Chapter II

The Advent of the Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries in Barak Valley

Christianity in India

Christianity entered in India in 52 AD. when one of the Christ’s twelve disciples St. Thomas, is believed to have arrived at Cranganore in Kerala. In the fourth century a group of Christians led by Thomas of Cena sent from Edessa, Persia, arrived and settled in Kerala. This Christianity made no impact and remained confined as one of the sects in Kerala.

In the second century of the Christian era, Pantaenus, an Alexandrian philosopher and Missionary also found Christian when he had visited India. Cosmas, a Greek traveler found Christians in different parts of India. He saw a Church at kalian in 545 A.D and found a bishop appointed from Persia.

The second, a Roman Catholic phase of India’s Christian history began in the 1250's, with the arrival of the first Missionaries of the Franciscan and Dominican orders. These however were not successful, and half a century later had disappeared almost without trace. In 1498 Vasco-Da-Gama landed near Calicut and although the Portuguese came chiefly for trading purposes, they were also concerned to extend Christianity in their dominions. In 1500 there arrived eight Franciscan Friars and eight “secular” priests the first of many thousands of such Missionaries. The best known of these included Francis Xavier and Roberto de-Nobili.

In 1542, Francis Xavier, the Roman Catholic Missionary had come down to the coromandel coast and converted thousand of fishermen into Christianity. He trained them the Ten Commandments the Lord’s Prayer and a basic creed. He worked in India for ten years. Other Catholic Missions followed, in different parts of Tamil Nadu. In 1606, Robert de-Nobili, the Italian Jesuit, arrived in Madura. He was the

1. David M.D: Missions: Cross Cultural Encounter And Change In Western India Assish Amos Ispek, Delhi, 2001. p. 27.
5. Baird D Robert: Religion in Modern India. p.225
founder of Madura Mission and adopted a wholly Indian style of life as a sannyasin. Learned Sanskrit and being granted at least some access to the Vedas. He adopted this style due to the fact that two things were hindering evangelism there:

a) The Indian hatred of the Portuguese invaders, and

b) the Missionaries refusal to observe caste distinctions.

*In front of his Indian style house he placed the following notice:*

"I am not a Parangi (Portuguese), I was not born in the land of the Parangis nor ever connected with their race I came from Rome, where my family hold the same rank as respectable Rajahs do in this country The law which I preach is the law of the true God, which from ancient times was by his command proclaimed in these countries by holy men and saints. Whoever says that it is the law of the Parangis, fit only for low castes, commits a very great sin, for the true God is not the God of one race, but the God of all." 6

De-Nobili enjoyed some success in converting high caste Hindus, but his work was too controversial to survive his retirement in 1645 and his death in the following year 7. Sixty years after de-Nobili's death there began the third phase of Christian history in India.

In 1705, the first protestant Missionaries came to Tranquebar. They were Germans, sent by the King of Denmark, with the support of an English Missionary Society 8. The first protestant Missionary, Ziegenbalg by his hard labour translated Bible in Tamil and converted some people into Christianity. He also set up the first school for girls in Tamil Nadu. Modern Missionary work in India started from 11th November 1793 when William Carey entered in Calcutta. He was also the main source of the influence of Christianity in India when Carey came in Calcutta India was ruled by the East India Company.

In 1600 AD, London-based East India Company was established and also gained political as well as commercial power but they did not accept the Missionary work in India until 1813. It was mainly because that the official policy of the East India Company was firmly against Christian missions, on the grounds that to 'Interfere with the religious beliefs and practices of the people of India would endanger the trade

7. Religion in Modern India p.226.
8. Changing India p.19
which was the company's sole official concern; and for which they were publicly answerable. But when East India Company revised the charter in 1813 and 1833 the door was thrown open to Christian Missionaries in India. When the charter act of 1813 incorporated three significant provisions relating to the position of education and the Church. An Episcopal organization was established, and Missionaries of all faiths were allowed to enter India and the Indian government was authorized to spend One lakh rupees from surplus revenues for Indian education. Accordingly in 1830 the first Missionary sent by the Church of Scotland, Alexander Duff came in Calcutta and engaged himself into educational work, on the belief that "every brance of sound general knowledge which you inculcate becomes the destroyer of some corresponding part in the Hindu system" This general knowledge was to be communicated in English and on that point official policy agreed: in 1835 a protected controversy on the issue of English versus vernacular higher education in India was resolved in favour of the "Anglicists". He established a school in Calcutta in 1830. At present it converted into the Scottish Church College. The school offered western science and literature, and also the Christian teachings. His view on matters of education was given great valued by the then government of India. He was also engaged in the establishment of the first Indian Universities and of the grant-in-aid-system. In India he was at the fore front of mission thinking. He pioneered the close relationship between education and mission. After this decisions Christianity was developed in colleges and universities of India.

The Revolt of 1857 had relatively little immediate effect on the situation of Christianity in India. The 1858 Madras Missionary conference drew the measure that needed to be brought to bear on the government to prevent further out breaks. "All we require is simple Christian consistency in all their proceedings which have a bearing on religion, the introduction of the Bible into all governments, Schools, to be read daily by those of the pupils who do not object to it; and, especially, the entire cessation of all patronage and countenance of idolatry and caste."

In 1857 East India Company's rule had ended and direct British rule began.

The Christian of South India welcomed this because they wanted to be protected

10. H.Luna J.V: Education and Missionaries in Mizoram p.38
11. Religion in Modern India p.227
12. SDB Vad Kumpadan Paul: Missionaries of Christ A Basic course in Missiology. Vendrame institute publication shillong 2006. p.54
against their Hindu neighbours. The new government proclaimed a policy of religious impartiality, in which Christianity deprived from the status of ‘most favored religion.’ Queen Victoria’s proclamation of 1858 was like this:

“Firmly relying ourselves on the truth of Christianity, and acknowledging with gratitude the solace of religion, we disclaim the right and the desire to impose our convictions on any of our subjects.”

After 1900 due to mass movements in rural area sizeable numerical accession to Christianity took place. For the social betterment ill-educated rural people jointly converts themselves into Christianity. These mass movement developed Missionary statistics. In 1858 only one million of Christian community in India which stood almost 3 million in 1901 and ten years later it became 4 million.

In the last quarter of the 19th century the National Movement was started in India which affected Indian Christianity in some ways for the birth of anti-Christian organization like- Arya Samaj and Theosophical society etc. Before 1914, few Indian Christians became deeply involved in the national movement and among them the name of Bhawani Charan Banerjee was very remarkable one. From 1900-1914, there was a powerful Missionary movement, led by the Scotsman J.N.Farquhar, to emphasize the scholarly and sympathetic study of Hinduism and Indian culture generally. A. G. Hogg, a Scottish educational Missionary who was also a first philosophy teacher of Radhakrishnan helped to create a new class of Christian intellectual in India from his chair at the Madras Christian College. In 1905 Indian National Missionary Society (Bharat Christya Sevak Samaj) was founded under Indian direction. It gave rise to many later initiatives like Christian Ashram. S. K. Rudra the first Indian to be appointed principal of a Christian college in India and in 1907 V.S.Azariah the first Indian to become an Anglican Bishop in India.

