# KOLKATA – The City Of Joy

Submitted By:
Moksha Bhatia
M.Arch (Urban Design)
1st - Semester

# Introduction

**Etymology :**

~ Calcutta, ( Bengali Kalikata and colloquially Kolkata ) – Kali (Goddess Kali of Kalighat) , and kota – (her abode).

**Location :**

- Kolkata is located in the eastern part of India.

- It has spread linearly along the banks of Hoogly River.

- The city is near sea level, with the average elevation being 17 feet.

- Most of the city was originally marshy wetlands, remnants of which can still be found especially towards the eastern parts of the city.



*Map of India – showing position of Kolkata*

*Map of Kolkata with Hoogly River*

- The capital city of West Bengal, India

- Was the former capital (1772 -1912) of British India.

- This river port is the most important urban center of eastern India.

- The city, nicknamed the "City of Joy" is widely regarded as the "cultural capital" of India and as of 2019, 6 Nobel Laureates have been associated with the city.

- Kolkata was the first Indian city to get a metro network in the country.

- The grand old city still operates the tram, and you can actually go from one place to another in it.

# Historical Context



- Kolkata evolved  more than 300 years ago when the British East India Company came to Bengal for exploring the business opportunities in the region.

- Kolkata  region was thought to have potential as early as the Mughal period.

- The first historic mention of Calcutta is found in the Ain-i-Akbari in 1596.

- However, the credit of its establishment goes to Job Charnock who haulted at Sutanati on august 24, 1690.

- It is believed that he was already looking for a suitable site to establish a trading port for the east India company.
- This was to invoke a 50 year old concession granted by the emperor Shahjahen.
- In 1640, Gabriel Boughton,an english surgeon effected a royal cure for which the fees asked for and granted was the mughal emperor shahjehan's concession of free trade in Bengal

- The permission was granted to the East India company to purchase 3 villages of Sutanati, Kalikata and Govindapur in the immediate neighbourhood of the fort.
- The purchase price in 1690 was Rs. 1300.
- It was in 1690 that Job Charnock realized the potentials of this regions
- He Laid the foundations of British Calcutta on the site of the 3 villages on the eastern banks of the Hoogly river.
- Calcutta grew around the villages of Kalikata, Sutanati, Govindapur and Chitpore on the east bank.
- On the south fringe was Sunderbans, the world's largest estuarine forests.
- Eastwards extended the salt lake – the draining board of Calcutta.
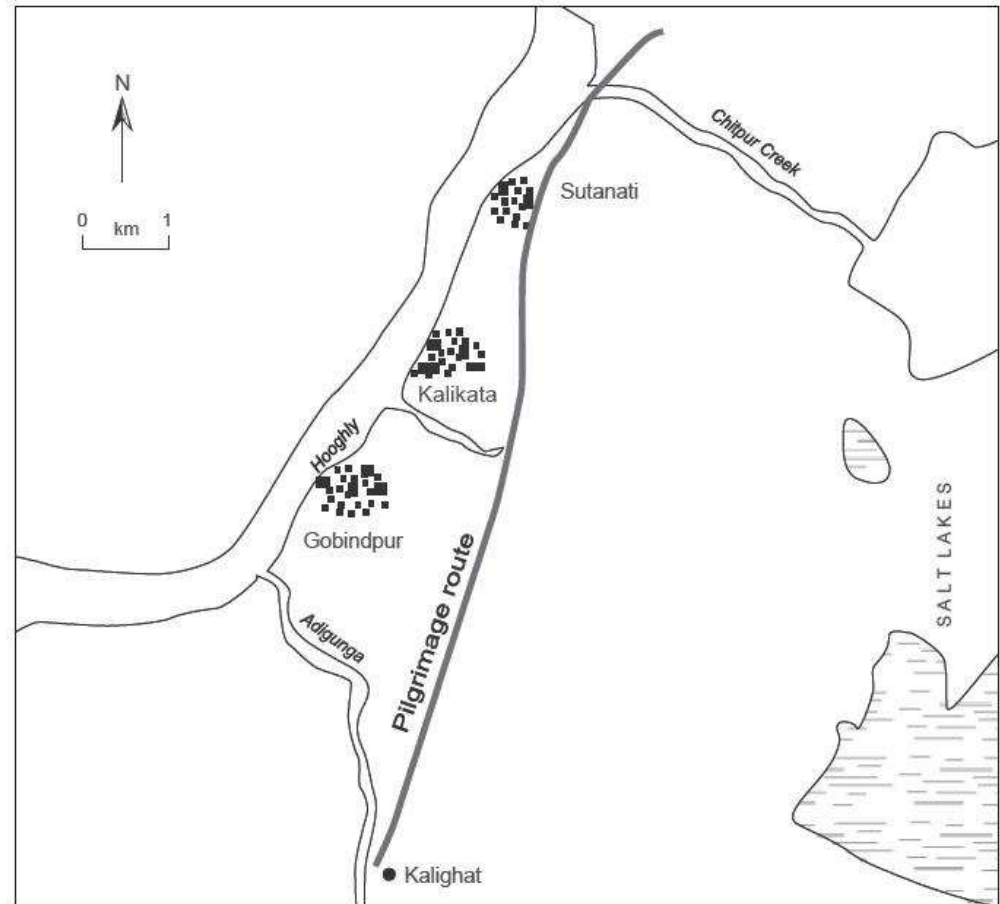
*Map showing 3 villages – Sutanati, Kalikata and Govindapur*

