

Some Travancore Dynastic Records,

(Third Series)

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In this the third article of the series I shall record the *paditharam* documents firstly, in corroboration of the genealogy of the Sovereigns as stated previously, and then the *neets* showing the assignment of lands and estates to the princes of the royal house.

The first document marked (a) dated the 17th Kartigai 755 M. E. states that King Martanda Varma (No. 6 of 1st series) mounts a palanquin on that day. From the documents of the first series it will be seen that Martanda Varma (No. 6) was King from 754-767 M. E. and that Ravi Varma was his successor. (See also Doc. X of the same date in 1st series.)

King Ravi Varma (No. 11 of the first series) died on the 11th Avani 838 M. E. This event is corroborated by the document marked (b) in this series. It is dated the 24th Avani 838 M. E. and states that the *punyaham* (purification) after the death of the King was performed on the 22nd idem, i. e. on the twelfth day, after the usual period of pollution.

The third document marked (c) is dated the 17th Tai 843 M. E. According to the documents of the first series Rama Varma (No. 12) was King from 838 M. E. This document says that Rama Varma assumed the headship of Jayatunganad (Quilon) at Kallada. It says only 'കാലാടം ഇന്നേഴിയ ഇടക്കം പൗരോഹിത' and not 'ചിറവയ്ക്കൽ ഇന്നേഴിയയിടക്കൽ പൗരോഹിത' (the head of Chiravay). The omission of the words 'head of Chiravay' throws a doubt as to whether this Rama Varma is the same person as the King (No. 12). It may however be noted

that both Chiravay and Jayatunganad had already become allied during the reign of his predecessor, King Ravi Varma (No. 11), and that, unless he was the Sovereign, he would not have assumed headship. Hence it may be presumed that King Rama Varma (No. 12) himself assumed the sovereignty of Quilon also.

The next six documents marked (d) to (i) will indicate the line of succession since the death of King Aditya Varma (No. 13) who died in 852 M. E. (1677 A. D.) According to accepted history, (Queen) Umayamma Rani succeeded him in that year. It may be inferred from document marked (d) that she must have ruled only as Regent for her son Ravi Varma, the only Prince who survived the Kalippankulam tragedy when five of his brothers were murdered by the Ettuveetil Pillamars. This document (d) dated the 15th Alpasy 860 M. E. states that Ravi Varma born in the star Kartiga, head of Chiravay, went to the palace (koikal) at Kallada and assumed the sovereignty of Jayatunganad (Quilon). This event is again referred to in the next document marked (e) which states also the necessity for doing so.

Document marked (e) is an incomplete record dated the 3rd Tai 860 M. E. and recites the events in connection with the resumption of the daily services (pooja) in the Sri Padmanabha temple in Trivandrum after their discontinuance for some time.

It does not say why the poojas ceased for a time. But we know from other sources that those were troublous times. Since the invasion of Thirumala Nayak some time

about 809 M. E., there have been successive incursions of the Madura troops (called *Vēdu-gappada*), and the whole of South Travancore was in an unsettled state. Taking advantage of this and at the instance of the traitors of the sovereign, a Muhammadan adventurer, ordinarily known as *Mukilan* (literally the Mogul) invaded and plundered the country. He fixed Manakkad near Trivandrum as his headquarters. This was in 852 M. E. In his devastation the Sri Padmanabha temple (in Trivandrum) alone escaped desecration at the intervention of some Muhammadan friends of Umayamma Rani. But the *poojaris*, the *pillamars* and others ran away shutting up the temple. So it was that the *pooja* (daily service) ceased to exist.

It appears from the document that, when the *Poojaris* escaped, they pilfered the temple of the golden covering of the image. It says that the Senior Rani of Attingal born in the star *Aswathi* (this was the *Nakshatra* of Umayamma Rani) and her minor son King Ravi Varma having resolved to resuscitate the daily services in the temple on a reduced scale (പുനഃപ്രവൃത്തി) and conduct the necessary purificatory ceremonies and the annual *Utsavam* (festival) convened the temple council. There it was decided that, according to past usage, although the daily *poojas* could be continued, the purificatory ceremony (പുനഃപ്രവൃത്തി) and the annual festival (അനുഷ്ഠാനം) should be performed only after the King had assumed the headship of Jayatunganad (Quilon) and Thrippappur (Attingal). In other words, unless the Sovereign is the head of all the three Houses, Chiravay, Jayatunganad and Thrippappur, he is incompetent to preside over the conduct of extraordinary ceremonies in the Sri Padmanabha temple.

