CHAPTER-VI

THE CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN IN FREEDOM MOVEMENT AT STATE OF KARNATAKA

The role of women in the freedom movement is unique in Karnataka. Both in Pre-Gandhian period and during the Gandhian period, women participated very actively and sacrificed their lives for the cause of their motherland. In the pre-Gandhian freedom struggle women in their role as queens fought for independence of the territories. They were Belawadi Mallamma of the Swadi dynasty, Abbakka, queen of Ullal kingdom of South Kanara district, Keladi Rani Channamma, and Rani Veeramma of Keladi dynasty. The Gandhian era of freedom struggle in Karnataka began roughly from 1920. Gandhiji’s visit to Belgaum in 1924 left everlasting impression upon the freedom fighters. They also participated in individual Satyagraha, salt Satyagraha and No Tax Campaign. Women freedom fighters along with men fought for socio-economic values and to popularize democratic ideas. Queen Channamma of Kittur started an era of revolt against the British in India.

ROLE OF WOMEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF KARNATAKA:

The word “Freedom Movement” brings vividly to our minds the saga of sacrifices made by millions some of whom laid down their lives in a blazing train of glory. Bondage, whether social, economic or political, has always evoked intense resistance the word over. The history of foreign domination in India is replete with acts of courage, sacrifice and dedication to the cause of freedom. But over the decades, the fight for freedom of the country was continued with the same dedication, singleness of purpose and solidarity. The heroes of our freedom struggle came from every corner of the country. They did not speak one language. They did not belong to
one religion or one caste. They rose above these narrow loyalties and considerations and had in tense love for their motherland and keenness to see the country free. That was the single thread of unity that bound them all. Free India has been built on untold sacrifices made by numerous individuals. Freedom movement was started not merely to drive the Britishers out of India, but the struggle continued to gain recognition for our nation among the other advanced nations of the world. “Indians should be the Masters of India” was the dictum. The main aim was that the Indian had to be an equal to the world citizen.

This may called as freedom movement is related to human life, namely, traditions, economic activities, rich cultural background and goals, Gandhiji dreamt of Swaraj. In this world Swaraj means, “The wealth of the nation is being washed away, we Indians are very poor. We should come out from poverty. Although India is a rich land, people suffer from epidemic diseases. Until and unless the Britishers are driven away from India, we will not rest in peace. We should be free. We must rule ourselves and regain our soul. Therefore we need freedom”.  

Freedom is related to our mind and knowledge. Freedom and responsibility are two related terms. Many national leaders have understood the meaning of “Freedom movement”. It is a matter of great pride to note that the first ever call for revolt against the mighty power of the British was given by a woman, Queen of a small state in Karnataka, namely, Kittur, which occupied then a strategic place from both political and military points of view. She is one of the greatest among the freedom fighters not only of Karnataka but also of the whole world. Queen Channamma once defeated a British force and killed Thackeray. In the second encounter with the British army, she was defeated. Thus Queen Channamma of Kittur started an era of revolt
against the British in India. During this period of struggle, Karnataka had been mainly
distributed among five different administrations, apart from more than fourteen other
smaller princely states. The five administrations were the Bombay presidency, the
Madras presidency, the Mysore princely State, the Nizam’s and Coorg.

In spite of this kind of indifferent and uneven proposition, Kannada speaking
people responded positively to the political awakening and participated actively in the
freedom movement. Belgaum, Dharwad, Karwar and Bijapur districts known as
Bombay Karnataka, formed the Southern part of the Bombay presidency. As part of
the Bombay presidency, these four districts were considerably influenced by the
political awakening in that presidency, which was administered by the British.
Mysore was an enlightened princely state and responded in its own way to this
national call. “The name of Kittur Rani Channamma has become a source of
inspiration to all. She was the first Indian woman warrior to fight the British”.
Gulbarga, Raichur and Bidar districts formed part of Nizam’s State. No one could do
anything about Nizam’s rule till late in the forties. After independence, however, by
police action it was incorporated into the Indian Union. The Coastal South Kanara
(Dakshina Kannada) and inland Bellary districts were in the Madras presidency. They
were so far apart, that there was no contiguity between the two districts. Coorg,
though contiguous with Mysore, was entirely cut off from other parts of Karnataka.
So far as political activity was concerned, it was administered by the Government of
India through a Chief Commissioner.
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND:

The Congress movement and the spirit of nationalism found greater expression in areas directly under the British rule. But it so happened that more than half of Karnataka area was under the rule of Indian princes. As noted earlier, besides Mysore and the Kannada Districts in the Nizam’s state, there were nearly a dozen small princely states like Sondur, Savanur, Ramadurg, Jamkhandi, Mudhol, and Akkalkot. These princely states which were separate and independent administrations were surrounded on all sides by British Indian provinces. These territories came under the influence of political agitation and upheaval that came from the British administered territories. It was only natural that the people of these states shared the political aspirations for freedom and democracy of their fellow citizens living across their borders. The political upsurge in British India could not, therefore, leave the people of princely states unaffected.

Karnataka State has contributed a lot in the freedom struggle. Kannadigas are very well known for bravery and courage. They have believed and continue to believe that freedom is more valuable than their life. When one speaks of freedom, one is sure to remember Karnataka rulers, namely, Kadambas, Hoyasalas, Chalukyas of Badami, Vijayanagar Kings and many more for their love and dedication for freedom. Dr. D. C. Sarkar says, “Ever since the growth of Chalukyan dynasty from 6th century, Kannadigas have played a remarkable and memorable role in the history of freedom movement”.3 There is also some evidence of Karnataka Kings who also ruled in Bihar, Bengal and other parts of India. The sacrifice made by women is a unique feature of the culture of Karnataka. One can remember Attimabbe of 10th century, Akka Mahadevi of 12th century, Gangambika of Vijayanager, Onake Obavva, Rani
Kittur Channamma and Belavadi Mallamma. The first woman who revolted against the British rule in India in 1824 was from Karnataka and she was Rani Channamma of Kittur. The 17th century poet Sarvajna of Karnataka has eulogized, in his compositions in triplets called as “Vachanas”, Kannada culture and its supremacy. He was called as the ‘pole star’ or Karnataka culture. He has stated in his compositions that freedom is must to one and all and that they need not have any sort of bondage. In his “Vachanas” he has very eloquently depicted the patriotism and faithfulness of the people of Karnataka. He firmly believed that one must sacrifice for the sake of his country.