After 1910 the political temperature of India cooled somewhat, though more as a result of government measures than because genuine agreement had been reached. Christian Missionary apologetics were best represented at this time by J.N.Farquhar’s book ‘the crown of Hinduism’ (1913) which argued that Christ (not Christianity) came to fulfill to bring to completion in a semi-evolutionary sense all the

---

14. Christianity World Wide p.57
15. Religion in Modern India p.228
17. Ibid p.231
highest spiritual and practical aspirations of Hindu religion and culture. During the period of Indian National Movement a new journal, Christian patriot was started. Articles devoted to the national cause begun to appear in the more liberal Missionary Journal written by Indian Christians like K.T.Paul and P Chenchiah. Their angle of approach remained constant for the next dozen years: that in the forms in which it had been presented to India, protestant Christianity had been a denationalizing factor, and needed to be reformed and reshaped in accordance with Indian thought and Hindu spirituality. Some Missionaries, most notably C.F.Andrews and Stanley Jones, concurred enthusiastically, while other did not. K.T. Paul wrote in the international Review of Missions on "how mission denationalize Hindus," arguing that for Christianity to find its place in the emergent India, far more room than hither to would have to be found for Indian forms of cultural expression. Eight years later Chenchiah stated what many Indian Christians by then believed, that "Christ comes to India deeply interwoven in the fabric of western civilization. Christ and Western civilization, clearly distinguishable in their natures and frequently fundamentally and radically opposed to each other, are cemented together by history and brought to India as a unified indivisible whole."

Christian Ashram movement also played a vital role for the growth of Christianity in India. Inspired by the tradition of st Francis of assists by Tolstoy, by social Christianity in Europe and North America, and above all by the example of Gandhi, during the 1920’s and 1930’s numerous Christian Ashrams were set up in India. Their prototype was the christakula Ashram in Tirupattur began in 1921 by two medical doctors, savarirayan jesudasan and Ernest Forrester- Paton. In 1922 jack Winslow, together with five other Europeans and five Indians, began the christa Seva Sangha in Ahmednagar, on Franciscan Principles of fellowship and service. Still Christianity in India was greatly dependent on overseas support. In 1925 an American Missionary, stanlay Jones, stated the Indian case in his widely – read book. "The Christ of the Indian road." Two years later a diametrically opposite point of view was taken by another American, Katherine Mayo, in her book ‘Mother India.’ Young men’s Christian association (YMCA) an American -based organization had always

---

18. Religion in Modern India p.231
19. Ibid p.232
20. Ibid p.232
21. Ibid p.233
been prepared to advance Indians to positions of leadership and often individual YMCA men had taken a pro-nationalist position. In 1920 J.N. Farquhar had written that

“...The association is at this moment the one form of Christian organization which is trusted and welcomed everywhere. At the height of this menacing crises, it can be friendly with all the groups, can play the peacemaker between the races, and do the work of the servant of India.” 22

In 1938 the international Missionary council held an important conference on the new campus of Madras Christian college, Tambaram where various volumes of Indian Christian writing was produced. Rethinking Christianity in India contained essays by seven Indians Christians namely Job, Chenchiah, Chakkarai, Devasahayam, Jesudasan, Asirvatham and sudarisananam. It was not uncontroversial. In various ways it maintained the tone of the Christian patriot of earlier years, while moving somewhat further in a Hindu-direction. “Christ cannot oppose Hinduism nor does he,” chenchiah affirmed. And further: “Christianity is not going to drive a wedge in National solidarity. Nor is the Eastern Christian likely to be a good child and accept the theology and the Church offered to him by his monitors. Let it be clearly understood that we accept nothing as obligatory save Christ”.

In 1905, the national Missionary society was formed which partly solved the disunity among the Christians in India. Thereafter there followed more and more intricate schemes of union among protestant Churches, in both north and south India. Since the 1970's the situation of Christianity in India has been inextricably bound up with development in an increasingly complex world order, and has reflected in one way or another what has been taking place elsewhere in the world. In 1982 S.J.Samartha wrote:

“We are in the process of reshaping an ancient, powerful an intricate civilization into new cultural and social patterns, in response not just to impersonal technological forces but also to the clear, vocal and aggressive demands of oppressed people for a reasonably satisfying human life here and now. Basically it is a cultural struggle in which currently the economic component is crucial. New political institutions to bring about effective change are desperately needed, as well as spiritual

resources to undergird the struggle to redeem it from self-righteousness and direct it towards a hopeful future.”

In 1980 the total population of India where 700 million, among them 27 million were Christian and their percentage was not more than 3.9. But Christianity is arguably, for better or worse, the most international of religions.

Factors that helped the spread of Christianity

One of the important factors that helped the spread of Christianity in India was the favourable motive of the Portuguese rulers of India. Till the end of the 17th century Portuguese became the masters of the territories of Goa, Bassein, Daman, Chaul and Diu and they favoured the spread of Christianity in that places.

Moreover, some Indian rulers like Akbar, Tirumala Nayak and queen Mangammal of Madurai, and Kantirava Narsimha Raja etc. also favoured the Missionaries workers to preach the gospel of Jesus freely in their territories and to Christianize the people. Most important factor that helped to the spread of Christianity in India was the zeal, transparent sincerity and activeness of many of the Christian preachers Like Francies Xavier and john de Britto.

Although Portuguese rulers were favoured to spread in Christianity in their Indian dominions but their methods of conversion was not fair. They were guilty of making their proselytes by force. The following quotation gives a clear picture of their forceful method of conversion—“Material advantages had much to do with their conversion to Christianity. The Missionaries saw to it that government jobs would be given to the Christians and not to the Hindus. They also made sure that Hindus would not harass or molest those who became Christians. The Hindus were deprived of some of their rights, like the right of going on horseback or in palanquins etc.”

East India Company’s opposition to Missionaries

East India Company was strongly opposed to the Missionaries until around

---

25. Ibid p. 4
1813. They thought that “over much Missionaries zeal”\textsuperscript{27} means the destruction of their territorial expansion and trading interest in India.

From the very beginning East India Company sent British priests to accompany its ships to cater to the spiritual needs of British traders and soldiers but they deliberately opposed Missionaries coming to India for evangelizing. In September 1808 the court of directors wrote to the governor general of India, “The paramount power which we possess in India, undoubtedly demands from us the necessity; as well as strengthens our obligations, to protect the native inhabitants in the free and undisturbed profession of their religious opinions, and to take care that they are neither harassed nor irritated by any premature or over zealous attempts to convert them to christianity.”\textsuperscript{28}

This policy of the East India Company gave some interesting results on the one hand, to extensive support for Hindu and Muslim institutions, and on the other, to the shutting out of Christian Missionaries from the company’s territories. On the first count, most important was the company’s financing of publishing ventures, including the first English translation of the Bhagavad-Gita (1785) and Max Muller’s edition of the Sanskrit text of the Rigveda. On the other hand at that time William Carry’s arrival in India paved the way for the Protestant Christian Missionaries activity. A few years later he was granted a measure of official company recognition by being appointed to teach Bengali at the college of Fort William. His chief work was in the field of Bible translation in many Indian languages.\textsuperscript{29}

**Relationship between Christian Mission and Colonialism**

For same respective vested interests both the two entities Christian mission and the colonialism had been working hand in hand. British government expressed its desire from making alliance with the Christian Missions even before 1800 AD.

