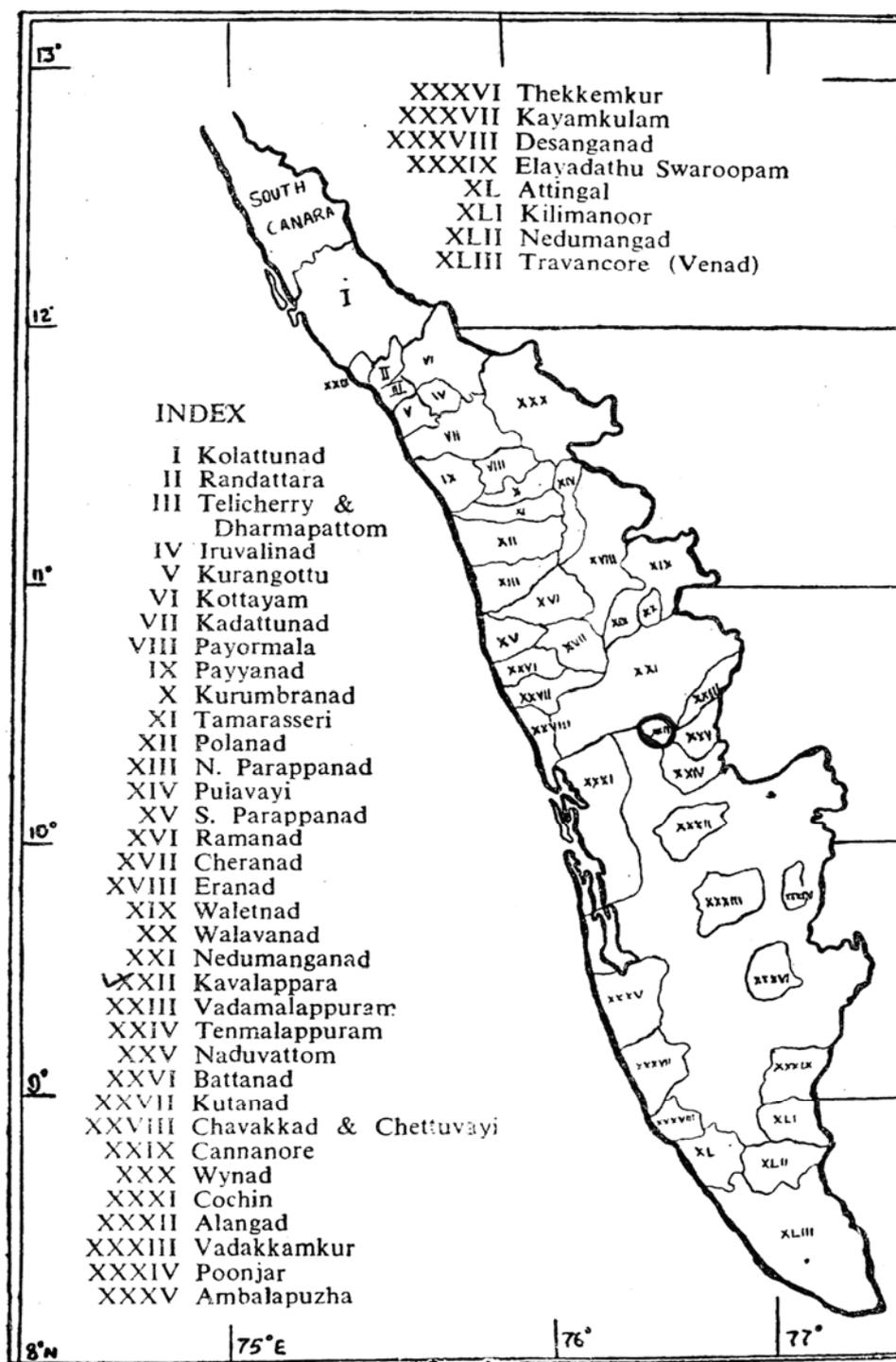


CHAPTER III
FAMILY HISTORY OF KOODALI
TARAWAD AND KAVALAPPARA NAYAR

The two important feudal families that form the basis for this study are the Koodali *tarawad* and the family of Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar and as such it is worthwhile to give a brief history of these two families. In fact the entire study is intertwined with the origin and development of these families.

The Kavalappara family has been a typical *marumakkathayam tarawad*. The head of the *karanavar* of the family is called *Mooppil Nayar*. The residence of this *tarawad* is in Kavalappara *desam* in the Karakkat *amsam* of the former Valluvanadu taluk of South Malabar. Now this area is in the Ottappalam taluk of Palakkad District. The origin of this family is related to the story of Vararuchi, the Brahmin saint who happened to marry a *paraya* woman. In tradition this is known as the story of *Parachipetta Panthirukulam*. Vararuchi had twelve children in his wife and among this twelve there is only one girl, *Karakkat Mata* who figures in tradition as Karakalamma. The Kavalappara family originated from the Karakkalamma in the female line. The eldest of the twelve children was Mezhattur Agnihotri. From him began the present *Kadambur Mana*. The relation between these two families continued through ages. Now this relation is manifested through

KAVALAPPARA AND OTHER CHIEFTAINCIES OF MALABAR



Source: T.C. Varghese, *Agrarian change and Economic Consequences*, Bombay, 1970, p.13.

certain rituals and ceremonies. The news of the death of a member in the *mana* used to be intimated to the Kavalappara Nayar. He then would take a purificatory bath, as a relative. Likewise when the news of the death of the Mooppil Nayar is intimated to the head of the Kadambur *Mana* he also takes a purificatory bath as a matter of kinship.¹

There is another legend in connection with the origin of Kavalappara and it is related to the story of Cheraman Perumal. The family is said to have acquired its property from Cheraman Perumal on the eve of his departure to Mecca. By the time the Kavalappara Nayar arrived, he had already distributed his territory except a block of twelve square miles (19.32 km) in Nedunganad. As it was a rocky area nobody wanted it. The Nayar accepted it and called it Kavalappara or false rock.²

Following the fall of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram³ the Kavalappara family emerged as an independent family. But there is no evidence to show that the family had an independent status from 12th century. In 1748 the Zamorin attacked the domain of the Kavalappara Nayar and

¹ Letter from K. Appunni Nayar, Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar to K.K.N. Kurup, dated 4 November 1982, p. 1.

² C.A. Innes and Evans, *Malabar Gazetteer* (1908), Thiruvananthapuram, 1997, p. 497.

³ The Perumals of Mahodayapuram ruled Kerala from 800 to 1112 AD. For details see Elamkulam Kunjan Pillai, *Studies in Kerala History*, Kottayam, 1970, pp. 98-129. According to M.G.S. Narayanan the dynasty came to an end in 1124 AD. See M.G.S. Narayanan, *Perumals of Kerala*, Kozhikode, 1996, p.66.

subdued him.⁴ Before this the nayar was under the Raja of Palghat⁵ for some time and the Raja of Cochin. In the beginning of the 18th century the family was under the control of the Raja of Cochin. When the Zamorin attacked Cochin Raja in the war between Cochin and Kozhikode, the Nayar was fighting on the side of Cochin Raja. The army of the Kavalappara Nayar was the best one in Cochin at that time.⁶

The Kavalappara Nayar held the following *stanams* or positions under the Palghat Raja.

1. Kavalappara Nayar or Karakkat Moothar with the *stanam* name of Karakkat Kumaran Raman. The property held by him in this position was around Kavalappara.⁷
2. Kanhumelpada Nayar with the *stanam* name of Kumaran Raman. The property situated in and about Melarkode, Palakkad District.⁸
3. Pannithiruthi Kaimal with the *stanam* of Ittunni Kumaran Raman. The property were in Thennilappuram, Palakkad District.⁹

⁴ K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *Zamorins of Calicut* (1938), University of Calicut, 1999, p. 112.

⁵ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers*, Calicut University Historical Series, University of Calicut, 1984, Document No. 16, p.11.

⁶ C. Achyuta Menon, *The Cochin State Manual* (1911), Thiruvananthapuram, 1995, p. 149.

⁷ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers*, *op. cit.*, Doc. No. 32, p.35.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 23, p.27.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xvi.

4. Chundi Moothar with the *stanam* name of Kotha Kumaran Raman. The property were in Kavassery, Palakkad District.¹⁰
5. Kattusseri Kaimal with the *stanam* name of Karuthillathu Ittunnikumaran Raman. The property were in Kattusseri, Palakkad District.¹¹
6. Pazhampalakkode Moothar with the *stanam* name of Kumaran Raman Alias Pazhampalakkode Moothar. The properties were in Pazhampalakkode.¹²

The *stanams* held by the Nayar under the Cochin Raja were the following:

- Ayyazhipada Nayar alias Ayyazhi Chathan Raman and
- Vadakkum Nambidi alias Kayar Nadutaya Kandan Naman.¹³

As the Ayyazhipada Nayar or the Ayyazhi Chathan Raman the Kavalappara Nayar had certain obligation to the Cochin Raja. He was responsible to the protect the boundary of Cochin Raja.¹⁴ He was to command the fortresses along the boundary. The Vadakkum Nambidi was

¹⁰ Certified copy of decree in Suit No. 117 of 1858, Thukkidi Munziff Court, Themmalapuram in Calicut Jilla.

¹¹ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, Document No. 26.

¹² *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 29.

¹³ Certified copy of the Proceedings of the Diwan of Cochin, dated 6th January 1880.

