



Indian Pioneers of Singapore

Pugalenthi Sr



981-221-064-4

*This book is an
introduction to the
Indian pioneers who
contributed to the
existence, growth and
success of Singapore.*

*Pugalenthi Sr. has
compiled and
presented these
outstanding Indians
in an easy to read
style. He has also
attached archive
photographs of these
pioneers.*

*This book is
milestone in
documenting
contribution
Indians
to Singapore*

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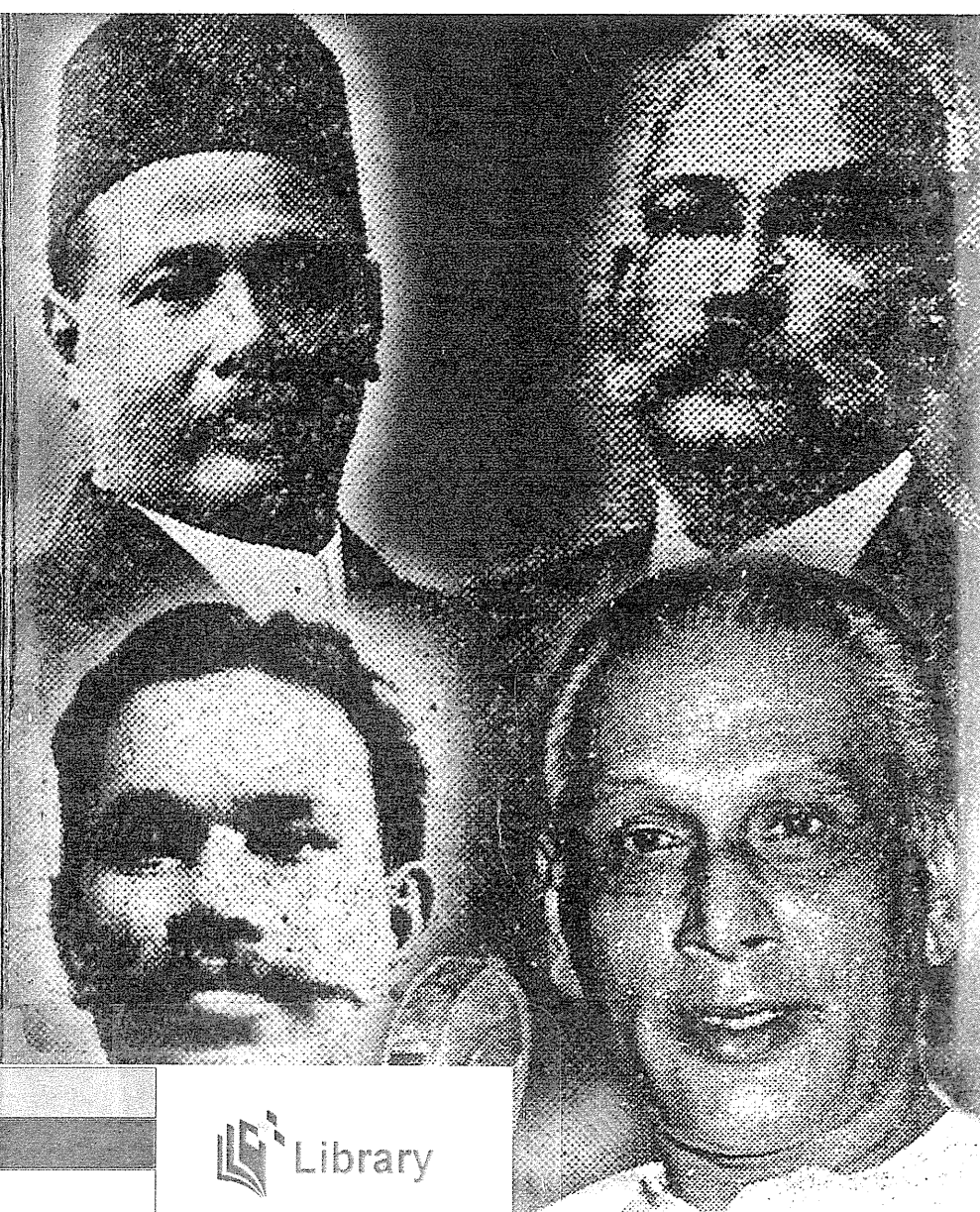
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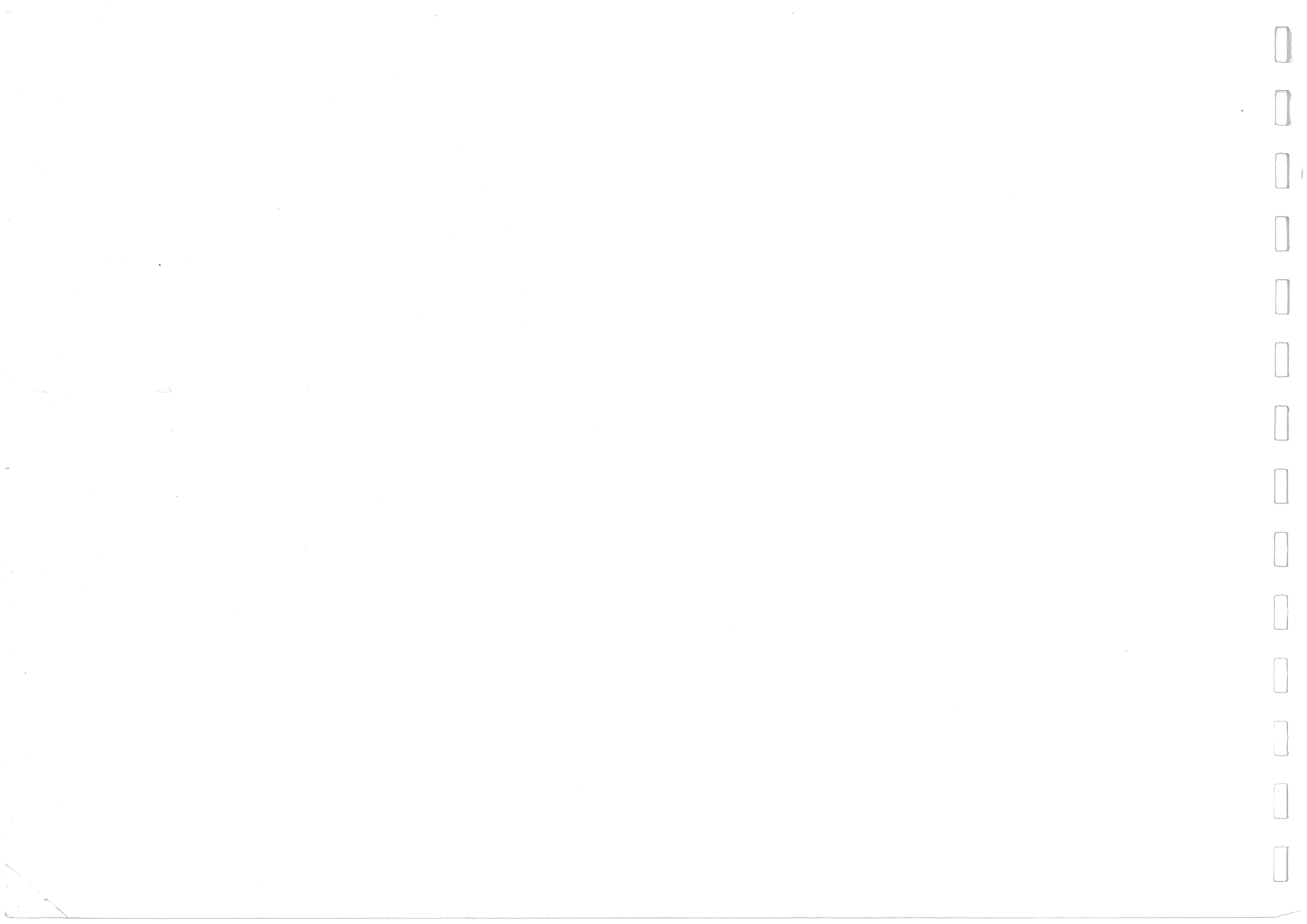


