



Colonel Colin Mackenzie's Services to the Historical Research of South India

C Beeraiah

Assistant Professor of History, Government Degree College (A), Khairathabad

Hyderabad –Telangana - India

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ABSTRACT

Colonel Colin Mackenzie (1754–1821), the first Surveyor General of India, made pioneering contributions to the historical and archaeological research of South India. Born in Stornoway, Scotland, Mackenzie's early interest in mathematics and his association with John Napier fostered his passion for research and documentation. After joining the East India Company in 1782, he undertook extensive surveys across southern India, documenting its geography, history, culture, and art. His systematic collection of manuscripts, inscriptions, coins, maps, and artifacts laid the foundation for modern South Indian historiography. Mackenzie's efforts led to the discovery of the Amaravati Stupa and the preservation of numerous *Kaifiyats*—local historical records that provide invaluable insights into regional governance, culture, and society. His vast collection, comprising over 1560 palm-leaf manuscripts in multiple languages, continues to serve as a crucial resource for scholars studying India's political, social, and cultural evolution. Mackenzie's legacy endures as that of a dedicated scholar who bridged the disciplines of archaeology, cartography, and history, preserving South India's past for future generations.

A brief overview of Colin Mackenzie's early life and career

Early Life and Education:

- **Birthplace:** Stornoway, a village on the island of Looe, west of Scotland.



- **Birth Year:** 1754.
- **Parents:** Murdoch Mackenzie (father) and Barbara Mackenzie (mother).
- **Father's Occupation:** Small businesses and postmaster.
- **Education:** Attended school in Starnoway.
- **Early Interest:** Mathematics.

Early Career:

- **Clerk:** Worked as a clerk in the tax collector's office in Starnoway.
- **Assistant to John Napier:** Hired as an assistant by John Napier, a wealthy man and descendant of the famous mathematician who invented logarithms.
- **Contribution to History:** Assisted Napier in collecting materials for his historical work.
- **Discovery of Indian History:** Learned about Indian History during this period.

Move to India:

- **Migration to Madras:** Came to Madras in 1782 after Napier's death.
- **Employment:** Secured a position in the engineering department of the East India Company.

Key Points to Note:

- Mackenzie's early life was influenced by his family's modest background and his own interest in mathematics.
- His association with John Napier exposed him to historical research and Indian History and Mathematics
- The move to Madras marked a significant turning point in his career, where he would make substantial contributions to the fields of history, archaeology, and cartography in India.

Potential Areas for Further Exploration:

- Mackenzie's specific contributions to Indian mathematics and history. Mostly south Indian History.



- His role in the development of cartography in India.
- His archaeological discoveries and their impact on our understanding of Indian History. Would you like to delve deeper into any of these aspects or explore another topic related to Colin Mackenzie's life and work?

Colonel Colin Mackenzie's Services to the Historical Research of South India

Mackenzie was appointed Surveyor General of Madras in 1810. He collected about 1560 Tal Patra texts during his time. He also collected ancient coins and antiques. He collected many historical items. No one else in the history of the world has collected so many historical objects. After Mackenzie's death, C.P. Brown wrote clean copies of everything. The same is said by Mackenzie Kaipiyattu Colonel Colin Mackenzie (1754 - 1821) was a prominent English officer, the first Surveyor General of India.

Colin Mackenzie, who visited the town of Amaravati in 1797, praised the architecture and architecture of the city in various ways in the Asiatic Journal. It was Colonel Colin Mackenzie who excavated a large mound known as Dipaladinne and brought the Mahastupa to light in 1797. With this the history of Amaravati is known internationally.

Mackenzie's work led to the revelation of the Buddhist Stupa at Amaravati . In 1792, Mackenzie met Venkatadri Naidu, a local zamindar , the then ruler of Amaravati, collected details and published them. When Venkatadri Naidu was using Pala stone slabs from Amaravati to make lime for the construction of his building, he explained their importance to the zamindar, convinced him, stopped him and undertook to save them. He was able to paint the entire form of Maha Chaitanya on the basis of the sculptural arts on the plates that remained till then. Thus we can see the shape of Amaravati Stupa now. But most of the tablets were moved to an exhibition hall in London for preservation. He hired a man named Borrayya to collect such archaeological materials and collected many details. The things he collected and the tala patra texts were kept in the oriental script storehouse in Madras . They are ready for display by now.