# Historical Context – Time Period



Calcutta
1690–1757
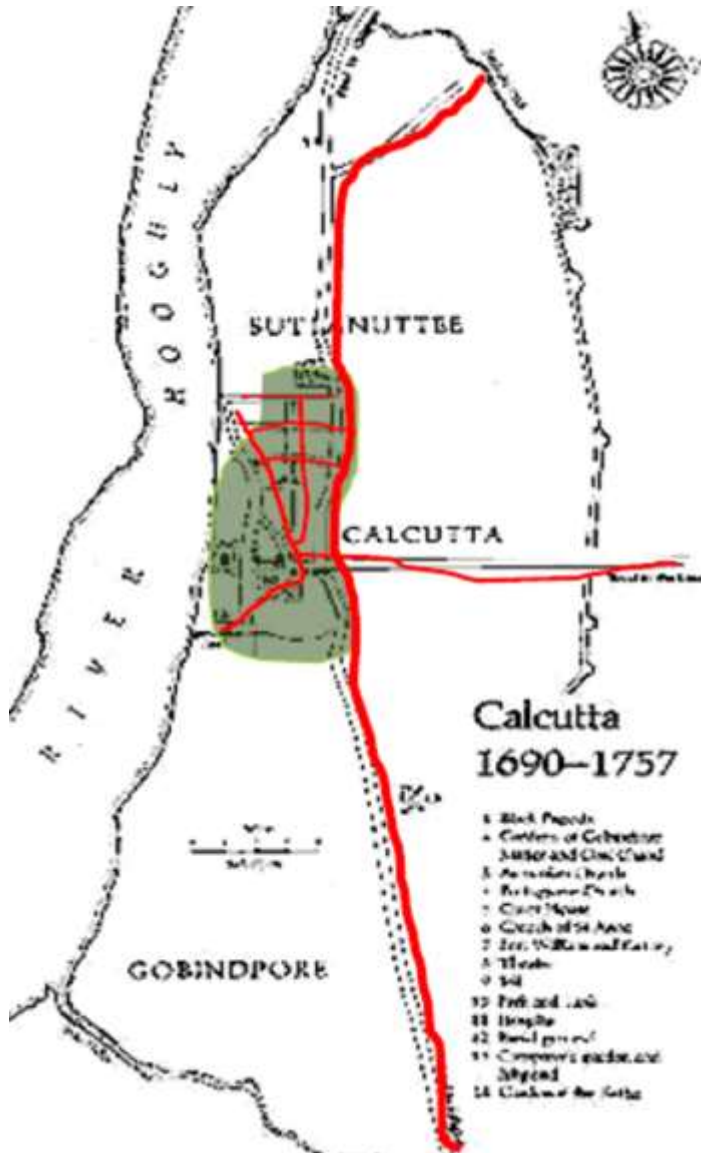
## 1690

- 3 small villages  Sutauti Gobindapur and Kalikata, flanked the banks of river Hoogly when <u>Job Charnock arrived with the proposal of trade with the British East India Company in the Mughal Courts.</u>
- 3 villages <u>were purchased in 1690</u>.
- This was  in the <u>early days of the East India's mercantile adventures.</u>
- Port facility served as an easy way to import finished goods and export raw materials, since the <u>main purpose of the British in coming to India was to expand international trading opportunities</u>.
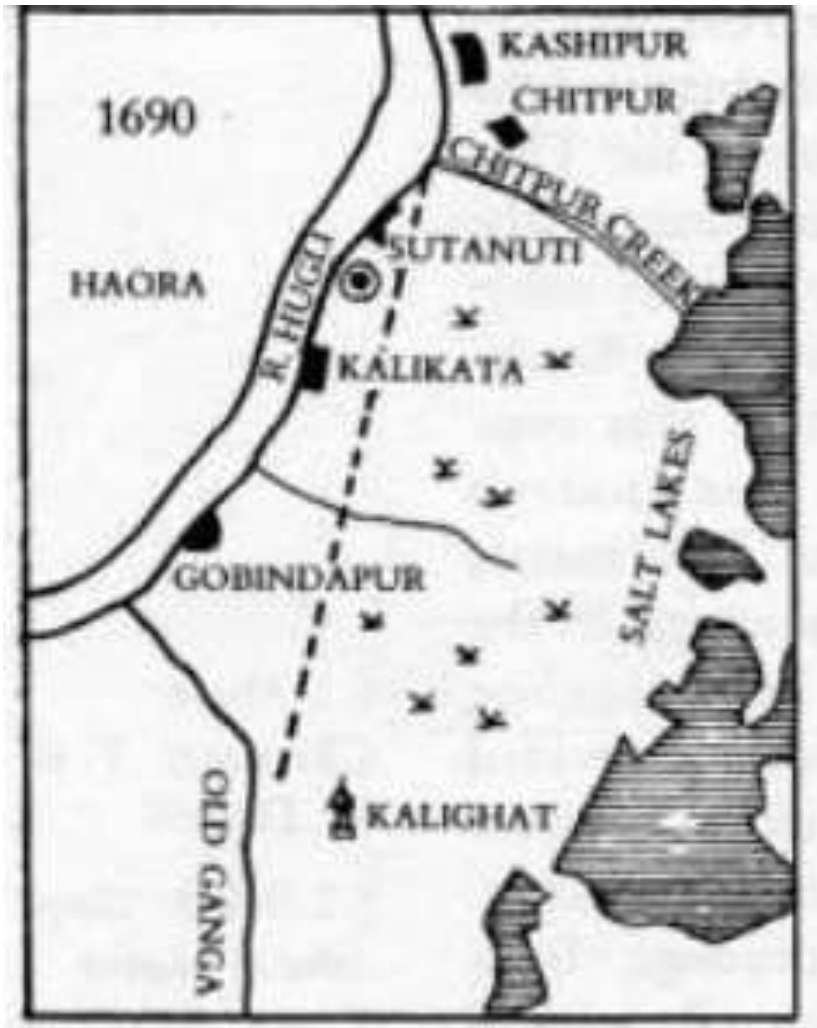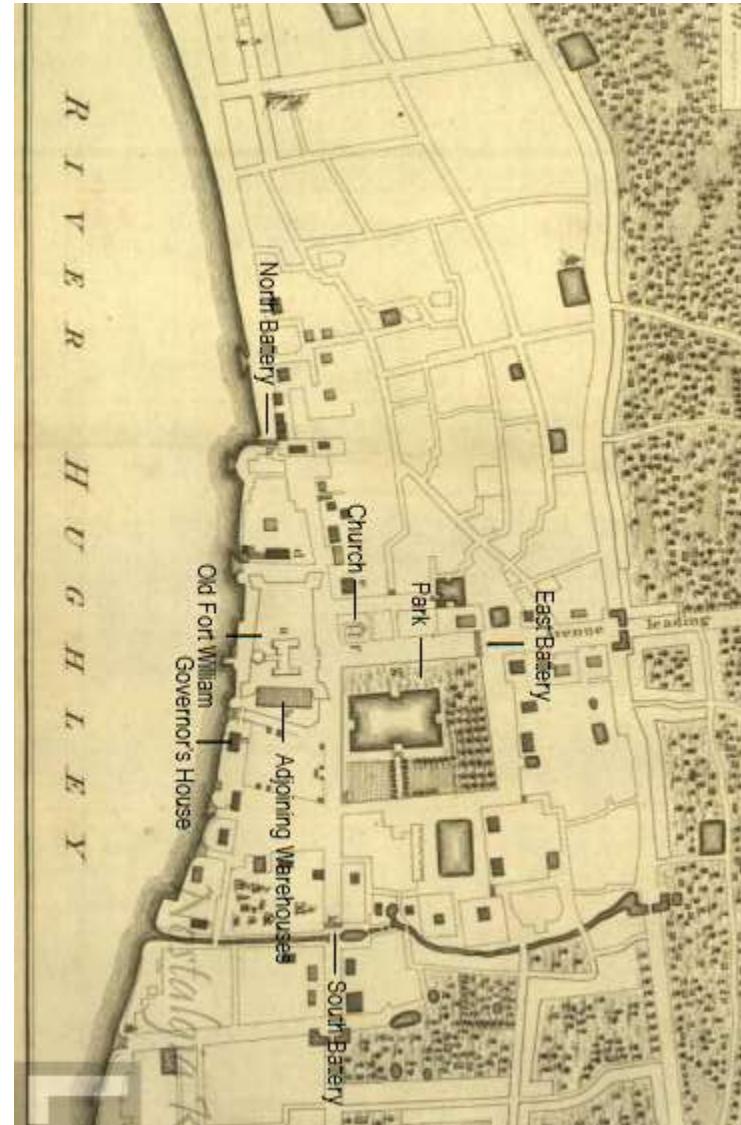
- During This Time The Villages Were Connected By A Route From Chitpur In The North To The Kalighat Temple, That Was Built In The 15" Century, In The South.

- The English Bought Gobindapur, Kalikata And Sutanuti Villages To Establish Their Settlement

It seems the pattern of Calcutta's development was chaotic from the inception of the city. Planned settlement was not a priority for either the foreign traders or their native associates and beneficiaries: they viewed the city solely as a place for commercial gain by the quickest means.

