CHAPTER –I

ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH RULE IN THOOTHUKUDI
CHAPTER I

ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH RULE IN THOOTHUKUDI

Only a few towns in India can compete with Thoothukudi in possessing a continuous and fascinating history. While harbours that were once centers of trade and cradles of civilization stand obscured and cities with teeming population steeped in prosperity that once decided the destinies of others, have been reduced to a mere geographical and literary expression, Thoothukudi has maintained a steady record of growth throughout the centuries in spite of all challenges hurled on its way in its onward march. It has been able to respond to challenges of the changing time successfully and progressed without any let-up.

To trace the history of Thoothukudi, the European travellers’ accounts provide authentic historical information. Thoothukudi became an important centre of trade and commerce only after the arrival of the Portuguese. Before the arrival of Portuguese, it was a small port under the Pandya rule.

Sangam Period:

It is well known fact that the early Pandian kingdom of South-India was known for pearl fishery. During the early Pandya rule, Korkai was an important seaport located 30 km off to Thoothukudi towards Tirunelveli.
The Sangam epics like Silappathikaram and Manimekalai speak about the pearls, but they do not post-mention the exact location from where they came from. There are many references to pearl fishery in and around Korkai region. The Sangam literature mentions the pearl fishery during the reign of Pandyan Nedunchezhian. He is reported to have subdued the Paravas of pearl fishery coast around Korkai region\(^1\). This means his territories lay up to Korkai. So one can possibly infer that Thoothukudi was small port under the rule of Pandyas during the Sangam and the immediate post-Sangam age\(^2\).

As far as external evidences are concerned, the earliest reference of Thoothukudi occurs in the “Peutinger Tables” of Rome. During the reign of Augustus Ceaser (63 B.C. to 14 A.D.), he ordered to draw a map of the countries and ports with which ancient Rome had trade contacts. This map was etched in a pillar which stood in a public square in Rome, Which is called “Peutinger Tables.” In this map, Thoothukudi port was mentioned as “Solcium Indorum”\(^3\).

---

\(^1\) S. Arunachalam, *The Pearl Fishery of the Tamil Coast* (Annamalainagar: Anamalai University, 1952), pp.15-16.


\(^3\) E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce Between the Roman Empire and India* (Cambridge: OUP, 1928), pp.256-258.
Another earliest definite reference of Thoothukudi was in the “Periplus of the Erythraean Sea” written by Ptolemy, the great Geographer and Astronomer in Greece in the second century A.D. (123 A.D.). In his enumeration of the provinces, towns, ports and rivers of the east coast of India, the following description is found: “Country of the Kareoi (Korkai); in the Kolkhic Gulf (Korkai port), where there is the pearl fishery, Sosikourai (Tuticorin) and Kolkhoi (Korkai), an emporium at the mouth of the River Solen (Porunai”).

James Hornell, who wrote about Indian pearl fisheries of the Gulf of Mannar and Palk Bay, identified this Sosikourai to the modern Tuticorin, which is called in Tamil as Thoothukudi. He explains that, the Tamil “S” is commonly corrupted into “ch” as “Sippi” into “Chippi” and then Chochi Kourai would readily pass into Totikourai and Tuticorin the present rendering name of this town is readily derivable from it.

J. Hornell writes on the derivation of the name of Tuticorin as follows: Tuticorin is the European equivalent or corruption of the Tamil name Thoothukudi. The cerebral “d” often (usually) becomes “r” in the mouth of Europeans and the final “n” was added for the same euphonnic and

---


reason that turned Kochi into Cochin and Kumari into Comarin. Thoothukudi then becomes Tutikourai to the European ear and from this the inference of Sosikourai of the Greek as Tutikourai is not hard to establish. A Greek mariner sailing along the coast of the Kolkhic Gulf could not possibly miss the only sheltered port on the west side of the river port of Korkai (Kolkhoi) - that is Tuticorin⁶.

Judging from the Ptolemy’s narration, Thoothukudi was a trading centre where pearl fishery was carried out. Hence, it can be fairly concluded that Thoothukudi was a port town in the Pandyan kingdom, where pearl trade was one of the primary activities of the people⁷.

