INTRODUCTION
Nilgiri (Neelamalai) is one of the holy mountains in the Western Ghat. For this reason the Hindus made it a 'punyasthala' (Pilgrimage centre) - a place of virtue. In Tamil it is pronounced as Nilagiri. Nila in Tamil means 'blue' colour. Sangam Literature designates the hilly region as 'Kurunji' Nilam. Kurunji is a wild flower (Strobilanchus Kunthianus) and 'Nilam' means Land. The real colour of the flower is not pale blue but pink. It blooms at the interval of twelve years, and is familiar to the people of both the hilly region and plains. When the British came to the Nilgiri it was referred to as Blue Mountain. It is about 200 miles from the Coramandal coast, and 40 miles from that Malabar.

The Western Ghats were formed much earlier than the Himalayas. Geologists have two opinions on this point. It is also evident from the fact that the peninsular part of India is one of the oldest land masses of the world and this land had never been
under water at all. The hills are of the primitive igneous order. The mass of soil has invariably granite core. There is little or no lime in the composition of the soil. The deficiency of salt has also been noted and the presence of peaty and humustop layer tells us the long existence of floral life over the hills. Western part of the Nilgiris (Gudalur & Kotagiri) contains gold dust but the mining proved uneconomical.

**Topography**

The so called plateau is in reality, a rugged terrain which presents a most varied and diversified aspect. It rises in low gradients from East and South and extends in ceaseless undulations, and valleys, frequently breaking into lofty ridges and rocky eminences, terminating in abrupt and sharp drops in the west, where as it descends gently towards the northern tableland with the deep ravine of the Moyar river as an exceptions.

The Nilgiris is a plateau of lofty mountains roughly 55 k.m. long 32 k.m. in width (exactly 2549.38 sq. k.m.) and 6500 feet above sea level on an average. The hills lie between 11° 8' and 11° 37' North latitudes and between 76° 27' and 77° 4' East
longtitudes. The huge mass is due to the junction of Eastern and Western Ghats at converging angle.

The Nilgiris, being the North Western district of present Tamilnadu is bordered by Karnataka in the north, Kerala in the West and South and Coimbatore and Periyar Districts in the East.

The Nilgiris is divided originally as Paringinadu (extreme South), Todanadu (in the North) Mekunadu (The Western region) and Kundanadu (in the east). But modern revenue districts of the Nilgiris are divided into four taluks named after the four major towns namely, Ootacamund, Coonoor, Kotagiri and Gudalur. Ootacamund and Coonoor are municipalities and the other two are town panchayats. Wellington being the seat of Madras Regimental Centre and the Defence Service Staff College is under the cantonment board.

There are Legislative Constituencies namely Ootacamund, Coonoor and Gudalur. The Nilgiris Constituency for the parliament seat includes not only Ootacamund, Coonoor, Gudalur, Kotagiri but also includes the Taluks of Mettupalayam, Annur and
Avanashi. The last three taluks belong to Coimbatore district.

Nanjanad, Kundha, Pykara, Ketty, Aravenu and Ouchterlony Valley are the important valleys of the plateau. These valleys are known for rich soil source of water, pockets of thick vegetation and blankets of grass cover. The rolling mountains are punctuated by enchanting peaks (Doddabetta - 8640 ft., Snowdon - 8299 ft., Kolaribetta - 8613 ft., Mukurthi Peak - 8380 ft.) patches of evergreen forests intercepted by streams and vast stretches of grasslands.

In the recent past extensive lands have been reclaimed for cultivation. The streams which once formed into perennial rivers and drained into the Bhavani River in the South and the Moyar river in the North, are now checked by dams to make 16 reservoirs for power generation. Another man made lake is that of Ootacamund, where boats entice for tourists. Most of the grasslands have been invaded by plantations and fast growing exotic plants.

Climate

The climate varies between 0°C in the winter
and 26°C. in the summer and the annual rainfall is 1838.23 mm. This temperate climate is mainly due to the height (The mercury level falls 1° C. down for every 300 ft. above mean sea level) and proximity to the equator. The location of the hills on the east of the Malabar Coast and its height (on an average of 6500 ft. from MSL) is responsible for its monsoon like that of South England. It has a spring season like that of North Persia and Autumn that of South France. Water freezing during the three months of winter as reported by the writers of the nineteenth century and early 20th century, is a very rare incident now. This could be attributed to the Global phenomenon i.e. Global warming as a result of Green House Effect.