- The original <u>Fort  was built in the year 1696</u> by the British East India Company <u>under the orders of Sir John Goldsborough</u>

- Fort William was started in 1696 out of <u>brick duct, lime, molasses and cut hemp</u>.
- In 1702 construction was completed.
- Fort William was <u>established to protect the East India Company's trade </u>in the city of Calcutta





*Fort William along River Hoogly*

1756

CHITPUR
R. HUGLI
BAG BAZAR
SUTANUTI
OLD FORT WILLIAM
BARABAZAR
LAL DIGHI
COMPANY'S HOUSE
MARATHA DITCH
SALT LAKES
CHANDPAL GHAT
KALIGHAT

1. ARMENIAN CHURCH
2. PORTUGUESE CHURCH
3. ST ANNE'S CHURCH
4. COURT HOUSE
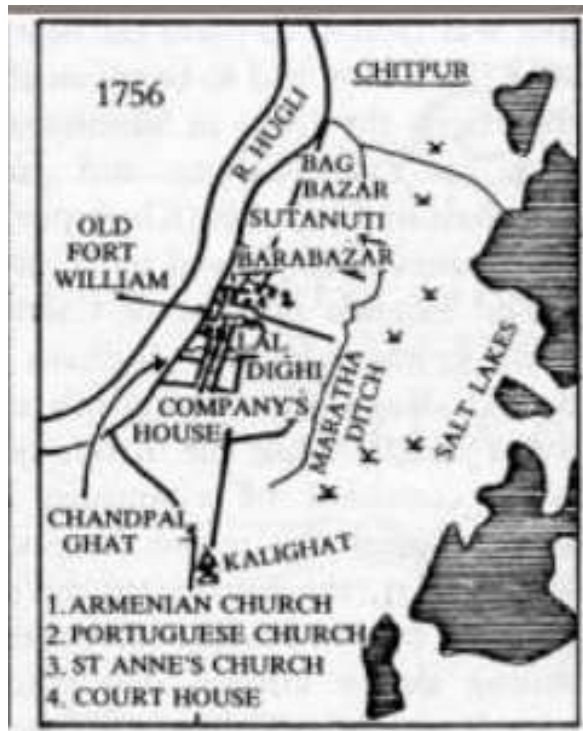


## 1757

- It was the guardroom of this two-storied building (Fort William), where the black hole tragedy took place.
- During the Plassey war in 1757, Siraj Ud Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal attacked on the fort and defeated the Britishers.
- This paved way for the construction of a new fort by British.
- After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the Company started rebuilding the city.
- The Black Hole of Calcutta was later used as a warehouse.

- During this time development of ghats and churches started.

Calcutta
1757–1798

1 Aker Pagoda
2 Armenian church
3 Portuguese church
4 Philip Francis' house
5 Orphan house for soldiers'
   children
6 Theatre
7 Stewart & Co
8 Old Fort/Customs House
9 Writers' Buildings
10 Old Court House
11 Magistrates' Court
12 Old jail
13 Persian Madrassah
21 Collector's Office
23 Mission church
26 Gen. Clavering's house
17 St John's
26 James Grand's house
10 Sir Robert Chambers'/
   William Hickey's last house
20 Edward Wheler's house
21 William Hickey's first house
22 New Court House
23 Justice Hyde's house
26 William Hyde's house
25 Accountant General's Office
26 Council House
27 Government House
28 Vansittart/Impey House
29 Great Burying Ground
30 New Jail
31 Col. Watson's dockyard
32 Richard Barwel's house/
   Orphan House for Officers'
   children
33 General hospital
34 Warren Hastings' estate
35 Belvedere House
36 Philip Francis' garden house

Fort William

Maidan



1785

- Development of areas – Chowrangi, Baliganj, Tollyganj, Garden Reach and Chitpur road.
- Fort William was rebuilt.
- The Fort in 1756, led to Calcutta acquring its most characteristic feature – a large open space called Maidan at the center and Central Business District roughly placed around it.
- In 1773, the capital was transferred from Madras to Calcutta.
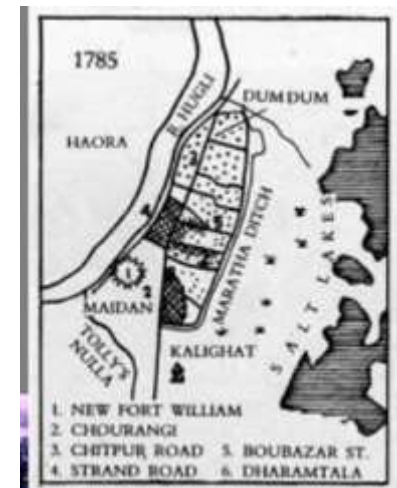
- Robert Clive started rebuilding the fort in 1758, after the Battle of Plassey (1757); construction was completed in 1781 at a cost of approximately two million pounds.
- The area around the Fort was cleared, and the Maidan became "the Lungs of Kolkata".
- It stretches for around 3 km in the north-south direction and is around 1 km wide.
- The Old Fort was repaired and used as a customs house from 1766 onwards.
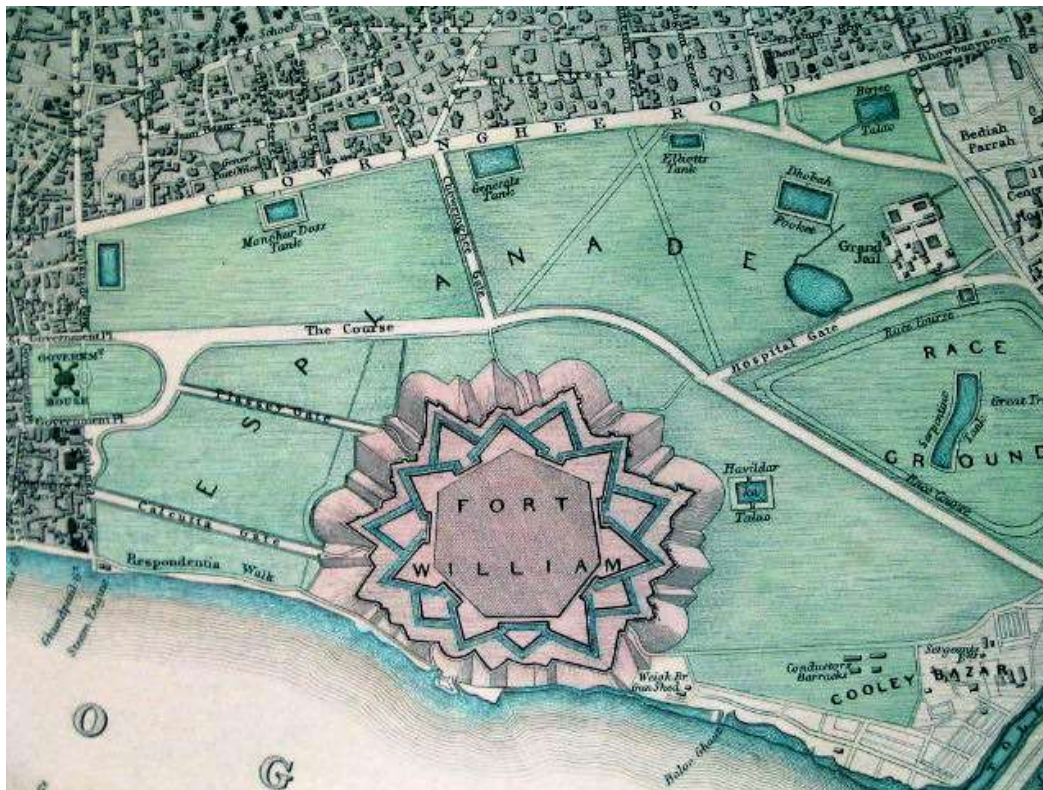


- The basic purpose of setting up Calcutta Fort William was to prevent attacks from Muslim invaders.

- The area that was cleared around the fort became maidan, where several exhibitions and fairs take place.

