Chapter III

Evangelism and Church Planting of Welsh Missionaries in Barak Valley

The term ‘evangelism’ or evangelization is derived from the Greek verb evangelizesthai which means “To announce the good news”. A brief definition of evangelism is as follows: “To evangelise is so to present Christ Jesus in the holy spirit that men shall come to put their trust in God through Him, to accept Him as their saviour and serve Him as their king in the fellowship of His Church”. Robert E Speer, secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A said, “the aim of Mission is the evangelization of the world, or to preach the Gospel to the world to make Jesus Christ known to the world.” John R Mott, general secretary of the World student Christian federation said that the evangelization means to give every person an adequate opportunity to know Jesus Christ as Lord. The Church will not have fulfilled her task when the gospel has been preached to all men. Such evangelization must be followed by baptism of the converts, by their organization into Churches by building them up in knowledge, faith and character and training them for service. Thus from the above definitions it can be said that in the name of announcing the good news or evangelism the Missionaries adopted some methods to spread Christianity to the non-christians who were inclined to accept Christ. Through preaching the Gospel of Lord Jesus which Missionaries considered good news, in the open air or in the Mela (festival), educational institutions, Church services and medical activities they wanted to convert the non Christians of India as well as the poor and tribal people of Barak Valley with the help of native preachers.

Dr. Ralph Winter, one of the faculty member of the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary, has distinguished between three kinds of evangelism, ‘E – 1’, ‘E – 2’, and ‘E – 3’ evangelism. E – 1 evangelism is sharing the gospel with others of the same language and culture as one self. E – 2 evangelism is seeking to reach people of a similar language or culture, while E – 3 evangelism is a cross cultural activity.

2. Ibid p. 82
4. Ibid pp. 70, 71
Evangelistic Work in India

In India the American Methodist Missionary adopted the Church work through religious annual festival at Puntamba in Maharastra in 1940. They adopted Christian Jatra as the Church work. For example on October 4-5, 1941 the first Methodist Christian Jatra (Mela) was held in Maharastra. The main object of the Mela were three fold viz spiritual, cultural and social. This Christian Jatra brought together all the isolated Christians from the surrounding villages. In coming together they were encouraged when they found that their numbers were not small and they were strengthened by the unity of their common love for Christ. One thousand Christians from the surrounding 40 villages came singing “Christ Maharaja Ki Jai” with their Bhayan bands and met Bishop J.W Picket.

The Bishop and others Rev. A.S Navagiri of Dhulia, SS Salvi of Puntamba and A.B Tribhuvan a lawyer from Ahmednagar delivered their lectures on Christ. The following day a mass communication for 500 took place were 21 children and 18 men and women were baptized. Moreover, they also carried on its evangelistic work through regular preaching. It was supplemented by the sale of books and distribution of tracts. In other side of India like Gujarat Church held successful Easter melas and joint communism services for the Gujarati and urdu Church people. At Islampur (Maharastra) regular gospel bus service was taking for preaching tour to various villages. They also organised Bhajan Mandali (Indian music group). The mendali met voluntarily two evenings a week. The members of the Bhajan Mandali came from different occupational groups such as tailors, carpenters, masons and farm labourers. The mission also had a Gospel Boat. This boat carried the Bhajan Mandali on mission tour to visit villages along the river bank. In the evangelistic tours the Marathi Christian helpers collected audiences and addressed them in Marathi and that proved to be the most useful. As a result of such help from Indians, the mission work in Maharastra made remarkable progress, especially in the villages. In western Maharastra Christian Missionaries succeeded in converting a few high castes including Brahmins. They were mostly successful in gaining converts from Mahar and Mang communities and some Bhils and a few tribals in konkon.

Bengal has been the scene of the devoted labours of many Missionaries.

7. Ibid p.167
over the years including those of the Baptist Missionary Society and the Church of through open air preaching and tract distribution when they found the active opposition during their preaching they took help to the Indian Christian to circulates thousands gospels,new Testaments and Bible in Bengali and Hindi .In Andrapradesh evangelism is largely entrusted to the full time workers ,who move in groups of four or five to the surrounding villages .They organized Bible classes in a central area and 200 to 300 were gathered from many miles around the programme is a full day one from to 10 p.m .Brethrea lead the congregational singing with traditional Indian musical instruments,such as little hand- pumped organs ,Cymbals,tambourines and tables or drums⁸.

In Northeast India, like in Mizoram, Welsh Missionary Rev William Williams took the evangelistic work by preaching the gospel in the open air. When the number of Christian increased, the avangelistic work was done by the Missionaries with the help of the Mizos. The Arthington Missionaries Savidge and Lorrain started evangelistic work in Mizoram by preaching and teaching¹⁰. At the time of preaching Missionaries and the native preaches saying, “Believe in the Lord Jesus” they also said “Believe in God and worship Him, then you would not need to sacrifice to demons anymore. evan when you die you will go to heaven”¹¹

Rev Lalsawma said, “Missionary preaching was from the first, a method of direct attack, a contrast between life and death, heaven and hell, good and satan”¹² For the speedy evangelization of the gospel of Christ among the hill tribes of Manipur Rev William Pettigrew followed the Pauline Missionary method .So he wanted to established many local Churches in the hill area as strong hold bases through which the gospel might be diffused in the plain in future .He also established a Church at keisam Thong in Impal for the evangelistic work in the plain area. Most of the Church members were his students. The Missionaries and the native Church workers were fully engaged for itinerant preaching from village to village and organized local Churches continuosly the progress of Christianity upto 1948 as T.Luikham said 505 Churches and 42,91 christians in Manipur¹³

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⁸. Tatford FredkA: The challenge of India. Echos of service 1 Wideombe Crescent, Bath; London 1983 p.135
10. Ibid p.198
11. Ibid p.199
12. Ibid p.200
In the North Cachar Hills the Biates were the first to receive the gospel through the Khasi evangelists. The pioneer evangelist was Haite who brought the good news to his brethren and the JamesNagas during first decade of the 20th century. In 1921 Kama from Manipur arrived at Halflong and preached the Gospel among the Hmars in the North Cachar Hills. Although the Christian Missionaries Continued their evangelistic works in the hilly places of North cachar and the Barak valley but it was evident that there took place a strong opposition from the local chiefs and the influential villagers. The Rev and Mrs. J.M. Harries Rees reported that "converts have however been called upon to suffer bitter persecution. They have been publicity insulted, kicked, beaten, and spat upon. Some have had their children taken from them by their heathen relatives. Other have been deprived of their rice fields. And most of them have been turned out of their villages". Moreover, due to the lack of educational facilities in the vernacular the work amongst tribal Christians is greatly handicapped in Barak Valley but this need has been partly met by the re-opening of Missionaries Middle English School at Lakhipur. Progress was made during 1953, in all branches of the Church in Cachar is mainly the result of initiative of Indian Christian themselves.

From the above fact it is evident that the Missionary accomplished their work of evangelization largely with the help of native Christians and in this work foreign Missionaries helped them money and other self less services. Snaitang says "the spread of Christianity was mainly due to the work of Khasi Jaintia Christians themselves rather then the activities or financial investment of the Missionaries". This is also happened in other side of India. For instance, in 1865 the American Marathi Mission had 23 Missionaries to supervise and work in nine mission centers and 49 out stations. In addition, it had 82 Indian helpers, four Indian pastor and four Indian preachers.

The persecution of conversion was also happened in Andra Pradesh and North India. During 1920's Mahatma Gandhi's efforts to remove untouchability on the one hand and the Hindu Mahasabha's efforts to politicize religious conversion on the

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14. Marvellous Mission p-257
15. Ibid pp.282-283
17. Ibid p.495
18. Snaitang O.L. Christianity and social change in Northeast India p.74
19. Missions: Cross Cultural Encounter and Change in Western India. P.77
other, led to a strong opposition to conversion. In some instances, the hostility towards Christians and their persecution increased. Persecution of Christians was increasing in the late 1930’s in Kolhapur area well trained Christian boys were denied jobs. Christians already employed were forced to leave if they refused to worship Hindu Gods. But in 1939 Mission paper reported that although orthodox Hindu opposed the work of Christians and persuaded to the converts to return to Hinduism the Christians stood firm.

One reason for the Hindu opposition to conversion was the instinct of self preservation. In the preservation of the existing social system, the upper castes benifited if the lower castes people place the wholesale conversion then the upper castes would have been forced to perform the manual work which had been delegated to the lower castes.

In the late 1870 the reconversion movements was strated in India like Shuddhi Movement, but this was not a new one. During the time of Portugues expansion, when Hindus were converted, some time forcibly, Catholicism, reconversion through Suddhi were adopted by the Hindus in Goa and in other parts of the Portuguese India. The Arya Samaj, Rastriya Sayang Sevak Sanga (RSS), Vishya Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal use suddhi ceremony based on their scriptures to convert those of other faiths into Hinduism. C. V. Mathew a minister of St. Thomas evangelical Church of India and principal of Juble Memorial Bible College Chennai says that “the suddhi ritual is a ceremony at which re-admission into the Hindu fold is granted to those who were converted by foreign religions, i.e., islam and Christianity. This ritual purification also has a wider meaning of receiving into Hinduism anyone who is not a born Hindu.

Conversion is the most detestable term for Hindus despite the fact that many of them do respect and love the person of Jesus Christ. There is no room for conversion in Hinduism. They do not see the need for interreligious conversion. For them all Indians are Hindus except those who are converted to foreign religion like Islam or Christianity. This is well expressed by T.M.P Mahadevan “Whatever may be the

20. Corss Cultural Encounter and Chage in Western India p.186
21. Ibid p. 186
22. Ibid p.321
23. Missions: Corss cultural p.322
label it is the content of faith that matters, one may call oneself a Christian, a Muslim or a Hindu or a Buddhist. What is essential for one's soul is conversion from the baser to nobler sides of one's personality. So Hinduism does not believe in conversion. Gandhiji in one of his interviews qualified conversion as "the deadliest sin that has sapped the very foundations of truth." From the above facts it is evident that Hindus do not accept conversion as a way of religious order but in spite of this they regard it as the result of western chauvinism and intolerance endangering peace and harmony.

Therefore, philosopher like Dr. Radhakrishnan would advice, "our aim should be not to make converts, Christians into Buddhists or Buddhists into Christian, but to enable both Buddhists and Christians to re-discover the basic principles of their own religion and to live to them."

Moreover, a prevailing misconception was that any one who converted himself into Christianity would get a large sum of money which is incorrect from the statement given by Lakshmi Bai Tilak. She wrote: "Many people thought that they could earn a large sum of money by becoming Christians, but I do not know of a single instance of any one receiving anything for such a reason. Help from Missionaries and Christian people to the poor may be given a sordid interpretation, but the giving of help is an important part of the Christian religion."

It must demonstrate that the present Indian Christians are not threat to our nation rather; Christian mission seeks to transform the Indian society and work towards removing social discrimination and poverty. As a citizen of secular country we should make awareness that we are living in a multi social cultural and religious context. The religious quest of every Indian citizen should be respected and the freedom of religion act upheld as we seek to safeguard the Indian constitution.

**Church Planting**

The term 'Church' in English is derived from Kuriakos as used in the phrase like Kuriakon doma or Kuriakeoikia. These terms are derived from the Byzantine Greek form and they basically mean the Lord's house i.e, the Christian place of

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25. *Nationalism and Hindutva a Christian Response* pp-233,234
26. *Ibid* p.234
27. *Nationalism and Hindutva a Christian response* p.234
28. *Ibid* p.234
29. *Mission Cross Culture* p.349
workship.\textsuperscript{30} The Greek word Ecclesia which literal meaning is 'called out community' call out from "Darkness into light" had been accepted by the New Testament writers in order to give the true meaning for the Church.\textsuperscript{31} The Church in a sense is the agent for the extension of the kingdom of God. That is the Church has a Mission to the world.

