CHAPTER-VI
CONSEQUENCES

Soon after the defeat of the Kittur army, Chaplin took into custody the few survivors. Prominent among these were Sardar Gurusiddappa and Sangolli Rayanna. The Commissioner, then, with the help of Stevenson and a few other officers, ransacked the whole palace and plundered all the wealth. It is said that the British took away the entire cash in the treasury amounting to Rs.16 lakhs and jewellery worth about Rs.4 lakhs. They also took into possession 3,000 horses, 2,000 camels and about a hundred elephants of the Kittur army, and a large quantity of miscellaneous arms like swords, bows, arrows, spears etc. At that time, the Kittur "Desgat" had 286 villages and 72 hamlets, and its annual income was in the neighbourhood of Rs.4 lakhs.

Rani Channamma and Veeravva, the widow of Shivalingarudra Sarja and Janakibai, the widow of her late son Shivabasavaraj, were detained in the Kittur palace for about a week. Thereafter, they were forced to sign a document conceding the Kittur "Desgat" to the British. They were then sent under heavy escort to the impregnable fortress of Bailhongal and kept as political

1. Sadashiv Wodeyar, "Rani Channamma" (Kannada), National Book Trust, New Delhi, 1996 p - 132.
prisoners. A pension was fixed for all the three ladies of the Kittur ruling family, amounting to a total of about ₹40,000/- per annum.

There was an uneasy calm in the Kittur territory for some time. Even so, many people in Kittur dreamed of regaining the Kittur "Desgat". The impressive fortress and the towers of Kittur palace, which were visible embodiments of the past glory of Kittur, kept these hopes green in the minds of the people. Chaplin thought that these buildings, which kept alive the memory of Rani Channamma in the minds of her people, should be razed to the ground so that they should no longer act as constant reminders of its former splendour. Therefore, the main portion of the palace was ordered to be pulled down. The massive big teak pillars of the magnificent porch were sold by auction for a paltry amount. The other precious wooden grills, ornamental window frames and doors were also either sold or allowed to be taken away. There was a veritable public licence to plunder the palace property.

Rani Channamma and Veeravva, languishing in the Bailhongal prison, dreamed of another rebellion in Kittur by their loyal sardars and the restoration of the "Desgat". Some Kittur rebels like Sangolli Rayanna met them incognito on a few occasions and appraised them of the news about Kittur. Rani Channamma encouraged them to organize another revolt, but this was not to be
on account of the demoralization that had set in after the humiliating defeat and gruesome massacre of thousands of people in the Kittur battle.

Rani Channamma spent most of her time in pooja and spiritual pursuits. Her constant dream was the liberation of Kittur for which she pined day and night. She hoped against hope, but nothing came to pass. In the dark and dingy cell of Bailhongal Fort, the sorrowing, careworn Rani sat dreaming of the day when she would lead another fight against the British, and when her beloved people of Kittur would be free and her state restored to independence. Rani Channamma thus withered away day by day. After nearly five years of confinement in the Bailhongal Fort, she died on the 2nd of February 1829.²

She was buried at Bailhongal with full military honours, a tomb has been erected on her Samadhi, within a few months, on 20th July 1829. Her daughter-in-law Janakibai also died in prison.

Although Rani Channamma had been vanquished, the Kittur army defeated and Kittur "Desgat" annexed, the Kittur people continued to have the same affection and pride for the Kittur rulers and the same love for Kittur land. They smouldered with

² G.S. Halappa: "Bharatada Swatantrada Bellichukki" (Kannada) "Rani Kittur Channamma", Karnataka Sahakari Sanitya Sangh Ltd, Dharwad 1967 p - 93.
the fire of rebellion and waited for an opportunity to rise up against the arrogant British.

There were many sporadic eruptions. The most important of such outbursts was the rebellion led by Sangolli Rayanna in 1829-30. Rayanna was one of the most loyal and patriotic followers of Rani Channamma. He had promised Rani Channamma that he would continue the fight even after her death.