Rainfall

The average annual rainfall of the Nilgiris is about 67 inches but the distribution varies enormously according to the locations and the force of the South West monsoon. All the western parts of the district receive the bulk of their rain during this period and the five months from December to April the district receives virtually no rain. Coonoor receives 63 inches and Kotagiri 62 inches of rainfall.
The heavy rain frequently washes away portions of the roads leading to the plateau and when rock railway to coonoor was first opened it also suffered considerably. Experience has now rendered it possible to protect the places prone to landslips.

**Flora**

The altitude of the District naturally causes its flora to differ altogether from that of areas on the plains. On the grassy downs occur several varieties of wild orchids; and wide streches of land. In the sholas grow (rhododendrous) several species of ilex ferns of many varieties broken tree orchids with delicate blossoms, the hill gooseberry, black berries of especial luxuriance, the sweet Scented Nilgiri lilly, the alphine wild strawberry and many other unusual and interesting trees and plants. English flowers and vegetables flourish amazingly. English fruits are also successful.

**Fauna**

The Nilgiri plateau and a few other parts of the Western Ghats are especially known for a large and
interesting game of animals. Tigers and leopards often and wilddogs occasionally, ascend the plateau from the lower slopes. Nilgiri Tahr and Sambur are common in the sholas throughout the hills, especially in the kundahs. Bison and elephants are fairly common in the Benne reserve and in the Mudumalai leased forest in the lower Wynaad. Among the rare animals of the smaller kind may be mentioned the Nilgiri langur and the Indian marten. The hill - otter is fairly common on the banks of the pykara river. Snakes are not so common as in the low country. Of migrant birds the wood cock, is fairly common on the plateau between the months of October and March. Snipe (a game - bird with a long straight bill found in marshy places) also visits the bogs at the bottom of the valleys. There are pigeons of several kinds, black birds, Thrushes Wrens, Larks, and King fishers. Of predatory birds, the large eagles, and the enormous horned owls are very interesting of hawks, there are two kinds which are peculiarly beautiful, one being milk white, except on its back. It also has a large black mark between the wings. The other variety is cream - coloured.

People

The Nilgiris is the least populated district (with
just 7,04,827) in Tamilnadu according to the provisional figures of the 1991 census. The hills were shared mainly by the Badagas, the Todas, the Kotas and the Kurumbas. The present figure of population includes the labour, Commercial and service classes who migrated from the plains of Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Kerala. Ceylon repatriates and the refugees are also included in the total population of the district.

Among the natives, the Badagas are the leading singular community in number, contributing about 50% to the existing population who quickly transformed themselves from semi-pastoral status into producers of commercial crops such as tea, potato and other vegetables introduced by the English. The Todas are believed to have enjoyed undisputed rights over the plateau from time immemorial. Their secluded life, female infanticide and polyandry have made them lowly in population and it never crossed a thousand till the last century. Now they show an increasing trend and their population is 1500. Basically the Kotas are known as artisans and musicians who until recently were making wood and clay utensils, silver jewels and iron implements and for other inhabitants. Their seven hamlets are suitably located to serve the
Badaga and the Toda settlements all over the hills. Though the Kurumbas as sorcerers and jungle dwellers lived here in good number at one time. They have become very less presently. They refused to join the mainstream until recently. The paniyas who are very meagre in number, have never shown interest in the civilized life. The government is trying to pull them out from the jungles. The Irulas (or the dark ones) from the Tamil word Irul 'darkness' live on the lowest slopes and forests extending from the base of the hills. They await recognition by the other tribes of the Nilgiris.

All the above mentioned tribes are speak their own respective dialects of Dravidian origin with the influence and contributions of Tamil, Kanadas and Malayalam.