Charles Grant, and avowed Clapham Evangelical and influential person of the Court of Directors had put up the idea for the consideration by the Court of Director in 1797. He thought that conversion of the Indian people to Christianity could help achieve permanence of the British rule in India.\textsuperscript{30} This was supported by the two influential persons,

\textsuperscript{27} David M.D: *Mission: Cross Cultural Encounter And Change In Western India* p.31.
\textsuperscript{28} Ibid p.31
namely Charles Simpson and William Wilberforce. W. Wilberforce was the parliamentary 
voice for Christianization of the Indian people to justify and strengthen the British control 
over India. The free-trade merchants in Britain readily approved the idea in the hope of 
improving their narrow Commercial interest. Claudius Buchanan, then provost of the fort 
William College served to promote the co-operative adventure of the imperial power and 
mission in India. Besides these, the successive revisions of the East India Company's 
charter in 1813 and 1833 the door was thrown open to Christian Missionaries.\textsuperscript{31} Clause 
XXXII of the charter Act of 1813 virtually provided the freedom to propagate Christianity 
in the British Colonies. From then on, the age of the reformed Churches Started in India, 
and Missions of various protestant denominations came from Europe and America along 
with the Catholics. When peace and stability established in the British India and all the 
objectionable 'Missionary clause' was deleted from the charter Christian Missionaries 
penetrated into the interior and into tribal regions, and by the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century 
Christians became an integral element in the diverse population of India.\textsuperscript{32}

**Christians in India**

The following table shows the Christian population of India and their percentage.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christians</th>
<th>P.C. population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>1,862,634</td>
<td>0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>2,234,380</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>2,923,241</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>3,876,203</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4,754,000</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>6,296,763</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>8,392,038</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>10,728,086</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>14,223,382</td>
<td>2.59 (\textsuperscript{33})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christian in Assam- district wise population by religion as per 1991 census.


Golpara-52745 P.C- 7.89 Barpeta 3558 P.C-O.26 Nalbari-10988 P.C-1.08. Kamrup- 
31820 P.C -1.59. Darrang-81952 P.C-6.31. Sonitpur-85427. P.C- 600 Lakhimpur

\textsuperscript{31} Baird D. Reboot: *Religion in Modern India*, p. 227.

\textsuperscript{32} Thomas P: *Churches in India*. Ministry of information and Broad casting government of India. Reprinted April 1969. p.18.

\textsuperscript{33} Baird Robert D : *Religion in Modern India* p.238.
The first census of free India was held in the 1951 where the position of the Christianity in different states in Northeast India has been shown as given below:

### States / union territories – P.C. of Christianity in the total population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States / union territories</th>
<th>P.C. of Christianity in the total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meghalaya</td>
<td>23.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assam Hills</td>
<td>7.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division</td>
<td>90.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>00.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arunachal</td>
<td>46.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nagaland</td>
<td>11.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>00.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christian population of Assam (1881 to 1931 census) as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Christian populations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>7,093</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>16,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>35,969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>66,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>132,106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>249,246</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christian religions composition of India’s population, 1961-2001 and growth rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Christian religious composition</th>
<th>Decadal Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1961-71 – 32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1971-81 -17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>1981-91 – 17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1981 - 2001 -22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Christian Missions in Northeast India:

Various pioneering missions which worked in Northeast India can be put under three groups, namely -

a) The Jesuits  
b) The Serampore missions and  
c) Later missions.  

The Jesuits

The most copious and the most successful Missionaries of India were the Jesuits. In 1626 AD the two Tibet bound Jesuit Fathers, namely Stephen Caeella and John Cabral undertook Missionary works first on Northeast India. For some time they opened their Missionary center in Koch Bihar and Mariam nagar, near Agartala, Tripura. They left India for opening a mission center at shigatze of Southern Tibet. The Christianity they had either planted or witnessed at Rangamati in Goalpara soon disappeared after the region was ceded to the East India Company by the Moghal in 1765. The French Missionaries Fr. Bourry and Fr. Krick were killed on the Tibetan border in 1854. After this incident there were no Missionaries in Northeast India for some time the Jesuits were especially important among the Roman Catholic orders because of their very high level of professional training, their systematic practice of a method of contemplation, their political activities and method of contemplation, their political activities and their radical obedience to the Church. They became the most

famos of all Missionaries to India and china, and were prominent also in south and North America. In China their first entry was made by Michael Ruggieri and Matteo Ricci in 1582. Jesuits like Ricci were successful because they accepted the position of the Confucian Scholars and because of their skill in the mathematical sciences and in engineering and astronomers. A Chinese chronicler noted approvingly that ricci wrote many books on subjects on which no Chinese had written. He converted the first government official who was baptized as Paul HsU. In 1601 he moved to Peking, the imperial capital of China. There the Emperor gave him a house and a salary. By 1605 he had 200 people studying the Christian faith. When he died, in 1610, Ricci was buried in Peking in Chinese style.

Serampore Mission

It was established by William Carey in 1793 stood as the first well recorded Missionary work in North and Northeast India. He was supported by two other enthusiastic Missionaries – Joshua Marshman, a Chinese language scholar and William Ward, a printer and preacher. They Missionary doctrines and methodology were remarkably modern. They insisted on a thorough study of Indian languages, the Hindu religion, and the custom of the people. They preached the Gospel in all towns and Villages. They rendered Bible into over 30 Indian languages. They setup schools as part of evangelism. Their involvements in Social action were aimed for the social change in the Bengal society and in large for the Indians. They followed a holistic approach in their Missionary zeal. They were among the few who went against the structural evils in the society, like sati, in fanticide and many more. They did not allow the practice of caste system. They gave importance to native education both for boys and girls, presented both Bible and Ramayana in vernacular language to the people of India that they might be influenced by the teaching of the Bible. Their contribution to literature helped the people towards upliftment of the society and their

*There was a clause in the charter of 1813 which gave the executive of the company in India power to prevent the landing of, and even to deport, European who were considered undesirable by them. As it was mainly used against the Missionaries, the clause came to be known as the “Missionary Clause”.

contribution to science and technology helped the people to uplift their economic standards.⁴¹

In 1811, William Carey employed one Assamese pundit, Almaram Sharma of Kaliabar in the Nowgong district for the purpose of translating the Bible into Assamese. They brought out a translation of the New Testament in Meithei in 1827. In 1829, by James Rae, they opened school at Guwahati. It was the Serampore Mission which first took the advantage of the provisions of the charter Act of 1813 and to carry it forward into Northeast India.⁴² In the year 1813, they undertook Missionary work among the Khasis under the leadership of a Bengali convert Krishna Chandra Paul. In 1837, their Missionary works was discounted and close down from the region when Joshua Marshman, the last of the Serampore trio lost his life and all the existing Mission centers of them were handed over to the American Baptist Mission.⁴³

**The American Baptist Mission**

It was the first Mission which could establish permanent Christian community Churches in Northeast India. C.A Bruce, was the main person who gave the idea of inviting Christian Mission to Assam. In 1834, he persuaded Captain Jenkins, commissioner of Assam to invite Missionaries to Shadiya. In 1835, Captain Jenkins wrote to both American Baptist Mission Home Board in America and Burma Mission headed by Adoniram Judson. They were promised governmental protection and suggested the possibility of working among the Shans there by connecting Assam with Northern Burma and China. Responding to the Government enthusiasm and assurance of protection, two American Missionaries Rev Messrs Nathan Brown and Oliver cutter were asked to proceed to Sadiya, Arunachal Pradesh. In September 1835 they reached Calcutta. On the 23rd March 1836 they reached Sadiya to survey the area for establishing school. They established their first Mission Station at Sadiya.⁴⁴

---

⁴¹ "The Answer" the voice of the indigenous Missions in India. Vol 28, No. 1 Jan- June 2010. p.4. Publisher Mrs. Helen Johnson. Vishakapatnam, India.
⁴² "Issues Facing of Christian Church Today". p.44
In 1836 they established a school at Sadiya. In 1847 a school at Goalpara and in 1867 they established the first Garo Church at Rayasimla. On May 13, 1841 they first baptized an Assamese youth named Nidhiram by Bronson at Jaipur. The first two Garo converts were omed W-Momin and Ramke W-Momin. Its work soon spread to Nagaland, Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh and other parts of the region. In 1902, by William Patigrew they established the first Church at ukhrul in Manipur. The Garos (1863), the Aos (1871) the Angamis (1871), the Lothas has (1883), the Tangkhuls (1895) received the Christian faith, brought by the American Baptists.