Paravas:

The Paravas were the original inhabitants of the seacoast of the Pandyan kingdom and their pre-occupation was pearl fishery⁸. The Pandyan rulers were the overlords of the Paravas and obtained large revenues from pearl fisheries. The Paravas paid tribute to the successive Pandyan rulers

---


⁸ Edgar Thurston, Castes and Tribes of Southern India, vol VI (Delhi: Cosmo Publications,1975), p.140.
since the latter gave protection to them. This condition of peaceful terms continued on the fishery coast up to the 10th century A.D.\textsuperscript{9}.

**During the Times of Later Cholas:**

Rajaraja the Great established an empire for the Cholas in southern part of Tamil country by conquering the Pandyas and the ruler of North Ceylon by about 990 A.D. the entire pearl fishery coast, including Thoothukudi came under the possession of the Cholas by this conquest\textsuperscript{10}. His son Rajendra subdued the king of Ceylon, who rose in revolt against him. He conquered the Chera kingdom also and took the title “Mummudi Cholan”\textsuperscript{11}. This Chola overlordship of the entire south and parts of Ceylon continued till the beginning of the thirteenth century. The power of the Cholas declined, when Maravarman Sundrapandya II established his power in the Pandya kingdom. Hence, the period of nearly two centuries, Thoothukudi was under the Cholas. That is why it was possible for the Cholas to conduct the invasion of Ceylon in 1020 A.D. The expedition was launched from Thoothukudi, that being the nearest to Ceylon\textsuperscript{12}.

---


Later Pandya Period

Maravarman Sundrapandya II could assert Pandya’s independence from the Chola overlordship by the year 1216. Jatavarman Sundrapandya I (1251-1263 A.D.) was the great king of this later Pandya kingdom. Maravarman Kulasekarapandya I (1268-1310) was the last great king of this dynastic line. He conquered Quilon and Ceylon around the year 1284 A.D.\textsuperscript{13}

There was a war of succession of the Pandya throne between the two sons of Kulasekara Pandya. Vira Pandya II ascended the throne while Sundra Pandya, the other claimant to the throne, was driven out of Madurai. Sundra Pandya sought the help of Malik Kafur, the commander of Alauddin Khilji, the Sultan of Delhi, who wanted to annex south India with his empire. Kafur seized Madurai and captured a very large booty, consisting of pearls and costly stones\textsuperscript{14}.

Following Malik Kafur, Khusrukhan (1318 A.D.) invaded the Pandya territory. Muhammed-Bin-Tughluk’s invasion subsequently in the year 1327 A.D. resulted the annexation of Madurai in his empire as a province\textsuperscript{15}.


\textsuperscript{14} S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, \textit{South India and Her Muhammadan Invaders} (Annamalai Nagar: Annamalai University, 1921), pp.96-97.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ibid.}, p.136.
The greatness of the Pandyas thus declined and they became powerless. The line of the Pandya dynasty was there till they were finally displaced by the Nayaks of Madurai in the beginning of the sixteenth century\textsuperscript{16}.

**Paravas and Arabs:**

During the later Pandya period, Kayal became the Head Quarters of Arabs who were operating from the Malabar Coast. The Pandyan monarchs extended great favours to the Arab merchants as done to others to facilitate the trade to be successfully conducted. The Arabs imported horses from Arabia for the Pandyan kings and got pearls, precious stones etc in exchange\textsuperscript{17}. The Arabs were held in high esteem in the councils of Pandyas. This and the other privileges they enjoyed in the Pandyan kingdom prompted them to think of settling down in this country itself. Not only they settled down here on the fishery coast, but they even propagated their religion first through peaceful means. They also made matrimonial relations with some of the Paravas\textsuperscript{18}.

The decline of the Pandya power and the humiliation the Pandyas suffered at the hands of Muslim invaders from north India gave

---


encouragement to the Islamic chieftains to force the Paravas to embrace Islam\textsuperscript{19}. Moreover, the moors, as they were called then, were very powerful on the sea and they became stronger by the help rendered to them by the zamorin of Calicut\textsuperscript{20}.