PROMINENT WOMEN FREEDOM FIGHTERS OF KARNATAKA:

Women Satyagrahis of Karnataka and their role in the history of freedom struggle should be written in letters of gold. They dedicated their lives to the cause of freedom of their motherland and scarified there all to achieve their goal. The role of women in the freedom movement is unique in Karnataka. Both in Pre-Gandhian period and during the Gandhian period, women participated very actively and sacrificed their lives for the cause of their motherland. The Gandhian era of freedom struggle in Karnataka began roughly from 1920. As in all human historical events, there is bound to be some emphasis upon leadership of prominent personalities who stand out because of their greater initiative or forceful personality or organizing abilities. The freedom struggle from 1920 to 1947 was led by Mahatma Gandhi, whose leadership attracted men and women of all walks of life. Gandhiji’s visit to Belgaum in 1924 left everlasting impression upon the freedom fighters, and many women became staunch followers of Mahatma Gandhi. Women played an important role in distributing pamphlets. They were enthusiastic in preparing food for the
freedom lovers. The leading women participants in the freedom movement in Karnataka were - Umabai Kundapur, Bellary Siddamma, T Sunandamma, Kamaldevi Chattopadhyya, Nagamma Patil, Krishnabai Panjikar, Subbamma Jois, Yashodharamma Dasappa, Padmavati Bidari, Jayadevai Ligade, Sitabai Ramchandra Madagaonkar and Shakuntala Kurtakoti.

1. UMABAI KUNDAPUR

Umabai Kundapur was a pioneer among the women freedom fighters of the Gandhian era. She came from Bombay and settled in Hubli, in 1923. Her father-in-law Sri Anand Rao Kundapur was himself a nationalist and encouraged young Umabai to participate in social and public life. Unfortunately, as she became a widow at an early age, she made up her mind to spend her life in the service of the nation. Her stay in Bombay provided an opportunity to listen to the speeches of great nationalist leaders of the Congress. She had by that time organized Saraswati Mahila Samaj. Umabai was one of those millions of people who came under the magnetic influence of the Mahatma. Her interest in the struggle for freedom almost became a creed. It had been laid down that each active member of the Congress should collect as many members as he or she could for the Ahmedabad Session of the Congress. Umabai collected no less than a lakh. It stood her in good stead later when she came to Hubli.

In Hubli, she came into contact with Dr. N. S. Hardikar, who was the main leader at that time in Hubli. The Bhagini Samaj and Tilak Kanya Shala were engaged in creating national awakening among women and trained women for national movement. After a few years, Umabai took the responsibility of these centers. Umabai’s service in creating national awareness among women on the eve of
Gandhiji’s visit to Belgaum in 1924 was highly commendable. She toured all over Karnataka and brought women volunteers to the annual session of the National Congress. For all these activities she was appointed as Chief Leader of the women’s wing of the Seva Dal. Umabai once again toured Karwar district for Salt Satyagraha movement.

In 1932, for her great courage in mobilizing the crowd, she was appointed the Director for the non-cooperation movement on 26th January 1933. Umabai collected some fund out of which she helped the prisoners. Her doors were always kept open for all Satyagrahis. She was arrested for Satyagraha. After her release from jail, she continued to be associated with adult education and other social programmes. Her ill health prevented her from participating in Quit India Movement. Later she did wonderful work in the collection of fund for Kasturba Memorial Trust and Gandhi Memorial Trust. She never cared for power nor offered claims for it. She recalls those days when she used to sit tight near the radio listening to the news bulletins put out every two hours regarding the health of Gandhiji when he was on his memorable fast. "For me, she says, “Gandhiji was a living God".

2. BELLARY SIDDAMMA (1896-1982)

Bellary Siddamma is another name to remember for her active participation in the freedom movement. She was born in 1903 in Dhundasi village in Haveri Taluka of Dharwad district. Her father candalised in her the national spirit. She also had a spiritual bent of mind. She was married to Bellary Murigeppa who was also a staunch nationalist and follower of Gandhiji. The first important event which shook Bellary Siddamma and drove her to public life was the death sentence passed on Mallappa Dhanashetti and his comrades.
In spite of the efforts of leaders of the state they were hanged. This incident inspired many more youngsters to participate in the freedom movement. It was at this time that Siddamma declared that the British should be driven out of India and independence should be gained at any cost. She who had not so long ventured out of the four walls of the house became an inspiring speaker and a good organizer. She was really a very brave woman. She toured all the neighboring villages of Davangere and Chitradurga and addressed men and women in their own language and sought their co-operation. Because of her excellent work in organizing women volunteers, she was soon recognized as a prominent state level leader in the Mysore State.

Her association with Sardar Veeranagouda Patil, K. F. Patil, Nagamma Patil, S. Nijalingappa and T. Siddalingaiah enabled her to enlarge her activities. Her first important public activity was her participation in the memorable Shivapur Congress session held in April 1938. It was the first session of the princely Mysore State Congress. In that session, the leaders who hoisted the national flag were arrested and imprisoned on 12th April 1938. Siddamma sang in her beautiful tone the song ‘Vande Mataram’, due to which she came to prominence among all the persons gathered there. It was women like T. Sunandamma, Yashodaramma Dasappa, Bellary Siddamma and Subbamma Jois who struck a serious nail in the conflicting conditions among the organizers in the Shivapur event. They declared that they were ready to face the consequences and hoist the flag leaving behind men. This was considered as not only outstanding courage of the women but even the decision which surpassed the courage of men in the love for freedom. The Sivapur Flag Satyagraha was an important milestone in the struggle for national freedom.
Bellary Siddamma unfurled the national flag and the very next moment she too was arrested. She was the first lady arrested by the Mysore State police. The news spread throughout the State. The reaction of the public was, “A brave lady, a truly brave lady, an ideal Satyagrahi, indeed. Anybody else in her place would have run to the Maharaja”.

After her release, she traveled widely all over Karnataka and Mysore State. She mainly concentrated her activities in the rural areas. She was truly a mass leader. She advised the women to take to spinning and weaving. She popularized Khadi. She tried to dissuade the young and the old from the drinking habit. Her second major political activity was her participation in the programme of cutting of toddy trees in Turuvenur in Chitradurga district under the leadership of S. Nijalingappa. The Quit India Movement of 1942 found her again politically active. She did not court arrest, but was all the time helping the underground workers. The police kept an eye of her. But she managed to fool them on a number of occasions. She was very active in undertaking underground work. In recognition of her service to women and to the nation a Tamrapatra was awarded to her.