In 1935 Baptist-Mid-Missions founded their Mission station in Cachar district at Silchar by Dr and Mrs. Galen G-Crozier M.D. They were commissioned and sent by Baptist Mid-Missions Home Board to be the Missionary to the Manipuri’s in Cachar district of Assam. They had begun Missionary ministry first among the Rongmei Nagas who were living in Silchar. Through free medical treatment they started their Missionary work. In 1945 they organized the Alipur Baptist Church with 21 converted Christians. Later others from different communities and tribes were also added to the Church. The first pastor of the Church was Angom param Singh. From Alipur they extended their ministries by opening up new Mission stations namely at Makunda (1950), Dharmanagar (1953) Binnakandi (1953), Jaffirband (1954) and at Silchar (1962). Preaching the gospel to winning of souls and establishing Churches was the goal of these Missionaries through the medical work and literature ministry.

**Roman Catholic**

Roman Catholic Christianity came to India with the arrival of the Portuguese in 1498. According to M.B Niyogi, “this should be considered the beginning of the aggressive Missionary era of the Roman Catholic Church in India.” In 1542, Francis Xavier, the greatest Roman Catholic Missionary came to Goa. He preached Christianity through out South India and also a number of Churches were established.

---

47. Irene Salam: Catholic Education In Manipur. Scholar publishing house, Delhi, 1989 p.4.
In 1834, the whole of Northeast India came under the jurisdiction of the Vicar Apostolic but the Vicariate did not have priest to work in Northeast India. The Catholic Missionary activities of the Assam Valley was actually started in 1850, when the three French men namely- Fathers Julien Robin, Nicholas Michael Krick and Benard setup Chapels at Guwahati and Nogaon on their way to Tibet. But their was no resident priest. The first resident priest of Assam was Father Jacopo Broy of Berhampur who arrived at Guwahati on June 20, 1872. In 1873 he built his residence at Gauhati and then expanded his Mission to Nagoan and Shillong by 1876. He built the “Villa of Good Hope”. He was able to minister to catholics numbering 195 and 70% of these were Europeans. They extended their works in the Khasi and Jaintia Hills in 1890, at Raliang in 1892, at Shella in 1893, at Laitkynsene and Cherrapunji in 1897. In 1912 Fr Ansgar Koenigsbauer the first Catholic Missionary went to Manipur. But it was many years later, in 1953, that the pioneer Italian Missionary, Fr Aloysius Revalico-entered Manipur and began the true Missionary work in the state. The catholic faith was brought to the land of Mizos by Mr. Aichunga. In 1925 he along with a few of his Mizo friends were received in to the Catholic Church. In the same year Fr Boulay came to Aizal and Baptist and Joseph Francis Laldailova and Mary Theresa Lalbaiak thangi at first they formed a small community and Mr. Thang phunga as its leader, and a small Church was built at Kulikawn. They entered Nagaland after the independence of India and made great progress both in evangelic, educational and humanitarian services. In Barak Valley, they established their first Missions at Badarpur in 1890. In Catholic Missionaries, who came out from continental Europe followed similar background to that of the Welsh Missionaries. They were devoted priest who were prepared to live lives of great hardship and self denial for the Sake of the people. They were committed to working among the poor, to care for both their bodies and spirits. Their educational policy was mainly responsible for their successful Mission in this country. In Barak Valley they are working for the educational improvement of the economically backward tribal people

56. Snaitang O.L.Dr: *Christianity and social in Northeast India.* p.124.
57. Irene Salam: *Catholic Education in Manipur* p.9
like the Khasis, Nagas and the some tea garden labourers of Barak Valley. The Missionaries also engaged in publishing books, established sericulture farms and printing press etc. at shillong they published a monthly magazine called the Christian family or 'Ka-Ling-Kristan. One of the catholic societies like the salesians of Don Bosco (SDB) Wlaich was founded in 1859 by st. John Bosco in Italy run the largest number of secondary and Higher Secondary School in India. In 1906, this society came in India. Missionareis considered education as a part of their evangelical and social work. Due to the growth of education they developed the social position of women, Harigan and other depressed classes of Andrapradesh, kerala and other places of India. They setup both vernacular and secondary schools in various places of Karala For educational work Missionary received subscriptions, endowments and special gifts and government grants.  

**Anglican Church**

Elizabeth, the Queen of England kept her personal religious convictions to herself, but her upbringing was protestant, and her legitime depanded upon the Acts which established the Church of England, also known as the ‘Anglican Church’. Richard Hooker was the most important Anglican theological writer. He wrote the laws of Ecclesiastical polity. Anglicanism is the theological ‘Middle way’ between the theological extreme of Catholicism and Zwinglianism. Hooker maintained that no form of Church government can claim in absolutely sure basis in the Bible or the early Church, but insisted on the necessity of a standard and official frm of worship: By us it must be acknowledge as a work of god’s singular care and providence, that the Church has always held a prescribed from of common prayer, although not in all things every where the same yet for the most part retained the same analogy.

Anglican Church came in India for the purpose of spiritual welfare of English men in India who were involved in the business of East India Company. When the company gradually change from a trading body into a political power and its territorial expended need for the spiritual care of British officials, traders, soldiers and others also increased especially after 1814 when Thomas Middleton was appointed as the first Anglican Bishop in India.  

---

59. David M.D: *Mission: Cross Cultural Encounter and Change in Western India*. Ashish Amos Ispck, Delhi, 2001 p.249
in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta presidencies. In 1835, Bombay was made a separate Diocese and Thomas Carre took the charge of its first Bishop.

The main work of the Anglican Church was to look after the spiritual welfare of the Anglo Indian, Railway workers and also the Indian Christian community. As most of the Railway workers belong to this Church, their chaplain was attached to each railway colony along with a Church and a school.

The Anglican Church did not adopt Missionary work in Northeast India except in the tea Gardens of the Brahmaputra Valley. There they preached the gospel of Lord Jesus. In 1814, Rev Agarstin, the first Anglican priest visited Assam for scattered Europeans. In 1850 Christ Church was consecrated at Gauhati and in 1851 a priest was posted at Dibrugarh. Bishop Cotton visited Shillong in 1866 and gave encourage for the establishment of a Mission there. In 1872, the first Anglican Church was constructed at Shillong where Bishop Milon donated Rs. 3000/-. In Barak valley they established their first Church at Silchar. But it is at present the property of American Baptist Mission. When Anglican Church left the place the Baptist Missionary established a theological college there. From Silchar they expanded their center to other places of Barak valley like Bursingapur, Dalu and Kumba tea gardens, etc.

The Seventh Day Adventist

The history of seventh day Adventism has its root in Miller's prophecies. He predicates that Christ would return on October 22, 1844, which would be their calendar equivalent of the Jewish Day of Atonement for that year. The seventh month movement so called because Tishri', the month in which the day of Atonement fell, was the seventh month of the Jewish ecclesiastical year.

In 1860 they adopted "Seventh Day Adventism" as their official name and Michigan was the headquarters of the movement. Joseph Bates was the first member of the movement who started the Missionary efforts of this denomination. In 1903, they sent their Missionaries to Europe, Africa, Australia, The South Sea Island, South Africa, the Orient South Asia, Central America and the Middle East.