The need for building Churches arise mainly out of the religious obligation for Christian to keep the Sabbath. All Christian denominations observe Sunday as their Sabbath. However, one Christian denomination, the seventh day Adventists, observe, like the Jews, Saturday as the sabbath\textsuperscript{32}. Although, the nature of workship and service in Churches varies from denomination but weekly community workship in Churches is obligatory on practically all Christian denominations. Christians considered it spiritually elevating to live near their Churches. The Church is a place of daily workship too for many Christians. The pious attend the Church as often as they can, for prayer and meditation. The Church is also linked, the world over, with the three main events in a Christian’s life; baptism, marriage and death. Baptism is generally performed in a Church by sprinkling of water and the repetition of certain formulae, and every Church has a baptistery for the purpose, with a font for the flow of water. Marriage is a sacrament for Christians and all devout Christians wish to be married in Churches. Death has peculiar associations with the Churches. The Syrians loved to die within their Churches. Moreover, important individuals are buried within the Churches. The Gregorian chant is still the basic of all Church music\textsuperscript{33}. The most popular function of the Churches are the feasts and festivals. Perhaps the most important civil function of the Church has been in promoting the cause of education. In regular Sunday classes Christians children are taught the daily prayer and also the fundamentals of Christian religion.

The Ministry of the corporate body of the Church is called the Christian Ministry. The traditional offices are the Bishop or pastor, the presbyter or the elder and the Deacon and Deaconess. These in the beginning were interchangeable offices of the Church.\textsuperscript{34} The Christian Ministry is chiefly the pastoral Ministry in Northeast India. The candidates are sent by the Churches and they look towards the theological Institution for training their candidates to be pastors for their Churches.

\textsuperscript{32} Thomas P: \textit{Churches in India} Publications Division Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Government of India. Reprinted April 1969 p. 19
\textsuperscript{33} \textit{Ibid} p.25
\textsuperscript{34} Rao O.M.: \textit{Focus on Northeast Indian Christianity}. Ispck, Delhi. 1994. p. 34.
Many of the Church bodies in Northeast India are evangelical and take Mission seriously. Dr Edward winter Clark was the first Missionary to the Ao Nagas was an ordent evangelist. He evangelized the kol of Sivasagar tea gardens, Ao Nagas of Nagaland and established the first Church at Molungkimong in 1872.\(^5\)

The Christians of Northeast India are very young in comparison with their counter part in the rest of India. Some tribes have to come to the Christian faith recently. Under such circumstances, the Churches are still Missionary minded. Much money and personal are expended for this task of evangelizing the new areas. The Nagaland Missionary Movement (N.M.M) under the auspices of the Nagaland Baptist Church council (NBCC) has begun realizing this need. Numbers of Churches are carrying on this work independently and indeed notable results have been achieved by some Churches like the Merangkong Baptist Church of the Ao areas in its project among the Amir Karbis of Karbi – Anglong district of Assam. Other Church bodies are actively involved. It has been voiced forth by Rev. Alemmeren, the former director of Evangelism of Nagaland Missionary movement that this work has to be coordinated under one umbrella for effectiveness and for conserving the meager resources at our disposal. The NEICC toyed for sometime with the idea of setting up a department of evangelism attached to one of the theological Colleges of Northeast India but so far not much has materialized in this direction. It is high time that the theological Colleges in Northeast India give due importance for this area of training Missionary personal. The NBCC at Dimapur and Eastern theological college at Jorhat have setup their own Missionary training Programs for Northeast India which is a good sign.\(^6\)

**Some Important Churches of India**

Some important Churches of India- St. Mary’s Church, Madras, the first English Church in India was built in 1680, St. John’s Calcutta (1770), St. James’ Church, Delhi (1841), the first Lutheran Church in India was built by the Missionaries Ziegenbalg and plutschau in Tranquebar, the first Anglican Cathedral, St. paul’s, Calcutta; (1847). The orthodox Syrians have over 800 Churches in India. Among them most important are orthodox Syrian Church; Calicut, the Kadisha.

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Church, Quilon; Cheria palli, Kottayam and St. Thomas Church, Muvattupuzha etc. 37

The Four Major Patterns of Church Government

The Four Major patterns of Church Government are a) Autocratic (one man’s rule) like the Pope of the Roman Catholic Churches. B) Episcopal like that of the Episcopalian Churches or Methodists which are run by a group of Bishops. e) Presbyteria like that of the Presbyterian Churches which are run by a group of elders. D) Congregational –like the congregational and the Baptist Churches which are run by a group of believers in a democratic way.38

Evangelical Method of the Presbyterian Church

From the very beginning for evangelism the Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries adopted a wise policy of indigenous leadership. So they thought and trained the Indian Christians to preach the gospel. For evangelistic works they opened school, taken extra classes for bible reading and hymns, young men and women went out in groups from their respective Churches to conduct evanggelistic campaigns in the different parts of the land and opening of Home Mission fund etc. In 1935-36 the Presbyterian Church of welse sent a commission to India and they gave the following suggestion: “One suggestion we made in India was that individual Churches should regard the evangelization of the near villages as their special responsibility, and that they shulud not depend entirely on the labors of paid evangelists39.

The British government indirectly encouraged the Missionaries policy of evangelization which is well evident from the words of British prime minister Lord Palmerstone in 1854. He said that “ it is not only our duty but it is our inters tot promote the diffusion of Christianity as far as possible through out the length and breath of India”.40 British Government encourage the Missionaries education schemes when they knew that basically educationl was used as means of prosyletisation. Missionaries evangelized the people through the dedicated teachers. The establishment of schools and introduction of literature was seen as the only plan to

37. Churches in India p.55  
38. Focus on Northeast Indian Christianity pp. 16, 17.  
answer to the good purpose of evangelization. In the words of Cunville “the translation of the Bible marks a very important Missiological event in the life of the Church. In the years before 1891, almost all converts were school pupils. After 1891, the lives of those who lived outside the school were affected and they become Christian. 41

In Sylhet district Mr. William Pryse used various methods of evangelism. He organized public debates between him and the Mohammedan Maulvis and the Hindu Gurus, established orphanage Home, and arranged essays on answers a questions type on Biblical Subjects42. Mr. Pengwern Jones carried on this work by organizing workship services in the chapel and held open air meetings in various parts of the town. The Church and evangelical work of Bangladesh was weakened because of the fact that in 1947 some of the better educated Christian leaders left Bangladesh to live in India. D.A.K Mondal, a leading Christian from Bangladesh has said that heavy dependence on foreign funds, lack of creative national leadership, tension between evangelical and liberal Churches, inadequate facilities for theological education etc are the major weakness of the Church in Bangladesh. These weaknesses coupled with the majority character of the Christian community have hampered the mission of the Church in Bangladesh.

Evangelism and Church Planting (Cachar Silchar)

The first three Missionaries Dr. T. J. Jone, Miss Elizabeth Williams and Laura Evans and their successors were very active in evangelistic work and Church planting in Cachar district of Barak Valley. In 1893 Dr. T.J. Jones in his report clearly said that they (Missionaries) endeavour to present Jesus Christ as a saviour to the people in their own language and in English. 43 To those who attend their meetings they delivered the Gospel in the way of addresses or lectures on ethical or semi religious Subjects. In every week they arranged the weekly meetings. In that meeting they taught different subjects such as the version of Christ, the work of the holy spirit, faith, love, hope and the different books of the New Testament, Chapter by Chapter. Initially the Sunday, service was held at 7:30 a.m But later at 4:30 p.m The meeting was held at the Mission room. In 1893, regarding the Church meeting Miss Elizabeth William in one of her latter said like this:

41. Khasi Cultural Resistance to Colonialism p. 64
42. Marvellous Mission p.81
43. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1893 p.21
"As in hundreds of places in Wales, so here in Silchar, India, a Society (Church meeting) is held every Wednesday night, and it is carried on much in the same way. We meet in a room in Dr. Jones’ house. A hymn-book and a copy of the bible are placed in the hand of each one that enters, so that we may read together the chapter which is read at the beginning. Then the little children (our orphans) repeat their verses, and after wards those who have grown up".  

In 1899 Dr. T.J. Jones in his Annual report said regarding the preaching meetings in the Mela like this:

"The work for the year was commenced as usual by holding preaching meetings in the annual fair (Mela) which is held here. Dr. O.O. Williams, Karimganj, came here to assist us and we were thus able to hold several meetings everyday, and to proclaim the Gospel for several successive days to large crowds of people. This fair is attended by people from all parts of Cachar and Sylhet and many as twenty different languages will be spoken here."  

The tasks of Missionaries’s proved that they were good travelers. Undoubtedly they traveled far and near to preach the Gospel. They never lost the chance to preach the Gospel any time and any where. For preaching the gospel they adopted many devices like selling scriptures in the market, at Mela and also opened the Sunday School etc. T.J. Jone said, “We hope god will see that the good seed which is sown may find deepness of earth, then the fruit will come”.  

The young men had come regularly to the house of T.J. Jone and the Missionaries read several chapters of the history of Jesus Christ to them. In addition to the Sunday School, as T.J. Jones reported in 1901, a class for young men meets in their house. In the previous year they read together “The crossbearer” – a commentary on Mathew’s Gospel. It was written by prof. Farquahan of the London Missionary society. They believe that several of its members have come to knowledge of the way of salvation. In 1902 Rev J.Gerlan Williams, B.Sc., said that at Silchar the average numbers of Sunday congregations was about 50. These were nearly all members and their families. Four or five outsiders also attended there. Missionaries arranged special meetings for outsiders

44. Report of Sylhet Cachar p. 22  
45. Ibid 1893 pp. 73-74  
46. Souvinir 1st March 2002 p.20.  
47. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1901 p.93  
and for the educated Babus. In that year the presbytery was held in Silchar. So the Missionaries arranged the two Special meetings which were addressed by Revs J. Pengwers Jones and T.W. Reese. On Christmas Night Rev J. Ceredig Evans gave an address where he emphasized that they would be needed to appoint the native workers for the evangelistic works in the villages or Markets of the Cachar. The ordinary week-night meetings and society prayer meetings were also held at Silchar. Mrs. Williams held a Christians Endeavour Meeting weekly for the children, and the later part of the year she had a class to prepare young women for membership. These were received into the Church on Christmas day. 49

In 1903 Rev J. Gerlan Williams gave progress report of the work of Missionaries in Silchar. This was due to the fact that they had extended the work in some directions. One Church has been formed in Borkola, a place 13 miles out of Silchar Station and at the foot of the North Cachar Hills. The communities consisted of Khasis who had removed from Jaintia to cultivate the betel leaf—a leaf that the Indian cannot do without. 50 In 1904 another new Church was established in Kalain. It was also a Khasi Presbyterian Church. They came to the plains from the Hills due to cultivate the betel leaf. When they came down only one family, husband and wife, were Christians. But within a very short time by their influence several came forward as candidates and its numbers became 40. 51 It heard that some of the neighboring tribes like Mikirs and Cacharies were prepared to become Christians.

Regarding the Rampoor Church, Rev. J. Gerlan Williams said that “several were baptised in the Rampoor Church. This is a Church on a tea garden and the members are all coolies. They came from Orissa and belonged to the Oriya community. Rampoor Church was actually established before the arrival of Welsh Missionaries in Barak Valley.