*Figure shows densification of the city*
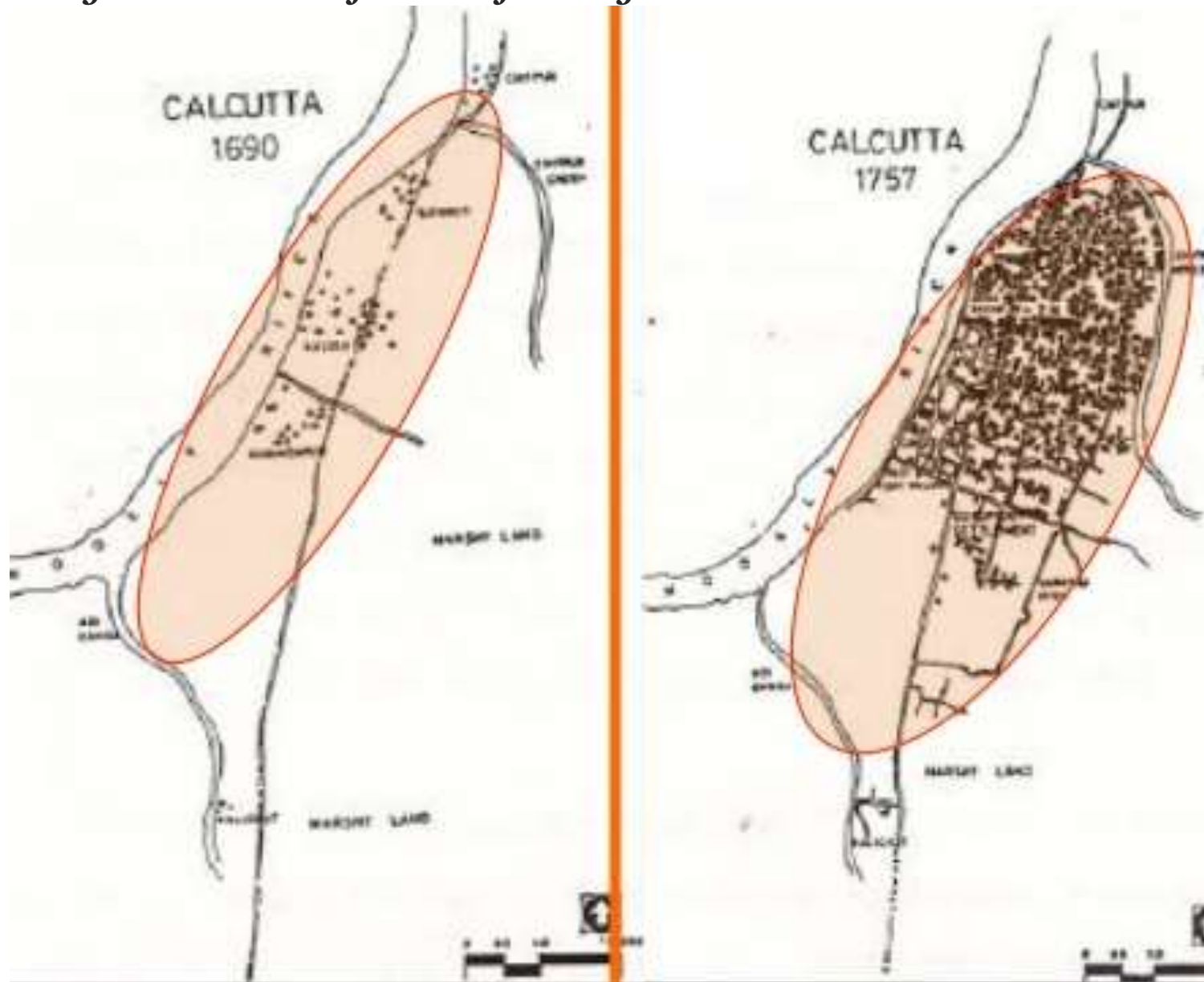
**Circular Road**

- **Maratha Ditch** (archaic spelling: Mahratta Ditch) was a three-mile long moat excavated around Calcutta (now known as Kolkata) in Bengal, India, in 1742, as a protection against possible attacks by marauding Bargis, as the Marathas were known locally.
- The road came up on the <u>stretch that formed the Maratha Ditch that was dug in 1742</u> to protect the City from the Bargi invasions.
- The Ditch was never completed which was excavated to meet the river, and was partly filled up in 1799 to create the Circular Road.
- The ditch was never completely built.
- It was mostly filled up in 1799 to build the Circular Road and the remainder was filled up in 1892–93.
- The <u>area bound by the ditch was considered</u> to be the original town of Kolkata.



*Maratha Ditch Lane*

# PLAN OF CALCUTTA

reduced by permission of the
Commissioners of Police
from the original one executed for them by
LIEUT COLONEL MARK WOOD
In the Years 1784 & 1785
Published in October 1792 by
Wm Baillie
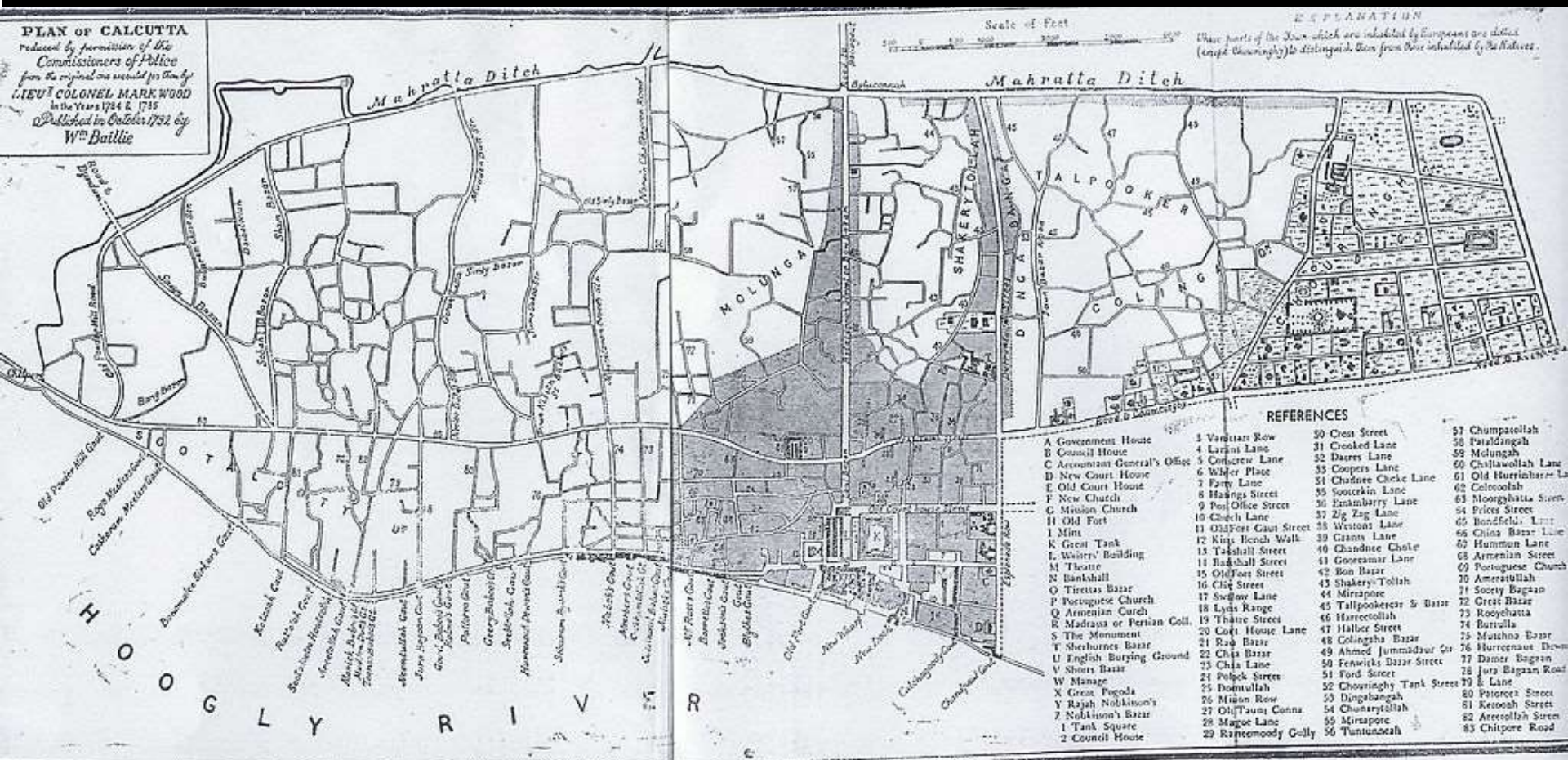
Scale of Feet