Colonel Colin Mackenzie" is remembered as the historical researcher of South India. He devoted his life to the historical research of South India. He devoted himself to historical research. In particular, those who researched archeology, history, coins, language, and culture used the information collected by Mackenzie. They are still using it. Mackenzie's qualities provide invaluable information for historical research in Mackenzie's service.



The Arabic Persian word kaifiyattulu means "narrative - anecdote - explanation". The word Kaifiyatu has evolved into a special account, a special work written about a particular village - mandal or country. Kaifiyats are like local histories. Similar to today's local records. The practice of writing the features related to the country's history as separate history books prevailed from the post-Prabandha era. Before that some parts such as chatupus, prasthavika poems, kavyatarikas, inscriptions, kavyantargatas were the basis for understanding the local history. After the Mughal government established itself in the Telugu Mandal, many reforms related to landlordism, zamindari system and settlement were introduced. It is imperative to write a history of each part of Jamabandi. They encouraged poets and scholars to write national and local histories. The Bahmani rulers, the Qutb Shahi Asaf Jahi nobles, offered to do similar works in their fields. Ambassadors from abroad, pilgrims and locals etc. wrote famous historical texts in Persian language. In these, the history of local and mandal villages is included as appropriate.

After the British established their dominance, they introduced many reforms and encouraged the locals, village chiefs, zamindars and various officials to write the history of Pratimandal in a standard manner. "Colonel Colin Mackenzie" during his tenure as "Surveyor General" made a comprehensive plan for writing these. As a result, Kaifiyat writing was born. The zamindars asked their subordinate officers, village officials, karanas, niyogas etc. to write such kaifiyats and send them to Mackenzie. Ordered. All the poems written on Mackenzie's instructions came to be known as "Mackenzie Poems".

In the village of 'Starnoway' on the island of Louie in the west, close to the north coast of Scotland in the Atlantic Ocean. Mackenzie was born in 1754. His father 'Marduk Mackenzie', mother 'Balbara', Colonel Colin Mackenzie worked as a clerk in the tax collector's office in that village. He was fond of calculations. 'LORD FRANCIS NAPIER' of that town, a genius five generations before him, 'Jannefier', set himself the task of writing history. Jannfior was the inventor of the 'logarithm' method, which played a key role in Ledge. In that case, Prances needed the help of Mackenzie, who was interested in mathematics. It was then that Mackenzie came into contact with the science of 'Hindava Geeta' and became fascinated by the riches of Hindu Shastra.

Francine's daughter and son-in-law were in Madurai for work in the East India Company. Mackenzie also got an opportunity to come to India in 1782 as an employee of the East India Company. Mackenzie was employed in a corps of engineers surveying the territories the company was winning in wars with native lords. So wherever war was declared, he too had to go to the battlefield along with the Company's troops. AD In 1783 he toured Dindigul and Coimbatore with the army. AD Between 1784-90, he took part in the coastal wars from the north of Madras to the Krishna river. From Nellore through the



Eastern Ghats to the Rayalaseema region, the Ongole region, during this period meeting the countrymen in the patterns of the roads and getting to know the local details from them can be found here and there in the local records.

He used to write'. After that the company in aid of Nizam of Hyderabad If the army is sent, go to Elur as an engineer with that army reached Only then, with the permission of Lord Cornwallis, Kadapa, Kurnool, Rayalaseema, Guntur, Nellore etc The survey was completed. Andhra country as a result of his efforts For the first time, we were lucky enough to conduct a survey. Not only here Maps were also prepared for Mysore region.

AD Participated in the Mysore War of 1700-02 and was later commissioned by the Lord of Cornwallis to carry out geological research in the estates given to them by the Nizam's Company. AD After participating in the 'Sinhala' war in 1796 and returning to Madras, he became determined to collect the historical, social and historical material of India. His career spanned from 'Krishna' to 'Kanyakumari'. Even though he faced many disappointments in his efforts, he did not waver and moved forward with his initiative. Mackenzie was the first to comprehensively investigate the Deccan region and formulated the Deccan Valley. Srirangapatnam. Mainur area was also surveyed after Vatana. By 1806 he had surveyed 40,000 square miles and prepared several thousand maps. It is no exaggeration to say that his survey maps are the basis for any project to be built in those areas.