3. KAMALADEVI CHATTOPADHYAY

Kamaladevi was born on April 3, 1903 in an affluent family in Mangalore. Her marriage with Harindranath, brother of Sarojini Naidu, which created a flutter in the orthodox circle and led her to fame and popularity on the national scene through the stage. Margaret Cousins came to wield a strong influence on the young mind of Kamaladevi. “All her yearnings began to be of service to society and especially to women, now to take concrete shape in her (Kamaladevi’s) mind”. Mrs. Cousins was a seasoned worker and for Kamaladevi she blazoned the trial of women emancipation
and service to mankind”. She got many opportunities to meet great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Gokhale and Pandita Ramabai.

In Pune, she offered her services in organizing women volunteers. She also participated in the salt Satyagraha. She was arrested. Referring to this incident, Kamaladevi writes in “Women in India”, “I was sure that no force, not even machine guns could stop this raid. On the view of the raid, I was arrested but my parting message to my colleagues and the vast population was to execute this plan. My little son of seven who proudly carried the banner and engaged in the drama of this first battle.” The magistrate, before whom she appeared, sentenced her to six months simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 150. After her release in 1931, Kamaladevi was put in charge of the Seva Dal. This organization was later taken over by the Indian National Congress. She was appointed General Officer Commanding of the women’s wing. Her main task was to organize and train women for a variety of jobs from first aid to fire fighting, to face lathis and bullets. In 1936, she was elected president of the party at the Meerut session. Thus, after training herself, Kamaladevi returned to Mangalore in 1934. She organized unions and Adult Education drives. She aroused political consciousness and organized the congress committee.

Kamaladevi participated in Quit India Movement. On August 8, Mahatma Gandhi gave the ultimatum to the British to Quit India. Kamaladevi plunged into the struggle and went to jail. After independence; she devoted her entire life to social work. In recognition of her noble service, she was honored with Ramon Magsaysay Award in 1966.
4. JAYADEVI TAI LIGADE

The patriotism and love for Swadeshi in Jayadevitai could be traced back to her family tradition and culture in which she was born and brought up. Jayadevitai Ligade was the granddaughter of Sri Mallappa Warad who was closely associated with Lokamany Tilak, M. G. Ranade and Gopal Krishna Gokhale.\textsuperscript{15} The British officers then knowing the situation of Sholapur city, ignored their participation as a matter of policy, and avoided arresting any women participant. But the British officers, strategists as they were, started pressuring Jayadevitai’s husband Shrimant Channamallappa, an aristocrat and a big zamindar, whose stakes were great in the hands of the revenue officers.\textsuperscript{16}

Such was the associated of the Ligade’s family with the extremist elements in the freedom movement. This was one of the reasons why the British Officers had an eye on the family and looked with grave concern on Jayadevitai’s participation directly in the movement. The Collector counseled Jayadevitai that she should support the British rule for which she would be conferred the title of “KAISER-E-HIND”. Tai, a stubborn and staunch follower of Gandhiji, did not budge an inch from her principles and convictions with all these pretty threats and allurements. On the country, she gave away all her valuable dresses and adapted to Khadder and Swadeshi from then onwards. This attitude of Tai agitated both her husband and the Government. Ultimately the British levied a heavy fine on the Ligades.\textsuperscript{17}

Jayadevitai along with her mother participated in the salt Satyagraha movement. Her area of freedom struggle was confined to the districts of Bidar, Gulbarga and Raichur. She organized the National Movement against the Nizam of Hyderabad, an oppressive ruler and a stooge of the British Raj. In 1946 Jayadevitai
addressed a huge crowd at Zahirabad near Basavakalyana. In Zahirabad, a few kilometers from Basavakalyan, the Hindu Provincial Conference was convened. Tai was to be the Chief Guest. The entire Hindu community irrespective of the low and high stood as one monolithic block and rose into a great upsurge. It would be a long story to narrate in detail how Tai presented herself personally on the occasion, discarding the ban and started addressing the audience. Only all the audience through the loud speakers could hear the speech. Tai was introduced as ‘Kalyanamma’ by name but as Jayadevitai.\(^1^8\)

The entire community was both in high spirit and was determined to do any sacrifice. The situation was both sensitive and explosive. Any attempt on the part of the Nizam Government to arrest Tai would have ended into another “Jallianwallah Bag” in the South. When the refugees from the territories of Hyderabad came down to Sholapur, Tai’s house became the center of activities.

5. KRISHNABAI PANJIKAR (1906-1959)

Krishnabai Panjikar was a leading woman freedom fighter. She was born on 8\(^{th}\) August 1906 at Honnavar. After completing her education, she started a primary school and Mahila Samaja at Dharwad. The school developed into a big institution.\(^1^9\) Krishnabai participated in the Swadeshi Movement. She soon became well known for her courage and indomitable will and the Dharwad District Congress Committee requested her to go round to enlist participants for the Salt Satyagraha. She moved from village to village inspiring people by her speeches. In 1932, she was arrested for anti-Government speeches. In 1940, she was the Vice-President of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee. In 1942, she was again sentenced for one-year imprisonment for her anti-British rallies.
Krishabai’s activities were varied and she never accepted defeat. When she was elected regional secretary of the Karnataka National Commemoration Fund, she collected. With the help of the district secretaries, Rs. 2.50 lakhs and presented the amount to Gandhiji. Her activities had to slow down when the health of her husband began deteriorating. She contributed in memory of her father-in-law, mother-in-law and her stepdaughter, a sum of Rs. 10,000 to a welfare fund, which had the aim of helping poor students. It was a pity that such a noble soul who never courted rest was to suffer long from ill-health before breathing her last in 1959.20


Smt. Nagamma Veeranagouda Patil, popularly and widely known as ‘AVVA’ (mother). She was born on 16th December, 1905. She completed her primary education and in the year 1923 she married Padmashree Sardar Veeranagouda Patil who was the founder of Karnataka Liberal Education Society and a veteran leader of freedom movement. Smt. Nagamma Patil closely associated with her husband in the upliftment of Harijans and as well as socially, economically and educationally backward women.

It was in 1933 when Mahatma Gandhi visited Karnataka for the second time as part of his countrywide tour to educate people against untouchability. He was received at Mangalore by the leading Congress leaders among who were Sardar Veeranagouda Patil and his wife Nagamma. Their presence was significant because they were already aware of the cause for which Mahatma Gandhi was dedicated. They had by that time opened a Harijan Balika Ashram in Hubli on the lines of the one at Sabarmati, the second of its kind in the whole of India. She traveled in all the neighboring districts and selected Harijan girls for her Ashram.21 Responding to the
call of Mahatma Gandhiji for the freedom movement. Smt. Nagamma Patil, submitting her Resignation to the Legislatorship, entered freedom movement and was arrested and kept in the jail in 1938 at Belgaum Hindalaga jail for 3 months. Again in 1942 movement, she was arrested once again and was kept in the Yarawada Central jail as detune for 13 months along with other eminent ladies like Smt. Krishnabai Pnjikar and others.  