¹⁴ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, Doc. No. 64.

also known as Kayyur Nadutaya Kandan Naman. This was associated with Chelakkara temple. This *stanam* was more related to the religion. The *stanam* as Ayyazhipada Nayar related to the defender of Cochin territory. Both these brought land holdings along with privileges to the Kavalappara Nayar.¹⁵ Once the Ayyazhipada Nayar intrigued with the Thalachannavar or the commander of Zamorin army and joined the side of Zamorin. Later the Padanayar was killed. Then the family of Padanayar was left with only one member, the Ayyazhikkal Erappan. Then with the sanction of *Raja* of Cochin one Kelappan Nayar and one Kunhi Kambi and her children were adopted to the Pada Nayar family.¹⁶ There were lands belonging the Kavalappara Nayar registered under the name of Ayyazhipada Nayar. During the period Col. Munro there was contention between the Kavalappara Nayar and Cochin Government regarding these lands. The verdict of the Court was in favour of the Nayar.¹⁷

Each of these dignities held by the Kavalappara Nayar involved certain powers and privileges including property for holding such *stanams*. The Moopil Nayar was a *naduvazhi* but he enjoyed the powers and privileges of a *desavazhi* also in several villages. As a *desavazhi* he enjoyed the rights of

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. xxi.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 64 and 65.

ambalam, ambalappadi, desam and *desadhipatyam*.¹⁸ These rights included the directions of the religious ceremony of the village, management of temple lands and temple servants, control of marriages and ceremonies in the *desam* and general supervision of the affairs of the *desam*.¹⁹

Some sort of a hierarchy existed among the rulers in the region. Roughly it was in this manner - king, *naduvazhi, desavazhi* and *janmi*. *Naduvazhis* had authorities in their respective *nadus* but extent of that authority and the degree of their subordination to the king depended upon their political status.²⁰

The Kavalappara Nayar was both a *naduvazhi* and *desavazhi*. Each dignity involved certain privileges and property for holding this *stanam*. The Nayar had obligations like payments on certain occasion to the overlord. By the beginning of the 18th century the struggle for power in Kerala among the prominent rulers of Kerala and among the European powers who had come here for trade became acute. During this period the Kavalappara Nayar owed a nominal allegiance to the Cochin Raja and to the Zamorin.²¹

The struggle between the Zamorin of Calicut, and the King of Cochin gave opportunity to the Kavalappara Nayar to enhance his power. When the

¹⁸ For details of these see Chapter V, p.170-171.

¹⁹ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, pp. xv-xvi.

²⁰ C. Achyuta Menon, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

²¹ William Logan, *Malabar Manual*, (1887), Thiruvananthapuram, 2000, p. 653.

Zamorin was making preparation for attacking the Dutch he mobilized troops from Kavalappara also.²² The territory of Palghat Raja was often attacked by the forces of Calicut and Cochin. In 1746 the Zamorin attacked Palghat Raja and its feudatory, Kavalappara Nayar. Unable to withstand the hostility of Zamorin the Palghat Raja placed himself under the protection of the King of Mysore on the condition of paying an annual tribute of 12000 *Vira Rayan fanams*.²³ The king of Mysore sent Hyder Ali who was the governor of Dindigal to assist the Palghat Raja. Hyder Ali sent 2,000 cavalry and 5,000 infantry under a military general to Palghat. The Zamorin was engaged in war with other powers and he thought of buying off the invader by paying a large sum of Rs.12 lakhs.²⁴ In this circumstances the Kavalappara family managed to come out of the control of the Palghat Raja. The family managed to come to its previous position during 1760-61. It was with the assistance of Travancore forces and the Divan Kesava Pillai of Travancore that the Nayar was reinstated in power in his domain. In return the Kavalappara family handed over monopoly of pepper to Travancore.²⁵ Following this agreement in 1762 the combined army of Kavalappara and Travancore under Dalwa Marthanda Pilla and D' Lanoy invaded the Zamorin's army at Trichur.

²² K. Balakrishna Kurup, *Kozhikodinte Charithram* (Malayalam), Calicut, 2000, p. 115.

²³ K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *op. cit.*, p. 224.

²⁴ *Ibid*, p. 224.

²⁵ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, p. xiii.

Zamorin's army was defeated at Chelakkara. The Zamorin agreed to pay an indemnity to Travancore.²⁶ This victory added to the power and prestige of the Kavalappara family. To signify the newly acquired independent authority the family built a new palace and called it *Kottaram*. Formerly any attempt of Kavalappara Nayar at independence was suppressed by either the Zamorin or the Cochin Raja. It is to be noted that the Kavalappara Nayars called their residence *Kottaram* after the fashion of Travancore and not as a *Kovilakam* as in the case of Cochin Raja or the Zamorin. This must also have been part of the conciliatory policy of the Kavalappara Nayar because the word *Kovilakam* for his residence would be resented to by the local Rajas. In the political system of the kings and nobility even the name of residence had much significance as the same showed the nature of authority.²⁷ It is to be noted that it was the enmity of Travancore Raja towards the Cochin Raja and the Zamorin that made the former help Kavalappara. This friendship between Travancore and Kavalappara continued for a long time. The Travancore royal family used to invite Kavalappara Nayars on important occasions. The Kavalappara Nayars also used to invite the Travancore Raja on all important occasions in the family. Brahmins were sent as messengers between the two families. They used to exchange presents also. When the Kavalappara Nayar assumed office from the Court of Wards, the Maharaja of Travancore sent an invitation to

²⁶ K.V. Krishna Ayyar, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

²⁷ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, p. 13.

him to visit Thiruvananthapuram. This was in the form of inviting a state guest. When Kavalappara Parvathy Nethiyar passed away the news of the demise was intimated to the king of Travancore, along with the residents of Cochin and Thiruvananthapuram.²⁸ This shows the power and prestige of the Kavalappara family in the political set up of Kerala even under colonialism.

The Kavalappara family lost its independence during the period of the Mysorean occupation of Kerala. On the eve of the Mysorean invasion many a chieftain of Malabar fled to Travancore for security.²⁹ The Kavalappara Nayar also fled to Travancore. In the third Mysorean War Tippu Sultan ceded Malabar to the English East India Company. This was according to the Treaty of Sreeranga Patanam in 1792.³⁰ In the third Anglo-Mysorean war the Kavalappara Nayar had helped the English. The Kavalappara Nayar supplied Nayar soldiers and grains to the garrisons of Palghat.³¹

The English East India Company reinstated the Nayar on his former position after the fall of Tippu Sultan. This time also the Nayar was actively helped by the Diwan of Travancore. But at this time the Cochin Raja also had made his claim over Kavalappara. This created difficult situation for the Kavalappara Nayar. The English East India Company appointed the Joint

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Kerala Charithram* (Mal.) (1967), Kottayam 1977, p. 373.

³⁰ William Logan, *Malabar Manual, op. cit.*, p.489.

³¹ William Logan, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Other Papers of Importance* (1879), Thiruvananthapuram, 1998, p. 155.

Commission for effecting an administrative set up in Malabar. The Joint Commission made an agreement for one year with the Kavalappara Nayar in 1792. According to this he was reinstated to his former position, but as a subordinate of the Company. This was the case with other chieftains of Malabar.³²

The agreement was signed by W.G. Farmer and Alexander Dow on one side for the Company and by the Kavalappara Nayar on the other. The territory of the Kavalappara family was assessed at an amount of Rs.18,285 (Rupees eighteen thousand two hundred and eighty five only).³³ From this amount Rs. 2,285 was considered as a charge of collection. Rs.1000 could be taken by the Kavalappara Nayar for himself. The rest of the amount, that is Rs.5,000 (Rupees Five thousand only) must to be paid to the Company for one year, from the 1st September 1792. The amount could be paid in three installments. The Nayar agreed to submit the inspection of his revenue report to any person appointed by the Company. The Company also made it clear, that the Cochin Raja had no claim on Kavalappara family and that the agreement was for one year only.

The Palghat Raja also renewed his claims on Kavalappara. But this also was rejected by the Company. In October 1794 the Company made another agreement with the Nayar and granted him a quinquennial lease. But

³² *Ibid.*, p. 155.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

Company was very particular to abolish all the feudal privileges of the Kavalappara Nayar. There after he was not to collect *Purushantaram* or succession fee from his subordinates or receive the *Kazcha* or festival offerings on *Onam*, *Vishu*, etc. from the ryots.³⁴ But the agreement with the Company proved to be fatal to the Kavalappara family. The Mooppil Nayar could not pay the agreed amount to the Company. The result was the accumulation of arrears of revenue payment to the Company. This made the Company bring the territory of the family under its direct control. Many a chieftain of Malabar had this fate. Thus the Kavalappara family lost its position as a ruling family. Then it became a *janmi* or landlord.

Later the Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar was given a *Malikhana* by the English East India Company.³⁵ It was an amount about one fifth (1/5) of the share of the gross revenue. *Malikhana* used to be passed for payment at the Palghat treasury.³⁶ But this payment was on the good behaviour of the ex-chieftain. Later the advance of *Malikhana* was made perpetual. But the good behaviour of the chieftain was stressed by the English East India Company.

³⁴ K.K.N. Kurup, 'European Impact on Malabar Society in the 18th Century - An Analysis', *Journal of Kerala Studies*, Vol. IV, Department of History, University of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram, 1977.

³⁵ Certified copy of decree in Suit No. 991 of 1817, Thukkidi Munsiff Court Vettathu Nadu, Kavalappara Third Nayar Vs. Kavalappara Valiya Nayar.

Malikhana was the amount given by the Company to the ex-chieftains from the revenue collected from their own realm. It was like a pension and was meant for the maintenance of the chieftains family and administration of property.

³⁶ Letter from Kavalappara Kochunni Mooppil Nayar to the Collector of Malabar, dated 22.08.1925.

On the basis of the revenue realized in 1800-01 from his territory, an amount of Rs. 4567 (Rupees four thousand five hundred and sixty seven only) was given as the *Malikhana*.³⁷ Even though the Mooppil Nayar lost his powers and privileges as a ruling chieftain, he retained his powers as a feudal lord including the authority over several temples. But by the last quarter of the 19th century again there was a crisis in the family.

During the colonial period also the *naduvazhis* retained their civil officers. The Kavalappara Nayar had *Pattalis*. *Pattali* was an accountant. Under the British the *naduvazhi* collected the ordinary and extra revenue from his territory. In this collection the *naduvazhi* was assisted by the *Pattali*. The office of *Pattalis* was hereditary. They also held land for their services which were free of rent.³⁸ In 1818 the accountants were Nannata Raman Menon and Kulaviyil Menon.³⁹

In the Kavalappara family there had always been a dearth of male members.⁴⁰ In 1872 when the Mooppil Nayar passed away he had no direct nephew to succeed him and his niece who was to be the heiress of the property was only 6 years old. Hence there must have been somebody to look

³⁷ Letter No. D. 115/P-11 dated, 22.01.1911 from R.B. Wood, Esquire, I.C.S., Acting Collector of Malabar to Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar.

³⁸ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, p. xviii.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 24, p. 29.