In 1885, it was established by the Rampoor Tea Estate Manager. When Welsh Missionaries came in Silchar they took the charge of the Rampoor Church. During the period of Welsh Mission only 13 families of the Rampoor tea estate became Christians. They were namely Ananda Senapati, Anil Singh, Salman Das, Jogendra Das, Hemranjan Patra, Philimon Das, Layar Das, Chandra Biswas, Sadan Biswas, Nitay Christians, Chanu Das, Samuel Das and David Das etc. 52 The evangelists of the

49. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1902-p.100
50. Ibid 1903 p.107
51. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1904 p.115
52. Personal Interview with Ambika Roy Age 85 years. At her resident Rampoor. On 13-06-2009
Rampoor Church during Missionary period were viz,- Jenkin Pastor, Khagen Biswas, Candra Biswas, Sadan Biswas, Ananda Senapati and Parit Babu. Parit Babu was the last evangelist of the Rampoor Church. His original residence was in Calcutta. He did not reside at Rampoor regularly. When he came at Rampoor he had stayed in the house of Jatindra Mohan Patra. During his period Rampoor Church members were divided into two groups and thereby formed another Church at Rampoor which is still existing there. The name of the Church is called – “All one – in Christ – Church Fellowship Bridal Apostle and Prophetic Philadelphia Church”. It was established on June 1947. Land of the Rampoor Church was not more than 3 Khatas. This quarrel ultimately changed the location of the Welsh Presbyterian Church and later on it was established in the gateway of the Rampoor Christian colonies. Before independence it was under Shillong Synod. But now it is under the Control of Mizo Synod. At present at Rampoor 30 families are the Presbyterian and others are belonging to the Philadelphia Church (Under C.N.I Church).53 The Rampore Church members built a very nice chapel early in 1896 which cost about 80 rupees. The Church developed in self reliance and had thus done this itself. The Church and the school were growing steadily.54 In 1908, Rev T.W. Reese in her report stated her occasional visit to Rampoor Church. She also expressed her desire to improve the Sunday services by sending an efficient young man at Rampoor. In open air meetings Missionaries were not only discussing the religious affairs but they also discussed other social and educational atmosphere of our country at that time. It was evident from the words of T.W. Reese. As she said: “ A number of meetings have been held for the educated Babus in English, Embracing Temperance, Literary and Religious Subjects papers were given by orthodox Hindus on the Cast System, and on early marriage, and the evils of both were recognized and Condemned by nearly all present” 55 Concerning the Cachar presbytery, a latter was received under the name of Dr. Rowlands, moderator, and the Rev D. K. Badshah, as secretary, in which it mentioned that a misunderstanding had divided the Church at Rampoor for the past 2,½ years and had resisted all effort. The reconciliation took place in the Church and the communion service, which followed, was unutterably real, 10 children were baptized and 12 young people were received into full membership.

53. Personal Interview with Arun Patra. 70 years old, Ex-Chairman of Rampoor Church and Rana Roy Ex-Secretary of Rampoor Church. At Rampoor on 13.06.09.
54. Marvellous Mission p.155
Another Church built by the Welsh Missionaries in Cachar district is the Pailapool Church. The Church building and quarters were built from Mission and Presbyterian funds. During Missionary period Pailapool was a village situated 14 miles eastern side of Silchar town. The Church at Cathedral Road, Cardiff, has generously contributed 450 rupees towards the creation of a new chapel there. For the construction of the Church at least 1,000 rupees will be required. The Land of Pailapool Church belonged to one Sudhir Kumar Basu, a Christian but he sold the land to one Mr. S. K. Roy, during his mental disturbance. Therefore, the Mission worker Mr. C. K. Biswas was transferred. Beside the Church and quarter, the Mid-Mission established their mission station and they worked there and eventually established Mission Hospital at Alipur. In the initial stage at Pailapool Church area around 5 Christian families were Presbyterian. They were namely – Mr. Biresh Roy, C.K. Biswas, Binay Bushan Roy, Phillip Sarkar and Santi Chaudhury. The total area of the Church land was not more than 18 Khatas. It was made with burnt bricks and woods, called Assam type house. Near Pailapool at present another two Churches are there at Hmar Colony. They are called Reform Presbyterian Church (R.P.C) under Halflong synod. All the believers of this Church are Hmar people.

In 1935 two important Churches were built in Cachar area viz., Katlicherra Church and Konakpur Church. Katlicherra Church (at present Hailakandi district) was one of the oldest Churches in the Cachar plains. In 1960, Mr. Chalmers, the owner of the Tea Garden erected a Church in Memory of his late father which was called: "Chalmers Memorial Church". When these two Churches had built the Missionaries of Silchar district were the Rev and Mrs T. W. Rees and Misses E M. Lloyd and Olwen Rees. Rees reported that he paid the regular visit to the Churches. At Konakpur a new Church has been built. ‘Four of the Churches in this part of the field have, by a resolution of the presbytery, been formed recently into a Sub-District. Through out the year the divine blessing has been upon us’ During the time of Welsh Missionaries, a small Church was built in Sonapur by the local members, and it was built as a tiny chapel, thatched with grass and a mud floor, but was spotlessly clean. Rev. T.W.

57. Marvellous Mission p. 156.
58. Personal interview with Chiro Biswas, 71 years old. At his Pailapool residence on 12.08.08
Reese was asked to give baptism and one day, Rev. T. W. Reese, Miss Unice James and Miss Phyllis Jones, Silchar, went to give baptism to the twenty seven heathen Khasis, thirteen adults and fourteen children.\(^{60}\)

The work on the plains was very difficult and the Church could not grow properly. It was evident from the report of Rev J. W. Roberts. He said that

"the year 1920 was the period of great unrest throughout India and that had coloured the whole work of Missionaries. In September, however, a nationalist conference for the Sylhet and Cachar district was held in Sylhet, and great crowds came from every part. This conference adopted, on behalf of these districts, the policy of non-cooperation. The result of this was to make the attendance at our bible classes fall very low and to make the holding of the English meetings impossible" \(^{61}\). However, in that juncture Christ favoured the Missionary of the plains. A presbytery was held in Sylhet in August, 1920 at which Babu Hem R. Sarkar was ordained to the full work of the Ministry. From the beginning of the present year a presbytery fund was established, all the Churches on the plains contributing. In that year total collection was Rs. 750/- an exceedingly encouraging figure. This made a step in advance in the development of India Church on the plains, and the enthusiasm shown was a very happy augury for future\(^{62}\). Hem R. Sarkar was the first Bengali pastor in Silchar in 1920. The Churches in the plains were organized into three presbyteries, namely- Sylhet-Habiganj with eight Churches and Karimganj Cachar with five Churches. The first plains Assembly met in Maulvi-Bazaar in February, 1925 with Rev. Pongwem Jones as moderator. The Total number of Christian at the end of 1925 was 1947.

In 1933 Rev Edwin Adams, B.A had given well report about the object of presbytery like this: "In Cachar, where the Silchar – Karimganj presbytery was held from December 1\(^{st}\) to the 3\(^{rd}\). All the meetings of the presbytery were characterized from beginning to the end by a warm atmosphere of devotion and Spiritual power. All who attended witnessed to a special sense of God's presence with his people. Subjects dealt with were, - Grace, Gods pose to redeem, and prayer. The presbytery was concluded on the Sunday night by a long programme by the 'Pad Kirtan' party" \(^{63}\). On December 1\(^{st}\) 1933 a presbytery of the Assembly of the hill tribes of Cachar

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\(^{60}\) Souvenir 1\(^{st}\) March 2002 p.23.
\(^{62}\) Ibid 1920 p.233
\(^{63}\) Report of Sylhet Cachar 1933 P-342
was held in Jaintia hill. Adam Said, “Here also we had evidence of God’s presence in this Church”\textsuperscript{64}. Hill tribe presbytery some time faced with the problem of Syntengs who engaged with pan cultivation on the plains. These people, coming down from the Hills Churches are exposed to unusual moral and spiritual dangers. Rev Adam again stated, “it is feared that in isolated places many fall away from all connection with the Christian Church. The presbytery is grappling with this problem, but with all together inadequate resources”\textsuperscript{65}.

In 1947, the partition came, it reduced the plains Assembly to a District meeting with headquarters at Silchar and a mission centre at Karimganj. During these days, the Church in the plains faced many problems and there was an imminent collapse. However, the Assembly took the right step to appoint the Rev Zairema as the Assembly Officer (from 1959 to 1968) to supervise the work of the Church in Cachar District.

The year 1953 was very encouraging for Missionary works in several ways in Barak Valley. In that year general secretary of silchar and surrounding districts paid a visit to silchar. In that occasion the Assembly was held in silchar. There discussed about the tribal and Bengali Churches. A few prayer groups had formed, whose burden was a revival of the Bengali Church. Although, the work amongst Tribal Christians were greatly handicapped due to the lack of education and financial difficulties. But the work of evangelizing had been most encouraging. In one sub-district alone, ten whole villages were converted to Christianity.\textsuperscript{66} In all branches of the Church in Cachar was made very progress mainly the result of initiative of Indian Christian themselves.

\textsuperscript{64} Report of Sylhet Cachar 1938 P-343.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid 1947 P-343.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid 1953 P-494.
Table 3.1
The following table shows the total number of Churches during the period of Welsh Missionaries in Cachar and Karimganj districts of Barak Valley.

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<td>11</td>
<td>13676-7-9</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cachar Hill Tribes</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>137</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1957 Sylhet Cachar</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>Rs.930.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cachar Hill Tribes</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>Rs.15,776.84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1958 Cachar Hill Tribes</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>Rs.18,604.71</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1959 Cachar Hill Tribes</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>24,590.07</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>


1) These figures of the Churches and preaching stations, Ministers, preachers and Deacons of Silchar indicates the whole cachar district Christian Population under Welsh Mission inclusive of plain and Hill Tribes members. The nomenclature Silchar means the Missionary’s report of particular year under reference head quarter at Silchar.

2) Because of the migrating nature Hill Tribes Christian Population of those past days of Missionary era the fluctuation in the statistic report is very much reflected in unconvincing manner.
First convert and the first pastor in Barak Valley

Gonga Prosad was the first convert in Barak Valley. He was a young Brahmin, who received baptism on the 26th July, 1895. He was baptized by Dr. Jones, on his baptism, his name was changed, at his own request to Prem Ronjan Upadyha, a name signifying ‘Love’.67 The local people did not welcome the baptism of Gangaprashad which is evident from the report of Dr. T. J. Jones. Dr. Jones reported that “the baptism of Prem Ronjon, who had been in the school up to 1894, caused a number of parents to take away their boys”68. The people of this country look upon baptism as a rite by which a man is made Christian. After he had embraced Christianity, he read with Dr. Jones for sometime, and afterwards proceeded to the theological institution of Cherra where he made great progress, both intellectually and spiritually. In March, at the shangpoong presbytery, he passed the evangelists examination successfully. He is a very good young man, a good preacher and filled with the spirit of the gospel. In addition to this work as a teacher and evangelist, he has done much works amongst the Khasis in Marwacherra. In 1920, the first Bengali pastor was ordained, Rev. Hem. R. Sarkar, Silchar. About Sarkar T. J. Jones Said:

“He passed the theological examination third on the list. He is really good and substantial preacher and has a very pleasing style.”69

Another two men viz., Abdul Hamid and Anonda K. Ghose had provided good services for the Mission. Abdul Hamid Opened a school at Sunaibari, a place six miles distance from Silchar for the Nagas, a tribe in habiting the surrounding Hills. By doing this work he brought many poor tribes to Christ. The contribution of Anonda K. Ghose as the deacon was very significant. He did his work well. He preached regularly in the chapel and in the Bazar. About these four converted T.J. Jone in his Missionary report said like this:

“These four men are providing themselves to be very good workers. During the year they met on the Sabbath days to pray together for the success of the work in Silchar and for guidance in carrying it on”70

During the time of Missionary the work on the plains was very slow but steadfastly growing. It was slow because plain people did not accept Christianity and

68. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1895 p.35
69. Ibid 1901 p. 93.
70. Ibid 1901 p.93
their work whole wartedly. The Missionaries believed that the gospel seed sown may produce more fruit. In Silchar station the member of native Christians has grown so much that the Missionaries felt that two Bengali preaching services should be held each Sunday for their benefit.

**Sunday School**

One of the important functions of the Church is Sunday School. Robert Raike, an ordinary member of the Anglican Church, was the founder of the Sunday School. From England it spread to America and from America it again came back to England. Later on it spread all over the world. Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries also performed this Church function very regularly in their houses or within their Churches. They conducted this religious school only on Sunday in the Church with different groups learners and appointed teachers along with scheduled lesson curriculum based on the holy scriptures that is the Bible. The classes of Sunday school are graded like nursery to adult. In every Sunday it was started about 8 O’clock in morning. Their primary aim was to make Christians. Rev. T.J. Jones in his statistic report said that in 1894 at Rampoor 63 candidates were attended in the Sunday school.71

Itkhola school of Silchar was the great Sunday School of Cachar district during the Welsh Missionary period. In every Sunday morning the School was started, and there also attended by the children of the day school. Mrs. Jones started a new class with the women. She also started a ‘Christian Endeavour Society’ amongst the children to work for Christ and his Church. About the Sunday School of Silchar T. W. Reese said:

“The meetings in the Church on the compound, more especially on the Sunday, have been well attended” 72

In 1898 at Karimganj the number of Sunday School students was 794; The number of Bible verses learnt by the Sunday School girls was 1,028. According to the Report given by Miss Das in 1899, the total attendance for the whole year was 843, and 1,010 Bible verses were learnt by the girls. The Sunday school children were taught the stories of Abraham, Jacob and Joseph.

