

## **1.2. Haidar Ali, Tipu Sultan and the Mysore Wars.**

### **RISE OF Haidar Ali and the Mysore Wars.**

On the death of Aurangzib in 1707 A.D., rapid disintegration set in throughout the Mughal dominions. Daud Khan, who was left in command of the Carnatic provinces, followed northwards shortly after, nominating as his deputy Sadat-ulla Khan.

The territory directly under Sadat-ulla Khan comprised Carnatic Haidarabad, Payinghat and Carnatic Bijapur which by this time came to be known as the provinces of Arcot and Sira respectively. Meanwhile, in Mysore, Chikka Deva Raja had been succeeded by his son, a deaf-mute, and henceforward that State was ruled by its ministers, in the names of puppet Rajas.

Sadat-ulla Khan at first enjoyed, under the suzerainty of the Nizam, the undivided control of the two Carnatics, but after four years his jurisdiction was restricted to the province of Arcot, and a new Nawab, Amin Khan, was appointed for Sira. Sadat-ulla Khan resented the removal of the rich State of Mysore from his jurisdiction, and formed a conspiracy with the Nawabs of Cuddapah, Kurnool, Savanur and the Maratha chief Morari Rao Ghorpade of Gooty to seize it. The new Nawab, Amin Khan, compromised by suggesting joint action against the Raja of Mysore.

Meanwhile, one Abdul Nabi Khan, the Pathan Nawab of Cuddapah, theoretically a subordinate of the officer holding the joint command of the Carnatics, absorbed four of the five Circars of the Carnatic Haidarabad. Before, however, Nizam-ul-mulk, the first Nizam of Haiderabad had consolidated his power, Abdul Nabi Khan had become practically independent. He extended his possessions southward along the back of the Eastern Ghats, nearly to the Kaveri, and by 1714 A.D., he had made himself master of the Baramahal.

After the death of Nizam-ul-mulk in the year 1748, a war of succession followed, in which the French and English took sides and for the first time came into political prominence. Nanja Raj, Chief Minister of Mysore State, tried to get the cession of Trichinopoly from Muhammed Ali, Nawab of Arcot, and then intrigued with the French. His share in the war cost him money, but brought him no gain. It was in this war that an obscure adventurer, Haidar Ali, became the most powerful subject in the service of Mysore.

On January 22, 1760, the French had been vanquished by the British forces at Wandiwash. The French General Lally, as a last resort, applied to Haidar for help. Haidar thereon sent his brother-in-law, Makhdum Ali, to Pondicherry to negotiate. The treaty was to stipulate the cession to Mysore of Tiyyaga, a fort which commanded the Attur Pass. At the conclusion of the war, Trichinopoly, Madura, and Tinnevely were to be ceded to Haidar. Makhdum Ali proceeded to Pondicherry before the end of June and ratified the treaty. He was recalled with all his forces by the urgent necessity of Haidar. The conspiracy of Khande Rao with the puppet Raja and the Marathas had all but terminated his career. Makhdum Ali, after hard fighting, got as far as Kelamangalam and occupied Anchetti-durgam. Here he was closely blockaded, and every attempt of Haidar's force at Anekal to effect a junction failed. Haidar then resorted to the expedient of bribing the Marathas to desert Khande Rao. The bribe succeeded. Three lakhs were paid and Baramahal was ceded. Haidar joined his

brother-in-law, defeated Khande Rao and assumed the supreme control of Mysore affairs. In the year 1761, Marathas perished in the Third Battle of Panipat fighting against Afghan Abdali. In the same year, Haidar Ali, emboldened by the catastrophe at Panipat, usurped the Government of Mysore.

### **FIRST MYSORE WAR, 1767-1769:-**

Haidar Ali, in alliance with Basalat Jang (brother of then Haidarabad Nizam), drove the Marathas out of Sira and created Nawab of Sira and bestowed title on Basalat Jung. The seizure of Sira by Haidar was an insult to the Marathas which brought speedy retribution. In 1764, the Peshwa himself invaded Mysore; by June, Haidar had sustained a crushing defeat and in February of the following year he bought off the Marathas with an indemnity of 32 lakhs. In 1766, the pageant Raja died. His son, a youth of 18 years, was set on the throne by Haidar. The young prince chafed against Haidar's authority. Haidar confiscated all his property, and placed him in confinement. This act determined the Marathas and Nizam Ali and precipitated the First Mysore War.

The War of 1767-69 was a sequel to the treaty of November 12, 1766, between the Company and Nizam Ali. In pursuance of their undertaking, plans for a joint invasion of Haidar's territory were agreed to by the Marathas, the Nizam and the English.