⁴⁰ Letter from K. Appunni Nayar, Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar to K.K.N. Kurup, dated 4 November 1982.

after the property of the family. By this time the affairs of the estate were in utter confusion. For the maintenance of the bureaucrats and retainers the estate was in need of money and it fell into a debt of Rs. 70,000 (Rupees Seventy Thousand only). Then the colonial administrators intervened in the affairs of the administration and brought the property of the family under their control.⁴¹ The Court of Wards was a trusteeship system and property brought under the system was entrusted to a manager under the control of the Court of Wards.⁴²

The Court of Wards is an institution which dates back to the age of feudalism in Great Britain. In India it was instituted by the English East India Company through an ordinance. This was confirmed by two Regulations X and L of 1793. These laws were amended and supplemented through years till the twentieth century. The aim of the East India Company in introducing this system in India was to ensure the collection of revenue whenever a zamindar or a big landlord under it was declared unfit for ruling. It was introduced at the request of the landlord or zamindar who themselves found it a need.⁴³ Between 1912 and 1923 thirty estates in Bihar and Orissa were taken over by the Court of Wards. Of these seven were taken over at the request of their proprietors. It was the Board of Revenue that assumed the

⁴¹ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, p. xvi.

⁴² Jacques Pouchepadass, *Land Power and Market: A Bihar District under Colonial Rule, 1860-1947*, New Delhi, 2000, p. 255.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 255.

role of Court of Wards and it referred to a ministerial office in charge of the management of the estates under government trusteeship. A contribution was levied on each Ward's estates proportional to its yearly income to cover the management costs incurred by the government. If there was any surplus income it was used to liquidate the debts of the proprietor or for investment purpose like purchase of land. In course of time the Court of Wards began to take interest in the financial re-organisation and improvement of the estate. It also undertook the duty to train the proprietor for his future responsibilities. The education of the proprietor was of much interest to the Court of Wards as it was aimed at the inculcation of Western habits and culture in him.⁴⁴ The first Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar educated by the Court of Wards was the son of Parvathy Nethiyar, Kumaran Raman. In the annual proceedings of the Court of Wards the progress of the education of the Wards was clearly mentioned. For education the students were sent to the Newington School, Madras. The curriculum of this institution included English and Malayalam, including grammar, arithmetic, geography and history of India. The Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar alias Kumaran Raman joined the school at an age of thirteen. Narayani Nethiyar who was eleven years old and studying in the Kavalappara Estate School and Raman Elaya Nayar alias Ittunni Kumaran

⁴⁴ *Ibid*, p. 256, also see Pushpalatha K "Administration of the property of chieftains by the Court of Wards in the Madras Presidency during the period of colonialism with special reference to Kerala", paper presented to the South Indian History Congress, Thirunelveli, February, 2009, (unpublished).

who was six years old also joined Newington School. Unni alias Ittunni Kumaran Raman and Unni alias Kochunni also joined the Newington school.⁴⁵

For 38 years and 13 days the property of the Kavalappara family was under the Court of Wards. During this period it was called the estate. During this period the income of the estate increased by 3,000 *paras* of paddy and by Rs. 5,652 in cash. Among the acts of improvements were the repair and maintenance of buildings, education of the Wards, marriage ceremonies etc. A debt of Rs. 90,702 of the Kavalappara family was paid off by the Court of Wards.⁴⁶

The Court of Wards made effective arrangements for the administration of the land of the Kavalappara Estate and effective measures for the cultivation of the land.⁴⁷ The estate land covered an area of 15493 acres of which 4503 were wet lands and 10990 dry. The area under cultivation was 7806 including 1004 acres of unoccupied dry lands. A home farm was started in the estate under the Court of Wards in 1905. The cultivation of sugarcane was introduced. Superior quality manures were used in the farm. The result was bumper crops. The home farm paddy crops of the

⁴⁵ *Report on the Administration of Estates under the Court of Wards in the Madras Presidency for fasli 1300 (1890-91)*, Madras, 1892.

⁴⁶ *Report on the Administration of the Estates under the Court of Wards in the Madras Presidency for fasli 1320 (1910-1911)*, Madras, 1912.

⁴⁷ Proceedings of the Court of Wards, dated 15.10.1910.

year 1910 was better than those of the neighbouring agriculturists.⁴⁸ The total current demand for the year 1903 amounted to Rs.34,432 of which Rs.30,486 was collected. A sum of Rs.324 also could be collected. The total balance to be collected was Rs. 3622.⁴⁹

In the opening of the year 1903 the financial balance was Rs. 1,04,272 exclusive of Rs.3442 being the value of paddy on hand. The total receipt during the *fasli* was Rs.79727.⁵⁰ The Court of Wards used to invest the excess money in buying government securities, promissory notes, etc. In 1903 government promissory notes for Rs. 13,737 was sold and it added to the total receipt amount to Rs.1,69,999.⁵¹ An important feature the Kavalappara Estate under Court of Wards had been the correct accounting and detailing of income and expenditure, most of which were in the form of the Proceedings of the office of the Court of Wards. These Proceedings have been a great source for the history of the family. These Proceedings shed light into the family history also. For example among the general remarks of the proceedings of 1903, the delivery of the Nethiyars eldest daughter and the unfortunate death of the baby are mentioned.⁵²

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹ Proceedings of Court of Wards, No. 9, Press, 13th January 1903, Madras, by C.J. Weir, I.C.S.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*

The total number of the tenants in 1903 was 2,922.⁵³ So long as tenants paid rent regularly they were left in undisturbed possession of their land. There was no forced *melcharth* or eviction. But this was not the case with many other *janmies* in the region.

The Court of Wards undertook many programmes for the betterment of the estate. The facilities in the Alathur and Vaniyamkulam markets were improved and permanent shops were put up at Alathur.⁵⁴ Among these measures the construction of Pudukulangarakavu temple, *Balikkalpura* of Trikkanyavu temple, Eruppe temple *gopuram*, Mookan Chathan's temple, Eruppe temple tank, *Kuthumadam* at *mulamkunnukavu*, *Thidappali* at *Mulankunnukavu*, etc. are note worthy. The *Kottaram* and the nearby buildings also were repaired or renovated. Under the Court of Wards a new *Pathayapura* and an office building for the estate manager were built. Reconstruction of *Thazhathukalam* building and improvements to *Kottaram* buildings with a new bungalow at *Kottaram* were also effected. Construction of *Kottaramadham* and gate house at Melarkode, construction of watersheds, construction of a *Pathayapura* at Pazhampalاکode, construction of Menakathodikalam building, construction of *Pathayapura* gate house at Thiruvillwamala, construction of new building for the Kavalappara school and the reconstruction of the gate house of Kyliatt *Kottaram*, etc, were also

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Proceeding of the Court of Wards, dated, 15.10.1910.

important activities. New wells were sunk at Aryankavu and various other places and they added to the public utility in the area. The Court of Wards looked into even minute aspects of the estate and recorded them. That is how even the construction of new cattle house at *Kottaram* came to be recorded. Facilities at the markets of Vaniyamkulam and Alathur were improved. The construction of Vaniyamkulam market sheds and the market sheds of Alathur belonged to this period.⁵⁵ Apart from this a new building and gymnastic sheds were constructed for the Kavalappara school. The hill bungalow was repaired. A Tennis Court was laid out. The Court of Wards introduced a number of reforms that saved the estate from debts. When the debtors filed suits against the estates, the Court of Wards defended the suits. Prominent lawyer Sir. C. Sankaran Nair was appointed to sue for the estate.⁵⁶ Certain members of the Kavalappara family had differences of opinions with the Court of Wards. Once when Parvathy Nethiyar stayed outside Kavalappara, her payments were refused by the Collector till she returned to the estate. Against this she sent a petition projecting the long standing ill will between herself and the estate manager. She also wanted another official as manager to manage the affairs of the marriage ceremonies of her eldest daughter Narayani Nethiyar.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Kavalappara Papers, op. cit.*, p. xxxiv.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

The Court of Wards used to interfere even in the personal affairs of the family members. For example it would not allow the marriage of the Wards before attaining maturity. The marriage of the Parvathy Nethiyar was conducted only in 1886. The ladies of the family were married only to the nambuthiries under the *sambandham* system. As in other *marumakkathayam tarawads* the married lady lived in the *tarawad* itself. A separate establishment called *madham* was maintained for these nambuthiri husbands.⁵⁸ In 1887 Rs.70 was spent for the maintenance of the husband of the Nethiyar.⁵⁹ In 1909 Rs. 29 per month was spent for the maintenance of the husband of junior Nethiyar.⁶⁰

There were occasions when the request for additional funds by the Nethiyar was turned down by the Court of Wards. But with all its limitations and the lack of de-centralisation of powers, the Court of Wards managed the estate well and provided security to it. That is why neither Parvathy Nethiyar nor Narayani Nethiyar came forward to shoulder the responsibility of the estate.⁶¹

An important feature of the education at Newington School provided for the Wards was the special attention bestowed on their physical

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 90.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Doc. No. 90.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

development. Gymnastics, bicycling, riding, tennis and cricket formed part of their curriculum. There were also to have a course of musketry drill and firing exercises. The subjects taught, mode of teaching, boarding, lodging everything was after European fashion and the Court of Wards has been a device through which western culture was introduced in the estates.⁶² Due attention was given to the public work department of the estate which included the repair of roads, buildings etc.⁶³ in 1910 when Appukkuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar attained majority he took the charge of the estate and its the administration. Thus the Court of Wards came to an end. There began a glorious era of Kavalappara when Appukkuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar took over the reins of estate.⁶⁴ People of locality were happy that they got a person then to look into their affairs and to whom they could approach in their times of troubles. Through Appukkuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar new games like tennis ball and baseballs percolated among the public. The new Mooppil Nayar inaugurated a reading room for the people at Kavalappara, at a time when such institution had not been introduced in the country side. He has been a patron of cultural activities.⁶⁵ During the period of Appukkuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar everyday there would be some event or other connected with

⁶² For details See Chapter VI, Colonial System and Transition, p.214.

⁶³ For details see Chapter VI, Colonial System and Transition, p.214.