**Confrontation between the Paravas and Moors:**

By the beginning of the sixteenth century the Moors and their adherents took to the diving of pearls, an occupation which had hitherto been the monopoly of the Paravas of Thoothukudi, the native people of the coast\textsuperscript{21}. The empire of Vijayanagar, which had by now, acquired almost the whole of south India except Travancore. Thus, moors oppressed the Paravas and they waited for an opportunity to strike back the Moors\textsuperscript{22}.

The opportunity for it came not very late. At a pearl fishery held at Thoothukudi, the Paravas had purposely picked up a quarrel with the Moors and killed hundreds of them\textsuperscript{23}. They even burnt their vessels and remained masters of the coast for sometime. They were expected trouble


\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., p. 13.


\textsuperscript{22} Henry Heras, *Aravidu Dynasty of Vijayanagar Empire*, vol. 1 (Madras: B. G. Paul & Co Publishers, 1927), p.120.

from Moors at any time. At this juncture, the Portuguese power in India had come to stay\textsuperscript{24}.

**Portuguese in Thoothukudi:**

The Portuguese defeated the Zamorin of Calicut in 1502 A.D. and established themselves in Cochin\textsuperscript{25}. They were very eager to seize the south east coast and the pearl fishery therein. The time for their expansion of the south east coast was ripe. The Paravas heard of the rising power of the Portuguese on the sea and their success over the Zamorin of Calicut and they decided to seek their help against the Moors\textsuperscript{26}.

When the condition of the Thoothukudi was like this, the Portuguese mission under Manual- De-Fries sailing around Cape of Comarin (1523-1525) in a bid to search for the remains of St. Thomas on the coromandal coast landed in Thoothukudi\textsuperscript{27}.

The Portuguese mission understood the problems faced by the Paravas against the Moors. The oppressed Paravas when approached the Portuguese mission for assistance, the mission advised the Paravas to seek


\textsuperscript{26} S. Arunachalam, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 91-93.

the help of Portuguese captain at Cochin\textsuperscript{28}. Accordingly some of the key persons among the Paravas (called Patangatis (or) Jatitalaivans) proceeded to Cochin and appealed to the Portuguese captain Dr. Pedro vaz De Amaral for help. The king of Portugal John III, when informed, also ordered the captain to provide necessary military help to the Paravas against the Moors.

On the advice of John III, the king of Portugal, the Portuguese captain at Cochin arranged a fleet commanded by captain Joae Froles accompanied by Micheal vaz, Vicar-General of the Bishop of Goa with other priests went to Thoothukudi, defeated the Moors and restored pearl fishery to the Paravas. The Paravas were baptized by Micheal vaz; the Paravas accepted as citizens of the king of Portugal in 1532\textsuperscript{29}. Thus the Portuguese power was established in Thoothukudi\textsuperscript{30}.

The political Government of Portuguese in India (Cochin) appointed a military chief as captain to superintend the pearl fishery of Thoothukudi. The Paravas of Thoothukudi agreed to pay 1500 cruzados as tax for their protection. The captain of Thoothukudi obtained from each time


\textsuperscript{29} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 150.

\textsuperscript{30} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 150.
of fisheries a profit of 6000 Rix dollars for the king of Portugal leaving the remainder of the income from the pearl fishery for the Paravas.  

The Paravas who continued to follow their own religion condemned the baptized Paravas. However the timely arrival at St. Xavier saved the situation

In 1543 A.D., St. Xavier began to preach Christianity among the discontented Paravas. He established Thoothukudi as his Head-Quarter. By his patient service among the people and miracles he believably performed, he converted the entire Paravas community of Thoothukudi into the Christian religion in course of time. After this, the Paravas remained sincere Christians and had many monasteries in Thoothukudi.

