

Chapter: II

BRITISH INTERVENTION IN ASSAM DUARS

2.1 Introduction

The Treaty of Yandaboo, signed on November 23, 1826, followed the annexation of Assam by the British. Sir Edward Gait on the annexation of Assam states that '*with most old administrative landmarks destroyed during the Burmese invasion and the people split into many opposing factions, the British troops' withdrawal from Assam after the treaty of Yandaboo would have rekindled the deadly dissensions and civil wars that had raged for so many years before the Burmese occupation. So, it was decided to run the country as a British province for a while.*'¹

The changes that occurred in Assam following the establishment of British rule were economically immense. For the convenience of administration, the province of Assam was bifurcated into two divisions, Western and Eastern Assam respectively. In Western Assam, David Scott was appointed as a commissioner while in Eastern Assam; Colonel Richards was placed as the commissioner.² During the period Western Assam covered the portion of an area between Goalpara and Biswanath, while Eastern Assam included Sibsagar, Lakhimpur, a small portion of Darrang, and a Sadiya Frontier Tract.³ However, in official correspondence, the terms Western and Eastern Assam were quickly dropped and replaced by lower and upper Assam, respectively. H.K. Barpujari observes that '*on the annexation of Lower Assam, the authorities in Calcutta viewed the entire matter from an economic standpoint. The estimation that Lower Assam would generate about three lakhs of rupees in revenue propelled them (the authorities in Calcutta) to approve Scott's proposal of permanent annexation of lower Assam through the proceedings of 7 March 1828.*'⁴

The British came into close contact with Bhutan following the annexation of Assam. When the British annexed Assam, the Duars in Kamrup were under the management of Bhutan and the Duars in Darrang were under the joint control of both the states. Amar Kaur

Jasbir Singh on the management of Assam Duars observes that *'after the annexation of lower Assam (1828), the British continued the agreements of the Ahom government with Bhutan on Assam Duars. But the arrangements were intricate in nature and over time led to conflict, particularly on the issue of the traditional system of payment. The British accused the Bhutaneses of overvaluing their payment since the payment of tribute in kind rarely realized its expected value, and continued to fall short of the required amount. Moreover, the Bhutias raided the British territories whenever the British officials pressed hard for clearance of the arrears.'*⁵

H.K.Barpujari on the issue of payment of tributes observes that *'the tribute paid by the Bhutias for Assam Duars was in kind approximately amounted to Rs. 4785-4 annas Narayani rupees. But the Sezvals, who were responsible for the collection of tribute from the Bhutias often substituted the valuable articles. As a result, the value of such articles sold at sadar stations for auction seldom matched the value set by the Bhutan government, and each year the tribute paid for Assam Duars fell short of realized amount, resulting in arrears.'*⁶

This was followed by a series of incidents of raids of the Bhutias into the British territory of Assam Duars, the British authorities in order to negotiate a peaceful solution to the disputes between British India and Bhutan dispatched a mission under Pemberton in 1838 to Bhutan. But along with the failure of Pemberton's mission to negotiate a settlement with the Bhutias, the raids of the Bhutias in the British provinces of Duars continued unabated. Therefore, Lord Auckland, the Governor-General of India authorized the annexation of Assam Duars in 1841 on the payment of Rupees 10,000 per annum as compensation to the Bhutan Government.⁷

The British occupation of Assam Duars marked the beginning of a new epoch in economic history. The discovery of the economic potentiality of Assam Duars, or tracts of land in the northern frontiers of Lower Assam, including its suitability for the tea cultivation and its commercial potential and the prospect of high yielding revenue collection propelled the colonial government to introduce various schemes and policies of profit maximization.⁸ Ashley Eden on the advantage of occupation of Duars stated that *"these Duars contain some of the finest cotton and timberlands in Bengal. The province is one of the finest in India and under our government would in a few years become one of the wealthiest. It is the only place I*

have seen in India in which the theory of European settlement could in my opinion take a really practical form.”⁹

The British came into possession of eighteen Duars after the Treaty of Sinchula with Bhutan in 1865. Apart from economic prospects, the Duars offered the colonial government a commercial opportunity and, more importantly, a route to Lhasa and Central Asia. However, prior to the Sinchula treaty of 1865, the British had already annexed Assam Duars in 1841 account of the outrages of the Bhutias on the frontier. Hitherto before the Sinchula Treaty, the British government introduced and adopted various policies and measures in Assam Duars that had far-reaching consequences on the economic and social lives of the inhabitants of Assam Duars.

2.2 Wasteland Grant

Wasteland primarily means those areas of land that are left uncultivated and are covered with dense trees and grasslands. Following the annexation of Assam, the East India Company acquired vast swaths of the wastelands in Assam¹⁰ including wastelands in Kamrup and Darrang Duars. In the early phase of the British occupation of Assam, about 68-78 per cent of the land was swathed with forest.¹¹ These wastelands proved to be a hurdle for the British who wanted more cultivated areas that would yield them more revenue. A decade after the British colonization of Assam, Kamrup district had seven-eighths of cultivable land as waste. Assam in 1853 in an area comprising 34,345 sq. miles had only about 2,252 sq. miles under cultivation.¹² In 1874-75 the districts of Kamrup and Darrang had 19.9 and 09.5 per cent of the area under cultivation.¹³ The British Government in order to convert the wastelands into revenue-yielding regions introduced several wastelands grants that favoured the planters, especially for the cultivation of tea. This introduction of wasteland grants was made successful through the initiation of changes in the assessment of land, revenue survey, and land regulations.

The introduction of wastelands grants started with David Scott, in 1827 in order to convert wastelands into revenue generated regions proposed to grant the wastelands to any planters who fulfils the liability of bringing wastelands under cultivation with the stipulation that the planter would effectively bring into cultivation one-fourth, one-half and three-fourth

of the allocated region in preparatory to the termination of the third, sixth and ninth years, after which the claimant will be eligible to hold the land as per prevailing rates on three-fourth of the entire portion.¹⁴ The beginning of lucrative tea cultivation provided the British Government with the prospects of converting the wastelands into a revenue-generating region. Sir William Erskine Ward on the subject of granting land to tea planters described that '*since the discovery of tea in Assam, the government has made it a policy to encourage the opening out of the sparsely populated tracts of the province by offering land on especially favorable terms.*'¹⁵

The Charter Act of 1833 introduced European land ownership in India and Colonel Jenkins took the opportunity to introduce wasteland grants in order to lay the foundation of the colonial tea enterprise. Therefore, favorable terms and conditions were introduced in wasteland grants rules to encourage the European Capitalists and the planters in the cultivation of tea. Major Jenkins on 6th March 1838 approved the first wasteland grant rules to attract the British capitalist to establish tea gardens. The first wasteland grant rules enticed the planters to occupy the 100 to 10,000 acres of wasteland on a lease for a term of 45 years, with a rent-free period starting from 5 to 25 years but after the land was open a progressive assessment of three-quarters of the area ranging to Re.1-2 an acre was levied.¹⁶ However, after the expiry of the lease one-fourth of the area was to remain free from assessment in perpetuity and the rest was to be assessed at the option of the guarantee of one-fourth of the gross profits. There was also a clause providing that a quarter of the area must be cleared within five years failing which the land was liable to resumption.¹⁷ These rules were amended in 1854 and the term of the lease was extended to 99 years with a further reduction in assessments in 1861 the system of fee simple grants was introduced, under which land was sold at rates from Rs. 2-8 to Rs.5 per acre and a year later the grants were made actionable, with an upset price of Rs. 2-8-0 per acre, which in 1874 was raised to Rs.8.¹⁸ Finally, in 1876 it was provided the wastelands could be leased only for a period of 30 years.¹⁹ According to the Annual Tea Report of 1878-79 in Kamrup district, the planters out of a total of 19,434 acres of land cultivated tea in 6,999 acres, and in Darrang district out of 68,600 acres of land planted tea in 14,125 acres of land.²⁰ It should be stated that although the large acres of land about 12,435 in Kamrup and 54,485 in Darrang districts respectively remained unplanted with tea shrub, the planters never considered rice cultivation. Moreover, to add to this predicament the planters imported food grains for the distribution of rations in the tea plantations from other provinces.