⁶⁴ Letter from K. Appunni Nayar, Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar to K.K.N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

⁶⁵ Fore details see Chapter IV, Religion and Rituals.

art and letter in the *Kottaram*. This Mooppil Nayar was a prominent political personality. While studying in Newington Mooppil Nayar was a favourite protage of Dr. T.M. Nayar, founder of the Justice Party. Later he became a prominent figure in the party and has been member of Justice party delegation to England under the leadership of Dr. T.M. Nayar and Sir. P.T. Thyagaraja Chettiyar.⁶⁶ He took an active part in the rehabilitation work following the Malabar Rebellion of 1921.⁶⁷ Appukkuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar passed away in 1925 and followed by the successor Kochunni Mooppil Nayar. Kochunni Mooppil Nayar put up claims that the entire estate property belonged to him exclusively. Litigations started and it reached the Privy Council.⁶⁸ Kochunni Mooppil Nayar passed away in June 1964 and was followed by Kunhikuttan Unni Mooppil Nayar. He passed away in 1974. After him Sathyanathan Unni Mooppil Nayar became the Mooppil Nayar.

After the death of Kochunni Mooppil Nayar the junior members of the Kavalappara family filed a suit before the Sub Court of Ottappalam for the partition of the estate. Nobody opposed the suit. The proceedings of the partition went for some time. But before the partition of the estate landlordism in Kerala was abolished by legislative measures of Kerala Government. This

⁶⁶ Letter from K. Appunni Nayar, Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar to K.K.N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p.3.

⁶⁷ For details see Chapter VIII, Individualism and Mobility, p. 23.

⁶⁸ Letter from K. Appunni Nayar, Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar to K.K.N. Kurup, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

was through the Kerala land Reform Amendment Act of 1969. Among other things the act provided for the conferment of full ownership of land on cultivating tenants, fixity of the occupation to the *Kudikidappukar* (those who reside in the lands) ceiling on all landholding, and take over and distribution of surplus land. These laws were put into practice from January 1st 1970.⁶⁹ The tenants now became the proprietors of the holdings and by giving a small compensation to the landlord they were relieved from the duty of payment of rent.

At present the Kavalappara family is under the administration of Receiver. Many a building of Kavalappara family have been destroyed or sold. Some of the existing building are in a dilapidated state.⁷⁰ The Receiver finds it difficult to renovate or maintain these buildings and other monuments because of the lack of funds. Now the female head of the family and her successors live in the building of Kavalappara at Ottappalam town.⁷¹

The present Mooppil Nayar Sathyanathan Unni Mooppil Nayar resides at Trippunithura. He has been a bank manager. Even though the family lost its power, it still has ritual authority over the temples under its control.⁷² The

⁶⁹ A. Sreedhara Menon, *Cultural Heritage of Kerala: An Introduction*, Cochin, 1978, p. 234.

⁷⁰ Interview with Advocate Mohan Kumar, Receiver, Kavalappara Estate, dated, 20.09.2009.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

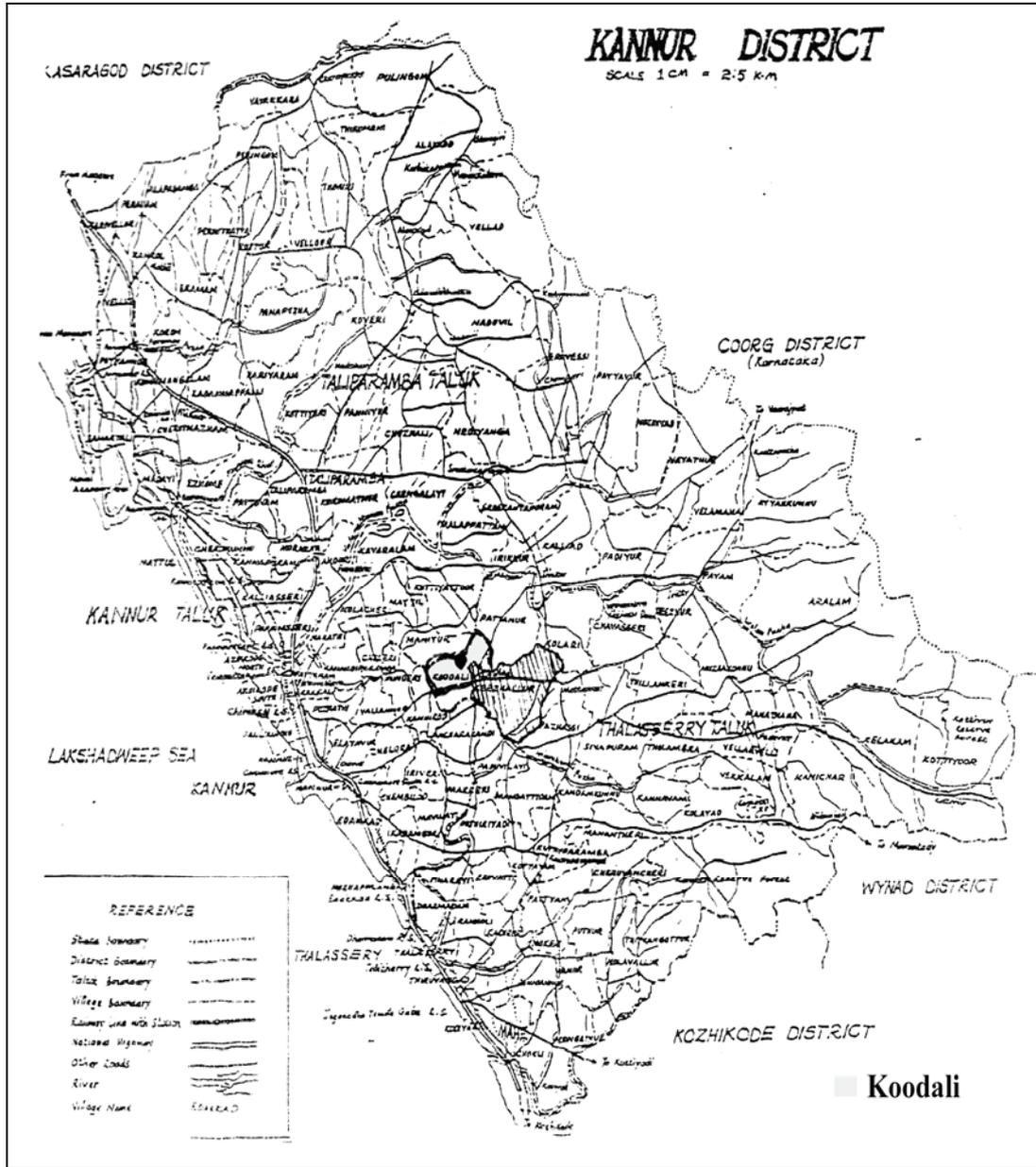
⁷² Interview with Sarala Nethiyar, a senior member of Kavalappara Family, Ottappalam dated 10.10.2008.

senior most lady of the Kavalappara family Gouri Nethiyar resides at Trippunithura.

The history of Koodali family is traceable from the 16th century. In the 16th century the seat of this family was at Kanhirode Village⁷³ to the east of Koodali village in Kannur district. The Koodali family belonged to the Kalliyat *Swarupam*.⁷⁴ Kalliyat *Swarupam* reigned over a territorial division of Puravazhinadu in North Malabar. Later the residence of the family was shifted to the present village of Koodali. The residence was on a hillock and it came to be known as Koodali Koodathil Kunnath. 'Kunnath' means on a hill top. When the house was shifted to the lower ground it came to be known as Koodali Thazhath house. The members of the family are known as Kalliyadan Nambiars after the Kalliyat *Swarupam*. They are also known as Valluva Nambiars. There were two branches in the family – Keloth and Kannothe. Later the family came to have six collateral branches – Thazhath, Keloth, Kannothe, Puliyaamkandy, Puthiyaveedu, and Puthiyarambu. If the *Koodali Thazhathu* house had no heir it would make adoption from any of these branches. If any of these branches was not having an heir its property

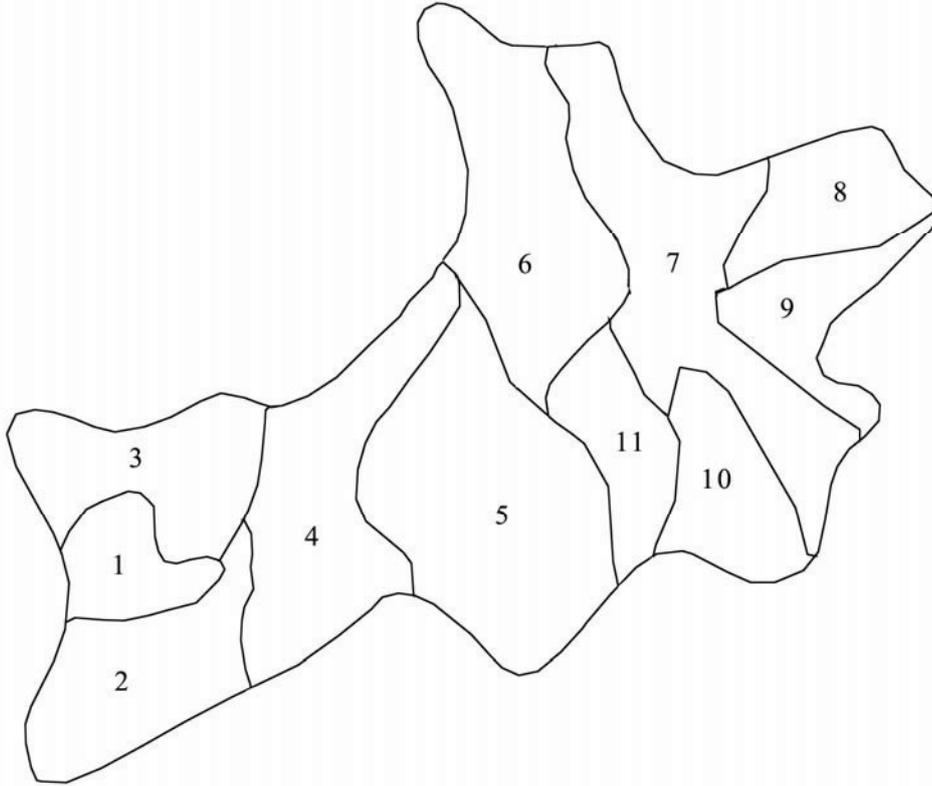
⁷³ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari*, Calicut University Historical Series, University of Calicut, 1995.

