



DISSERTATION

THE BATTICALOA DISTRICT UNDER BRITISH
ADMINISTRATION

A.D.1796- 1948

Submitted by

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Abstract

Sri Lanka has been under western colonial administration since the 16th century. Chronologically speaking first came the Portuguese, then the Dutch and the British subsequently took hold of the administration. British brought the entire island under their supreme authority and administered for around 133 years. Batticaloa is situated in the eastern coastal area and was governed for a long period of time by the British.

The objective of thesis is to conceptualize the reliable history of the administration, the supreme influence and the phenomenal progress in Batticaloa during the era of British administration. The area has not been previously subjected to a detailed historical study. Therefore an extensive research has been conducted. Our main concern is to construct the multifaceted history of Batticaloa with information chiefly from archival records and statistical information found in the reports published by government departments.

The sources of study are statistical data and records of the British government in Sri Lanka, literary records, field work, interviews and also archaeological evidence. They are mostly archival records and government publications, which have been collected and preserved at the National Archives, the Colombo Museum Library and other institutions.

The study is undertaken according to the principles of historical methodology and in competent guidance and in conformity with the principles of rational investigations and analytical examination of the source material.

Chapter divisions are 1)General Introduction, 2)History of Batticaloa in the pre-British period, 3)Continuity of Administration, 4)The Responsibility of Native Chiefs under British Administration 5)The Beginnings of Modern Education, 6)The Development of Transport and Communication Infrastructure 7)Agriculture and other Economic Activities, 8)Courts, Laws and Customs, 9)Conclusion.

In conclusion it may be stated that the British Administration established enterprising activities for the development of Batticaloa and was extraordinarily successful in the transformation and modernization of this area. Batticaloa had a cultural heritage which is unique in some ways.

Keywords: British administration, Archival records, Colonial occupation, Modernization, Historical study