71. *Report of Sylhet Cachar* 1894 p.28
72. *Ibid* p. 30
In 1899 Rev Richard Burgees, Secretary of the Sunday School union for India has given high praise to the school for a large number of verses to the Memory of the children.

In 1955 a meeting of the Church Committee of Silchar was held on 30 January. The meeting resolved: from Sunday the 6th February 1955, Sunday School will be held in the Church and distribution of Classes will be liked this:

1. Superintendent for Conducting the Sunday School, Rev- S.C. Dutta or Miss F. Nayak.
2. Teachers Class: Miss Evans or Miss F. Nayak.
3. Senior Class: Rev. S. C Dutta or Mrs. U. R. Dutta
4. Intermediate Class: Miss Abala Das or Miss Leema Ghose.
5. Junior Class: Mrs. Basanti Ghose or Mrs. P.I. Sarkar
6. Children’s oral class: (Section A) Miss Usha Chakraborty. (Section B) Miss Helena Sarkar. or Mrs. P.B Sanyol.

Mr. M.B. Sarkar has been requested to go round each & every family and request them to sent their children to attend the Sunday school regularly. At that time Dr. J. H. Rowland was the secretary of the Sunday School Committee of Barak Valley.

Prem Ronjan taught the Bible stories to the Sunday School childrens. The average attendance during 1897 was over twenty. In the annual examination of schools in India on gained a first class certificate, one a second and one a third.

According to the statistic report of the Presbyterian Church in Assam, December 31st, 1958 the total number of Sunday School of Cachar Hill Tribes were 217, teachers 461 and schools 7913. In according with the ruling of the General Assembly, the 1st Sunday in November, i.e., November 1st will be observed as Missionary Sunday.

Silchar Chapel

Missionaries had no Chapel at Silchar till 1896. They used to hold meeting in the school room. In 1897, they had little Chapel furnished nicely. It was made of

73. Abstract of the Minutes of the Church committee held o 30th January 1955. Silcahr. File No. 1 Name : D.C Minute Subject Plains
74. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.22
75. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1900 p.82
temporary material. This chapel was built and furnished by money contributed by the
Church. In 1900 AD, Dr. T. J. Jones in his report stated that:

‘The Church is at present busily engaged in building a new chapel. One native
member has already contributed Rs. 40 towards this object. I am glad to bear
testimony that the Church is alive and active. The gospel was reached regularly
through the year. In different places in the station, and we feel that residents of Silchar
have had an opportunity to come to the Knowledge of the truth’ 77.

In the early part of the year 1901, Dr. T. J. Jones was very busy with the
erecting of the new chapel and it was completed at the end of the year, and the
opening service was held on the first Sunday in June in the same year. Rev. T.W.
Reese and Rev J Pengwem Jones preached at the opening service. The Chapel had
cost Rs. 2569.7 annas and it had been almost prepaid for with the exception of Rs.
257. For making this chapel many European contributed and the native Christians
showed their faithfulness and a spirit of sacrifice.

Silchar Mission Compound

The Mission had acquired 21 bighas at prime land at the heart of Silchar town,
but could not put up pucca fencing for lack of fund. The land lies at a slightly higher
level and becomes a place of refuge for flood victims of the town during the monsoon
season. The Municipal water pressure was too low to reach the compound. So the
Missionaries often had to draw water from outside. It becomes the playground of
children of the town and grazing ground for the cows of the neighborhood. The
present family quarters of the Silchar Mission Compound were the girls hostels during
Welsh Missionary period. When Missionaries left this place the Mission lands were
allotted to Mizoram and Cachar Hills Tribes synod for building their offices. 78

In Mission compound during Missionary period a Banglow was there. It was
occupied for many years by the Rev. and Mrs. T.W. Reese. It was completely
destroyed by fire. The fire book out about 3:30 a.m on Sunday morning, September
25th 1937. The Whole house was burnt to the round in less than half an hour. They did
not know the actual cause of the fire. But all believed that it was caused by the fusing
of an electric wire. Every thing in the house was completely destroyed with the
exception of a small quantity of clothing and linen.

77. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1900 p.81
78. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.42
An European officer who lived nearby came with troop of Gwrea, and they managed to save two cabin trunks, and many jewels and small things before it burnt down completely. They could save only 800 rupees but another 200 rupees which was kept for local Churches of Lushai and Khasi Complately burnt out. Three gold Sovereigns were without blemish after the fire. The Missionary and his wife were given refuge in the house of Miss Lloyed for the time being. At that time the Missionaries of Silchar were the Rev and Mrs. T.W. Reese, Miss E. M. Lloyd, B.A; Missolwen Rees and Miss Mairola Jones. Mr Rees reported the consequence of the fire like this:

“During the last four months I have been more than a bit preoccupied with such very mundane things as bricks and mortar. Since the end of last September we have been home less, though we have been welcomed, as well as generously endured as temporary residents in the ladies bungalow”

Rev T.W. Reese insisted immediately to go built a new Bungalow one that would not go on fire so easily. So, he built it with a ceiling of Heraklith which was also damp vermin fire proof, and also it had an iron roof.

For the maintenance of Silchar Presbyterian Mission Bungalow an estimate was granted which is given below:

**Silchar Estimate For 1955**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Grant</th>
<th>Per Monsum</th>
<th>Per Annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Repairs</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>360/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Traveling</td>
<td>50/-</td>
<td>600/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Postage</td>
<td>5/-</td>
<td>60/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chowkidar</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>420/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Rent &amp; Taxes</td>
<td>120/-</td>
<td>1440/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Miss Evans T.E.</td>
<td>15/-</td>
<td>180/-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Miss Chowkidar</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>420/-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 330/- 3480/- *80

80. Estimate Record obtained from Presbyterian Church of Barak Valley, Silchar, Cachar, Assam 1955. File- Nil- Page No. Nil
Repairs

1. The Rev. G. Jenkins informed the District Committee that the stove at Silchar was in a serious state of disrepair, and that efforts to repair it had not proved to be very successful. He requested permission to approach the Directors for a Capital Grant of Rs. 375/- to purchase a new stove.

Resolved: That the Directors be requested to sanction this grant.

2. The Rev. G. Jenkins reported that the car at Silchar would not be used during his furlough, and pointed out that it would deteriorate if allowed to lie idle for a year. He requested permission to sell the car and retain the money received for the purchase of a new car on his return.

Resolved: That the car be sold on the above suggestion.  

Personal Estimate for Silchar for the year ending 31st December, 1956.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per Monsum</th>
<th>Per Annum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rs.-a-P</td>
<td>Rs.-a-P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Buildings Repairs</td>
<td>35-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Postages, Stationary</td>
<td>5-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Rent, Taxes</td>
<td>110-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Traveling</td>
<td>50-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Care taker</td>
<td>35-0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>Rs. 235-0-0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presbyterian Church of Welsh foreign Mission sent an estimate for 1956 for Silchar Mission station to Rev Morfyn Jones, Mission House Halflong, Assam which is given below:

Silchar

Building Repairs Rs. 35, Postages Rs. 3, Rent and Taxes Rs. 110, Traveling Rs. 70, Care Taker Rs. 35. Pundit Rs. 25, Chawkidar Rs.35. Total Rs. 313.

81. Minutes of the plains district committee Silchar 29th January' 1954
82. Personal Estimate record. File No. Nil. Record obtained from Barak Valley Presbyterian Church Record Room, Jail Road, Silchar
For the Red painting of the Mission Girls School the following estimate of the amount of the painting given by contractor Abdul Mattib Mazumdar of Madhurbond, Silchar. The estimate latter is given below:

D/Sir,

I beg to submit the following estimate for ‘Red painting’ of Mission girls school building Silchar.

1. Red painting should be given after removing the old painting (Shalimar paint to be used) total 8428 sqf.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measurement (Main School)</th>
<th>Second School Building</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 X 18 X 14 = 252 sqf.</td>
<td>1 X 26 X 12 = 3125 sqf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 84 X 24 = 2016 „</td>
<td>1 X 26 X 12 = 312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 84 X 16 = 1344 „</td>
<td>1 X 13 X 8 = 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 15 X 7 = 105 „</td>
<td>1 X 13 X 8 = 104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 16 X 11 = 176 „</td>
<td>1 X 18 ½ X 9 = 166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 15 X 7 = 105 „</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 16 X 3 = 48 „</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 42 X 16 = 672 „</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 64 X 16 = 1024 „</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 X 18 X 14 = 252 „</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total = 7430 sqf.</td>
<td>Total = 998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grant Total = 8454

@ 5/8/-% sqf Rs. 463/6/-

Total Rs. Four hundred Sixty three and annas six only.

Dated: Silchar 23rd June 1955. Contractor

Sd/- Abdul Mattib Mazumdar 84

84. Hand writing letter of Abdul Mattib Mazumdar. Obtained from Barak Presbyterian Church Record Room. Silchar.
The Land document of the Silchar Mission Station:

**Patta No. 440**

11 – 30 years | Revenue | Local
---|---|---
| Rs. 36/- | Rs.-a-P 2-7-0 |
| Rs. 36/- | Rs.-a-P 2-2-0 |
| Rs. 36/- | Rs.-a-P 4-4-0 |

Zenana

**Patta No. 549** Lease given 1905

11 – 30 years | Local
---|---
| Rs. 17/7, 1-1-6 |
| Rs. 17/7, 1-1-6 |
| Rs. 34/14, 2-3-0 |

School teacher Bungalow (Purchased 1912)

**Mahal No. 25**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUE</th>
<th>LOCAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rs. 34/1/-</td>
<td>1-14-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs. 34/1/-</td>
<td>1-14-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rs. 68/8/-</td>
<td>1-12-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Problem of Mission Compound

During Missionary era no serious problem was faced regarding the question of Mission compound of Barak Presbyterian Church, Silchar. But when land ceiling was introduced by the government of India round about 1967, there was a danger of being seized all the unutilized land inside Mission Compound. The Assembly in 1969 resolved that all the unoccupied land inside Mission compound made into sub-lease to every unit who would like to construct own synod house. Accordingly the land had been distributed to different units. The Mizo Synod also occupied about two bighas of land in the Southern corner for which a sum of Rs. 7134/- was paid to the Assembly as remuneration fee. Other Synod like CHT. Synod and KJ.P Synod and Silchar presbytery had been constructed their own building. The remaining land have been used for various projects like school and book room.  

Work among Zanana

The work for women by the lady Missionaries is called Zanana, because in order to safeguard the sanctity of their homes, the Hindus secluded the females of the family in the part of the house is called the Zenana. In 1893 the two lady Missioneris namely Miss Williams and Miss Evans started the Zananas because the people of this valley could heartly received the work of the lady Missionaries. The people continued to favour them due to their good and acceptable work. The native people appear to appreciate the lavours of Missionaries's sisters with the women. In their weekly meeting they delivered lectures on ethical and semi-religious subjects.

The primary object of the Zananas work was to win the women of the village for the Lord. Sometimes they established out stations in the villages to serve as center of Christian influence. Such centres would enable the women Missionaries to stay in the village for a period of 1 to 3 Months which could make them closer contract with the people. They would then create the opportunity to share to gospel more effective by words and deeds. In 1937, they introduced the village residence scheme.

Miss Evans in a letter dated the 14th February 1893 wrote to her work in the Zananas like this, that they began the work with two houses and visited these twice a week. When the number of the houses increased then they visited one a week. The

86. Personal interview with Ranjit Goala, Chairman Barak Presbyterian Church on 10th July 2009 at his Residence Silchar. (Also obtained from Souvenir 1st March 2002.)
87. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1893 p.21
last month of the year 1893 the number of houses were 20. There were 26 families under instruction in these houses. As a rule they spend an hour in every house. About 20 minutes they gave religious instruction like reading a portion of the gospels and the history of the Jesus Christ. The houses which they were allowed to visit, were increasing constantly.

