Acknowledgements

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."

I am highly indebted to my supervisor Professor Dilbagh Singh for his generous and invaluable guidance, and sympathetic understanding which has made this work possible. In the initial stages he taught me to read the script of archival documents as well as the terminology used in the records. At the stage of writing he came up with so many valuable suggestions and introduced me to several new areas of enquiry that I had to modify the original chapterization in order to update it. He went through several drafts of various chapters most ungrudgingly and made a thorough scrutiny of the information and arguments presented by me. It has been a wonderful academic experience to work under his supervision. My gratitude to him is far beyond my reach of expression.

I am taking this opportunity to thank Dr. P.C. Patanjali, Principal and Dr. R.B. Solanki, officiating Principal, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar College (DU), who cooperated with me at various stages of my work and facilitated me in all possible ways.

Any research of this nature would not be possible without the assistance of members of the staff of libraries and archives. I place on record my thanks to the Director and Staff of the Rajasthan State Archives and Bhartiya Vidya Mandir Sodh Pratishthan, Bikaner and Govind Aggarwalji and Subodh Aggarwalji, Poddar Collection, Churu for their unfailing cooperation and help during my frequent visits there.

Special thanks to Om Prakash for typing the thesis efficiently in the record time.

My husband Hari, daughter Jigya and son Prateek have participated vicariously in every stage of this work and their happiness at its completion is matched only by mine. It is to them and to my parents that I dedicate this thesis.

MAMTA