Smt. Nagamma Patil addressed both men and women in a meeting at Byadagi and called on the people not to extend any cooperation to the Government and the Government arrested her on the same day. Smt. Nagamma Patil was attracted by Bhoodan Movement and joined saint. Vinoba Bhave along with other eminent ladies likes Smt. Mahadevamma Hegde and others. Vinoba Bhave used to stay in this Ashram during his visits in this area. Smt. Nagamma Patil took active part in the fund collection for ‘Kasturba Nidi’ during 1945-46 and inspired others by donating her own golden ring from her finger. Like Kasturba Gandhi, Smt. Nagamma Patil followed her husband in all the activities of Harijan upliftment, bringing up the orphans, establishing the institutions, freedom movement and others fruitful activities.

7. SUBBAMMA JOIS (1919-1982)

Subbamma was wife of M.N. Jois, who was a dedicated Congress worker. In 1930, Subbamma went along with her husband to Sirsi and Siddapur- the scene of hectic political activities like Salt Tax Satyagraha, No-Tax Movement and Jungale Satyagraha. The place was new to her, but it did not take her long to collect friends such as the Nadavars, the dominating community there, one friendly by nature. She took active part in the flag hoisting and pamphlet distributing programmes in which quite a good number of women used to participate under the inspiring leadership of
Gouramma. Later, women played an important role in “No Tax Campaign Movement”.

Subbamma was tried in the court of Sirsi and sentenced to six months simple imprisonment. After her release the government passed a preventive order on her. She was not to enter British India. Later on she looked after an Ashram established by K. A. Venkataramaiah opened for the children of satyagrahis, at Shimoga. In 1937, it was decided to put up Congress candidates to the two Houses of Representatives. Subbamma accompanied Bellary Siddamma, Umabai Kundapur, Krishnabai Panjikar and Tayamma Verrangouda for canvassing all over Mysore State. The response from the public was heartening. They had bitter experience only at Yalundur where stones came flying towards them. But they were not deterred. Subbamma also participated in the Shivapur Congress session.

The one incident, which she nostalgically and proudly narrated, was the Flog-hoisting ceremony on January 26, 1938. M.N. Jois used to observe January 26 as ‘Independence Day’. And he would invariably collect Congress workers and hoist the flag. On that day, he was in jail. So it was suggested to Subbamma that she should do it in Subrayar Pond Maidan and she readily agreed to it. The moment she unfurled it, she was arrested. She had at least come to realize her mistake and recognize the new wave that had come over the country. It was a happy occasion for Subbamma, since at that time the family was united. Soon after, she came to be arrested for participating in the Sivapur Flag Satyagraha Movement. She was in jail for a short time. The day she was released along with the other volunteers, the public arranged a heroine’s welcome was arranged by the public. Subbamma said that she and her husband had to undergo a lot of suffering, no doubt, but they had rich rewards also in the form of
public sympathy and admiration. The richest reward came when the British Quit India and all the states merged.26

8. YOSHADHARAMMA DASAPPA

Yoshadharamma Dasappa enjoyed a unique place among the first generation of women freedom fighters of Gandhian era. She was the wife of Sri. H. C. Dasappa, a prominent congressman from the former Mysore State. Yashodharamma’s first confrontation with the Government took place at Shivapur Congress Session held on 10th April 1938. It was the first session of the Mysore Congress.

Yoshadharamma, along with other women participants guarded the flagpole for which she was arrested. She also played an important role in underground activities. The centre of activities was the house of Yoshadharamma. Satyagrahis were coming from all corners of the state. There was a particular significance in hoisting the flag near the Town hall because the government had banned holding of any meeting there. Yashodharamma wrote speeches for the Satyagrahis to oppose the decision of the Government to name the building of the town police of Mysore after Hamilton, who was known for his cruelty and inhuman treatment of those who participated in nationalist activities.

Yoshadharamma was the first lady member on the working committee of the Mysore State Congress and later its first lady-president, too. She was mainly responsible for women folk of Mysore coming out of their houses participating in the freedom movement. She had the gift of the gab. Add to it her transparent sincerity and her missionary zeal, she was a great force in those days, and continued to be one, even later. Her short speeches, but hard-hitting ones were classics by themselves. Both men
and women would sit like a painted picture to listen to her. She was most influenced by Mahatma Gandhi. She was in Sevagram in 1944. Gandhiji advised her to take to constructive work. She took to social work under the programme of Kasturba Memorial Trust. She was the first lady Minister of cabinet rank. She served in Nijalingappa’s Ministry. She resigned her minister ship on the question of prohibition. She continued to be the Chairman of the state-level Prohibition Committee till sometime before her death. Age had slightly bent her tall imposing figure but it had crushed her fighting spirit. Mellowed though she was, occasionally she turned into a firebrand at the contemplation of the change of values that has taken place in the present public life.

Yoshadharamma continued to fight for freedom from ignorance, illiteracy, poverty and squalor. For her, prohibition was not just a principle but a creed. She was running hostels for workingwomen, homes for the destitute, the handicapped. She brought up a Harijan girl and adopted her. All those who worked with her affectionately called her ‘Amma’.

9. T. SUNANDAMMA

T. Sunandamma had her education in Theosophical College, Madras, and later was married to N. Narasimmyangar, an advocate of Doddaballapur in 1932. The person who influenced her young mind and initiated her into national activities was her sister in-law, T. Kanakalakshamma, the first lady-Graduate from Mysore University with English as her principal subject. T. Sunandamma from Doddaballapur was closely associated with leaders like T. Siddalingaih and T. Narasimha Iyengar in starting the Nigers Youth League in 1936. The League’s activities were mainly social though political interest was not completely barred. Later with the merging of
the Justice party with the Congress, there was a significant turn in the political affairs of Mysore State.\textsuperscript{29} Once Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel was invited to address the league. T. Sunandamma and her husband were closely associated with its functioning in the Shivapur Congress Session. T. Sunandamma was a leader of volunteers. God has blessed her with a loud but sweet, clear voice. Each function, in those days would open with her prayer and with her ‘Vande Mataram’.\textsuperscript{30} There she led a batch of women clad in white to defend the national flag. She took active part with Yashosharamma Dasappa in the Town Hall Satyagraha at Mysore. In the Quit India movement her husband was arrested and she worked underground for sometimes. Later in the ‘Palace Chalo Movement’ she participated along with M.R. Lakshamma, courted arrest and was in jail for five months. In recognition of her services, she was twice put up as a candidate for the House of Representatives and both times got elected unopposed.\textsuperscript{31}