He had her example always before his eyes. Sangolli Rayanna was a village watchman in Sangolli, a village about thirteen miles north of Kittur, a retainer of the Kittur Desai, who had received a pardon for his part in the 1824 outbreak. He collected a group of loyal followers of Rani Channamma with the avowed object of restoring the "Desgat" to Shivalingappa, the adopted son of Shivalingarudra Sarja, and lawful heir to the Kittur "Desgat". He raised a relentless rebellion against the British for nearly two years. During those two years, Sangolli Rayanna attacked the British strongholds from many points by resorting to guerrilla warfare. He operated from his base in Balagund and Handi Badaganath hills. During the year 1830, for four months continuously he attacked and plundered the treasuries and offices in the Kittur region. The most successful attacks were at Nandagad, Bidi, Sampagaon and Khanapur. He had become a terror to the British who became extremely agitated.

The people of Kittur "Desgat" naturally sympathized with
Rayanna and his rebellions activities. The British officers and soldiers failed to track him. They announced cash awards to any one who would seize and hand him over to them. Even this did not yield any result. Then they caught hold of some disgruntled traitors and hatched a plot to trap Rayanna. One Linganagouda of Khodanapur, who was a distant relative of the Kittur royal family, wanted to give his son in adoption to the Kittur "Desgat", but had been disappointed. He was nursing a grievance against them. The British caught Linganagouda and instigated him to hatch a wicked plan to get Rayanna arrested. Physically weak and wicked by nature, Linganagouda gave in. Yenkana Gouda of Neginahal who was bold and courageous, was sent with Linganagouda to support him. They joined Rayanna and continued with him for a fortnight plundering. Neginhal Venkanganouda, was a physically strong and well-built person. Once again, it was the treachery of our own people which helped the British to consolidate their Kingdom. Together they played the role of traitors. They pretended to join Rayanna in his rebellion against the British and followed him for a few months. One day, when Rayanna was taking his bath, they arranged to get a group of armed police to arrest him. Rayanna was completely taken by surprise and was overpowered and arrested by the British police. He was convicted and sentenced to death. The British wanted to terrorise the people and decided to hang him in a public place at Nandagad, which was one of his favourite haunts. Only a few days earlier he had successfully looted
the treasury at this place. He was hanged on the 28th of December, 1830. He stood smiling as he faced the fast approaching death. When the British officer asked him what his last wish would be, Sangolli Rayanna replied, "My last wish is to be born again in his land to fight against the British and drive them away from this sacred land." A chair was brought to him to step up and put the noose around his neck. He kicked the chair away and took the noose in his hand and put it around his neck and asked the executioners to pull the noose. This indomitable spirit could not but evoke reverence for the mettle of this great freedom fighter.

Veeravva, who had survived the death of Rani Channamma and also of Janakibai, was kept in the Bailhongal prison for some time. Being of the same stuff that Channamma was made of Veeravva too was a woman of indomitable courage, and she too had determined to fight to the last for the freedom of Kittur. She sent money to some Sardars of Kittur who were trying to organise another revolt. The British came to know about this. They decided to shift Veeravva from Bailhongal to a distant place. It was intended to send her first to Kusugel and then from there to Malegaon in Khandesh district. When the people came

to know about this, they collected in large numbers around the Bailhongal Fort to resist her being shifted from there. More than a thousand people gathered outside the fort. The British brought a huge army to put down any resistance. The people felt helpless and dispersed.

While Channamma's last days ended like this, the last days of Veeramma were full of pathos. The English behaved with callousness almost bordering on inhumanity towards this ill-fated widow of the Kittur Chiefs. Veeravva was sent under heavy escort to Kusugal fort. There, her health deteriorated day by day and when the British sensed that she was fast languishing to death, she was sent to a family of her relatives in Dharwar. After she recovered a little, she was brought, to the Ulavi Channabasaveshwar Temple and, it is said she was administered poison by the then Collector of Dharwar, Mr. Babar. Her tragic end has been vividly described in some folk songs. Before finally taking poison, she sought Babar's permission to have a last glimpse of Kittur. She went up on the terrace on the roof of the temple and climbing a few steps of a ladder, she nostalgically looked at the palace towers of Kittur and heaved a deep sigh, recapitulating its past splendour. Then she came down gulped down the poison administered to her and died a martyr's death.