History

The subject matter of this work becomes more intelligible only after going through the historical sketch of the plateau. Ever since the explorations of the Europeans like J. Sullivan (1819) Rev. James Hough (1826) Captain H. Congreve (1847) J.W. Breeks
(1873) and Bruce Foote (1901), the so called dark ages of the Hills began to glow. The credit of unearthing the remains of the past and illuminating the dark ages goes to the Europeans. The indigenous writer like M.K.Belli Gowder (1941), Arputhanathan (1953) Gopi Nath Das (1957), Jogi Gowder, Kariabettan (1958) and Vivekanadam Pillai (1937) who followed the European writers have contributed to the reconstruction of history of the Nilgiri people. In the light of new findings and interpretations, the eventful bygone years of the hills are arranged as the pre-historic, early, mediaeval and modern periods.

Pre-historic Period

The early history of the Nilgiris starts from the earliest Pre-historical times. Men of the pre-historic age had wandered over the slopes of the hills. They had left scratches and stone weapons as marks of their existence. The fact that this part of India is one of the oldest land masses of the world, as referred to above in this chapter, also supports the above view. Thick layers of peaty soil that cover almost all the granite core stand evidence for the existance of bushy grass which must have supported variety of fauna species which attracted the Paleolithic nomades
to the Hills. The antiquities of the hills include cairns, barrows, azarams, Kistvaens, crombechs, paintaings, and innumerable polished stone weapons, pieces of earthenware and sculputured slabs which are found scattered all over the hills.\textsuperscript{15}

**Ancient Period**

Geographically the ancient Tamilnadu was divided, into Thirteen Nadus of which the 'Cheethanadu'\textsuperscript{16} is identified with the modern Nilgiri district by V. Kanakasabai\textsuperscript{17}. Cheetham in sanskrit means cold and since the Nilgiris is a cold region, it might be called 'Cheetanadu'.

**Mauryas and the Nilgiris**

The Mauryas who first unified India, conquered Deccan and their kingdom is said to have extended to the South upto Madurai. It might also be possible that the Nilgiris formed part of the Mauryan Empire.

**Sangam Period**

The political history of Tamilnadu begins with the Sangam times, which witnessed the rule of the
Sangam Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas. The historical exploration reveals that the present district of the Nilgiris has no definite history earlier than 930 AD\textsuperscript{18}, perhaps its dense jungle and mountains were deterrent to the invaders. No doubt there had been inhabitants even before. Though the administration of the ancient Tamilnadu was dominated by the Cheras, Cholas, and Pandyas there were also chieftains and petty dynasties, who carved out their own principalities and owed allegiance to any one of the big three dynasties.

The name (the Nilgiris) Neelagiri (Blue Mountain) has been mentioned in 'Silappathiigram' which is a well known Tamil epic of the 3rd Century A.D. Its author Ilango describes that Chenkuttuvan a chera king of the post Sangam period, led an expedition through the Neelagiris and the hill people presented gifts to him at his camp\textsuperscript{19}. There are sufficient evidence to prove that the cheras ruled over the hills. Ptolemy's reference to the ancient chera capital (vanji) is identified with modern Karur. The place names of Cherambadi and Cherankode (both in Gudalur taluk), mean the military camp of the chera and the mount of the chera respectively.
The Nilgiris was under the rule of the Satavahanas who built their empire in the Deccan. The Satavahana king who was contemporaneous to Cheran Senguttuvan was in friendly terms with the cheras. 'Satakarni' (Satavahana) was a friend of the chera king senguttuvan²⁰. Satakarni might have been ruled the territory up to the Nilgiris, and he might be the friend of Senguttuvan who invited him to his country on his way to the north and assisted him.

Rashtrakuta

'Kongudesa Rajakkal' a Tamil work gives an account of some of the kings who ruled the region of Kongu (the modern district of Coimbatore, Periyar, Salem and Dharamapuri). They had their capital at Skandapura, identified with a place near the Gajalhatti pass of the present Karnataka State (near Mysore). It is said that their rule extended over South West Mysore, including Nilgiris²¹.

The Gangas

The Gangas ruled over a greater part of Karnataka from Second to the eleventh century. As their boundaries in the north, east, west and south were Marandale (still not identified) Tondainadu
(Kanchipuram - the Pallava country) Chera country (Cochin and Travancore) and Kongu (Coimbatore, Dharampuri, Periyar and Salem) respectively, the Nilgiris formed part of the Kingdom of the Gangas naturally22.