The political Government of Portuguese kept themselves the command of Thoothukudi, the pearl fishery and the sovereignty over the Paravas. The Nayaks of Madurai had become the ruler of Madurai by this time. In a short time afterwards, the Nayaks captured all the lower regions from Kanyakumari to Thanjavur, defeated all the princes and local chiefs and obtained the sovereignty of all these countries. They also wished to

---


subject the Paravas of Thoothukudi. The Portuguese opposed this\textsuperscript{34}. The Portuguese, often being not powerful enough effectively to resist, left the lands with the priests and the Paravas and shifted their interests to the Gulf of Mannar and settled in Jaffnapatnam, from where they sent vessels to Thoothukudi. This caused so much disquiet as a result of which revenue of the Nayaks was ruined, trade circumscribed and almost annihilated. The Nayaks of Madurai in the circumstance left Tuticorin open to the Portuguese\textsuperscript{35}.

From 1563 to 1581 A.D. the Portuguese allowed the Paravas to engage in pearl fishery and trade in Thoothukudi. The Moors were left out. The discontented Moors who could not pursue the pearl fishery trade became sea pirates\textsuperscript{36}.

The growth of the power of Portuguese in Thoothukudi caused anxiety to Nayaks of Madurai. Hence, Muthu Krishnappa Nayak became a strong ally of the Maravar country (Ramnad). It was presumably to frighten the Paravas who acknowledged no master other than the king of Portugal. The Nayaks of Madurai sent, by about the middle of the sixteenth century,


Vadugas the tax farming people of Nayaks to raid Thoothukudi. These Vadugas were referred as Badugas by St. Xavier. This attempt was not successful.\(^\text{37}\)

When, Thirumalai Nayaka came to power in 1623 A.D., he could not tolerate the Portuguese power in Thoothukudi. So he entered into an agreement with Mudaliar Pillai Marakayar, the headman of the Moorish community to reside near the Portuguese Government house, near Mariamman’s koil, at Thoothukudi.\(^\text{38}\)

The Portuguese did not object to this superintendence of the agent of the Nayaks of Madurai as long as it did not affect their revenue. When the Nayaks of Madurai turned their attention towards Thoothukudi, there was already rivalry going on between the Portuguese and the Dutch in Thoothukudi.\(^\text{39}\)

**The Dutch in Thoothukudi:**

The peaceful and profitable trade the Portuguese had at Thoothukudi evoked the jealousy of the Dutch. They made their first appearance in Ceylon in 1602 and made an unsuccessful expedition to

---


capture Thoothukudi on 7th February 1649\textsuperscript{40}. They dispatched a fleet of ten vessels with Dutch and Sinhalese infantry under the command of J. M. Suycher, the Governor of Galle. They sailed along the coast and captured Thoothukudi and ravaged Tiruchendur temple. The Dutch, Protestants by religion, persecuted the Paravas, who were Catholics\textsuperscript{41}. The resistance on the coast was intensified and the Dutch demand for money was ignored. The Dutch realizing the futility of their exercise sailed back on 13th February after indulging in arson and plunder in Thoothukudi and took along with them all the fishing boats of the Paravas too\textsuperscript{42}. Again in 1658 A.D. a superior fleet of Dutch entered Thoothukudi harbour and succeeded in capturing it\textsuperscript{43}. They made Thoothukudi as their Head quarter in southeast coast. They built a small factory covering an area of about 100 square yards and stationed a resident to supervise the pearl and chunk fisheries in Thoothukudi\textsuperscript{44}. Very soon they gave up their policy of persecution and adopted a cordial attitude towards the Paravas. The Dutch got considerable revenues from pearl

\textsuperscript{40} Alexandr Rea, \textit{Dutch East India Company in the Presidency of Madras} (Madras: Madras Government Press, 1897), p.4.


\textsuperscript{42} A. Meersman, \textit{The Ancient Franciscan Province in India} (1500-1835) (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 1971), pp.252-254.


\textsuperscript{44} Alexandr Rea, \textit{Op. Cit.}, pp. 10-11.
fishery. The Dutch also carried on export trade in coarse cloth\textsuperscript{45}. They however did not exercise civil authority over the Paravas. To protect their trade interests they formed a fleet under the head of an able commander and manned with selected warriors, who guarded the coast of Thoothukudi pearl fishery\textsuperscript{46}.