The Marathas moved first, and early in March 1767, before their allies could join them, they had overrun the Mysore dominions as far as the Baramahal, brought Haidar to his knees, and agreed to withdraw from the war on the payment of 17 1/2 lakhs cash down, and the pledge of Kolar District as security for the payment of a like sum in addition. The balance was paid early in May, and on the 11<sup>th</sup> of that month the Marathas finally moved northwards.

Meanwhile the army of the Nizam had, by March 9<sup>th</sup> reached the Tungabhadra and was joined by Colonel Joseph Smith, with six battalions of infantry and some guns. On March 24<sup>th</sup> the allies learned that the Marathas had been bribed to withdraw. Colonel Smith soon discovered that Haidar was making overtures to the Nizam also which the latter was prepared to accept. He accordingly withdrew part of his force, but the Madras Government insisted on three battalions remaining in the Nizam's camp. This force was soon afterwards suffered by the Nizam to depart with a few days of the actual outbreak of hostilities and the British.

While the Nizam's army was approaching Bangalore from the north, a respectable force of 3000 foot, 500 of whom were British, was despatched from Madras with the object of seizing the Baramahal. The mud forts of Vaniyambadi, Tiruppattur and Kaveripatnam fell without serious opposition, and on June 3<sup>rd</sup> an unsuccessful attempt was made to storm Krishnagiri. The siege was then converted into a blockade, the prosecution of which absorbed the energies of the whole force, and precluded further active operations.

On his return from the Nizam's camp near Bangalore, Colonel Smith was directed to assume general command of the British troops in the Baramahal. In the latter part of August the combined armies of Haidar and Nizam Ali descended the Krishnagiri Passes and on the 25<sup>th</sup>, the transport cattle in the vicinity of the British camp near Kakankarai were surprised and driven off. Smith's cavalry hastily moved out for their recovery and were unexpectedly assailed by very superior numbers under Makhdum Ali, who charged them into the very lines of

encampment after destroying about one-third of their number and carried off the greater part of the cattle.

The same evening Haidar appeared before Kaveripatnam and delivered two assaults on the three companies held by Captain McKain which were repulsed. But Captain McKain finding the place untenable, capitulated on August 27<sup>th</sup>.

By this time Colonel Wood was advancing with reinforcement from Trichinopoly towards Tiruvannamali and it became a matter of vital moment that Colonel Smith should join him. Smith, crippled by the loss of cattle on the 25<sup>th</sup>, was unable to move till the 28<sup>th</sup>. He fell back eastward, reaching Singarapet on the 30<sup>th</sup>, Pallipatti on the 31<sup>st</sup> and Chengam on September 1<sup>st</sup>. Haidar followed close on his heels.

It was lucky for the British that Haidar did not forestall them and seize the Chengam pass. On September 2<sup>nd</sup> Smith turned to bay at Chengam and won a victory. Smith then proceeded to Tiruvannamalai. There on the 26<sup>th</sup> he brought on a pitched battle with Haidar and won a decisive victory. The Nizam and his army bolted, 55 field pieces were taken and Haidar was compelled to retire into Baramahal. Colonel Smith proceeded to Madras in the hope of effecting some improvement in the departments of supply.

Haidar, led by the continued inactivity of the British, resumed the offensive, recaptured Tiruppattur on the 5<sup>th</sup> and Vaniyambadi on the 7<sup>th</sup> and appeared before Ambur on the 10<sup>th</sup>. Vaniyambadi was surrendered by Captain Robinson, on parole not to serve again during the war, a promise which he subsequently broke.

Captain Calvert's spirited defence of Ambur was ended on December 7<sup>th</sup> by the appearance of Colonel Smith with a detachment from Vellore. On the following day, Smith came in touch with Haidar at Vaniyambadi. Haidar fought a rear-guard action, retiring as soon as his retreat was secured, and abandoning Vaniyambadi.

Haidar attacked the united forces in person on December 29<sup>th</sup>, with a force of 4000 horse, 2000 foot and 5 guns and was badly beaten. Immediately after this, Haidar followed his main army up the Ghats, leaving Makhдум Sahib with a strong force, mainly cavalry, to watch the British, and act on, their supplies. At the same moment the British army was compelled to fall back eastward on its communications, to save itself from starvation.

