The Thesis on Cachar Under the Superintendents (1832-66) is a significant work in which the socio-economic and political administrative activities of the Superintendents of Cacahr is explained in detail. The work throws light on the achievement and operational aspects of revenue, judicial and police administration of the day. Besides, the frontiers of the District were surrounded by war like tribal people who frequently created a situation of potential danger. The designation of the District Officer was Superintendent and they ruled from 1832 to 1866. Since then the title was changed as Deputy Commissioners and the same continued since 1866. The Government could not cope with the situation of the frontier and drew out a detailed plan for the defence of this District. The administration of plain Cachar (presently Cachar and Hailakandi) was maintained by the Cachari kings from Khaspur (1750) till the reign of last Cachari King Govindachandra (1830), who was murdered through conspiracy on that date. Plain Cachar was placed under the supervision of Thomas Fisher who ruled as the incharge of Cachar affairs till 1832. Cachar was annexed with the British dominion by a formal proclamation on 14 August 1832 and Thomas Fisher
was appointed as the first Superintendent of Cachar. So, all the Superintendents from Thomas Fisher to R Stewart played a vital role more or less in the socio-economic and political situation of Cachar. These executives also did commendable works as frontier officers. The names and tenures of them can be seen in the following way:

References

CR, Nos. 240 of 1839, 349 of 1842, 101 of 1845, 47 of 1847, 199 of 1850,

Letter Nos. 5, 7, 35-36, 43-44 of 1857 (DCRRS)

Book No. 5A, Letter Nos. 19, 26, 48, 52, 56, 151, 159 of 1860 (DCRRS)

Book No. 8A, 121 of 1862, 3, 42 of 1863, 4, 8 of 1864 (DCRRS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superintendents</th>
<th>Officiating Superintendents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Fisher (1832-35)</td>
<td>P Mainwarring (1835-36)</td>
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<tr>
<td>J G Burns (1836-39)</td>
<td>... ... ... ...</td>
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<tr>
<td>E R Lyons (1839-49)</td>
<td>W M Mc Cullock (1842)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E S Pearson (1845)</td>
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<td>G Verner (1847-49)</td>
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<tr>
<td>G Verner (1847-57)</td>
<td>R Stewart (1857-58)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Stewart (1857-66)</td>
<td>Dr S M Shircore (1857-58)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr Clement Scone (1861-62)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>J F Sherer (1860-64)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>J W Edgar (1864-66)</td>
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R Stewart was the last Superintendent and first Deputy Commissioner of Cachar. He was succeeded by J W Edgar who became the full fledged
Deputy Commissioner of Cachar from June 1866. First of all, British rule in Cachar was conducted under the supervision of Assam Commissioner having headquarters at Dudhpatil. In 1836, Cachar was included in the Dacca Division and the headquarters of Superintendent was shifted to Silchar from Dudhpatil. The present Cachar and Hailakandi were merged with Cachar having its headquarters at Silchar. So, the period of my study has its significance in the history of Barak Valley as well as in the history of North East India. Accordingly, it gives emphasis on the Administrative History of Cachar during the British Rule.

So, the study aims at discussing the socio-economic and political activities of Superintendents of Cachar from Thomas Fisher to R Stewart (1832-66) and the study will

(i) compare the activities of the princely regime with the British regime along with the reaction of the people, and further,

(ii) Cachar is a new unexplored area of historical importance. So, it is my duty to find out the nature of British rule under the Superintendents in Cachar and to assess whether it is for the betterment of the people of Cachar or not. Their treatment of the subjects like society, revenue, judiciary, land, agriculture etc. are taken for discussion.
(iii) The study will find out the Frontier policy followed by the Superintendents of Cachar with the neighbouring tribal population.

To write the thesis, I have followed analytical method and comparison is made. For this, I have collected both primary and secondary source materials at local, regional and national level. Primary source exploitation is made at the Record Room, Deputy Commissioner, Silchar, Assam State Archives, Dispur, Assam Secretariat Library, Dispur, Assam, West Bengal State Archives, Kolkata, Asiatic Society of Bengal, Kolkata, National Archives of India, New Delhi. I also examined sober views expressed by scholars of the past and present. That is why, I have to rely on books, booklets, reports, gazetteers as secondary sources. Thus, the study is undertaken based on both primary and secondary sources, the details of which are appended in the Bibliography of this thesis.

The literary works published by eminent scholars and historians to enrich the History of Modern Assam and of Barak Valley had not elaborated the activities of the Superintendents of Cachar in detail. Mention may be made of the following books:

of administrative history of present Barak Valley under the Superintendents of Cachar.

Another book *Assam and Neighbouring States: Historical Documents*, Gauhati, 1963, by N N Acharyya deals with various records on Assam, Goalpara, Cachar, Manipur, Burma. As for the present topic, reports on revenue matters from 1831 to 1853-54, proclamation of 1832 etc. are highlighted. But other related matters are not explained in details where the gap remain for writing the new history of the Barak Valley.

*Report on the Eastern Frontier of British India*, Gauhati, 1966, by R B Pemberton highlighted the History of Frontier states and of Cachar. But regarding the activities of Superintendents of Cachar, detailed accounts were not given so far.