Pandyas

As the Ganga Kingdom became weak, the Pandyans conquered the parts of Kongu Country. Pandya Neduncheliyan (AD 740-770), a powerful king of Western Kongu subdued Kongubhumi with his elephants so that the noisy drum was sounding his fame throughout the Kanakabhumi23. Kanakabhumi literally means to land of gold. There is a reference to the gold mines in the Nilgiris, which were conquered by the Pandyas.

Mediaeval History

Kadambas of Banavasi ousted the Gangas from Wynaad between 10th and 12th century A.D. Punisa, the general of Hoysala King Vishnuvardhana (according to his own record of 1117 A.D.) was said to have 'frightened the Todas, driven the Poluvas, put to death the Malayalees, terrific king Kala24 and entered into the Nilgiri.........25.
The plateau was an important acquisition for the Hoysalas of Halabidu. The successors of Vishnu Vardhana bore the title 'Subduer of the Nilgiris'. The hills appeared to them an object of reverence. The Hoysalas were overthrown by Malikafur, the general of Alaud-Din-Khilji, the then sultan of Delhi, in 1310 A.D. Perumal Deva Dannayaka (Danda Nayak meaning the leader of collecting tax) became independent enough to take the title 'Subdeur of the Nilgiris'. He gave the name Dannayakan Kottai to the fortress from where he reigned the hills.

The Vijayanagara empire guarded the Hindu interest of South Central India. It is understood that the chain of fortresses (a ruined fort near Kallhati, another one above the hamlet Anchatti or Anaikatty, and the Hulikal Durg or the Droog, just above Nellithorai near Mettupalayam) was built by them in the Nilgiris. The masanahally (which is now masinagudi) and Devarayapura (now as Devarayapatna) are referred to as villages granted to a royal officer by the emperor of Vijayanagara according to the inscription of 1527. Though Nilgiri was under the suzerainty of the above rulers, it is doubtful whether their administrative systems were implemented in the
area systematically. Hence it can be said that so far as the district of the Nilgiris is concerned there existed no distinct characters in the administration of the area than the administrative system then existed in South India.

Mysore kings

The Vijayanagar Empire, which reigned supreme in South India since its foundation in 1336, was down by the united forces of the Sultans of Deccan in the famous battle of Talaikkotta in the year 1565. The Mysore vasalage (Udaiyars of Mysore) declared independence and claimed Suzerainty over Wynaad and the Nilgiris. The Udaiyars or Rajas of Ummattur were the Poligars. Their administrative territories were called 'nadu'. They were many military 'encampments' of the paligars in the Nilgiris of the times. From about 16th Century onwards, the Nilgiri plateau was divided into four nadus (Todanadu, Mekauadu, Paranginadu and Kundanadu) occupied by the Todas, Badagas and Kotas, and later, Kunda nadu was added. The Kotas still recall how the Lords of Ummattur came to ketti to collect the revenue, built houses and lived there. In Badaga tradition Bijivarasu, an Ummattur chieftain is believed to be the founder
of the ketti village. In the 17th century, the chieftains divided the plateau into three (hill forts) areas of nadu for collecting tribute. Male-Kote commanded Todanadu, Hatrekote paranginadu and Bakasuram Merku Nadu respectively. Wynaad also was ruled by these chieftains. The chieftains wanted to incorporate Nilgiris into their realms Lord Bujjalinga the chieftain who captured "Nellapattana" (near Sigur ghat), ascended the slopes and established a camp at Kotatti near Soluru. (Later he built Malakote there).

After this conquest, the chieftain was paid an annual tribute of 900 gold coins by the headman of Soluru. He became the chieftain of Nelliyala and collected revenue from there, without interruption until either Hyder Ali or Tipu Sultan drove them back to Nellialam and captured the Nilgiri fortress.

**Nilgiri under Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan**

Hyder Ali usurped the Throne in 1760 from the Udayars, and controlled Danayakan Kottai, the Headquarters of the Nilgiris. It is certain that Hyder Ali occupied the Nilgiris and all the hill forts in the district. He and his son Tipu Sultan
struggled hard to safeguard their kingdom from the frequent British invasions towards the close of the eighteenth Century.