For many years after the defeat of Kittur, there were occasional sporadic attempts to revolt against the alien rule, and to install the rightful heirs on the throne. This was a display of unique and implicit loyalty of the people of the region to the Kittur ruling family even as late as in 1831.

Again in 1833, one Shankaranna made an unsuccessful attempt to raise a revolt against the British rule in Kittur. In 1836, another group of rebels led by Nagappa, Gajapati and Sawi Rudrappa Kotagi, tried to get the help of the Portuguese from Goa to rise against the British. This too was abortive. In 1837, Shivalingappa, who was popularly known as Sawai Malasarja led a revolt but was apprehended and arrested and was imprisoned for some time in Dodwad Fort. In 1845 Shivalingappa made yet another attempt to rise against the British in Sampa-gaon and Bidi. His own father in law, the Desai of Wantamuri, gave information to the British about his plans. Some implicating correspondence was traced and Shivalingappa was taken into custody and kept in prison for a while.

Sufficient legal evidence to secure conviction could not be obtained and the conspirators escaped punishment. Shivalingappa spent the rest of his life dependent on the bounty of the Wontamuri Chief. The adherents on the family still regard a son of his as the lawful Desai of Kittur. A few months

later, after obtaining surety from the Desai of Wantamuri and the Raja of Sangli, to which region Shivalingappa belonged, he was released, and finally, in 1857, Shivalingappa undauntedly made another abortive attempt to rise against the British. The fire kindled by Rani Channamma had not been extinguished. It lay dormant in the hearts of the freedom loving people of Kittur for more than three decades and although all their attempts were foiled, they were the forerunners of such uprisings in future all over the country. In the same year 1857, the first war of independence had started. Rani Channamma's fight undoubtedly was the beginning of the freedom struggle in India. She has, therefore, been rightly called "The morning star of India's freedom struggle". 6

"A distinction must be made in the study of freedom struggle in Karnataka. Freedom struggle may be defined as the struggle to regain the lost political freedom". Hence Chandbibi and other independent rulers were great heroines and defenders of freedom but not fighters for freedom. Kittur Channamma and others were great heroines who defended the feudatory rights.

Rani Channamma was one of the great and outstanding rulers of Kittur principality. She was a brave lady, well versed in the art of warfare. She was the second wife of Mallasarja, Rudramma being his first wife. When Mallasarja went in the

cause of uniting local Chiefs and Desais against the British he accidentally met Channamma, the daughter of Dhulappa Gowda Desai, of Kakati of Sangli State. She was born in 1778. It is also said that both Mallasarja and Channamma met each other when both of them killed the same tiger in the forest. At first sight Mallasarja was struck by her youth and beauty. She too was much attracted by his magnetic personality. Dhulappa Gowda Desai who heard of this was very much pleased and gave his daughter in marriage to Mallasarja. Mallasarja had thought that quarrel between his wives in the palace was inevitable. But in contrast, Channamma loved Rudramma like her own sister and showered on her sons Shivarudrasarja and Veerarudrasarja the same affection as she showered on her own son Shivabasavaraj (Balasaheb). She looked upon, all the three with the same affection and love. In fact it was Channamma herself who suggested that Rani Rudramma's son Shivarudrasarja should succeed Mallasarja. Even fate conspired to fulfill her wishes. "Channamma's own son Shivabasavaraj had died earlier after a brief illness. Veerarudrasarja also died within a few years. Thus the only surviving claimant to the throne was Rudramma's son Shivarudrasarja".  