---

60. *Christianity and Social Change in Northeast India*. p.82.
There are approximately 7,500 ordained ministers and 3,700 licensed ministries. They have 14,896 licensed Missionaries on the field, and 6,904 credentialed Missionaries.\(^4\)

In 1933 Rev and Mrs. L Buirges came in Northeast India as the pioneer Missionaries of this determination. In 1935, by Rev, J.F. Ashlock they established their first mission center in khasi-Jaintia area.\(^5\)-Schools, literature, technical, Agriculture and social welfare scheme etc undertook as their Missionary works. In 1989 its total membership in khasi-Jaintia area were 1500. They do not differ from historical Christianity. Regarding the Christian Sabbath they have differ from all others Christian denomination Sunday was fixed as the Christian Sabbath but they observe like the Jews, Saturday as the Sabbath.\(^6\) They have always placed stress on the harmonious development of the physical, mental and spiritual powers of the individual. In their boarding schools they combine daily physical work with intellectual study. The aim is to build into character the qualities of industry, integrity, orderliness, and dependability they maintaine that, in as much as the ultimate goal is citizenship in heaven, the real objective of life and education is to bring about in man the restoration of the image of god.\(^7\)

**Arthington Aborigine Mission in Mizoram**

J. Herbert Lorrain and F.W. Savidge, who were the members of High gate Baptist Church in London,\(^8\) arrived at Aizawl on January 11, 1894 as the first Missionaries to the Mizos . They stayed in Mizoram for four years (Jan.1894 to Dec-1897) and produced some elementary Mizo Literature and started a school but failed to setup a Christian community. They arrived in Indian under the scheme of Arthington, a millionaire businessman in Leeds who as a sternly evangelical person wanted to send the gospel to those who had never heard it and who had his own original ideas as to how this was to be done. Later both the two Missionaries formed their own organization which they called “The Assam Frontier Pioneer Mission and began work among the Abor people and gave up the idea of coming back to Mizoram.\(^9\)


\(^{45}\) Saitang OL.Dr: *Christianity and Social Change in Northeast India*. p.83.

\(^{46}\) Thomas P: *Churches in India*. p.19.


\(^{49}\) *Ibid* p. 33
Other Christian Missionaries who later established their center in Mizoram were Welsh Presbyterian Mission and British Baptist Missionary society in south Mizoram. In 1891 the first Presbyterian Missionary William Williams visited Mizoram and on August 31, 1897 the Welsh Presbyterian Mission sent D.E Jones as the first Missionary to Mizoam. On 15th February, 1898, on his 28th birthday ,D.E Jones opened a school on the verandah of his house at Aizal. British Baptist Missionary Rev George Hughes of Chittagong visited Mizoram in 1902. In that year the General Assembly meeting was held at Liverpool, and on the recommendation of the Mission Board, readily accepted to the request of the B.M.S. for the transfer of the southern part of Mizoram to the Baptist Missionary Society and the northern parts to the Welsh Presbyterian. They settled in Lunglei on 13th March, 1903. Lorrain and Savidge were obviously close to other Missionaries in their faith, in their views of Church organization and on the best method of Missionary work.

**Lutheran Santhal Mission**

Lutheran Santhal Mission started their Mission work in Goalpara district in 1870 and worked among the Tea garden workers. The Grossner Evangelical Lutheran Church of Chota Nagpur also followed its members to the Assam tea gardens and organized them into Churches. Newzealand Baptist Missionary society was one of the last foreign Missions who started their work in 1938 among the hill tribes of Tripura, which led to the formation of the Tripura Baptist Christian Union.

**The Salvation Army**

One of the new movements which start in the 19th Century was the Salvation Army. In 1865 this movement was founded by William Booth and his wife Catherine. It has spread from London, England to many parts of the world. India is the Army’s oldest Missionary field. It is an integral part of the Christian Church, although distinctive in government and practice. This movement was typical of one aspect of nineteenth century Christianity. “The Booths devised effective means of reaching poor people in the great cities who had lost touch with the Churches. The Salvation

---

70. History of the Church in Mizoram p.42
72. History of the Church in Mizoram. p.75.
Army used popular music and brass bands which attracted attention on the streets, and their methods shocked more conventional Christians.\(^75\) The main principle of the Army is to follow the main stream of Christian belief and its articles of faith emphasize god's saving purposes. Its objects are the advancement of the Christian religion of education, the relief of poverty and other charitable objects beneficial to society or the Community of mankind as a whole.\(^76\) In 1882 Army's work in India was first started in Bombay by Frederick St George de Latour Tucker.\(^77\) The Salvation Army is registered as a guarantee Company under The Indian companies' act 1913. States in India included in the territory- Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Maghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, Bihar, Haryana, Himachalpradesh, Jammu-Kashmir, West Bengal, Delhi, Chandigar, Punjab, Sikhim etc. They also established a divisional territory at Cacher, Silchar. Under the captainship of C-Dawngliana.\(^78\) In India they adopted evangelistic work and various social agencies were inaugurated for the amelioration of distress from famine, food and epidemic. Educational facilities such as elementary, secondary and industrial schools, cottage industries and settlements were provided for the depressed classes. Medical work organized at Nagereoil in 1893 when Henry Andrews set up a dispensary at the headquarters there.

Pentecostal Mission

Pentecostal Mission was setup first in Sri Lanka by Pastor Paul which is known as the Ceylon Pentecostal Mission in 1921. In1924 this fellow ship was registered in SriLanka.\(^79\) The Indian Pentecostal Church of god is the largest Pentecostal denomination in India. It is an indigenous Pentecostal denomination started by K.E Abraham an Indian national in British India.\(^80\) In India it was divided in to two groups K.E Abraham's group was known as South India Pentecostal

---

77. Ibid p.119
78. Ibid p. 125.
Church of God. Rev Cook's group was known as South India Full Gospel Church. Later both groups joined together and formed the "MalanKara Pentecostal Church of God; Again they Separated in 1930 in order to be free from foreign domination. From 1930-1933 K.E Abraham’s group co-operated with Ceylon Pentecostal Mission. They changed the name from South India Pentecostal Church of God to Indian Pentecostal Church of God.\(^{81}\)

This Movement encouraged a real and genuine worship of Christ from the depth of the heart. They also encouraged the lay participation in worship service. No cast discrimination was practiced in this movement. The main factor that motivated people to join in this movement was Pastoral care with much concern and fellowship among the believers.\(^{82}\)

Organization of Presbyterian Christianity in Northeast India

The first organization of Presbyterian Christianity in Northeast India was the Khasi-Jaintia presbytery which was formed in 1867. The Presbytery then decided on rules for admission on new converts into the Church, enforcement of attendance in Sunday school, approval of evangelists and so on. It became the first body to decide for guidelines and rules for the organization of Presbyterian Churches and functioned for the whole Mission field.\(^{83}\) When the Church expended it was reorganized and in 1895 the field was divided into five presbyteries namely, eherra-shella Presbytery, Shillong-Mawlai; Mawphlang- khad sawphra; Jaintia and the plains.\(^{84}\) An annual Assembly, called the Assembly of Assam was constituted. In 1896 its first meeting was held in Shella for three days from 15-17\(^{th}\) February. In 1910 the first presbytery of Mizoram met in Aizawl. In 1918, when the assembly meeting was held in sylhet the Churches on the Mission field Resolved to enter into the union formed among the Presbyterian and other Churches in North India. The aim of the movement was to make closer union of all Christian Churches in India. The Churches on the Welsh field constituted one of the seven synods within the united Church of North India and were designated the synod of Assam. In 1924 when Assembly was held at Mairang, a new constitution adopted and according to this constitution the field was divided into

\(^{81}\) Christianity is Indian the Emergence of an Indigenous Community p. 449

\(^{82}\) Ibid p. 383.