EXPLANATION

Those parts of the Town which are inhabited by Europeans are dotted
(except Chowringhy) to distinguish them from those inhabited by the Natives.

Mahratta Ditch

HOOGLY RIVER

MOLUNGA

SHAKERY LOLLAH

DINGA BANK GA

TALPOOKER

COLING

## REFERENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| A | Government House |
| B | Council House |
| C | Accountant General's Office |
| D | New Court House |
| E | Old Court House |
| F | New Church |
| G | Mission Church |
| H | Old Fort |
| I | Mint |
| K | Great Tank |
| L | Writers' Building |
| M | Theatre |
| N | Bankshall |
| O | Tirettas Bazar |
| P | Portuguese Church |
| Q | Armenian Curch |
| R | Madrassa or Persian Coll. |
| S | The Monument |
| T | Sherburnes Bazar |
| U | English Burying Ground |
| V | Shoars Bazar |
| W | Manage |
| X | Great Pagoda |
| Y | Rajah Nobkisson's |
| Z | Nobkisson's Bazar |
| 1 | Tank Square |
| 2 | Council House |

| No. | Name | No. | Name | No. | Name |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Vansittart Row | 30 | Cross Street | 57 | Chumpatollah |
| 4 | Larani Lane | 31 | Crooked Lane | 58 | Pataldangah |
| 5 | Corscrew Lane | 32 | Dacres Lane | 59 | Molungah |
| 6 | Wilder Place | 33 | Coopers Lane | 60 | Chitlawollah Lane |
| 7 | Fasty Lane | 34 | Chadnee Choke Lane | 61 | Old Hurringharee La |
| 8 | Haungs Street | 35 | Sootcrkin Lane | 62 | Colootollah |
| 9 | Post Office Street | 36 | Ezrahmbarry Lane | 63 | Moorghatta Street |
| 10 | Church Lane | 37 | Zig Zag Lane | 64 | Prices Street |
| 11 | Old Fort Gaut Street | 38 | Westons Lane | 65 | Bondfields Lane |
| 12 | Kings Bench Walk | 39 | Grants Lane | 66 | China Bazar Lane |
| 13 | Tankhall Street | 40 | Chandnee Choke | 67 | Hummun Lane |
| 14 | Bankshall Street | 41 | Gooreamar Lane | 68 | Armenian Street |
| 15 | Old Fort Street | 42 | Bon Bazar | 69 | Portuguese Church |
| 16 | Clie Street | 43 | Shakery Tollah | 70 | Ameratullah |
| 17 | Swallow Lane | 44 | Mirzapore | 71 | Sooety Bagaan |
| 18 | Lyons Range | 45 | Talpookerear & Bazar | 72 | Great Bazar |
| 19 | Theatre Street | 46 | Harreetollah | 73 | Rooychatta |
| 20 | Coot House Lane | 47 | Halber Street | 74 | Buttulla |
| 21 | Rao Bazar | 48 | Colingaha Bazar | 75 | Mutchna Bazar |
| 22 | Chia Bazar | 49 | Ahmed Jummadarar Str | 76 | Hurregnaue Dewn |
| 23 | Chia Lane | 50 | Fenwicks Bazar Street | 77 | Damer Bagaan |
| 24 | Polock Street | 51 | Ford Street | 78 | Jura Bagaan Street |
| 25 | Domtullah | 52 | Chowringhy Tank Street | 79 | D Lane |
| 26 | Mission Row | 53 | Dingabangah | 80 | Patorees Street |
| 27 | Old Taumi Conns | 54 | Chunarytollah | 81 | Kezooah Street |
| 28 | Magoe Lane | 55 | Mirzapore | 82 | Areeatullah Street |
| 29 | Rancomoody Gully | 56 | Tuntunneah | 83 | Chitpore Road |

- Calcutta was divided into 4 sub areas :
    - European Kolkata (dihi Kolkata)
    - Residential Village at Gobindapur
    - Traditional Market (Burrabazar)
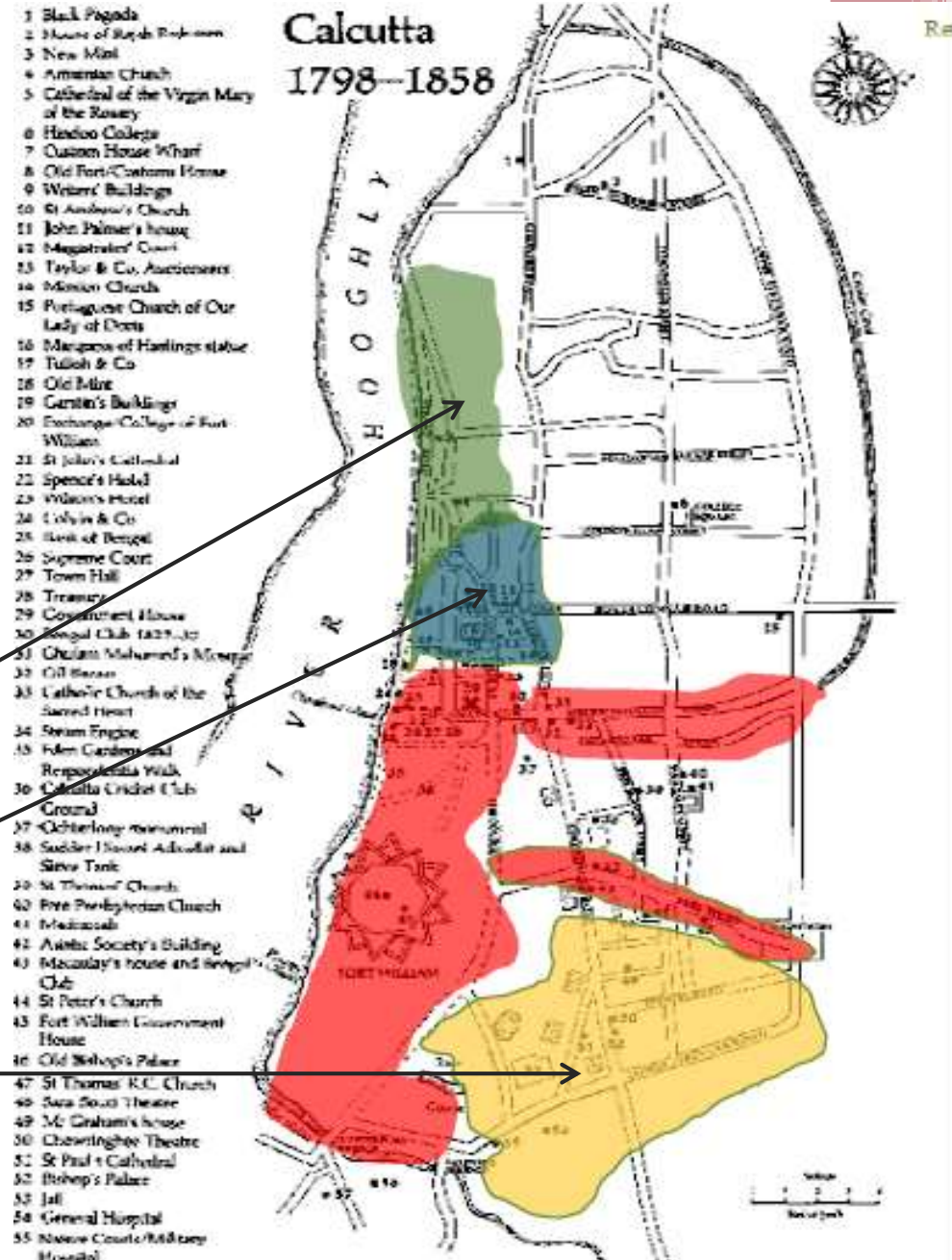    - Riverine cloth trade mart (Sutanuti)
- In 1839 ,City started to grow on the western fringes of ganga with jute industries coming up.
- Led to the construction of the old Howrah Bridge in 1874