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Of Singapore*
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Pugalenthi Sr is a versatile and prolific writer who writes plays, poems and short stories of various genres in both the english and Tamil language. He is a managing director and is an (NS) Captain in the Republic Of Singapore Air Force.

He is an avid supporter and firm believer of creative writings in Singapore and he conducts lectures and workshops to encourage young aspiring writers in schools.

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*Indian Pioneers
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By

Pugalentbi Sr



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Dedications



This book is dedicated

to the new generations of Indians

born in Singapore and Malaysia.

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Contents
❖❖❖ ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖ ❖❖❖

G. Sarangapany 11

A.C. Suppiab 14

N. Veerasamy Naidu 17

O. Ramasamy Nadar 20

*Labour
supply B. Govindasamy 22*

Koona Vayloo Pillai 25

Dr. A. Viswalingam 31

A.R. Annamalay Chettiar 36 ✕

M. Kandagnany G.H.A. 39

S. Muthukumar Pillai 42

A.N. Ratnasingam 45

D. Sundaramodaliyar 48

EVS? N. Elyathamby Pillai 50

P. Abdul Kader Maricayer 52

Contents

V.R.A. Thaver	54
Arumugam Naganather	57
V. Murugasam Pillay	60
M. Murugasu	62
T. Pakirisamy Pillay	64
M. Kaduthosy	66
S. Govindasamy Pillay	68
K.S.A.S. Somusundra Mudaliar	70
G. Maruthamuthu	72
Thambimutto Sivapirasam	74
Souce Maria Nathan	76
S.N. Samy	79
Narayanan Chettiar A.V.L.	82

Contents

Mrs B.C. Handy	85
M. Akkisa Malumee	88
N. Thenappa Chetty	90
V. Narayanasamy Pillai	92
V. Pakirisamy Pillai	94
A.V. Munusamy Chettiar	98
M. Vytilingam Pillai	102
Rev S.M. Thevathasan	106
A. Athisayam ..	109
M. Kader Sultan J.P.	112
A.R. Muthia Chettiyar J.P.	114
A.R. Mariappa Mallickondar	116
M. Sithanbaram Pillai	119

*"Every generation will have its own
approach and questions, since history is,
in the end, an inquiry about the past.
History is not an inert reconstruction of the past
that gets sets once and for all;
it is a form of inquiry, and these inquiries
will shift and renew and grow in time.
Succeeding generations will write
different kinds of histories - and should."*

- Bernard Bailyn



G. Sarangapany



G. Sarangapany

Mr Sarangapany was born on 20 Apr 1903 at Tanjai Mavattam, Thiruvuru, India. After spending his early years studying, he came to Singapore in 1924 to seek his fortune. He took a job as a clerk in a trading firm and he rose speedily in ranks by his diligence and committment.

Mr Sarangapany was moved by the hardship and sufferance of Indians in Singapore and he wanted to make a contribution. In 1930, he became the editor of 'Munetram' weekly after serving as an assistant editor for only a year.

It was an era in Tamil Nadu where revolution was spearheaded by Periyar, who by his speeches and writings, was awakening Dravidians from the shackles of caste system and superstitions. Periyar visited Singapore in 20 Dec 1929 and Sarangapany was moved by Periyar's committment and sincerity.

Mr Sarangapany was instrumental in starting the Tamils Reform Society in 21 Apr 1930. He campaigned for the upliftment of Tamils to discard caste system, avoiding drunkardness and to give equal opportunities to women in education and life. Tamils Reform Society set forth the tasks with such

fervour that it became a leading society with numerous members.

In 1935, the weekly paper of the society Tamil Murasu was in debt. Sarangapany not wanting to shut down the paper, took over the debt and the paper. By 1 Dec 1937, Tamil Murasu daily was in financial difficulties.

Mr Sarangapany used the paper to spread reform ideas, using Tamil as the gelling agent for the community. The paper was not well received. Mr Sarangapany would himself carry the paper on his shoulders and go villages to villages, door to door, to sell the paper. He would be mocked and harrassed and sometimes even hit by the people. He showed no fear and his dedication sustained him. Slowly, readership grew.

By 1960, Tamil Murasu became the No. 1 Tamil daily in Singapore and Malaysia.

Even with his charismatic speeches and moving writings, the Tamil community was moving rather slowly towards prosperity. It was then that he wanted to sow the seeds of succees in the next generation.

To do it, he set up in 1948 the Tamil Education Board. Many Tamil schools were not properly run due to financial difficulties. Sarangapany set up the board to raise funds and to educate the youths so that in future they would prosper in

Singapore and not stay as coolies and labourers. His organisational ability was astounding. In one singular day he could galvanise over 2,000 members to go out and garner over \$30,000 by evening.

In August 1951, he started the Tamils Representative Council to gather societies under one flagship so as to co-ordinate their efforts and not to duplicate their social works. Such concepts were then extended beyond the shores and took roots in Malaysia.

By 1952, his other ideas of Tamils Festival where all Tamils regardless of religion, social status can gather and enjoy themselves, was a resounding success. All over Malaysia, even in remote cities and rubber plantations, Tamils Festival was celebrated.