These Wasteland Grants provisions introduced by the colonial government proved death kneel to the native cultivators and the benefits were secured by the European planters.

The Wasteland Grant which is related to the clearing of forest lands had various effects on the indigenous people inhabiting *Assam Duars*, the forest lands on which tribals were dependent for the shifting cultivation were cleared for the cultivation of tea. Moreover, the planters for the expansion of the tea plantation usurped the grazing fields of the poor villagers and sometimes even disrupted the inter-village communication by fencing the traverse roads of the villagers. Further, there are also reported events of selling cultivators' lands, as wastelands to tea companies.²¹ One of the interesting aspects of the Wasteland Grant policy of the colonial government was that apart from the land, the planters were able to secure incomes out of expensive timbers besides other valuable materials.

Table 2.1

Waste Land Settlement Rules of 1838

First 5 years	First 10 years	First 20 years	Nil
6-8 years	11-13 years	21-23 years	9 as.
9-30 years	14-35 years	24-25 years	Rs. 1-2 as.
On expiry of leases			at par with rice lands

Source: Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.12

Table 2.2

Waste Land Settlement Rules of 1854

Term	Land revenue per acre
First 15 years	Nil
16-25 years	3 as.
26-99 years	6 as.
On the expiry of leases at par with rice lands	

Source: Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.12

2.3 Land and Revenue Administration

When the British extended their authority in Assam, they did not immediately make any radical changes in the existing indigenous setup of land and revenue administration. Edward Gait in his book '*A History of Assam*' on the revenue system of the Ahoms stated that '*under the Ahoms there was no tradition of land tax collection, but in-lieu the natives had to render service to the Raja without any setbacks, and those who defied the orders of the Raja, a penalty of death was imposed.*'²²

The British administration to begin with put an end to the native system of personal service and introduced a monetary economy. In fact, the British annexation of Lower Assam in 1828 was dictated by the assortment of the annual revenue of at least 3, 00,000 rupees.²³ The Northern Duars were subjected to land tax assessment in 1843-44.²⁴ The systems of land tenure in the Goalpara district were under Permanent Settlement but the Duars of Chirang, Ripu, and Guma for revenue purpose was treated like proper Assam, while Bijni and Sidli Duars were subjected to Periodic Settlement²⁵ and Banska Duar was kept under the Chamuadarship of Bhutia family for thirty years.²⁶ The Darrang Duars of Buriguma, Khalling including Koriapara were subjected to Mouzahwaree settlement.²⁷ The system of land settlement in the Assam plains was Ryotwari Settlement.²⁸ The British at the start introduced a poll tax of three rupees per Paik in place of personal service and the responsibility of tax collection was assigned to the Khel officials. But in due course of time poll tax was toppled with the introduction of regular land revenue on the basis of a survey of the land.²⁹

The Brahmaputra Valley had three distinctive classes of land tenures- Basti (homestead), Rupit (Paddy land), and Faringati (high land).³⁰ In 1832 after Thomas Campbell Robertson succeeded W. Cracroft as the Agent of Governor-General and Commissioner of Assam abolished poll tax and introduced a land tax on the basis of assessment of land, which varied in different parts of Assam, in Kamrup the payment of land revenue was between one rupee and six annas, while in Darrang the assortment of land revenue was one rupee eight annas and four annas, and in Darrang the collection of land revenue per hearth was one rupee and eight annas.³¹

However, in the early part of 1833, the system was changed and each of the districts was divided into Mahals and resettled annually until 1835 after assessment.³² Under the Mahals the Chaudhuries, Mouzadars and Kakoties were assigned for the assortment of revenue.³³ This system existed until for settlement of a group of villages called Mouza was introduced in 1836.³⁴

Table 2.3

Revenue Collection of Lower Assam

Year	Revenue Collection of Lower Assam
1832-33	1, 83,196
1833-34	2, 27,128
1837-38	4, 03,968 ³⁵

Source: Lopita Nath, *The Socio-Economic History of Assam in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Gauhati University, 2000, p.243

The payment of revenue in cash was made compulsory in 1840. This created obscurity among the peasants particularly because of the fact that the monetary value of the produce was not steady and vary frequently depending on the price of the commodity creating an obstacle for the cash payment. But in 1854, annual settlements were reverted to and lands were divided into three categories.³⁶ (1) Basti (homestead), (2) Rupit (fertile paddy land), and (3) Faringati (high lands).³⁷ The rents of lands also varied according to category. The standard rates of revenue for basti, rupit and faringati category of lands in the districts of Brahmaputra valley were six annas, five annas and four annas per bigha respectively.³⁸ But in 1861, Colonel Hopkinson put forward a proposal to raise the rate of revenue and the government accordingly doubled the rate of revenue in 1867. Due to the realization of enhanced rate of revenue in 1868-71, an amount of rupees 2,165,157 was accumulated during 1871-72 season as compared to rupees 1,001,733 during 1864-65 season.

The government for the first time under the Settlement Rules of 1870, unconditionally and undeniably recognized the permanent, transferable and heritable rights in rupit and bari lands in private occupation. Besides, for the effortless collection of land revenue, a district was divided into Mauzas or circles under Mouzadars, who is bound to pay the revenue of his Mauza towards the end of April month.³⁹ The Mauzadar obtained a commission of 10 to 15

per cent of the revenue paid by him. The Rules of 1870 provided the settlement of rupit and bari lands for a term of ten years. However, in 1883 other changes in settlement rules were introduced regularizing the decennial settlement. The Settlement Rules of 1870 prevailed until Assam Land and Revenue Regulations were introduced on 1st July 1886, in the plains districts of the Brahmaputra valley. Meanwhile, a cadastral survey operation made in several districts of Upper Assam was completed by 1882-93.⁴⁰ The land revenue rates remained unchanged for twenty-five years until March 1893. But the discovery of obscured cultivation and the new additions to the settled area augmented the land revenue collection to almost 33 percent in the Brahmaputra valley of total land revenue demand considerably.⁴¹ However, in 1902-05 re-settlement took place in Kamrup followed by Darrang in 1908 for a period of 20 years.

The changes introduced by the British in the field of land and revenue settlement hastened the end of the native traditional method of revenue collection and socio-economic order. Moreover, the new process of cash-based revenue collection and maximization of land revenue initiated by the British had crept into a transitional crisis that affected the local economy in an adverse way. Besides, the new method of revenue collection proved a blow to the native peasants for they were obliged to pay the revenue on time albeit of fluctuations in the price of produce. Hence, the peasants were coerced to borrow money from the money lenders and sometimes mortgaged their lands to make their ends meet.