The Government wished to invade the Balaghat and strike directly at Bangalore and Seringapatnam. The army was formed into two columns, one headed by Colonel Smith to invade the Balaghat and another headed by Colonel Wood to reduce the lowland forts in detail. On February 23d Colonel Smith appeared before Kaveripatnam, which was promptly abandoned. He then received orders to proceed to the camp of the Nizam at Punganur. The Nizam had made overtures of peace to Colonel Smith as early as December 1767. A treaty was concluded between the Nizam and the Nawab on February 23<sup>rd</sup> which was signed by the members of the Council on the 26<sup>th</sup>. Shortly afterwards Smith returned to the Baramahal and undertook the blockade of Krishnagiri which did not surrender till May 2nd.

On June 8<sup>th</sup> an advanced detachment of the British army under Colonel Donald Campbell, moved from Krishnagiri and ascended the pass of Budikota; on the 10<sup>th</sup> Venkatagirikota occupied and the direct road to Vellore via Peddanayakan durgam secured.

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> Mulbagal was taken, on the 28<sup>th</sup> Kolar. Meanwhile, Colonel Smith had ascended the Budikota Ghat with the main army and arrived at Araleri, where he directed Colonel Campbell to rejoin him. On July 3<sup>rd</sup> the united forces moved via Bagalur for the siege of Hosur, which fell on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The Bagalur Poligar, a feudatory of Haidar, prudently abstained from hostilities with the English, at the same time representing to Haidar his inability to resist and the necessity of temporizing until he had a better opportunity of evincing his allegiance.

Shortly after the fall of Hosur, a detachment under Colonel Cosby seized Anekal and Denkaikota. Smith then moved to Koskote. On that very day Haidar re-entered Bangalore.

Colonel Wood, had begun his task of reducing the lowland forts with the siege of Tenkaraikottai, which capitulated on the eve of assault on February 12<sup>th</sup>. Dharmapuri was carried by assault. The slaughter of the defenders was so severe that only one other garrison (that of Erode) dare face Wood's storming party. The forts of Salem, Attur, Sendamangalam and Namakkal surrendered without a blow. Wood then crossed the Kaveri, secured the plateau and penetrated to Palghat. He then received orders to join Smith in Mysore. Marching via the Toppur Pass, he reached Krishnagiri on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Haidar, carefully concealing his movements, had taken up such a position at a bend of the defile up which Wood must march, that he could enfilade the advancing troops from chosen position and taking advantage of the ensuing confusion, annihilate the British force. As Smith advanced, he received early intelligence of the movements of Wood and Haidar, and realised that the latter could be trapped. He sent messengers to apprise Colonel Wood of his intentions. On reaching the corner of the defile, Smith and Haidar were startled by a regular salute which Colonel Wood thought proper, in honour of Colonel Smith. The warning was enough, Haidar withdrew and Smith and Wood joined their forces without opposition, but the chance of dealing the enemy a severe blow was lost. Haidar now offered the cession of the Baramahal and an indemnity of ten lakhs, as the price of peace. The terms were rejected. The Government were soon to repent their rashness in rejecting these proposals.

The British army next moved on Kolar. Meanwhile Haidar recovered Mulbagal. On October 3<sup>rd</sup> Wood retook the Peta and failed at the Fort. On the following day Wood was attacked in force by Haidar, and barely escaped defeat.

On November 14<sup>th</sup> Smith set out from Kolar towards Venkatagiri kota with Muhammad Ali and two Deputies, with whom Government had thought fit to hamper the discretion of their Commander-in-Chief. On the first day's march of the Nawab's party, news was received that Haidar was attacking Hosur.

On November 16<sup>th</sup> Wood marched to the relief of Hosur. On the 17<sup>th</sup> he reached Bagalur and deposited there his baggage, camp equipage and surplus stores, with two brass 18-pounders, as a preliminary to a night attack on Haidar's camp. Wood started from Bagalur at 10 P.M. and reached Hosur at 7 A.M. on the morning of 18<sup>th</sup>. Haidar allowed him to enter the fort unmolested. It was not till 2 P.M. that the sound of firing to the north, convinced Colonel Wood of the situation. He hastily retraced his steps to Bagalur, but arrived too late. Haidar, without attempting an attack on the Fort, had entered the Peta, packed nearly the whole of the stores and baggage of the British army on his carts, tumbrils and gun-carriages and marched them off to Bangalore with the two 18-pounders. By the time Wood reached Bagalur

nearly the whole of Haider's army was out of sight. An awful panic in the Peta had resulted in the loss of over 2000 human lives and as many bullocks.

On November 20<sup>th</sup> Wood returned to Hosur and gave the garrison what ammunition and stores he could spare. On the 21<sup>st</sup> he marched via Bagalur to Araleri, where he was attacked in force by Haider on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> and was only saved from annihilation by the arrival of Major Fitzgerald.