In 1952, when Singapore citizenship was given, many Indians refused it. Sarangapany saw the benefit of getting the Singapore citizenship. He went door to door, campaigned relentlessly, even set up a booth at the society to allow members to fill up the documents and take the oath of allegiance.

His dedication and committment to uplift the Tamil community knew no bounds. What has been written here is just a brief introduction to a great pioneer who used Tamil Language to get the community together and under that umbrella other Indian languages and communities flourished.



A.C. Suppiah

Mr A.C. Suppiah was born in Singapore on 12 Dec 1881.

His parents, Mr A.Sithamparam and Mangalathamal, had travelled to Singapore from Thirupaangkottai, India in 1875 on a ship called Nagai Meenachi.

Mr Suppiah studied in Singapore until 1894 when he stopped his education at primary four to follow his parents back to India.

In India, he studied sculpture, drawing, medicine and astrology. He was very intelligent. With the blessings of Mahatma Sathanantha, he also learnt special medical treatments and religious teachings. He got married to Miss Anjalaiaammal and returned to Singapore in 1901.

After working in the Government Investigation Department and then Sepoy Football department, in his part-time, started his own business in drawing and building (architectural and construction). He was well liked by the people due to his wide knowledge and good heart. Eventually, he started his own pharmacy. He specialised in traditional herbal treatments. At 251 Serangoon Road, he



A.C. Suppiah



started a company called Kantharasam Company. He packed medicinal ointment for workers at an economical price.

He became so well known that even people in remote locations in Malaysia and other countries knew of him. His business expanded to 233 and 235 Serangoon Road. He became the founder of the 'Singapore Vivekanda' club, 'Singapore Tamil Students' club, 'Agampadiyar' club and 'Agathi thiravidar' club. In 1932, he was the head for 'Seerthirutham' club with 1000 members voting for him.

On the whole, Mr A. C. Suppiah contributed a lot towards the Indian community in Singapore, both medically and socially. Under his leadership, other well known men were nurtured to lead the community.



N. Veerasamy Naidu

Dr N. Veerasamy Naidu was born in 1864.

His parents were Mr Narayanasamy Naidoo and Ramanushahammal. His grandfather, Mr. Kuppusamy Naidoo taught him Tamil till the age of four. He was intelligent and a fast learner. After completing his Tamil education, he went to Raffles School where he studied English.

He worked in a lawyer's office run by Mr. Cooke. He became dissatisfied with his job and quit to study medical treatments. His attention was drawn to investigating new medicine herbs. He worked in a hospital owned by Mr Govindasamy Naidoo who was born in Kaaraikkaal.

Mr. Veerasamy was a brilliant, hard-working, self-educating person. He investigated and discovered the causes of various new diseases and derived scientific and traditional treatments for them. He was very kind and his treatments were very effective. He was also popular and well known as an exceptional physician.

Despite his lack of wealth early in life, he became very knowledgable and through hard work,



N. Veerasamy Naidu



he was able to set up his own clinic called Indian Dispensary in Rochor Road. He passed all the examinations set by the Governor and the Dispensary became profitable after being recognised. He became a wealthy man.

Mr Naidoo was one of the few Tamil people involved in the government. He was the president of the Hindu Advisory club. He was also a member of the Municipal club and the India club's chairperson. He was chosen as Justice of Peace and he had the honour of having Veerasamy Road * named after him. He enjoyed all luxuries until he contracted rheumatism and suffered in bed till his death.



O. Ramasamy Nadar

Mr O. Ramasamy Nadar's father was Mr Oodaiyappa Nadar from India, Ramanathapuram, Thirupathur Thalluka, Pallathoor Post, Nadar generation. He studied Tamil and came to Singapore in 1909 to work in liquor business, one year before the indenture system of recruiting Indian labour was abolished.

He ended his business in 1925 and using Singapore's Market Street as a base, became a rice and grocery supplier to Malaysia's small markets and rubber plantations.

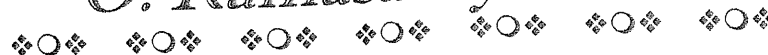
With his wealth, he bought many houses and land in Singapore. His godowns were stretched across at River Valley area. He supported and greatly encouraged the advancement of Indians in Singapore. He was extremely concerned about the well-being of the Indian people. When A.C. Suppiah and Sarangabani sought his help to support Tamils Reform Society, he in turn donated his shophouse at Serangoon Road for the organisation.

He was one of the few men who owned a Rolls Royce similar to the one owned by the governor. When he went for a business trip to India, his passport was not sanctioned and he could not return back to Singapore.

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O. Ramasamy Nadar





B. Govindasamy

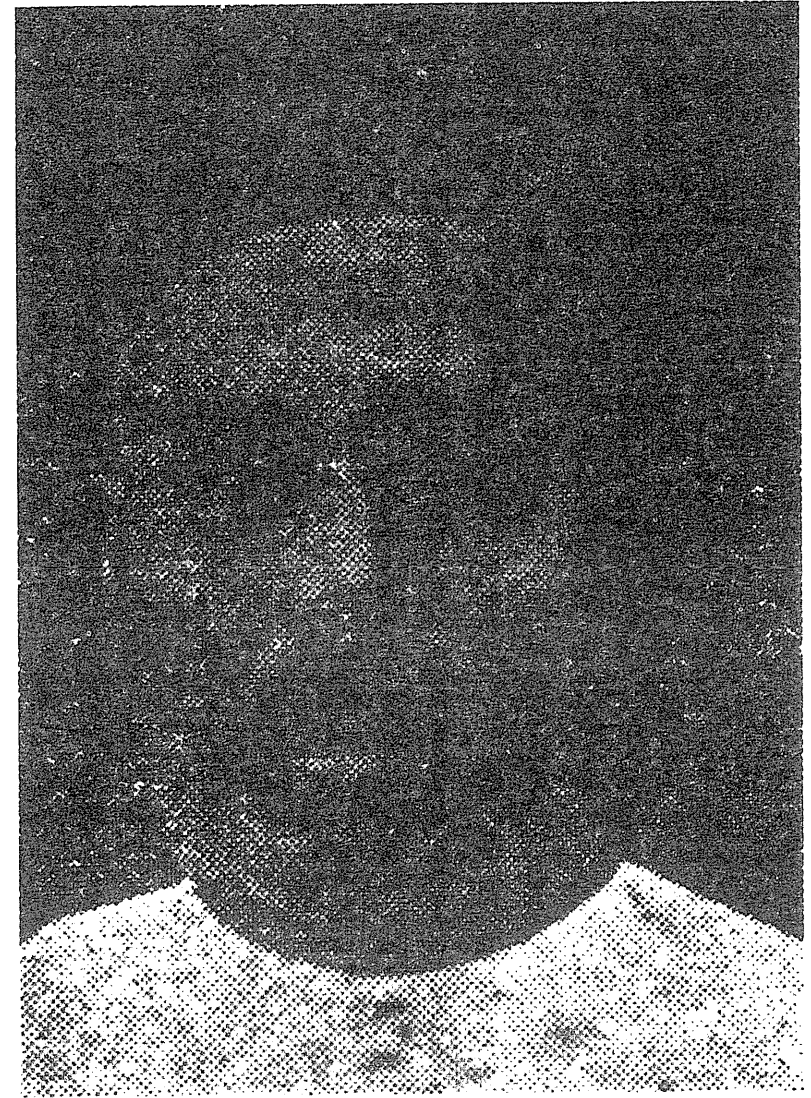
Mr B. Govindasamy was born on 5 Sept 1889.