**Acquisition by the British**

War against Nepal (1814-1816) led to the opening of hill stations (Simla, Darjeeling, Almora etc.) in North India. The wars against Mysore led to the opening of hill stations in the Nilgiris in the south.

The Third Anglo-Mysore war ended in 1792 and the British and their allies i.e., Nizam of Hyderabad and the Marathas shared Malabar among themselves. It is to be noted that by the treaty signed by them in 1792 the 'Tingnycotta Taluk of Barrah Mahal' (one of the Taluks of Malabar) was ceded to the British. Thus the British acquisition of the hill stations took place in 1792. But the British could not take over immediately because they could only succeed in the battle and not in the war with Tipu Sultan, which they won finally, only in 1799. So the Treaty of Srirangapattam of 1799 only confirmed the right of the British over the hills ceded to them in 1792 which also ceded them the Nilgiris, the territories thus acquired were distributed in Salem, Krishnagiri
and Dindukal districts. The Nilgiris, which was under the tahsil of Dannayakankottai was allocated to the Salem District. The land west of the river Cauvery (including Dannayakankottai Taluk) formed the new district with a new collectorate at Coimbatore. The Nilgiris was under the revenue control of Dannayakan kottai and thus formed Salem District first and of Coimbatore district later in 1800. Though the East India company took possession of the Nilgiris in 1799, it was not visited by any Englishman until 1818 A.D. and certainly contained no European residence until 1819. It was in 1800 A.D. on 25th October, Dr. Francis Buchanan, who had been deputed by the authorities to conduct enquiries into the extensive territories added to the company's possession by the Treaty of 1799, arrived at the village of Danayakan kottai, then the headquarters of the taluk which included the Nilgiris.

Meanwhile, the British East India company had deputed Col. Colins Mackenzie, an oriental scholar well recognised for his works and collections, to survey the area. But the survey team headed by Mackenzie could not succeed in its attempt as is evidenced from the Collector's report in 1819 that owing to extreme inclemency of the climate, the
surveyors were frightened, measured not an acre and contented themselves with making an estimate of quantity and quality of the land and fixing the old rates of 'teervai' (assessment) upon it.

Dr. Ford and Captain Bevan were sent by the collector of Coimbatore to survey the district. These surveyors went up by the old tract which led from Danayakankottai to Arkad, and the existing village of Denad and penetrated as far west as kallhatti; but they kept to the lower levels to the north of Ootacamund and they never located the beautiful valley in which that place lies.

There's no other record of any further expedition to the Nilgiris by Europeans until 1818. In May 1819, John Sullivan (writer in the East India company at Madras, he rose to the very high position of District collector in 1814. In 1815, he became the collector of Coimbatore) visited the eastern plateau with Leschenault (French Botanist), stopped at Dimhatti, built a bungalow there in which he afterwards resided. In 1821, he acquired the stone house hill which was a funerary mund not inhabited by the Todas, and built the first house of Ootacamund, the Stone House, in which the Government Arts College is now housed. He
pleaded with Directors of East India company to develop the Nilgiris as a sanatorium for sick European troops in India. The government decided to develop the infrastructural facilities for the hills. The road leading to Ooty was developed. A resident Medical Officer and cantonment commandant were appointed. The very first improved tract originated in march 1819 and that was the Kotagiri Ghat road. In 1823 he obtained financial grant from the government to improve a pass leading from the plateau west wards to wynaad. In 1826 he improved another pass upto the southern side of the hills, which was later known as Sullivan's Ghat. His interests were thus very broadly concerned with the development of the district.

The history of the administration of the district covers the episodes like the transfer of certain territory to Malabar in 1830 its retransfer in 1843, annexation with Coimbatore in '1860 and the formation of separate district in 1868.

In 1855, a Principal Sadr Amin Court was established at Ooty, the function hitherto had been discharged by Military commandants. The Sadr Amin Court comprised of a Magistrate and a Justice of the peace, a Director of the Police, a Civil Military and Pension Pay Master
and a Station Staff Officer. An Act passed in 1855 empowered the District Judge of Coimbatore to hold criminal session at Ooty.