10. SHAKUNTALA KURTKOTI

Perhaps, the only women freedom fighter of Quit India Movement who has still retained the zest of that fight is Shakuntala Kurtakoti. Throughout her life she has been a fighter and a tough one too, for a good cause. She is happily married to Shankarrao Kurtakoti, another eminent freedom fighter. Like the Patils couple they have rested satisfied with the social work that they have involved themselves in after the country attained freedom. Not those opportunities for power did not come their way, they rather avoided those ways.\textsuperscript{32}

Her husband did not draw Shankuntala, unlike many other women, into the fray. She was already very much there at the time she came into contact with him, when he was active as an underground worker. The government had declared a prize
of Rs. 2000/- for anyone who would supply it with clues regarding his where about. The government might sentence him to imprisonment or even decide to execute him. Who knows? Those were very uncertain days. Shankuntala was undaunted by the most gloomy picture of further life that was held before her by Shankarrao. They were married in Bombay on February 15, 1944. The marriage was attended by not less than forty underground Congress workers; important among them were Rangarrao Diwakar, V. R. Kulkarni, Mhadu Joshi, Achyut Patwardhan S. M. Joshi and Ramchandra Wadawi. Soon after marriage she returned to Belgaum which was so to say her headquarters. The police intensified their activities to arrest Shankarrao, as the result of which Shankuntala was under constant surveillance. But that in no way deterred her in her activities. She was living in the neighborhood of the famous freedom fighters, the Yalagis, whose house was the centre of lots of political activity. She was impressed by the visit of Jawaharlal Nehru. Gangadharrao Deshpande was also a frequent visitor. She decided to dedicate her life henceforth for national service.

On August 11, 1942 Nath Pai and Shankuntala organized the biggest ever procession of the citizens of Belgaum mainly consisting of school and college going students. Nath Pai was leading the boys, while Shankuntala the girls carrying proudly and boldly the national flag. Their ideology was: do or die. All of a sudden the police force fell on the procession. The police surrounded Shankuntala. Their threat did not strike terror into her heart. She managed to pass the flag to her followers. She was arrested along with Nath Pai and eleven students from the Law College. It was her first taste of the jail life. Her parents were rather worried, as they feared that imprisonment might be regarded as a stigma on their family. Their real fear was that Shankuntala’s marriage might pose a problem.
Her activities were mainly concentrated in schools and colleges. She would arrange for the secret meetings of the underground workers. She would straight walk into the boys hostels and persuade them to boycott classes. She would, along with her followers, picket in front of liquor shops. In October 1942 she organized a very big meeting. She went to jail along with a batch of hundred girls. It was during that time she came into contact with Mridula Sarabhai and Maniben Patel. She does not consider the jail life as a waste. The moment she came out of jail she would again start her activities. She does the social works in Gandhi Pratistana. She believed the Gandhi philosophy and she Gandhi follower. She was great women freedom fighter in Karnataka. She was leg behind the movement participate so many movements.\(^3\)\(^5\)

11. T. B. JAYALAKSHMIBAI

Jayalakshmibai was born in 1912 in Motebennur of Harihara Taluk. Her parents and other members of the family were all patriotic. In 1924, after she visited with her brothers the Congress Meeting in Belgaum, she became inspired to participate in freedom movement. After her marriage to T. B. Keshavarao. Who was also a patriotic social worker; she had full freedom to take part in freedom movement.

In 1909 when the family shifted to Bellary, they adopted a Harijian boy and because of this they were ex-communicated by their family and society. But she and her husband were not discouraged, as they were convinced that their act was right. She used to travel all over Bellary district, and be actively engaged in National work. In Hadagali Taluka, they were boycotted. Then she had to explain and convince the women there that what they were doing was right, and afterwards the people gave them a warm welcome.\(^3\)\(^6\)
In 1930, she used to arrange women’s ‘Prabhat Pheri’ in Harapanhalli. She was arrested when she participated in the Salt Satyagraha. In 1932 when she was engaged in Non-Cooperation Movement in Hospet, she was arrested and sentenced for six months, with a penalty of Rs. 150/- failing in the payment of which she was to serve in jail for another 6 weeks. Thus she was kept in women’s jail in Vellore for 7½ months. In 1942, though she participated in Quit India Movement, she was not arrested, but her husband was. During the period he was in goal, she had to shoulder the responsibility of their family and look after the guests who visited their house.37

12. SIDDAMMA MAILAR

Siddamma is the brave wife of the brave Martyr Mahadev Mailar. At the time of marriage Mahadev Mailar had already come under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and other local leaders. After marriage, Mahadev Mailar left home and joined the Congress workers in Dharwad against the wishes of the members of the family. Siddamma, then a young girl of thirteen confided in her husband that she too would, like a true Hindu wife participate in the freedom movement. But she needed training. Mahadev though that a short stay in Sabaramati Ashrama was necessary for her to be initiated into movement. In 1931 both went to Sabarmati. At that time Gandhiji was at Bardoli. Gandhiji smiled and consented to her joining the Women’s Ashram in Sabarmati. In 1932-33 Gandhiji gave a call to the nation for Individual Satyagraha and Siddamma was one among the many women courted arrest.38

She was released from jail after three months. She came to Motebennur and took to constructive programs like Harijan uplift, popularizing Khadi and enlisting sympathy for prohibition. The Mahatma undertook a tour of the whole country in 1934 for awakening the conscience of the public regarding the Harijans. He visited
Karnataka, too. He made it a point to pay a visit to Motebennur, through Mahadev was, at that time, in Hindalaga jail. He took Siddamma along with him to Gujarat. As the Sabarmati Ashram had been close, she spent a few days in Bhavnagar and later in Rajkot. She had become as a good as a member of the family of Gandhiji. She returned to Motebennur after Mahadev was released. She joined the Harijan Balikashram in Hubli and helped Nagamma Patil in running it. Mahadev and Siddamma were engaged in constructive social activities from the Mahatma. When she entered the house of their friends in Hospet, the first thing that caught her eyes was the picture of Bhagat Singh. Siddamma broke down, the next day is 18, April 1943 he much feared news came that Mahadev had been shot dead.