⁷⁴ A *Swarupam* is a large joint family having ruling powers, in which the senior most person of all the branches of family taken together would be the ruler. *Swarupam* was a form of state. Also see M.R. Raghava Varier, 'Swarupam as State' in Venugopal and Champakalakshmi (ed.), *State and Society in Pre-Modern South India*, Thrissur, 2001, p.120.



Source : *Vikasana Rekha*, Kizhallur Grama Panchayat, Janakeeyasuthranam, 1996.

KOODALI PANCHAYATH –WARDS



1. Koodali
2. Thattiyode
3. Moolakkari
4. Kavumthazhey
5. Kololam
6. Kovur
7. Kolappa
8. Koorari
9. Ayipuzha
10. Kodoliprum
11. Kunnothri

Source : *Vikasana Rekha*, Kizhallur Grama Panchayat, Janakeeyasuthranam, 1996.

would go to the Koodali Thazhathu *tarawad*.⁷⁵ According to the system of *marumakkathayam* descent was through the mothers. The joint family of the *tarawad* included a mother and all her daughters, all her brothers and sisters and the descendants on the sisters' side. They lived together in the same building or buildings having a common kitchen and dinning hall.⁷⁶ The head of the family has been selected according to *marumakkathayam*. The senior most male member of the joint family would be the head or the *karanavar* of the family. He would be the administrative head of the *tarawad* and had vast power on the property and the members of the *tarawad*.

The *karanavar* of the Koodali *tarawad* was called *Gurikkalachan*, a term representing the title of a Nayar commandant who maintained a *kalari*. There were ritual formalities for becoming a *Gurikkalachan*. The title was formally awarded by the *Raja* of Kottayam.⁷⁷

Tradition ascribes the origin of Koodali family to a house called Nettur Puthiyaveedu near Thalasseri. A few members of this family migrated to Kanhirode and founded the Kunnath house. When the members of the Kunnath family increased in numbers a branch of it went to Koodali and founded the Koodali Kunnath house. Later this Koodali Kunnath family

⁷⁵ K.K.N. Kurup (ed), *Koodali Granthavari*, *op. cit.*, p.1.

⁷⁶ T.K. Gopal Panikkar, *Malabar and its Folk*, New Delhi, 1900, pp.34-53.

⁷⁷ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari*, *op.cit.*, p.x.

shifted their residence to the present Koodali Thazhathu house.⁷⁸ The building of the Koodali Thazhathu house was gifted to a lady of this family called Kunhathai by her husband. This Kunhathai was the daughter of one Uppatti Amma who belonged to the Koodali Kunnath family.⁷⁹

Kunhatthai had a daughter called Patti and a son Raman. It was this Raman who was responsible for the foundation of *kalaristanam* in the Koodali Thazhathu house. He is known as the Raman *Gurikkalachan*. He figures in the folk songs of North Malabar as the individual who invited the deities to this *kalari stanam* at Koodali.⁸⁰ It is this Raman *Gurikkalahan* who obtained the *stanam* of *Gurikkalachan* and the *Kalliat Edva Stanam* for the *Thazhathu veedu* family from the Kottayam Raja. This was in 850 KE (AD 1675).⁸¹ We have documents belonging to the Koodali family and Koodali *kavu* much before the foundation of the *kalaristanam*.⁸² The second document of Koodali Granthavari is in connection with a meeting in the *kalari*.

⁷⁸ K.T. Kunhi Kammaran Nambiar, *The History of the Koodali Family*, unpublished, document kept in Koodali *tarawad*, p.1.

⁷⁹ C. Sankaran Nambiar, Retired Dt. & Sessions Judge (Arbitrator), Partition Document, Koodali Tarawad, Tellicheri, 1956, p.1.

⁸⁰ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit.*, p.1.

⁸¹ C. Sankiaran Nair, *op.cit.*, p.1.

⁸² K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Koodali Grandhavari, op. cit.*, Document Nos.1, 2 and 3, pp.1-2.

Raman *Gurikkalachan* was followed by Kelu *Gurikkalachan* who was his nephew. It was he who built the *kalari* of *Thazhathu Veedu*. This is mentioned in an old *Nalvazhi* book kept in the office of the *tarawad*.⁸³ According to the *Nalvazhi* book mentioned above Raman *Gurikkalachan* passed away on 28th Kanni 899 KE (August – September AD 1724). It was he who built one Puthiyaveedu house for the family.⁸⁴

Kelu *Gurikkalachan* was succeeded by Koran *Gurikkalachan* the direct brother of the former. He seems to have purchased the 50 *para* paddy field at Koodali Menuprakandi for the family paying 101 *Cannanore Puthiyapanam*.⁸⁵ This shows availability of liquid cash with the family. He died in 905 KE (AD 1730). It was Koran *Gurikkalachan* who built the Keloth house. Koran *Gurikkalachan* was succeeded by Kelu *Gurikkalachan* second. He was the son of Koran *Gurikkalachans* sister Mathu. He made important purchases for the family which added to its wealth and prestige. They include the jungles of Parambiheri and the paddy lands in Kavumthazha and Mattannur.⁸⁶ From the documents of the land transactions conducted by him it is clear that the name of his father was Chindan. Kelu *Gurikkalachan* passed away in 940 KE (AD 1765). He was succeeded by Koran

⁸³ A book of accounts showing daily income and expenditure, a journal, a day book.

⁸⁴ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit.*, p.2

⁸⁵ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari, op. cit.*, Doc. No.108, p. 77.

⁸⁶ Some of these purchases are detailed in *Koodali Granthavari, Ibid.*, document No.137, 139, 142, 143, 145, 146, p.88-92, etc.

Gurikkalachan second.⁸⁷ There are legends with regard to the death of Koran *Gurikkal*. His death was in the wake of Tippu Sultan's attack of Koodali. When the forces of Tippu were approaching he entered the *kalari*, stood before the *bhaghavati* and asked his *karyasthan* to shoot him. Thus he got himself shot dead. He preferred death to dishonor at the hands of the enemy. After the death of this *Gurikkalachan* another Kelappan Nambiar became the *karanavar*. From this time the *karanavar* of Koodali ceased to assume the title of *Gurikkalachan*.

Kelappan Nambiar made certain adoptions to the family as he was the sole member surviving in the family. The adoption was from the Kanhirode Kunnath family. The adoptees were Uthala Amma of Ramambeth house and Kunjamman, her son. Kunjamman proved to be a very good assistant of the *karanavar* and later a very famous *karanavar*. Uppatti Amma the mother of the Kunhamman Nambiar had three other sons and daughters. All these sons were very efficient and had acquired vast property. Kunhamman Nambiar has been an able assistant to Kelappan Nambiar, the *karanavar* in the management of the family affairs and the estate. Kelappan Nambiar had to face troubles arising out of the attack of Tippu sultan and subsequent taking over of Malabar by English East India Company. During this troublesome period Kunhamman Nambiar has been of great help to him. In 972 KE (AD

⁸⁷ K.T. Kunhi Kammaran Nambiar, op.cit., p.3.

1797) Kelappan Nambiar passed away leaving the estate and all its possessions to Kunhamman Nambiar.

With the accession of Kunhamman Nambiar to power there began a new era in the history of Koodali *tarawad*.⁸⁸ After 16 years of Kunhamman Nambiar's *karanavarship*, there arose a dispute over his title to the property of Koodali family. In 1814 Melotan Veetil Kannan Nambiar filed a case in the Tellicherry Jilla Court against Kunjamman Nambiar on the ground that he was not the rightful owner of *Thazhathu Veedu*, but only an agent appointed by his brother Rairu *Gurikkalathan* and he himself was the actual member of the Koodali family. Kunhamman Nambiar claimed that he was the rightful *karanavar* as he was adopted to Koodali *Thazhathuveedu* by the late *karanavar* Kelappan Nambiar and his position was acknowledged by the Kottayam Raja. He had also performed the funeral rites and other rituals for the late *karanavar*. The judge agreed with the contentions of the Kunhamman Nambiar and dismissed the suit. Against this verdict Kannan Nambiar filed an appeal before the Provincial Court of Tellicherry. The judges of this court who heard the case agreed with the decision of the Jilla judge. The final decree in favour of Kunhamman Nambiar was made on 30th December 1818.⁸⁹

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.4-5.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.5-6.

Kunhamman Nambiar earned much property for Thazhathu Veedu. He earned liquid cash whenever possible and invested the same in land for the Koodali family. Kunhamman Nambiar has been an ally of the British that he had recruited *kolkarans* for the British in their attack over Coorg. This also earned much money for him which also was invested in land. Pazhaya Veetil Chandu another ally of the British was close to him. Kunhamman Nambiar was noted for his industrious nature and dedication to this family. He used to work in the paddy fields like other labourers. Among the measures adopted by him to increase the income of the family was the system of lending money on interest to the Mappilas of Kanhirode bazaar. Kunhamman Nambiar has been a good friend of the Thiyathikandi muslim family in the area. In 1790 even before he became the head of the family he had helped the British against Tippu Sultan. When the British were fighting against the Sultan's troops near the Manikkunnam bridge he was watching the event. On the request of the British he became a sentry at Manikkunnam bridge. Then many of his tenants also joined the British militia. As noted above he used to recruit a good number of the tenants as *kolkars* to the British in return for which earned money.⁹⁰ When Tippu Sultan attacked the area Kelappan Nambiar second was the *karanavar*. Kunhamman Nambiar has been considered as a *desavazhi* under the *Melkoima* of Kottayam Raja. He had *desadhipatyam* (supremacy) over five *desams* – Koodali, Thattiotte,

⁹⁰ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari*, *op. cit.*, p.xvi.

Kavumthazha, Poovathur and Mattannur. As the *karanavar* of the *tarawad* he possessed *Ambalapadi* and *Urayima* over the Koodalikavu. His formal accession to the *karanavarship* was through a ritual in which he was seated over *Vellayum Karimbadavum* (white cotton cloth and black woollen mat) in the presence of the temple oriented people and the elders of the locality at the Koodalikavu. This has been a usual custom. Kunhamman passed away on the day of Aswathi star in the month of *Thulam* 1007 KE (AD 1832 October, November) at the age of 87.⁹¹ The *Sradham* of Kunhamman was celebrated in a grant manner by all the members of this family. His *Sradham* is celebrated even today as *Aswathi Sradham* in memory of his name.⁹² Kunhamman Nambiar has been one of the most famous *karanavar* of the Koodali *tarawad*. He consolidated the *tarawad* property and his name has been held in great esteem.