It so happened that the head of the Chiravay House was then the head of the other

two houses also. So both the mother and son went to Kallada and on the 15th Alpsi 860 M.E. assumed the headship of Jayatunganad, stayed at Quilon for four days, came to Attingal and there also halted for four days, and then came back to Trivandrum. Then the repairs of the damaged portion of the *Bimbam* (sacred image,) were carried out.

It is further evident from this record that the Pillamars (Ettuveedar) and the Kurupus headed by Vira Kerala Varma of Poka Thayvazhi rebelled against the Senior Rani of Attingal in 852 M.E. This was evidently after the demise of her predecessor Aditya Varma (No. 13) in Masi, 852 M. E. In Avani 853 M.E. the annual Rohini festival (the Queen's star was *Aswathi*, & Ravi Varma's *Kartiga*) was performed, and the *Saraswathi Pooja* (*Daara*) conducted in Puratas; at Kalkuam (Padmanabhapuram). The wording of the record gives room for the suspicion that the chief Priest, Tharanalloor Padmanabhan Thirivikraman, was as guilty as the *poojaris* themselves and therefore one Thakarapurathu Chingan Akkiranman was got down from the northern part (പുനഃപ്രവൃത്തി) to officiate in the conduct of the daily services of the temple.

The document is incomplete. Otherwise, more information could have been obtained on these matters. It is however clear that Ravi Varma was the next King to Aditya Varma (No. 13), from Masi, 852 M. E. and that his mother, Umayamma Rani, reigned as Regent only.

Document (f) is also dated the 3rd Tai 860 M.E. It describes the assumption by Ravi Varma of the headship of the Thrippappoor House at the Mahadevar (*Siva*) temple at Thrippappur, eight miles to the north of Trivandrum. Even now the Maharajas of Travancore go to that temple for *Padiyettam*

after assumption of sovereignty. The record incidentally refers to the rebellion of the *Kuru-ppas* headed by Kerala Varma against the Senior Rani of Attingal (Umayamma Rani) mentioned in the previous record and the regalia being taken away by the rebels by breaking open the strong room (കുറുപ്പുറം), thus necessitating new regalia being made in gold.

The next two documents (g) & (h) both dated the 4th Tai 860 M.E. refer to the visits of King Ravi Varma to the Kanchipurathu Madom (കണ്ടിപ്പുറം) and the Sri Padmanabha temple respectively after assuming the headship of Thrippappur. Document (i) of the same date says that after worship in the temple, he went to Karippu Koikal (this Palace is still in existence within the Fort at Trivandrum) and paid Nazar and obeisance to the Senior Rani of Attingal (his mother).

It is evident from the afore-mentioned records that, when King Aditya Varma (No. 13) died in 853 M.E., he was succeeded by Umayamma, Senior Rani of Attingal as Regent for the minor son, King Ravi Varma, and that he assumed the reins of government in 860 M. E. (859?). The records in my possession do not say how long he ruled. But it is seen from the *Land Revenue Manual*, Vol. IV, p. 74 that he ruled up to 893 M. E. (1718 A. D.) His rule appears to have been a beneficent one as may be judged from the Edicts he issued to the people of Nanjanad regarding the revenue concessions consequent on the invasion of the Madura troops and the reforms he introduced in the land administration (*vide pp. 74—84 of the Land Revenue Manual*, Vol. IV.)

The Travancore Almanac says that King Ravi Varma was succeeded by Unni Kerala Varma. I have not come across any record of this Sovereign in the *Paditharam* accounts.

But document marked (j) dated the 16th Chitra 896 M. E. shows that Rama Varma was then King, while according to the chronology given in the Almanac, Rama Varma ascended the throne only in 1724 A. D. i. e. 899 M. E. The document under reference states that King Rama Varma assumed the headship at Thiruvattar Thoniman (തൃവട്ടാർ) Palace on the 1st Panguy 896 M. E., travelled to Kalkulam where he worshipped at the Siva shrines at Thiruvitancode, Kerala-puram and Kalkulam and stayed in the Valia Neerazhikkara Palace, and on the *Vishu* day (1st Chithira) a Wednesday worshipped Sri Velayudha at Velimala shrine, had special festival (പുഷ്പം) performed, and on the 5th Chithira started for Nanjanad, reached Bhuthapandy on 6th, Darsanamcope on the 7th idem, heard the complaints of the inhabitants, redressed their grievances and ordered them to go to his camp at Asramam, near Suchindram, on the 13th idem. On the 16th Chitra, the king proceeded with all his regal paraphernalia to worship in the Suchindram temple. The procedure adopted on royal visits to this temple is detailed next. The record however is incomplete.