In 1858, The Principal Sadr Amin was substituted by a subordinate judge and the part of the plateau was also brought under his jurisdiction. In May 1860 these areas were annexed to the Coimbatore district for revenue purposes. In 1863, a special civil and sessions judge for the Nilgiris was appointed.

Formation of the Nilgiris district

The foregoing system of administration of the hills proved inadequate and hence in 1868, the Nilgiris district was altogether separated from the then Coimbatore district and placed under a commissioner and an Assistant Commissioner who had identical revenue, criminal and civil jurisdiction. The commissioners had the powers of a Collector, Civil and sessions Judge and Principal Sadr Amin and the Assistant Commissioner became Assistant Collector, District Munsif, District Magistrate. Both the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioner were military men, who had full magisterial powers and
were assigned a definite territorial jurisdiction.

Another major development in the administration of the Nilgiris was that Ouchterlony valley and South East Wynnaad were added to the district, in the years 1873 and 1877 respectively.

The year 1882 is a landmark in the administrative history of the Nilgiris as the district came to have a collector as its district head.

The commissioner became the collector and the Assistant commissioner became the Head Assistant. A Deputy collector was also appointed to look after the administration of treasury. A Deputy Tahsildar was appointed to take charge of criminal justice, the district was put under the judge of Coimbatore. The collector was Additional sessions judge and subordinate judge who held also the powers of a First class Magistrate and a small case court was appointed to Ooty. The office of the joint Magistrate of Ooty and Wellington was subsequently abolished.

The revenue district of the Nilgiris has an unique administrative heritage. Britishers introduced new schemes of assessment and settlement of land revenue.
Civil criminal courts were established. The Local Jurisdiction of the sub-mageistrate of Ootacamund was extended. An efficient police system was maintained. Prisons and Jails were opened. Setting up of Local Boards, Municipal administration was a best example of the local administration setup. Many changes arose in the development of School education, sanitation, water supply, building up of reservoirs and dams. Local bodies were encouraged, development of means of communications like Road and Transport System, Postal, Telegraph Railway were the achievement of the Britishers under their administration.

The British Government in the Nilgiris introduced a conservation policy with the introduction of exotic plants. They brought drastic changes in cultivation, introducing cash crops like Tea, Coffee and Chinchona. All these administrative structure and development shall be explained by the scholar in the following chapters.

Why did the Britishers like this hill station

The newly discovered Nilgiris in Sullivan's day became the summer capital of the Madras Presidency
after A.D.1868. The Nilgiris, because of its natural charm and pleasant climate was a place of special attraction for the Britishers. The high altitude and cold climate of the Nilgiris pleased the Britishers.

Ootacamund (Ooty) known as Udagamandalam in Tamil, is a hill station which was founded by the British in the early part of the 19th century to serve as the summer headquarters of the Government of Madras. Having put the tourist literature into a more realistic perspective Ooty is nevertheless, a very pleasant and relaxing place and an ideal escape from the heat of the lowlands. Although Ootacamund quickly became the Principal hill station in Southern India during the British Raj it was not the first in this area. As early as 1819 the British had begun to build houses at Kotagiri a smaller town which still survives as a minor hill station and has a climate midway between that of Ooty and Coonoor.

History of Modern India is synonymous with the History of British India. India was destined to be under the foreign rule for a period of more than two centuries. The Britishers waged wars, concluded treaties, and established monopoly of trade elsewhere in the sub-continent but settled down to live
peacefully only in some pockets of India. The Nilgiris was one of their best choices for rest, recreation and recuperation. They discovered to their surprise a small 'patch of England' in the tropical region of South India.

The Britishers made a peaceful and comfortable living, exploiting the indigenous resources and lands. At the same time they gave the native inhabitants as well as the immigrants the key to tap the natural resources and to live on the comforts of civilization. The quick developments in the field of administration in the hills interested the scholar to probe into the historical background of these events. The administrative history of the Nilgiris most of which remains unexplored is looked from an angle different from those of other writers. This work is a sincere attempt to throw light on the points not much touched in the existing works on the Nilgiris. Hence the title "The British Administration in the Nilgiris From 1799 A.D. to 1947 A.D". The objective of this analytical and critical study is to highlight the changes which the dominant communities of the Nilgiris have underwent due to the British Administration of the hills.
The British acquired the Nilgiris in 1799 A.D. as a result of their success in the prolonged Mysore Wars (as per the treaty of Srirangapatinam in 1799 A.D.). This led to the discovery of the Nilgiris with its salubrious climate, patches of evergreen forests, rolling downs of sylvan pastures and perennial sources of clear water flowing through the innumerable streams of the hills.