Melotan Veetil Rairu *Gurikkalachan* who was a party to the suit against Kunhamman Nambiar was receiving an allowance of 3000 *sers* of paddy from Koodali as he was incharge of the *kalari* attached to the *Thazhathuveedu*. As he went against the *karanavar* Kunhamman his allowances were stopped. While the trial in the court was going on he passed away. He died unhonoured and unsung. The members of the Koodali family and the people were so irritated with his action that nobody cared for his

⁹¹ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit.*, p.6.

⁹² C. Sankaran Nair, *op.cit.*, p.1.

burial. His body remained unburied for more than two days. It was decayed and then cremated in the Unnambeth thazhathu house. Rairu Nambiar was noted for his scholarship and he devoted himself to spiritual matters. There is a belief that the curse of this *karanavar* fell on his successors.⁹³ Most of his successors fell prey to diabetes and met with pre-mature death. Then the problem was brought before the astrologers during the period of Koodali Kunhikrishnan Nambiar (1918-27) and as per the suggestion of the astrologers remedial measures were taken to save the family from the so called curse of the *karanavar*. An important factor of his remedial measure was the symbolic cremation of the body of Rayru Nambiar. An artificial body of the *karanavar* made of grass was taken from the Unnambeth in a palauquin to the Thazhathu house. All the members of the family observed the funeral rites and one after another lay prostrated before this body. Then this body was cremated with the fire wood of a mango tree in the compound of the Thazhatthu family. The *bali*, *deeksha* etc., were observed by his near relatives following this.⁹⁴

Kunhamman Nambiar was followed by Kelappan Nambiar II as the *karanavar* in 1832. He was the nephew of Kunhamman Nambiar. By this time the British had reconstituted the local administration in Malabar with the *amsam* as the lowest unit. Each *amsam* was under an *adhikari* appointed by

⁹³ K.K.N. Kurup, (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari*, *op. cit.*, p. x.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.xvi.

the British. The post of *adhikari* of Koodali *amsam* was conferred on the *karanavar* of Koodali and Kelappan Nambiar II was the first one to have this office.⁹⁵ He continued in this post up to 1834. As the *karanavar* and *adhikari* the responsibilities of Kelappan were heavy and so the Collector Blemsman wanted Kelappan to nominate his successor for *adhikariship* and he nominated his eldest son Ponmaleri Koroth Chathu to this post. Kelappan Nambiar's wife belonged to Ponmaleri Koroth house in Padenvilai, an affluent family. The manager of this family Pazhayaveetil Chandu was an ally of the British and an enemy of Pazhassi Raja. Quite against the laws of *marumakkathayam*, Kelappan Nambiar gave vast property to his children at Paduvilai. Kelappan Nambiar had another wife belonging to the Aamiyath *tarawad* at Edayannur and had a son Machunnathu Raman Nambiar in this marriage. This Raman Nambiar also was given a house and property by him. But later according to a will they were restored back to Koodali *tarawad*.⁹⁶ Kelappan Nambiar added much to the landed property of Koodali *tarawad*. These lands included the big garden of Kuttikunnu purchased by him. The *karanavar* planted pepper, wines, arecanut and coconut plants in this garden. During this period the Koodali family had the service of the able Karyasthan Kottur Krishnan Menon belonging to Kumaranellur near Koottanadu taluk in

⁹⁵ C. Sankaran Nambiar, Retired Dt and sessions Judge (Arbitrator), Partition Document, Koodali *tarawad*, Tellicheri, 1956, p.2.

⁹⁶ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit*, p. 9.

the present Palakkad District. His brother Sankara Menon and son Chathu Menon also served the family as managers.⁹⁷

A few days before his death Kelappan Nambiar conducted a *sahasra bhojanam*⁹⁸ at *Thazhathu veedu Madham* for the Brahmins. On this occasion presents were distributed among the Brahmins. It was believed that such gifts to the Brahmins would bring prosperity and good luck to the family. Kelappan Nambiar's nephew Kunhikelappan was only a boy and before his death Kelappan Nambiar left a will written in the handwriting of Kottur Krishnan Menon stating that as his nephew Kunhikelappan was only a boy the *Koodali tarawad* was to be managed by Kunnathu Kalliyadan Ramar alias Kunhambu, a close associate of the *karanavar*. This will was dated 18th *Chingam* 1026 KE (AD 1851). In the will it was also stated that Ramar was to live in the Thazhathu Veedu and manage everything concerning the interest of the *tarawad*. But it was also stated that everything was to be done in the name of the nephew Kunhi Kelappan. This will created much confusion and trouble in the *tarawad* during the years to come. *karanavar* Kelappan passed away on 11th September 1851.⁹⁹

At the time of the demise of *karanavar* Kelappan Nambiar, the next *karanavar*, Kunhi Kelappan was only ten years old. So as per the will

⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p.10.

⁹⁸ *Ibid*

⁹⁹ *Ibid*

mentioned above Kunhambu assumed the *adhikariships* and began to live in the Koodali Thazhathu house. This was resented to by the family members. Kunhambu had the support of certain government officers. There officers were Edappadi Chandu Nayar, Tahasildar of Kottayam taluk. The second wife of Kunhambu *adhikari* was the niece of Edappadi Chandu Nambiar. His sister-in-law at Edappadi was married to the head police officer in Kottayam taluk. With the attempts of Kunhambu to capture power there began a period of litigation between the member of Koodali *tarawad* on one side and Kunhambu Nambiar on the other.¹⁰⁰ The attempts of Kunhambu Nambiar to capture power had begun even when *karanavar* Kelappan Nambiar was alive. As the close associate of the *karanavar* in all correspondence of the *karanavar*, he used to add at the bottom "own nephew Kunhambu."¹⁰¹ There were frequent quarrels between Kunhambu Nambiar and the mother of minor Kunhikelappan Nambiar Kunjathai and her sister Thambai who were the permanent resident of the Koodali Thazhathu house. Once on a minor incident there developed a clash between these on one side and Kunhambu *adhikari* on the other.,

In the sacred room of the house Kunhambu Nambiar hanged his wet cloths. Then Kunjathai pulled them out. But again Kunhambu *adhikari* hanged his loin cloth in the same room. This was pulled out by Kunjathai with

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p.13.

¹⁰¹ K.K.N. Kurup, (ed.), *Koodali Granthavari*, *op.cit*, p.xvii

a stick and this precipitated a quarrel. The local people were aware of the cunning nature of Kunhambu and the exploitation of the family by him and so they drove him out of the house. But he managed to come back because of the compulsion of Thambai for the management of the *tarawad*. The Nambiar who now took charge of the store room also managed to poison the food items distributed among the family members. All except Kunjathai died of poison. Kunjathai because of her hatred and fear towards Kunhambu used to cook her food separately. He again managed to kill Kunjathai by adding poison in the ritual food from Koodalikavu. But it was not success. As the village headman Kunhambu Nambiar collected revenue, rent etc, from property of the Thazhathu *tarawad*. But family members were given no maintenance allowance by him.¹⁰² The *jama* of Koodali *amsam* and Maniyur *amsams* were transferred to the *karanavar* Kelappan.¹⁰³ Kunhambu like wise managed to get the *patta* of Ayyallur and the neighboring *amsams*. Once on 8th Kanni 1028 (AD 1853) Kunhambu with 300 followers trespassed into the Kuttikunnu *paramba* and plucked arecanut. As noted above the head police officer of Kottayam was a friend Kunhambu and was practically on his side. But complaints were sent against Kunhambu and he was found guilty. He was to remit a fine of Rs.10/- (Rupees Ten). Against this decree Kunhambu filed an appeal before the District Magistrate Mr. Cannoly and Kunhambu obtained

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit*,p.13.

a decree in favour of him. Against this Kunhi Kelappan submitted another petition and the decision of the Court was in favour of Kunhi Kelappan. There were disputes with regard to the succession certificate and finally it was granted to Kunhambu. Then Kunhi Kelappan filed another appeal against this. The decree of the Jilla Court of Tellicherry in granting succession certificate to Kunhambu was cancelled.

In October 1854 with the support of the Head Police Officer Chandu Nayar, Kunhambu managed to take away two elephants belonging to the Koodali *tarawad*. A complaint about the theft was filed and Kunhambu was ordered to give back the elephants. Even though Kunhambu sent an appeal in the Tellicherry Court but the case was dismissed.¹⁰⁴

In 1857 the adult members of the Koodali family filed a suit against Kunhambu's interference in the management of Koodali estate and other property of *tarawad* including the temple and to restore the property which were already in his possession.¹⁰⁵ The main base of the complaint of the family members headed by Kunhi Kelappan was that Kunhambu did not belong to Koodali *tarawad* and that he and other plaintiffs alone had the right over the *tarawad* and its property. The will left by the late *karanavar* Kelappan Nambiar in giving Kunhambu the rights over *Thazhathuveedu* was

¹⁰⁴ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit*, pp.15-16.

¹⁰⁵ Civil Suit No. 41 of 1857 in the Jilla Civil Court Thalasserri. Also see K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *ibid*, p.16.

to be considered ineffective as it was against *marumakkathayam* usage.¹⁰⁶ The *karanavar* or any other member had no legal right to make a gift over a *tarawad* rights.¹⁰⁷ All these show the increasing awareness of the members of the aristocratic families about the British jurisprudence. The large number of litigations show not only family disputes and feuds but also the confidence in and influence of British judiciary established by British in Malabar. The native people in government employment in the locality especially in the police department wielded much power and influence. The support of these local officers were a decisive factor in many an encroachment or other illegal activities. This is seen in the case of Kunhambu Nambiar who exploited the property of the Koodali house. Kunhambu had defeated the case of the boy *karanavar* Kunhi Kelappan and once the entire property had come under the *janmam* (absolute) right of Kunhambu Nambiar. It can be inferred that in instances like these the colonial state was supporting the claim of the village headman because the Court wanted to maintain the prestige of the colonial servant.¹⁰⁸

The contention of Kunhambu was that six houses including his original family had all rights over the Thazhathu veedu and as such he had claim over Koodali *tarawad*. Kunhikelappan was much junior to him in age and that the

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p.16.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁸ K.K.N Kurup (ed), *Koodali Granthavri*, *op.cit*, pp. xvii – xviii.

late *karanavar* Kelappan's will empowered him to have right over the management of the family. A lot of money seems to have been spent by both parties for litigations.