*Sutanuti*

*Burrabazar*

*Gobindapur*

Calcutta
1798–1858

1 Black Pagoda
2 House of Rajah Rekmon
3 New Mint
4 Armenian Church
5 Cathedral of the Virgin Mary of the Rosary
6 Hindoo College
7 Custom House Wharf
8 Old Fort/Customs House
9 Writers' Buildings
10 St Andrew's Church
11 John Palmer's house
12 Magistrates' Court
13 Taylor & Co. Auctioneers
14 Mission Church
15 Portuguese Church of Our Lady of Dolo
16 Marquess of Hastings statue
17 Tulloh & Co
18 Old Mint
19 Gunsten's Buildings
20 Exchange/College of Fort William
21 St John's Cathedral
22 Spence's Hotel
23 Wilson's Hotel
24 Colvin & Co
25 Bank of Bengal
26 Supreme Court
27 Town Hall
28 Treasury
29 Government House
30 Bengal Club 1829-30
31 Ghulam Mahomed's Mosque
32 Oil Bazaar
33 Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart
34 Steam Engine
35 Eden Gardens and Respondentia Walk
36 Calcutta Cricket Club Ground
37 Ochterlony monument
38 Saddler Sword Adjutant and Sieve Tank
39 St Thomas' Church
40 Free Presbyterian Church
41 Madrassah
42 Asiatic Society's Building
43 Macaulay's house and Bengal Club
44 St Peter's Church
45 Fort William Government House
46 Old Bishop's Palace
47 St Thomas' R.C Church
48 Sans Souci Theatre
49 Mr Graham's house
50 Chowringhee Theatre
51 St Paul's Cathedral
52 Bishop's Palace
53 Jail
54 General Hospital
55 Native Courts/Military Hospital

CITY GROWTH
- The area, which is south of the Maratha ditch, was full of ponds and ditches and spreads of jungles.
- In the southern part it was mostly the Englishmen and the rich businessmen who started building up houses.
- The only directions for Calcutta's growth were east and south.
- North was already congested and west was the river.
- The capital got shifted in 1912 A.D to Delhi
- Soon the British government set up the Improvement trust for the settlement of living condition in the city.



- The great tank of Dalhousie square was developed as an administrative center.
- The Maratha ditch got converted to be the circular road all along the city as a city boundary till the mid 19" century.
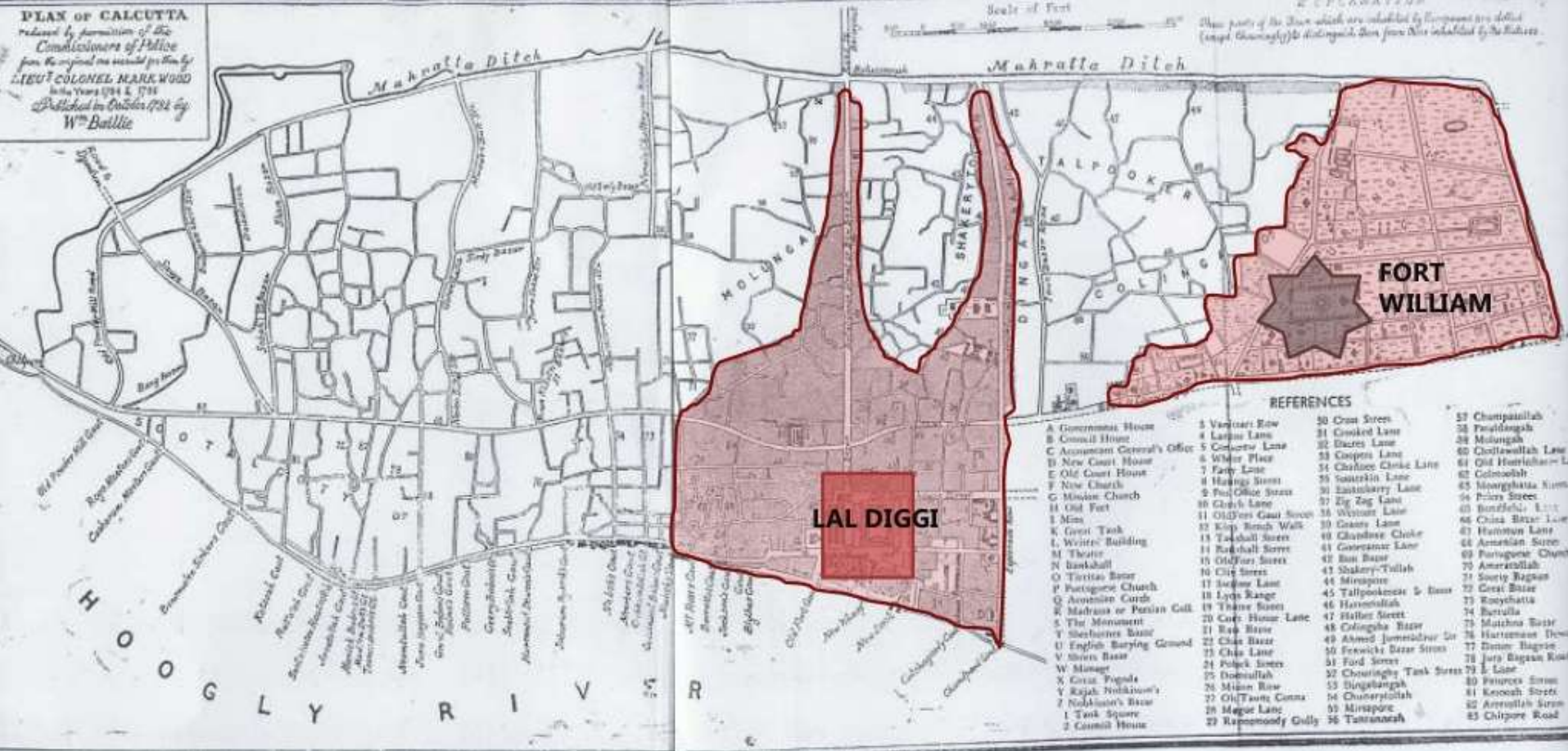
*In the 1690's the Fortified area was the first Fort area which turned into The Great Tank "Lal Diggi" after 1757 , the principal CBD area lies in this portion of the city marked Red which includes B.B.D Bag Area , Esplanade, Chowringhee, Park Street and Maidan area*

- From the mid 19$^{th}$-century, the number of British mercantile firms multiplied.
- In 1852, the town was made a Municipality which later became Municipal Corporation.
- At the turn of the century, Municipal markets were a regular feature.
- By 1865, seventy one firms had opened their offices in Clive Street.
- Tramways and street lighting were introduced in the city.
- With development of roads, railways and bridges, Calcutta began to expand.