His parents were Mr Baluguru and Komalamma from South India, Thirunaapalli, Oodaiyarpalayam. He studied Tamil at Tamil School at French Thirumalairayan Town. He came to Singapore around 1907 and worked under Mr Muhamad Yusoff who had a contract to supply labour at the Singapore Tanjong Pagar Harbour Board. When Mr Sirangu passed away in 1922, Mr B. Govindasamy took over the contract.

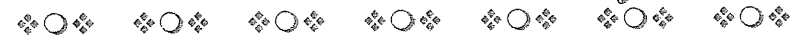
He did the job to the satisfaction of the Harbour Board officials and he was praised by the other races for his work. He was fond of his nation and caste and he was the Tamil people's Perukariyar, * one who helped many people and one who attempted to uplift the Tamil community.

Poets and philosophers came to him and sang praises to him and earned gold. People like Balakenthagasamy sang poems to him. These poets and philosophers were supported by clubs and rich and generous people like Mr B Govindasamy.

His efforts to uplift the people in Singapore



B. Govindasamy



and India are highly commendable. He was the Thilagar for the Singapore Hindus club. He was also the Danabashagar for the Singapore Vivekananda Sanmarka club, Singapore Students Pure Tamil club and Indian Tamil Beginners School.

He was the arbitrator president of Sri Mariamman Temple due to his good behaviour, helpful nature, government loyalty and piousness. He was chosen by the government office. He was also a member in the Hindu Advisory Board and he helped bring about many reforms in the club.

He loved his nation as much as life itself. He treated everyone with equality and had no prejudice towards caste. His tolerance towards all races can be shown by the fact that he donated money towards the construction of the Sultan Mosque at Arab Street. He also donated money towards the construction of the Sri Ramakrishnan Mission at Noris Road and the renovation of Sri Kaliamman Temple in Serangoon Road. He also donated money to the Indian Ladies Union Club.

There was a temple at Bukit Timah where people go to pray to the Eyar deity (Tin deity). Mr B. Govindasamy built a zinc roof building to house the pilgrims where they can cook, eat and shelter themselves.



Koona Vayloo Pillai

Mr Koona Vayloo Pillai was born in 1856.

His father was Mr Kuttaiya Koundar who came to Singapore in 1837 from South India's Erodtta Samisthanam. His mother was Veerayiammal, the daughter of Seetharam, from the same town.

Mr Pillai's father worked in construction works like the water pond in Thompson Road, government jobs and mason jobs. His mother and his maternal grandfather owned a number of cows in Singapore Town and Bukit Timah 9th mile and they ran a milking business. At the time, Bukit Timah was an undeveloped jungle area with little civilization and no roads so transportation was a problem for them. People used to travel between Singapore and Johore by horse carriages.

Mr Pillai was left in the care of his grandfather when he was a young boy. His grandparents were very rich people and as a teenager he helped them and worked hard. He studied Tamil and grew to love it. He owned houses in Penang Lane and Tanglin.

When his father asked him to follow him back to India, Mr Pillai refused and as a result his father got angry with him and left without leaving him any

money. His father then passed away.

Mr Seetharam, the grandfather of Mr Pillai, left a will leaving his wealth to his grandson and his wife. He also made Mr Pillai the trustee of the will. But since he was under 21 years of age, the court appointed an outsider as the trustee. The trustee was a dishonest man who showed fake accounts and swindled all the money, leaving only a balance of 45 cents. Mr Pillai and his grandmother were unfamiliar with the court proceedings and actions and did not know how to disprove the trustee. They had no one to turn to for help. Even the 45 cents was taken by the trustee.

Mr Pillai and his grandmother became paupers. Even the wealthy Tamils did not help them and Mr Pillai did not wait for their help. He often hid away when he spotted other Tamil people.

He was a cautious and intelligent man and lived a humble life. He built up his courage and vowed to succeed. He got a job at Mr E.R. Koek's grandfather's cow farm; he did not mind working as a cowherd to support his grandmother. After some time, Mr Koek noticed his honesty, talent and decency and decided to sell him his cows at a reasonable price. Soon, Mr Pillai started supplying milk to Mr Koek and the other Europeans who lived in the Tanglin area. He obtained the friendship of the Europeans and other good people and his milk



Koona Vayloo Pillai



business boomed. He learnt that misfortune can be transformed.

In 1890, he married Ms Allameluaachi, the daughter of Mr Sabapathy Pillai from South India, Kumbakonam, Sempiyavarampal.

After his marriage, he became more prosperous. However his cows were housed at Cairnhill where there were many pigs and chicken farms run by Chinese. The Europeans became unhappy about the prosperity of Cairnhill and the Johore Sultan was advised to tear down all the houses there. Notices were sent out to the owners to vacate the place. Luckily, with the help of Sir David Galloway, Mr Pillai's house and farm were the only one saved.

With the capital he earned from his milking business, he became a money lender, rented out bullock carts and horse carriages and did other businesses. He earned a great deal of money and he earned praise from other races for his honesty. Mr Pillai became more confident. He went into real estate. He envisioned it would be a demand in Singapore. He bought houses, gardens and land and rented them out. All his wishes had come true for him.

In 1907, he stopped his milk business and concentrated solely on money lending and real

estate. In 1909, he went to India for pilgrimage at Kasi, Raamespuram, and other places of worship. His business boomed.

In 1915, he went to Madras for an eye operation. After that he handed his business over to his son Mr Pakirisamy Pillai and he retired. He had two sons, Mr V. Pakirisamy and Mr V. Narayanasamy Pillai, and four daughters. He set up a number of charities for the poor in Singapore and India. He also adorned the Suppramanian deity in Veeramakaliamman Temple in Serangoon Road with gold.

His wife passed away before him and he died on 24 Mar 1931.