Rudramma was not only a learned lady but also a pious

7. Ibid., p. 276.
woman. She was becoming more and more interested in religion and philosophy. She built a separate small palace at Sangolli on the banks of the Malaprabha to conduct her religious pooja and reading religious texts. In short, she gradually retired from public life. Thus, the responsibility of the administration of the Kingdom fell into the hands of Channamma. She began to help her husband in the administration. In fact there was a tug of war betweencontending mights of the Marathas and the British over Kittur. On all occasions of military exploits, she accompanied Mallasarja. She also used to sit with him in the court in the deliberations of the state matters. In fact she was in every sense a friend, philosopher and guide to her husband. It was, therefore, not surprising that after his death political power was naturally shifted to her.

After assuming all the power, she carefully studied the situation, closely watched over the movements and developments in the political field. She was intelligent, capable and grasped the prevailing conditions. Gifted with courage and foresight, she could take decisions on the spur of the movement. She loved the people and freely mixed with them. Thereby she could easily understand their problems and sufferings. She did her utmost to help the poor. She knew that the safety and the security of the Kingdom depended much on the good faith of the army. She was closely associated with the army and her military leaders. She loved the soldiers very much and used to appreciate their adventures by rewarding them with generous gifts.
The British were waiting for an opportunity to interfere in the affairs of Kittur and finally annex it. In the meanwhile Shivalingarudrasarja, the nominal head of the state, was bedridden owing to ill-health. Rani Channamma was the real ruler. "Thackeray, the British Chief Political Agent and Collector of Dharwar, visited Kittur in 1824 to study the Kittur affairs". Shivalingarudrasarja had no male issue. Moreover his health was deteriorating. So he decided to take an adoption to succeed him. He called upon some leaders like Kannur Mallappa, Kannur Veerappa, Subedar Mallappa and Sardar Gurusiddappa and asked them to search for four or five boys belonging to the families of his nearest relatives. Out of them he could select one. At last, a boy Shivalingappa, son of Balappa Gowda of Mastamardi brought up by Gurusiddappa was selected by Shivalingarudrasarja. All this was done confidentially to avoid factions in the court. If it was made public there would be open rivalry among the relatives who were aspiring to give their children in adoption. On September 11, 1824, a ceremony was held and Shivalingappa was invested with Sovereign powers over Kittur. Later, he came to be known as Sawai Mallasarja. Twelve hours after the event Shivalingarudrasarja passed away.

8. Ibid., p - 277.
Rani Channamma was anxious about the future of Kittur. She had suspicions about the evil designs of Thackeray and also about the intrigues of some of her court assistants like Kannur Mallappa. At the earnest request and appeal made by Channamma almost all the leaders of the Kingdom pledged their loyalty and support to the Kingdom. The letter drafted on 10th May 1824 addressed to Thackeray expressed the desire to take Shivalingappa in adoption, was kept pending since his health suddenly improved. But the same letter was sent to Thackeray through Kannur Mallappa, by Sardar Mallappashetty on 12th September 1824. Thackeray suspected the bonafides of the letter as it was dated 10th July, 1824. He thought the letter must have been got signed by Shivalingarudrasarja after he had been unconscious by the interested persons with a view to retain the power over the Kingdom. This discrepancy in the date was sufficient for Thackeray to start a quarrel with Kittur and held the view that the state should lapse to the East India Company and in case it continued under Kittur rulers, he should be entrusted with the responsibility of conducting the Government of Kittur. Chaplin, the Commissioner of Deccan and Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, were also misled by Thackeray who was acting as a despot. Mallappa and Venkata Rao, leaders of Kittur court, were treacherous about the situation and carried false and malicious tales to Thackeray and aided him with all possible means to see the end of the royal family.
Even if the adoption took place before the death of Desai, it was not legal as previous permission was not obtained. But since Kittur Desais enjoyed full autonomy regarding internal matters, there was no need for them to take any such permission. Thackeray grasped this opportunity, and advanced to Kittur, and ransacked the palace, intimidated the officials, the members of the royal family and did every thing possible to prepare grounds for the annexation of Kittur to the British domains.

