdered, his reaction is unusual. It is one of "historical" resignation. Resignation to his feeling that at the end of British Imperialism, with Independence, 'the wretched of the earth' like Silindu, will not notice any change. He says before he knows that Silindu is dead, "...it won't be long before the Wickremanayakes, the Senanayakes, the Arunachalams, the Silvas and the Pereras become the Millingtons, the Carruthers and the Burtons. You'll just walk into our clubs the moment we leave, and hopefully poor devils like this Silindu, will appreciate the difference."

When Millington knows that Silindu has been murdered he orders, "Take the body away and make whatever entry, you wish, in your books, of how Silindu came to die. They will be your books, and your bodies, not long from now, after Independence"....." All governments are evil in one way or another"

Then, Sargent Ramanathan begins dragging the body crudely across the floor, without the dignity a corpse is entitled to. Millington loses his strained composure. He screams, "God forbid"! Ramanathan stops, very slowly lowers Silindu's legs down to the floor and stands erect. Millington orders, "Take up the body". There is a slight hesitation

by Wickremanayake. "Must I then..." says Millington with slight movement. Ramanathan and Wickremanayake then take up the body and begin moving out with at least the formality of a dignified posture.

Millington, alone on stage, decides that the murder of Silindu by the Ceylonese officials of The Government of Beddagama shall not change the ending of the story, the way his predecessor intended.

The murder of Silindu is another story, one that will continue outside of fiction.

He reads aloud as he completes the novel, in the way it is now found fictionally. Silindu, in the novel, is sent to jail, sentenced to 20 years imprisonment. And then, "The village was blotted out and forgotten. It disappeared into the jungle from which it had sprung, and with it all traces of the lives ... It is as if they had been the last people left in the world, a world of unending trees, over which only the wind roared and the sun blazed. "The Village In The Jungle".

ERNEST MACINTYRE (Ryde, NSW)

Great interest

I'm Amitha Gallanawatttha, Assistant Director, National Library of Sri Lanka. I just saw the details of

[Thiru Arumugam's] book "Writing and Musings" in *The Ceylankan*, the journal of the Ceylon Society of Australia.

National Library is mainly concerned on acquiring books published in Sri Lanka and books published in foreign countries on Sri Lanka and books by Sri Lankan authors. If there any possibility to obtain a copy of your publication we can acquire for the National Library collection also we can include your publication details for the National Bibliography published by the National Library of Sri Lanka.

If you don't mind please share this message within your friends in Australia who published any kind of publication.

So we would be very much thankful if you can send a copy of your publication to the National Library of Sri Lanka.

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Happenings

Sunimal Fernando is new Secretary of CSA



• *Sunimal Fernando*

A youthful SUNIMAL FERNANDO was elected Secretary of the CSA at the Annual General Meeting held in November 2016. He replaced Les Perera who did not re-contest after serving three years in the position.

Following his early childhood at Haputale, Sunimal had his schooling in Colombo, attending Royal Primary and Royal College. Tertiary and University education followed in London from 1973 to 1981, including graduate architectural training at Geoffrey Bawa's Colombo practice.

After final architectural examinations, he was offered a position in the Bahamas, working for the Ministry of Works & Utilities - culminating in the design of Nassau Airport's international passenger terminal expansion. This location allowed travel to the US and Mexico, continuing the wandering itch which had started on the 'Udarata Menike' looking out at the wondrously changing landscape and subsequent backpacking exploring towns and cities in Europe.

Family commitments returned Sunimal to Haputale and a job with a Japanese consultancy,

to work on the construction and renovation of the Katunayake International Airport terminal buildings from commencement to completion in 1989.

Brewing troubles of the JVP insurrection, with its pervasive violence and uncertainty, made working thereafter on a programme to upgrade rural Technical Colleges quite difficult. Sunimal met and married a young undergraduate of Colombo University, Chrysanthe, in 1991 - whose University education had also been interrupted and extended to over double its normal duration due to the troubles.

They moved to Jakarta in 1993 where Sunimal worked on the construction of the 35-storey Shangri-La Hotel - affording an opportunity to sail to the fractured island remains of the Krakatoa volcanic explosion and to explore Java and Bali, which resemble several aspects of the Sri Lankan landscape and culture.

Following migration to Australia in 1994, they settled in Sydney at a location not far from the Ceylon Society of Australia's regular quarterly meetings - and its rather unique community. Sunimal was employed as an Architect in private sector design firms in Sydney and Brunei, and in local government as a Project Manager until 2008. He has since worked in a strategic planning role as a Senior Project Manager in the Tertiary Education sector.

Here's to a rewarding Secretaryship!



• Tony Peries in Sydney, February 2013.

Remembering Tony Peries

by Dr Tony Donaldson

My first encounter with Tony Peries took place in 2003. By chance, I stumbled upon a meeting of the Ceylon Society in Melbourne one Sunday afternoon at which Tony was giving a talk about his book *George Steuart & Co Ltd 1952 – 1973: A Personal Odyssey*, published in 2003, a copy of which occupies a prominent position on my bookshelf. He made an immediate impression on me as a gifted speaker with a natural stage persona that drew audiences into his world.

Our paths crossed again a few years later when he invited me to give a talk to the Ceylon Society in Sydney. I can't remember what the talk was about but it led to a fruitful period in my research and writing which gave me the opportunity to explore a variety of topics that had occupied my mind for many years. This included subjects such as the Imperial Russian visit to Ceylon in 1891 and Mountbatten in Ceylon. These two topics might at first glance seem unrelated by distance and by 53 years but by unique circumstances they intersect in Ceylon. Tsar Nicholas II was Mountbatten's uncle and both had spent time in Ceylon. As heir to the Russian throne, Nicholas II visited Ceylon in February 1891, and from 15 April 1944 to 25 November 1945, Mountbatten was based in Ceylon as Supreme Allied Commander South East Asian Command (SACSEAC). During this period in Ceylon, Mountbatten did sometimes think of his uncle and his children who had been some of his closest friends before they were executed by the Bolsheviks in 1918.

Whenever I was in Sydney, I would visit Tony at his home in Seven Hills. His wife Srimi would prepare lunch and we would talk and laugh. Tony was fun to be around with and I liked him very much. We never argued and I always found his company stimulating. We kept in touch over the years but less so in recent years due to my frequent travels overseas.

Though he never knew it, Tony was very helpful in my research on Force 136, the SOE organisation set up in India and Ceylon during World War II. One of SOE's tasks in Asia was to obtain

rubber and other war essentials by smuggling it out of Japanese occupied territories using Chinese black market operators. The operation was run by Walter Fletcher who was based in Chungking. Fletcher had an SOE agent in Colombo assisting him. Tony was able to explain the extent of slaughter rubber tapping that occurred in the Ceylon during World War II and the extent colonial policies had exhausted rubber reserves in the country. Though SOE played no part in exhausting rubber reserves in Ceylon, Walter Fletcher's smuggling operations were so successful in generating revenue that at the end of the war, Force 136 was one of the few British organisations (if not the only one) to come out of the war with a considerable profit.

In this special tribute to Tony Peries for the readers of *The Ceylankan* who admire him as I do, the following interview is an edited extract of an oral history interview I did with Tony Peries on 23 February 2013 in Sydney. The interview covers a wide-range of subjects from the art of tea tasting to lively tea and rubber auctions he witnessed in Colombo, his time as a director of George Steuart & Company (GS) and his assessment of the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board. He also talks about his impressions of Sir John Kotelawala, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke and Lakshman Kadiragamar and about his reasons for migrating to Australia and provides a surprising revelation about what he might have done in his life with the benefit of hindsight.

One contradiction about Tony that always brings a smile to my face is that although he worked for GS for just over two decades and spent many of those years refining the art of tea tasting, he preferred to drink coffee.

So I began this interview by asking: "Tony what makes a good tea taster?"

Tony Peries (TP) As with so many other things, to be proficient one needs a fair degree of intelligence. And tea tasting is a method of evaluating tea and it doesn't depend entirely on taste but in my day on the appearance of the leaf, the appearance of the infused

leaf, the appearance of the "liquor" [brewed liquid] as we used to call it and finally the taste. So there was strength and colour and many things allied to taste but not taste alone.

Tony Donaldson (TD) Visual?

TP Yes.

TD To what extent does the location in which the tea is grown influence its taste?

TP Quite a lot because the best tea is grown at the higher elevations above 4,000 feet. There are exceptions but largely that is the case.

TD Why are those teas so special? Is it the climate or the environment?

TP As with wine, it is a question of soil, temperature, rainfall, exposure to wind and sunlight.

TD How does this relate to the quality and taste of tea in Kandy, Uva or other regions of Sri Lanka?

TP Any reasonable tea taster, after a little experience, can distinguish, not so much by district, but the taster can say, "This is not a very good tea", meaning it is not full of flavour but it could be a good tea nevertheless. Many teas were purchased as what used to be called "fillers", that is, to make up the bulk of a blend or mixture, uplifted with a minimum of very good tea.

TD When has a tea taster made a mistake?

TP It is easy to make a mistake. This did not apply to my kind of tea tasting. My tasting was really an evaluation of how well the tea had been produced on the plantation. But those who purchased tea could value a tea wrongly and decide it was worth four rupees when it was really only a two rupee tea. That kind of mistake did happen.

TD How were you taught to know the quality of good tea?

TP It was purely experience. I was told this is good tea and why. I tasted tea every day. I probably tasted somewhere between 80 to 100 cups every day. If you have a reasonable memory and a fair degree of intelligence, you begin to learn quickly what is good and why.

TD What factors do tea estates need to consider when growing and cultivating tea?

TP Tea cultivators need reasonable soil – I'm not really an agriculturalist – and I think tea needs a minimum of about 70 inches of rain per year and preferably not more than 150. So you need a fairly good amount of rainfall evenly distributed and a good soil.

TD You were involved in tea auctions. What was the life and atmosphere like at a tea auction?

TP It was exciting because firstly it proceeded at great speed. A good auctioneer could sell six lots a minute but an auction normally went at somewhere between four and five lots a minute. So it happened very fast.

TD So a tea auction was lively and full of energy and noise?

TP Yes a lot of noise because when a particularly good tea was put up, somebody would bid for it and other buyers would say to the initial bidder: "Can I have some?" A single lot of tea could be divided by the buyer into two, three or four. If there were six bidders, the intending buyer would divide with those he knew were likely to be the most competitive. So if he "went quarters", he was eliminating three bidders. All these deliberations had to be done in seconds.

TD How did a tea auction compare to a rubber auction?

TP The rubber auctions were much slower and the quantity sold was much smaller and the lots were not divided. The rubber auctions took place twice a week and went on for an hour or two. The tea auctions started at 8 am and went on with a lunch break until 6 or 7 in the evening, and very often continued [into] the next day as well.

TD While we are on the subject of rubber, sometime in 1942, an SOE Force 136 officer called Walter Fletcher ran a smuggling operation by using Chinese black market operators to smuggle rubber, quinine, kapok, foreign currency, diamonds and machinery out of Japanese occupied territories. To finance his rubber smuggling activities, Fletcher put up a proposal to the Commander-in-Chief in Ceylon Admiral Geoffrey Layton in 1942 recommending the price of rubber be increased by 600 per cent. While the C-in-C Ceylon was not opposed to an increase in the price of rubber, he did feel an increase of 600 per cent was too high and he rejected it. In your view, what would have been the impact of raising the price of rubber by 600 per cent in Ceylon in 1942 if Fletcher's proposal had been approved?

TP The impact would have been enormous. I know what the impact was when the price of rubber increased and it might have been something like that figure. I think rubber at the end of the Second World War was selling at around 90 cents per pound. At the time of the Korean War, I think it was around 20 or 30 rupees per pound. My father-in-law owned a big rubber estate and he made an enormous amount of money at the time.

TD So there were times when, if you were into producing rubber, you could do very well?

TP A rubber grower could do very well.

TD Were those price increases artificially pushed up?

TP No, it was because of scarcity value. Rubber is a strategic material. You may not know this but in the early 1950s, when Red China first set up as an independent government, they were not recognised by many Western governments, particularly the United States and the United Kingdom. Those two countries frowned upon countries like Ceylon having anything to do with China. But a very clever rubber trader called Terence de Soysa set up a very good export business with China, selling rubber to China and he

made a great deal of money. That company is still in business. [It is called] C. W. Mackie & Co. Ultimately it led to the creation of a barter system between China and Ceylon in which we sold them rubber and they sold us rice without any exchange of hard currency. It was a saviour of the Ceylon rubber industry at the time.

TD Did the British give incentives to rubber growers during the war?

TP No, they didn't. Don't forget Ceylon was a colony at the time and the British controlled the price of rubber. There was a ceiling price so you had to sell your rubber to the government at that price and not only did the British do that but they forced everybody to do what is called "slaughter tapping" to increase the yield. If you tap a rubber tree, you have to ration the amount of bark that you use because if you use too much bark, before too long you will cut off the bark faster than it can grow back. At the end of the war, Ceylon was left with a lot of rubber estates which had exhausted their reserves.

TD Was there a shortage of rubber in Ceylon at this time?

TP Yes, it was in short supply because synthetic rubber was known before the war. But it was developed in America during the war due to the short supply of natural rubber because Malaya was overrun by the Japanese. So that was lost. So the producers of natural rubber were practically none.

TD Could we turn to the time you became a director at GS. What were the main challenges for you in that role?

TP To me, the challenges were not all that much different to having been a manager of the department. It merely meant that I didn't have to answer to anybody else. But it brought in new areas because I had to know about the other areas of the firm and how they functioned.

TD You come across to me as a straightforward businessman. You have a certain degree of business ethics and yet you know how to find loopholes. You don't suffer fools or corrupt practices. Is that a fair description of how you would see your business and managerial style?

TP Yes. My father was also very much a straightforward businessman. He was a broker in the Central Business District in the Fort. Brokers didn't have a very good business reputation and for years he was called "the only honest broker in the Fort".

TD Is that good?

TP Yes, very good [laughs].

TD How do you feel about wheeler-dealer managers?

TP I was fortunate in that the business world that I grew up in at George Steuart's didn't have room for wheeler-dealers. It wasn't that kind of business. But when I left Ceylon and George Steuart's and came to Australia I was exposed to lots of wheeler dealers and I had to adjust my thinking to accommodate them.

TD Could you expand further...

TP One company I worked for in Australia was big in manufacturing. The company made cardboard boxes and cartons and they had the opportunity to tender for a very large job involving tens of thousands of cartons on a yearly basis. I was working in Melbourne and one boss at the head office in Sydney rang me and told me that Christmas was coming and he wanted me to buy a case of the finest wines and send it to the purchasing manager of that company and he told me I could buy a bottle for myself. So I did the job very gladly. I was very interested in wine at the time and drank quite a lot, so I bought excellent wines and sent them to this man. But we didn't get the contract because the winner of the tender bought the purchasing manager a Mercedes-Benz [laughs].

TD Tell me about the Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board (CTPB). What were its aims and how successful was it?

TP The Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board was set up to do propaganda for tea, in other words, to advertise it themselves or to help others to advertise tea and to promote tea in the big markets overseas. In order to do that, every pound of tea exported carried a cess of so many cents a pound which was allocated to tea propaganda. There was similarly a tea research cess which went towards funding the Institute for tea research.

So the Tea Propaganda Board gave money to firms overseas in my time mostly to retailers to help them to promote tea. And the popular cry at the time which was swallowed by the Board was that to promote tea generically was a good idea because it would sell more tea and therefore sell more Ceylon tea. But the Tea Propaganda Board didn't really take a great deal of trouble to make sure that their tea was where it was supposed to be. For instance, the retailers (the people who packed tea for retail) were allowed to use a symbol on their packs to show pure Ceylon tea and there was a gentleman's agreement that they would use a certain percentage, 60 to 70 per cent of Ceylon tea in their packs but it was never policed. In fact, it would have been very difficult to police.

One didn't know whether all the retailers who used the [Ceylon] symbol on their packs were really using as much Ceylon tea as they were supposed to. I think they did most of the time to give them their due.

The Tea Propaganda Board made a mistake in that they did not help small Ceylon exporters. There is a notable example. There is today a very well-known tea marketed in Australia and in Europe. It is called Dilmah. The man who owned that company and still does is Merrill Fernando and in his early days on the Propaganda Board, he was always on at them about the fact that people like him needed support to pack tea in Ceylon and to export it as tea packed entirely in Ceylon. He does this very successfully today but at the time he got no support from the Board.