At Karimganj, the first women work or Zanana was started by Mrs. Williams. She took one Zanana regularly. In the last part of the year 1895 they opened 11 zamananas, all of which were Hindus. There were 18 women in them, who were taught plain needle work, English and Bengali. In 1902, Missionary of Sylhet published a periodical for making conscious to the women of the plains. The name of the paper was “the friend of the women of Bengal”.

In 1900 AD Miss Williams said in her report that as the town was growing the Zananas also were multiplying and she had entirely failed to meet all the calls. Three months and more pass by before she was able to visit several of them. At Karimganj the Zananas work was also in a prosperous state. There the women were taught to sew, read and to be truthful. Miss Das Looked after the work of Zanana there. She visited 25 houses regularly. Her chief aim was to bring the gospel to the women. Through the medical work she opened many Zananas. Miss Das said:

“We have given medicines also to large number from villages far and near”

In 1904, Miss S. M Das again gave the report of Zananas work of Karimganj. In her report she stated that the number of Zananas through the year had been far more than in any previous year.

The Zanana work in the Silchar town was rapidly increased. To cover their work the lady Missionaries visited some of the Zananas twice a day, in the morning and in the afternoon. All the houses in Silchar had been opened for them. Even the man and old women also came to listen to them. But sometime ‘some of them occasionally defend Hinduism and all its cruel custom.

In 1905, in Karimganj Miss Das taught the women sewing, crochet and fancy work and then she song to them and read and explained a portion of the gospels. Her aim at all times was to make known to them the ‘glad tidings’. Miss Das referred to several women in the Zananas who delighted to hear the gospel and to sing Christian

88 Report of Sylhet Cachar 1895 p.40
89. Ibid 1900 p.79
90. Ibid 1904 p.114
hymns, but who had not so far made a public profession of Christ. The medical training which she received in this country was found of incalculable help in her work. She also desired to think the kind friends who had from time to time sent her gifts the use of the work. Sewing cotton, fine needles, small thimbles prints, calico, etc. were very useful. The Zananas of Karimganj was under the care of Miss Das. In 1906, she opened several new houses where she met with the very bigoted women and changed their way of life by the teaching of reading and singing the hymns.

By opening Zananas lady Missionaries could really changed the social position of the women in Barak Valley. By their great effort many women received education, acquired vocational training and knowledge of social services etc. At that time Mrs. Kusum Kumari Ghosh could speak good English Mrs. Sushila Das, Mrs. Suroma Raj, Mrs. Shaylabula Ghosh, Mrs. Dayabati Nandi, Mrs. Kiran bala Das, Mrs. Pramobala Das, Mrs. Minalini Chatterjee and also many other women acquired the knowledge of social services after regular attending of Zanana. They inspired other women of the Valley for Zanana work more enthusiastically by handful of rice collection or 'Musti Bikha' they raised the Zanana fund. Mrs. Uma Dutta became the Head Mistress of government girls school due to the untiring effort of lady Missionaries. They also could easily discharged their duties with the help of the said women believers.

In 1908, Miss Das in her report mentioned their visit to Mohammedan Zanana pupil. She met with a Mohammedan women who was quite broad and took an interest in Christianity. She was educated and very different to her class. In 1910, Miss Laura Evans one of the lady Missionaries of Silchar reported the Zanana work like this:

"We had successful meetings with the Church women throughout the year, and I think it was of benefit to us all. We had hoped that a number from the Zanana would join with us in our services; a few came but not regularly".

In that year the Zanana of Karimganj was visited by Miss Radcliffe. She taught them the related ways of the great Salvation. The year 1914 was the very promising year in Silchar Zanana. They had sold more copies of the Gospels in the Zanaanas than over before. In that year Sorat and Mrs. Ghosh helped them in Zanana

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91. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1905 p.125
93. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1910 pp.185-186
work by giving scripture lessons instructing worldly things to the women. The women who wanted to learn English and sewing pay for their education.

In 1915, the Zanana girls were participated well for a 'Red Cross Sale' which was held in Silchar. They also brought some of the things, which they themselves had made.

In 1917, the Zanana work in Karimganj was successfully carried on by Miss Das. Because in that year among the fisherman class strong opposition had arisen. But this did not discourage the work of Missionary.

In 1919, the lady Missionaries like Miss Aranwen Evans, Miss Olwen Rees, Miss Launa Evans and Miss Elen Evans carried on the work in the Zananas of Silchar and Karimganj of Barak Valley area. Miss Hetty Evans reported that in that year they visited more than twenty villages. There were often 30 to 40 listening attentively.

Regarding the women work in Karimganj Dr. Helen Rowlands wrote in her diary like this:

‘Our Women’s Committee met once a quarter, when under the able chairmanship of Miss Laura Evans or Mrs. Reese, we discuss our difficulties with one another and shared our joys, and through prayer and following strengthened and encouraged one another to continue steadfast in the work.’

At Silchar, Zananas work was happened regularly. Every fortnight the Bengali women’s meeting had been held under the presidency of Mrs. Jenkins. In 1952, a Lushai women’s meeting was held. In the initial stage of the Lushai Women’s meeting the attendance were small in numbers but later on it was growing. The meeting brought them many blessings. In some of the gatherings, tablecloths, etc. were made. Thus, lady Missionaries introduced their Zenana wok not only in the plains, but also in the areas of Hills and Tea Gurden of this valley. By doing this work they easily penetrated Christianity in the heart of the women of this Barak Valley.

Christian Youth Fellowship

This association was formed by O.W. Owen, a Welsh prebyterian Missionary on 22nd February 1954. Membership was open to young people between 14-40 years of age. Within a few years the association reached the faerthest corner of the country. At

94. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1937- p.396
present, this Association has become an important organ of the Church and also become the right hand of the Church 95

**Karimganj Mission Compound**

Karimganj is the second important district of Barak valley. It is about half way between Sylhet and Silchar. In the heart of the Karimganj town Welsh Presbyterian Missionaries established their second Mission station in 1895. Before establishing Mission station in Karimganj the Missionary Commission Consisting of Dr. T.J. Jones, Misses Elizabeth Williams, EA Roberts and Laura Evans and Daniel Ghose visited Karimganj in February 1893. At that time a Mela was held at Karimganj. The distance of Karimganj from Silchar was 35 miles. T.J. Jones and evangelist Denial Ghosh went there for a week to make known the truth of the Gospel in that Mela (Gathering). They held several meetings there daily and sold between six and seven hundred Gospels and others portions of the Bible. On three nights they showed magic lantern scenes in the life of Christ. 96

Although Jones visited Karimganj for Missionary works but he did not establish there a permanent Station. The actual Mission Station was started by Dr. O.O William. He was the first Missionary at Karimganj. He and his wife left Liverpool on the 15th November 1894, and arrived at Sylhet on the 5th January, 1895. In the Same year they were to be stationed at Karimganj. Miss Das was also stationed with them at Karimganj and assisted them in their Missionary work. In 1895, Dr Williams in his latter praised the place of Karimganj like this:

“The Selection of Karimganj has been well founded. In every way it is marked out as a strategic position for Christian work. It is just midway between Sylhet and Silchar, on the high road; it is a central and important river station for Steamer traffic; a large and increasingly busy market is held twice a week. Several excellent government buildings are being created in place of the previous temporary structures; indeed, during the last few months the town has been developing in a most noticeable manner. This development will receive a great impetus when the great Assam – Bengal railway will be completed”. 97

95. *Marvellous Mission* pp.233-234
96. *Report of Sylhet Cachar 1894* p.29
97. *Ibid 1895* p.37
In addition to this he also never back to write about the people of Karimganj district. In his latter he reported:

“half the people are Hindus, and Count Krishna, Shiva, and the Goddesses Kali and Durga as their principal objects of worship. There are no Buddhist and no reformed sects. The other half of the people are Mahammedans” 98

At that time road system was not good. As Miss S.M. Das in her report said that her school Students could not possible to attend in her school regularly due to bad path and some part of the road being several inches under water. In the heart of Karimganj town they built a thatched bamboo house where they started their Missionary works like Sunday services, Girls School, and Bible classes etc. But unfortunately on the 21st of April 1896 the Mission station was fired in a few minute which burned the Missionary house and most of their effects were destroyed. The fire began in the Kitchen, probably accidentally, a short time before down. They managed temporary buildings at a small cost, that they might not forsake the work.

Karimganj Mission Station was actually established for the Medical work. But they did not confined it like the dispensary. The also started preching work there. Dr. Williams in his annual report of 1896 said that “I seize every opportunity of speaking to my patients, and distributed books to all who can read” 99

In 1896 they baptized their first convert Raj Kumar Sarma, a Brahmin of high Caste and of some influence. After the baptism sharma could assist Dr. William in his medical work. He was Perfectly Sincere and a through Christian. Dr. William Praised him like this: “I am glad to say he is full of the desire to bring others to the light, and gives me help in the dispensary, so that I am no longer single handed. I often find him in the dispensary with a group of Hindus, some of them perhaps former disciples, sitting around him and receiving instruction from his lips”. Another person who assisted Dr. William chiefly in the preaching was Babu Heraball Biswas. He came from the Church of England Mission in Bengal. His wife was in various ways a capable and assisted Miss Dass. with them there were also four orphan girls who were growing up well cared for and well instructed. A khasi compounder was also assisted them in their preaching work. Mrs Williams had a small class of children on Sunday evenings and taught them children’s hymns in addition to scripture lessons. In 1901

100. Ibid 1896 p.49
the District of Karimganj was placed under the charge of the Rev J. Gerlan Williams. In his annual report he said that in the initial stage of their work in Karimganj the number of Christians was very small so they started their work mainly among the non-christians communities, both Hindu and Muslims. At that time markets were hold twice a week an fixed days for a few hours before sunset. Missionaries choice this market place as an appropriate place for preaching the gospel of Jesus. So they regularly attended there. They began their meeting by singing a hymn, and immediately a crowd gathered. About the listeners of the meeting Rev D. Gerlan Williams Said like this “May listen most attentively some times some one will interrupt with a question. We beg the questioner to wait till we finish our address, and then we can take the question”.101

Evangelism and Church planting (Karimganj)

In Karimganj district the first evangelistic work was started by Dr. O.O. Williams. He distributed many hundreds of gospels, tracts, catechism etc., and have made use of such work as ‘peep of Day’ stalkers “Life of Christ” &c in special cases. He proved that those books are widely read. Sometimes, Dr. Williams organized bible classes for the boys who know English.

Dr. Williams got another valuable opportunity to preach the gospel of Jesus in every year when the Europeans officers and businessman were exhibited horse races competition in Karimganj district. In this exhibition many native people came together to see the horse races and they also attended the preaching meetings of the gospel of Jesus which were held by the Missionaries in the market, sometimes, on Sunday they went out the villages and hold meeting there. Miss Das has been given a report like this:

“About twenty or thirty came together, some of them sick persons, and one leper we sang a few hymns and then spoke on the creation, the justice and love of God. and afterwards on the verse, “Come unto me all ye that labour”, etc. the majority listened very attentively.102

The Church of Karimganj was growing slowly, the Christian members were very few, but they were very generous. They subscribed one hundred rupees for the relief of the people who suffered on account of the floods; besides giving their time

101. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1901 p.89
102. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.32
and energy in going about helping to distribute rice supplied freely by the government for the use of the starving. Also the Church in Karimganj, aided by some Hindus and Mohammedans, sent one hundred and fifty six rupees, eight annas, to the Belgian consul in Calcutta for the relief of the suffering Belgians.

**Sunday School (Karimganj)**

About the Sunday school of Karimganj Mission in 1895, Dr Williams in his letter stated that ‘on Sundays they had occasionally held services in the compounds of their neighbours. In that work Miss Das had been specially assiduous’. In Karimganj Mission station Sunday School work was specially conducted by Miss Das. In the initial stage all the students of Sunday school of Karimganj Mission were the girls. Their numbers were 20. The school was started about 8 O’clock in the morning. They started the school by a small service many visitors also came to meet with the students of Sunday school, even from the welse. Miss Das in her report of 1897 said: ‘may the children of the Sunday schools of Wales remember the Sunday school in Karimganj’. The majority students were Hindus form poor background and of the fishermen class. A) The Sunday school was growing and was making encouraging progress. In 1898 the number of Students was 794; the number of Bible verses learnt by the Sunday school girls was 1,028. In 1899 Miss Das reported that the total attendance of the whole year was 843, and 1,010 Bible verses were learnt by the girls. The Sunday school children were taught the stories of Abraham, Jacob and Joseph.