Siddamma received a letter of consolation from the Mahatma, in which he had reiterated that the best tribute that she could pay to the memory of her martyr-husband was to dedicate the rest of her life for the cause for which he had laid down his life accordingly she pledged her life for social service. In recognition of her service, she was requested to contest the election to the Legislative Assembly, which she did and go elected. But her heart is in social service.39

13. PADMAVATI BIDARI

The Bidari couple like the Kurtkois, the Dabades and the Magadies has played an important role in the freedom movement. The suffering that they underwent and the sacrifice which they did are befitting ideal Satyagrahis. It was her marriage with Vamanrao Bidari, which brought Padmavatibai into public life. Vamanrao had already come under the influence of Gandhiji, and local leaders. The marriage took place in 1925 in a very simple manner. She stayed in Bidari for some time and later went to Panchapur where both came under the influence of Annu Guruji. She learnt to spin
and sing national songs. She collected a band of young women whom she taught to
spin and sing.⁴⁰

Later, Padmavati and Vamanrao shifted to the famous Kamari Ashram, which
was the headquarters, so to say, of Gangadhararao Deshpande. She went to jail on two
occasions, once, in 1932 for participating in the Salt Satyagraha Movement. She had
to take her child also along with her to jail. In 1942, she was sentenced to simple
imprisonment for one year and half. In 1945, Vamanrao died of pneumonia leaving
Padmavatibai helpless and financially poor. But the circle of friends was very large.
The Jatties, the Karmarkars and the Dabades gave her timely help and encouragement.
She pledged to dedicate her remaining life for the service of the people, a cause very
dear to the heart of her husband. She chose the erstwhile Jamkhandi State for her
activities. Her popularity was so great that she defeated the government-sponsored
candidate, Smt. Laxmibai Apte in a straight fight in the election to the State
Legislative Assembly.

After the merging of the states, the field of her activity no doubt, widened. But
the quarrel among the erstwhile workers for power and position made her retire from
active politics. Her attention was drawn towards the Sarvodaya Movement sponsored
by Vinoba Bhave. She joined the dedicated band of workers when Vinoba visited
Karnataka in 1956-57. In recognition of her services she was granted Tamrapatra on
the occasion of the Silver Jubilee celebrations of Independence Day.⁴¹

14. BHAVANIBAI KANAGOD

The patriotic poems of the late Master Tippayya inspired Bhavanibai Kanagod
to take an active part in the freedom movement in 1920-21, she used to go from house
to house to persuade people to boycott foreign goods and to buy Indian hand-woven cloth and join the Congress Party. She used to be extremely careful, as police kept a watch on her.

In 1930-32, during “Jungle Satyagraha” she used to bring from secret campus handbills and distribute and explain them to the people. She worked day and night to arrange for food and shelter for the workers in the Congress Camps. In addition, she arranged processions or ‘Prabhat-Pheri’. Her brother Nagesh, who was also a teacher, was her strong support and guide in all these activities. Her love for the country was so great, that she abandoned her husband’s house with her only son, and plunged into freedom fight. Many friends, like Mahadevi Dodmane, Saraswatamma Dodmane, Kaveramma Kallali, Godubai Madgaonkar, her own mother Subbamma, Saraswatamma, Manjama Balegar, Tulsabai Kini, Parvatamma Bhat and many others helped and co-operated with her in a number of ways.

In 1940-41 when she was participating in Gandhiji’s Non-Cooperation Movement, she was arrested and was kept a prisoner in Hindalaga jail, for four months. Later in 1942 she took part in Quit India Movement, and was again brought to Hindalaga jail, where cholera was claiming many victims. Then she devoted herself to the service of those victims of cholera, and was made a volunteer of hospital in the goal. Her small son was also arrested during this period and he was brought to the goal. The goaler wanted to persuade him to apologies, and get him released as he was a minor, but her son refused to apologies, and she too refuse to persuade him. The goaler was shocked at such a unmotherly behavior and her son was later transferred to some other goal. After she was released from jail, used the guidance of Sri. Nayak,
she worked for the Ankola Gramseva Samiti till 1950. She set up Sri. Ramana Nisarga Chikitsa Centre in Siddapur.42

15. GANGABAI. N. MIRJANKAR

Smt. Gangabai was fortune in that though her husband was loyal to British Government, he had been honoured with the title ‘Rao Sahab’ he had sympathized with her when she began to take interest in the national movement. In this she was mainly inspired by Shri. Shankar Gulvadi who was also related to her. She attended along with others from her town the Ahmedabad Congress Session in 1921. She footed the distance to Gokarna in 1923 to attend the Session there, and it convened at Belgaum in 1924, she would not miss it.

In Honnawar, in 1931, Satyagrahis had been lathi charged heavily. The morale of the people had been at low ebb. Smt. Gangabai with four of her female associates, walked to Honnawar at night. They violated the sec. 144 which had been clamped down on the town. She was arrested along with Smt. Ramabai. They were, however, released the same night. Smt. Gangabai invariably took part in the picketing and freedom ‘Morchas’ in her town. Smt. Gangabai used to wake up the others around 4 a.m. to get ready for the Morcha which used to be led by ‘Captain Amba’ as Smt. Ambabai Shanbhag was affectionately referred to.

The procession taken out by women in 1942 was lati-charged but Smt. Gangabai was not unnerved. Entirely ignoring her domestic chores she practically jumped into the activities of the Congress. Her husband and children had to depend on hotels for food. Her son Shankar was taken as prisoner during the 1942 movement. When he was put in Karwar jail, she occasionally went there and distributed food
among the prisoners. Smt. Umabai Kundapur and Smt. Krishnabai Panajikar founded a Women’s Forum in 1931 with a view to strengthening the national movement in the area. The forum which is still extant had sixty members to begin with. Its activity included running Sales Depots during fairs in Sirsi, Gokarna and Honnawar to popularize and promote Swadeshi sarees, bangles and Khadi.\(^{43}\)

An incident in the life of Smt. Gangabai is worth remembering. All the members of the Madgaonker family of Bilgi had been arrested for participating in the No-Tax agitation and they were being transferred to Karwar. Smt. Ganagbai pleaded with the police and took them all to hit house for a short while. She treated them all, including, of course, the police to light refreshments, and collected and kept with her all the ornaments of those going to jail. The ornaments were with her several months after the prisoners had been released. They were ultimately handed over to their rightful owners. Smt. Gangabai recalls the day when the ten or twelve Satyagrahis went smilingly with the police, with a patriotic glow in their eyes.