TD I am curious about the name Ceylon Tea Propaganda Board. The words "tea" and "propaganda" don't go together well insofar as while drinking tea is a harmless and enjoyable pastime, propaganda is a subversive activity. We don't think of tea cultivation or tea drinking as subversive and one would not usually openly admit engaging in propaganda by including this word in the name of the organisation. How did this name come about?

TP I don't know. It went back to well before World War II. I suppose at the time propaganda didn't have the political connotations that it acquired by World War II.

TD Was it a subversive organisation?

TP No, not at all.

TD What are the big challenges for the tea industry in Sri Lanka today?

TP The challenge for Sri Lanka and some other tea producers is how to contain costs, while improving wages and living standards of pluckers. I am hardly qualified to comment, having been in Australia for 40 years during which I visited Sri Lanka only three times, in 2007, 2010 and 2013. In all that time I did not see a tea estate or talk at length to a planter. However, the problem I mention is well known.

Plucking tea in all weathers is a wretched task which has never attracted indigenous people and tea estate workers are still mostly of South Indian origin – even they are quitting when they can. It is said that increased yield in recent years has come from small holdings which may be an indication of labour shortages on estates.

Another major problem of relatively recent origin is political instability in countries like Iraq, Iran and Syria, which purchase big quantities of low country tea grown under 2,000 feet, which is not of the best quality flavour-wise. These countries, mostly oil rich, became major buyers but just recently, the United States has pressed the Government of Sri Lanka to follow the lead of many Western powers that have imposed sanctions on Iran and Syria, and not export tea to them.

TD Could I ask you about some of the personalities you got to know starting with Sir John Kotelawala. What was he like? Did you like him?

TP Yes, I liked him very much. He was a very forthright individual who said exactly what he thought. He was reputed to have called every head of state in his era "You bugger". He was at school with my father so he knew my father and he was a close friend of my father-in-law. He came to our wedding and in later years when he was no longer Prime Minister he used to dine with us from time to time. He was a very entertaining man to have because he had a whole series of scurrilous anecdotes which he would enjoy telling us.

TD What personal experiences did you have of Sir Oliver Goonetilleke?

TP I did not know him as well as Sir John but

he was also a friend of my father-in-law. Sir Oliver proposed the toast at our wedding. It was my father-in-law's wish and he was paying for the wedding. Sir Oliver had a lot of charm. He had a great memory and if he met you after ten years he would still remember your name and if he didn't know your name, he would ask and find out who you were. He would ask, "Who is daddy?" He had the reputation of being devious and cunning.

TD You need to be cunning in politics...

TP Well don't forget he wasn't a politician but a civil servant who, because of his ability was made Civil Defence Commissioner during the war. I think he might have been an Ambassador before he became Governor-General. As Governor-General he was a supreme manipulator of politicians. It is said with reasonable certitude that he brought Mrs Bandaranaike into politics realising she was a vote winner. She did not put herself forward when her husband was alive.

TD What about Lakshman Kadiragamar? Did you ever come across him?

TP Yes, I knew him. In my book I mention how Ranjan Wijeratne who became a minister of the government set up a kind of Ginger Group. I think he really did it to benefit himself. One of the other members of that group was Lakshman Kadiragamar, who was a very nice man, very well educated, Oxford I think, President of the Union at Oxford and very confident and a good lawyer. It was very unfortunate that he was assassinated.

TD What was the purpose of the Ginger Group?

TP The purpose of the Ginger Group was to give Dudley Senanayake an ear to the ground. Ranjan was distantly connected to Dudley or his wife and I think Dudley couldn't really say no so we went to see him a few times at his home and he spent about an hour with us and we expressed our views on various subjects but I don't think he was listening to us very carefully.

TD Did you like Lakshman Kadiragamar?

TP Yes, very much. I only ever met him five or six times, in the context of the Ginger Group, when we convened at each other's homes. I think there were about six members, so the meetings were intimate enough to give me an appreciation of his ability. He possessed both grace and charm.

TD Of the personalities discussed so far, who were you drawn to the most and why?

TP You have to remember I knew them at different levels. Sir John was a much older man than I. So obviously our relationship wasn't like that of a person of my own age or at the same social level as Lakshman Kadiragamar. So I would say it was Lakshman because he could talk to me on the same level.

TD Did you meet Geoffrey Bawa?

TP Yes.

TD What was he like?

TP He had a very sharp tongue. I once went to a social occasion with him where the drink was in very

short supply and he made the classic remark, "the whiskey is flowing like glue" [laughs].

TD Was he astute?

TP Yes, very astute. He qualified as a barrister and I don't know whether he practised even for a day but he realised very quickly that law was not for him, so he also qualified as an architect. He was a very talented man but I think he was at times a little impractical. He designed some houses in Colombo which had ornamental ponds within. In the Colombo monsoon, an ornamental pond inside a house is not a good idea. I know someone who had such a pond and somebody fell into it during a party.

TD I would like to turn to your life in Australia. You decided to migrate to Australia in the 1970s. In your book you hint at your reasons for leaving Ceylon. You say that at the age of 41, full of energy, you did not want to see your hard earned assets expropriated. You were convinced you could build a life elsewhere while all the freedoms were vanishing in Ceylon. Is that really how you felt?

TP Yes, absolutely. I knew that I could get a job because tea tasters with my experience—at the time I left George Steuart's I had 21 years of experience and there weren't a lot of locals around with that depth of experience. So I could find a job but I didn't want to work for some government corporation.

TD You have visited America, New Zealand, Europe, Russia, Denmark and England, but you chose to live in Australia. Why?

TP I had been to America. I went to the Stanford Business School and when I was there, I was offered jobs by people I knew at the school but I was not attracted to the American way of life and I found, for instance, Americans would ask me very quickly, "How much do you earn?" In the world I grew up in, one had to know someone very well and even then one might not ask that question. When I visited Australia, I stayed with friends who had migrated here and I could see the way they lived and that they liked the place so I was attracted to come here.

TD What were your first impressions of Australia?

TP Very good. The first place we landed in was Brisbane. I thought it was bright and the people were friendly. It was clean. It wasn't crowded. I found it very appealing.

TD When you look back over your life what do you see as your greatest achievements?

TP I would say there are two. One was becoming a Director of George Steuart's. To a degree, you have to be in the right place at the right time and I was very much for that job in the right place at the right time. I had the right social accomplishments. I could mix with the British without any difficulty.

In Australia that counted less. It was really more about how one did the job. Even so, it was

difficult in the sense that we didn't come here with a great deal of money but probably more money than many people had but even so, I had to build myself up again and that was a little difficult. So my second achievement was building myself up again in Australia.

TD With the benefit of hindsight, is there anything in your life you would have done differently?

TP I might just have stayed in Ceylon. If I stayed in Ceylon, I would have made George Steuart's do some things differently. After I left, the company made some very bad mistakes which are really down to my successor. He had been a planter and he was a good businessman insofar as the management of estates was concerned but he wasn't a good businessman in the wider sense and he made some very bad decisions.

One mistake was he put a great deal of money into building a rubber thread factory. This is used in support garments such as corsets, and for socks. It was a terrible failure and George Steuart's lost a lot of money. And then the company went back to what they used to do in the pre-war years, they did a bit of merchant banking. George Steuart's early business was partly in the form of merchant banking. In the days when coffee was being grown and coffee [was] the emerging crop, the company advanced money to coffee growers and they did it with bills drawn on Arbuthnot & Co in Madras. And when I left [in 1973] George Steuart was still connected to Arbuthnot Latham in London, who were big merchant bankers.

After I left and banking was freed up after a change of government, the company went back into merchant banking and lent money unwisely. Some of this they couldn't recover and to get themselves out of debt, they had to sell their stores which were their biggest asset. I would not have done any of those things. I would have turned the entire stores into a warehousing operation, which even from hindsight would have been perfectly feasible and I would have used the profits from that to go into other business. But I don't think I could have stood the political climate.

TD You have dealt with all sorts of people over your lifetime. You call some "stinkers" and there are those you have greatly admired. What have you gained from these experiences?

TP I suppose the biggest lesson is to take the good with the bad. When you are very young, you want to reject the bad very violently but you cannot do that. You have to learn to live with the good and the bad.



A Free man firstly

I am Free man, an American, a United States Senator and a Democrat, in that order.

— Lyndon Baines Johnson *Texas Quarterly* 1958

A President's hardest task is not to do what is right, but to know what is right.

— Lyndon Baines Johnson 1908-1973

A hunger for knowledge makes THIRU ARUMUGAM probe into the story of JGW Wilmot (1830-1895) which, in turn, makes him ponder...

...How did the village Baddaginnie in Victoria get its name?

Baddaginnie (hungry belly in Sinhala) is a small village in north-east Victoria, Australia, about 180 km from Melbourne. Its population was 465 persons in the 2011 Census. This article describes how it got its name, its early history and a brief biography of the Surveyor, J G W Wilmot who gave Baddaginnie its name.

John George Winchester Wilmot was born in Westmoreland (now Cumbria) in north-west England in 1830. His father was Edward Charles Wilmot and his mother was Maud Winchester. In 1843, he arrived in Port Philip, Melbourne. Since he was only 13-years old it is unlikely that he travelled alone. It is possible that he travelled with a relation, Sir John Eardley-Wilmot and his sons. Sir John also arrived in 1843 to take up duties as Governor of Van Diemen's Land, present day Tasmania. A year later, the travel bug had bitten Wilmot again and he travelled to Ceylon at the age of 14 years.



• Fig.1 J.G.W.Wilmot in middle age.

Robert John Wilmot was born in 1784. He married an heiress, Anne Beatrix Horton, in 1806 and a condition of his father-in-law's will was that he would have to add Horton to his surname to inherit his dowry and so he became Sir Robert John Wilmot-Horton and in 1831 he was appointed the sixth Governor of Ceylon. He continued as Governor of Ceylon until 1837. He implemented the recommendations of the Colebrook-Cameron Commission, formed the first Legislative Council, abolished Rajakariya, started the first newspaper (Colombo Journal) and started the public school, the Colombo Academy (now known as Royal College). His name lives on in Horton Plains and Horton Place.

Wilmot in Ceylon

Governor Wilmot-Horton and J G W Wilmot (JGWW) were related, but the exact relationship has not been determined despite the best efforts of their descendants. JGWW was probably the Governor's grand-nephew, but there is also the possibility that he was an illegitimate grandson. The Governor had finished his spell in Ceylon and returned to England before JGWW left for Australia and, no doubt, told

him stories about the fortune to be made planting the new crop of coffee in Ceylon. And so we find that in 1844 the 14-year old JGWW sailing for Ceylon from Australia to seek his fortune in the 'coffee rush' in Ceylon, where, a few years later, Ceylon was among the top three coffee producers in the world, along with Brazil and Indonesia.

At about this time the Ceylon Government sold about 300,000 acres of upcountry forested areas to British coffee Planters for the nominal amount of about a Pound an acre. The first task of the Planters was to clear the forest and survey the land allotment. Wilmot got interested in this job of Surveying and over the years he became quite skilled at it. It seems likely that he worked in the Dimbulla area. In 1852, after eight years in Ceylon, Wilmot must have heard about the mini gold rush in Victoria so he decided to return to Victoria to try his luck as a gold digger.

Wilmot returns to Australia

Gold was discovered in Victoria in 1851 and a rush of gold diggers and prospectors soon started. Within a few years, the Victorian gold output was greater than any other source in the world at that time, other than California. The major finds were around the towns of Beechworth, Ballarat and Bendigo. However, within a very short while, surface alluvial gold from creeks and rivers soon ran out and gold could only be obtained by drilling and deep excavation. This meant that individual prospectors with their pans were soon out



• Fig. 2 Wilmot's survey plan OD Baddaginnie showing the allotments.

of business and gold mining was carried out by firms with the required resources.

Wilmot tried his luck as a prospector with limited success and in 1855 he gave up prospecting

and accepted the post of District Surveyor in Benalla, a town about 110 km south-west of Wodonga and nearly 200 km north-east of Melbourne. One of his early assignments was to survey the land for a new township about 12 km south-west of Benalla. To carry out the survey in 1857, he needed a team of survey labourers and for this purpose he recruited locally

that Wilmot surveyed and named was Glenrowan, about 40 km north-east of Baddaginnie. This place name has no Ceylon connections but became famous as the site of the last stand of the renegade Ned Kelly on 28 June 1880. He was hanged in Melbourne on 11 November 1880.

His private life

TOWN LOTS.
Baddaginnie: 29 half-acre lots, situate in the township of Baddaginnie, on Folly Creek, Sydney-road, between Benalla and Violet Town. Upset price 8£ per acre.
32.—Benalla, Broken River, Sydney-road, 14th July, 1857, at the Police Office, commencing at eleven a.m.
Baddaginnie: 11 half-acre lots, situate in the township of Baddaginnie, on Folly Creek, Sydney-road, between Benalla and Violet Town. Upset price 8£ per acre.

• Fig. 3 is an advertisement in *The Argus newspaper, Melbourne* on 04 July 1857, by the Government for the sale of 40 half-acre lots in Baddaginnie at a price of £8. an acre.

On 28 June 1853, soon after his return to Australia, Wilmot married Ide Fanny. The marriage lasted only three days when she deserted him. He lived a single life and commenced divorce proceedings nearly ten years later. The *Bendigo Advertiser* of 20 December 1862 states that the ruling of the divorce court was as follows "The Chief Justice expressed his opinion that a sufficient case

a group of Ceylonese who were unemployed and broke. They were probably sailors who had jumped ship in Melbourne and joined the gold rush, but by this time surface alluvial gold had run out and they found nothing and ran out of money for food. They had gone round the farmsteads patting their stomachs and asking for food saying 'Baddaginnie' and Wilmot, with his knowledge of Sinhala, had named the new township Baddaginnie, a name it retains to this day. The main road from Melbourne to Sydney is shown passing through the High Street of the town.

Victorian place names with Ceylon connections

As District Surveyor, Wilmot surveyed locations for several new townships and parishes and decided on their names. Place names that Wilmot gave with Ceylon connections include Dimboola (VIC 3414), a township with a present population of about 1500, it is located about 36 km north of Horsham. Wilmot surveyed it in 1862. Les Blake in "Place names of Victoria", 1977, p. 83, suggests that it was so named after Dimbulla in Sri Lanka and because of the abundance of fig trees (Dimul). Wilmot also gave the name Gampola to a Parish that he surveyed near Borung, but this is not traceable on present day maps. Another township that Wilmot surveyed and named is Dookie (VIC 3646), about 40 km north-west of Benalla. When surveying this area it was found that Mrs Turnbull who had lived in Ceylon and occupied the land was partially squatting on Crown land. When she was told that she would lose some of her land she said that she was filled with 'Duka' and Wilmot promptly named the place Dookie. Another township

had been made out for the Court to grant a divorce. It is true that the Petitioner was aware that his wife had previously lived an unchaste life before he married her, but he had a right to suppose that she would remain faithful to him as her husband. She had not done so and he was fully entitled to a divorce". In 1867 he married Hannah Louise Whittakers and they had eight children. His eldest son Reginald was a Sports Journalist in Melbourne and is believed to have



• Fig. 4 High Street of Baddaginnie many years later in 1905. (Courtesy Museum Victoria).

coined the term 'body line bowling' in the 1932/33 Ashes cricket Test series.

Wilmot resigned from public service in 1869 and started private practice, based in Melbourne. Fig 5 is an advertisement placed by him in *The Australasian*, Melbourne, dated 28 August 1869 in which he canvasses for private work such as surveys including contour surveys, moieties (land division), boundary disputes and valuation of property. He was successful

in private practice for many years. He died on 03 August 1895 at the age of 65 years.

John Francis – the ‘Cingalese’

At about the same time that Wilmot was surveying Baddaginnie, John Francis was possibly the first Ceylonese to start a business in Australia. He

MR. J. G. W. WILMOT, for many years District Surveyor in the Victorian Survey Department, has COMMENCED PRACTICE in Melbourne, and is prepared to undertake the survey and subdivision of town and country lands, the adjustment of moieties, and the settlement of disputed boundaries of runs. Contour surveys made. The valuation of, and all matters connected with, landed property, pastoral or agricultural, will meet with prompt attention. Office—15 Collins-street west, entrance from Collins-place.

• Fig. 5 Wilmot private practice advertisement, 1869

had a shop in the prestigious location of the corner of Flinders and William Streets in Melbourne. According to the Adelaide Observer of 07 November 1857, he opened a bank account in the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank and deposited 150 Pounds. He became friendly with the Bank's Ledger Keeper, Charles William Walter Raven. It was soon found that without overdraft facilities over 3000 Pounds had been paid out in cash in instalments from this account. Raven had marked cheques of Francis as 'alright' and the Teller had paid out cash. To keep the account of Francis in credit, Raven credited the account with sums which were never actually paid in. When Raven's misdemeanours were detected, he disappeared and left the country.