In 1901 Rev J. Gerlan Williams took the change of the district of Karimganj because of the absence of Dr. Williams on furlough. About the Sunday School of Karimganj he reported like this:

> “On Sunday we hold services in our own school room. In the morning the girls attending Miss Das School come to the service, and we have generally a congregation of about 30”.

In 1911 Miss Elizabeth Radcliff and Miss E Beatrice Jones took the charge of Karimganj Mission. During their period the services in the market place were partially suspended. One of the evangelists left the Mission in the early part of the year and as

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104. *Report of Sylhet Cachar 1897* p.57  
105. Ibid 1901 p.89
Prem Babu was unable to carry on the work alone, the preaching services were mostly confined to the Dispensary.

Three meetings were held every Sabbath, a Church meeting on Wednesday, and prayer meetings on Saturday evenings. The attendances were not large, but a number of Hindus and Mohammedans were present as well as some of the children from the Mission and Government Schools.

In 1924, two Missionaries of Karimganj namely Misses Dilys G. Edmunds, B.A. and Hetty Evans took very active part for the regular Sunday services in the Namasudra Villages of Karimganj district. A service was also held in the sweeper settlement on Sunday evenings when the necessary day's work of scavenging etc, was over. 'One of these sweepers was being, prepared for baptism, and appeared to be an earnest and sincere young man. In the year 1926 Karimganj Mission was suffered a serious loss. In that year Dr. Williams was called by the Home authority. In the same year same call came to Miss Lewi, another Missionary of Karimganj Station. So due to the shortage of Missionaries the work of Karimganj station was very slow. Miss Hetty Evans promptly stepped into the vacant place, and she remains the only link in both the Girls school and the village work with the past. While the Churches were growing slowly, Sunday schools were flourishing. After the death of Dr. Williams, the pastoral committee of the plains Assembly decide to locate one of the India pastors Rev D. K. Badshah in Karimganj to take care of the Church and of the evangelistic work has largely fallen on him.

The Sunday school kept growing. The Missionaries prepared Sunday school lessons. They visited a large number of Christian families as well as Hindus and Muslims. There they sold a large number of Christian religious books.

In 1932 plains Assembly held at Sunamganj on last February where decided to establish a new feature for the encouragement of Sunday school work. It was decided to appoint examiners from the Assembly to examine on the same syllabus as that of the S. S. Union Missionaries had given the more importance pressure on Sunday work due to the fact that in that year the Congress workers, the Ram Krishna Mission and the Arya Samaj were very active for the development of the lower caste people of

106. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1924 p.253
108. Report of Sylhet Cachar p.332
the country. Independent associations were springing up in various parts of the country having as their object the removal of untouchability and the uplift of the people. In that circumstances if the missionaries did not create pressure on Sunday work or any other preaching work then they should lost their Missionary goal. It was evident from the writing of J.W. Roberts. He reported like this:

"Hinduism has a great power of absorbing others communities. It these low castes are taken into Orthodox Hinduism the chance of winning them to Christ will be lost for many generations" 109.

In 1934 the Rev Edwin Adams, B.A, and Mrs Adams, Miss, J Helen Rowland and Miss Mairola C. Jones were the Missionaries of Karimganj District. Among them Rowland took active part for the development of the Sunday School and also the day school of the Mission. Rowland Said:

"I have always felt that the first task of a Missionary is to exert himself to make the life of the Church, in his own station, first of all, an effective witness to the power of God’s spirit to produce, in fact, in the hearts of believers individually, and as unit of the Church, those promised fruits which are both the ornament and the wetness of the redeeming energies of Christ’s Gospel" 110.

In 1935, a Sunday school was started at Narsingpur, in which the children were taught a course which covered the life of Jesus Christ. Dr. Rowlunds said, “two boys surprised me by reciting, the following practically without error: St Matt. Chap. 5; St John Chap. 5; John Chap 10; Romans Chap 12; 1 cor Chap. 13, 1 John chap 4, all this without a break” 111. In the same year the Karimganj Sunday School won Prizes in the Assembly scripture examination.

In 1941 Dr. Rowland regularly visited the Churches and other Mission centers in the whole of the Karimganj and Cachar areas by a team of two or three at a time. They visited remote villages and tea garden areas of Cachar and Karimganj districts. During the time they spent there; seek to train the Christian in worship and in useful occupations, and to enlighten the non Christian women.

In 1947 Missionary could not progress in the work of Sunday School and preaching affairs. It was mainly because that political unrest was so prevailing in that year that thousand of Mohammedans from Bengal came to Karimganj 112.

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110. Ibid 1934 p.353.
111. Ibid 1934 p.354.
Mohammedans in the town had caused a lot of trouble and even demanded again that they must have the sylhet district included in Pakistan. The men who were called ‘gondas’ attempting to break the Mission house. Two attempts were made to set Miss Sybil Robert house on fire. ‘Another night twenty shops in the Bazaar where fired and several villages were completely after all the money and valuables had been carried away. In that crucial period Miss Sybil Roberts, only the Missionary of Karimganj station, on the advice of the local Government officer had leave Karimganj and go to idiling for rest and recovery. Three heavy floods were also visited in Karimganj between June and October in the same year. After October 1946 no rainfall was there upto April -1947, and as a result much sickness followed. It was evident form the report of Miss Sybil Robert. She reported that “From March until the middle of May the women and children all had mumps, and the home was very much like a Hospital”\textsuperscript{113} Besides these Missionary lost one ox stung by a cobra which was great loss and sorrow for them. All the said circumstances were responsible for the slow progress of their work in Karimganj at that period. On Christmas day they baptised in Karimganj chapel a boy who was given the name Eric Emmanuel.

Missionaries faced the strong opposition from the Brahmins and also from the other religious people of India. Their converts were suffered not only in Barak Valley but also in other parts of India. For example, Dajiva the prabhu covert, was physically attacked in the streets of Bombay by a group of man for giving up Hindu Religion and joining Christianity. They knocked him down tour up his clothes and beat and kicked him somuch that he found it difficult even to walk home\textsuperscript{114}. In another example in satara and Wai the Brahmins opposed the very presence of Missionaries. They not only wrote to the government to expel them from their town but also constantly harassed and humiliated them in the market place and in the streets. During the greate rebellion of 1857 Missionaries were treated brutally and also lost their lives\textsuperscript{115}.

In 1948, in the absence of a male Missionary in Karimganj district, the whole responsibility of the work fell upon the pastor. Rev D.K. badshah took active part of the work of this Mission station. Under his guidance there to hold special classes for the young men to give them sufficient new testament Knowledge. Most of their work in the district had been preaching to the non-christian\textsuperscript{116}. In addition to their preaching

\textsuperscript{113} Report of Sylhet Cachar 1947 p.456
\textsuperscript{114} Mission Cross Cultural Encounter p.50
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid pp.-50-51
\textsuperscript{116} Report of Sylhet cachar 1948 p.465
they had done a certain amount of social work also. Work had been amongst 'the Garder' workers. In that year, they visited twenty seven new villages of this district and sold nearly fifteen hundred Gospel. In 1952, 2nd November 1952 was observed the day of the World Sunday School day all over the world. In that Occasion the then administrative Secretary of Indian Sunday School union V.M.Koshy, B.A. BT. DIP, EC sent a letter in Barak Valley Presbyterian Church which was like this:

"I hope, indeed that members of the I.S.S.U. Committees, Missionaries, Pasors, superintendents of Sunday Schools and other Sunday School leaders, District Chairman, Office-bearers of Auxiliary Sunday school unions of the I.S.S.U, secretaries for youth work in Churches and missions and others would wish to pull their weight in furthering the Sunday school cause in this land. Let me say that the W.S.S. Day is a day on which Sunday schools throughout the country realize very specially their sense of fellowship one with another and with the world wide movement for well-organized and spiritually potent Sunday schools. Unnotedly, the capacity of the Church to face the difficult problems of our Country will depend very largely upon the young ones who are today in our Sunday schools". He had also given some suggestions for all the Sunday school workers to act upon :1) that they urge upon all schools that come within their influence to celebrate the day. 2) that they begin preparing for the day in their own Sunday school immediately. 3) That they ask for any help or information they might require from any one of their secretaries or from him. The executive committee of the I.S.S.U.desires them to organize a finance campaign in their centre (or area) in connection with that day.

In 1954, 7th to 10th January an All Assam Sunday School Convention was held under the auspices of the Assam Christian council and the Indian Sunday school union. In this convention the following points were discussed. A) Plans for strengthening Sunday school work in Assam. B) Training of Sunday School leaders and teachers. C) Sunday School organization and programme.

The following points were also included into programme a) Bible Study and Worship Services. B) Aim and purpose of Sunday School Work C) Discussion of Sunday School problems in Assam. All Churches affiliated to the A.C.C were invited

117. Letter from Administrative Secretary, Indian Sunday School Union Coonoor, Nilgiris, August 1952.
118. A.C.C. Report 1952, p.12,23,25
to send delegates to the Sunday School Convention. The delegates registration from was like this:

Registration From:
Name (Block Letters):
Address (Block Letters):
Experience of Sunday School Work:
Church:
Signature of delegate. Date
Countersigned by pastor of Church officer.
Registration fee Rs.- 1 119

Work Amongst Namasudra in Barak Valley

Namassudras were considered as financially and educationally backward people at the Missionary period in Barak Valley had majority in number in Karimganj district. So that Welsh Missionaries of this district always wanted to get a good opportunity to convert this backward Hindu people into Christianity. In 1910, they got the opportunity to start their works among the Namasudras. In the same year, on 3rd February a deputation of leaders of the Namasudras came to interview with Rev O.O. Williams on behalf of their caste. This was the real beginning of the Missionaries work among the Namasudras. Their spokes man brought with him a file of their newspaper which had been published for about two years. He had been carefully thought all these, and had noticed and marked all references to Missionaries in the paper. After long talked with them he promised them to help. In 1911 total numbers of Namasudra people in the plains area of Sylhet Cachar was nearly 200000 Their villages being mainly situated along the banks of the river. Although, in name they connected with the Hindu religion but in many respect they are outside the pale of Hinduism120.

Dr. William was the first Missionary who took the great step to improve the Namasudra people to impart them education. So in 1910 he established 16 schools for them in Habiganj District and he received grant from the government. Within 1912,

119. Report of Sylhet Cachar p.159
120. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1911 p.160
Missionaries established 19 Namasudra Schools in Sylhet district. In 1914, 12 Namasudra schools were established in Silchar and 12 in Karimganj\(^{121}\).

In 1916 in cachar district two Namasudra schools were closed owing to shortage of funds. From the Mission funds Mission gave salaries to the teachers of Namasudra Schools.

The Missionaries visited regularly to the Namasudra schools and villages and taught them the story of Jesus. There continued to be a movement towards Christianity in the Namasudra Villages, on X-mas Day many villagers were coming into Karimganj to attend the Church services. Reporting about the response to their evangelistic activities T.W. Reese says:

"Several have expressed a desire to become Christians, and here some asked for baptism, but so far they have not summoned up sufficient courage to take that stand and remain on in their own villages. And until the time comes that they are prepared to do so we have not encouraged them"\(^{122}\).

In 1923 a society was formed at Silchar representing some scores of thousands of people with the object of stimulating progress among four of the large depressed classes. Members of the Society elected T.W. Reese as the permanent president and Aghore Babu, a widely cultured, a high caste Kulin Brahmin, became the vice president of the society\(^{123}\).