*Clive street*



*Tramways*

- With the development of <u>roads, railways and bridges, Calcutta began to expand.</u>
- The twin cities of Howrah and Calcutta were <u>linked by a pontoon bridge in 1874.</u>
- <u>In 1870, Calcutta Port Trust Commission</u> was formed.
- The <u>Kidderpore Docks were completed in 1892.</u>
- <u>Tea warehouses also started</u> coming up during the era.
- <u>Jute foundries were mainly established in Howrah.</u>
- Europe was supplied with Indigo and Cotton in Calcutta.
- Rapid development of industries in Calcutta during the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century
- The **Victoria Memorial** was built between 1906 and 1921.



*Howrah Pontoon Bridge, 1874*



*Kidderpore Dock, 1892*

**Kidderpore** is a neighborhood of metropolitan Kolkata (Calcutta), in Kolkata district

## Present

- <u>Western side of the ditch</u> was also inhabited by <u>the Europeans.</u>
- The area between the present day <u>Park Street and the Lower Circular Road was known as Chowringhee.</u>
- The locations in the <u>North</u>, primarily for the <u>native population had irregular road or lane pattern.</u>
- Several roads had dead ends.
- <u>Along the bank of the river Hooghly, several ghats had developed</u>
- '<u>Black town</u>' patch between the present day Lenin Sarani and Park Street (the taltala area);
- this area in between the two east west corridors must have had a mixed character being predominantly European closer to the North South spine
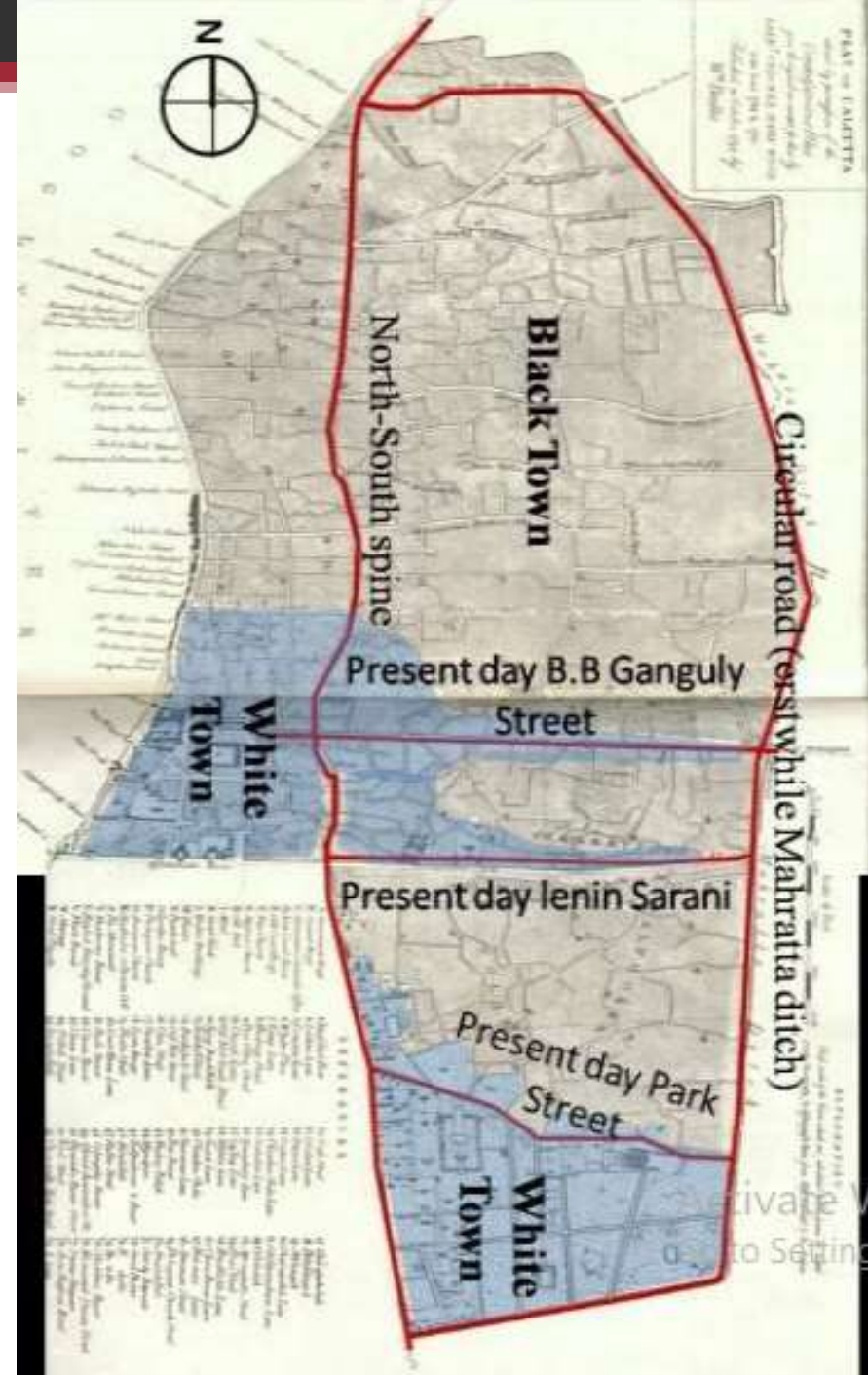
# Urban Settlement