There are plenty of sources of information about the town, its harbour and pearl fishery for the period from 1650 to 1700 A.D. Many European travellers visited Thoothukudi and recorded their impressions. The description of John Nieuhoff, an English traveller who visited Thoothukudi in 1662 and stayed for six months gives an elaborate and interesting information. He narrates the events that led to the establishment of Dutch power in the region. He explains the Dutch Administrative system. The Dutch factory at Thoothukudi was managed by factors as Chief Governor and Deputy Chief Governor respectively. They had a few assistants. There was a military officer in charge of their soldiers. However, the Nayaks of Madurai, Chokkanatha had prohibited erection of any fortifications. Hence, they had to be content with soldiers and officers without any fortifications.

\textsuperscript{45} P. C. Alexander, \textit{The Dutch in Malabar} (Annamalai Nagar: Annamalai University, 1946), pp. 189-190.

\textsuperscript{46} Alexr Rea, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p.60.
The harbour had been 5 fathoms deep and when the sea was calm in October, pearl fishery was conducted in about 12 to 15 fathoms afar. The abundance of hares and partridges has also been recorded. Presumably that is why, the island is called “Hare Island”\textsuperscript{47}.

The impressions recorded by Philip Baldaeus, a Dutch missionary, who visited Thoothukudi in 1672 are valuable. The magnificent view of the Thoothukudi city from a distance, the religious zeal of the people and even the making of the best lime out of the sea-shells struck him deeply. The extreme variation in climate was another phenomenon that struck the Philip Baldaeus as curious, “The nights are extremely cold, by reason of the thick fogs which fall constantly at that time, the days being at the same time, so excessively hot, that there is no touching of the ground without the shoe called serippu by the inhabitants”\textsuperscript{48}.

Jean De Lacome for his part described the profitable pearl fishery and trade that flourished under the Dutch\textsuperscript{49}. The remarks and observation of Alexander Hamilton confirmed the profitable trade of pearl

\textsuperscript{47} John Nieuhoff, \textit{Voyages and Travels into Brazil and East Indies} (Translated from Dutch Original), vol II (London: 1703), pp. 265-267.

\textsuperscript{48} Philip Baldaeus, \textit{A True and Exact Description of the Most Celebrated East India Coasts of Malabar and Ceremonial and also of the Isle of Ceylon 1672} (Translated from Dutch), Amsterdam, 1703, pp. 647-657.

\textsuperscript{49} Jean De Lacome, \textit{A Compendium of the East} (London: 1710), p. 54.
fishery in Thoothukudi by the Dutch. He also states that the island of Mannar served as a prison for the Dutch in which the king of Chatra Souri of Java was kept prisoner in 1708.\textsuperscript{50}

Dr. John Fryer, who traveled in the Coromandel Coast in 1672-1681, records the events of Anglo-Dutch rivalry and he adds the interesting information that the Paravas of Thoothukudi were fluent in Portuguese language\textsuperscript{51}. Father Martin, who visited Thoothukudi in 1700 traces how the Dutch thrived in trade gradually and makes a special mention about the pearl fishery trade and coarse cloth exports\textsuperscript{52}.

**British in Thoothukudi:**

In the middle of the eighteenth century, the rule of Nayaks of Madurai was ended. In 1736 the Nawab of Carnatic became the ruler of entire south India and southeast coast after the overthrow of the Rani Meenakshi, the last ruler of Madurai. The British East India Company had succeeded in acquiring the Dewani right from the Nawab. The Nawab


\textsuperscript{51} Dr. John Fryer, *Travels in India* (London: 1873), pp. 249-255.

remained the *de jure* ruler. The Dutch, not content with trade advantages went further in trying to bring the Tirunelveli area under their control. To complete this, the Dutch summoned additional army force from Batavia. The Dutch were happy with Yusuf Khan, the able lieutenant of the Nawab, whose services were lent to the Company. He was preoccupied with rebellious Palayakkars while a strong Dutch fleet was guarding Tuticorin. The Dutch army from Batavia landed on Manapad in 1760. Contrary to their expectation Yusuf Khan turned his attention towards the Dutch and demanded explanation for the stationing of strong fleet at Thoothukudi and landing of troops in Manapad. Immediate reply was not forthcoming from the Dutch. Hence, Yusuf Khan mobilized a large force and attacked Alwartirunagari, a Dutch trade centre. In view of the unexpected attacks of Yusuf Khan, the Dutch fleet immediately sailed off the Thoothukudi coast.