\(^{83}\) Morris J.H.: Story of our Foreign Missions. p. 43.

eleven presbyteries: four in Meghalaya, three in the plains, three in Mizoram and one in North Cachar Hills. The presbyteries met twice a year and consisted of all the ministers, Missionaries, evangelists and decons within their respective boundaries, together with duly elected delegates. The presbyteries also constituted the four Assemblies viz., The Khasi and Jaintia Hills Assembly, The Lushai Hills Assembly, and Cachar Assembly. Each Assembly met once a year. The Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Assam served as the Supreme Court of the Church and met triennially. It constituent units were known as Assemblies and, at the lower level, presbyteries.

In February 1925, the plains Assembly of three presbyteries namely Sylhet - Sunamganj, South Sylhet - Sanumganj and Karimganj- Cachar presbyteries first met at Maulivi-bazaar and its moderator was Pengwern Jones. Owing to certain problems involving diverse cultures and administrative issues, the administration of the plains Assembly was placed under the supervision of an administrative officer since 1959 and handed over to the Mizo Synod in 1974. The Welsh mission was without question the first and most influential Christian agency to work in the region. At present it has the largest number of adherents.

The Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries in Northeast India

The word Presbyteries derived from the Greek word presbuteros, meaning elder. Presbyterian wanted in official Church, governed, as in Scotland not by bishop, but by elected boards of ministers and elders called presbyteries. The Welsh pressbyterian foreign mission was the first to start their Missionary work in India on the Kashi Hills in 1841. On the recommendation of Rev. Tomlin, the Welsh mission selected the mountaineers area of Assam. They sent their first Missionaries Rev. Thomas Jones and his wife. He and his wife sailed for Calcutta, the nearest port to their destination (Khasi Hills), on the ship "Jamaica, leaving Liverpool on the 25th November, 1840. They arrived at Cherrapunjee on 22 June 1841, which in retrospect in truly a red letter day in the annals of Khasi history. He established first mission house near Cherra village. The arrival of these Missionaries must have been welcomed by the British forces in Cherrapunjee, for the British Military

86. Natarajan Nalini- The Missionary Among the Khasis p.63
administration apparently felt that the best way to tame the primitive and wild Khasis was through love, which the Missionary alone could give.

As a Missionary's Jones first work was to learn the local language. In this work he was assisted by two young men who knew a little English. He started the first school at Mawsmai (near Cherrapunjee) in 1842. He also setup another school at Mawmluh. The first khasi book read in the school in 1842 was kot kitals Nyng Kong (First Khasi Reader) followed by Rhodd Man (Mother's Gist). He opened the third school in Cherra. Mrs. Jones died on 22nd August 1845 at Cherra and was buried there. In 1847, Thomas Jones services were terminated on the grounds that he had commercial interests. He stayed in Calcutta, and died on the 16th September, 1849.

Eighteen Months after their arrival in Cherra, Mr. and Mrs. Jones were joined by other workers, - the Rev. and Mrs. Williams Lewis, and Dr. Owen Richards in 1843. One Captain Yule posted at cherrapunjee helped the mission with his private funds. However, Mrs. Lewis faced great difficulties when she started to educate the women. Because at that time Khasi women were confined in their domestic work and animistic religion was highly prevailing in Khasi Society. Proselytisation made a slow start. The first persons to be baptized on 8th March 1846 were U Amor and U Rujon at cherrapunjee. Rev. William Lewis recorded this as very joyous occasion. Ka Nabon was the first Khasi women convert. The first Khasi Deacon was K. First Singh. In 1849, three persons K. Jorkha, Ka phul, and Kabir were baptised, in 1850, the first Christian marriage in the Khasi Hills was solemnised when Ka phul was married to U Luh.87

Early in 1849 Mr. and Mrs Lewis were joined by the Rev. and Mrs. William Pryse. There they stayed for short period. Mr. Pryse was removed the following year to Sylhet, to commence Missionary operations on the plains. He and Mr. Lewis wrote a letter to the directors of Wales for permission to open a Mission station at sylhet. The Directors allowed him to establish a mission station at Sylhet. Mr. and Mrs Pryse moved to Sylhet in 1850 from Cherra. He begun his Missionary operations in the plains on some what similar lines to those followed on the Hills. The Welsh Missionaries worked on Khasi Hills from 1841 to 1967. In 126 years the 96 Missionaries were served the hill tribes of Khasis. Some of Missionaries had good talents and some were less talented. God used them abundantly for the transformation

87. The Missionary Among the Khasis p.65
of the Khasis and Jaintias. They established a strong Church in the land. In 1950, when the constitution declared the nation as a secular state, Government policy towards the foreign Missionaries underwent a change. Preaching by foreign Missionaries on the soil and conversion by them was discouraged. A chain reaction set in. There was restriction of foreign aid coming to the Churches. Henceforth, the Missionaries could come to India not to stay for any new work but only to continue the work done by the mission so far. In Northeast India another field of Welsh mission was Lushai Hills. Due to the strong arge and request of the Rev. William Williams, the Presbyterian Church of Wales General Assembly held at Machynlleth in June, 1892 adopted Lushai Hills as the field of Missionary operation. The General Assembly held at Rhyl in May 1897 appointed Rev. D.E. Jones, Llandderfel to be a Missionary in Lushai Hills. He arrived in Lushai Hills on 31st August 1897. Missionaries preached the gospel in the open ari and distributed Bible pictures. They formed a Church there which was indigenous by natute. From 1891 to 1968, the 22 Missionaries worked in Mizoram. In Lushai hill the evangelistic work was done not only by the Missionaries alone, but also by the Mizos. The missionares as well as the native preachers preached, saying “Believe in the Lord Jesus”, they also said, “Believe in Pathian (God) and worship Him, then you would not need to sacrifice to demons (Evil-spirits) anymore. Even when you die, you will go to pialral (heaven)88. In Lushai hill Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries worked from 1891 to 1968, by the 22 Missionaries the last Missinary was Miss. Angharad Robert whom Mizo people affectionately called PiZopari by Mizos. (1965 to 1968). In their 77 years services on Lushai Hills they had transformed the Mizo societies. Becouse of the Missionary education Mizo people at present engaged themselves in the various posts of the Missionary centers like Churches, Missionary Schools, Mission Hospitals and the Govt. offices etc. At present they are considered as one of the educationally and economically developed tribes of Northeast India. Missionary brought unity and equality among the different tribes of Mizos by promoting a better relationship between different villages and different tribes. They also abolished the head-hunting practices from Mizo Society by saying that killing of human beings was an act against God, the creator of all living and non living things in the world.

88. Marvellous Mission p.199
The next field of the Welsh Mission was Manipur. Rev. William Pettigrew was the first Missionary who brought the gospel to Manipur. He was a Missionary of Arthington Mission. On 6th February, 1894 he arrived at Imphal on the initiation of Mr. Porteous, a British political agent of Manipur. He opened a mission station in Sirgjamei, Imphal by establishing a small school which incidently was the first school in Manipur state. At present, this school is known as ‘Pettigrew Junir High School.’