The situation was critical. Channamma tried her best to safeguard the interest of the Kingdom. She was alive to the situation and bided her time. The fort and the palace were surrounded by the few British guards. The Sardars and the other officials were not allowed to meet her, nor was she allowed to meet the people. Their movements were watched over. To add insult to injury Thackeray ordered that Shivalingappa, the adopted son, should forthwith be sent away from Kittur. The treasury was kept under his control. Rani Channamma was annoyed by this humiliation and wrote a letter to Chaplin for justice. She waited for a week for a reply from him. Finally, she made up her mind to face the crisis boldly.

On 18th October 1824, Channamma called all the Sardars and officers of the court and advised them with regard to the steps to be taken against the British. In an impassioned speech she declared, "Kittur is ours. We are the masters of our own
territory. Kittur loved freedom more than their life. They would die rather than be slaves of the British". This inspiring speech of Channamma roused the valour of the people. The swords of the Kittur soldiers flashed. In one voice they all shouted "Long live Kittur". "Live Long Rani Channamma."

Channamma was aware of the military strength of the British. Hence she began to gather contingents from all the neighbouring villages and she also sought the help of Maharaja of Kolhapur. A garrison of about 7,000 army men 2,000 horses, 1,000 camels and 50 elephants, 6,000 trained fighters and a good number of guns were stationed in and around the Kittur Fort. Hearing this, Thackeray arrived at Kittur with the Company troops on 20th October 1824. In the war that broke out on the next day, Kittur forces under the commandship of Sardar Gurusiddappa, made a bold affront and overpowered the British soldiers. About forty British soldiers including two officers were captured by the Kittur army in the palace. In the battle that broke out after a few days, Thackeray was killed. The British army lost all hope and forced in different directions. Kittur had won a great victory on 27th October 1824. Coronation ceremony of Shivalingappa was performed amidst the happy occasion of their victory.

9. Ibid., p - 279.
The British became furious and decided to annex Kittur. As planned, almost all the British troops had arrived from Madras, Belgaum, Satara, Bombay, Arcot, Mysore, Poona and they prepared for the attack of Kittur within the radius of about one and a half miles. The British troops of about 25,000 surrounded Kittur. In the meanwhile, Rani Channamma had negotiated with the British through her Vakil to avoid bloodshed. The British Commissioner had agreed voluntarily to stop the war if his two officers, Stevenson and Elliot, were released from her custody. She did so. But the British did not keep up their promise and declared war on Kittur on 28th December 1824. Rani Channamma too decided to fight the enemy. Although the Kittur soldiers were outnumbered and were not well equipped, fought vigorously, but the roaring guns of Kittur had been silenced by the treachery of her own people. The gun power had been tampered with and rendered ineffective. All the efforts to save Kittur had failed. Rani Channamma, the heroine of the battle fell into the hands of the enemy. The war came to an end on 4th December 1824. Thus ended one of the glorious chapters in the history of our country.

After the great victory, the British ransacked the whole palace and plundered all the wealth. Elephants and horses of the Kittur army were also taken away by the British. After signing the necessary documents Rani Channamma and other members of the royal family were sent to Bailhongal and kept as political
prisoners. An annual pension of about Rs.40,000/- was fixed for them. Prominent among the other captives were Sardar Gurusiddappa and Sangolli Rayanna.

Rani Channamma died in prison on 2nd February 1829. Thus ended the life of a brave ruler Rani Channamma who had blazed a glorious trial of revolt against the British.

Kittur was a tiny state when compared with most other Indian states that existed before India's war of Independence in 1857. Many of these states and Jagirs which were allowed to continue, prolonged their existence because they either helped the British to build up their empire in India or made compromises with the British and bartered away their freedom. In the wake of India's Independence, they were wiped out of existence, and today most of them have been completely forgotten. But unlike these six hundred and odd states, the name of Kittur is today alive not only in our history books but in the innumerable ballads, Folk Songs, plays, poems and other writings, as in the minds and hearts of the people. The story of the gallant fight of Rani Channamma is on the lips of hundreds of villagers who sing the songs of her glory and her heroic deeds are on many occasions, vividly brought to life on the stage and on the screen, inspiring people all over Karnataka.