Hostilities between the Dutch and British East India Company became intense in 1782 when war broke out in Europe between the Dutch and the English. As the news reached India, the English commander at Palayamkottai sent an army to dislodge the Dutch from Thoothukudi. The

---


British army was successful in this task, the prisoners and seventeen guns were captured\textsuperscript{56}. In 1783, the war between Dutch and English came to an end in Europe and treaty was concluded. According to the terms of the treaty, Thoothukudi was restored to the Dutch in 1785.\textsuperscript{57}

In 1792 the British East India Company acquired the administrative control of Tirunelveli, Madurai and Ramnad from the Nawab and hence the presence of an once hostile power in the same area was not liked by the British. Colonel Donald Campbell, the military adviser of the Company and Powney, the collector of Tirunelveli, demanded the submission of the Dutch Company, which surrendered immediately without any resistance. The other Dutch factories and settlements in the area were also handed over to the British. Thus, the British received enormous stores and treasures that were carefully transferred to Palayamkottai under heavy military escort. Hence, Thoothukudi remained in the hands of the English, for a while. Panchalamkuruchi Palayakkarar Virapandia Kattabomman successfully captured Thoothukudi and disarmed the English soldiers\textsuperscript{58}.

\textsuperscript{56} Maclean, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 775
\textsuperscript{58} H. R. Pate, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 443.
The British sent captain Welsh to Thoothukudi to take it from the Dutch\textsuperscript{59}. Captain Welsh completed his task. The master attendant of the Dutch Mr. Baggot was taken as prisoner and the residents of Dutch were put on pension list of the Madras Government. They were also subjected to humiliations and even passports were issued to them if they were willing to go out of Thoothukudi\textsuperscript{60}.

The Dutch residents appeared helpless. The old fort had been left to decay and that eccentric missionary Ringeltaube, who visited Thoothukudi in 1806, says that the forts and garrisons which were “formerly the abode of power and luxury, are now the refuge of homeless travelers and thousands of boats suspended from the ceiling”. The British could not tolerate even the remnants of the Dutch rule in Thoothukudi. So they sent Colonel Dyce in 1810 to demolish all the fortifications and razed them to the ground. Thus, Thoothukudi could come under sway of British only after 1818\textsuperscript{61}.

In 1818 the English decided to give the Dutch their possessions back in accordance with a treaty of Aix-La-Chapelle. A commission was


\textsuperscript{60} H. R. Pate, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 443.

\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 444.
appointed to effect this transfer on 11th May 1818. When the transfer work was completed the British retained the rights to tax certain commodities and impose levies. The Dutch company with its nominal rights was not in a position to carry on the administration. Hence, the British took over the administration of Thoothukudi on 1st June 1825\(^2\).

Before the advent of British, Thoothukudi was known only because of its pearl and chunk fishery and its profitable trade. The beginning of 19th century marked the rise of Thoothukudi to a very prominent place in the world of commerce owing to the exports of raw cotton and other commodities to the European countries. The advantageous position of Thoothukudi port over other ports in the corommandel coast was its possession of a natural harbour. The lighthouse was built in 1842 (replacing the Dutch obelish) symbolizing the beginning of the harbour development in Thoothukudi\(^3\).

**Thoothukudi Harbour: Physical and Marine Features:**

Thoothukudi harbour is formed by a low sandy cape called the devils point. A reef on the northern end leads to three different islands namely Punaiyadi Tivu, Cronjee Tivu and Pandyan Tivu facing

---


Thoothukudi. The Pandyan Tivu is also known as Hare Island. These three islands form one continuous stretch of land connected with the mainland. The islands extend northwards at intervals to the Vaippar, ending with the Sali Tivu groups. Within this circular chain of islands and reefs lies the harbour. This Thoothukudi harbour has the shape of horse shoe with its opening towards the inside and outside of the Gulf of Mannar\(^64\). Thoothukudi harbour is in the Gulf of Mannar in a latitude of \(8^\circ 45^\prime\) North and longitude of \(78^\circ 11^\prime\) east\(^65\).