John Francis was tried on a charge of conspiracy to defraud the Bank. At the trial Francis said that he knew nothing about the withdrawals from his account and that it was all done by forgeries by Raven. The Adelaide Observer of 07 November 1857 stated that "The defence is a total denial of the fraud, and an allegation that if fraud has been perpetrated, it must have been by the agency of forgeries". Nevertheless, Francis was convicted and sentenced to a fine of 3000 Pounds, the amount of the fraud, and three months imprisonment. The imprisonment was to continue after three months, until the fine was paid. As he was unable to pay the fine, he was in jail for a long time.

A few months later, according to The Argus newspaper of 19 May 1858, the Bank filed a court case to attempt to recover 3244 Pounds from Francis. By this time, Francis had already declared himself insolvent. It transpired at the case that Raven had been tracked down in Ceylon and the Bank had paid the Police 150 Pounds to meet the cost of sending a policeman to arrest him in Ceylon and bring him to Melbourne to be tried. Raven's trial was on 23 July

1858 and he pleaded guilty to a charge of conspiracy to defraud the Bank. He was sentenced to two years imprisonment. He was acquitted on charges of larceny and embezzlement.

Baddaginnie and the Melbourne-Sydney Railway

Baddaginnie was surveyed in 1857. In 1861 the population was 32. In 1871 a Post Office was opened and a Town Hall in 1883. Early industries were grazing, a quarry, vine growing and timber. By 1903 it had a hotel, butter factory and creamery, school and a church and the population was 276 by 1911 and the 2011 census gives the population as 465. The main factor in the growth of Baddaginnie was that the main road and railway line from Melbourne to Sydney passed through Baddaginnie and a railway station was built here.

When the Australian States started thinking about constructing railways, London applied pressure on all of them to use the standard gauge of 4ft 8½in. However, the States did not want to have the same gauge as a neighbouring State. The reason being that in the event of a war between States, they did not want their neighbour to be in a position to use invading rolling stock on their lines! As a result, Victoria used the broad gauge of 5ft 3in whereas New South Wales used standard gauge.

Construction of the broad gauge north-east railway line from Melbourne's Spencer Street to Wodonga started in the late 1860s and the line from Melbourne up to Seymour was completed in 1872. The second section of the line up to Benalla, passing Baddaginnie, was completed in August 1873. The final section up to Wodonga was completed on 21 November 1873. Baddaginnie Station was completed a little later and was open for passenger traffic on 19 February 1882.



• Fig. 6: Baddaginnie Railway Station in 1905.

(Photograph courtesy Museum Victoria).

Meanwhile, New South Wales completed the railway from Sydney to Albury in 1881. Victoria completed the link between Wodonga and Albury in 1883 and from 20 August 1883 it was possible to travel all the way by train from Melbourne to Sydney and vice

Melb. Terminus—

MELBOURNE to WODONGA & SYDNEY.

Spencer-st.

Mile	Single.	Return.	Down.	a.m.	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	a.m.	*Exp	p.m.
1st	2nd	1st	2nd								
s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.								
				MELBOURNE dep.	..	..	6.20	..	2.58	..	4.55
11	..	..	..	North Melbourne ..	..	..	6.24	..	2.58	..	5.34
21	..	..	..	Newmarket ..	..	..	b	..	b	..	b
31	..	..	..	Essendon ..	..	..	6.32	..	3.7	..	b
41	..	..	..	North Essendon ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5.53
51	..	..	..	Pascoe Vale ..	..	..	b	..	3.12	..	5.53
61	..	..	..	Glenroy ..	..	..	b	..	3.17	..	6.2
71	..	..	..	Broadmeadows ..	..	..	6.49	..	3.22	..	6.8
81	..	..	..	Somerton ..	..	..	..	..	b	..	6.17
91	..	..	..	Craigieburn ..	..	..	7.5	..	3.37	..	6.26
101	..	..	..	Donnybrook ..	..	..	7.15	..	b	..	6.39
111	..	..	..	Beveridge ..	..	..	7.28	..	b	..	6.54
121	..	..	..	WALLAN ..	..	..	7.36	..	4.10	..	7.6
131	..	..	..	Kilmore Junction ..	..	..	7.46	..	b	..	7.16
141	..	..	..	Wandong ..	..	..	7.53	..	4.19	..	7.19
151	..	..	..	Kilmore East ..	..	..	8.6	..	4.31	..	7.32
161	..	..	..	Broadford ..	..	..	8.20	..	4.47	..	7.47
171	..	..	..	Tallaroak ..	..	..	8.40	..	5.9	..	8.17
181	..	..	..	SEYMOUR { arr. ..	..	..	8.50	..	5.19	..	8.32
191	..	..	..	{ dep. ..	..	..	9.10	..	5.39	..	8.50
201	..	..	..	Mangalore ..	..	..	9.25	..	5.57	..	9.8
211	..	..	..	Avenel ..	..	..	9.34	..	6.7	..	9.24
221	..	..	..	Monea ..	..	..	b	..	6.15	..	9.36
231	..	..	..	Burnt Creek ..	..	..	b	..	6.21	..	b
241	..	..	..	Longwood ..	..	..	10.10	..	6.37	..	9.58
251	..	..	..	Creighton ..	..	..	b	..	b	..	b
261	..	..	..	Euroa ..	..	..	10.34	..	6.55	..	7.44
271	..	..	..	Balmattum ..	..	..	b	..	b	..	b
281	..	..	..	Violet Town ..	..	..	10.54	..	7.21	..	10.59
291	..	..	..	Baddaginnie ..	..	..	11.10	..	b	..	b
301	..	..	..	BENALLA { arr. ..	..	..	11.25	..	7.58	..	8.23
311	..	..	..	{ dep. ..	2.0	..	11.30	..	..	..	8.28
321	..	..	..	Winton ..	..	..	11.42	..	..	..	b
331	..	..	..	Glenrowan ..	..	2.45	12.0	..	..	..	b
341	..	..	..	WANGARATTA { a. ..	..	..	12.15	..	..	..	9.7
351	..	..	..	{ d. ..	3.25	..	12.30	..	..	..	9.15
361	..	..	..	Eechworth Junct'n ..	3.33	..	12.25	..	..	..	..
371	..	..	..	SPRINGHURST ..	4.12	..	12.48	..	..	..	9.44
381	..	..	..	Chiltern ..	4.44	..	1.6	..	..	..	b
391	..	..	..	Barnawartha ..	5.8	..	1.16	..	..	..	b
401	..	..	..	WODONGA { arr. ..	5.45	..	1.40	..	..	..	10.35
411	..	..	..	{ dep. ..	6.50	..	1.43	..	..	..	10.40
421	..	..	..	ALBURY { arr. ..	7.25	..	2.15	..	..	..	11.13
431	..	..	..	(N.S.W.) { dep. ..	..	..	2.45	..	..	..	11.40
441	..	..	..	For Albury to Sydney, see p. 20.	..	..	a.m.	..	..	..	a.m.
451	..	..	..	SYDNEY ..arr.	..	..	6.0	..	..	..	11.45

b Stops when required.

c Sydney time.

d Next day.

* The 4.55 p.m. Express on SATURDAY runs to ALBURY ONLY, and the Express DOES NOT RUN between Albury and Sydney on SATURDAY or SUNDAY.

† The 2.45 p.m. Ordinary from Albury to Sydney leaves Mon. Tues. Wed. Thurs. Fri., and Saturday.

Sleeping Berths may be secured at Spencer Street at 12s. 6d. each.

Holders of Single and Return Tickets can break their journey, but the through journey must be completed within one month. Return Tickets to Sydney available for six months.

• Figure 7: Melbourne – Sydney Railway Timetable, 1895

versa. However passengers had to get down with their luggage at Albury from the broad gauge Victorian train, go through inter-state Customs, and get into the standard gauge NSW train to Sydney. It was only in 1962 that an additional track in standard gauge was constructed in Victoria between Melbourne and Albury and it became possible to travel between Melbourne and Sydney without changing trains.

The railway station at Baddaginnie really opened up the town. The railway time table of 1905 is shown in Fig 7. It can be seen from the time table that the express trains between Melbourne and Sydney did not stop at Baddaginnie, stopping only at Benalla, 12 km away. However, the slow train between Melbourne

and Sydney stopped at Baddaginnie. The express steam engine train between Melbourne and Sydney took about 19 hours and the slow train took about 24 hours. Nowadays express diesel engine trains take about 11 hours.

The drunken Station Master

The easy going life style in Baddaginnie can be seen in the incident of the drunken Station Master, Thomas Jones, which occurred on 12 March 1884 when he filed a private case for libel and slander against Rev. James Richards who had written a letter to the Minister for Railways stating that the Station Master is drunk while on duty and an accident may happen at any time. He alleged that the Station Master goes to

Benalla by the last train on Saturday night and returns by the first train on Sunday morning, still inebriated. Several witnesses gave evidence, for and against, and the Judge found in favour of the defendant and ordered the Station Master to pay costs estimated at £27.

Later when the Station Master received the bill for costs, he passed it on to the Railway Department for payment. They refused to pay stating that the Station Master must pay, who also refused to pay. The Bailiff was called in to seize assets. The Colac Herald of 23 May 1884 described the situation as follows: "The Department did not recognise the position and appointed a Board which has just

reported on Mr Jones' habits and the effect of their finding is that while Mr Jones is not always drunk (sic!), his conduct was very reprehensible and as to costs they do not entertain them. Meanwhile the Bailiff is at the Station casting a longing eye at a locomotive"!

With timber logging declining in Baddaginnie, goods traffic from the Station declined. Also with increasing motor car ownership, there are at present 1.06 cars per person over 19 years old in Baddaginnie, passenger traffic also declined. Inevitably, on 05 July 1978 Baddaginnie Railway Station was permanently closed down.



Renowned Sri Lankan Tamils 1 ... Arumuga Navalar by S.MUTTIAH

During a short break in Australia catching up with family, friends and former colleagues, I was also invited to catch up with a bit of Tamil literary history at a meeting being held in Sydney to commemorate the 125th death anniversary of Arumuga Navalar. I was, however, returning to Madras about then and could not attend the meeting, but the invitation did make me recall that Arumuga the Orator had, in his time, strong connections with Madras and Chidambaram and that vestiges of those connections still survive.

Navalar, a Sri Lankan Tamil from Jaffna, has been described as the leading Hindu social reformist of the 19th century in the island, the foremost champion of Saiva Siddhantha, and the father of modern Tamil Prose. I am not competent to comment on these statements, but recall having over many decades heard him being revered as philosopher and writer. More up my street, however, have been his connections with Madras and Chidambaram.



• Arumuga Navalar
Photo courtesy Google.

Educated in a Wesleyan school in Jaffna, whose principal was the Rev. Peter Percival, Arumuga's scholarly fluency in both English and Tamil caught the attention of the missionary who in 1840 had been requested by the Wesleyan Missionary Society in Madras to translate the Bible into Tamil. In 1841, he recruited the 20-year old Arumuga, who had begun teaching in the school, to help him with the translation. Working six hours a day together, the two finished the work in 1846. Arumuga came to Madras for the first time soon afterwards, accompanying Percival, to see the translation through the Madras Bible Society's scrutiny and, then, through the press. Eventually, what became known as the 'Union Tentative Edition of the Bible' came out in 1850, published by the American Mission here.

By now, Arumuga had parted ways rather unhappily with the missionaries and had begun getting interested in Saivism. He not only began speaking about the Saivite saints, but he also began writing about them. To get his writing into print, he came to Madras in 1849 and returned to Jaffna with equipment to set up a printing press there. It was during this visit to the Presidency that the head of the Thiruvavaduthurai Mutt conferred on him the title 'Navalar' after hearing him expound on Saivism. These views of his, much of it simplified in tracts for children, kept his press busy, but he sought a wider audience for his writings, so, he came to Madras again, in 1858.

In 1860, he established the Navalar Vidyanupalana Press at 300 Mint Street and there it remains a ghostly presence in premises bearing the new number 25. Assisted by his disciple N.K. Sathasivam Pillai, he issued in print for the first time the Thirukkural, with notes by Parimelahar. This 1860 publication was followed the next year by another conversion from ola leaf to print, Thirukkovaivar by Manickavasagar, Navalar adding the notes himself. From this press-cum-sales depot-cum-residence, there were issued scores of titles in the years that followed. Today, only the sales depot functions there, perfunctorily at that, and the ghost of Navalar walks through the desolation of his press and Madras home. The sales depot is today run by the Navalar Trust that was established to run the Navalar High School that Arumuga Navalar established in Chidambaram in 1867 and which still thrives. His second printing press, which he set up in Chidambaram, is no more, but the titles printed at both presses are still being reissued – making it very likely, with its 144-year old tradition, the oldest continuous Tamil publishing activity on both sides of the Palk Strait. With all officialdom's talk of honouring Tamil, perhaps it should more focusedly be looking at means of preserving Navalar's press and home in Mint Street as a heritage landmark.



Jews who left their footprint in Ceylon

by Tissa Devendra

The only footprint, if any, left behind by the Jews of ancient times, is in the 11th century chronicle of the Arab geographer Idris. He writes that the king, probably Kasyapa IV, was advised by a Council of 16, including four Jews and the rest Buddhists, Muslims and Brahmins. A fascinating story from a compatriot of Sinbad the Sailor but with no supporting evidence at all in our own chronicles.

The Portuguese

Assorted Jews came to Ceylon in the wake of the Portuguese invaders of the Maritime Provinces. In that era of the Spanish Inquisition, Jews from Spain and Portugal camouflaged their ethnic origins by adopting pseudo-Portuguese names such as Silva, Perera, Mendis, to name but a few. The plentiful harvest of such names, yet flaunted by Sinhalese families in our Maritime Provinces, establishes the depth of the footprint left behind by the Portuguese "Jews".

The Dutch

Their successors the Dutch avoided marriage with the natives and scrupulously prohibited their use of Dutch names, even if converted. Assimilated Jews from the Netherlands came to Ceylon as merchants or employees of the Dutch East India Company (V.O.C.). Among the most prominent of names here is that of the Van Dorts, a name yet found in the Dutch Burgher Union (D.B.U) records. 19th century Kandy boasted of the lawyer-cartoonist J.L.K Van Dort. Apart from this faint example, my desultory reading has not uncovered any significant footprint left behind by Jews from the Netherlands.

The Rothschild Link (1841 – 1865)

The British Period, during which the Jewish Desraeli was Prime Minister, [until 1858 Jews could not enter British Parliament. Therefore, he became a Christian and changed his name to Disraeli] saw many British Jews seeking their fortunes in the new Colony. Among these were the de Worms brothers, related to the aristocratic European bankers, the Rothschild family. The brothers cleared a huge stretch of jungle in the Nuwara Eliya district to plant coffee and named it Rothschild Estate. The estate they founded yet flourishes, proudly flaunting its aristocratic Jewish name, though no longer owned by the pioneering de Worms. The brothers pioneered in planting coffee on their estate. Later, when coffee failed, they became the first in Ceylon to replant their estate with the new crop - tea. The brothers were well regarded in

the Colonial establishment and even contemplated a career in politics. Gabriel de Worms now contested the elections to the Legislative Council under a limited franchise in 1847 and won a seat. He then went on to make history. Being a non-Christian Jew, he declined to take the Oath of Allegiance on the Holy Bible. He forfeited his seat, thus failing to be the only Jew to be elected to the legislature. The de Worms left Ceylon and their estate in 1865. Rothschild Estate yet flourishes under the same name – though no longer under its Jewish founders.

Marie Musaeus Higgins (1855- 1926)



• Marie Musaeus Higgins.

Mrs. Musaeus, as she is generally referred to, is the Jewish person who made the greatest contribution to Ceylon. She was the highly educated daughter of the Chief Justice in the German State of Mecklenburg. She settled down in America where she married Mr. Higgins who had fought in the Civil War. After his death her interests turned to the newly popular doctrine of Theosophy and Asian

religions. In Theosophist circles, she was greatly impressed with the charismatic duo of Colonel Henry Steele Olcott and Madame Blavatsky. She followed in their footsteps to the British Colony of Ceylon. When Olcott pioneered the establishment of modern schools for boys of Buddhist families, Marie realised that girls of these families, though keen for a modern education, had recourse only to Convents or Missionary Schools. An ardent Buddhist by now, Marie took over the faltering school for Buddhist girls already established in Colombo by a few well intentioned, but sadly inexperienced, Buddhists. With her background of American business skills and German education, she steadily transformed this school into an institution that proved promising enough for the newly Buddhist-conscious Sinhalese merchants of Colombo to send their daughters to. This school's rise in status and achievement was such that the Colonial Governor himself accepted the invitation to preside at a prize-giving.