The work among the Namasudras still continues to grow. In the year 1925, 120 Namasudras were present in Christmas Day service at Karimganj. "Miss Hetty Evans reported like this:

"I believe that the only way to give people a true conception of Christianity is to live it among them. We are always welcomed to spend a night or two in their houses and villages, and the fact that we take sufficient interest in them to do so in greatly appreciated. We visit some villages weekly, others monthly, or oftener, as circumstances permit. Although there is a strong desire among the Namasudras to accept Christianity, there are great difficulties in their way, and should they come over, our difficulties will be multiplied a thousand fold. They are almost all entirely illiterate. The Mission Schools are doing excellent work."\(^{124}\)

\(^{121}\). Report of Sylhet Cachar 1914 p.195
\(^{122}\). Marvellous Mission p.121
\(^{123}\). Report of Sylhet Cachar 1923 p.245
\(^{124}\). Report of Sylhet Cachar1925 p.246
The work amongst the namasudras was carried on as usual. The Church was growing slowly. In the year 1925 two hundred Namasudras attended service on Christmas Day in Karimganj Mission. In 1929, 18 members of Namasudras community were received into the Church. Among them one is the teacher of Sonapore village school. With him, one other person in same village was also received. In 1931, on 3rd January two Namasutra boys Durgyamani and Shadhumani took baptism from the village of Kamalpur. When they took baptism the Missionaries of Karimganj were the Rev-Edwin Adams and Mrs. Edwins, Miss J.Helen Rowlands and W.A Thomas. Another two namasudras S.K.Sarkar and Gopal Ram of Sonapore village took the charge of evangelist and village school teacher. In the last part of the same year two Missionaries Miss Hetty Evans and Miss Egames were transferred other station. In their places Miss J.H.Rowlands and Miss W.A. Thomas took the charge of Karimganj Mission Station.

In Sylhet district, for the Namasudras, Missionaries established a co-operative credit societies from this societies. They got agricultural loan at a low interest. In Barak Valley area for Namasutra they established many Churches and not less than 26 schools in the namasudra villages.

Karimganj Church

Dr. O.O. Williams, the first Missionary of Karimganj district had a dream to make a Church in Karimganj. But during his time he could not able to make a permanent building for the Church. In 1926 he became seriously ill so that he left himself from all the responsibilities of the Mission work. He substituted Miss Hetty Evans name for his own as secretary of the Girls School and also secretary of the Namasudra Villages. He also gave the responsibility to the charge of Karimganj Mission pass books, the Church affairs, hostel, school and Church buildings.

Till 1926, the Karimganj Christian members had no Church building in Separate, they used to held Church services in the school room and also in the dispensary. Fortunately Argyle Calvinistic Methodist Church, Swansea gave 945 pound to build a Church in Karimganj. On the 4th March, 1927, Karimganj Church

125. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1931 p.322
126. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.30
128. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.33
was opened by Rev. E.H. Williams of Mawphlang. This Church was built by Argyle Calvinistic Methodist Church, Swansea, Wales. During this day Argyle Church reached its highest point in the Mission work. After prayerful consideration, they had decided on April 6th 1919, to build a chapel at Karimganj as a memorial to the men of Argyle Church, who had fallen in the Great War. 15000 pounds were collected, of which 55 pounds were spent in placing a brass tablet at Argyle with the names of those who died engraved on it. The remaining amount of 945 pounds was transferred to the Mission for building the memorial chapel 129.

On the 4th March, 1927, Karimganj Church was opened by Rev. E. H. Williams of Mawphlang. On the opening day, a great crowd of men, women girls and boys had assembled. Before the formal opening, they walked in procession around the Church, singing, “All hail the power of Jesus Name.”130

The service was beautiful and impressive. They stood in front of the Church while Mr. Williams prayed and formally opened the building. Mr. Williams based his address on 2 chronicles 2:5, 6 “And the house which I build is great, for great is our God above all gods.... Who am I that I should build Him a house, save only to burn incense before Him”131. Another important Missionaries Miss Laura Evans, Habiganj, also attended there and followed 1 Kings 8:29. “That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even towards the place where of thou has said, my name shall be there”132. The last speaker was one of the Indian preachers, Babu Subodh Chandra Dutta, of Sylhet, Habiganj. He was attended at Karimganj due to the fact that at that time Habiganj field which was under American Mission, transferred their field in Habiganj to Presbyterian Mission of Karimganj. He said in his speech:

"When the spot on which the new Church now stands was a rice field, where in the past the song of the reapers only was heard far away on the Northern Horizon. We see the Hills of Khasia, and today they are singing, what never songs do we here? In the old days, no sound was carried on the breeze except the rustle of the full corn in the car, but today a new song of praise to god is borne on the wind, and the Hills rejoice"133.

129. Marvelous Mission p.174
130. Ibid p.175
131. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.34
132. Marvelous Mission p.175
133. Report of Sylhet Cachar, 1927 p. 284
The Church is beautiful and worth memorial to those who laid down their lives in the Great War. Now, (1st World war) the total number of the Churches is 120, the Church of Karimganj is living actively and bear many fruits.

In 1951, 24th October a meeting of the district committee was held at Karimganj Mission Compound. Persons who presented in this meeting were – Mrs. E. Lewis, Dr. J. H. Rowlands, Matron W.A Thomas, Mrs. G.C. Evans. Rev. William Morgan, G. Jenkins and G. Rowlands. Rev. William Morgan was the chairman and Rev. G. H. Morgan was appointed as secretary of the meeting. In that meeting some agendas raised which were related with the Karimganj Church, as given below.

Meeting resolved: (a) Rev. and Mrs. Rowlands were congratulated on the birth of son Geraint Philip. (b) The secretary was instructed to write to Rev. Llewelyn Jones on his appointment to the General Secretaryship, extending to him their most cordial greetings.

The secretary was also instructed to write to their former colleague. Rev. D.G. Morfyn Jones congratulating him on the occasion of his marriage (c) Miss Gwen Evans’s pundit allowance and traveling allowance of Rs. 20/- per month and Rs. 15/- P.M respectively were sanctioned (d) Rev. G. Jenkins reported that he wished to sell the silchar Jeep and use the proceeds to purchase a more economical vehicle. Permission granted, with the provision that Mr. Jenkins does not exceed the sum obtained by the sale of the Jeep. (e) That, Dr. Lowlands be granted permission to let the upper bungalow to Mr. Waldock, of Mid Missions, temporarily, pending the erection, in his own district, of his accommodation. (f) Dr. Lowlands presented estimates for electric installation at the Karimganj Bangalow and for re-thatching the Bungalow. Meeting resolved: That Dr. Rowlands be permitted to refer these estimates to the directors. The question of re-thatching Bunglows, raises the question of permanent roofs, and the Directors are requested to consider this matter which has been pending since 1947. Four Bungalows need to be considered (G) Rev G. Jenkins reported that the land of which the mission is tenant to be sold at Lakhimpur. He has been given to understand that this land will be offered to the Mission at a very reasonable price of Rs. 400/- to Rs. 500/-

Meeting resolved: That Rev. G.Jenkins be given permission to purchase within the amount quoted.134

134. Minutes of the plains District Committee Karimganj 24-10-1951.
The Need of Churches in Cachar Plain area

The Church in Cachar plains is older than the Churches in Mizoram but Cachar plain Churches have faced many problems. During pre-independence of India Cachar and Sylhet Presbyterian Churches already formed a Synod. But in 1947 when India gained freedom from the British rule and the curse of partition incurred in the subcontinent by creating Hindustan and Pakistan, the misery fell upon Sylhet cachar Synod as a blow from the blue. While Sylhet fell in East Pakistan and Cachar along with Karimganj district came into the portion of India. Thereby the Churches could not continue the solidarity of fellowship and were desperately separated from each others. The Missionaries from Wales also had to leave India subsequently. The entire Mission field of Wales Presbyterian Church in Northeast India devours of guardianship of the mother Church. The Churches of Barak Valley became orphaned in many ways. This situation brought about a sudden breakdown in the System of the Church Government and pastoral ministry in Barak. In a crucial hour of anarchy and chaos in cachar plain, the mother Church of Wales handed over all the affairs relating with the Church and Mission in Cachar plain to the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of N.E. India.135

Work for Widows and Orphans (Dipti Nibash)

Dr. Miss Helen Rowland was famous for her creation of home for widows and orphans, called ‘Dipti Nibash’, which by dint of her ability founded in 15th March, 1939 in the Mission Compound, Karimganj. Dipti Nibash is a Bengali word. It has a duel meaning. ‘Dipti’ means light and ‘Nibash’ means house. So the two words unitedly formed a new meaning, called ‘Lighthouse’.

Miss Hetty Evans who was one of the Missionaries of Sylhet in 1937 and also a Missionary of Karimganj station in 1922, wrote a report of Dipti Nibash in the following words:

“Dr. Rowlands and I take charge of the women’s work here (Karimganj) for alternate three months. The other quarter is spent in village work. Miss Das and others help us with this work, and the women always give us a warm welcome”136

The women’s work in Karimganj ranges itself under two heads a) work outside in the villages, and b) work within the Dipti Nibash, the women’s home. The

135. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p.52
136. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1940 p.422
main workers of Dipti Nibash in Karimganj were - Miss Minnie Das, Miss Santi Sircar and Miss Esther Singh, Miss Hetty Evans, Mr. & Mrs. Angle Jones and Dr. Helen Rowland. Dr. Helen Rowland in her report writes:

"We have had the blind, the maimed and the half of our community, in both the literate and metaphorical sense, and have been truly grateful for the change seen in their lives. We try to keep an open door for women who are in dire need of refuge".

For Dipti Nibash Missionaries adopted the two methods viz., worship and work. They had a little plot of Mission land which was very fertile for cultivation. The women workers had done everything except ploughing. They had also worked well in the Gardens. They also very much interested to do the knitting work for Red Cross supplies. Because at that time Second World War broke out and many soldiers were also stationed in this valley.

In 1942, Miss. Hetty Evans paid a visit to the villages of Sonapore where in 1924 the Missionaries built a Mission center but at present there stands four Mission centers and in each centre, there is a local Christian worker for the management of these centers. When they have been facing the financial problem and also the other problems in their works the following friends of the Missionaries and institutions are extending their possible assistance. They are viz., Mrs. Harries, Towy works, Carmarthen; Rhydageau Church, Cyfeilles, Mrs. Griffiths, Llangain, Miss Jones, Nanternis, Mr. & Mrs. Morris, and Llanelly, etc.

In July, 1947, two-fly-shuttle looms were setup and a larger-one followed next year, another later on and they set up five fly shuttle looms as well as two of the kind used by Hills women, Known as "Naga-process Looms". The sale of their products helped them to acquire a warping drum, with many reads and hearts of varying sizes and counts, together with a number of spinning wheels and the famous Indian "charka" for making bobbins. They used to weave saris, dhuties, bed sheets, bed cover, calico, also huckaback, and honey comb, toweling, curtains, mosquito-netting, table cloths, check-shirts, material for children’s frocks and boys suits etc. Embroidery, needleworks, knitting (the bigger boys make their own pullovers) balking all had their place in their curriculum.

137. *Report of Sylhet Cachar 1941* p.427
139. *Marvelous Mission* p.176
The older women in selected batches took their turn in cooking and other kitchen duties, children being taught by them also in each group. There were cattle-shed and poultry-house as well. The paddy for the days food was husked daily. They had three husking pedals worked by the older and the younger members together.

Dr. Rowland said the purpose of Dipti Nibash Like this: “This Dipti Nibash or Ashram meant to be first of all for our own Christian community and than for any women or child in need of refuge more than shelter.”

Dr. Helen was always rejoiced in her work and there was no limit to her activity. She began her work with prayer and faith, and had itself fruits in the serving of many women and destitute children. She was always assisted by Miss M. Das. In 1953, Miss Gwen C. Evans gave a report of Dipti Nibash like this: “During last year, two of the girls got married, and one started her training as a nurse in a Mission Hospital. One boy and his sister went to work for a nearby Missionary family, and we understand that they give every satisfaction”.

From Dipti Nibash two of the children sat the middle English Examination, and one passed the primary Examination with distinction in Needlework.

In 1951 Dr. Rowland said: “Our main occupations for the women and boys and girls are agriculture and weaving. In the weaving department, five large looms with accessories occupy the room which we put up as an extension, and which we intend to be sick room. Now with forty inmates, a sick room is an indispensable necessity. We ardently hope that when the Jowai Hospital project is happily completed, there will be money for us to put up a weaving room.”