*Cachar District Records*, Silchar, 1969, by D Datta deals with the growth of judiciary, police administration, revenue system, education, early British relation with the Nagas, Kukis, Lushais and incidentally interesting information of Cachar under the Cachari Rajahs. But those are a few documents and whatever records we find, those are not written completely from 1832 to 1866.

*Cachar Under British Rule in North East India*, New Delhi, 1977, by Jayanta Bhusan Bhattacharjee highlighted about the history of Cachar during the British Rule. But regarding the activities of Superintendents of
Cachar, detailed accounts separately under different Superintendents were not made so far.

*Land Revenue Administration in Cachar 1832-1900, Calcutta, 2001,* by Ratna Dey deals with revenue matters of Cachar but activities of Superintendents in other fields are not elaborated.

*A Survey of Documents on the Economic History of Barak Valley in the 19th and 20th Centuries, Silchar, 2002,* by Ranjit Kumar De, though deals with certain aspects of the present work is also a collection of documents.

Besides these, many other publications mentioned in the Bibliography help me doing research work. So, the gaps are there and the present work makes all attempts to fill up them with new interpretation.

The study is divided into eight chapters, beginning with an introduction which traces the pre-Superintendents Rule in Cachar. It throws light on the socio-economic and political situation under the Cachari *Rajahs,* circumstance leading to the annexation of Cachar with the British dominion in 1832 and the inauguration of British Rule in Cachar.

The second chapter deals with the multifarious socio-economic and political activities for the stabilisation of British rule under Thomas Fisher (1832-35), the first Superintendent of Cachar. Here attempt is made to remould the social set up, economy, judiciary without disturbing the old order except slight modifications in the administration of Cachar.
The third chapter begins with the activities of J G Burns (1836-39) who exercised the powers in the socio-economic and political arena of Cachar. Here attempt is made to reorganise the Mukhtar and Tahsildari system, first regular scientific land settlement (1838) for the increase of revenue prospect in Cachar. The reorganisation of judiciary, courts, Thanahs, police administration of the day is also highlighted that led to the transformation of Cachar people gradually in all aspects of life.

The fourth chapter deals with the activities of E R Lyons (1839-49) who tried his level best to reorganise the society through fresh settlement along with some subsequent economic measures. Political situation is tried to remould through the reorganisation of judiciary, police, Thanah, jail administration of Cachar with the active help of his officiating Superintendents in Cachar.

The fifth chapter highlights the education, immigration, medical and health, communication, games and sports, Jungle settlements, Tahsildari system, development of tea industry, import-export trade and subsequent economic measures, reorganisation of police, Thanah, court establishments in Cachar under G Verner (1847-57), the Superintendent of Cachar.

The sixth chapter deals with dynamic and transitional activities of R Stewart (1857-66) in the socio-economic and political aspects of Cachar. In this chapter, R Stewart made every attempt to renovate the society with the help of subordinate staff. In social segments, introduction of western
education, Christianity, games and sports, medical and health, communication system etc. are elaborated. In economic aspects, 20 years settlement (1859), settlement of Chatla Hawhr, junglebari settlement (1864), waste land survey, waste land rules, trade, industry and other subsequent economic measures are explained. The judiciary, jail, police, Thanah, the Superintendent’s office etc. were reorganised under R Stewart.

The seventh chapter begins with the Frontier policy of Superintendents (1832-66) in Cachar. All the Superintendents from Thomas Fisher to R Stewart dealt with the war like tribal people - Nagas, Kukis, Manipuris, Khasis, Jaintias, Lushais etc. as frontier officer. They established trade and matrimonial relation, provided settlements, set up military outposts in the border region and sometimes undertook military operations against these tribes. In this mission, Superintendents succeeded in restoring peace and order in Cachar.

The eighth chapter ends with the suspension of marathon discussion and summarises all the facts in a transitional and comparative method from the beginning to the end and is shown the reaction of Cachar people.

I profoundly acknowledge my gratitude to my esteemed Supervisor, Professor Ranjit Kumar De, Head, Department of History, Assam University, Silchar for all kinds of guidance, inspiration to complete my research work. I can never forget my supervisor for his diligent service rendered to me in checking the work and for this I am indebted to him. I am
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My acknowledgement also goes to those authors whose works I have consulted and to Sri H N Bhuyan, Director, Assam State Archives, Dispur, Mr D Sonowal, Officer in charge of Secretariat Library, Dispur, Smt. Aradhana Ghosh, ADA, B Chakravarty, S De of West Bengal State Archives, Kolkata, Smt. Mitali Chatterjee, Librarian of Asiatic Society of Bengal, Kolkata. Smt. Jaya of National Archives of India, New Delhi, Record Keepers of Record Room of Deputy Commissioner, Silchar, Assam Secretariat Library, for allowing access to the materials in their custody. My thanks also goes to the staff of National Library, New Delhi, B C Gupta Memorial Library, G C College, Silchar for providing me access to its excellent collections. Lastly I express my thankfulness to Sri Pinakpani Nath Purkayastha for typing the manuscripts.

Dated Silchar, the 06 October, 2005

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