2.4 Tea cultivation in Assam Duars

Plenty of opportunities in Assam Duars for tea plantation on a commercial scale encouraged the Colonial Government to introduce tea cultivation in Assam Duars. Europeans universally called tea an herb. The Portuguese albeit, being the first European nation to have trade relations with China it was the Dutch who in the early part of the 17th century introduced tea in Europe as a commercial commodity.⁴² The East India Company became serious about the tea trade in 1677 and then from 1715 onwards started a well-organized and regular tea trade after the inauguration of the factory at Canton.⁴³ At Canton, the superintendents were the spokesmen of the entire body of foreign merchants and the Chinese directly held them accountable for the conduct of trade on a foreign side.⁴⁴

The East India Company was enticed towards China in anticipation that the country would offer an extensive market for the British goods and pay specie in return but the British shortly realize that the Chinese had no relish for foreign goods. In spite of all these hiccups, there was a significant development in the tea trade with China. Towards the end of the 18th-century British products were finding their way into Chinese markets. Therefore, in 1792 with the hope to secure privileges for sending the goods further north of Canton where the demand might be stronger Lord McCartney was deputed only to be met with failure, another attempt was made through Sir John Stauton but with no better success. China was in no mood to accept British goods for celestial leaf and the only article which her people would like to take on was the Opium the article which was legally prohibited. Between tea continued to be exchanged for silver and opium until the growing commerce of opium was regarded objectionable and was prohibited by an imperial edict in 1796. However, the importation of opium continued in spite of restrictions until the monopoly of EIC was vigorously attacked and finally terminated in 1833.⁴⁵ Therefore, the necessity was felt by the E.I.C to find an alternative source for the supply of tea.

The growth of the tea industry was one of the significant causes that resulted in the growing commercial importance of the province of Assam. On the discovery of tea in Assam Rev. P.H. Moore wrote that '*although the tea was indigenous, a European discovered it and soon after the introduction of the colonial regime in Assam, the European capital and enterprise nourished the tea industry to mature as a major source of wealth in Assam.*'⁴⁶

Mr. C.A. Bruce brought the indigenous tea plant of Assam to the notice of the government in 1826 and the Government in order to enquire about the possibility of cultivating tea in Assam on a commercial scale appointed a tea committee in February 1834⁴⁷ and in May 1834 that Lieutenant A. Charlton and Captain F. Jenkins announced about the tea shrub growing wild in Upper Assam.⁴⁸ Therefore, on the recommendations of Jenkins in 1835, the government deputed a committee of three scientists Wallich, McLelland and Griffiths to Upper Assam for investigation.⁴⁹ This committee of three scientists affirmed the appropriateness of soil for the cultivation of tea shrubs and recommended the government appropriate the lands without any delay.⁵⁰ The discovery of tea shrubs in the province of Assam was one of the most important aspects that encouraged the annexation of Assam. From the 1830s onwards the British in search of suitable soil for the cultivation of tea extended their

empire even outside the province of Assam, especially the places that were deemed to be suitable for tea cultivation.⁵¹

The appropriateness of soil and physical characteristics of Assam Duars prompted the Colonial Government to transform the region into a tea industry in order to meet the growing demand for tea as a beverage in the European market. Although the Dharma Raja was apathetic toward tea cultivation in the Duars region the Colonial Government successfully converted the Duars region to the tea industry following the Sinchula treaty of 1865.

In Assam Duars the initiation of a tea plantation was started after 1854 in Kamrup and Darrang districts respectively. B.C. Allen stated that tea cultivation in Kamrup is fairly of less importance compared to Tezpur and Lakhimpur.⁵² Moreover, the prediction of Colonel Jenkins ‘*although tea might not grow abundantly in Kamrup but it would be on sufficiently rewarding proved futile.*’⁵³ The pioneer of the tea garden in Kamrup was Mr. W. Robinson. In 1853, he took a grant of 155 acres of land at Ramsa Pargana in a place called Phatasil to cultivate tea, which half a decade later produced 12 maunds of tea.⁵⁴ The Kamrup district at Banska Duar Doomni Tea Estate was established in 1926 by the Brookbond and Company and the other notable tea estate located at Banska Duar is the Nagrijuli Tea Estate. The word “*Nagrijuli*” is derived from the word “*Narchi-Juri*” meaning eternal spring.⁵⁵

The genesis of the tea garden in the Darrang district dates back to 1854⁵⁶ with Mr. Martin who opened tea plantation at Balipara and in 1857 started a garden at Haleswar.⁵⁷ This tea plantation at Balipara appears to be Addabarie and Balipara Tea Estates divided by the Jarasora river in two divisions.⁵⁸ In 1855 Assam Tea Company had already started a plantation at Singri Parbat when in 1859 captain Comber submitted the report.⁵⁹

Prior to the introduction of the fee simple rules of 1861 the years that followed were a period of steady expansion of the tea industry. The introduction of the 1861 fee simple rules resulted in the attraction of a large number of speculating classes, who in order to make fortune started opening tea gardens to sell at exorbitant prices to the investor. In the Mangaldai subdivision of the Darrang district tea plantations are segregated into two divisions. The older plantations are located in the vicinity of Kalaigaon while the newly established plantations are located on the West of Bengbari Church at the foothills.

Tea plantations at the foothills started rapidly expanding with the opening of Attareekhat Tea Company Limited under the management of Williamson, Magor, and Company on 11 August 1887. The underlying motive behind the formation of this company was to purchase Attaree Khat, Panery, and Dhorum Juli (Barrongajuli), which had been going through a tough financial situation. These Tea Estates then approximately comprised 7,200 acres of which 760 acres were under thriving tea cultivation. The Attareekhat Tea Company Limited in 1889 purchased Kasu Bheel (Kachubil) Estate attached to the Paneery (Panery) Estate followed by Bhergaon Estate which was within a radius of 7 miles of Attaree Khat in 1890. The Company's property by 1890 comprised 9,805 acres of land, the majority held on fee simple.⁶⁰ Out of 9,805 acres, 1,962 acres were in cultivation and 1,528 were under production in 1895. Attaree Khat tea estate by 1903 was the largest tea Estate in the Mangaldai subdivision of the Darrang district with an area of 6,031 acres of which 1185 were under cultivation. This Tea Estate had 2,727 workers. While Panery and Kasu Bheel (Kachubil) Estate had 5331 acres out of which 7,17 acres were under tea cultivation with a total number of 2,517 workers.

In the Mangaldai sub-division of Darrang district, one of the large tea estates is the Hattigarh Tea Estate. The origin of the name "Hattigarh" is derived from the local Assamese word "Hati" meaning elephant and "Garh" meaning trench or moat.⁶¹ Hattigarh during the Ahom rule was a popular place for elephant trapping. This tea estate was established in the year 1893. Hatigarh Tea Estate is bounded by the Bholra river in the East, the Maranadi river and Beltola village in the West, Jorpukhuri village and Majuli Tea Estate in the North, and Teliapara Village in the South. At Hattigarh initially, the first tea was planted by Consolidated Tea and Land Company (India) Ltd. On 30th November 1895 the amalgamated North Sylhet Tea Company, The South Sylhet Tea Company, and the Estates of the North Travancore Land Planting and Agricultural Society Ltd. which had their formation in 1882 been worked under the same proprietary.⁶² In 1903 Majuli and Khoirabari Tea Estates were established by the Consolidated Tea and Land Company Ltd.