Thoothukudi harbour is a natural harbour rarely occurred by storms. The water off this coast is shallow and very calm. Hare Island upon which the lighthouse was built in 1842 provides considerable protection to the crafts during south and south-east winds and again it is protected in the north-east monsoon\(^66\).

The port has an open roadstead. The ocean-going vessels anchor in the roadstead outside the Pandyan Island 5 miles off the town. A boat channel is maintained to a depth of 10 feet from the 2 fathoms line to the jetties for cargo boats, which range from 30 to 130 tons to ply between the

\(^{64}\) M. Franklin Kline, *Official Shippers Guide* (Oskaka: Shosen Kaisha, Secretariat Department, Oskaka, Japan, USA, 1933), p. 376


\(^{66}\) Ibid, p. 67.
vessels at anchor and the piers and jetties. The port was equipped with 3 piers and 3 cross-jetties. The south Indian railway line runs parallel to the cross jetties from which passengers and goods could transship to launches and lighters\textsuperscript{67}.

**Thoothukudi Harbour Development Works:**

In 1842, the Thoothukudi harbour was first surveyed. The planned development of harbour started in 1866 and the first pier, a primitive wooden jetty, a hundred feet in length, was constructed at a cost of Rs. 1200\textsuperscript{/-.} In 1868, the Thoothukudi port was declared as minor port anchorage in the corommandel coast in the Madras Presidency. In 1873 again the wooden jetty was rebuilt and extended. In 1876 Thoothukudi was connected with Maniyachi rail-line by south Indian railway\textsuperscript{68}.

In 1877, the Duke of Buckingham visited Thoothukudi, the business men of Thoothukudi met and convinced him of the necessity of improving the pier and succeeded in getting his promise. His promise took concrete shape in 1881 and the jetty was considerably strengthened in 1887

\textsuperscript{67} Handbook of Commercial Information for India (Issued by Central Government of India) (Delhi: Government Press, 1921), p.82.

and its width was doubled. In 1888, trolley rails were laid to connect the port with the interior through a railway line\(^{69}\).

In 1894, a new iron screw pier was constructed. To cope with increased demand for space considerable reclamation was done in the foreshore to provide approaches to new jetty at a cost of 2 lakhs of rupees and the pier was opened in 13 July 1895. The main line of south Indian railway was extended up to Wharf in 1899. In 1903, the necessity of dredging the harbour was much discussed and a dredger was brought from England at a cost of Rs. 3.25 lakhs\(^{70}\).

From 1900 to 1912, about Rs. 17,00,000 has been spent to increase the facilities for landing and shipping, storing and cleaning of goods. These improvements included 4 cross new jetties, taking over all old customs goods sheds, 4 new goods shed, closing all open sheds and foreshore improvements like drainage, reclamation, revetment, consolidating reclaimed land for cart and motor traffic of the jetties for shipments of cargo and electric installation\(^{71}\).


In 1912, the third Thoothukudi harbour survey was made. According to the survey report, Thoothukudi port was declared as second important port in Madras Presidency next to Madras port and fifth in the whole of British India in exports and imports. Thus, the Thoothukudi port became a very prominent port served for five districts in the region of south India\textsuperscript{72}.

In 1912, the Government officials and merchants of Thoothukudi discussed the scope for further development of harbour. It was suggested to extend the harbour further to south. The works was postponed owing to the First World War. In 1920, a new scheme was prepared and suggested to construct an artificial harbour (a deep water harbour). The scheme was to construct a dock with deep water Wharf near Pandyan Island\textsuperscript{73}. In 1924, Thoothukudi port trust was constituted. The Port Trust expressed its inability to finance any scheme in excess of Rs. 60 lakhs. The Government of India declined to make any grant for this purpose. So, the scheme for the further development of harbour was abandoned and it took shape in latter years\textsuperscript{74}.

\footnote{G. T. Boug, \textit{Op. Cit.}, p. 68.}