CHAPTER III

THE ENGLISH IN KANARA

In the early part of the seventeenth century some of the coastal towns in Kanara witnessed the commencement of the English activities. Like the other Europeans, the English too, came to Kanara for trade and confined their activities only to trade and their involvements in local politics were motivated by commercial interest.

The establishment of East India Company and their factory at Surat enabled the English to know more about the wealth of Kanara especially its prosperous pepper trade. Captain William Hoare was the first English man
to make an attempt to trade in Kanara in 1619 A.D. His ship 'Dhagan' came to Bhatkala where he tried to purchase pepper. But the merchants there refused to sell pepper to him. But Venkatappa of Keladi seems to have entered them by offering them pepper for two ships. Perhaps, he thought that his friendly relationship would help him in putting down the Portuguese. This move boosted the trade activities of the English, and strengthened their relationship with the Keladi Nayakas. Consequently they could get certain trade concessions and permission to build a factory at Bhatkala from Virabhadranayaka.

In the course of years, the English resumed their trade activities there as a result of fresh invitation from the Keladi Virabhadra. They extended their trade activities to all ports in Kanara such as Mangalore, Basruru and Mirjan. There was a considerable hindrance from the Dutch in the same field. Yet there is reason to believe that the English continued to enjoy the confidence of the rulers and continued to trade in the port of Bhatkala till 1670 A.D.

In the meantime the English were able to settle on firm footing at Karwar where Mr. Courteen, an English entrepreneur built factory in 1638 A.D. with permission of Muhammad Adilshah of Bijapur, who had hold on the area.
Late in 1653 A.D. the London East India Company decided to reopen a branch factory at Karwar with the approval of the Adilshahi ruler. In 1659 A.D. they secured more privileges from the Adilshahi governor and stepped up their commercial activities.

The trouble with governor of Karwar about the custom house at Siveshwar in 1663 A.D., the differences with the Desai over the custom duty in 1670 A.D., the seizure of their factory by rebel Fauzadar, Main Shaib in 1673 A.D. and the clash with the new governor of Karwar in 1674 A.D. hampered the trade activities of the English to certain extent. However, as a clever diplomat, they succeeded in consolidating their position by concluding a series of treaties with the Adilshah of Bijapur by which they secured more privileges and protected their factory with guns and ammunition. This they had to achieve at all costs and they had an instruction from the London East India Company to the effect that "trade should be maintained at Carwar, and faire correspondency kept with the king of Deccan, Bijapur, by all possible means". The English looked at the Marathas with suspicion. They did not like the rise of the latter. They helped Siddi Jauhar, an officer of the Adilshahi ruler, against Sivaji, who captured Panhala. But the constant incursion of Sivaji
in Karwar affected their trade in such a way that they had to seek friendship with the latter who agreed to grant all sorts of trade privileges.

During the four years of Sambhaji's rule the English activities suffered a setback. Further the war between Sambhaji and the Portuguese and the activities of the rebel chiefs also adversely affected their trade. They even thought of removing their factory from Karwar. But on the defeat of the Portuguese at Phonda and the arrival of a new subedar who became friendly to them, they decided to remain there.

THE ENGLISH AND THE SVADI CHIEFS

The English in Karwar first came into contact with the Svadi in 1671 A.D. But they could not maintain cordial relationship for a long time. Finally there ensued an armed conflict between the two in 1716-17 A.D. in which English sustained a defeat. In 1752 A.D. they were forced to leave Karwar by Immaḍi Sadāśivarāya.

THE ENGLISH FACTORY AT HONNĀVAR

After the clash with Svadi chief in 1717 A.D. the English desired to settle themselves either at Honnāvar or at Bhaṭkala. They tried to establish their factory again at Bhaṭkala as can be seen from the English records.
Finally they chose Honnadavar\textsuperscript{30} on account of abundant supply of pepper and sandal wood in that area.

Through a series of treaties with the Keladi Nayakas in 1737 A.D., 1738 A.D. and 1740 A.D. the English were allowed to establish a regular factory at Honnadavar\textsuperscript{31}. Further these treaties enabled them to strengthen their trade activities in that area. In 1751 A.D. the English factory chief at Tellicherry concluded another treaty with Keladi Basavappa II. Accordingly, the chief allowed them to rebuild factory at Honnadavar and gave them exclusive trade privileges.\textsuperscript{32} This treaty strengthened the bond between the two. On the eve of the closing of the period under study, the English were at Honnadavar witnessing the fall of the Keladi Nayakas and the rise of Haidar Ali.

The attitude of the English towards the people was sympathetic. They refrained from killing cows as can be seen from the letters of Harbins to Mexico men.\textsuperscript{33} (The English merchant in Mexico ship). They did not like to wound the feeling of the natives. Throughout the period under study we do not come across any record mentioning any destructive activities that antagonised the local people.

The English had great appreciation for the skilled artisans. For instance, Chamberlain, the chief of
Karwar factory between the years 1670 and 1673 A.D., highly appreciated the skill of the weavers round about the area and encouraged them by lending money, though it involved extra expenses.
REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Foster, The English Factories in India, 1618-21, p.1

2. Foster, Ibid. Letter dated 15th February and 1st March 1619 A.D. It is to be remembered that the English in the first instance hesitate to accept the offer of Venkatappa on account of strained relationship with the Portuguese. Danvers, Reports to the Secretary of State for India in Council, p.35.


7. Foster, Ibid. 1642-45, p.109. Ibid. 1646-50 pp.167,172 It should be noted here that this offer of Keladi Virabhadra was the outcome of the English withdrawal from Bhatkala in 1639 A.D. on account of the Portuguese influence in the Keladi court. (Ref. Foster, Ibid. 1637-41 A.D. pp.115. Danvers, Op.Cit. p.36).

8. Ibid. 1646-50, p.199.

9. Ibid. 1661-64, p.349. Letter from Bhatkala, dated in 7th November 1664 A.D.

10. Ibid. 1661-54 A.D. Introduction p.74. JBHAS (1930) p.262, Foster, Ibid. 1663-69, p.105,109,110.

11. Alexander Hamilton narrates an interesting story of the massacre of eighteen English men at Bhatkala in 1670 A.D. by the natives as the bull dog belonging to one of the English men, killed sacred cow. This
incident led to the closure of English factory there. (Hamilton, A New Account of the East Indies, I, 1930, London, p.158). But it is strange that this incident was not mentioned in the Karwar letters which had been thoroughly scrutinised by Foster, and Fawcett. Therefore much importance on this may be given (Ref. Foster, Op. Cit. 1668–69 II, p.248, Fawcett, The English Factories in India (Oxford), (NS) p.300).


16. Foster, Op. Cit. 1655–60, p.208 f(1) The privileges were the following. Guarantees were given to the English for free trade(2) The governor of Karwar was to assist the English in recovery of debts (3) The English were permitted to build a new house with the permission of Rustum I Zaman. Later on 39th November 1659 A.D. he granted these privileges to the English. Further they could buy pepper at Hubli without paying customs there. (Ref. Foster, 1655–60, p.208–246, Nayeem, Op. Cit. p.244).

17. Foster, Ibid. 1661–64, p.240, Nayeem, Ibid. p.244.

18. Fawcett, The English Factories in India I (NS), p.299


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