Majuli Tea Estate is located approximately 26°N, 91°E of the meridian. The estate is surrounded by the mighty Himalayan ranges in the North and in the South Hattigarh Tea Estate, Ghagra village in the West, and Bhorolo River in the East. The name of the Estate 'Majuli' is derived from 'Maj' meaning middle and 'Juli' meaning dangling in between. Since the majuli Estate is nestled between the Bhorolo river in the East and Kulsi river in the West,

hence the name Majuli came into being. During the colonial period, it is said that Majuli Tea Estate had a water supply pipeline connected with Bhutan through which the estate received the water required in the Tea Estate.⁶³ This Tea Estate was established in the year 1897 by James Finlay and Company. The Estate was later on owned by Tata Tea and finally, it was taken over by Amalgamated Plantations Ltd.

Orangajuli Tea Estate is one of the oldest tea estates in the Mangaldai Sub-division of the Darrang district. This Estate belonged to Assam Duars Tea Company Ltd. The Estate derived its name from the word “Oranga” and “Juri” which in the local dialect means people living by a small stream.⁶⁴ Initially at Orangajuli tea seeds were planted by Mr. Walter Dalton in 1894 and Mr. Walter Duncan was the first appointed secretary of the Company. The objective behind the formation of this estate was to acquire land in Assam under the prevailing ordinary tea lease and Waste Land Rules announced by the Colonial Government. In 1894 the company started the Orangajuli Tea Estate with the tea plantation on 26 acres of land and gradually expanded to 146 acres in 1895. The company in 1903 had 5192 acres of land under their possession wherein only 710 acres were in tea plantation under work force of 1,199.

Since 1854 the tea plantation industry made a rapid stride and until 1900 the tea industry was thriving but by 1896 when the owners of the flourishing tea plantations for the extension of the tea cultivation started selling their gardens at lucrative prices to the joint-stock companies as a consequence of this the tea industry passed through a depression period. The cause of this depression was the rapid increase in production, a duty levied on tea production in England, and more importantly the scarcity of labour.

Table 2.4

List of tea Gardens in Barpeta Sub-division of Kamrup and Mangaldai Sub-division of Darrang

Name of Garden	Company	Mauza	Area in acres in 1903	Labour force on 30 th June 1904
Nagrijuli	Nagrijuli Tea Company	Ghargaon	1825	-
Doomni	Brookbond and		-	-

	company			
Atharikhat	Atharikhat Tea Company	Sekhar	6031	2,727
Bangalagarh	Messers, Bridge Brothers	Bangalagarh	126	231
Barrongajali	Atharikhat Tea Company Ltd	Sekhar	1559	561
Bhergaon	Atharikhat Tea Company Ltd	Kalitakuchi	410	411
Bhutiachang	Bhutiachang Tea Company Ltd.	Jhaparabari	2242	1,463
Bongong	Messrs. T.J Walker and J. Walker	Silaikuchi	354	145
Dimakuchi	Dimakuchi Tea Company Ltd.	Sekhar	1510	416
Ghagrapara	Logan Brothers	Harisinga	1308	784
Gronland	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Samabari and Chapai	3024	546
Hatigar	Consolidated Tea and Lands Company	Jhaparabari	7562	2,660
Kaupati	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Dalgaon	2156	649
Kherkheria	Logan Brothers	Harisinga	1352	1,002
Khoirabari	Consolidated Tea and Lands Company	Jhaparabari	Included in Hatigarh	
Kobirali	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Silpota and Petuachubri.	233	Included in Singramari
Kunderbil	Logan Brothers	Ambagaon	654	586

Majbat.	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Orang	1172	703
Majuli	Consolidated Tea and Lands Company	Jhaparabari	Included in Hatigarh	
Orangajuli	Assam Duars Tea Company	Sekhar	5192	1199
Panbari	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Samabari	2935	245
Panery	Atharikhath Tea Company Ltd	Jhaparabari	5331	2,517
Ranthali	Atharikhath Tea Company Ltd.	Ranthali	36-2	413
Rowta	Messrs, King Hamilton and Company	Orang	727	308
Rupatal	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Dalgaon	384	95
Singramari	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Kalaigaon	1426	727
Tangani	Messrs, Bridge Brothers	Dhula	530	260
Tokonkata	Messrs. T.J Walker and J. Walker	Dalgaon	250	75

Compiled from B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers: Darrang*, Volume-V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, pp.235-37& also B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers: Kamrup*, Volume-IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.233

2.5 Labour in Tea Plantations

Assam was the land of the self-sufficient economy and almost the whole of the population of the province like the rest of India was dependent on agriculture and very few people were landless labourers. Therefore, it was natural for the Assamese population to adhere to cultivation than work in strict, disciplined, and labour intense tea gardens. The Kacharis of Mangaldai and Kamrup was hired in considerable numbers in tea plantations. Rana P. Behal in “*One Hundred Years of Servitude*” stated that in Assam only the Kacharis, who were industrious worked as labourers but since they were intolerant it proved difficult to manage.⁶⁵ B.C Allen mentioned that in 1901 about 14,000 Kacharis were employed in tea plantations.⁶⁶ The British were skeptical about the ability of Assamese inhabitants to viably nurture tea; therefore, Lord William Bentinck approved the enrollment of Chinese tea growers.⁶⁷ But since the Chinese recruitment proved expensive C.A. Bruce insisted the authorities at Calcutta to get rid of the Chinese labourers and the planters were obliged to search for an alternative.⁶⁸

The colonial government to withstand the shortage of labourers in the tea plantations started importing labourers from 1859 onwards. The labourers were imported from Bihar, Orissa, Central Provinces, United provinces, Bengal, and Madras⁶⁹ including labourers from Bombay.⁷⁰ In 1863 the government passed the first Labour Act in order to regulate the transport of the native labourers emigrating into Assam Valley and their recruitment through Arkattis (professional recruiters) and in 1870 Amendment Act was passed which recognized the Sardari System of recruitment. In 1867-68 the figure for imported labourers in the tea gardens of Darrang and Kamrup was 3,102 and 316 respectively, while the figure for native labourers in Darrang and Kamrup was 2,865 and 1,672 respectively.⁷¹

The imported labourers were provided with the amenities of housing, drinking water, rations, and hospitals in the plantations. The provision cost the employers a large sum of money; therefore, the imported labourers were bounded by Act VI of 1901. The Act of 1901 provided unless the expiry of the contract the labourer must remain in the garden unless he chooses to redeem it by a money payment. In addition, labourers were also employed by the simpler Act XIII of 1859. This Act gave the magistrate the power to deal with the pre-paid labourer, who has taken an advance payment for the completion of work. In Assam, a large

number of imported tea garden labourers after the expiration of their agreement reclaimed vast tracts of forest land for cultivation. In 1911 the area of land held by ex-garden labourers from the government was about 200,000 acres.⁷² This resulted in a population explosion. According to the Report on the Census of British India 1881, in 1881 the number of inhabitants in Assam was 4,881,426.⁷³ While according to the Census of India 1901, in 1801 the population of Assam was 5,477,302 and by 1901 Assam had a population of 6,126,343⁷⁴ of which 6,45,000 were imported labourers.⁷⁵ Thus, the importation of labourers into the tea gardens of Assam by the planters resulted in the growth of the population and the demand for tea in Europe also resulted in the expansion and extension of tea gardens in Assam Duars. Furthermore, it is to be jotted that since most of the labourers in the tea gardens of Assam were recruited from the exterior state the plantation economy much or less had a very little contribution to the economic development of Assam. Moreover, this British policy of importation of labourers resulted in economic, social, political, cultural, and linguistic tensions in Assam during the later period.