Kittur is immortal today because of Rani Channamma's everlasting contribution to the glorious heritage of freedom.
struggle in India. It suffered a crushing military defeat in its fight against the British. So did many other states in India. However, the greatness or splendour of any state is not judged by its success or defeat in the battlefield. The spirit that animated the gallant soldiers of Kittur, the noble ideas that inspired them, are what constitute their greatness. Kittur's efforts to hold the torch of freedom burning, its splendid example of courage and determination to stake everything to preserve its liberty, have made it immortal. The patriotic fervour and the love of freedom among the people of Kittur was inspired by Rani Channamma whose name is remembered with great respect and admiration.

Rani Channamma, although a queen of a small state, had great qualities of leadership, such as statesmanship, indomitable courage, keen political acumen, an uncanny judgement of men and affairs, a presence of mind equal to any emergency, and a deep knowledge of military strategies. She was a skilful administrator and resourceful diplomat. She could take decisions on the spur of the moment, and once she took a decision, she was firm in executing it. More than all these, she loved Kittur and its people. All these qualities made her almost a legend in her own lifetime. Her actions always spoke of these great qualities. She had the courage to defy the British by holding a Durbar and declaring the continuity of the state. She tried her utmost to avoid war, if she could do it without compromising the independence
of her state. She negotiated with the British with great dignity, firmness and equanimity, displaying remarkable qualities of statesmanship in these negotiations. She was firm in her demand for autonomy to the state. But she knew what to concede, and when negotiations failed and war became inevitable, she could rouse the conscience of her people. The people of Kittur rose as a man in response to her clarion call. She was profoundly human and magnanimous at the time of her victory. She forgave the prisoners and released them. She protected and sent back the captive women and children of the British army officers, in the true tradition of Indian kings in the treatment of their prisoners, But when it was a question of the freedom of Kittur, there could be no compromise. She was prepared to die fighting for it. It is because of these qualities that she could infuse such loyalty and patriotism among her people. They were prepared to lay down their lives at her bidding.

The fight the Kittur soldiers gave to the British in spite of their meagre strength in arms and equipment, is a rare instance of such a small force holding at bay a much superior mighty army, by sheer strength of courage and determination. Even the British officers, who witnessed the fight, have described their spirit in glowing terms. Chaplin, Commissioner of Deccan, speaking about the courage, valour and determination of Kittur soldiers said, "They have drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard. Stevenson, political agent to Chaplin in one of his
letters, has made a mention of "the ungovernable spirit and fury" of the Kittur rebels. The finest tribute, however, was paid by Chaplin. While reporting the final victory over Kittur, he has recorded that the strong fort of Kittur was defended by a garrison of an unusually determined character for its spirit and energy.

For many years after the defeat of Kittur, there were occasional sporadic attempts to revolt against the alien rule, and to instal the rightful heirs on the throne. This was a display of unique and implicit loyalty of the people of the region to the Kittur ruling family. Even as late as in 1831,¹⁰ the Bombay political despatches to London quote the report of Mr. Nisbet, Collector of Dharwar in the following words.

"Every day brings to light, some fresh disclosure to confirm the belief that the whole province is united in one common cause and the people have, by some means, been inspired with the idea that it may be possible to recover their independence."

"It is with much concern that I am forced to state that I am now firmly convinced that the people of the country, from a strong attachment to their former Government, are ready and willing to obey any directions from them which they may receive."