From Imphal he visited Tangkhul Naga Villages and Hmar villages like Senvon. He lastly went to Uukrul and started his work there. Besides this Rev. Wat Kin Roberts, a Welshman started the Northeast India general Mission in 1910. He with the help of three men namely. Savawma, Vanzika, and Taitea from Aizawal opened a mission center at Senvon. This Mission is also known as “the thadere-kuki pioneer mission”89. Around 1914 to 1916 many evangelistics were appointed and these evangelists worked in different villages. Prof. F.S. Downs says that “through Pettigrew objected to their mission working in the Baptist territory of Manipur, and he considered it, the political agent finally gave the TK PM permission to work in a small area beyond the Manipur-Cacher road bordering Mizoram and Burma”. In Arunachal Pradesh the first missionaries were Natan Brown and Oliver Cutter, they were American Baptist Missionaries. They arrived at Sadya on 23rd March, 1836. In 1900 two Arthington Missionaries Namely Rev. F.W. Savidge and Rev. J.H. Lorrain came to Sadiya (upper Assam). The latter Missionaries were L.W.B. Juckman and his family who arrived at Sadiya in 1912. Rev Jumto Ngomdir, a Mizoram Presbyterian Pastor comments, “actively Mission Work was started in Arunachal Pradesh Since 1960”90. The field was officially opened in 1991. The first field secretary was Rev. Lalthangmawia. At present in the East Arunachal Pradesh there are 15 Churches and 6 pastorates and in the west Arunachal Pradesh there are 28 Churches with 24 branch Churches. The total Church members are 4031.

During the Kuki rebellion (1917 – 1919), Christian Mission work was suspended, but in the 1920 especially in 1923, there was a great revivalist upsurge among the Christians of Manipur. This made Christianity popular among the hill people, though the popularity was short lived. There were constant clashes between the adherents of traditional tribal beliefs and the new Christians, extending to the

89. *Marvellous Mission* p.279
90. *Ibid* p.245
Christian pastors and the traditional village priests. However, after 1950, Christianity made great progress, and Churches of different religions denominations sprang up; the Roman Catholic, the Welsh Presbyterian, Baptist Mid-Mission, Salvation Army, Seven Day Adventist, Pentecostal Church, free Apostolic Church of Christ Mission etc.

The independence of India brought about a change in Mission activity in the region. The comity system among the protestant Missions came to an end. Within the region and in particular the Naga and Lusai Hills, Tripura and the Hills of Manipur were opened to newer Christian Missions including the catholic and the Pentecostal and other mission. In time these Missions registered spectacular growth. Evangelization in Tripura was slow. The Khasi, Jaintia and Garo Hills received more focus with enthusiastic response of the people. The leadership of the missions was changed. Indians were taking the larger share of decision making and planning. Independence however brought with it a new dimension of criticism against the Christian Missions.

The advent of the Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries in Barak Valley

Due to the Missionary Zeal, different Christian Missionaries came and settled in Barak Valley long before independence and this trend continued after independence also. In the year 1851 first Welsh Presbyterian Missionary Rev. William Pryse stepped in this valley to visit Manipur with an intention for establishing Christian Missionary work there at Manipur. But he returned back from Jiribam, a part of Manipur and settled down in Silchar for expanding his work. He stayed in Silchar a few years and in 1856, he opened a School in Silchar, the Capital town; and so began the Missionary operations in the Cachar District. In 1863, he also opened a High School in Silchar, with 150 pupils enrollment. During this time captain Stewart was Goverment agent of Cachar District and gave full support to the work of Pryse. From 1861 to 1866 William Pryse visited so many places in this valley and extended his mission as far as North and South Cachar Hills. But unfortunately the General Assembly of the LiandLoes, unexpectedly in July 1867 terminated William

---

91. Catholic education in Manipur p.82
92. Religion and Society in Northeast India p.241
Pryse from his Missionary work, because he had connection with the Mission. Due to the shortage of persons to serve as Missionaries in Sylhet, the General Director’s meeting held in December 1872 resolved to discontinue the work on the plains. After 15 years of abandonment, the General Assembly of Aberdare held on 13-15th July 1885, decided to resume Missionary Operations on the plains without delay. Rev. and Mrs. J. Pengwern Jones and Miss. Sarah A. John arrived Sylhet on the 28th November 1887 to resume the work on plains.

In 1892, the Mission work in Sylhet was started by the Missionaries viz., Rev. and Mrs. J. Pengwern Jones, Rev. Dr. T. J. Jones, Miss. Elizabeth Williams, and Miss Brownlow. They were assisted by Miss S. Das and Daniel Ghose, the evangelist. On 15th December 1892 two lady Missionaries Miss Laura Evans and Elizabeth A. Roberts arrived in Sylhet.

Selection of Silchar for the Second Missionary Station in the Plain

Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries opened their second Mission field in Sylhet and Cachar plains. Sylhet Mission Station was opened by William Pryse and his wife in 1851. He began his Missionary operation in the plains on somewhat similar lines to those followed on the Hills. At that time Sylhet was under the Jurisdiction of Assam, India which was the first Mission station in the plains. The first four candidates who were baptised in May, 1852- Gour Mohan, Baburam Bishonath and his mother Sibi. Pryse adopted various methods to carry on the mission work were-public debates between him and the Mohammedan Maulvis and the Hindu Gurus. Essays on answers and questions type and prices were provided by the European Sympathizers in Sylhet. Besides he also established an orphanage home at Sylhet.

The second Mission station in the plains was opened in Silchar, the chief town of Cachar district, Assam in 1893 by Rev Dr. T. J. Jones, Miss. Laura Evans and Miss. Elizabeth Williams. They opened it when a number of the Missionaries visited Cachar and on their report the District Committee unanimously agreed to recommend the Directors to establish a new Station in Silchar, the chief town of Cachar. Before they left Sylhet in the last part of May 1892, the Suggestion given by Rev. Pengwern to open another Mission station in Sylhet district. However, it was seen that T.J. Jone

wanted to include Cachar in this circle of possibilities, especially as William Pryse had previously began to do some work there.

For choosing the best place to establish a new station a committee was appointed consisting of Dr. T.J. Jones, Misses Williams, E.A. Roberts and Miss. Laura Evans and Daniel Ghose, the Bengali Evangelist. They left Sylhet on 29th January 1893 and they visited many places of present Bangalades like Maulvi Bazar, Hubiganj, Balaganj, Karimganj (Assam) and at last, they came to Silchar and stayed a week. They sold 600 scriptures and also preached the word of God in the market and at Mela.

Towards the end of 1892 and the beginning of 1893, three Indian Aborigine Missionaries namely Rev. J.H. Lorrain, Rev. F.W Savidge and Rev William Pettigrew were in Silchar. They actually came in Silchar not for establishing here a Missionary centre but for permission to enter Lushai Hills and Manipur. They requested the Welsh Missionaries to stay with them. These Missionaries convinced them that they were in Silchar only for a short period, "we get our wages for working amongst the hill and mountain tribes". They also informed them that they would welcome the Welsh Missionaries to come to work in Silchar. They were with the Missionaries till the end of the year 1893 when Messrs, Savidge and Lorrains went to Lushai and Mr. Pettigrew to Manipur. They helped regularly to the Missionaries in different ways like preaching the word of Christ in Bazaar and at Mela etc. The Arthington Mission began to function after the arrival of William Pettigrew in Manipur in 1894 this was named after Robert Arthington, a millionaire at Leeds in U.K. The Mission was purely a private organization and Arthington himself was the sole contributor to it.