Table 2.5

Labour Recruitment from various provinces in 1901

Provinces	Numbers of Labourers Imported
Chota Nagpur	20,477
Other Parts of Bengal	10,228
United Provinces	1,396
Central Provinces	11,662
Madras	2,827
Assam	19,440

Source: B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, volume V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.141

Table 2.6**No. of Imported Labour for tea industry since 1923-24 to 1927-28⁷⁶**

Year	1923-24	1924-25	1925-26	1926-27	1927-28
Men	25,902	19,106	19,720	27,295	24,124
Women	8,705	7,842	7,452	10,566	10,027
Children	7,525	6,779	5,837	7,833	8,694
Total	41,826	33,727	33,009	45,694	42,845

Source: *Royal Commission on Labour in India*, volume-vi, *Assam and the Dooars*, Majesty's Stationary Office, London, 1931, p.3

2.6 Development of Transport and Communication

When the British came into possession of Assam, the difficulty in communication proved to be an obstacle to the progress of the province. The only efficient means of communication were the river routes of the Brahmaputra River. The state of backwardness and isolation of Assam in the field of transport and communication can be understood from a letter written by Colonial Hopkinson to the Government in 1861. Colonial Hopkinson stated that *'the destitute and isolation of the province of Assam during the early days of colonial regime was such that there was no road suitable to run a wheeled carriage, nor in the Brahmaputra, there was a steam boats, moreover, the state of the road in Assam was such that it took about a month to complete a journey of 482 kilometers.'*⁷⁷

One of the most remarkable aspects of the nineteenth-century colonial Assam was the introduction of railways, roads and steam engines. The introduction of this not only facilitated cheap means of transportation but also made the convenience of travelling cheaper, safer and faster. During the Ahom period, the common means of transportation were boats, elephants and palanquins. Edward Gait stated that in 1853 carts and carriages were unknown in Assam.⁷⁸ The accounts of Captain F. Jenkins (The Commissioner of Assam) in 1835 A.D., and Mills, in 1853 A.D., confirm to the absence of any type of wheeled carriage.⁷⁹ Further, in the old accounts of Assam, it is found mentioned that the travellers for the transportation used horses, ponies, elephants, bullock-drawn carts, palanquins, country boats and rafts.⁸⁰ Horses

were the common medium of communication used by cavalry, royal messengers and travellers.

Assam since the ancient period shared a geographical boundary with the neighbouring country Bhutan. The northwest frontier of Assam had an outlet connecting Bhutan, Tibet and China, popularly known as Duars or passes. Minhaj-Uddin-Siraj in *Tabaquat-i-Nasiri* acknowledged the existence of routes that linked Assam with the west.⁸¹ In the Medieval period, the Koch king Naranarayan constructed an important road known as Gohain Kamal Ali Road extending from Cooch Behar in Bengal to Assam's Narayanpur in the Lakhimpur district. This road ran from West to East passing through the districts of Goalpara, Kamrup, Darrang and Lakhimpur.

In Assam Duars the interest of the British in the development of communication networks adhered to the tea industry, trade and its strategic importance. Assam Duars comprising of hilly terrains and rivers acted as an obstruction to the development of communication and transportation network. The only viable transportation option that existed in the early years of British rule was the use of mules and ponies in the hilly region, while in the steppe of Assam Duars bullock carts were by and large utilized for moving merchandise. Moreover, goods were also schlepped on backs or heads by humans.⁸²

2.7 Communication Network

The British after a few years of their rule in Assam realized the importance of a communication network for the development of trade and commerce. During the tenure of Lord William Bentinck as the Governor-General of India, the executive officers at Dhaka administered all public works in Assam as recommended by the military board.⁸³ In Assam, certain advancement related to the construction of roads is noticeable after the establishment of the Public Works Department in 1868. But the establishment of the Road Board in Assam in 1926-27 was a landmark in the construction of road communication.⁸⁴ A separate board was constituted for the administration of the Tea Cess Fund for the improvement of the roads. The amount earned out of these additional rates was utilized for the improvement of local roads. Roads in the states were divided into three categories metaled, gravelled and unsurfaced. In 1929-30 the government of India for the purpose of developing road

infrastructure introduced an additional tax of two annas a gallon on petrol. Out of this additional tax, General Road Fund and Special Reserve Fund was introduced, one-fifth of the fund was for Special Reserve Fund which was spent on the construction of roads of national importance and the remaining fund was dispensed to the states.⁸⁵ In 1937-38 a total sum of Rs. 58.7 lakhs were spent in Assam, out of which Rs. 21.8 lakh was from Central General Road Development Fund and Rs. 36.9 lakh from Special Reserve Fund.⁸⁶ Finally, the establishment of 'Assam Road Communication Board' on 4th June 1946 brought a new leap forward in the field of road construction, new road schemes and the implementation of funds.⁸⁷

In the Province of Assam, the initiation to construct a road through the whole length of Brahmaputra Valley started in 1865. In Assam between 1890-91, there were 293 miles of imperial, 2119 miles of provincial and 3095 miles of local fund roads and the cost of maintenance was Rs. 4,70,000.⁸⁸ And between 1903-04 the figure for provincial roads was 1,625 miles and for the local fund, roads were 4,483 miles and the cost of maintenance was 8,87,000.⁸⁹ Most of the roads in the Province of Assam were katcha apart of the roads in the hills. It is to be stated that between 1903-04 there were only 144 miles of metaled roads this was due to the high rate of wages and difficulty encountered in obtaining material.

Table 2.7

Total mileage of road in Assam

Agent	1890-91	1903
IMPERIAL	293 MILES	1869 MILES
PROVINCIAL	2119 MILES	1625 MILES
LOCAL FUNDS	3095 MILES	4483 MILES
TOTAL	5507 MILES	7977 MILES

Source: Priyam Goswami, *Assam in the Nineteenth Century: Industrialization and Colonial Penetration*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1999, p.153

2.8 Development of roads in Darrang and Kamrup Duars

The course of Assam Trunk Road in the district of Darrang was about 254.276 kilometers stretching from Kuruaghat on the north bank of the Brahmaputra to the eastern

boundary of the district. Apart from the Assam Trunk Road, there were various roadways in the interior of the district. From Aurang a road stretched westward to Udalguri, which is about 23.335 kilometres and from Udalguri another road stretched to Bengbari about 14.484 kilometres and from the latter place to Singribari Hat which is about 20.921 kilometres in length.