Mrs. Musaeus was a scholar who also immersed herself in Buddhist literature, mainly the

great chronicle, the Mahavansa. This led to her taking the revolutionary step of teaching her students the history of their homeland, Ceylon. This was a bold and radical step as the existing Euro-centric syllabus in Ceylon's schools taught only British and European history and geography. Her students responded to the 'new' subject with enthusiasm and thus absorbed the patriotism they learnt from their own country's history.

Her interest in our history led Mrs. Musaeus to embark on a unique and imaginative literary journey. She rewrote for children, in simple English, many fascinating stories extracted from the Mahavansa. When published, these stories, of great heroes and brave princesses, became a huge success. They are still republished even a century after they were first printed. These tales from the Mahavansa were a welcome alternative to the fairy tales from Europe which were the only children's stories then available for young readers. All that was changed in all the new Buddhist schools for boys as well. Looking back today, it is well nigh impossible to imagine the national fervour that this German Jewish teacher's revolution in education roused among Ceylon's educated young of that era. We are all her beneficiaries.

The passing away of Mrs. Musaeus was considered a great calamity by the Buddhists of Ceylon who accorded her a magnificent and solemn funeral. The school she founded was renamed Musaeus College in her honour and, to this day stands tall as the oldest and best school for Buddhist girls in Sri Lanka.

No Jew has left a deeper footprint on the soil of Sri Lanka.

Leonard Woolf (1880-1969)

Leonard Woolf was the Cambridge-educated son of a prominent Jewish family in London. He became an English political theorist, author, publisher, civil servant (in Ceylon) and husband of the writer Virginia Woolf. He joined the Ceylon Civil Service in London and served in Ceylon from 1904 to 1911. He was appointed the administrative head (Assistant Government Agent) of the Hambantota District in the Southern Province from 1908 to 1911 when he resigned and returned to England for his marriage to Virginia Stephen. His claim to fame in Sri Lanka rests on his fine and only novel 'Village in the Jungle' based on his experiences in Hambantota District. It is a sensitive work which shows a great understanding of the sorrows and tribulations of the impoverished Sinhala villager scraping a living in the Dry Zone. Interestingly, the novel is devoid of the 'white supremacy' all too common in writings of other Colonial civil servants.

Woolf's 'Village in the Jungle' is undeniably the best English novel ever written about Ceylon – and as such, places him among those Jews whose work has left a significant footprint in our country.

Sidney Abraham

Sidney Abraham was born to a prominent Jewish family in Birmingham and educated at Cambridge University where he excelled in athletics and was a member of the British Olympic team in 1906. On graduation and qualifying as a lawyer, he joined the Colonial legal service and served in several British possessions in the Middle East and Africa. He was appointed Chief Justice of Ceylon in 1936 and was knighted the same year and presided over the Supreme Court till 1939.

Sidney Abraham created legal history in Ceylon when he passed judgement against a ruling of the Governor Sir Reginald Stubbs, the King's representative in Ceylon. This was in the now famous 'Bracegirdle Case'. Bracegirdle was a young Australian who began work as a planter in an up-country tea estate. He seems to have been a 'closet Marxist' and, as such, grew indignant at the management's treatment of its Tamil 'coolies' (labourers). His pro-coolie attitude cost him his job and he began agitation with the local Leftists, on the side of the 'coolies'. The British management soon appealed to the Governor who ordered the deportation of Bracegirdle the Marxist agitator. Ceylon's fledgling Leftist parties rallied round Bracegirdle who defied the deportation order by going underground. Subsequently, he was arrested and remanded in jail pending his deportation. This was a *cause celebre*. The State Council, with a Ceylonese majority, protested vigorously. Eminent lawyers appealed to the Supreme Court to repeal the order. After due deliberation, Chief Justice Sidney Abraham now delivered his historic judgement. The Governor's order was overruled and Bracegirdle was immediately released. The entire Colonial establishment was thunderstruck by this judgement by "one of their own". Bracegirdle, after a hero's welcome by the Leftists and 'coolies', soon left for England on his own. Chief Justice Sidney Abraham continued unperturbed to preside over the Supreme Court for three more years. This judgement by Jewish Chief Justice Sidney Abraham has earned him an honourable place in Ceylon's legal and political history.

A surprising footnote to this story took place in 1953 when Sir Sidney was Chief Justice of Guyana. He ordered the suspension of the Constitution and banned the People's Progressive Party of the Leftist Prime Minister Cheddi Jagan !

Heidi Keuneman (1916- 2004)

Heidi Keuneman is, perhaps, the most exotic of the Jews who made a great impression in Ceylon. She was born Heidi Simon to a family of non-observant Jewish intellectuals in Austria. With Hitler's rise to power she was sent to England where she excelled in Cambridge University – which, perversely, denied her a degree as she was a woman. She was active in leftist politics even as an undergraduate. In Cambridge her beauty

won her many suitors but she fell in love and married a fellow Communist from Ceylon – the dashing handsome Burgher Pieter Keuneman, President of the Cambridge Union. On their return to Ceylon they continued their Communist politics. She also



• *Heidi Keuneman*

taught at the University College. The Colonial Government viewed all Leftists with suspicion. However, this attitude changed when in 1940 Hitler invaded Soviet Russia – the Mecca of Communism – which, thus, became an ally of Britain. As such, local Communists were no longer hunted as subversives. Now comes a mysterious development. The barefoot Heidi

in a red cotton saree was given a government appointment by the Civil Defence Department, which was responsible for ensuring food supplies to the civilian population, now deprived of rice shipped from Burma. Her responsibility was to monitor food stocks island-wide, organise People's Depots and retail Co-operatives for distribution of essential food rations and popularise alternative cereals ('bajiri') as rice substitutes. She was fondly called 'Bajiri Nona'. She travelled far and wide by bus and train on her mission. It remains a great mystery how this young European philosophy graduate, and Red came to be selected for such a responsible assignment. Was there a 'closet Red' in the Establishment?

Heidi's legacy is the network of retail Co-ops that came to dot the country to distribute rice and other rationed commodities for many decades. The War ended. Heidi went back to England. An amicable divorce ended the Keuneman marriage.

A few years later she married an old friend Peter Staedtler, a distinguished concert pianist, and pursued a career in teaching and radical politics. A fascinating postscript is that in 2002 Cambridge University



• *Venerable Nyanaponika.*

relented and awarded her the degree she had earned five decades earlier. Her pride was that, at the same Convocation, her son got a Master's Degree and her grandson a Bachelor's! *Venerable Nyanaponika (1901 – 1994)*

The learned Buddhist scholar monk Venerable

Nyanaponika was named Siegmund Feniger when he was born, as the only child of a Jewish family in Hanau, Germany. The family later moved to Berlin. The spiritually inclined young Feniger began reading books on Buddhism, on which many German scholars had written. Gradually he became convinced that he should travel to Ceylon and study at the feet of the German Buddhist Bhikku Venerable Nyanatiloka. He achieved his ambition becoming a fully ordained Bhikku in 1936 at the Polgasduwa Island Hermitage of Ven. Nyanatiloka. In the sylvan surroundings of the Island Hermitage, he studied the Buddha Dhamma, meditated and translated Buddhist teachings into German.

The outbreak of WW II ended this phase. Ceylon was a British Colony and, as such, all Germans in the country were suspect. Both Bhikkus Nyanatiloka and Nyanaponika were consigned to internment camps – first in Diyatalawa and later, in Dehra Dun in India. Undeterred, Nyanaponika continued with his translations. When the War ended they were released and returned to the Island Hermitage.

Meanwhile, loyal lay disciples in Kandy built a hermitage in the sylvan forest of Udawattekelle and invited the German monks to reside there. His mentor released Nyanaponika to live and work in the Forest Hermitage, where he lived the rest of his life in meditation, study and writing. His many books interpreting the Dhamma gained world wide fame. In 1957 Nyanaponika's lay disciples established the Buddhist Publications Society (BPS) which he headed till his passing away. The BPS quietly became an outstanding publisher of the Theravada School. Its publication had a world -wide readership and in addition to Nyanaponika's own perceptive writings, it published the work of many other Buddhist scholars – both clergy and lay.

The great institution of the Buddhist Publication Society, and the corpus of his writings, is Venerable Nyanaponika's outstanding contribution to Sri Lanka.

Edith Gyomroi Ludowyk (1896 – 1987)

Edith Gyomroi was a Hungarian Jewish psychoanalyst, poet and communist. Her youth in Hungary was spent in intellectual and communist activities. When the Fascist Admiral Horthy captured power in Hungary, she left her homeland and travelled to the British colony of Ceylon. She soon got involved in Leftist politics and joined the local Trotskyist party, the Lanka Samasamaja Party (LSSP). In 1940 she married the Burgher Professor of English at University College, E.F.C. Ludowyk.

Edith continued her association with Leftist politics, especially with radical women. However, her great contribution to University life was her work with her husband on the theatrical productions of the University Dramatic Society (DramSoc). She designed

the sets and the colourful costumes that amazed Colombo's theatre-goers. Old staggers yet recall the twinkling lights of Peking's skyline in "the Good Woman of Setzua" and the delicate Mogul pavilions of "The Little Clay Cart" – and the wonderful costumes of the actors who trod the boards.

Edith now introduced to the University two of her protégés. The first was the Austrian Jewish academic Dr. Vally Reich who became the University's first Professor of Modern European Languages. The other was the very colourful Hungarian Jewish theatre producer Neumann Jubal. He directed an outstanding production of Ferenc Molnar's "Liliom" with a huge cast. Interestingly, he boldly ventured into producing, Gorky's "Lower Depths" in Sinhala – incidentally, Irangani Serasinghe's first venture on to the Sinhala stage.

After Professor Ludowyk's retirement from University, Edith and a group of women activists established, in the Kandyan village of Menikdiwela, a women weavers' cooperative. Here, for a few years, these women, the Menikdiwela Weavers, produced textiles (sarees, sarongs, bedspreads etc.) in the most imaginative and colourful designs by Edith.

Edith Ludowyk's contributions to Ceylon's cultural life earn her a honoured place among the Jews who lived here.

Rhoda Miller de Silva (1910 – 1980)

Rhoda Miller was an American Jew from New York who became a Communist and a committed activist in her youth. After WW II ended she travelled to war-torn Europe where she married a fellow Communist from Ceylon, Joe de Silva. After a few years of writing and Party activity in Eastern Europe, Rhoda accompanied her husband back to Ceylon.

She immersed herself in Communist activity and leftist journalism.

The Cold War was at its height and America was now in the McCarthy era. The right-wing Prime Minister of Ceylon, John Kotelawela, considered himself a staunch ally of America. Therefore, as soon as he heard from the U.S Embassy that an American woman was spreading Communist propaganda in Ceylon, he decided to deport her. This was done in great haste and the Police arrested Rhoda and bundled her, under protest, into a TWA plane headed via London to New York.

Rhoda's fellow 'progressives' kept up a relentless campaign in the U.S for her return to Ceylon. They succeeded at last and Rhoda came back to Ceylon and made a name for herself as a staunch left-wing columnist to the Ceylon Daily News. She died "in harness".

Also deported from Colombo, on the same flight as Rhoda, was one of the most intriguing – Claudine Liebovitz who glittered briefly in the city's cocktail circuit. She was a statuesque blonde Jewish millionaire from Britain and a sensation in Colombo's

party circles and diplomatic receptions. She was the live-in-lover of the Estonian artist Karl Kasmann, whom the government suspected (or was tipped off by the CIA) as a KGB agent – and targeted for expulsion. By the time the local Police got on his track, the KGB had been faster and Kasmann had fled. They then went on to arrest Claudine, in spite of her 'marriage of convenience' to a local Communist Municipal Councillor. The two deportees are reported to have studiously ignored each other during their enforced flight. Claudine was never heard of after this.

Ulrik Plesner (1930 – 2016)

Plesner was a Danish Jewish architect who spent many years in Ceylon. He first worked with Minette de Silva, the renowned woman architect who pioneered in the use of local material and an indigenous tradition. He next worked closely with Geoffrey Bawa, Ceylon's greatest modern architect, on several ground-breaking projects. Ulrik also worked with two other women outstanding in the field of art and entrepreneurship – Ena de Silva and Barbara Sansoni (born Daniel – a Jewish name). He collaborated with Barbara in a fine book of drawings of Sri Lanka's old buildings – "Viharas and Verandahs".

He returned, via a stay in Israel, to his native Denmark where he passed away recently.

Anne Ranasinghe (b.1925)

Anneliese Katz was the daughter of a Jewish family in Germany. She left for England soon after the Nazi anti-Jewish pogroms began. After schooling she trained in midwifery and later married the Sinhalese Buddhist Dr.D.A.Ranasinghe from Ceylon. The Ranasinghes came back to Ceylon where her husband became a University Professor and they led a successful life, raising their seven children. Some time after her husband's death, Anne began writing poetry. Most of her poems have been on the Jewish experience and the Holocaust. Her poetry has won many accolades and awards in Ceylon and Germany. She has been a live wire of the English Writers' Cooperative and associates closely with writers of all ages and persuasions.

(This article submitted by the author for publication in The Ceylankan first appeared in The Island newspaper of 25 November 2016).



Hope in make-up

In the factory we make cosmetics; in the store we sell hope.

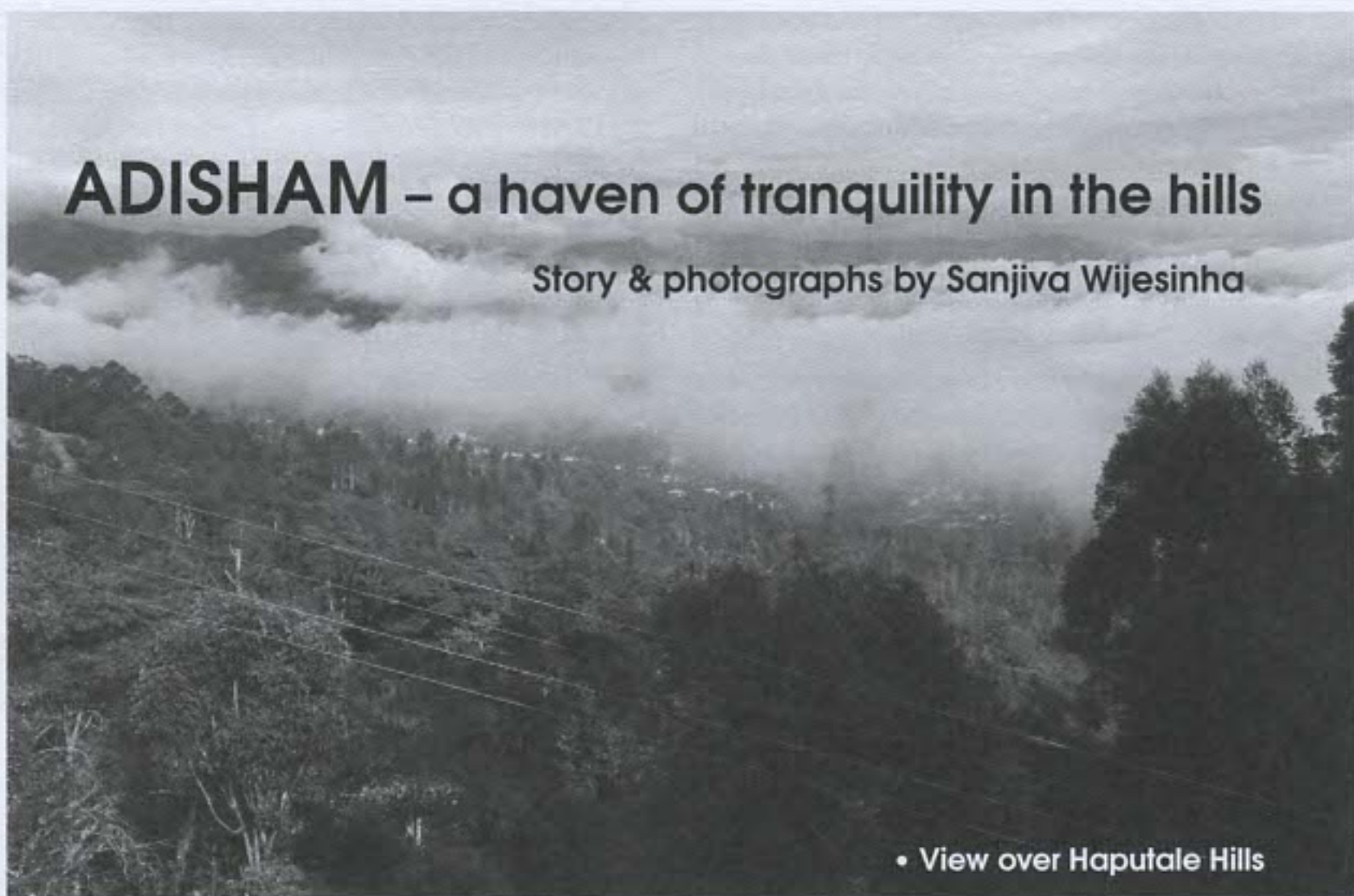
- Charles Revson Fire and Ice (1976)

There is an old political adage which says: "if you can't lick 'em, join 'em".