I shall in a future paper describe the details of the ceremonies and procedure adopted on such occasions. Suffice it to say now that Rama Varma was King in 896 M.E. and not Unni Kerala Varma as the chronology given in the Almanac would have it. His successor was the renowned Martanda Varma, the maker of modern Travancore who ascended the Musnad in 934 M. E. (1729 A.D.). Thus we have now authentic records to prove the uninterrupted succession of Sovereigns for nearly two centuries from 719 M. E.

The remaining six documents here published marked (1) to (6) relate to assignment of lands and *desams* to members of the royal family. The first document marked (1) is dated the 7th Purattasi 810 M. E. It gives details of the *desam* and the revenue therefrom given to Unni Kerala Varma of the senior Poka Thayvazhi. Probably it was this Unni Kerala Varma who gave Viliñjam to the English East India Company in 820 M. E. (1644 A. D.) as referred to in the State Manual Vol. 1, p. 302. It also shows the pension allotted to Raja Rama Varma, apparently a member of the same family, from the revenues of the said *desam*. It has already been explained in my second article that Poka Thayvazhi Senior Branch became allied to the royal family by the adoption of 797 M. E.

The second document (No. 2) dated the 23rd Tai 829 M. E. is a similar gift of land for the possession and enjoyment of Ravi Varma Kochunni Pandarathil. Who is this Prince? Ravi Varma was the ruling Sovereign then. The document itself says that this young Prince after *Samavartanam* (Upanayanam) at Attingal on 21st Tai 829 M. E. in his sixteenth year came to Trivandrum and paid respects to King Ravi Varma on the 23rd idem. He is therefore a Prince of Attingal born in 813 or 814 M. E. It may however be noted that the epithet 'Kochunni Pandarathil' is found in the case of the adoptees from Vellarappallil, e. g. Rama Varma and Aditya Varma (*vide* documents of the second series). Whether it is an honorary pet name used in regard to all minor Princes, as the word Kochumni (കുറുചുമ്മ) in later times, or whether it is a special appellation to the descendants of the adopted Princes from Vellarappallil, I cannot say. The document under reference alludes to the

fact that the Thikkurichi Palace and demesne attached thereto given to this Prince were in the possession and enjoyment of Aditya Varma till 785 M. E.

The next document (No. 3) is dated the 29th Tai 855 M. E. It is a royal grant of the Manalikkara Fort and Palace, Kothanalloor Adhikaram and forest revenue (കടവനം), Nattalam, and the plateaus and valleys and also estates in Kadukkara in Nanjanad to Rama Varma Junior Prince (കുറുചുമ്മ) from 1st Avani 856 M. E. This grant was made by the then Sovereign Ravi Varma while residing at Attingal. This Ravi Varma was the son of Umayamma Rani and succeeded King Aditya Varma as a minor. It may be presumed that, because he was a minor then, he resided at Attingal, the Regent mother's residence.

On the 17th Tai next year, i. e. 856 M. E. pension was settled by assignment of lands and revenue to Vira Kerala Varma of Poka Thayvazhi. The name of the King who granted it is not mentioned in the document (No. 4). This record gives the names of several old tenures on which the lands had been formerly given. The terms *Anchali* (അച്ചാലി) & *Melvaram* (മേല്വരം) appear in several other documents also. *Anchali* is defined in the *Land Revenue Manual* as a cess levied on wet lands in Nanjanad under Otti, Jenmom and other Inam tenures. The name of one Arumana Nampirattiar Pandarathil, probably an aristocratic chief of the locality, is referred to. Some properties of this chief are also included in the grant. It may be that this Vira Kerala Varma is the successor of Kerala Varma who disputed the adoption of Ramakoil in 847 M. E.