From Udalguri on the North, a road elongated about 14.484 kilometres up to Bhairabkunda. A site where Udalguri trade fair was held annually thence, the road stretched up to Amratol, a distance of about 6.437 kilometres. Further from Bengbari, a road ran south by way of Kalaigaon joining Mangaldai and Rangmati (Port on the Brahmaputra) a distance of about 40.234 kilometres. An elephant path is also situated in the district on the edge of Bhutan hills popularly known by the name *Hathi Poti*.⁹⁰ It is to be stated that during the colonial period the construction of roads in the district adhered only to the areas of tea gardens in order to facilitate transportation of products to the nearby train station and ghats. According to the Annual Administrative Report of 1872-73, the district of Darrang had 542 miles of road.⁹¹

In Kamrup district the North Trunk Road starts at Raha, ends at Dumnichauki, which is a boundary between Kamrup and Darrang. This North Trunk Road had inspection bungalows at Raha, Halapakri, Bhawanipur, Pathacharkuchi, Barama, Nalbari, Rangia, Kamalpur, Dumnichauki. B.C. Allen describes that another three branches of roads ran from North Gauhati these were to Dumnichauki, Naokata, and Nalbari.⁹² The road to Naokata had inspection bungalows at Chutiapara, Sutargao, and Naokata. While Nalbari road had inspection bungalows at Hajo. Besides, Trunk Road the most important road was that ran on the north of Gauhati from Rangia via Darranga to the foot of Bhutan hills a distance of about 26 miles and thence from Darranga to the village of Dewangiri and Subankhata.⁹³ Further, there was a road that ran from Barama to the boundary of Mangaldai. There was also an inspection bungalow on the 17th mile after passing 29 miles away from Tamulpur. Another inspection bungalow was located on the 16th mile on the road that ran from Patacharkuchi to Kakilabari. Each of these roads located on the North of Gauhati was unmetalled. According to B.C. Allen in Kamrup district between 1903-04, there were 547 miles of cart road maintained by the Local Boards or the Public Works Department in Kamrup.

Table 2.8**Total Mileage of Road in Kamrup and Darrang 1903-04**

PROVINCIAL			LOCAL BOARD		
DISTRICT	METALLED	UNMETTALED	METALLED	UNMETALLED	TOTAL
KAMRUP	16	160	-	371	547
DARRANG	-	165	-	420	585
TOTAL	16	325	-	791	1132

Source: Priyam Goswami, *Assam in the Nineteenth Century: Industrialization and Colonial Penetration*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1999, p.154

2.9 Railways

The history of the railway in Assam started with the Assam Railway and Trading Company established in 1881 to carter the transportation of tea and coal from Dibrugarh to Margherita. However, the epoch of the railway line connecting the province of Assam with Calcutta started with the foundation of the Bengal Railway Company in 1901.

In 1902 the Bengal Railway company immediately after its establishment in 1901 connected Dhubri to Calcutta by meter gauge of the Eastern Bengal State railway branch.⁹⁴ In 1905 the Eastern Bengal State railway further extended its network from Golakganj to Amingaon in Kamrup district. After 1905 no further steps were initiated in the state to introduced new railway lines until the partition movement which led to the wreckage of railway lines connecting Calcutta. The consequence of this was the introduction of Assam Rail Link, a project of 8.9 crores in 1948-49 to link Assam with the rest of Indian territory through a direct meter gauge.⁹⁵ Assam Railways which had been operating railway lines in Assam since 1947 was merged with North-eastern Railways in 1952 and in 1958, railway lines located on the east of Katihar came under the management of Northeast Frontier Railway. Thus, Railway lines in the province of Assam came under the management of North East Frontier Railways.

The genesis of the railway line in the district of Darrang started in 1895 with the Tezpur-Balipara narrow gauge line which was about 24 miles in length initially constructed for the convenience of transportation of tea manufactured in the district to the port at Tezpur.⁹⁶ The construction of the scheme cost expenditure of Rs. 4, 87,000.⁹⁷ This gauge line stretched from Tezpur passing Dekargaon, Sessa, Thakurbari and Rangapara. Besides, this gauge line there was also a branch line from Rangapara to Barjuli and a line of about 15 kilometers from Orang to Singri to cater the needs of tea industry.

The Darrang district extension of the meter-gauge railway line of the Eastern Bengal Railway was completed in 1912-13. This meter gauge line extended from Rangia to Tangla was about 38 kilometres. Rangia-Tangla meter gauge line was further extended in 1930 to Rangapara. This extension resulted in 160 kilometres of meter gauge tract in the Darrang district. Rangia-Rangapara railway line was further extended after the conversion of the Tezpur-Balipara Railway tract into meter gauge in 1953-54. This meter gauge line in the Darrang district passed through the stations of Khoirabari, Tangla, Harisinga, Udalguri, Rowta Bagan, Mazbat, Hugrajuli, Dhekiajuli Road, Belsiri, Misamari, Rangapara North, Thakurbari, Bindukuri, Dikargaon and Tezpur.⁹⁸ Since most of the stations between the Rangia-Rangapara railway line were located in the vicinity of tea gardens and rice fields provided the convenience of transportation and at the same time contributed to the development of trade in the region.

The introduction of railways in the region of Assam Duars heralded the expansion of the tea industry and transportation of tea production. On the construction of railways Lord Elgin, the Governor-General in 1896 said that '*railways construction was the process to improve the material condition of the agriculturally dependent population unremittingly.*'⁹⁹ G.S. Iyer commenting on the railway construction said that '*every extra mile of railway built, proved to be the death warrant for industries.*'¹⁰⁰

In 1903 the Railway line that had extended to 715 miles was instrumental in transporting 5, 67,000 passengers and 3, 17,000 tons of goods and minerals.¹⁰¹ Moreover, by 1911, the extension of direct railway line communication with Calcutta felicitated the immigration of the people of East Bengal in Assam along with immigrants from various parts of India.

2.10 Lac and Rubber

Lac and rubber during the pre-colonial Assam were one of the articles of import. Lac besides being used as a dye was also used for medicinal purposes.¹⁰² This is evident from the A Statistical Account of Assam that Assam imported lac and rubber from the Bhutias.¹⁰³ Besides, Lac small amount of lac was also produced in the Darrang and Kamrup districts. Lac industry was not confined to any particular caste or tribe. In Darrang District Lac was mainly reared on Pakari (*ficus rumphii*) and the poma (*Cedrela Toona*). In Mangaldai of Darrang district lac came from Nahara, orang, Odalguri, Kalaigaon, Paneri, Sipajhar and Barpathar. The output of lac in the district is said to be about 4,000 maunds per annum. The villagers sold the lac at prices ranging between Rs. 25 to 30 per maund.¹⁰⁴ The lac produced was exported in the form of stick lac. Eri clothes called bhumoka, manufactured mostly in Mangaldoi were turned into red colour for the sale to the Bhutias using the lac.¹⁰⁵

In Assam, Indian rubber was discovered during the early days of British rule. But until then the rubber was imported from Bhutan. W.W. Hunter mentions that in 1875 at Doimara fair Assam imported rubber from Bhutan at the rate of Rs. 32 per maund.¹⁰⁶ But when the demand for rubber started escalating in the 19th century for the manufacture of various articles in European countries naturally the importance of lucrative rubber trade started drawing the attention of the British entrepreneurs, therefore, the British started encouraging rubber cultivation in the extensive areas. In Kamrup and Darrang districts rubber plantations were set up in 1874 at Kulsi and Chariduar respectively. The Assam rubber cost 40 per cent higher prices in the market than the rubber imported from different regions because of its pure white complexion. Despite producing rubber, no attempt was made to develop rubber in Assam by the British.