- Quentin Reynolds; Wounded Don't Cry (1941)

ADISHAM – a haven of tranquility in the hills

Story & photographs by Sanjiva Wijesinha



• View over Haputale Hills

I am seated on the cement garden seat in the corner of the well-maintained lawn, peacefully gazing at the magnificent grey stone building that looks majestically down on me.

Beyond the low parapet wall are the Haputale hills, now shrouded in mist but waiting patiently to be bathed in the morning sunshine.

This is Adisham, the lovely stone mansion built by Sir Thomas Villiers during colonial times in the style of the manor houses of England's landed gentry. Named after the village of Adisham in Kent where Sir Thomas was born, the mansion was aptly described as a 'homesick Englishman's dream home in the tropics'. It is a charming relic of our colonial era.

Thomas Villiers, whose mother Lady Victoria Russell was the daughter of former British Prime Minister Lord Russell (and the paternal aunt of the philosopher Bertrand Russell) was a descendant of the Dukes of Bedford, among the richest landowning aristocratic families in England at the time. Thomas (being only a grandson of the 6th Duke of Bedford through his mother) had no chance of inheriting the vast family estates; so he decided to come out to Ceylon in 1887 and seek his fortune as a tea planter.

Starting out as a creeper on Elbedde Estate in Bogowantalawa, the enterprising young man, in due course, began his own tea plantation, the Dikoya Group – and by 1905, was able to join George Steuart & Company and went on to become its Chairman in 1928.

Back in England, Sir Thomas would have had no chance of succeeding to the title or the estates

of the Dukes of Bedford but out here in Ceylon, by acquiring vast tracts of fertile tea lands, he could aspire to becoming a colonial "lord". In his 1951 book 'Some Pioneers of the Tea Industry', he wrote '... office life or industrial life did not appeal to everyone, many of them looking for an open air life. Agricultural life in England was on the decline. The usual openings in the Navy and Army were very keenly competed for. Ceylon seem to many of them to offer just the life they wanted'.

Not only did Sir Thomas establish himself successfully in the commercial world of the colony, he also played a significant role in public life as well, being a member of the Legislative Council from 1924 to 1931.

While he was Chairman of George Steuarts, Sir Thomas began building his dream home. Selecting an idyllic site in Haputale with commanding views across the hills towards the highest mountain ranges of the island, he had the building designed in Tudor style, with long turret windows and chimneys – a retreat in this tropical colony of a wealthy Englishman, nostalgic for the scenes of his boyhood.

In building Adisham, he was allowing himself to show his peers that he belonged to the landed aristocracy – and was a duke, albeit a colonial duke, in his own right. Sir Thomas and Lady Villiers regularly entertained Ceylon's social elite of the day – the house parties at Adisham during his time included the Governor and distinguished visitors to the island. When Sir Thomas retired to England in 1949, the property was sold to Sedawatte Mills. In 1961 it

(Continued on page 23)

HUGH KARUNANAYAKE reveals

the darker side of British Justice

– Civil Servant Extraordinaire

C.J.R. Le Mesurier sacked for embracing Islam



Hugh
Karunanayake

The Ceylon Civil Service through which the British administered Ceylon over a period of around 150 years had some outstanding personalities who contributed much to researching into the country's history and understanding of its people and culture. Names that readily come to mind are those of William Boyd, John Still, H.C.P. Bell, Henry Marshall, Emerson Tennent, J.P. Lewis, William Twynam et al.



• C.J.R. Le Mesurier as a Barrister in Western Australia in his seventies.

A man who made it his duty to understand the laws, customs and culture of the people he was expected to serve was C.J.R. Le Mesurier who joined the Civil Service in 1875. Ponnambalam (later Sir) Arunachalam, the first Ceylonese Civil Servant to be recruited on the basis of a competitive examination held in London, joined the service in the same year. Le Mesurier epitomised the ideal "civil servant" – one who was there to serve the people as an agent of those who ruled the country.

He took his role even further as one who was required to understand the needs of the people and to act as a catalyst in developing the area within his purview. To this day there is a village in the Nuwara Eliya District bearing his name and is

known as Lamasuriyagama – probably the first peasant settlement scheme in the country which he established when serving as Assistant Government Agent of Nuwara Eliya. In 1893, he brought out a Manual of the Nuwara Eliya District listing out all the resources in the area and placing on record much of its oral history. He was an avid student of local laws and customs and together with Mr T.B. Panabokke, was the joint author of a translation into English of Niti Nighanduwa or the "Vocabulary of Law" (published in 1880) as it existed in the last days of the Kandyan Kingdom. Le Mesurier was instrumental in opening the doors of bureaucracy to import trout ova from England which were introduced into Lake Gregory. Although the Ceylon Fishing Club and its hatcheries are no more, brown trout originally imported in 1893 are still seen in the streams of Nuwara Eliya and Kandapola.

His DNA may also be seen in some light skinned folk, some with blue eyes and carrying the name Lamasuriya, living in the Nuwara Eliya area. He lived and served in times where many of the colonial bureaucrats, especially those who loved the colony and its peoples, took their admiration a step further by going to bed with native women. It is on record that John Still, H.C.P. Bell, Emerson Tennent among others, had "common law" wives who were left behind with their progeny, upon returning back to Britain. Bell, of course, died in Ceylon. Le Mesurier was very fluent in Sinhalese but this enigmatic character was the subject of snide amusement by his local staff for his inability to correctly pronounce Sinhalese words such as "thuna" or "thiyanawa" which he would pronounce as "tuna" or "tiyanawa"!

Apart from his personal frailties, there is, no doubt, that the man was an exceptional Civil Servant. Possibly his greatest service to the people of Ceylon was his persistence in drawing attention to the adverse impact of the Waste Lands Ordinance and the Paddy Tax on the peasantry.

A man with such devotion to duty would have been marked for a great future in the colonial administration. Instead his reward was dismissal from the Civil Service. Was it his close links with the local community which distanced him from the administration in Colombo? Or was it his enigmatic personality dominated by a fiercely independent natural disposition that undid him? The answer lies elsewhere.

In December 1898, Le Mesurier received a letter from the Government Agent Matara where he was serving as Assistant Government Agent, asking Le Mesurier to state distinctly whether he had embraced the Mohemedan faith and whether he had married a



KADIJA.

Mrs. C. J. R. A. H. LEMESURIER.

From a reproduction of a Photograph taken in England, 1900.

• *Alice Mary Rivett Carnac aka Kadija Le Mesurier when she was 25 years old.*

lady according to Mohemedan rites. Le Mesurier replied inquiring "what concern my religion has to the Ceylon Government" and how it affected his efficiency or character as a public servant and what concern his domestic affairs were to the Ceylon Government. The Lieutenant Governor of Ceylon wrote back stating that he was satisfied that Le Mesurier had married a lady by Mohemedan rites while his legal wife was alive

and not divorced, and on instructions received from the Secretary of State dismissed him from the Ceylon Civil Service.

Although Le Mesurier lived in the age of Victorian rectitude, his dismissal did not appear to deserve such peremptory action, particularly as he had obtained a divorce from his first wife Juliette Le Noir. He married her in London in 1883 but after eight years of marriage sought a divorce alleging that she had committed adultery. He succeeded with his plaint which was overturned by the higher courts on the technical grounds that the parties concerned were not domiciled in Ceylon. Juliette then obtained a decree for judicial separation on grounds of cruelty thus preventing Le Mesurier from contracting another legal marriage which seemed to be on the cards as he had struck an alliance with Mary Rivett Carnac, described as a "beautiful woman" from an English family long resident in Bengal. Frustrated by the legal Straight jacket he was placed in, Le Mesurier sought relief by embracing Islam which permitted four wives and which was recognised by the legal system in Ceylon. He and Mary went before a Muslim priest and went through the religious formalities, took on the name of Abdul Hamid and with Mary assumed taking the name Kadija. He wore a fez, even attended the mosque in Batticaloa in confirming acceptance of his new found faith.

Official circles were not impressed and even the Burgher managed newspaper the Ceylon Independent had reported that some colleagues in the Civil Service had "laughed incredulously" at the turn of events. The government, however, did not see it as a laughing matter and dismissed him from service. Le Mesurier was not a man to give in to injustice. A man of fiery temperament and although physically small, he would not refrain from taking on bigger opponents. He raced horses in Colombo, the Kelani Valley and even in Batticaloa. In 1889 when Colombo races were held on the Galle Face Promenade, someone accused Le Mesurier of "pulling" the horse that he rode, whereupon he smacked the accuser in the face. Colonel T.Y. Wright who commented on this episode described Le Mesurier "as quite a little chap". Several decades later, when Le Mesurier was practising as a barrister in Western Australia, he accused a lawyer of lying in court which resulted in a straight left into the face of Le Mesurier who assumed a boxing stance to deliver a retributory blow when court officials intervened and separated the two; both of whom were issued with received a stern warning from the bench.

Le Mesurier's second wife Kadija was a strong willed woman who supported her husband with resolute devotion. Born in Punjab in 1873 as Alice Mary Rivett-Carnac, she was 22-years old when she met Le Mesurier who had gone to England on furlough in 1895. She converted to Islam and assumed the name Kadija after coming to Ceylon in late 1895. She was the daughter of Lt Col Rivett-Carnac, Military Secretary to the Governor of Bombay, Sir Richard Temple. At five years of age, she was taken to England where she grew up studying and later, in finishing schools in France and Germany. Upon returning to Ceylon as newlyweds, she accompanied her husband to Matara where he was Assistant Government Agent. After her husband's dismissal from the Civil Service, she accompanied him to Batticaloa where she purchased the Carnac Mills which her husband managed. A brave and forthright woman, she acquired a reputation as a "sportswoman" with extraordinary prowess with a gun. On one occasion, she saved her husband's life by shooting down an elephant that charged him and earned the dubious distinction of being the first woman ever to have killed an elephant in Ceylon. Two feet of the shot elephant were taxidermied and lined with tamarind wood to adorn her London home in later years.

Meanwhile the government enraged by the apparent impunity of the Le Mesuriers was bent on running them to the ground. The establishment apparently engaged the services of minor officials to harass Le Mesurier who after his dismissal from government service was involved in a series of speculative transactions concerning both private and crown land. On one occasion Le Mesurier is said to have been subject to a savage and unprovoked

attack by village headmen who were later convicted and jailed. He was apparently saved by Kadija who appeared on the scene with a gun and shot at the headman who escaped unscathed. Fortunately too for him, else the unfortunate man may have ended later as a stuffed trophy to adorn her reception room in London, Mrs Le Mesurier's health broke down as a result of the continuous harassment and she proceeded to England to recuperate. After she recovered her health, she became a frequent visitor to the House of Commons and her persuasive appeals won much sympathy for her cause. In late 1899, her husband whose health too had suffered in the face of the official onslaught, had suffered a cancer in the colon which, however, he overcame miraculously. Undaunted, he studied law in England and was admitted to the bar in 1902 by which time his marriage had failed and his ostensible interest in Islam had waned too!

He migrated to Western Australia in 1904, married his third wife Rachel Mallam and practised as a barrister until his death in December 1931. Alice

Rivett Carnac aka Kadija lived in England until 1957 when she died at the age of 84. She too had married again - to Francis Toyne by whom she had a son. Le Mesurier's legacy in Ceylon lasted more than the illegitimate offspring he left behind in Lamasuriyagama. The reliance on old Dutch Land Register to establish title to land in Ceylon was introduced after Le Mesurier initiated several land actions against the government. This compelled the government to preserve and protect all Dutch Land Registers which survive in the Government archives to this day.

A vengeful government apparently responded to Le Mesurier's various initiatives by removing his name from the annual Civil Lists that were published by the government. His name ceased to appear in any Civil List published after 1895! A rather inglorious aspect of British rule in 19th Century Ceylon.



ADISHAM ... (Continued from page 20)

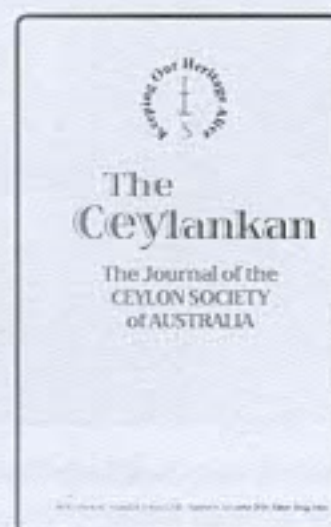
was acquired by the Roman Catholic Church which converted it into a monastery housing a small community of monks of the Benedictine Order and is known as the "Monastery of St Benedict". Situated about three kilometres west of Haputale and easily accessible by three wheeler, the monks use the outer building to run a low key motel-type operation. With three comfortable rooms, the simple accommodation they provide allows secular folk like us to avail ourselves of the opportunity of spending time in these tranquil surroundings.

The gardens and orchard established by Sir Thomas are well maintained – the orchards providing fruits that the enterprising monks convert into the famous marmalades and jams for which Adisham has acquired a well-deserved reputation.

Adisham today is a place where one can appreciate the beauty and grandeur of mist-shrouded hills and sweeping mountain vistas, marvel at the achievements of Sir Thomas - and experience silence, serenity and solitude.

(First published in 'Sunday Times' of 27 November 2016)

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Kelaniya and its renowned temple



(Photo courtesy srilankaview.com)

Kelaniya is in the outskirts of Colombo and is a centre of Sri Lanka's pottery industry. It is renowned mostly for its Buddhist temple, the Kelaniya 'Raja Maha Vihara' regarded as the

most important temple in Colombo. Legend has it that it was in Kelaniya that when Buddha visited the island, he converted the earliest people of Sri Lanka to Buddhism. He gave them a jewel-studded throne on which he sat as a reminder of his message. The king at the time is said to have built a dagoba over it. It is also noted that the Buddha bathed in the Kelani river close-by.



Meals Ammi Made

Date Cake

By Cheryl D'Abrera (St Clair, NSW)

4 cups dates, chopped
4 cups cashew nuts, chopped (optional)
4 cups sugar
6 cups self-rising flour, sifted
4 cups boiling water
4 eggs, beaten
4 tsps soda bicarb
21 tsp salt
4 tsps vanilla
250g butter

Method:

Pour boiling water over chopped dates, add soda bicarb, then butter and set aside to cool. Beat eggs, add sugar, then mix in chopped dates and flour alternately until well mixed. Bake in a pan approximately 6" x 9" at 325 degrees for an hour or longer until cooked.



Congratulations & a Warm Welcome to our New Members

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DR BRAHMAN SIVAPRASAPILLAI, Unit 1007,
150 Gulf Blvd. Florida 33767-2962 USA.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS

From Aubrey Koelmeyer, Nakhon Ratchasima, Thailand, to •Tony & Jean Aniff, 7 Woodlands Avenue, Worcester Park, Surrey KT4 7AN, England.

From Joe Vaz, Phoenix, Arizona, USA to
•Jennifer Abhayaratne, 129 Boddington Crescent, Kambah ACT 2902, Australia, and
•Mohan Thambyah, 84 O'Loghlen Street, Latham, ACT 2615.

From Hugh Karunanayake, Melbourne, VIC to
•Jehan Raheem, 13 Spring Pond Drive, Ossining, New York 10562, USA.



Bad television at home

Why should people go out and pay to see bad movies when they can stay at home and see bad television for nothing?

Sam Goldwyn - The Observer 9 September 1956.

This cake can be iced if desired with the following icing:

3 cups icing sugar
4 tbsp melted butter
2 tsp lemon juice to make enough cream to spread on cake.