Mackenzie used to hire many scholars as Sadhaks for various activities he undertook and paid them from his own money. "Venkata Rao, Narayana Rao and Kavali brothers" who worked under him were the chiefs. They returned to all the villages and towns of the southern route, asked the local scholars and palmers, inquired about inscriptions, palmistry books, coins, chronicles, sarsavata matters, ritual affairs and collected a lot of material for Mackenzie. From then on, there was a need for a 'Surveyor General' post in the company's government, had to go to 'Java' for the invasion, but he used to study the conditions of the people there, and he came back to India in 1816 as 'Surveyor General' Office Madras to Calcutta has become, Mackenzie used to write frequently in the journal of the 'Royal Asiatic Society' and the journal of the 'Madras Literary Society' about the information he had collected while he was in Calcutta with the assistance of his forces. All these have been of great use to the researchers. Mackenzie BC Sh. He died in Calcutta in 1821.

Indian knowledge collected by Mackenzie can be divided into following types:



1. Kaifiyats

6. Ch. 1793 10.Ch. 1816 Compiled in 1568 volumes. These are in languages like Sanskrit, Telugu, Tamil, Kannada, Malayalam, Odram, Marathi, Hindi, Persian, Arabic, Hindustani, Japanese, and Burmese etc.

2. Manuscripts

2070. In every village and in the attics of the villagers, many copies of Tatakū books, which were carelessly thrown away, were taken and pres

3. Statutes

8076, these are inscriptions and copperplate inscriptions found in Pratigarams near Rachabandas, in God's shrines and in houses. He took all these and preserved them.

4. Translations

2,000. He copied and preserved many translations of Sanskrit texts.

5. Countries

79, preserved by Mackenzie, drawn while he was a surveyor.

6. Drawings

2500, drawings drawn as models for the sites to be surveyed.

7. Coins

6218, these are coins collected just out of enthusiasm.

8. Sculptures, pictures

2630, 2: 106.

9. Replicas of Ancient Building Structures: 70

10. Ancient Ruins: 40°.

All this wealth Sh. Mackenzie died in 1821 Later his wife from Daggira then to India



Governor General 'Warren Hastings' for 10 thousand pounds bought from these Sanskrit, Arabic, Parsi, Javanese, Burmese Palms, coins, petroglyphs in languages, Models of the sculptures reached England. South India Language palatal texts, local histories, inscriptions. The goods reached Madras.

The company government appointed William Tyler to organize all these collections. But he made bindings of papers which he understood, and considered those which he did not understand as rubbish. Later 'Braundere' repaired the damaged ones, re-bind them and rewrote them into 62 volumes. 48 of which. Volumes are for Telugu only. At present Mackenzie's writings on the history of South India are available in Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, and Kannada etc. languages. Of the total written texts, 48% are related to Telugu, 35% are related to Tamil and Malayalam. 25% related to vision. There are Braundere preserved all these in "St. Georgypov" College, Madras. In 1858 AD, a scholar named Wilson prepared a list of all these. Later, Prof. 'Offert' succeeded in keeping them in the Oriental Manuscripts Museum, Madras. They are still there today. Recently, the state government has made 'microfilms' and kept them in the 'State Archives'. Currently, the State Archives of Guntur Taluka have been preserved in the library.

In this way, the evidence collected by Mackenzie is useful to know the political, economic, social, cultural and conditions of South India. In particular, about the Kangu, ancient Pandya dynasties, about the predecessor of the Cholas, about the Kakatiya, Bahmani, Reddy, Gajapati, Vijayanagara dynasties, about the internal strife between them, about Chhatrapati Shivaji, about the wars with Delhi rulers, about the history of the city of Pune, the historical 'Srirangapatnam'. ' about, are very helpful in explaining various aspects. Moreover, it will be known how many Samit each region has, the dynasties that ruled those regions in the past, and the political relations.

The collection history of each village is described as far as known. Definition of village boundaries, in village These kaifiyats also describe the geographical conditions of temples, mountains, jungles, - tatakas, ponds, wells, etc., population - animals - cattle, dairy crops fields, etc., descriptions of manyas and agraharas in the village, local myths and stories related to villages. Mackenzie loved India. He got to know the culture and customs here with some curiosity and some objectivity. Moreover, he tried to preserve as much as he could every aspect of the Kalachakra incident that he thought was in danger of being falsified. If the government does not cooperate financially in such an effort, he spends his own money. Having worked in this way - 'Colonel Colin Mackenzie' has become known as a pioneer among South Indian historical researchers.



Conclusion

Colin Mackenzie was a British antiquarian, engineer, surveyor, and cartographer who spent his life in India collecting historical artifacts, manuscripts, coins, and other items. He was the first Surveyor General of India, a position he held from 1815 until his death in 1821. Mackenzie's collections are an important source for studying Indian History.

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