His will left his wealth to his sons and asked them to carry on upholding their father's good name. His sons carried out his wishes and became involved in multiple charities, paying for the renovation and Mahakumbabishegam (house warming) of the Sri Manmatha Karunesbarar Temple in Singapore Kallang Road and the building of Mr K. Vayloo Pillai hall in Sri Ramakrishnan Mission in Singapore Norris Road. In memory of their mother, they built a hall and a tower in Sri Krishna Moorthy Temple in Singapore Waterloo Street.

Mr Pillai had stayed in Singapore for 75 years. The Tamils were proud that he was a man who had

always followed the customs and traditions. He never touched cigarettes, suruttus and toddy and led a clean life. Mr Pakirisamy's son Mr P. Veerasamy was the fourth generation of the family in Singapore. He studied in England. Due to their booming business, hard-working capability and humble lifestyle without unnecessary spending, the family was able to live with wealth and status.



Dr. A. Viswalingam

Mr A. Viswalingam was born in 1890 in Ooralla area.

His mother was Devanai Ammai, the daughter of Mr Kaasi Pillai who was the brother-in-law of Vithanaiyar Vinayagar Moorthy. She was also the granddaughter of Kanagaratnam Mudaliar. Mr Viswalingam's father was Mr Sangarapillai Arumugam from Yaalpaanam, Orumbarai area.

Dr Viswalingam studied Tamil when he was young and then English at Kanthavarothaya English College. He travelled to Singapore to study. He learnt higher medical in 1909 at King Edward VII College of Medicine Singapore.

He was very involved in the Singapore Sri Lankan Tamil club. He became its secretary and introduced many changes to the club. He also worked hard to build the club's own building. Since he was one of the first Sri Lankans to sign up in the Singapore Volunteer Corps, he became a Sergeant. (NCO) He was the Honorary Secretary in the Singapore Medical Union for 3 years. He passed his medical examinations and received the Doctor Lim Boon Keng Gold Medal for Medicine.

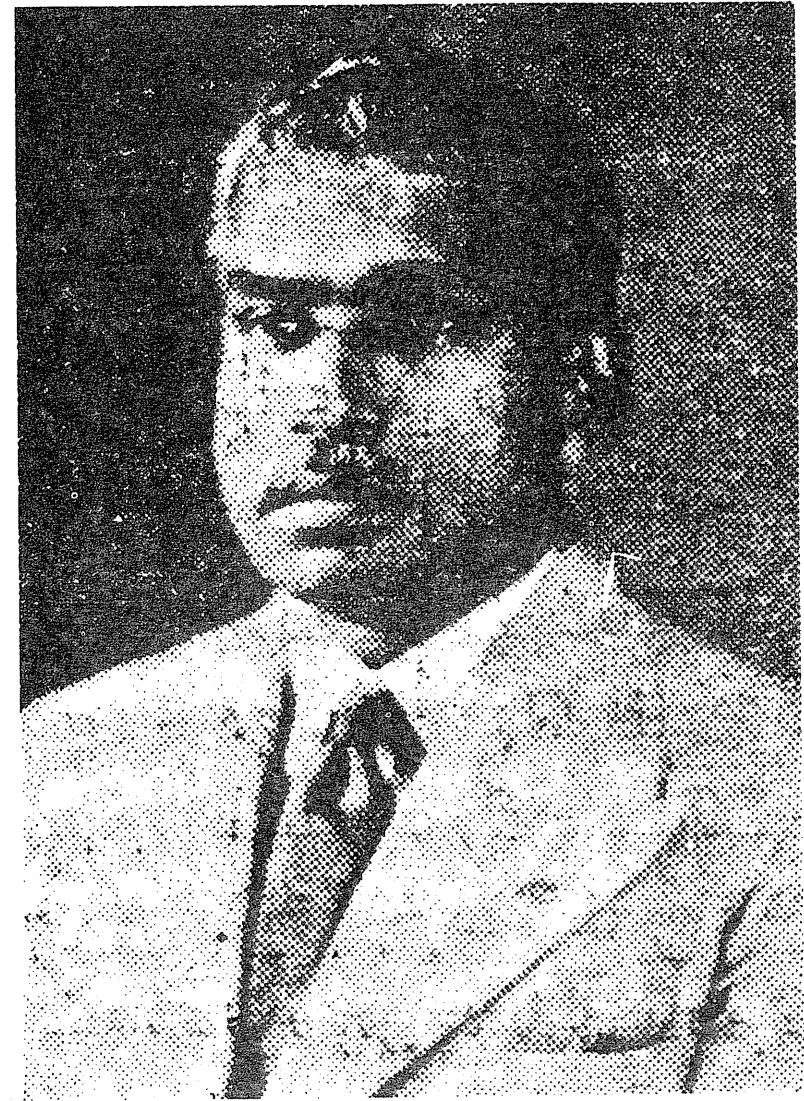
He taught as a Demonstrator in Anatomy for 3 years. In 1913, he got a Diploma (LMS) for medicine and worked in the Perak Government Hospital. In 1914, he also worked as Taipeng Medical Officer.

He discovered the disease Pellagra in Malaya and his discovery was written in the England Journal of Tropical medicine and Hygiene by Sir James Cantlie.

In 1917, he became the chairman for the Sri Lankan Tamil Club in Taipeng. He also started a Hindu Youth club in Taipeng after calling the Hindus for a meeting in his home, to increase the awareness of religion. He became the president of the club and requested and obtained 2 acres of land to build a temple meeting hall and Vithiyasalai for the club.

In 1918, he married Ms Ratanammal Umadevi, the granddaughter of Mr Ambalavanar Saravanamuthu Laimon, a teacher at Achuvelli Vasasthalam and a senior teacher at Yaalpaanam Centre College. She was also the daughter of Mr Ponnambalam Aiyathurai, an engineer from Yaalpaanam Sanditippa.

In 1919, he was a District Medical Officer at Kuvalakanjar and he invented methods of getting rid of the Puru disease that had affected many Malays there.



Dr. A. Viswalingam



Having heard of his healing abilities, many Malays from other places came looking for him. Not only did he publish a book on the cause and the treatment of the disease, he also wrote a request to the government to look into the disease and an inquiry was carried out in the whole of Malaya.

Due to his attempts and concern, he inevitably helped to uplift the name of the Indians among the government officials, Malays as well as among other members of the general public. The Sultan, Britainia Representatives and the public were surprised at Dr Viswalingam's reforms to Kuvalakanjar district's environment. They praised him and gave him formal certificates. He also became the personal physician to the Sultan's family.

From 1922 to 1923, he went to India and did post graduate studies in Opthamology Obsetrics and Gynaecology. In 1934, he opened an eye clinic in a government hospital in Kuala Lumpur.

It was an ideal location for people to receive treatment. In the same year, he also started a Malaya Saiva club after inviting the people who were interested in the growth of saiva religion to his home in Kuala Lumpur. Dr Viswalingam was the club's president until 1937.