Document No. 5 is the grant of Eraniel Chinganalloor to Prince Rama Varma. It is dated the 21st Avani 882 M. E. This Rama

Varma is the King mentioned in document (1) dated 16th Chithra 896 M. E. (*vide supra*). Eraniel was then the seat of the heir to the throne. What had become of Unni Kerala Varma who is said to have succeeded Ravi Varma in 893 M. E. is not known. Document H of the second series however mentions the name of one Kerala Varma head of Chiravay who died in 871 M. E. Unni Kerala Varma can no longer be traced. According to other records already referred to Ravi Varma was King in that year. If at all, Unni Kerala Varma could have ruled only from 893 to 896 M. E. Rama Varma was King three years hence in 896 (*vide document j*).

One important point to be noted in connection with this record is the grant of *Srikaryam* and *Kanakku* of the *Kadinambalam Mahadevar Devaswam* and *Madhusudanam Vinnavar Eraperumam* (മധുസൂദനാസ്സമം പാലം) *Devaswam* (i. e. *Parakkaswar Sachindram*). The ownership of *Devaswams* was a chief source of revenue in former days, as it is so even now, so long as the *Devaswam* revenues are not treated as a separate trust fund. Many jennies even now own *Devaswams* with properties, the income of which goes to augment the receipts of the family.

The name of the King who granted this *Sat* is not mentioned therein. But it may be presumed that it was Ravi Varma who reigned according to the Almanac till 893 M. E.

The last document No. (6) is dated the 2nd Alasi 810 M. E. It is the grant of *Emmal Chingannalloor Fort* and properties and other estates to Prince Ravi Varma.

In this *Net*, also the *Srikaryam* of *Alwar temple* and *Parakka Madhusudanaswami temple* is given among other properties

DOCUMENT a.

Martanda Varma (see Series 1, p. 8, No. 6) mounts palanquin at the Mahadevar temple in Tiruvancodur, on 17th Kartiga 756 M. E.

.....മരൻറ തിരുനാമ പെരുടയ
ടത്തിൻ പണ്ടാരത്തിൽ..... ടിത്തരം

ഈമുന്നെട്ടു

കാരത്തികൾ ഹെൻ.

നയിനാരം മാത്താണ്ടവമരൻറം തിരുനാമപ്പെരുടയ ചിറവായി മുത്ത ഇരുന്നരുളിയ ഇടത്തിൽ നയിനാരം തിരുവിതാങ്കൊട്ടുകാതെവരംകൊവിൽ തന്നിതിയിൽ നിന്നും നാളെ പുതനാഴിച്ചുമുറു ഉത്തിരട്ടാതിയും പൂർവക്ഷത്തു ഭഗവിയും? അൻറ തന്തരാമി കൊണ്ടു പല്ലക്കെറി അരുളുകയിൽ പടിത്തരം.

വിളക്കും കിണപതിയും. കിണപതിക്കുകതലിപ്പഴം ൨൫൫. വിളക്കിനു തെങ്ങാ ഏണ്ണൾ. ... [അഴം] മങ്ങല്ലിയം അരി ൧. നിറനാഴിക്കു നെൽ ൮. [നിറ] മരൈക്കുൽ ൧ കൂ നെൽ ൩൪. നിലവണിക്കു അരി അരയ്ക്കാൽ. സരിവക്കെട്ടു - ൨൫൫. പല്ലക്കു കൊമ്പു പൊതിവാൻ ചെല ൧. പല്ലക്കു എടുക്കും ഉള്ളടവു കണ്ണങ്കരൈ രാമൻ അമ്പലപ്പുറ ചുറവാൻ ചെല ൧. കെട്ടുവാൻ ചെല ൪. നല്ലൂരും ഉള്ളടവു [പൊലിനെൽ?] കാളി കാളിക്കു ചുറവാൻ ചെല [൧]. കെട്ടുവാൻ ചെല ൪. അഴം മങ്ങല്ലിയം എടുക്കും മുറപ്പണി തിടുകട്ടിക്കു ഉടുപ്പാൻ പണം ൩ [൪ കൂ] ചെല ൧. ഉത്തരയത്തിനു പണം ൨ ട്ൽ ചെല ൪. ചാർത്തുവാൻ എഴുതുതതിൽ മുക്കുറപ്പൻ കൊല്ലപ്പട്ടി ഇപ്പട്ടി ൧.

—T. K. J.