Send us your recipes

Readers are invited to submit their favourite recipes for publication in this column. Preferably your recipes will be simple and easy to prepare. They must be of Sri Lankan origin and as this is a family-orientated column, we suggest that your recipes be of meals you learnt to prepare from your Ammi or Achchi.

So why wait? Send those mouth-watering recipes to the editor without delay.

CSA Membership subscriptions for 2017

Now that we are well into the New Year of 2017 (and the year of the Rooster for the Chinese) will all Members who have not yet paid their Membership Subscriptions for the calendar year 2017 please arrange payment, together with any arrears where applicable. If you are unsure about the amount of your arrears, please contact our Treasurer, Deepak, on 0434 860 188 or email deepakpsl@yahoo.com. Payment details are as follows:

Australian dollar cheques to be drawn in favour of the Ceylon Society of Australia, or pay by Bank Transfer to the CSA Bank Account at the Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062308, Account No. 10038725, and include your name as the remitter. For payments from overseas, if you have difficulty in sending the payment in Australian dollars, you could please send a bank draft or bank transfer in US dollars or Sterling pounds. We regret that personal cheques in foreign currencies are not acceptable. Since our Bank charges us 10 Australian dollars for converting a foreign currency payment to Australian dollars, please add 10 Australian dollars to the total and convert to US dollars by multiplying by 0.75, or if sending in sterling pounds, multiply by 0.60. These multipliers reflect the current rates of exchange used by our Bank. For overseas bank transfers our Commonwealth Bank Swift Code is: CTBAU2S Please post cheques to: Deepak Pritamdas, P O Box 489, Blacktown, NSW 2148, Australia. Email: deepakpsl@yahoo.com

Keris – the mystic fighting weapon of the Malays and Javanese

M.D. (Tony) Saldin

The Sri Lankan Malays are a pot-pouri of communities descending from Javanese (constituting 42 per cent of the Indonesian population), Sundanese, Bandanese, Madurese, Sumnapers, Bugis, Amboinese, Macassarese, Sumatrans, Moulacans and Malays from Penang, Keddah, Johor, Malacca, Singapore and other islands in the Eastern archipelago. (ref: *Hussainmiya*). They are referred to as “Jaa minissu” by the Sinhalese, “Java manusar” by the Tamils, “Malai karar” by the Moors, and “Orang Java” and “Orang Melayu” by the Malays themselves.

The present day Sri Lankan Malay community numbering around 65,000 -70,000 are descendants of nobility, political exiles, soldiers, adventurers, mercenaries and some convicts from the time of Dutch and subsequent British rule in Sri Lanka. The Dutch East India Company or VOC brought two types of Malays from Indonesia during their occupation of the maritime provinces of Ceylon from around 1640 to 1796: (1) Political exiles known in Dutch as “Staatsbanalingan”; (2) Soldiers and others known as “Oosterlingen” (Easterners).

Around 40 nobles were exiled to Ceylon with some of the royals being “Raja Bagoes Abdulla”, Prince of Bantam, “Raja Oesman”, King of Gowa, “Pangeran Menan Ratoe Maharaja Moeda,” Crown Prince of Tidor, “Raden Ariappen Panoelar,” Prince of Madura, “Pater Alam”, Sultan of Tidor, “Pangeran Adipathi Amangkurat” of Java etc. The ones who were deemed dangerous were exiled to Cape Town in South Africa and their descendants are now known as the “Cape Malays”. (Ref: *Hussainmiya*).

Malays served the Dutch East India Company or VOC, and subsequently the British East India Company and the British Colonial government in the “Malay Rifle Regiment” later re-named as the “Ceylon Rifle Regiment” (CRR), as well as mercenaries of the Kandyan monarch who was always on the lookout for trained soldiers for his army.

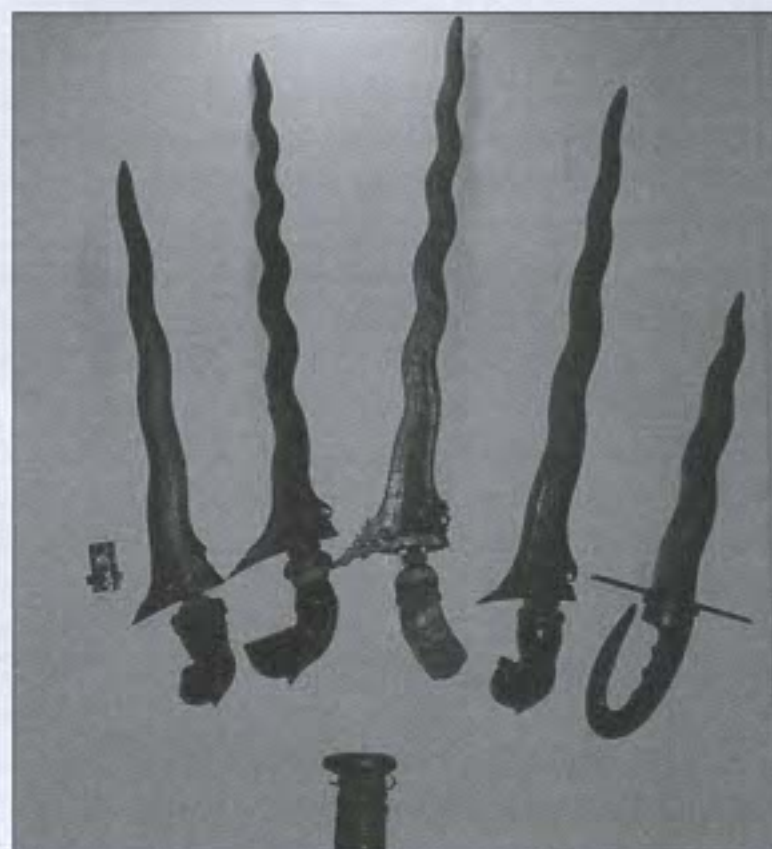
The inner circle of the Kandyan kings’ bodyguards were Malays who were always armed with Muskets and who wore their poisoned Keris by their sides at all times. The next circle was Malabars and Caffres (Kaffirs) and the third circle was the Appuhamis. The Kandyan Malays were usually headed by a “Java Muhandiram”, a Malay military officer of the court. Prince Sankelan, (also known as Sangunglo), Creasy (Greasy?), Chief Kuppen and Asana Capitan were some of the Java Muhandirams in the service of Kandyan kings. No Kandyan king was ever murdered by his Malay bodyguard.

Historical background of the Keris

The Keris has been the favored close range bladed combat weapon of the Malays for several centuries. It is ideal for fighting in confined spaces such as jungles

or inside buildings, where a longer weapon would be unwieldy and hence disadvantageous.

The word Keris (Karis) is of Malay origin and is also referred to as Kris, Krees, Crease, Crisse and Crys. The period of origin of the Keris is still



• *Kris at Colombo Museum Kandy Section.*
(Photograph supplied by the author)

widely debated. The Keris has over a 100 different forms, short or long with straight or wavy blades, a multitude of hilt and scabbard designs.

The Keris is thought to have originated in Java and the first prototype of the Keris was developed between the 9th and 14th centuries. According to the Javanese, the Keris were invented by Inakarto Pati, King of Janggolo at the beginning of the 14th century AD. However, according to Sir Stamford Raffles, a former British Governor of Singapore, the Keris originated in Java Tengah (Central Java) around 1361.

It has been suggested by Gardner (1936: 11ff) that the Keris was a development from the sting of the stingray (referred to as *Ikan Pari* in Malay/ Bahasa Indonesia). The sting of the sting ray has a

potent poison, which was used as an effective natural weapon by Malay fishermen. He illustrates the similarities in the sting ray which was also improvised as a dagger with a cloth handle, to that of the Keris Majapahit and suggests that after the Malays learned the art of metal working, they would have forged weapons in the form that they were used to.

It is important to analyze the archaeological evidence with regard to the origin of the Keris as the existing theories are based on oral tradition or speculation. The Keris is mentioned as early as the 9th century AD inscriptions of the Sailendra period (Winstedt 1981). (the Sailendra's were a line of Mahayana Buddhist Kings who are credited with the construction of the Borobudur temple complex (Tarling ed. 192 p176).

A.G. Maisey (2001) has suggested that the Keris was developed in East Java from a proto-Keris referred to as the Keris buda. Representations of this "proto Keris" can be seen in the relief carvings of the Hindu temples of Central Java i.e. the early 10th century. Chandi Prambanan (a.k.a. Lara Jonggrang temple complex) dating to the Central Javanese period/Early classical period (ca. 8th to 10th century AD) -Pl. 6-8.

The Keris buda is thought to have evolved from an Indian leaf shaped dagger. Maisey (2001) refers to this leaf shaped dagger as the "Great grandfather" of the modern Keris.

In Chandi Panataran, a Hindu temple spanning the time period 1197-1454 AD, Maisey (2001) clearly identifies representations of the Keris. This temple is located in East Java and dated to the East Javanese period/late classical period. In these relief carvings the dagger is held in a thrusting position common to the Keris, instead of the over-arm stabbing motion in conventional daggers.

Maisey (2001) concludes that the Keris evolved from a time period spanning the 9th century, to its present form in the 14th century, which was the height of the Majapahit Empire, in Indonesia.

This development from the bulkier Keris buda to the more streamlined modern Keris was facilitated by the fact that the Keris was habitually carried as a personal light weight weapon, which allowed for quick manoeuvring and better mobility, as well as technological advances in metal working.

Even though the Keris is the embodiment of Malay culture, it is undeniable that it does include a certain degree of Indian influences considering the fact that this region received its two great religions

i.e. Buddhism and Hinduism from India and also due to trade and political contacts between the two regions.

The Keris of today has evolved into a multitude of shapes and sizes with each region in the Malay world having its own unique characteristics. In fact there are so many variations and sub variations of the Keris that it is beyond the scope of this essay.

There are seven main types of Keris namely: Keris Java; Keris Semenanjung Utara (Peninsular or Northern Keris); Keris Bali and Madura; Keris Sumatra; Keris Bugis(Sulaweisi); Keris Pattani (Southern Thailand); Keris Sudang (a.k.a Keris Sulu or Mindano).

The Keris is highly valued, respected and handled with special care. Usually a Keris is inherited from one's father, and according to Javanese tradition, a father was obliged to give his adult son at least a Keris. Each has its own characteristics, with either a straight or wavy blade. During times of war, a man may carry up to three Keris, i.e. the family Keris (pusaka or heirloom), the Keris gifted to him by his father-in-law and his personal weapon.

Functions of the Keris

First and foremost the Keris is used as a double edged stabbing weapon. Then secondly, as symbol of social status; then as talisman for protection and used for various ceremonies and rituals; and fourthly as an execution device.

A good Keris

is made of iron, nickel, several alloys and a piece of meteorite. Keris master-craftsmen are known as "Empu" and craftsmen are known as "Pandai Besi (Master smiths). Only a top class Empu can forge a high quality Keris with physical and spiritual qualities. When making a special Keris, the Empu will fast, meditate, and not sleep for days and nights. Some Empu go into a "trance" when working the metal and thereafter, fashion the red hot metal with their bare hands. A Keris could be possessed with spiritual beings or "Jinns", unseen by ordinary people in order to help or protect its owner.

The Keris must be compatible with its owner and is usually custom-built for a specific person, according to his rank and status. Usually the length of the blade should correspond to the distance between the nipples of its owner, otherwise misfortune may befall him. Each wave in the blade is called a "lok" and the number of "lok" which is odd in number, would indicate the status of the owner. A three "lok" Keris would belong to a warrior, while a Rajah's (Sultan's) Keris would have nine waves or more. The

*A good Keris is made of iron,
nickel, several alloys and a
piece of meteorite.*

wave represents the Naga or cobra. In a wavy bladed Keris, the Naga is represented as active in mid strike, whereas in a straight blade, the Naga is in meditation. The Keris is considered a magical weapon filled with great power. The best example can be seen in the union of the paksi (tang or shaft) with the ganja. The paksi represents the lingam (phallus) while the ganja represents the yoni. The union of both is considered powerful in hinduistic belief since it brings life, an act of power. Thus the joining of the paksi with the ganja imbues the Keris with power over life.

The waves of the Keris are representations of the Naga or cobra. The naga is closely associated with water and rivers. As water is life, the Naga is a powerful symbol. Representation of the naga in the Keris adds power to it.

The Belalai gajah – or elephants trunk. This tiny projection is associated with the elephant and hence linked to Ganesh, the Hindu deity with an elephants' head, a deity of great strength and power. It is said that you can hurt your enemy by simply thrusting the blade into his footprints. Water has been drawn from the point of a Keris, and fire from a burning ship has been transferred to shore by pointing the tip at the fire and then elsewhere. The Keris is also believed to have the power to jump out of its sheath and engage the enemy in battle on its own. It is also able to warn the owner of impending danger by rattling in its sheath. Keris which are tied to traditional Malay houses as a talisman, are known to fly on its own and kill the enemy.

The curved wooden hilt is designed to fit snugly into the hand with a 10" or more long blade, for close combat. When held correctly, it becomes an extension of the forefinger with the user having total control of the weapon.

The hilt is gripped like a pistol at waist level with the blade parallel to the ground. An upward thrust will enable entry of the blade between the ribs. The targeted organs are the abdomen, lungs, kidneys and throat of the opponent. The Keris is usually worn in front, except for the Javanese who wear it at the back. Wearing it at the back by the Javanese signify that the keris is "out of sight" and will be used only as a last resort.

The sheath known as "Warangka or Sarung" is usually boat shaped since the Malays being seafarers were very fond of their boats. Various motifs are engraved on the sheath, and gold or silver wire is also used in the decorative process.

It is the detail at the bottom of the blade that distinguishes a Keris from an ordinary knife. Several guards have been incorporated to catch the opponent's blade from reaching the hand and to prevent slipping. The elephant trunk and the precious stones arranged in the 8 petal lotus pattern at the base of the hilt, signifies the connection the Javanese/Malays had with their Hindu and Buddhist past.

Keris were usually presented by the Sultan to his warriors as special tokens of appreciation.

The Keris was held in such high esteem, that if one cannot attend a wedding or ceremony, you can send your Keris through a son or close relative and the host would deem that he had attended. Giving up one's Keris also signified surrender. A well dressed Malay would consider himself "naked" without his Keris to complement his attire.

The Royal Keris of State carried by the King of Malaysia, the Yang di Pertuan Agung, is made of iron alloy collected from the nine states of Malaysia. The most famous Malay dagger is the "Keris taming sari" owned by the legendary Malaccan warrior Hang Tuah 600 years ago. It was believed to have been made of 21 different types of metal. The Keris taming sari is said to have mystical powers such as hovering in the air, during times of crisis and leaping out of its sheath to fight on behalf of its wielder. The one who possessed it was said to be invincible. This was Malaysia's equivalent to King Arthur's sword, the Excalibur. It is said that Hang Tuah killed his childhood friend Hang Jebat in a duel with this dagger, due to the latter's disloyalty to the Sultan of Malacca.

It is certain that the Keris was introduced into Sri Lanka by the Indonesian nobility, political exiles, their retinue, Javanese/Malay soldiers, mercenaries and various others who were brought to Sri Lanka during the Dutch and British periods. The Sinhala words "Kirichchiya" and "Kinnisa" are believed to be derivatives of the Malay word keris. It was also a popular gift presented to Kandyan monarchs and Adigars by British ambassadors visiting the Kandyan kingdom. More recently the Department of Museums have come across Malay Keris dating back to the Portuguese period. This would have been possible with the interaction of Malays from Malacca to Ceylon, which were both under Portuguese rule in the 16th century.

Some fine specimens of Keris are on display at the "Kandy Gallery" of the Colombo National Museum on the ground floor near the Regalia room, and also on the first floor and in the Museum stores.

Reference to Keris in historical documents:

- 13th century arrival of King Chandrabanu from Nakon Sri Dharmarath, in the Isthmus of Kraa of the Malay peninsula, present day Southern Thailand. "When the 11th year of the reign of King Parakramabahu II, had arrived, a king of the "Jaavakas" known by the name of Chandrabanu, landed with a terrible "Jaavaka" army under the pretext that they were also followers of the Buddha. All these wicked Jaavaka soldiers who invaded every landing place and who with their poisoned arrows, like terrible snakes, without ceasing, harassed the people who ever they caught sight of, and laid waste, raging in their fury, all Lanka".

• Chulawansa LXXXII 36 - 51
(Chandrabanu was a Buddhist king who invaded Ceylon with an army of 25,000 soldiers and established himself as the Ruler of Jaffna. He was killed by Parakrama Bahu during his 2nd invasion. References to "poisoned arrows like terrible snakes" are most probably Keris). Being Buddhists his soldiers probably integrated into the local population.