16. Balyatanda Muddamma

Smt. Balyatanda Muddamma had her initiation into the nationalist movement through Smt. Sita Belliappa wife of Shri. Pandyanda Belliappa. Perhaps, her first contribution to the Satyagraha movement was when she took interest in the Satyagraha camp held at Virajpet in 1930. Shri Belliappa requested her to join the others in ‘picketing’.

Smt. Muddamma later took part in the picketing at the time of the auction of arrack shops in Mercara. She and a few other women were arrested along with 40-50 men, but were released the same evening. Later, however, she was arrested for
activity in Virajpet and was sentenced to three months imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100. Consequently, Smt. Muddamma had to stay an extra month behind the bars. Prison conditions were far from being comfortable. While in Mercara jail, she was put in the same cell with many others. Only cold water was given for bath in the winter. Some of the inmates protested by refusing to touch food. They were all sent later to Cannanore jail.  

When she was released, Smt. Muddamma jumped into the national movement with renewed vigor. On a January morning in 1932 news went round that she would be arrested and all her relatives had gathered at home. A strong police guard had been posted in front of the house. She slipped away through the back door, distributed pamphlets in Teluga Street and was all but ready to address a gathering near the clock tower when she was arrested. Smt. Pandyanda Sitamma and Mukkatir Bojamma were also arrested on the same day. Smt. Muddamma was given five months sentenced and was sent to Cannanore prison.

Smt. Muddamma had to suffer a lot after her release. People loyal to the government looked down on her with contempt. Several of her relatives, would not have anything to do with her, but she did not bother. Whenever there was a camp of Satyagrahis she would, along with Smt. Pandyanda Sitamma, move from door to door and shop-to-shop collecting money and food grains.  

By 1942 the only women activist left in Virajpet was Smt. Muddamma. She picked in front of the Munsiff Court on 19-8-1942 and was arrested. Shri. Naida Belliappa was also arrested the same day. They were friend at Mercara. The Magistrate, a relative of Smt. Muddamma told her privately that he would release her if she begged forgiveness. She not only rejected to offer but said that she would
continue with her non-violent movement the moment she was released again. She was sentenced to six months imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 100/- As she did not pay the fine, she was awarded another month’s imprisonment. Taken to Vellore jail. She was given the ‘C’ class. She had a tough time there. She was not allowed even to correspond with others. Of late her services during the freedom movement were recognized when a ‘Tamra-Pata’ was presented to her.\textsuperscript{46}

17. LEELAVATI MAGADI

The contribution of the Magadis to the freedom movement in Karnataka is unique. Leelavati, the only daughter of Shri. Veeranagouda Patil by his first wife. Sundaratai inherited the graces, beauty and determination of the one and the sense of social services and sacrifice of the other. Sunderatai was born with a silver spoon in her mouth. Even while young she made others feel that she had her own mind. So, her marriage with any young rich boy who was selected by the elders could not be taken for granted either by her mother or her foster father Shri. Artal Rudragouda. When she was asked to indicate her preference she opted for an educated young man though poor, rather than uneducated rich young man. She was a young woman of determination. So the choice fell on Shri. Veeranagouda Patil.\textsuperscript{47}

From her very childhood, Leelavati breathed the air of independence and patriotism. She accompanied her father in his tour of the country. In 1927 he visited Shantiniketan. He was so much impressed by the atmosphere of the Niketan that he decided to admit there, Leelavati who was just seven years old. He asked her whether she would, and her quick and firm affirmative answer settled the matter. That is how Leelavati came to be influenced in her early children by the teaching of Ravindranath Tagore. Later she was admitted to the Kanya Maha Vidyalaya, another national
school in Jullundar. Though she spent much of her time outside, the national activities that were carried on in Karnataka were not unknown to her, both her parents being in the very thick of it. Prabhat Pheri, Picketing, boycotting the foreign goods, spinning, and the frequent visits of the police, the arrests and the release were part of her life. She usually spent her annual summer vacations in Hubli.

It is during that time, she came into contact with the young band of Congress workers like Venkatesh Magadi, Shirrang Kamat, Narasimha Dabade and others who used to frequent their house. Venkatesh Magadi was treated as good as a member of the family. She and Venkatesh Magadi decided to marry. The course of true love never did run smooth. There were objections to the marriage from different quarters for different reasons. Shri. Patil himself was not happy about it. He did not want his daughter to go in for a life of instability and suffering and deprivation. Their marriage, however, did take place on January 26, 1942 in a very simple manner befitting freedom fighter.48

On august 9, 1942 both of them plunged into the Quit India Movement. She was arrest and kept in the Hindalga jail for eleven months as a detune. After her release she was helping the underground workers.49 In freed India her services and sacrifice came to be recognized and rewarded, so to say. She worked as Deputy Minister in Jattis ministry. After the Congress split in 1969 Venkatesh Magadi decided to join the Congress (R) while Leelavati chose to remain in the Congress (O) for some time. They remind one of the Ktripalanis. She is now helping the cause of girl’s education by taking over from her father the responsibility of running the Mahila Vidya Pith.50
18. RAMABAI JEEVANRAO YALGI (1900-1966)

Ramabai Jeevanarao Yalgi was recognized both in Maharashtra and Karnataka as brave women ever engaged in mitigating the sufferings of others and an indomitable fighter in the social and political fields. Born in 1900 A.D. at Bellary, Ramabai was married to Shri Jeevanrao Yalgi of Belgaum, when she was just steeping into the teens (1913).  

She showed complete self-abnegation in responding to the wish of her husband, Shri Jeevanrao. What with the nationalist schools (Rashtriya Shala), the gymnasiums, the Melas and the Cotton spinning, the couple shared all activities, with full devotion. During the direct action politics of the Tilak days all the adults in the family were engrossed fully. Naturally a great responsibility devolved on the active women members at home. Ramabai was the main figure to keep up this spirit in the family. Soon followed the Gandhi epoch, with all its throes in full, as the resistance to the British grew grimmer and grimmer. The Yalgi women now came out into the open. The Prabhat Pheris, the sessions at Charkha, Women’s Club Organizations, welding the brooms to clean the Harijan settlements and to have common feasts with them truly secular in letter and spirit the whole panorama opened up before them. The task of educating young and old women was conducted with great tenacity. The husbands were in jails but the women neither faltered, nor would they get demoralized. 