This part of the territory did not come under the district administration immediately. Survey and assessment teams produced only formal reports but after the personal visits of John Sullivan the then Collector of Coimbatore district (to which the hill belonged) the British rule was extended to the Hills.

Britishers administered the hills for nearly one and a half century. Hence the period of the subject is fixed between 1799 and 1947 A.D. i.e. the end of British rule in India.

To repeat again, from 1866 onwards Ootacamund became the summer capital of the Madras Presidency. The provincial government functioned in the Stone House for six months every year. The annual visit of the Governors and occasional visit of the Governors
General to Ootacamund and other hill stations in the Nilgiris led to the over-all developments in the district.

The role of the district in the independence struggle is not to be ignored. Despite the long association and close contacts with the Europeans, the native leaders were attracted by the writing and speeches of Dr. Annie Besant and Arundale who were stationed in Ootacamund by the British government, during the period of World War I (1914-1918) as one of the war time measures. Mahatma Gandhi visited some parts of the districts.

Immediately after the Nilgiris was ceded to the British in 1799, it became a part of Coimbatore district. In August 1868, The Nilgiris was separated from the Coimbatore district, J.W. Breek took over the administration of the Nilgiris as its commissioner. In February 1882, the Nilgiris was made a district and a Collector was appointed in the place of the Commissioner. On 1st February 1882 Richard Wellesly Barlow who was the new Commissioner became the first collector of the Nilgiris. Today the collector is the pivot of administration at the district level.
who is assisted by the Personal Assistants (Deputy Collectors) and other complimentary staff at the Collectorate, while the Revenue Divisional Officers at Divisional level exact their duties. Tahsildars and Deputy Tahsildars at the taluk levels, Zonal Deputy Tahsildars at Zonal level Revenue Inspectors at the firka level and village administrative officers at village level are his representatives.

The collector is also the ex-officio chairman of many organisation, Boards etc in the district. He is the chairman of the District Development Council.

Source

The careful examination of the district records of the Nilgiris, Coimbatore, Salem etc. which are preserved in the Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras, has been done by the scholar. Ootacamund, by the virtue of its being the residence of the Europeans, Indian Princes and learned natives and the seat of the Madras Presidency administration setup, possesses valuable source materials. For example, the Nilgiri Library which has a very rare collection of books, journals, photographs etc., helped in a very big way. The
private collections of the European residents of Ooty and the interviews with them and also with the learned and experienced natives were all inexhaustible treasures of local and regional history. The scholar's long acquaintance with the above scholars and her access and access to their private libraries contributed much to this work.

The rare collections of the Nilgiri Collectorate Library the rare records of Government Botanical Gardens, preservations of reputed institutions like, Lawrence School, Lovedaele, Lawley Institute, Pasteur's Institute, Coonoor, The Nilgiri Wildlife and Environment Association Ootacamund and Coonoor municipality have been exhausted.

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References


2. The Ancient Tamil Literature From 2 B.C. to 2 A.D.

3. Though the Lemurian continent (Southern region of Ancient Tamil Country) was drawn by the Pakruli river, Nilgiri Mountain had never been under water at all.


16. Thirteen Nadus of ancient Tamilnadu were Pandi, Thenpandi, Kuttam, Kudam Karka, Ven Pooli, Panri, Aruva, Aruva Vadathalai, Cheetham, Malanadu and Punalnadu.


19. "Neelamalai Utchiellla", encamped over the Nilgiris), Ilango, Silappathigaram, one of the five Tamil Epics belonging to 3rd Century A.D., Line 85 Kalkotkathai, Vanji Kandam.

24. Kala - Badaga Chieftain of Kukkal Village.
27. Ibid, P.93.
34. Letter from the Government to the Collector of Salem dated July 6, 1799, Salem Collectorate Records, Tamil Nadu Archives, Madras.