When Kunhambu had defeated the case of boy *karanavar* Kunhikelappan the entire property had come under his *janmam* right. When Kunhikelappan was pauperized he decided to go to Banaras on a pilgrimage. On his way to Banaras he met Paduvilai Ponmaleri Koroth Krishnan Nambiar who promised him all help. Kunhikelappan Nambiar was taken to the judge who had earlier made a verdict quite unfavorable to him. The judge was intimated of all the incidents that actually happened. Then he became convinced of the rightful claim of young Kunhikelappan Nambiar. But the verdict had already been given. But the judge could arrive at a decision according to which half of the family property was given to Kunhikelappan Nambiar and his family. Kelappan Nambiar got property valued at an annual rent of Rs.12,000/- (Rupees Twelve thousand only) and paddy of 24,210 *sers*. It was decided to give 113 items of paddy fields and 88 gardens to Kunhambu *adhikari*. This compromise was arrived at 1858. It was thus the Koodali family was saved from the hands of Kunhambu.¹⁰⁹

Among the earliest activities of Kunhikelappan Nambiar for the *tarawad* was the construction of a new house, Keloth house for the Koodali

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, pp. xvii – xviii.

family. A separate house for the *karanavar* and his family was constructed. It was the Pathayapura Padimalika. Among the other construction works of Kunhikelappan were the repair of the tank of Koodali *Madham*, constructions connected with Poovathur temple and the Padimalika built in Kumbam. Kunhikelappan was responsible for setting up coconut gardens at Kumbam, Poovathur and Kanhirode.

Karanavar Kunhikelappan married four times. The first marriage was from Maruthai Keloth. This ended in a divorce. The next wife was from Kalliayat. She met with a pre-mature death. Then he married from Azhchavattam in Calicut, but it also ended in divorce. The next wife Varikkera Padinjare veettil Kalyani survived him. Kunhikelappan could live only upto the age of 38. He passed away on 9th October 1878. Kunhikelappan was held in great esteem by the family members. He followed strict economy in expenditure. His death was deeply mourned. He had been fortunate in having two able *karyasthan* namely Kottur Krishnan Menon and after him Perlasseri Mallil Chathu. The life of Kunhikelappan Nambiar was one of life long feuds and litigations.¹¹⁰ In the meanwhile Kunhambu also died in 1870.

The next *karanavar* was Kunhi Kannan Nambiar (1878 – 1887). During the period of Kunhikelappan Nambiar, the *karanavar* used to associate his direct brother Chathukutty with the management of the *tarawad*.

¹¹⁰ K.T. Kunhikammaran Nambiar, *op.cit*, pp.18-19.

Even after the death of Kunhikelappan Nambiar and the occasion of Kunhi Kannan Nambiar to power, Chathukutty Nambiar continued his interference in the family affairs. Kunhi Kannan Nambiar was deeply resented with this and he left the *tarawad*. Kunhi Kannan Nambiar's relatives especially Kunhi Kammaran Nambiar of Kalliyat and Chandroth Nambiar supported him. When Chathukutty Nambiar began to collect the income of the family and lived in *Thazhathu tarawad*. Kunhikannan Nambiar filed a case against him in the court of law.¹¹¹ With this there starts a period of litigations in which the *karanavar* was deeply involved. The order of the Court was that Chathukutty Nambiar was not eligible to live in the Thazhathu house the abode of *karanavar*.¹¹² Chathukutty Nambiar showed his ill feeling to the relatives who assisted Kunhikannan Nambiar in various ways. In 1880 he filed a case against the Chandroth Nambiar for getting back an amount of Rs. 1,000/- (Rupees thousand only) with interest which he had given to the Nambiar a few years before. The defendant Chandroth Nambiar contested that as the amount was from the *tarawad* income of Koodali, it was due to Kunhikannan Nambiar and that the same has already been paid. The decisions of the Court was against the defendant Chandroth Nambiar. Even though an appeal against this decree was filed it was dismissed and the Chandroth Nambiar had to pay the entire amount.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, p. 21.

¹¹² *Ibid*, p. 22.

Kunhikannan Nambiar had to engage in litigations of various kinds with regard to the *tarawad* and the Koodalikavu. Case No. 48 of 1888 of the Cannanore Munsiff Court was the one filed by Kunhikannan Nambiar to recover certain paddy fields belonging to the *devaswam* of Koodalikavu which had been leased to Chandrothidathil Kunhambu and sisters. The defendant were Kunhambu and Anandan. The defendants claimed that the management of the temple was in the hands of Anandan and that the case was not genuine. The case was dismissed. Against this decision of the Court an appeal was made before the sub-judge, Tellicherry. And the decision was genuine. The second appeal on this was filed in 1883 before the Madras High Court which also was dismissed. There were other similar cases in which the *karanavar* of the Koodali family and the Chandrothidathil Kunhambu and Anandan were involved.¹¹³

Kunhikannan Nambiar built the *Chova Madham* in Kannur. It was he who made important pepper garden for the *tarawad* in the *Chalayulla paramba* in Mattannur. The construction of the Komath House was during the *karanavarship* of Kunhikannan Nambiar. He married twice. One from Vallakkandy House in Chala and other from Paduvilayi Ponmaleri Koroth House. For a long period Kunhikannan Nambiar was suffering from

¹¹³ *Ibid*, pp. 22-23.

diabetics and he passed away on 23rd *Chingam* 1063 KE (AD 1888) out of cancer on his cheek¹¹⁴

After the death of Kunhi Kannan Nambiar, Chattukutty Nambiar became the *karanavar*. It was only for three and a half years that he was the *karanavar*. As noted above even before his succession to the post he used to interfere in the affairs of the *tarawad* which created much troubles, as described above. Chattu Kutty Nambiar was a scholar in Sanskrit and was fond of religious matters. He was well built in appearance and was a strong built person. There are stories with regard to conflicts with one Muhammad, the son of Kottil Uppu a famous hero of the locality.¹¹⁵ As noted above Chattukutty Nambiar was involved in a series of civil suits. But he was never inferior to his predecessor with regard to his love and concern for the member of the family. He was a better manager of the *tarawad* than his predecessor. Before his *karanavarship* he was the *adhikari* of the *amsam* for a few years. But he resigned his job because of the over bearing attitude of his superior officials. His wife was Perinthaleri Madhavi Amma. His eldest daughter was married to his nephew Kunhi Kelappan Nambiar, in accordance with the custom of the *marumakkathayam tarawad*. Chattu Kutty Nambiar also was a diabetic patient and during his last days was laid up with carbuncle (*Premeha*

¹¹⁴ *Ibid*, p.25.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.25-26.

Kuru). He died out of this on 25th *Dhanu* 1066 KE (AD 1891). The 41st day's ceremony of his death was at Thirunnelli.

Chattu Kutty Nambiar was followed by Koodali Thazhathu Vettil Kunhi Raman Nambiar in 1890. Kunhi Raman Nambiar, son of Sreedevi Amma had his elementary education from the locality of Koodali and upper primary education at Calicut. His high school studies were at Municipal High School Kannur. He studied up to Fifth form (9th standard). In 1063 KE (AD 1888) Kunhi Raman Nambiar was employed as *adhikari* of Koodali *amsam* and continued in his post up to 1067 KE (AD 1892). At the age of 22 he became the *karanavar* of Koodali *tarawad* following the death of Chattukutty Nambiar. It was he who started the first elementary school in Koodali in 1066 KE (AD 1891). The first Head Master of this school was Valluva Koroth Rairu Nambiar. Kunhi Raman Nambiar has been a patron of art and letters and it was under his guidance that a drama troupe was formed in Koodali. This drama troupe which lasted for three years created certain troubles to Kunhi Raman Nambiar. He was involved in a criminal case with a Brahmin called Subrama Patter, an actor of the troupe who was staying in the *Thazhathu Veedu*. Subrama Patter was accused of stealing a cash box and documents from *Thazhathu Veedu*. The magistrate was not convinced of the guilt and therefore the accused was acquitted. In the same year, 1893 the above said Subrama Patter filed a case against Kunhi Raman Nambiar and his

servant Kalathil Kannan for assault on him. The accused was acquitted for want of evidence.¹¹⁶

Kunhiraman Nambiar was very popular among the people of the locality. He was managing the family affairs to the satisfaction of the members of the *tarawad* and was held in great esteem by his tenants and by the public. Kunhiraman Nambiar was interested in public activities. He has been a nationalist and attended the Madras Congress Session in 1894. He has been a member of Taluk Board for three years.¹¹⁷

Kunhiraman Nambiar had the unique fortune of having his maternal grandfather and mother for advising him. His mother's father was Ponmaleri Korothe Krishnan Nambiar. Another important achievement of Kunhiraman Nambiar was the establishment of the Koodali Bank. The Bank was started in 1897 with Kunhikrishnan Nambiar his brother as manager and V.K. Rairu was secretary. The Bank functioned well for six years. But the misappropriation of money by some of its officials created a crisis and the Bank was liquidated in 1907. In 1901 Kunhiraman Nambiar lost both his father Kalliyat Kammaran Nambiar who has been famous for his charity and social service and his mother. Next year his brother-in-law Chandrothe Kunhichandu Nambiar who has been his able advisor also passed away.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.29-30

Kunhiraman Nambiar managed the affairs of the family to the satisfaction to its members. He was popular with his tenants and earned a name for his social service. He always commanded large liquid money with him and was never in difficulty for money during his whole life time. He was very alert in keeping account of income and expenditure. The purchase of few acres of land at Munderi and planting coconut seedlings in the bank *paramba* and Navuthiyanchal in Echur were his addition to the wealth of the Koodali *tarawad*. Kunhiraman Nambiar has been the *karanavar* for about 27 years and among the ceremonial occasions in the family during this period have been thirteen marriage celebrations of the family members. Kunhiraman Nambiar passed away out of diabetics in 1918.¹¹⁸

The next *karanavar* was Kunhikrishnan Nambiar. He was a man of refinement and culture. He was very popular in the locality and has been the arbitrator in many a civil and criminal matter in the locality. Though he did not have much higher education he managed to have knowledge in English and Malayalam. When the Koodali Bank was started he was made the manager of the bank. He was then only 18 years old. When the Bank collapsed he took up the responsibility for the same and paid the whole depositors and share holders the amounts due to them. Still the failure of bank was a shock to him and following it he fell ill for a few months. During his

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 33-35.

later period he spent his time in looking after the *tarawad* properties and settling the dispute of his tenants and others in Koodali and adjoining *amsams*. When he was a junior member of the family he setup two coconut plantations one at Pallipoyil and other at Koloth *paramba* at Mattannur. The Koloth *paramba* was a big garden with more than thousand coconut trees. This was gifted by him to his two sisters Parvathi and Meenakshi. It was this Kunhikrishnan Nambiar who made expiations for the misbehavior towards the dead body of late Rairu *Gurkikkalachan*. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar was very much interested in the welfare of his family and did many things for it.

