APPENDIX C

Temples, shrines and other important places of worship within the district of Cachar.

Rajar-mar dighi: To the east of the Bihara Railway Station there is a small brick-built temple and a big tank. The tank is called Rajar-mar dighi, i.e., the tank of the queen-mother. The temple contains an image of Shiva and other deities. It is constructed by a Kachari queen. There is a huge rush of people during Shivaratri.

Lakhi Tillah: A small hillock about nine miles from Diphu town on the Srikona road contains ruins of a stone-built temple with a lot of carved stones and broken images of various deities. This is locally known as Laklaki tillah and held sacred by the local people. Normally the construction is attributed to the Kachari king Lakshminarayan (1772-1780 A.D.) who was a great builder. But some stone images might be of an earlier date.
Narsing Akhra: In the heart of the Silchar town in Narsingtola, there is an old temple established in about 1840 A.D. by a monk named Bhagwan Das Ramayeti hailing from Oudh.

There are several other akhras or Vaishnava shrines in Silchar town established by the Bengalis some 60 or 70 year back. Prominents among them are Shyam-Sundar Akhra, Premtola and Madan-Mohan Jlu Akhra, Tarapur. There is a beautiful stone-image of the monkey god Hanuman in Madan-Mohon Akhra. This is said to have been procured from the Bhutan Hills.

Malugram Shiva Temple: There is a massive and high brick-built temple of lord Shiva in the Malugram Village to the northern out-skirt of the Silchar town. It was constructed by a monk of the Giri order.

Bhairab-bari: About twelve miles west of Lakhipur (a town established by the Kachari King Lakshmi Chandra), there is a shrine of lord Shiva on a hillock about 150 ft. high. The installation is ascribed to king Lakshmi Chandra. On the west of this shrine, there is another shrine on a hillock known as Baram-baba.
Narayan-Dahar: About five miles upstream of Phulertal in the middle of the Barak river, there is an island very much like the pea-cock island in the Brahmaputra near Gauhati. There is an ancient shrine which contains an image of god Vishnu under a shed. It is said that this temple was established by a king of Manipur.

Narsingh Akhra at Sonai: A corrugated iron sheet shed with a plot of land-grant attached to it, contains the image of Jagannath, established about 70 years ago by a Behari Sadhu.

Shiva Tilah at Sonai: On a small hillock named Chandragiri about a mile and a half to the south of Sonalibazar, a brick built temple was constructed and dedicated to lord Shiva by Joy Singh, the minister of the king of Haimamba in 1787 A.D. The temple has a plinth of 12' x 10' and 12 ft. in height. According to inscription, the temple was constructed in honour of Bhubaneswar, the lord of Bhuban hills.
Daivaki temple: At Tulagram in the Mohonpur village, within a mile of the Sonaibazar, there is a small brick-built temple 9' x 9' in planth and about 14 ft. high. Daivaki is said to have been a concubine of Govinda Chandra, the last Kachari king of Cachar.

Barala Tillah: About three miles to the east of Sonaibazar, there is a small but fairly high hillock known as Barala or Barail tillah. On the top of the hillock, there is an ancient stone of lord Shiva in the linga form. According to R.M. Nath, "Barala or Barail is believed to be a corruption of Bra-hla, meaning great male (Bra = old male, Brui = old female, Hla = god.), i.e., god Shiva, who is also known as Mahesvara. The term is of Bodo origin.

Palanghat: In the Palanghat village on the bank of the Rukmini river, about four miles south east of Narasinpur in the Silchar Subdivision, there are two small brick temples covered with jungle growth. These are believed to have been in existence from the Tripura kings. Old people assemble at the temple cite on the
occasion of the Varuni festival to take bath in the Rukmini river.

Salepur: About a mile to the east of the Narsingpur High School, on the eastern bank of the old abandoned channel of the Rukmini river, there is a village known as Salepur. On the southern end of the village, on the top of a small tillah about 60 ft. high, there is a linga image of lord Shiva of black hard stone, about 9" diameter and 1½ ft. high. This had been there from time immemorial. Very recently a pucca temple has been constructed over it.

Vishnupur Shiva: About a mile to the south-west of Balabazar, twelve miles south of Hailakandi town, an ancient Shiva-linga of black stone seated on a well-carved pedestal has been discovered. The carving and shape of the pedestal indicate its association with the Pala period.

Kachakhanti: Goddess Kachakhanti (one who eats raw meat) is worshipped at Udharband, seven miles from Silchar. She is regarded as a variation of goddess Kali and it is believed that the
Deity was originally installed by Gohai Kamal, a Koch Governor who ruled the territory after Koch conquest of Cachar. It is said that the original image of the goddess was taken away by a Jaintia Ram Sing who invaded Cachar in the last part of the seventeenth century. A substitute has been installed in the temple subsequently. Kachakhanti receives universal veneration in the district. It is believed that human sacrifice was customary in the temple till the nineteenth century. The name Kachakhanti naturally reminds one of another deity of Upper Assam who is called Kachai Khaki Gohani also meaning the deity who eats raw flesh.