¹⁰ Bombay Despatches, Vol. 59, p. 365, Political Department, September 21, 1831.
The people of the region believe that "The time had arrived for the restoration of the Desai and that they must go and fight in his cause". In support of his fears, Nisbet reported that out of 3,494 "setsanadies" who were summoned by the Collector to Dharwar, to declare their allegiance to the British, only 499 obeyed the summons. The rest of them who chose to remain absent still seemed to owe their allegiance to the Kittur rulers. So deep and great was the unshakable loyalty of the people to Kittur and its rulers, so ingrained was their love of freedom. It was unconquerable.

The battle of Kittur was the first-ever Indian battle for freedom against the British. The 23rd of October, 1824, will therefore, go down in history as a great day of victory for a tiny state against the imperial might of the British. It is therefore, a day of great significance, presaging, as it were the great war of independence of 1857 and of the freedom movement headed by Gandhiji, culminating in the Quit India Movement of 1942. The noble example, the relentless spirit, the courage and valour of Rani Channamma and her patriotic followers, who smilingly laid down their lives fighting for the freedom of their motherland, will continue to shine across the corridors of history. The figures of that heroic era have gone, but they will live long in our memory.

The next event of importance as affecting this district was the outbreak started by Sangolli Rayanna. He was a "Sanadi", or
village watchman, of Sangolli, and had been one of Kittur Desai's retainers. He had received a pardon for his participation in the rebellion of 1824, but now rendered desperate by the confiscation of his service. Land (a measure necessary in his case as in other owing to the enormously superfluous number of "Sanadis"), and it is said, exasperated by a quarrel which he had with the Kulkarni of his village, he gathered round him many of the disaffected, and taking with him the boy alleged to have been adopted by the late Desai of Kittur, he commenced a revolt with the avowed object of restoring the samsthan.

The Desais of Kittur had always been regarded with affection by the poorer classes in their country. Their memory is still tenderly cherished. They were Lingayats, as the mass of the population about them and were therefore naturally inclined to treat their poorer subjects without harshness. On the other hand, Mallasarja, the last Desai but one, who ruled for thirty-four years, and is the best remembered, had not spared the wealthier classes of the population from whom he often found pretexts to make large exactions. He also, in the beginning of the present century, resumed the whole of the "Inam" Lands of the district and village hereditary officers, and appointed stipendiary "Kar-kuns" to conduct the duties of the offices, the emoluments of which he appropriated. Measures of this sort increased his popularity.
With a little more understanding and tolerance, the British could have extended their empire without destroying the feeling of identity of some of the states like Kittur. In fact, the Kittur rulers were prepared to allow a greater say for the British in the administration of Kittur.

However, the British appeared to be in a great hurry and wanted to have no compromise. Their attitude and policy meant ruination for the people of Kittur and finally more violence to their own officers like Thackeray. Thackeray wanted to have an interview with the ladies of the royal family, Channamma in particular. When this was not forthcoming, he adopted a policy of showdown and attack. This meant that even when he was not well-prepared for the attack on Kittur, he went ahead with it and lost his own life in the process. This hasty and ill-considered action of his led to the subsequent larger attack of the Doab and other force collected by the British. In fact, the queen, in her letter to Chaplin, appealed against the wrong headed and the graceless attitude of Thackeray and for a more positive and gradual policy towards Kittur. They went to the extent of saying that the ladies could not stay in Kittur because Thackeray and others had secured access to the treasury and wealth of Kittur and the ladies had no resources to lead a normal life of honour and dignity. They had no means to offer "Dakshina" to the "Jangam" in the usual traditional celebrations. They thought of going to Poona or Bombay to meet the higher authorities,
so that they could secure better terms and treatment at the hands of the British. Failing this, they also were prepared to extend their journey to Banaras (religious journey, Pilgrimage). Such appeals brought the Kittur royalty nothing and the higher authorities like Mount Stuart Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay, continued the unnecessarily aggressive policy of Thackeray. They were particularly upset by the killing of Thackeray by the rulers of Kittur and they were all keen on the annexation of Kittur. As we have shown, this policy went from bad to worse, and when it was practised on a wider scale, it led to the general outbreak of 1857 which proved too costly, in course of which the East India Company came to an end and the direct rule of the British Government, with queen Victoria as its head, came to be imposed. The policy of subsidiary alliance and a more tolerant and broadminded treatment of the princely states came to be adopted.