### **Haider invades the Carnatic and ends the First War:**

As soon as Haider discovered that Smith was no longer in the field against him, he threw to the wind all anxiety for the safety of Bangalore. On December 6<sup>th</sup> Haider himself marched into the Baramahal via Palakodu and debouched on the Talaghat through the Toppur Pass. Four days later, Major Fitzgerald started in pursuit with a select force of 5000 men but he could not come up with Haider. Within six weeks Haider had won back every post that had been taken from him except Krishnagiri, Venkittagirikota and Kolar. He dictated peace on his own terms. A treaty was signed on April 3, 1769 stipulating the mutual restitution of prisoners and places and a mutual defensive alliance.

### **SECOND WAR OF MYSORE.**

The Second Mysore War is a tedious record of disaster from the British point of view. The Marathas attacked Mysore in 1771. But the British refused to honour the treaty of Madras and did not give support to Haider Ali. As a result, Haider Ali's territories were taken by Marathas. He had to buy peace with Marathas for a sum of Rs.36 lakh and another annual tribute. This angered Haider Ali who hated the British. When the French attacked Mahe, a French possession under Haider Ali's dominion, he declared war on the English in 1780.

Haider Ali forged an alliance with the Nizam and the Marathas and defeated the British forces in Arcot. Haider Ali died in 1782 and the war was continued by his son Tipu Sultan. Sir Eyre Coote, ended the war inconclusively with The Treaty of Mangalore. The Treaty was signed on March 11 1784 and under it the status quo ante was restored. The Company was not in position to claim a foot on Salem soil.

### **THIRD WAR OF MYSORE**

At the end of December 1789, Tipu Sultan, son of Haider Ali, attacked the Travancore Lines and was beaten off. In April 1790, he carried them by storm. This began the Third Mysore War. The English formed an alliance with the Marathas and Nizam to curb Tipu's aggressiveness.

The first stage of the War was mostly confined to operations in Coimbatore and Salem. General Medows left Trichinopoly on May 26<sup>th</sup> seized Karur on June 15<sup>th</sup> and proceeded to reduce the fortresses scattered over Coimbatore in detail. Coimbatore itself was occupied without resistance on July 21<sup>st</sup>. Erode fell on August 6<sup>th</sup>, and Dindigul on August 23<sup>rd</sup>. A force was sent against Palghat and another against a body of 4000 horse which Tipu had posted in the country for observation. This force was driven up the Gajalhatti Pass and Satyamangalam was surprised and taken. But these operations had split Medows Army into three divisions be-

tween Palghat, Coimbatore and Satyamangalam. Tipu, hitherto inactive, now began to move. On the second September at the head of 40000 men he left Seringapatnam, passed south through the Gajalhatti Pass (September 11) and crossed the Bhavani river (September 12<sup>th</sup>). The moves and counter moves of the next few days compelled Medows to return from the line of the Bhavani to Coimbatore.

Meanwhile, Tipu marched on Erode and by this move he recovered several of the places taken and inflicted several minor reverses on the British arms. A second English force, 9500 strong had concentrated at Arni under Colonel Kelly. On September 24<sup>th</sup> the officer died and the command devolved on Colonel Maxwell. Exactly a month later, on October 24<sup>th</sup> Maxwell entered Tipu's territory near Vaniambadi and on November 1<sup>st</sup> he approached Krishnagiri. He fixed his head-quarters at Kaveripatnam.

As soon as Tipu heard of Maxwell's advance, he started post-haste for the Baramahal. By November 9<sup>th</sup> Tipu's light cavalry reached Kaveripatnam. On the 12<sup>th</sup> Tipu appeared in full force and attempted to find the means of attacking Maxwell with advantage. But the strong position assumed by the officer, his admirable dispositions and his promptitude in anticipating every design, frustrated these intentions and the Sultan drew off. The same manoeuvres were repeated on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile Medows had started in pursuit of Tipu. He crossed the Kaveri on November 8<sup>th</sup>. On the 14<sup>th</sup> he encamped at the south extremity of the Pass of Toppur. On the following day he cleared the Pass and reached a camping ground at the northern extremity, about 29 miles from Kaveripatnam. Here a camp was espied six miles away. Thinking it was Maxwell's, the English fired three signal guns. In five minutes, every tent in the supposed English camp was struck.