• From "An account of the Island of Ceylon" by Captain Robert Percival, 1st Ceylon Regiment -1797. "The Malay troops are armed and clothed much in the same manner as the European, with the exception of shoes, the wearing of which is contrary to the rules of their religion. Instead they use a particular species of sandal. Along with their other arms, they always wear their kreeses or poisoned daggers by their sides and in the heat of an engagement, they often throw down their muskets and bayonet, and rushing upon the enemy with their kreeses, carry terror and destruction wherever they come.

From having done duty in the same garrison with them for three and a half years and having during that period lived in habits of intimacy with their native officers, I had an opportunity of minutely observing the character of the Malays as soldiers. From their natural intrepidity and hardness, they are

well calculated to become very useful and serviceable troops if properly officered and commanded. It requires however much management, much attention to their tempers, skill in regulating their economy, firmness in maintaining discipline, and at the same time great caution in punishing misbehavior, to make our service reap in its full extent the advantages that might be derived from them. To their native officers, who were at that time chiefly from among their own princes and great men, they always paid the most implicit obedience, and seemed to hold them in the highest veneration. (page 164-165).

Owners of Keris are required to bathe and oil the Keris during the month of Muharram to retain the weapon's supernatural powers. If the Keris is neglected, it may cause the guardian spirit to depart from the weapon, leaving it powerless.

Depending on the severity of rust, either coconut water or one half of a lime is rubbed on each side of the blade to remove rust, oil and grime and then thoroughly rinsed in running water. The blade is then dried on a low charcoal fire and fragrant oil (attar) is applied on the blade and sheath.

Although the art of making Keris is facing a slow death, its heritage will definitely remain.



Important information to our contributors!

The Ceylankan is a quarterly publication that is much-looked forward to both here in Australia and worldwide. The Editor is constantly on the look-out for literary contributions from our members and others. Contributions are given careful consideration with a view to publication at all times.

While original, previously unpublished articles are preferable, submissions relating to the culture and history of Ceylon/Sri Lanka in keeping with the ideals of the CSA and are of a non-racial, non-political, non-religious and non-controversial nature are always welcome.

We look forward to hearing from new writers with a passion for the study of Sri Lankan culture and heritage. You do not need to be a professional writer – even work from someone who has not previously put pen to paper with a view to publication will receive careful attention. Who knows, an enormous treasure of hidden literary talent with a vast knowledge of Sri Lanka may be waiting to be aired. What better vehicle to do so than through your own journal. Write down those hidden memories of life in the motherland; the people, the places, anything that you may fondly recall, from whatever era, post-colonial to modern. Your fascinating story, waiting to be written, may well be something our avid readers will lap up with immense pleasure and maybe inspire another aspiring writer.

To facilitate the design/layout, leave your articles with as **little formatting as possible – no indents or double spacing of lines; only single space after fullstops, percent or per cent, not %**. Mere trifles, but adhering to them can save hours of an Editor's time. Where applicable, contributors are also requested to annotate bibliographical references, both for copyright purposes and to help further research and study by interested members.

While every effort is made to print material that is relevant and correct, we cannot take responsibility for errors. The Editor would appreciate it if any inaccuracies found are brought to his attention as early as possible.

Manipay Memorial English School, Jaffna – 180 years of service (1836 - 2016) to the community

By Samuel Thevabalan Arnold



We who hail from Sri Lanka are blessed by the outstanding English education imparted to us by humble schools with dedicated teachers. Qualified professionals serve in different parts of the globe. Jaffna peninsula in the north of our Island nation is ever grateful to the schools founded here by Protestant Christian Missionaries from America and England.

Colonial Regime and Education

Sri Lanka was under colonial rule for about 450 years – Portuguese from 1505 to 1658, Dutch from 1658 to 1796 and the British from 1796 to 1948. The Portuguese and Dutch conducted schools in the vernacular language Tamil around the church. Large churches and houses were built to conduct schools. The British rulers were not bothered about education of the locals and freedom of religion was granted. Those who were forced to become Christians under the Dutch went back to their Hindu faith and temples were reopened for worship. Hardly any local Christians remained except for some Roman Catholic priests who worked in Jaffna. A few Dutch families were allowed to settle in Jaffna. Some locals set up small schools in their homes or under shady trees called “Thinnai schools” which catered to the so-called upper caste boys (not girls). The kids sat on the floor and wrote Tamil alphabets on sand spread on the floor. This was to prepare them to read writings on dried “ola” leaves called “erdu”.

Protestant Christian Missionaries

The dawn of the nineteenth century saw the arrival of missionaries to Sri Lanka. In 1804, the London Missionary Society (LMS) sent three missionaries – one went to Galle, the other to Matara and the third to Tellippalai. In 1812, the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) in Britain sent some missionaries who served in Colombo and started Carey College. The

Wesleyan Missionary Society (Methodists) arrived in Galle on June 29, 1814. Revs. Lynch and Squance went to Jaffna. Rev William Ault went to Batticaloa and founded the first English School in the Island, Methodist Central College. The Church Missionary Society (CMS), the missionary wing of the Church of England (Anglican) sent a few missionaries in 1818. Among them was Rev Joseph Knight who settled in Nallur, Jaffna. He founded St John's College in 1823.

American Ceylon Mission (ACM)

The contribution made by ACM missionaries to pastoral, educational, social and medical fields transformed the Jaffna peninsula. The first group of four missionary couples included Revs. Dr Daniel Poor, James Richards, Benjamin Meigs and Bardwell. The single missionary was Rev Edward Warren. They reached Colombo on March 22, 1816 after a five month voyage from USA on the sailing vessel “Dryad.”

In Colombo, the missionaries were welcomed by the Governor Sir Robert Browning and government chaplain. They worked alongside the Baptist, Methodist and Anglican missionaries. They started learning Tamil and Dutch and preached in some Dutch churches. The Governor invited them to serve the people in Jaffna and allowed the use of the Dutch churches and the Parsonages which were disused after the Dutch left. Thus Jaffna became the ACM project for Education.



• **Mr S P Rajaratnam**
Principal 1937-1941.

The first school of the ACM was established in Tellippalai, the present Union College (200 years old). English education attracted locals to schools established in many villages. By 1915, there were 120 missionaries who served in Jaffna. Some of the famous schools established included Uduvil Girls College (1824), Udupiddy American Mission College, Udupiddy Girls College, Pandaiteruppu Girls College, Driberg College, Atchuvelly Christian College and Manipay Memorial English School. The founding of Uduvil by Mrs Harriet Winslow in 1824 has a remarkable story, being the first girls boarding school in the East.

Batticotta Seminary - Jaffna College

Batticotta Seminary was the greatest institution

founded in Vaddukoddai (anglicised Batticotta) on June 22, 1823 by Rev Dr Daniel Poor. This was the first University of Western learning in Ceylon. Students selected from the ACM schools in the villages studied at the Seminary and graduated. The quality of education imparted in the Seminary was par excellence. The Seminary was closed down in 1855 and later became Jaffna College in 1872.

Rev Eurotas Hastings, who was the last Principal of the Seminary, became the first Principal of Jaffna College where many of us studied. The college continues to be a reputed institution. Many locals excelled and graduated from the Seminary becoming Pastors, Teachers, Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers and Civil Servants. Several went to India, Malaya and



• **Mr S V Alagaratnam**
Principal 1941-1960

other places where they were successfully employed. Teacher Training Colleges established by the ACM provided teachers for the Tamil/English schools.

Today, descendants of the early graduates from Jaffna of the 5th and 6th generations serve in different parts of the globe including Australia.

Manipay – Blessed Village

Manipay, an obscure village eight miles from Jaffna town, was selected by the ACM for service. The village was surrounded by green paddy fields, a pond and channels supplying water for farming. There are two famous Hindu temples and a Dutch Church with a tall steeple. This church is in use by the local Christian congregation and the bell sounded morning and night each day. The close ties which exist between the Hindus and Christians, many of whom inter married, is unique.

The locals were cultured people and many owned the lands and farms. The so called upper caste had education in Tamil from scholars in their homes. The poor earned their living by working for the privileged. There was division of labour which brought about the sad caste groups.

The coming of the missionaries with the Christian Gospel, education, hospitals and community development saw a transformation in Jaffna. Manipay saw many reputed families excel which included Mills, Mather, Lawton, Handy, Arnold, Curtis, Strong, Ashbury, Gardener, Page, Sellamuthu, Fitch, Kadirgamar, Rajasuriar, Paul, John, Nathaniel to mention a few.

Green Memorial Hospital, Manipay

Dr Samuel F Green was the famous Medical Missionary who established the Hospital in Manipay

in 1848 which was later named after him. He practiced western medicine and started the first Medical School in Sri Lanka. He translated Medical books in to Tamil to assist the local students. The medical graduates served in Sri Lanka and overseas. The large Hospital campus stands unique today in spite of major destruction during the war.

Genesis of the Manipay Memorial English School(1836) – Patriarchs of Education

During the period 1836 to 1840 there was a thirst among the people for education with the ACM opening many schools in the Jaffna District. Mr E Velauther started the School in Manipay in 1836 with seven students in the southeast corner of the Hospital campus as a “Memorial” to ACM education. This school is the beginning of Manipay Memorial English School, often referred to as “Velauther School” with Mr Velauther as Principal from 1836 to 1847.

From 1848 to 1864, the School was administered by Mr P Thiruvilangam and referred to as “Thiruvilangam School”.

Mr Ponniah Strong ran the school named “Strong School” from 1864 to 1871. During Strong’s administration the school started teaching in the English medium, very unique!

During the period 1872 to 1881, Mr Vairavanathar Page administered a school in the Northeast corner of the Green Hospital Campus called Page School/Central school. Following Mr Page, this school was conducted under the leadership of Mr T Arunasalam from 1882 to 1889 and Mr A M Nathaniel from 1889 to 1900.

In 1990, during the Principalship of Mr A M Nathaniel, the “Velauther School” and “Page School” were amalgamated and named “Manipay Memorial English School”. This School functioned effectively under the leadership of Messrs. Carol Visvanathar (1900-1911), Edmond Fitch (1911-1919), Scudder Manickavasagar (1919-1926), T G Thomas (1926-1931), J S Navaratnam (1931-1936) and S P Rajaratnam (1937-1941).

The ACM missionaries Dr Thomas Scott, Rev John Bicknell, Rev S K Bunker and Miss Lulu Book Walter managed the school which produced Tamil Scholars, Pastors, citizens, Public servants, Lawyers, Doctors and others.

Memorial celebrated the 50th anniversary of the founding of the school with Mr A M Nathaniel as Principal. The manager then Dr Thomas Scott visited the school and made the following entry: “Memorial in the island of Ceylon stands high in Discipline, Education and Extra-curricular activities.” The school remembers the services of the early educationists by naming the sports houses as Page, Bicknell and Scott.

New Era – Mr S.V. Alagaratnam – “Father of Memorial” (1941 TO 1960)

The service rendered by Mr Alagaratnam is outstanding and considered as the “Golden era.”

During his tenure, the school was upgraded to the Senior Secondary level.

The lack of facilities and space for expansion of the school was felt by the Manipay citizens. The family of Sabapathy/Karthigesu led by the philanthropist affectionately called "Ariamma/Ariam Acca" donated a 2 ½ acres of land across the Hospital to the school. On 12 June 1946, Memorial shifted to this land and this date is celebrated as the Founder's Day. The services rendered by Mr Alagaratnam, Mr R C Chelliah the Primary Head Master and Mr S P Sabaratnam are noteworthy.

Slowly and steadily, buildings were erected to cope with the student intake. Teachers qualified in Science, English, Tamil, Music, Sport, Commerce, Home Science, Art etc guided the pupils. In the Physical Training (PT) competitions in the District and National levels the school excelled. In Drama, the school produced plays which were well received by the Jaffna public. In 1954, the first Memorial Magazine was released.

Reminiscences of Samuel T. Arnold - Science Teacher at Memorial (1959-1969)

The writer of this article recalls fond memories of his ten years of teaching at Memorial. In May 1959, I graduated from the University of Madras with a B.Sc degree (First Class) with Chemistry as the main subject. Principal Alagaratnam invited me to join the Memorial staff and my stay was pleasant and fruitful. The outstanding colleagues of mine included Mrs': R C Chelliah, A R Jeyanayagam, M Mather, S Senathirajah, E A Lawrence, K Nadarajah, Sothimuthu, U Suntharathas, M Mahendranathan, Sampanthar and Messrs': G N Rajasingham, P R Ariyapooshanam, W G Annappah, M Kathiravelpillai, D T Wadsworth, A G Joseph, V Tharmaseelan, K Sinnathurai, Muthusamy, S Balasingham, A S Lawrence and A S Ayathurai. There was great team spirit with boys and girls excelling in all fields. The Boy Scout Troop with Mr W G Annappah as Group Scout master and myself as assistant developed with scouts Kamalasekaram and Rajadurai being awarded the coveted Queen's Scout badges by the Governor General William Gopallawa.

On the retirement of Mr S V Alagaratnam after two decades of leadership, Mr J V Thambynayagam, a reputed Science/Maths teacher became Principal from 1960. During his leadership, laboratory facilities were expanded and approval to teach Physics and Chemistry. This enabled students to go over to other schools for GCE Advanced Level Science studies.

Take over of Schools by the Government (January 1, 1961)

Manipay Memorial became a State school with Mr. Thambynayagam as Principal until 1964 when he took over Driberg College, Chavakachcheri. I had the pleasure of serving under the following Principals: Mr

J M G Samuel 1964-1966 and Mr V H Sampanthar 1966-1970. Now began transfer of Principals and staff overnight by interference by politicians in government administration of schools. I was transferred suddenly to Weligama in the South in September 1969 ending my tenure. Sad!

Later on I taught in Schools in Batticaloa for the next decade which included head of schools. In 1980, I went along with family to Zambia for 4 years and next 10 years in Botswana. In 1995, we migrated to Australia. I was blessed to be Science teacher for 50 years in 4 countries.

Further advancement of Memorial

The contribution made by the following Principals for the school development is noteworthy: Messers': W G Annappah, K Kailaynathan, K Vaithyanatha Sarma, (Mrs) P Sivanantharajan, V Suntharathas, V Ponnuthurai, A M Arunasalam, (Mrs) C Yogeswaran, (Mrs) V Shanmugaratnam, P Jeyaveerasingham, V Sivakadadcham, T Mathavan and A Perinpanayagam (current).

During the tenure of Principal Arunasalam (1989-2004), Alumni and the Development Society raised funds to purchase 14 acres of adjoining land to expand the campus. This was a great step forward. The Alumni and friends of Memorial recall many distinguished persons in Kalaiarasu Mr K Chornalingam, Architect V S Thuraiajah, Managing Director Cargills A A Page, Maharajah Mahaventhana Swiss resident, Attorney at Law Karalasingham Indran and Annappah family who made generous donations to build the Page Block, Karalasingham Block, Annappah Library and Suntharathas Block which provide magnificent facilities.

It is heartening to know that many of my students at Memorial 40 years' back serve their Alma Mater with zeal. Rev A Jeyakumar, Messrs A M Arunasalam, K Kamalasegaram and V Thirunavakarasu come to my mind. I had a very pleasant surprise when Kamalasegaram and Thirunavakarasu contacted me by phone and internet to give details of Memorial celebrating 180 years on 12 June 2016. We are ever grateful to the founders of Memorial, the staff, parents, alumni and pupils.

Acknowledgement -

I am grateful to the "Memorians" 180th Anniversary publication compiled by the distinguished Alumnus and my student K Kamalasegaram, former Bank Manager. He has done a fantastic job! Most of the information for my article is gathered from this source.



No chatter

Monkeys, who very sensibly refrain from speech, lest they should be set to earn their living.

- Kenneth Grahame - *The Golden Age* 1895

APPRECIATIONS

CHRISTOPHER GREGORY WEERAMANTRY
17 November 1926 – 05 January 2017



On 05 January 2017, Sri Lanka lost one of her most illustrious sons, Justice Christopher Gregory Weeramantry, who justifiably earned the iconic Sri Lankabhimanya, for

having 'rendered exceptionally outstanding and most distinguished service' to Sri Lanka, barely six weeks after he celebrated his 90th Birthday on 17 November 2016.

Justice Weeramantry who strode the international legal sphere as a brilliant judge, an eminent academic, yet carried his excellence with utmost humility. His loss is shared by the international community.