The British annexation of Assam was economically and politically immense. The policies adopted by the British to make Assam economically feasible region led to the changes in the notion so called self-sufficiency. The discovery of tea and the suitability of soil in Assam Duars propelled the colonial government to introduce waste land grants for the cultivation of tea and to generate surplus revenue from Assam Duars. As a consequence, many of the European entrepreneurs made their way into Assam Duars. These European entrepreneurs besides securing hold over the lands of Assam Duars on the basis of wasteland

grant policy they also encroached the lands of villagers, who had been using the land for cultivation. Besides, the monetization of land revenue that was previously paid in form of service during the Ahom period discouraged the ryots of Assam Duars for cultivation. The inhabitants in order to pay the revenue had to mortgage their land and, on many occasions, had to borrow money from the money lenders at high rate of interest. Besides, the importation of labourers in the tea plantation from the various places of India led to the demographic changes in Assam Duars. Over time these labourers after the expiry of their contract settled in Assam Duars either as cultivators or traders and remitted a sum of money they earned to their homeland.

The establishment of tea plantation also encouraged the merchants (Kayas) to set up golas (shops) in the vicinity of tea plantation. In the absence of marketplaces in the vicinity of tea plantation this golas attracted the villagers of neighbouring areas to procure essential commodities. The Keya merchants took the opportunity to advance credit or loan to the poor villagers at high rate of interest. The facilitation of transport and communication no doubt was instrumental in the development of the region but the advantage proved to be in favour of the planters and the far-flung traders. These planters and merchants used the transportation and communication facilities to their advantage. Moreover, the introduction of railways in Assam Duars as a faster mode of travel was instrumental in the immigration of the people from various places of India to Assam Duars. Thus, the policies and welfare schemes introduced by the British in Assam Duars was for their own advantage and the inhabitants of Assam Duars had to bear the brunt of such policies and schemes of the British socially and economically.

Notes and references

¹ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, L.B.S Publications, Guwahati, 2005, p.276

² S.K. Bhuyan, *Anglo-Assamese Relations 1771-1826*, D.H.A.S, Gauhati, 1949, p.553

³ S.K. Bhuyan, *Anglo-Assamese Relations 1771-1826*, D.H.A.S, Gauhati, 1949, p.556

⁴ H.K. Barpujari (Ed.), *Political History of Assam 1826-1919*, Vol. I, Publication Board of Assam, Guwahati, Fourth edition, 2014, p.9

⁵ Amar Kaur Jasbir Singh, *Himalayan Triangle*, British Library, London, 1988, p.300-301

⁶ H.K. Barpujari, *Problem of The Hill Tribes North-East Frontier 1822-42*, Volume- I, Lawyer's Book Stall, Gauhati, 1970, p.44-45

-
- ⁷ R.C. Mazumdar (Ed.), *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance*, Part-I, Bharatya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay, 1960, p.1022
- ⁸ Smriti Das, *Assam-Bhutan trade Relations 1865-1949*, Anshah Publishing House, Delhi, 2005, p.59
- ⁹ Cited in Priyam Goswami, *The History of Assam from Yandaboo to Partition 1826-1947*, Orient BlackSwan, New Delhi, 2012, p.149
- ¹⁰ Muhammad Abu B. Siddique, *Evolution of Land Grants and Labour Policy of Government*, South Asian Publishers, New Delhi, 1990, p.6
- ¹¹ Rajib Handique, *British Forest Policy in Assam*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2004, p.39
- ¹² A.J.M. Mills, *Report on the Province of Assam*, Publication Board Assam, Gauhati, 1984, p.56
- ¹³ Amalendu Guha, *Medieval and Early Colonial Assam: Society Economy polity*, K.P. Bagchi and Company, Calcutta, 1991, p.16
- ¹⁴ Rajib Handique, *British Forest Policy in Assam*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2004, p.39
- ¹⁵ Sir William Erskine Ward in *The Assam Land Revenue Manual*, Government of Assam, 3rd Edition, Shillong, 1917, p. xvii
- ¹⁶ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 1926, p.340
- ¹⁷ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 1926, p.340
- ¹⁸ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 1926, p.341
- ¹⁹ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 1926, pp.68-69
- ²⁰ Rajib Handique, *Colonial Wasteland Grants and their Impact on the Ecology and Society of Assam*, *Proceeding of the Indian History Congress*, Volume-70, 2009, p.736
- ²¹ Antrobus, *History of Assam Company*, pp.383 & 388 cited by Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.12
- ²² Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 2005, p.135
- ²³ Priyam Goswami, *The History of Assam from Yandaboo to Partition*, Orient Black Swan Private Ltd., New Delhi, 2012, p.160
- ²⁴ A.J.M. Mills, *Report on the Province of Assam*, Publication Board Assam, Gauhati, 1984, p.321
- ²⁵ M.L. Bose, *Development of Administration in Assam*, Concept Publishing company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.60

-
- ²⁶ Smriti Das, *Assam Bhutan relations with special reference to Duars from 1681 to 1949*, Unpublished thesis, Gauhati university, 1998, p.43
- ²⁷ A.J.M. Mills, *Report on the Province of Assam*, Publication Board Assam, Gauhati, 1984, p.402
- ²⁸ Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.38
- ²⁹ P.C. Goswami, Land Reform in Assam, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Volume- 4, No.42, 1969, p. 1662, *JSTOR*, Accessed 2 August 2021
- ³⁰ P.C. Goswami, "Land Reform in Assam", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Volume- 4, No.42, 1969, p. 1662, *JSTOR*, Accessed 2 August 2021
- ³¹ Lopita Nath, *The Socio-Economic History of Assam in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis, Gauhati University, 2000, p.243
- ³² M.L. Bose, *Development of Administration in Assam*, Concept Publishing company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.57
- ³³ M.L. Bose, *Development of Administration in Assam*, Concept Publishing company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.57
- ³⁴ M.L. Bose, *Development of Administration in Assam*, Concept Publishing company Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2010, p.57
- ³⁵ Table prepared from the unpublished thesis of Lopita Nath, *The Socio-Economic History of Assam in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Gauhati University, 2000, p.243
- ³⁶ Lopita Nath, *The Socio-Economic History of Assam in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, Unpublished PhD Thesis, Gauhati University, 2000, p.243
- ³⁷ Priyam Goswami, *The History of Assam from Yandaboo to Partition*, Orient Black Swan Private Ltd., New Delhi, 2012, p.161
- ³⁸ Priyam Goswami, *The History of Assam from Yandaboo to Partition*, Orient Black Swan Private Ltd., New Delhi, 2012, p.161
- ³⁹ Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.38
- ⁴⁰ Amalendu Guha, *Planter Raj to Swaraj*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2006, p.39
- ⁴¹ Priyam Goswami, *The History of Assam from Yandaboo to Partition*, Orient Black Swan Private Ltd., New Delhi, 2012, p.161
- ⁴² Dines Chandra Datta, "Early History of Tea", *The Journal of the Assam Research Society*, Volume-1, No.1, Gauhati, 1933, p.16