The club grew and a library and a home temple were added on to carry out charity. Dr Viswalingam

also instigated the renovation of the Shivan Temple and many gave donations to help do so.

In 1930 or 1931, after travelling to England, Europe and Africa, he went to Vienna University to learn treatments for the eyes, ears, nose, throat and other body parts.

He then became a specialist. He also travelled to London, Edinburgh, Paris, Berlin, Losan, Penn, Geneva, Rome, Cairo and many other cities to meet up with doctors and discuss with them their experiences in medicine.

He returned to the Kuala Lumpur Eye Clinic and became its Opthalmic Specialist Consultant. He was the first Asian to work in the Malayan Medical Service which only employed Europeans at that time. It was only later that people of other races were allowed in. He was one of the 25 people who formed the Rotary club in Kuala Lumpur. He was the club's president from 1936 to 1937.

Dr Viswalingam also enjoyed horse riding and golf. He was a good example to many and a pride to us. He was world famous for his many good deeds. He did good deeds not for personal recognition but for the good of the people.



A.R. Annamalay Chettiar

Mr A.R. Annamalay Chettier was born on 3 Feb 1908 in Rama-Santhirapuram Village, South India, Madras, Thiruchi District, Puthukottai.

His mother passed away when he was young and he was brought up by his grandmother, Mdm Oommaiyal. He studied English and Tamil as first languages and he won prizes for his proficiency in language. He was also active in club activities. He married Miss Naachammai.

He worked under a moneylender in Penang and came to Singapore when he was posted there by the same moneylender. He was diplomatic and improved business by introducing a systematic manner for moneylending. He started a Chettiar (Moneylenders) Varthega (Trading) Club" and invited the Municipal President for its opening service. He also started a tennis club and became its vice-captain.

When he had to return to India, he was given a grand farewell dinner. After some time, he came back to Singapore and took over friend's, Mr A.R.A. Ramasokalingam Chettiar's, shop in Singapore. He again became the president of the Chettiar Trading Club. At this point in time there



A.R. Annamalay Chettiar





M. Kandagnany G.H.A.

Mr Kandagnany was born on 20 May 1886.

His parents were Mr Swaminather Murugesu and Mrs Sinnachimbil from Yaalpaanam, Vattukillaku. He studied Tamil at Saiva School, English at English School and then studied at Victoria College in Yaalpaanam. In 1905, he came to Singapore and studied at St John's Institution and then at Kuala Lumpur Methodist School.

In 1908, he studied medicine from Sir Watson and passed the government exams for medicine. He worked in several government hospitals.

He went back to Yaalpaanam and married Thangammal, the daughter of Mr Veenasithambi Ambalavanar, his paternal uncle. He continued working in hospitals and he was also one who worked towards the improvement of the Tamillar club. He worked in the Jaffna fund raising club. Jaffna was formed for Yaalpaanam Aeroplanes in the European Wars. He also raised funds for India Flood Disaster.

He went to India Yaathiraiyilidupattu Aamathpath in 1921 for a congress.

In 1924, he stopped working in hospitals and

was a rule on moneylending which was affecting their business. He helped to amend this law and certain other laws. Thereafter he withdrew from being the president of the Trading Club.

Mr Chettiar as also the trustee of Thandayathpani Temple, member of the Government Advisory Board and Chettiar's Education Institutes President in 1937. In 1937, during the Thaipusam celebration at Tank Road temple, he invited the governor and accorded him the proper respects.

Having accomplished all this by the age of 27, he was well respected and became the people's representative. His story is one from which we can all draw motivation to achieve and obtain people's trust and respect.

Is Annamalai Ave named after him?!

began working in the Railway Station. After a year, he became a Hospital Assistant at Kelantan Government Hospital.

Mr Kandagnany worked very hard to apply for a cemetery for the Indians and Sri Lankans in Kuala Lumpur and finally got approval for one in 1926.

When he had to leave anyplace due to a work transfer, the people would gather together and give him a farewell dinner and read him farewell notes. He was a leader that made things happen.



M. Kandagnany G.H.A.





S. Muthukumar Pillai

Mr S. Muthukumar Pillai's father was Mr Somanatha Pillai from Yaalpaanam, Valikaamam Sulipuram. Mr Pillai learnt Tamil and English.

He came to Singapore and got a job at Lemat Engineering as a land surveyor and later became a contractor. He worked at building soccer fields and he did special roadworks.

He went back to Yaalpaanam after some time and married Ms. Muthachiammal, daughter of Mr Sinnappu. They came back to Singapore and he worked in Government Municipal Harbour Board sections. He became rich and soon owned houses, gardens and land in Singapore.

He was well liked and respected by all Tamils due to his good manner and heart. Tax collectors always came to his house personally to collect money from him.

He was a charitable person and he gave donations to the Sri Lanka Tamil Club. He was chosen to be the club's chairperson many times due to his helpful nature, love for Tamil, culture and language. He was also a member of the Singapore Advisory Board.



S. Muthukumar Pillai



He not only donated money for the construction of Ceylon Road Shanbaga Vinayagar temple but also took great effort to make sure it was completed. He was appointed the temple's chairman. Without his commitment and dedication the temple that we see now might not have materialised.



A.N. Ratnasingam

Mr Ratnasingam was born on 30 Mar 1895.

His father was Mr Appadurai, a Chief overseer at the Sri Lankan Kadukas Thottai area and was from well known. His mother was Abiramiammal. Mr Ratnasingam studied Tamil at Erubdai School and English at St John College. He worked in Yaalpaanam Jaffna Commercial Ltd in 1913 for a monthly salary of 5 rupees and progressed to 65 rupees a month.

Finally he quit and began working in a tea plantation for 90 rupees a month. He came to Singapore in 1922 to seek a better fortune.