Justice Weeramantry, or "Christy" as we would refer to him, at Hultsdorp, was the son of Gregory and Lilian Weeramantry. His father, a highly qualified educationist founded Alexandra College which Justice Weeramantry describes as having "played a significant role and discharged a very useful function on the Sri Lankan educational scene. Many eminent Sri Lankans – judges, doctors, civil servants, lawyers, international officials and cabinet ministers – were greatly helped in their careers by this institution".

Justice Weeramantry had two elder brothers, Lucien and Douglas. Lucien was a lawyer with a wide practice and among his clients was Talduwe Somarama, the main accused in the Bandaranaike assassination case.

Two other members of the family, Justice Thomas de Sampayo and Mr. D.J. Wimalasurendra, the author of the Laxapana hydroelectric scheme were acknowledged by Justice Weeramantry as role models that inspired him. Young 'Christy' attended Royal College, Colombo where he displayed his twin skills in academic and literary versatility. He was the Editor of the College Magazine and the Chairman of the Senior Literary Association. In 1943, he was awarded the Empire Essay Prize. His intellectual acumen won him several class and school prizes and the coveted Governor's Scholarship and the Principal's Prize.

For his tertiary education, Justice Weeramantry entered the University of Ceylon where he graduated with B.A. (Honours) and then proceeded to obtain an LL.B and an LL.D from King's College London.

Justice Weeramantry was called to the Bar as an Advocate of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka 1948. He excelled in his professional career and I had the privilege of associating with him as a fellow member

of the Sri Lanka Bar, before he began his meteoric rise to juristic excellence.

In 1958 Justice Weeramantry met Rosemary de Sampayo and to use his own words "I realised that this was the young lady I had been looking for. I wasted no time in showing my interest which was reciprocated and things moved rapidly and by 1959 we were married". They enjoyed a close knit family life and were blessed with two sons and three daughters and eleven grandchildren.

Justice Weeramantry describes their life together "Rosemary and I shared all things, all experiences and a series of wonderful memories. Rosemary was an immense source of support to me in my work, never interfering in it but always unobtrusively giving me all the support needed. Even when I launched out on the great enterprise of writing my books on the law of contracts, the amount of time this claimed increased my concentration on legal activities. Yet Rosemary never grudged this extra time but wove herself into the activities connected with it. When typists were typing the manuscript or juniors were reading through it or I was busy writing it, she was part of the scene, supporting us all with refreshments as well as with her company and making less tedious the endless hours spent on this work".

Justice Weeramantry commenced his judicial career with an appointment as a Commissioner of Assize in 1965, where he displayed a remarkable ability to guide a lay jury through the complexities of the criminal law in simple terms in summing up that met with the approval of the Court of Criminal Appeal. As junior Crown Counsel appearing before him, we were kept on our toes with mild but stern warnings of any attempts to over step the line in enthusiastic pursuit of our cause.

In 1967 Justice Weeramantry was elevated as a Puisne Justice of the Sri Lanka Supreme Court in 1967. He retired in 1972, sacrificing the opportunity of becoming the Chief Justice of Ceylon (as we then were) and migrated to Australia to accept the position of Sir Hayden Starke Professor of Law at the Monash University in Victoria.

In 1990, myself with Justice Abdul Cader and Prof. G.L. Peiris, as the panel of Members of the Permanent Court of Arbitration were required to nominate a candidate for election to the Asian seat of the International Court of Justice. We had absolutely no difficulty in agreeing that Justice Weeramantry had the most outstanding CV of the candidates whose applications came before us.

Adorning that Court as a Member from 1991 to 1997 and as the Vice-President of the Court until 2000, Justice Weeramantry when he was interviewed by the Lanka Guardian in 2007, about matters decided by that Court, identified "I would think that the decision the Court was asked to make by the General Assembly on the illegality of nuclear weapons was the

most important decision the Court was ever asked to make. This is because it involved the entire future of humanity and civilisation”.

In the course of the interview, Justice Weeramantry expressed a view that might be apposite in today's context. In comparing the perspective of Sri Lankan Judges in comparison to Western Judges, Justice Weeramantry said, “The perspectives of a Sri Lankan judge differs from those of a Western judge mainly owing to the cross-cultural perspectives which the Sri Lankan judge is so immersed in. In Sri Lanka we grow up in the midst of four major religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam, all of which have substantial segments of the population as their followers. Consequently we grow up imbibing their culture and participating in their festivals and enjoying each other's fellowship as neighbours.”

As a Judge on the International Court of Justice, Justice Weeramantry demonstrated the truism expressed by drawing on his expertise in Roman Dutch Law, Hindu Law and the Islamic Law.

In the matter (New Zealand v France) the majority of Judges ruled against request by New Zealand, and left open the question whether it was lawful for a State to use nuclear weapons in self defence. But Justice Weeramantry dissented from that ruling, as he was of the opinion that it left an opening that States could retain their nuclear arsenals and prevent their total elimination.

Quoted ancient Hindu Law

He quoted ancient Hindu Law that “war is intended to subjugate one's enemy and live in peace with him thereafter, not to ravage his countryside” as reflective of the prohibition of the preparation or storing nuclear weapons. He quoted Islamic Law where “... there was much thought and writing about what we would today call international law – the treatment of prisoners of war, conduct on the battlefield, the sanctity of treaties, the privileged position of diplomats and the likes. All of these were elaborately discussed on the basis of the Holy Qu'ran and the numerous traditions of the Prophet Mohamed known as the Hadiths, dealing with these matters. In the same case Justice Weeramantry advised that the word “genocide” in the Genocide Convention, required “that there must be an intention to target a particular national, ethnical, racial or religious group qua such a group, and not incidentally to some other act.” And went on to identify that nuclear weapons designed to “wipe out blocks of population ranging from hundreds of thousands to millions” had little purpose other than to wipe out, in whole or part the national group of the state that was targeted.

Justice Weeramantry was a Judge in several other cases before the ICJ, significantly, Damming the Danube: Project (Hungary v Slovakia), The Case Concerning East Timor (Portugal V Australia) and others too numerous to mention by name.

Justice Weeramantry was the Chairman of the Commission into Nauru: The Environmental Damage under International Trusteeship of The UK, Australia and New Zealand. He authored a ten volume report on the Inquiry into the Rehabilitation of Phosphate Lands in that country.

Commenting on the efficacy of International Courts which do not have an enforcement system, Justice Weeramantry accepted the fact that the reluctance of even the most powerful states were reluctant to lose the moral high ground of not acting in violation of international law and the decisions have averted armed conflicts that may otherwise have resulted.

Justice Weeramantry was jurist with a prolific pen. The page on Wikipedia devoted to him, contains a list of 27 books authored by him on a range of subjects from the Law of Contracts, Equality before the Law, Human Rights, Apartheid, the Scientific Responsibility for Nuclear Weapons, Islamic Jurisprudence, Universalising International Law, Ethical and Legal Concerns over transplation of cross specie cells.

The most recent being his Memoirs in three Volumes and I believe, he was in the process of completing a fourth.

May he rest in Eternal Peace.

– Sunil de Silva

(Former Attorney-General of Sri Lanka).

MICHAEL LAKSHMAN SILVA

(24 August 1936 – 17 December 2016)

Michael Silva, a stalwart member of CSA, passed away in December after a protracted illness in a nursing home in Melbourne. Michael joined our



Society in 1998 barely a year after it was established and had 18 years of uninterrupted membership.

Born in Sri Lanka in 1936, he was the elder son of Dr Lionel and Peggy Silva of Colombo. His father had an extensive medical practice including a nursing home in Matara but passed away in his forties. His mother Peggy an English woman however lived up to over 100 years and passed away while a resident at St Nicholas Home in Dehiwela. Michael's younger siblings David and Rosemary pre deceased him both passing away in their 20s.

Michael and his younger brother David attended school at St Thomas College, Gurutalawa and later at Mount Lavinia. He took to life as a tea planter and when nationalisation loomed large on the horizon in the early 1970s decided to migrate to Australia.

He worked for BHP and lived in Woolloongong for almost two decades before

relocating to Melbourne. He is survived by his wife Barbara (Daniels) and two children Michele and Graeme by his first marriage to Joan Vanderziel (deceased) and a granddaughter Ebony. A private funeral was held in accordance with his wishes and his body donated to medical research.

– **Hugh Karunanayake**

ANNE LILAMANI SILVA
(22 October 1937– 27 December 2016):

A couple of days after Christmas Day 2016, I took an overseas phone call at home in Sydney: it was a most shocking call, totally unexpected and deeply saddening. Lilamani's daughter, Yasmin, called from Sri Lanka to tell us of our dear friend Lilamani's sudden death while on holiday in the northern part of that country. She was surrounded by her immediate family from Australia and her extended family who live in Sri Lanka.



Just a few days prior to late November 2016, Lilamani, her husband Sirilal and daughter Yasmin joined a group of our friends for a lunch hosted by us at our home. It was a happy occasion at which Lilamani was at her best talkative self, enjoying the company of the guests who shared the lounge with her. She was most comfortable at social gatherings as she had great experience in organising and hosting parties at her home, both in Australia and in Sri Lanka. Her Christmas dinner parties at her home in Sydney were always marked by a spread of traditional Christmas fare – turkey, ham, roast beef, baked vegetables and delicious desserts, including the traditional Christmas Pudding and Cake – all cooked by her with assistance from her daughters Yasmin and Amali.

Lilamani's social interests went beyond hosting parties. She enjoyed ballroom dancing in Sri Lanka, she and her husband were regulars at the Sunday afternoon dancing sessions held at the Dutch Burgher Union in Colombo. In Sydney, she participated in many events conducted by the several organisations which arranged functions for primarily Sri Lankan guests.

Whatever the joys of married life, Lilamani had a very challenging life growing up. She lost both her parents at age of 14 and had to take on the responsibility of caring for her siblings. She did this admirably well while still a student at Ave Maria Convent School in Negombo.

After she married Sirilal in 1962, she took on the task of enthusiastically caring for her daughters Yasmin and Amali and encouraged them to perform well in their studies and sports. The two young girls were sent to Australia in 1990 to further their studies.

The pull of Australia became too strong for their parents. Lilamani emigrated to Australia in 1992 and was followed by Sirilal in 1994. She missed her many friends from Sri Lanka and was initially unsettled but soon came to understand her new home and settled down to enjoy a comfortable life. She punctuated her 'stay at home' life by travelling overseas widely: Alaska, Canada, the UK and Europe, South America, Africa, Israel, Jordan, Egypt, USA, Japan, China, Turkey, Thailand, Malaysia, Sri Lanka (which she visited regularly) made up the long list of countries and places her itineraries took her. She passed away before she could start the leg of her journey to the next country in her programme, India.

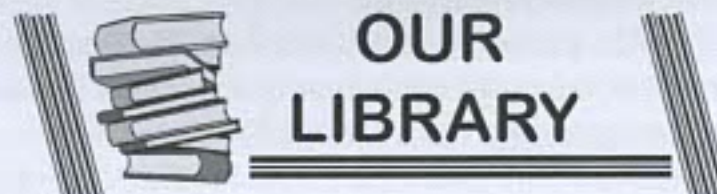
A loving wife to Sirilal, a very caring mother to her daughters Yasmin and Amali, a generous mother-in-law to Steve and a devoted grandmother to Rohan, Lilamani will be missed by her family and friends.

May her soul rest in Peace.

– **Challice Moldrich**

Lilamani was a loving wife, wonderful mother and a source of great support to the whole family. Her legendary culinary skills will be greatly missed. Her cheerful attitude to her life in spite of her many disabilities was exemplary.

– **Drs Brinda and Darrel Weinman**



The CSA library has a number of books, along with numerous other newsletters and pamphlets relating to Ceylon/Sri Lanka. Some of these books have been donated by members and friends out of their goodwill and kindness, while many are donations from authors who have held book launches to promote their books at CSA general meetings.

While we will publish a full list from time to time, only new additions will be listed in future issues.

Books & other publications FOR SALE

This is a regular column for the benefit of members (& others) who author books or have books, maps & other collectibles and would like the Society to promote these materials on their behalf. No charges apply to members, **but donations are encouraged from all using this service.** Regrettably, items can be listed only in three (3) consecutive issues. Please contact the editor for further details.



SYDNEY 26 February 2017

The First General Meeting of the Ceylon Society of Australia for 2017 will take place on Sunday, 26th February 2017 commencing at 6.30 pm at the Pennant Hills Community Centre, Ramsay Road, Pennant Hills, NSW 2120. Ramsay Road is off Yarrara Road and the Community Centre is opposite the Pennant Hills Railway Station. The entrance to the building is from the car park at the back of the building. Members and their Guests are welcome.

Srikantha Nadarajah will speak on "ORIGINS AND IMPACT OF FOREIGN INFLUENCES ON CEYLON SOCIETY AND CULTURE".

Srikantha Nadarajah has been an active member of the Ceylon Society of Australia for twenty years, having made several presentations to the CSA regarding contemporary social developments in Sri Lanka. He has a Bachelor of Arts Degree with History, Economics and Politics from University of Ceylon.

He had a successful career in corporate and merchant banking in Sri Lanka, Saudi Arabia and Australia. He has published two books on Banking, Business and Nationalism in Sri Lanka, covering economic, social and political aspects of our society since Independence.

The speaker will examine benefits and drawbacks of colonial rule in Ceylon over a period of four and half centuries and the extent to which it influenced social, economic and political developments in the post- independence period.

A major factor perhaps overlooked by historians, which contributed to determining policies of British colonial rule in terms of economic and social reform, was the social upheaval and transformation in Europe and America of political and industrial revolution at the time.

In the post-independence period the need to progress export of plantation products, upgrade from primary to industrial processing and the transfer of corporate sector business control from British hands was significantly delayed - inhibiting industrial development and exports until the late '80s. Nationalism, going beyond rectifying colonial neglect of local languages, has also impacted on the country's social and economic progress. The last four decades have also seen the influence of geopolitics, particularly from India and China in the nation's social, political and economic life.

Social: After a brief discussion period, the usual Social will be the next item on the Agenda. Those who are able to, please bring a plate of finger food. Kindly avoid cakes with icing as the general preferences are for plain cakes, sandwiches and savoury pastries. Those unable to bring a plate are kindly requested to make a donation to the CSA to help defray meeting costs.

— *Sunimal Fernando Hony, Secretary, CSA.*

How to become a Member of the CSA...

Who can become a member of the CSA? Any person with a common interest relating to the historical heritage of Ceylon/Sri Lanka and wishes to share that interest with like-minded people worldwide is welcome to seek membership. Younger members of the community are specially welcome.

Please contact any of the following for further details: In **Sydney**: Contact: Treasurer Deepak Pritamdas PO Box 489, Blacktown NSW 2148 Phone: 0434 860 188 Email: deepakpsl@yahoo.com

In **Melbourne**: Contact: Convenor Hemal Gurusinghe Phone: 0427 725 740 Email: hemguru@hotmail.com

Annual subscription is A\$30 (Pensioners & Students in Australia A\$20). Account details for Australia are: BSB 062 398, A/c No: 10038725, Swift Code - CTBAAU2S

In **Colombo**: Until further notice members are requested to deposit subscription money/cheques at a HSBC ATM machine or transfer to the HSBC electronically. The information you require is for ATMs: Account Name: Ceylon Society of Australia, CSA Account Number- 008-044109-001 - e Transfer above plus: HSBC Swift Code- HSBCLKLX Annual subs: LKR3000.00 Contact: Treasurer M.Asoka T.de Silva Phone 2822933 (Mob.) 775097517 Email: matdes@sltnet.lk

CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS ?

Have you recently changed your contact details – home address, email, telephone number and so on? If so, Treasurer Deepak Pritamdas would like to hear from you so he can update his mailing list and other records. This will help ensure you receive the Journal without interruption.

Contact Deepak on (Mob) 0434 860 188 Email: deepakpsl@yahoo.com

Human right

Human beings have an inalienable right to invent themselves; when that right is pre-empted, it is called brain-washing.

— *Germaine Greer - The Times 1 February 1986.*

Adisham Manor - The Monastery of St Benedict



Something to think about.



Adisham guest accomodation

This is Adisham, the lovely stone mansion in the hills of Haputale, built by Sir Thomas Villiers during colonial times in the style of the manor houses of England's landed gentry. Named after the village of Adisham in Kent where Sir Thomas was born, the mansion was aptly described as a 'homesick Englishman's dream home in the tropics'. It is a charming relic of Ceylon's colonial era. Adisham is now the "Monastery of St. Benedict". Full story on Page 20.



Entrance porch