-
- ⁴³ Dines Chandra Datta, “Early History of Tea”, *The Journal of the Assam Research Society*, Volume-1, No.1, Gauhati, 1933, pp.17-18
- ⁴⁴ Priyam Goswami, *Assam in the Nineteenth Century: Industrialization and Colonial Penetration*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1999, p.64
- ⁴⁵ Dines Chandra Datta, “Early History of Tea”, *The Journal of the Assam Research Society*, Volume-1, No.1, Gauhati, 1933, p.24
- ⁴⁶ Rev. P.H. Moore, General View of Assam. In *The Assam Mission of the American Baptist Missionary Union*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1992, p.9
- ⁴⁷ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers: Darrang*, Volume-V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1906, p.135
- ⁴⁸ Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2014, p.29
- ⁴⁹ Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2014, p.29
- ⁵⁰ Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2014, pp. 29-30
- ⁵¹ Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2014, pp.29-30
- ⁵² B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.143
- ⁵³ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.143
- ⁵⁴ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.145
- ⁵⁵ <http://www.rosselltea.com/our-estates.html>. Accessed on 30/11/2021
- ⁵⁶ *Emperial Gazetteer of India Provincial Series Eastern Bengal and Assam*, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1908, P.70
- ⁵⁷ N.C. Dutta, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, Government of Assam, Gauhati,1978, p.223
- ⁵⁸ Prem Kumar Sharma, “A Perspective on the Beginning of the Tea Plantations on the Northern Bank of Brahmaputra”, *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, Volume-9, Issue-1, January 2022, p.e456
- ⁵⁹ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, Volume V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.136
- ⁶⁰ Gow, Wilson and Stanton, *Tea Producing Companies of India and Ceylon*, A. Southey and Company, London, 1897, p.9
- ⁶¹ <https://amalgamatedplantations.co.in/>. Accessed on 30/11/2021

-
- ⁶² Prem Kumar Sharma, “A Perspective on the Beginning of the Tea Plantations on the Northern Bank of Brahmaputra”, *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, Volume-9, Issue-1, January 2022, p.e460
- ⁶³<https://amalgamatedplantations.co.in/>. Accessed on 30/11/2021
- ⁶⁴<https://www.goodricke.com/tea-garden/assam/orangajuli>. Accessed on 30/11/2021
- ⁶⁵ Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude*, Tulika Books, New Delhi, 2014, p.39
- ⁶⁶ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.80
- ⁶⁷ Jayeeta Sharma, *Empire’s Garden*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2011, p.36
- ⁶⁸ Priyam Goswami, *Assam in the Nineteenth Century: Industrialization and Colonial Penetration*, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1999, p.74
- ⁶⁹ Rajib Handique, *British Forest Policy in Assam*, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi, 2004, p.108
- ⁷⁰ *Royal Commission on Labour in India: Assam and Dooars*, Majesty’s Stationery Office, London, 1931, p.3
- ⁷¹ *Annual Report on the Administration of Bengal Presidency for 1867-68*, Bengal Secretariat Press, Calcutta, 1868, p.204
- ⁷² E.A. Gait, *Census of India 1911*, Volume I, Part I- Report, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1913, p.93
- ⁷³ W. Chichele Plowden, *Report on the Census of British India taken on the 17th February 1881*, Eyre and Spottiswoode, London, 1883, p. 10
- ⁷⁴ H.H. Risley and E.A. Gait, *Report on the Census of India, 1901*, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1903, p. 97
- ⁷⁵ Jayeeta Sharma, *Empire’s Garden*, Duke University Press, Durham and London, 2011, p.81
- ⁷⁶ *Royal Commission on Labour in India: Assam and the Dooars*, Volume-VI, Majesty’s Stationary Office, London, 1931, p.3
- ⁷⁷ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume- IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.176
- ⁷⁸ Edward Gait, *A History of Assam*, LBS Publications, Guwahati, 2005, p.327
- ⁷⁹ Assam Secretariat Proceedings, Report on the Judicial and revenue Administration of Assam, 1835 A.D., File No. 298
- ⁸⁰ N.C. Dutta, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, Government of Assam, Gauhati, 1978, p.268

-
- ⁸¹ Debasis Sen, “Road System in Ancient and Medieval Assam”, *Proceeding of the 8th NEIHA 29 Conference*, Kohima, 1986, p.157
- ⁸² J.B. Ganguly, “*The Modus Operandi of Trade between the Eastern Himalayan Sub region and Assam in the Pre-Colonial and Colonial Periods*” in Guru Das and R.K. Purkayastha (eds.), *Border Trade in North-East India and Neighbouring Countries*, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, 2000, p.13
- ⁸³ Bengal Judicial Proceeding 1835, 8 Dec, File No. 109-110
- ⁸⁴ N.C. Dutta, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang District*, Government of Assam, Gauhati, 1978, p.268
- ⁸⁵ Jogesh Kakati, “Development of Road Transport Infrastructure in Assam during Colonial Period”, *History Research Journal*, Volume-5, Issue.6, November-December, 2019, p.1639
- ⁸⁶ Jogesh Kakati, “Development of Road Transport Infrastructure in Assam during Colonial Period”, *History Research Journal*, Volume-5, Issue-6, November-December, 2019, p.1639
- ⁸⁷ The Assam Gazette, 30 July 1947
- ⁸⁸ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Provincial Series, Eastern Bengal and Assam, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1909, p.91
- ⁸⁹ *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Provincial Series, Eastern Bengal and Assam, Superintendent of Government Printing, Calcutta, 1909, p.91
- ⁹⁰ Hathi Poti is an elephant hunter’s tract that stretches from Kamrup's Barnadi to Lakhimpur's Maramarnai
- ⁹¹ W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Assam*, Darrang District, Volume-1, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1998, p.137
- ⁹² B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume- IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.179
- ⁹³ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume- IV, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.179
- ⁹⁴ D.P. Barooah, *Assam District Gazetteers, Goalpara*, Government of Assam, 1979, p.259
- ⁹⁵ D.P. Barooah, *Assam District Gazetteers, Goalpara*, Government of Assam, 1979, p.259
- ⁹⁶ N.C. Dutta, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, Government of Assam, Gauhati, 1978, p.277
- ⁹⁷ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Kamrup*, Volume- V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.177

-
- ⁹⁸ N.C. Dutta, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang*, Government of Assam, Gauhati, 1978, p. 278
- ⁹⁹ Bipan Chandra, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Har-Anand Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2019, p. 167
- ¹⁰⁰ Bipan Chandra, *The Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Har-Anand Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2019, p.169
- ¹⁰¹ *Provincial Gazetteer of Assam*, Gyan Publishing House, New Delhi, 2018, p. 67
- ¹⁰² Amrita Bora, “Lac Industry in Colonial Assam”, *Research Guru*, Volume-13, Issue-1, June 2019, p.917
- ¹⁰³ W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Assam*, Volume-I, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1998, p.145
- ¹⁰⁴ B.C. Allen, *Assam District Gazetteers, Darrang District*, Volume-V, Pioneer Press, Allahabad, 1905, p.160
- ¹⁰⁵ Smriti Das, *Assam-Bhutan Trade Relations 1865-1949*, Anshah Publishing House, Delhi, 2005, p.65
- ¹⁰⁶ W.W. Hunter, *A Statistical Account of Assam*, Volume- I, Spectrum Publications, Guwahati, 1998, p.145