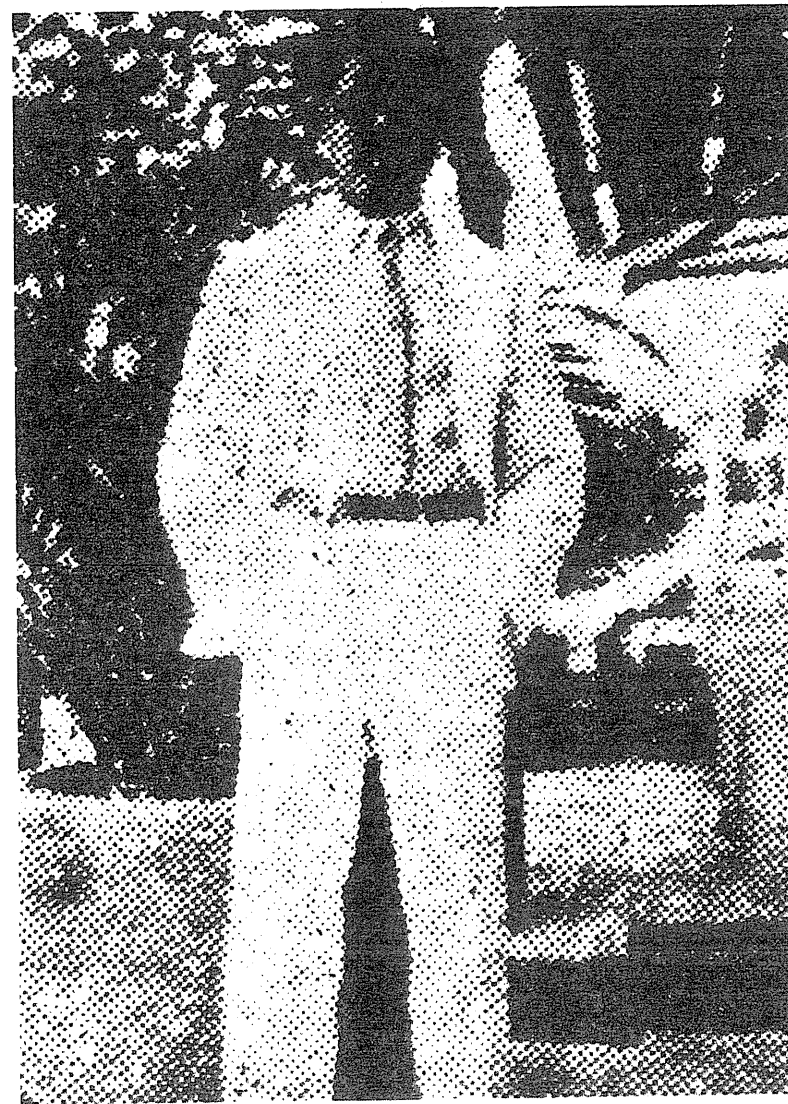
In January 1925, he worked in the Singapore Hume Pipe Company.

In 1928, he returned to Yaalpaanam and married Ms Sellammal, the daughter of Mr Pandithar Suppaya, a man respected by all the races in Malacca.

Her uncles were Mr M Rama Pillai and Mr M Ponnambalam. The former was a Nillamirasuthar in Yaalpaanam, an employee of the Sri Lankan government and called a millionaire by many whereas the latter was a Chief Goods Clerk and

then a Station Master. Her other uncle was Mr T Thambaiya, a Tamil and English teacher in Oduppity, Nalloore Pendachalai and a conductor in Mount Austin Estate. Mr Tambaiya's wife, a teacher in Odupitty, Pendachalai and Sri Ramanather Pendachalai were Ms Sellammal's sisters.

Mr Ratnasingam stayed in Yaalpaanam for some time before coming back to Singapore to work as a foreman in Hume Pipe Company. He was well liked by many and worked to the favour of his officers.



A.N. Ratnasingam





D. Sundaramodaliyar

Mr D. Sundaramodaliyar was born in 1887 in Singapore.

His father was Mr Darmalinga Modaliyar from Thirumalaraasan Pattanam village. He studied English in Anglo Chinese English School and obtained a pass in the higher language tests.

In 1904, after working in the Singapore General Hospital, he joined Singapore Police Inspector office as a clerk.

He later worked as chief clerk at Singapore Public Department. (PWD) He was a member of the Hindu Governing Body of a Temple Club and a secretary in the Hindu Advisory Board. He was an honest person.



D. Sundaramodaliyar



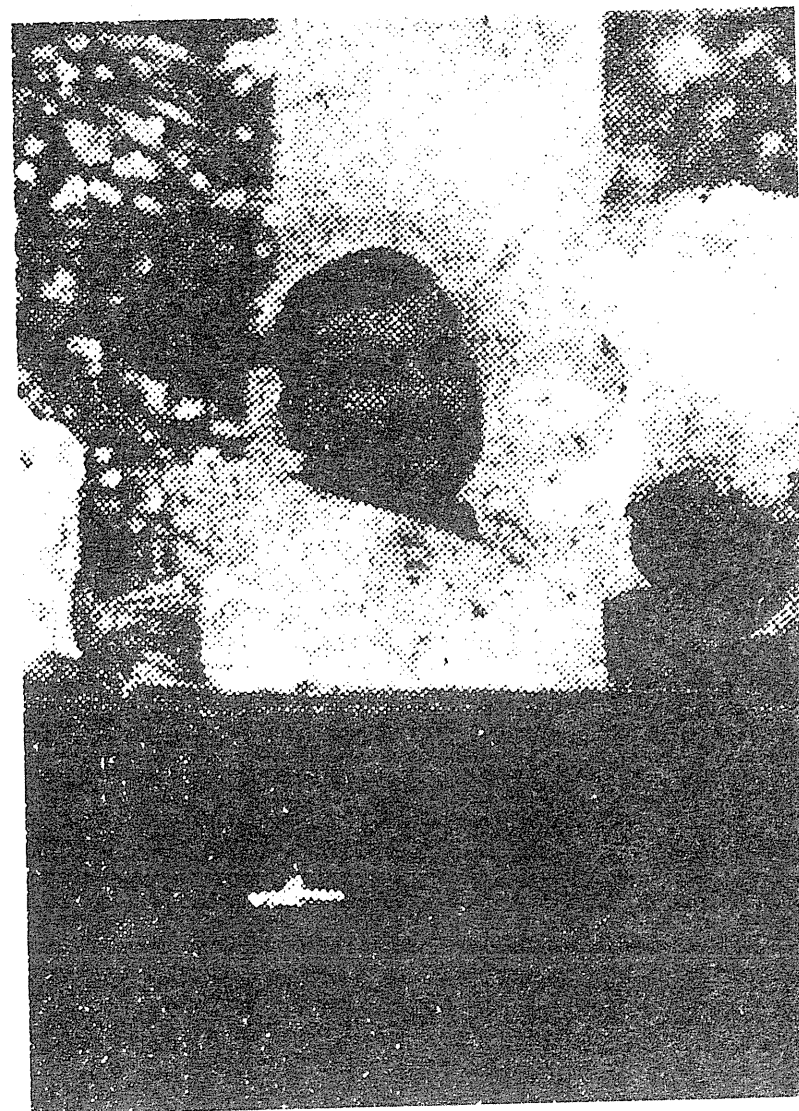


N. Elyathamby Pillai

Mr Elyathamby Pillai was born in Kurichi, Yaalpaanam, Sri Lanka. His parents were Mr Nanithamby and Maragathanachanammal, the daughter of Mr Ganapathy Pillai. He studied Tamil and English and then came to Singapore to do many different jobs.