The year 1941 witnessed the commencement of Individual Satyagraha. Gandhiji personally attended to the selection of Satyagrahis. The selection of Shri Jeevanaraao was a foregone conclusion. But the selection of Ramabai for the Satyagraha, by Gandhiji himself was a ‘striking’ event. In 1942, Ramabai was
arrested once again, but this time her compassion was her own niece Maluta. All the men folk in the family were already behind the bars by then. She was released on parole on account of her poor health.53

Eventually the agitation slowed down. But the whole family bore its scars and got plunged into a financial crisis from which there was no easy way out. But Ramabai once again showed her mettle in helping her husband, Jeevanarao. Now it was starting all over again, from scratch! Like any Hindu wife, one of her greatest wishes was to die before her husband. She did achieve it when she breathed her last on May 4, 1966.54

19. SITABAI RAMACHANDRA MADGAOKAR

Sitabai Ramachandra Madgaoner hails from a family of well known patriots. Haimappa Chandraghatgi of Siddapur, the noted freedom fighter, was her uncle. Her father-in-law, Hari Ramakrishna Madgaonkar and his brother Vaman Madgaonkar were also known for their contribution to the India freedom movement.

Sitabai’s uncle, Hariappa, joined the National School Siddapur in 1921 and she learnt there, in addition to formal education, cycling and swimming, Yoga and special works in national activities and self-reliance. For a while after her marriage she led a domestic life but it was not long before she took the inevitable plunge. With the encouragement of the elders she began to take part in the hoisting of national flag and morchas. The police would round them up, snatch away flags and books containing national songs and frighten them by keeping them in the open till 10. p.m. on many occasions. Pressure used to be brought on them to make them disclose the whereabouts of their active workers.
Sitabai’s in-law’s home was often the centers of national activity. The workers would collect there to discuss plans and methods of action. Her brother-in-law and father-in-law were both in jail. She took part in freedom morchas even when she had gone to her mother’s place for confinement. Along with other women workers, she offered to fast in front of the houses of those who had purchased in auction confiscated domestic animals. Later she decided to work in the background without getting caught. She would help the Satyagrahis, give them refuge in her place and visit them when they were in jail. The police harassed her and the other members of the family continuously. When one of her aunts died all her relatives were in jail. Her house was often subjected to police search and whatever was available used to be confiscated. The government even decided to take under its custody all the houses of the Satyagrahis. They could not even celebrate festivals like the Ganesha festival properly as only womenfolk were left at home. Even her brothers were behind the bars.55

When Sitabai Madgaonkar attended the Taluka Political Conference at Bonagiri, she was arrested along with the President and Vice-President of the conference and several others. After some twenty days of being pushed about from place to place, she was sentenced to 9 month’s imprisonment. As there was no other women-Satyagrahi in the Karwar jail she had to remain along with her four month old child in a separate cell. When a couple of others joined her, they were all taken to Hindalaga. Smt. Sitabai Madgaonkar was sent to Yarvada where she was ultimately released. One of the inmates here was one Shantamma from Ankola who had been put in prison without any court order to that effect. They had to work from 9 a.m. till 4 a.m. Smt. Madgaonkar did, in addition to the work allotted to her, even other people’s work, if they were weak or were not trained in that kind of work. Smt. Sarojini Naidu,
who was in the A class, often came to talk to the others and help look after the small children. When Smt. Madgaonkar was released, she felt bad for the older women who were left behind, for they were being treated by the authorities with no sympathy. 56

20. DEVAMMA HARIJAN

Devamma Harijan was a plantation laborer. She had no work to do as a large number of her employers have gone to jail, and agricultural work remained almost suspended. Her husband too was sick, and she had no means to earn her live hood. One fine morning she went in search of some fruits and tubers, and she climbed up a Banian tree to pluck tubers of “marakesu” (Arum Colocasia grown on trees) not far away from the dilapidated house of Nagesh Hegde. 57

The sun was rising and his rays were falling right below the tree. From the branch of tree she saw something shining on the edge of the mound under the tree. She was astonished, and she climbed down. To her great astonishment, she found one copper casket hidden on the edge of the small earthen mound. She scratched the earth, and she found to her great surprise that there were three such caskets, all locked. In fact, those caskets had been hidden there under earth by one brother of Nagesh Hegade, Subraya who was the last among the members of the family to court arrest. Heavy rains had washed off the earth covering the caskets, and now they were invisible. Devamma could imagine the whole story.

The police had somehow scented the fact that the valuables have been somewhere hidden. The whole area round the residence of Hegdes had been combed and ransacked. All servants and laborers in the neighborhood including Devamma had
been severely threatened by them, to get information in the matter. Devamma did not open her mouth even under threats to her life.58

Subraya was released first from jail. Though he was the last to court arrest. Other members of the family were still behind the bars. He came to the spot where he had hidden the caskets. They had vanished he was dismayed and shocked. His family had lost their plantations, lands, and their home and finally the jewels and valuables on which they had to depend in further.59

All members of the family were released. But they could not return to Kelaginamane. Their lands there had been confiscated, and even their house had dilapidated. They, like many such families, left their district itself and settled down at Dombe in Sagar Taluk, leagues away from their original home. Mad Sbraya, during his daily aimless rovings, once happened to come to Kelaginamane and he was surprised at old Devamma beckoning him from a distance. The grateful Hegdes offered some jewels to her in return for her great service. “No” was her reply. “Save my soul from temptation. Keep my hands unsullied. My inner soul cannot stand the idea of reward”, said the indomitable Devamma.60

Such was Devamma, an unlettered Harijan woman, such was her self-denying dignity, and such is her contribution to the march of the mass struggle of Satyagraha. When she was asked later why she did not look upon the treasure as God given compensation to her loss of work or the loss of her husband, “she abhorred with horror such illusion to harbor”. The state Government honoured her publicly at Siddapur and presented her a cheque. Such refused to receive the cheque as she felt that her deeds deserved no such return. Devamma died in 1966.
21. SUGUNA KARNAD DESAI:

Suguna Karnad Desai from South Kanara rejected all foreign edible goods felt very happy to wear Swadeshi clothes by all at home. This introduced a sense of patriotism.

All these women freedom fighters in one way or the other participated wholeheartedly and with great courage in the freedom struggle in the State. Especially in organizing women volunteers, in distributing pamphlets and in doing commendable social service for the cause of the national movement. They also participated in individual Satyagraha, salt Satyagraha and No Tax Campaign. These women freedom fighters along with men fought for socio-economic values and to popularize democratic ideas. They struggled for the introduction of representative Government and also for the economic development of India and above all for the freedom of their motherland. The contribution made by all the women freedom fighters towards the freedom movement is remarkable.
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