Medows now realised that he was in sight of Tipu's army. He did not give pursuit as his junction with Maxwell was more important, which was effected on the 17<sup>th</sup> at Pulahalli, 12 miles south of Kaveripatnam, Tipu now decided to double back through the Toppur pass and try his fortune in the Carnatic. On the 18<sup>th</sup> both armies were in motion, both pointing to the Pass of Toppur. Tipu's columns had entered the pass by the time the main body of the English army arrived on the camping ground. Medows let the chance slip. Tipu's army cleared the Pass with the exception of three infantry battalions in the rear of the main column, which retreated in the opposite direction. Tipu held on without halting for Trichinopoly and Medow's campaign was rendered abortive.

After arrival of Lord Cornwallis in Madras on December 12<sup>th</sup>, English had a definite objective, namely Seringapatnam. The Governor-General concentrated at Vellore on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Tipu doubled back from the Carnatic via Chengam and Palakodu. Cornwallis had feigned the invasion of the Baramahal. On the 28<sup>th</sup> Kolar fell. Bangalore was stormed on March 21<sup>st</sup> and on May 4<sup>th</sup> Cornwallis started for Seringapatnam but returned to Bangalore due to setting of rains. By July he began a series of operations for the reduction of Tipu's outlying forts. Hosur, Anchetti-durgam, Nilagiri, Ratnagiri were taken without resistance. Under Major Gowdie Rayakota lower fort was stormed on July 20<sup>th</sup> and the upper fort surrendered two days later. At the same time Hudedurgam and other small hillorts capitulated. Garrisons were placed in Rayakota, Anchetidurgam and Hudedurgam. The other places were dismantled. In September the British directed their efforts to reducing the country north of Bangalore.

In October 1791, a diversion was caused in the Baramahal by one Bakir Sahib, son of venerable Killedar of Dharwar. He descended with a force into Coimbatore and entered Ba-

ramahal by the Toppur Pass. Colonel Maxwell was despatched against him. The plunderers had ensconced themselves and their captives in the fort of Pennagaram. Colonel Maxwell appeared before the fort on October 31<sup>st</sup> and called on the garrison to surrender. In reply the flag of truce was fired upon. Of the garrison two hundred men were killed. Bakir Sahib soon found the Baramahal untenable and retired via Chengam to Coromandel.

Maxwell now proceeded to Krishnagiri and seized the Peta by surprise on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Soon afterwards Maxwell rejoined the main army and was again preparing for the march on Seringapatnam. Tipu was brought to his knees before the end of February and a peace was ratified on March 19<sup>th</sup> which stripped Tipu of half his dominions and crippled him with a fine of over thirty million rupees. By this Treaty, the whole of Salem District except Hosur Taluk came under the Company's rule.

#### **FOURTH WAR OF MYSORE, 1799**

In the last Mysore War, Tipu's whole force did not exceed 33000 foot and 15000 horse. His territory was invaded from Coorg by General Stuart with 6400 men, from the Baramahal by General Harris with a well equipped army of nearly 30000. Colonel Read, the first Collector of Salem, secured abundant supplies for the advancing troops. On the 28<sup>th</sup> February 1799, this army encamped at Karimangalam. Thence it proceeded via Palakodu and to Rayakota, where it encamped on March 4<sup>th</sup>. Hostilities began on the 5<sup>th</sup>, when a detachment under Major John Cuppage occupied without resistance the small hill forts of Nilagiri and Anchettidurgam. Hudedurg surrendered to Lt. Col. Oliver on the 7<sup>th</sup> and Ratnagiri was occupied after slight resistance on the 8<sup>th</sup>. Meanwhile on the 7<sup>th</sup> General Harris had established his head-quarters at Kelamangalam and by the 9<sup>th</sup> his whole army was collected there.

At this moment, Tipu was at Maddur. A party of 1500 horse had been detached to Hosur, to watch the movements of the army and to burn forage. It was the policy of General Harris to keep him in the dark, as long as possible, as to the route by which he would advance to Seringapatnam. Three alternative routes were offered. The Anekal Kankanhalli route was determined on by the General Harris after careful deliberation, the idea being taken to deceive Tipu into a belief that Bangalore was his first objective.

Lord Harris moved from Kelamangalam on March 10<sup>th</sup>. The Sultan's horse harassed the advancing columns at first and succeeded, near the village of Gulisandiram, in cutting up a light company of the rear-guard of the Nizam's contingent. The army camped at Kalugondapalli, on the present Hosur-Tali Road, for the night. The march was resumed on the 12<sup>th</sup>. On the 27<sup>th</sup> Tipu was defeated at Malavalli and on May 4<sup>th</sup> Seringapatnam was stormed and the Sultan slain.

On November 5, 1799, a general redistribution of garrison and detachments throughout the Presidency was effected under the orders of Lord Clive, then Governor.

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Source: Gazetteer of Salem District, 1918.