The commission visited Rampoor Tea Estate which situated 8 miles away from Silchar. At Rampoor, there were many Christian coolies, they were employed on the Rampoor Tea Estate. The Tea Manager Mr. Ross Jones, a Welshman, who came from Aberystwyth was Very Keen and desirous for the Mission field to appoint a teacher to live in the garden and offered 5 Rupees a month towards his wages. It was decided that Daniel Ghose, who had been there for some time connected with the work at Duldulley in Sylhet, should go to Rampoor for a period and do the work of

94. *Souvenir, Silchar Presbyterian Church 1st March 2002* p.18
95. *Marvellous Mission* p.147
teacher and evangelist. In 1893 there are in Rampoor 21 communicants, 5 Candidates, and 29 Children, making a total of 55 in the Church. There are 36 children in the day school – 21 boys and 16 girls. There are 40 girls under instruction in Silchar and 26 boys.\textsuperscript{98}

In 1893 on 24\textsuperscript{th} February commission came back to Sylhet Safely. The Missionary, Committee of Sylhet decided to select Silchar for the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Mission Station in the plains. This proposal was approved by the Directors of Wales.\textsuperscript{99} The Missionary committee decided to move Miss Elizabeth William from Sylhet and to send the new Missionary Miss Laura Evans with her to Silchar. It is worthy to mention here that according to the report of Rev.J. Pengwern Jones when Welsh Missionaries were in sylhet they established school for the lowest castes, the shoemakers, the sweepers\textsuperscript{100} and the tea garden labourers. They thought for improving them in every way. In Cachar, they also did not change their policy. Therefore, first of all they took attention towards the improvement of the Christian settlement of Rampoor.\textsuperscript{101} There, they found a school which was used as chapel by the tea garden christian labourers. But the school had fallen into a very neglected position and was almost roofless. Welsh Missionaries repaired the school and in return they demanded help of the Tea garden labourers for Missionary work. Accordingly, Missionaries contributed enough to repair the building. They opened the school not only for the Christian communities but also for the other religious people. Christian religious services were held in the school rooms. Dr. Jone said that when he went to Rampoor, he catechized the children and he had been often astonished how well they knew many of the facts of Bible. Some of the Hindus answer quite as well as the Christian children. In this way the school at Rampoor did much to evangelize the children connected with the tea garden and through them Missionaries hoped that the gospel of Jesus would influence the parents.\textsuperscript{102} Ross Jones the tea garden manager of Rampoor helped the Welsh Missionaries in their work to convert local people.

In every Sunday they were preaching three times and once every week. One of the members preached in the Aryan dialect, and the evangelist preached in Bengali. Occassionally teacher Daniel Ghose went across the river Dulu to a village for

\textsuperscript{98} Report of the Sylhet Cachar 1893 p.20
\textsuperscript{99} Marvelous Mission p.147
\textsuperscript{100} Report of Sylhet Cachar 1892 p.14
\textsuperscript{101} Ibid 1893 p.21
\textsuperscript{102} Report of Sylhet Cachar 1893 p.21
preaching where a number of Manipuris lived. After Daniel Ghose N. Sircar took the charge of Rampoor and services were conducted among the Christians in Bengali and Uriya. Thus, Rampoor was a good centre of Christian influence.

The First Three Missionaries in Silchar

The first three Missionaries in Silchar were namely, Rev. Dr. T.J. Jones, M.A. Ph.D, Miss Elizabeth Williams and Miss Laura Evans. Dr. Jones moved to Silchar from Sylhet before the end of March 1893 and other two Missionaries Miss Elizabeth Williams and Miss Laura Evans joined Dr. Jones at Silchar in the month of May, 1893. Among the three Missionaries Miss Laura Evans did not obtain an educational background. But she had training in Liverpool and London when she heard the call of the Mission field. Her health was not in a good position, the doctors had told her that she would not survive for more than a year if she ventured to go out to India. But she went out and spent 55 years as a Missionary in India.103

Regarding the object of the Missionaries, Rev. Dr. Jones said like this: “We have also a day school for poor children, which was opened soon after we came here (Silchar). The attendance varies, but we now think that it has taken a more settled from at the end of the year we had 26 names on the books, but it has increased since the children in this school are taught reading, writing and arithmetic and are instructed in the scriptures, and are taught verses of the Bible. Our object is to keep up its religious and moral aspect and make it helpful to the Sunday school which is held in the same building, and thus to became an aid to the evangelization of the poor children of Silchar”.104

Silchar is the chief town of Cachar, a division of the province of Assam lying to the East of Sylhet. In 1894, The population of Cachar was over 3,13,000; that of Silchar being about 7,000. According to the statistic received from Dr. Jones, there are in Silchar 8 communicants, 4 Candidates and 10 Children; in the Sunday School 50. The day Schools are attended by 86. The Church Collection in Silchar was 129 Rs. 2as (About £ 12-18 S). The Missionaries are assisted by an evangelist, of the name of B.N. Sarkar, and by Babu Nilkamal Das, a medical assistant in the Military Hospital.105 Dr. Jones reported that in 1894 a mela was held for one month. The

103. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.19
104 Report of Sylhet-Cachar 1893 p.22
105. Ibid 1894 p.28
Europeans also held horse races. For these two occasions large numbers of people gathered more. They sold there a good number of books. On the mela ground they made a little shop made of bamboo mats had been erected. They kept there some book for selling. The Missionary ladies had charge of this shop. They sold nearly 900 copies of portions of the scriptures. A gospel meeting was held on the mela ground. This meeting was the first meeting of the Missionaries in the mela ground of Silchar. They got large numbers of listeners there. Soon after the mela at Silchar was over, a mela was held at Karimganj. There they held several meetings daily and sold between six and seven hundred gospels and other portions of the Bible. On three nights Missionaries showed magic lantern scenes in the life of Christ.106

Residence

When Missionaries arrived at Silchar from Sylhet, they secured a large room at Silchar in the bazaar, for which they had to pay only the ground rent. In 1895, they rented a building in the middle of the largest bazaar, which was a Suitable place for preaching, when weather did not allow them to preach the gospel of Jesus. Rev. T.J.Jone reported the work of Silchar town like this that the evangelistic preaching during the year was carried on as before in the bazaars, in the station, and occasionally in neighbouring bazaars. In many places people treated them very well. Preaching meeting for Christians in the stations had been held in Bengali and English. But unfortunately the work at Rampoor had received a heavy blow by the death of Chokrador, one of the best member of the Church of Rampoor. He was very good Christian, a faithful teacher in the Sunday school, and he also helped the Missionaries for preaching the Gospel of Jesus in Bazaar.107

In September1895, T.J. Jones intended to purchase a house at Silchar for the Mission. He had married in November, 1894, Bessie Williams from Lanconwy, who was a Missionary in Shillong, and who had come out to the mission field in 1892. The owner of the house demanded 2,500 rupees for the house. According to the estimate of T.J. Jones it was only 500 rupees because the white ants had already eaten a part of it. At last, he was successful in getting a plot of land which belonged to the prison, and he was able to build a new house on that.108

106. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1894 p.28
In the following years, other buildings were erected, Missionaries bungalow, Zenana bungalow, School Teacher bungalow, Hostel for boys and girls, cook shed etc. Some of the houses are still remained and maintained, some buildings are used for stuff quarters and one bungalow built by Rev T.W. Rees is used for chapel and lady Missionary's bungalow is also used for the residence of the Administrative Secretary, Barak Area, Church and Mission. The old chapel is still remained as it was before.\textsuperscript{109} The school building constructed by Rev. T.W. Rees is still in good condition and continues to be used.

\textsuperscript{109} Souvenir 1\textsuperscript{st} March 2002 p.19