The urban settlement of Kolkata can be defined in to three definite regions, distinguished according to history, socio-economic culture, and architectural character
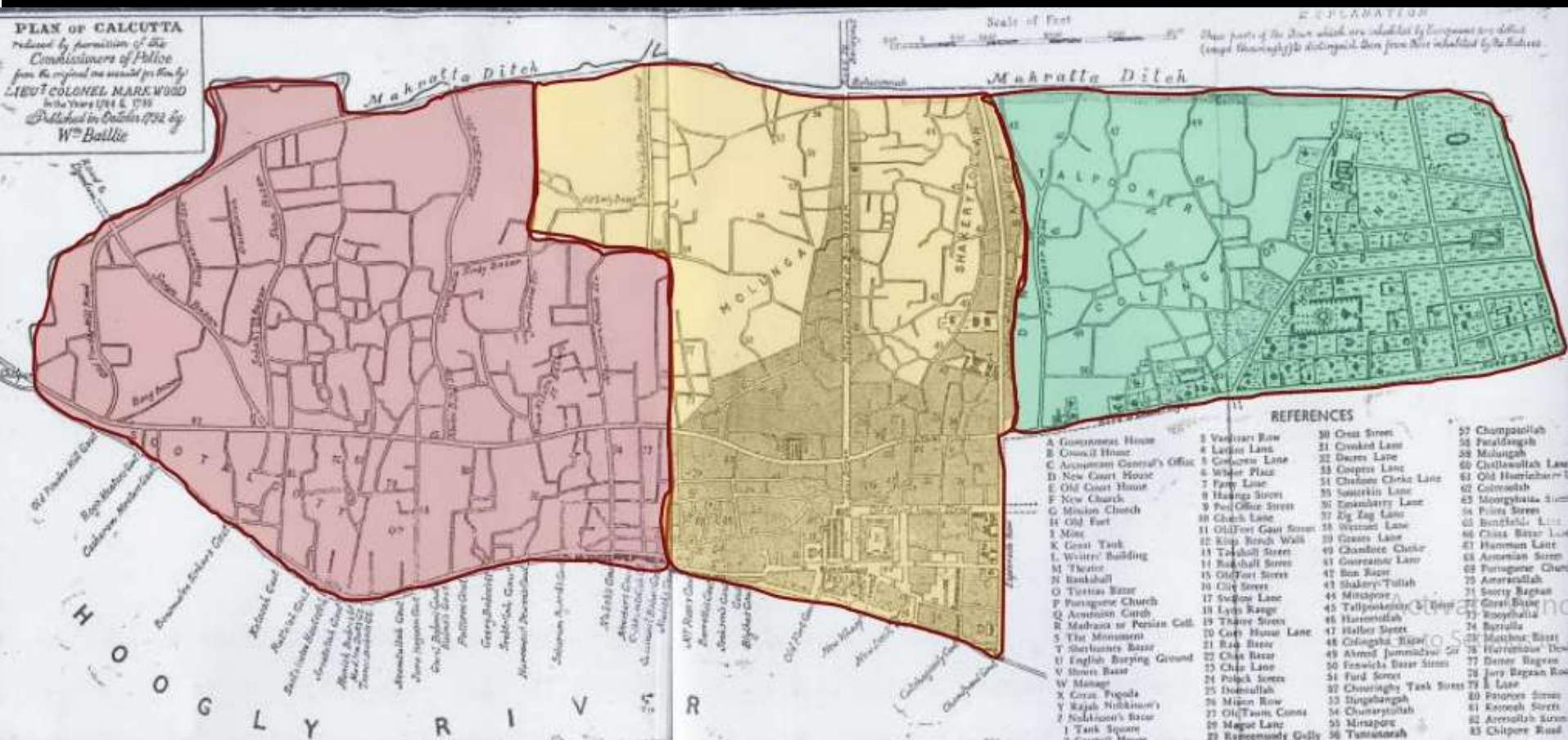
**North kolkata :** Neighbourhoods of elite Bengalis, crafts men, artisians and traders

**Central kolkata :** The business district developed by the British with palatial structures used as residences for British officers

**South Kolkata** Neighbourhoods of upper middle class Bengalis

# Urban Settlement

**North Kolkata :**

Location:

- Lies to the north of esplanade on the eastern banks the river.

- Built in the area where there existed the village of Sutanuti .

- Low height buildings with maximum of ground coverage.

- The buildings are all attached to each other and have practically no side setbacks.

- Typical roadside buildings have car porticos ('Garibaranda") highlighting the building entrance.

- Open space is less in this part.

*Esplanade - a long, open, level area, typically beside the sea, along which people may walk for pleasure*
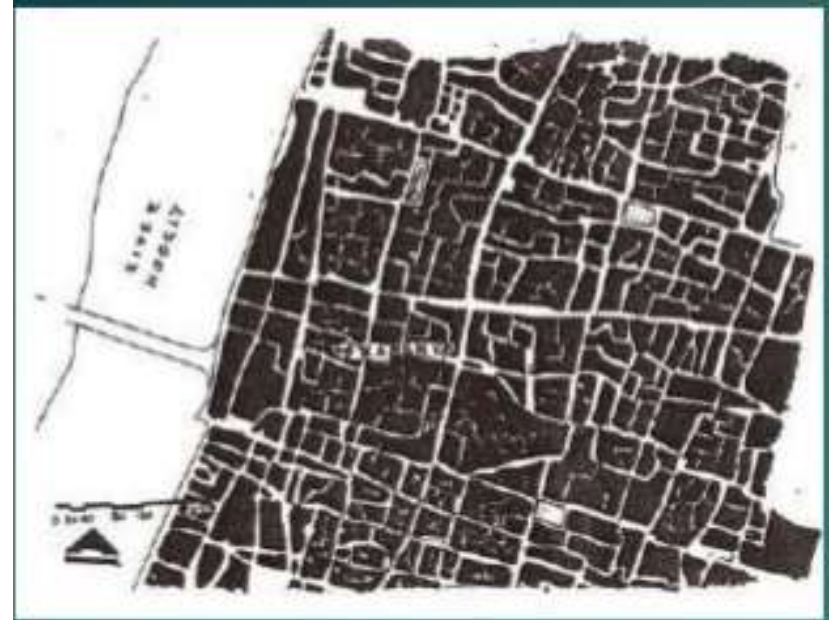
# Urban Settlement

<span style="color:orange">Central Kolkata</span> :

Location:

- It is <u>established on the site of the Gobindapur village.</u>

- Mostly <u>covered between esplanade and the park street</u> and is stretched till the lower circular road as its limits.

- <u>Administrative and the commercial district</u> of the city.

- <u>Monumental scale of proportion</u>.

- <u>The administrative district along the four ides of the great tank</u>, has a resemblance of London.

- The British have not done any compromise in their city road layouts.

# Urban Settlement

Location:

- It is established on the site of the Gobindapur village.

- Extends to the eastern wetlands and to the river in the west.

- Defined by the region, which lies to the south of the lower circular road.

- Preplanned and have a definite control over the urban form.

- The buildings have proper set backs on all the four sides.
- Mix of old Kolkata and some new type of architectural style.

- Mostly residential except some large markets , which has been planned to cater the needs of the people living here.

# Urban Form Components of Kolkata

- Central Kolkata hosts the **central business district**. It contains **B. B. D. Bagh**, and **the Esplanade** on its east.
- The **West Bengal Secretariat**, **General Post Office**, Reserve Bank of India, **High Court**, Lalbazar Police Headquarters, and several **other government and private offices** are located there.
- Another business hub is the area south of **Park Street**, which comprises thoroughfares such as Jawaharlal Nehru Road, Camac Street, Wood Street, Loudon Street, Shakespeare Sarani, and A. J. C. Bose Road.
- **The Maidan** is a large open field in the heart of the city that has been called the "lungs of Kolkata" and accommodates sporting events and public meetings.
- **The Victoria Memorial** and Kolkata Race Course are located at the southern end of the Maidan.
- Other important areas of Central Kolkata are **Burrabazar**, College Street, Sealdah, Taltala, BowbazAr, Entall y, Chandni Chowk, LalbazAr, Chowringhee, Dharma tala, Tiretta Bazar, Bow Barracks, Mullick Bazar, Park CircUs, Babughat etc.
- **Hoogly River** is an important Urban Component.
- **Fort William**, on the western part of the city, houses the headquarters of the Eastern Command of the Indian Army its premises are under the jurisdiction of the army.
- East Kolkata is largely composed of newly developed areas and neighbourhoods of **Saltlake.**
- **And many other gardens and shopping complexes**

# Few important and impressive buildings of Kolkata

- Victoria  Memorial

- High Court

- St. Paul's Cathedral

- Marble Palace

- Kolkata Town Hall

- Belvedere Estate

- Writer's  Building

- Indian Museum

- Jorasanko Thakur Bari

- General Post office

- Salt Lake stadium, etc.

Bibliography

- Puronokolkata.com
- *Book* - The Indian Megacity and Economic Reforms by A.K. Jain
- *Book* - Calcutta by Geoffrey Moorhouse
- https://www.oldmapsonline.org/
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kolkata
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Kolkata
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fort_William,_India