Rayanna's role in carrying on the second stage fight was most valuable because it continued the royal family's policy of opposing by force when necessary the British policy and strategy of undermining the independence of the princely states like Kittur. It was useful in showing that the greedy and unreasonable policies of administrations like Thackeray did not have the proportionate advantages and in fact brought in much avoidable fighting and violence. It was useful in showing that the weakness of the royal family did not necessarily weaken the resolve
of people to fight and retain their state or even recreate or re-establish the state. Rayanna's fight showed to the British imperialists that every Indian was not such as to aid the British or trade with the British the Indian territory in exchange of some promises or posts. Rayanna's brave fighting showed that all poor people, the low caste people can gather enough courage and people around them to give a tough time to the potential empire builders. The British worked on the assumption that people would not fight when their life was at risk. Brave and self-sacrificing heroes like Rayanna falsified this assumption. In the process they inspired the common people about protecting and continuing their own state even at the cost of their lives. People like Rayanna showed that life was worth living by dying also.

At the same time, Rayanna's life also shows that bravery and performance have to be shown continuously and if there is a decline, people in authority do not care so much. The British imperialists did have reasons not to favour Rayanna or to disfavour him or punish him. But, later, his descendents had no reason to be neglected in their own free country. Fortunately for them, two Chief Ministers of the state came forward with donations and assistance to erect or build monuments to Rayanna. But Rayanna's descendents have had hard time getting pension due to them as political sufferers because they have chosen to be weak and remain in the dark. They, like Rayanna, remained poor
and backward. But while Rayanna threw away his backwardness and became brave and active earned a great name for himself and the Kittur people, his descendants have remained poor and weak. The descendants are not given their due because the political authorities are not always efficient or justice minded in providing rewards or benefits to the worthy and deserving like the descendents of Rayanna.

In course of history, we find that several of the so-called heroes or brave soldiers come to attract criticism on the ground that they do not belong to this community or that, this religion or that, that they do not follow such and such principles and so on. Usually the ideological viewpoint of the critics is responsible for giving rise to such statements or evaluations. Owing to such variations, even looters and bandits have been praised by later generations and, on the other hand, some generally good leaders of men have been criticised adversely.

Viewed against this background, Rayanna had most of the qualities which have been universally praised. He was clearly anti-British. He did not like the British officers and administrators who were out to attack Kittur and annex it. He also did not like the Indians, who were serving the British in various military and administrative capacities. This is why he fought with the Amaldars and their peons. He also asked the postal runners not to carry the post. Except these matters,
Rayanna was helpful to all. He had the qualities of loyalty and devotion and he was deeply attached to the royal family. But he was not selfish in these matters. Because he was attached to the royal family, he did not dislike the common people, and had a strong sympathy for the poor. In fact, he made it a point to distribute among the poor and the needy what he could get by way of the loot of the treasury. He also sought to punish those who troubled the poor and the weak. Thus, although he was a simple uneducated young man, his head and heart were working properly and he had progressive ideas and attitudes.

As we have seen, in such a short span of time, Rayanna achieved so much and ended his life, voluntarily at such a young age. Such self-sacrificing nature makes such fighters extraordinary.

Why should he have been caught by the British is a question many would like to ask about Rayanna or any great and brave soldier who fights selflessly against a wicked and undesirable authority. Such things have happened in history again and again. People have wondered why. The very first reason seems to be the brave and fearless attitude of such fighters. They are not afraid of being captured and jailed, etc. It would be ideal if they keep fighting and the wicked authorities are not able to catch them. Well, in a few lucky, rare, cases, this happens. But in most others, this does not happen. The fighters, it appears, are not only fearless, they are also reckless and careless so that at times it is not difficult for the authorities to catch them.