In 1954 Rev William Morgan in his report stated that there were 12 Europeans between these three stations viz., Haflong, Silchar and Karimganj. But at present only two Missionaries in the said three stations, he himself and Dr. Rowland. In the course of their conversation Dr. Rowland expressed the desire to die in harness, for she had resigned herself to finish her days in the country she loved. In that year, at Dipti Nibas, there were eleven women and twenty five children.

Dr. Rowlands who served as a Missionaries in India for 40 years did not confine his work with the ‘Dipti Nibash’ she was a good Missionaries, and as well as

140. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1953 p. 480
141. Report of Sylhet Cachar 1953 p. 480
142. Ibid 1951 p.480
143. Ibid 1954 p.505.
a very good teacher. She had a very intimate relationship with the Karimganj College. She obtained Ph.D degree in Bengali from Calcutta University. She worked in karimganj college as a honorary teacher in the department of philosophy and English. Sometime she had taken Bengali classes. In honour of Dr. Rowlands, the Library Hall of Karimganj College was named ‘Rowland Hall’ in her memory. Dr. Rowlands had arranged to hold a local examination in order that they should not have to sit for the Calcutta examination.

During the life time of Dr. Rowland a new Sericulture Department was also set up in Dipti Nibash. The previous year the ashram (Dipti Nibash) was able to produce its first skeins of silk, after going through the whole process from the egg-stage right on through the silk worm and cocoon stage to the actual reeling. For this purpose two mulberry plantations were started. Silk-Worms were very large and devour enormous quantities of mulberry leaves, A separate house for silk—worm rearing with its equipment of frames and trays, etc, was constructed.

After the death of Dr. Helen Rowland on 12th February 1955, a meeting of the district committee was held at Karimganj on 15th February 1955. The Members who were present at the meeting were namely Revs- Williams Morgan, G.H. Morgan, Miss W.A Thomas, Mrs. G.H. Morgan, Revs E Adams, R.G. Jones, and Miss-M. Owen. In view of the special circumstances, Miss Minnie Das, matron of Dipti Nibash and Dr. Rowland’s Colleague was invited to attend. The chairman of the meeting was William Morgan. 1) William Morgan invited Rev R.G. Jones to commerce the proceedings with prayer.

Resolved:

2) In the absence through illness, of the secretary, Miss G.C. Evans, Rev. G.H. Morgan was appointed secretary.

3) The Chairman pointed out that this meeting was a special meeting of the Dist. Committee occasioned by the tragic and sudden passing of their colleague Dr. J. Hellen Rowlands. The Dist. Committee expressed its deep sense of grief and loss at the sudden passing of their friend, and desire to express their sympathy with the relative of Dr. Rowland Meeting resolved: That the General Secretary

144. Personal Interview with Subudh Ranjan Upadhay, 85 Years Old Ex-Chairman of Karimganj Mission. Date of Int. 15th February 2009. At his residence Karimganj.
145. Marvelous Mission p.178
be requested to express the sympathy of the Mission, both at Home and on the Field, with the family of Dr. Rowland.

4) Meeting resolved: Midland Bank account castle street, Liverpool which was found in her Bungalow, and along with her pass books be sent to the General Secretary.

There were also found deposit books for two accounts, viz.; a) Grindlay’s Bank, Calcutta; a Joint A/C in the name of Dr. Rowland and Miss Minnie Das. The Dist committee is unable to ascertain what the balance in this A/c. might be, as the book is not written upto date but with a sum of Rs. 6705/12/- (£505/-) which the District Committee had only recently passed on to Dr. Rowland for the new building project at Dipti Nibash, it is possible that the balance at Grindlay’s will be in the region of Rs. 9000/-

a) The united Bank of India, Karimganj. This is written upto the date preceeding Miss Rowlands’ death, and shows a balance of Rs. 6573/10/6. This is held in the name of Miss Rowland, only. Of this balance, there is certainly as sum of Rs. 450/- as the Karimganj personal Grant for January to March 1955. By arrangement with the D.C, Dr. Rowland had for some years been drawing her personal allowances quarterly.

5) In one of the Grindlay’s Bank cheque Books there was found a counterfoil for a cheque Rs. 124/- paid on 13-8-52 to the Grasham Life Assurance Society, Calcutta, presumably on a policy (Not to hand) held by Dr. Rowlands.

6) Dr. Rowland had commenced the new buildings at Dipti Nibash in accordance with the permission received from the Directors. The construction is in a fairly advanced stage, and the District committee is given to understand that all the materials are to hand it left now, the advent of the story and rainy seasons will mean that the partially constructed buildings will deteriorate considerably. There remain now expenses for the actual labour to complete the structures, estimated at about Rs. 2000/-

7) Miss Minnie Das understands that, on account of Dr. Rowlands’ sudden death, the money at the banks may not be available for some time, and she has therefore, graciously offered to advance the money from her own resources to complete the buildings.
8) The District committee accepted the generous offer made by Miss Das, and requested her to continue with the buildings. Miss Das had already supervised the construction of the buildings to date during Dr. Rowland time.

9) Miss Das requested the District committee to grant her permission to call upon the services of Revs William Morgan and G.H. Morgan for advice and assistance in the completion of the buildings, whenever necessary.  

After the death of Rowland the Home was taken up by the Assembly deputing one Superintendent to look after those widows and orphans. The time when the Mizo Synod took over charge of Church administration and Evangelism in Cachar area, this Home was also came under the supervision of Mizo Synod. At that time there were seven widows and five orphans in Dipti Nibash. This compound was big enough with good paddy field and two big fish ponds.

It is worthy to mention here that for the widows and orphans an Indian Christian women named pandita Ramabai founded a home in Maharastra called Mukti meaning deliverance. There child-widows also engaged for their livelihood in schools, diary farm and rope making industry etc. pandita Ramabai remained as head of this institution until she died in 1922.  

Beside this, for poor people the Basel Mission setup tile-making and textile industries on the west coast of India and at then places mission taught carpentry and furniture making. The YMCA, the student Christian movement and the national Missionary society did important work in the rural areas.

**Mode and result of Conversion**

When the Welsh Mission established their Mission centre at Silchar in Barak Valley by Dr. T.J. Jones in 1893 Silchar was the chief town of Cachar district. At that time the total population of Cachar district was 313000 and that of Silchar being about 7000.  

The first Welsh Missionary Dr. T.J. Jones adopted Evangelistic work for conversion through preaching the Gospel of Lord Jesus to the youth by arranging weekly meeting. In that weekly meeting they taught different subject like The Person of Christ, The Work of The Holy Spirit, Faith, Love, Hope, the different books of the

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147. Mission Cross Cultural encounter and western India. p. 405
148. Souvenir 1st March 2002 p. 19
New Testament chapter by chapter. They preached the Gospel of Lord Jesus in English and in Bengali.\(^\text{149}\) He was succeeded to baptize a young Brahmin of Silchar in 1895 on 26\(^{th}\) July. His name was Gonga Proshad. He was the first convert at Silchar.\(^\text{150}\) The Missionary also started the Sunday school or Sunday service for the preaching of Christianity in this valley. In their Sunday school both male and female were attended. In the Sunday service the day labourers of tea garden community also attended. It was mainly because of the fact that they could not possible to attend in the day period of other six days in a week as they had engaged in the day services of tea garden. The Sunday services were held at 7:30 A.M. but later at 4:30 pm. The meeting was held at the Mission room. In Sunday school they taught the children the reading of Bible. At Silchar the Sunday school the average attendance was twenty in number. In the initial stage the Bible class of the Sunday school was taught by Mrs. Jones.\(^\text{151}\) For preaching Christianity to the Non-Christian area of Barak Valley, the Missionaries also adopted the open air meeting in the towns and the villages of this valley. In the rainy season when Cachar was flooded they used a boat to preach Christianity in the flood effected villages.\(^\text{152}\) They also arranged the Horse races in Silchar town during the time of Mela or native fair. In this mela they appointed native preacher to preach Christianity among the non-Christian people who looking at the races. The native evangelists like S.N Sarkar, D. Ghose, and Nil Kamal Das, sold Christian religion books and distributed tracts to them. The Missionary ladies also opened a little shop on the Mela ground for selling the books of Lord Jesus. They sold 500 to 1000, Christian religious books or Magazin in every month. It is better to mention here that the Bengali women even after their conversion into Christianity did not attend the public meeting or Mela’s to preach Christianity.\(^\text{153}\) Mrs. Jones also started a Christian Endeavour Society amongst the children for preparing the children to work for Christ and his Church. Welsh Missionaries also set up school and medical dispensary for the propagation of Gospel of Lord Jesus. With the help of native teachers they had collected the poor and distressed people from the hill and plains of Barak Valley. They provided them Missionary education so that they could read the Bible and converted themselves into Christianity. Moreover, through medical

\(^{149}\) Souvenir 1\(^{st}\) March 2002 p. 20

\(^{150}\) Ibid p.21

\(^{151}\) Report of Sylhet Cachar 1897 p.55

\(^{152}\) Souvenir 1\(^{st}\) March 2002 p. 20

\(^{153}\) Report of Sylhet Cachar 1900 p. 82
dispensaries they also had given the free treatment to the poor people of this area. During the time of flood and natural calamities they also arranged the relief camps in their Mission Compound. They distributed cloths, medicine and also arranged the temporary settlement for distressed people. The Missionaries had arranged all these things to convert the people of Barak Valley. But inspite of their hard labour they could convert only a few numbers of plain people of Barak Valley. On the other hand, in case of tribal people they were able to convert them easily. It was mainly because of the fact that during Missionary period the tribal people of Barak Valley had economically and educationally very backward. Their religion was also not an institutionalized one. So when the Missionaries Suddenly provided them all they accepted Christianity. An alternative faith with was caused easily be super imposed on their faith.

The total number of the population of Barak Valley who were converted to Christianity in the Welsh Missionary period (1893-1958) is given below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Total no of Converts into Presbyterian Christians</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barak plain area</td>
<td>850 (eight hundred fifty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barak Hill area</td>
<td>6000 (Six thousand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no. of Converts during Welsh Missionary Period</td>
<td>6850 (Six thousand eight hundred fifty)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Among the total converts of 6850 the Hindu Bengali Converts was 250. Tea garden community like Adivasi, Oriya, Bihari, Gond (M.P Origin) was 600 in numbers, Khasi and Jaintias who were residing in the periphery of hill areas of Barak Valley, their numbers, of conversion into Christianity was about 2500. 1000 Mizo’s of Satasura hill, the Cheragi range and Jahnachara range, bordering Lusai hills were converted by the Welsh Missionaries. 1500 Hmar and 500 Kuki of Lakhipur area touching Manipur and the borders of N.C. Hill had converted into Christianity within Missionary era. At present, total number of Presbyterian Christian population of Barak Valley are 20000 (twenty thousand) they are belonging to the different Presbyterian Synods viz., i) Mizoram Presbyterian Church Synod- 9000 Christians. In this Synod Bengali, Bihari, Bishnupriay, Cachari, Manipuri, Mizo and all Hill tribes Christian excluding Hmar and Khasi are belonging.

154. *Church Statistic of Barak Presbyterian Church, Jail Road, Silchar 2010-11*
6000 Khasi and Jaintia Presbyterian Christians are there in the Khasi and Jaintia Synod. All Hill tribes viz., Hmar, Kuki, Paite, Naga, Dimasa and Napali of 5000 Presbyterian Christians are these is the Cachar Hill tribes synod. Other non-Presbyterian Christian denominations both in plains and Hills of Barak Valley were 2650. At present near 40,000 Christian populations are living in this valley. From the total percentage of whole population of the Christian population is nearly 8% (percent).

**Number of Baptised during Welsh Missionary, Period in Barak Valley is given in the following Table**

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<td>1949</td>
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<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>205</td>
<td></td>
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<td>2001</td>
</tr>
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Graphic picture of Christian population in the Presbyterian Church in Cachar Plains during post independent era (1948-2001):

*Graphic picture of PASTOR & ELDERS in Barak plain Presbytery since 1926 to 2001*

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