Kunhikrishnan Nambiar very much interested in the activities of the *Nayar Samajam* work and has been the Vice President of this association. In 1920 an anniversary of the *samajam* was celebrated under his auspices in Koodali. He did much for the amalgamation of *Chelavu Nayars* into the fold of Nayar community. It was through his personal interest that two or three inter marriages between the *Chelavu Nayar* and other Nayars took place in North Malabar. He took the lead in admitting *Chelavu Nayars* into the Kallayi temple near Anjarakandi. Among his services to the society was the construction of a good building to the Higher Elementary School in Koodali. He repaired the Koodalikavu and constructed a new *madham* at Koodali when the old one was burnt in 1913. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar also was a diabetic patient and in spite of constant treatment could not recover from it. He passed away in 1927. The Kunhikrishnan Nambiar had married twice. His

first wife was Narayani Amma of Kalliyat. Following her premature death Kunhikrishnan Nambiar married the daughter of his late uncle Chathukutty Nambiar. She survived him. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar and his brother-in-law Kalliyat Chathukutty Nambiar were intimate friends and their friendship has been proverbial during his life time ¹¹⁹

Following Kunhikrishnan Nambiar death, Kunhikannan Nambiar II his direct brother succeeded him as the *karanavar* of the Koodali *tarawad* in 1927 at the age of 45. He had his school education from Panoor and Koodali and from Brennen College High School Tellichery. He studied up to matriculation but had not passed. He was famous as a cultivator. He planted pepper vines and coconut by himself. His elders had great confidence in him and when the Chandroth Nambiar expired in 1902, he was asked to manage the Chandroth estate for his children. He managed it well for five years and handed over the same to the eldest member of the Chandroth family. Kunhikannan Nambiar was retiring by disposition and was pre occupied with his own business. He was not interested in the affairs of the locality and society and not interested in arbitrations. After the death of his first wife in 1906 he became very much religious and began to lead a simple life. In 1908 he came into contact with a religious teacher Maha Prasad and this intensified his religious bent of mind. In 1909 he lost his mind but got cured soon. He

¹¹⁹ *Ibid*, pp 40 - 41.

made coconut gardens at Pallipoyil besides those in Mattannur and Edayannur. He purchased properties for his sisters. Kunhikannan has been the *adhikari* of Koodali and he continued in this post up to 1927 when he became the *karanavar*.

On account of the post war depression which resulted in the fall in prices also Kunhikannan Nambiar was not able to save money or invest in properties of the family. Still he could clear the debts of his immediate predecessor and purchase the *janman* right of a property in Kanjirode for the family. Kunhikannan Nambiar had to bear many a sorrowful occasion in his life. The pre-mature death of his wife and the death of two children in his second wife were among them. He had to undergo prolonged treatment in a nursing home at Madras because of his carbuncle and suffering much pain he breathed his last.

Following the death of Kunhikannan Nambiar II in 1932, Kunhikammaran Nambiar became the *karanavar* of Koodali *tarawad*. Kunhikammaran Nambiar has been famous for his social and political activities. By this time the heads and members of many a Nayar *tarawad* had entered public life, cutting across the boundaries of their localities. Kunhi Kammaran Nambiar has been a good example to this. He has been a dedicated nationalist and social reformer.

Kunhikammaran Nambiar had his education at Koodali Primary School, Pannoor Middle School, Mission School at Tellicherry, Zamorins College, Calicut and Govt. Brennen College, Tellichery. He had joined Madras Medical College but did not complete the course. In 1932 he became the *karanavar* of Koodali. From 1912 he had to manage the affairs of the Chandroth *tavazhi*. Kammaran Nambiar married Kalliyat Madhavi amma and had four sons and four daughters.

Kunhikammaran Nambiar has been a member of the Malabar District Board and Chirakkal Taluk Board. He was a member in the Central Legislative Assembly representing the Madras Land holders. In 1930 he became the president of Taluk Board. In 1945 he founded the Koodali High School. In the same year he was elected to the Madras Legislative assembly from the west coast land holders constituency. Kunhikammarn Nambiar has been a patron of literature. He was *karanavar* for a period of 23 years and breathed his last on 16th December 1955, much regretted by the members of the *tarawad* and the public at large.¹²⁰

Kunhikammaran Nambiar has been a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and an ardent activist of Indian National Congress. In 1928 when the Kerala State Conference of the Indian National Congress met at Payyannur he was the chairman of the reception committee. As noted above

¹²⁰ C. Sankaran Nambiar, *op.cit*, p. 3.

he was a member of the Madras Legislative Assembly representing land lords. But he resigned this and was re-elected as an independent candidate in 1948 he actively supported the Mahe re-unification movement with the Indian Union.¹²¹

During the last years of his life Kunhikammaran Nambiar had made preparations for the partition of the Koodali *tarawad*. He had signed an agreement in December 1954 appointing C. Sankaran Nambiar as an arbitrator to effect the division of the *tarawad* properties. He had agreed to abide by Sankaran Nambiar in the allotment of shares. The members of Koodali *tarawad* decided to divide the property without going to the Court.¹²²

In accordance with the agreement signed by the all members of the *tarawad* Sankaran Nambiar inspected the properties, prepared nearly hundred survey plans and effected the division of property. There were 131 members in the *tarawad* at the time of partition and their names are given in the list attached as appendix.

Following the death of Kuhikammaran Nambiar, K.T. Padmanabhan Nambiar became the *karanavar*. His social and cultural activities have been remarkable. He has been a member of Malabar District Board. As the manger of the Koodali High School he has contributed much to the educational

¹²¹ K.K.N. Kurup (ed.) , *Koodali Granthavari*, *op.cit*,p.xviii

¹²² C. Sankaran Nambiar, *op.cit*, p. 3.

development of the area. He was intimately involved in the functioning of Kannur Town Middle School and Panoor Middle School. He has functioned as the manager of the *Swabhimani daily*. He has made his mark in the society as the founder of Panoor Co-operative society, a member of Thalasseri Taluk Board, Member of District Education Council, President of Public Library Kannur, Founder member of Thyagaraja Sangeetha Sabha and a patron of Chinmaya Mission Koodali. His wife was Vengayil Lakshmi Amma.¹²³ It was during the period of Padmanabhan Nambiar that the *tarawad* was partitioned in accordance with the partition deed on 2.05.1956. Padmanabhan Nambiar passed away in 1979 and was followed by Damadaran Nambiar as the *karanavar*. Following the death of Damadaran Nambiar Kunhikannan Nambiar III became the *karanavar* in 1982. After the partition of the *tarawad* the duties of the *karanavar* became limited even though he had the ritual powers enjoyed by his predecessors. Kunhikannan Nambiar passed away in 1987 and was followed by Balakrishnan Nambiar who continued in that post up to 1994. Following the death of Balakrishnan Nambiar in 1994 Kunhanandan Nambiar became the *karanavar*. He died in 2007 and following his death Kunhikrishnan Nambiar became the *karanavar*. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar is now 92 years old and is continuing as the *karanavar*.¹²⁴

¹²³ *Mathrubhumi*, 28th February, 1979.

¹²⁴ Interview with K.T. Sudhakaran, A senior member of Koodali family on 20.10.2009.

The foregoing account gives a precise history of the Kavalappara and Koodali families. The residence of the Kavalappara family in the Kavalappara *desam* is in the Karakkat *amsam* of the former Valluvanadu taluk which is in the present Shornur taluk. The origin of the family is from Karakkal matha, the only girl in the twelve children of legendry Vararuchi. Following the fall of the Perumals of Mahodayapuram, Kavalappara Moopil Nayar became a local ruler and he has been the feudatory of *Cochin Raja* and the *Palaghat Raja* and in these *stanams* he had powers and privileges of a ruling chieftain. Following the Mysorean invasion Malabar came under the rule of English East India Company. Then the Company made an agreement with the Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar by which he acknowledged British Supremacy. During the closing decades of the 19th century the Kavalappara *tarawad* and its property came under the Court of Wards. In 1910 Mooppil Nayar again assumed power as a local ruler under the British. The partition of the property of Kavalappara has not been effected so far and now it is under the rule of a Receiver. Family members are settled in different areas. Even under the British the Mooppil Nayar enjoyed ritual powers. Like any other feudal family the Kavalappara also lost many of its property with the introduction of the Land Reform Amendment Act of 1969. Even after the fall of feudalism the Kavalappara Mooppil Nayar exerts influence through his ritual authority.

Koodali family belonged to the Kalliyat *swarupam* that reigned over a territorial division of Puravazhinadu in North Malabar. In the 16th century the

head quarters of the family was shifted to the village of Koodali. Like Kavalappara, Koodali *tarawad* also have been a typical *marumakkathayam tarawad*. The *karanavar* holds the title *Gurikkalachan* and we have the details of *Gurikkalachan* from the early decades of the 17th century. The Mysorean attack affected the Koodali *tarwad* also and following the Mysorean rule and the establishment of British over the Malabar, the Koodali family also acknowledged British surpemacy. Koodali became an *amsam* under the British and the *karanavar* of Koodali *tarawad* was made the *adhikari*. In 1955 the Koodali *tarawad* was partitioned . The present *karanavar* is K.T. Kunhikrishnan Nambiar. Like Kavalappara, Koodali also has a rich culture and heritage. Through its enlightened *karanavars* and members the family it contributed much to the life and culture in the locality. The power exerted by both Kavalappara and Koodali has been mainly through the lands held by them and through the temples under them. With the end of feudalism their power and influence are expressed through the management of their traditional institutions of temples. These families had contributed to the development of art and culture of these regions.