He dealt a lot with insurance in companies such as New Zealand Insurance, Selangor Life Insurance and Great Insurance Company. He was a commisioner for property dealing as well as a broker for pawning. His honesty enabled him to gain the trust and business dealings of many Europeans, Chinese and Chettiars.

He stayed in a grand house in Bukit Timah Road, which had a garden. His first wife was Mrs Sundravalliyammal who passed away after giving birth to a few children. He remarried and his second marriage was a success. Mr Pillai was well known for his honesty and intelligence.



N. Elyathamby pillai





P. Abdul Kader Maricayer

Mr Abdul Kader Maricayer 's father was Aathinathulkaaraikal Baktart Maricayer. He was born in 1875.

He learnt Arab and Tamil when he was young. In 1887, at the age of 12, he came to Singapore to work in his grandfather's textile and sari shop. His business boomed.

In 1895, he began buying and selling properties worth millions of dollars. He had a knack for real estate.

He was the only Indian Muslim to be doing property selling. Therefore he had a lot of respect from Europeans, Chinese and Chettiars.

Mr Maricayer had great interest in Tamil books. He built a Muslim mosque in Serangoon Road and he devoted his time to helping the mosques in Singapore. He was a knowledgeable man in Islamic scriptures and verses. He was a patient and well-mannered person who others emulated.



P. Abdul Kader Maricayer





V.R.A. Thaver

Mr Thaver was born on 3 Sept 1907 in Thirumakottai, Tanjore.

His parents were Mr Velu Ramasamy Thaver and Thaiyamuthammal. He studied English and Tamil by himself. He arrived in Singapore on 26 Feb 1926 and worked as a help assistant 'ligithar' in Raffles Hotel.

In October 1929, he worked in Vivekananda Sanmarga club as a member, club representative, Prime Minister's secretary, Education secretary, Property secretary.

In January 1930, he became a member of Health and Strength League London. He was also Agampadiyar Magajana club's education secretary, Tamilar Seerthiruthar club's joint Maths examiner and a committee member of mangement committee and a scout member. He was awarded a gold medal on 4 July 1933 for his social service work.

He went back to India on 5 July 1933 and on 1 Sept 1933, he married Miss Thiruchelvi Kamalambal, the Congress President, Suppiah Thevar's daughter.



V.R.A. Thaver



He returned to Singapore on 6 Apr 1935 and on 15 Dec 1936, he became a member of the Hindu Endowment Board and worked as Sri Mariamman Temple's Clerk and Cashier.

He was also Vivekananda Sanmarga Club's first Chief minister's secretary from 1935 onwards and worked towards the club's success.



Arumugam Naganather

Mr Naganather was born in Yaalpaanam, Vattukottai, Naaranthanai Village. He studied Tamil and English in Yaalpaanam college together with land surveying skills. In 1880, he received the certificates from the government.

He accepted an invitation from Mr A Annamalai Pillai, a popular engineer, and came to Singapore.

In Malaya there was a great demand for land surveyors. Thus a Singapore Colonial Engineer, Mr MacLom, appointed Mr Naganather as a land surveyor in Sungu Joosong. Sungu Joosong was an undeveloped jungle area without any inhabitants. Mr Naganather had to travel by boat and horseback to be able to do his job well. Due to his efforts, buildings and roads were built so the area became more accessible.

His friends were amazed by his bravery and perseverence in carrying out the beginning stages of developement which shows how difficult it must have been for him. Brave men like him were hard to find. When most people were transferred to a new place, they inquired about the number of

mosquitos present but Mr Naganather inquired about directions. He became a leading example for the society when he surveyed lands that had a greater number of fierce animals than people who lived in Malaysia until 1880.

Government officials were impressed by him and promoted him to the position of Chief Surveyor based on his talent, knowledge and bravery in the field. He retired in 1898 and received his pension after working for 13 years doing land surveying jobs in Negri Sembilan's Port Dickson, Shalup, Seremban and other places.

He then worked in the Selangor government for 18 years building roads and ponds. In 1917, he went to Sri Lanka and obtained a land surveying certificate from the government.

He stayed there for some years and then returned to Kuala Lumpur to work in the government. Privately, he also did contract terms. He had vast experience. He was a man who was praised by all races.



Arumugam Naganather





V. Murugasam Pillay

Mr V. Murugasam Pillay was born in Yaalpaanam, Yattukilakku. He came to Singapore in 1877 to work as an overseer in road construction in the municipal.

Many people worked under his authority as sub-overseers.

He was a charitable man who brought children of his village from Sri Lanka to Singapore and educated them, using his own money and found jobs for them. He gave Mandoor jobs to those who did not know English. He was a generous man who took pride being a Tamil and was a great benefactor. He gave free meals to any Tamil. Mr Pillay was a wealthy man and well-respected by the other Indian groups in Singapore. He married Ms. Vengatammal and they had a son, M. Velu Pillay who became a well-known lawyer in Singapore and Johore.

Mr Pillay was appointed the Chief Road Examiner and was in charge of the town roads and roads built in jungle areas in Sinagapore. Around 30 overseers, 100 supervising agents, 100 bullock-cart riders, kandirakumars and 2000 or more workers worked under his authority.



V. Murugasam Pillay





M. Murugasu

Mr M. Murugasu was born in 1889, at Yaalpaanam, Vattukottai, East Kuruchi. His parents were Mr Marimuthu and Nagamuthammal. He studied in a Hindu-English school in Sri Lanka.

In 1904, he came to Singapore and he resumed his education at the Anglo Chinese School. In 1910, he began working in the Singapore Municipal and he received numerous promotions until he became the Municipal Secretariat. He carried out his duties conscientiously and he was favoured by his staff. He was very popular and well respected by the Sri Lankans in Singapore.

He was a member of several societies which included the Singapore Municipal Labour club, Hindu club, Vivekanandar Educational Institute and Sri Lanka Tamil club. He was the Honorary Secretary at Sri Ramakrishna club and Public Honorary Secretary for the Sri Lanka Tamil club. He was also the Honorary Secretary for the building committee of the Sri Ramakrishna club and the Ceylon Road Shambaga Vinayagar Temple.

In 1935, he became involved in organising King George the 5th's Silver Jubilee celebrations in the Indian community.



M. Murugasu





T. Pakirisamy Pillay

The father of Mr T. Pakirisamy Pillay was Mr Thiagaraasam from South India, Naagoor. He came to Singapore at a young age and studied English at Cross Street English School from Mr Sathasivam Pillai from Yaalpaanam. He also studied at Raffles School until he was in Primary 6.

He spent 6 months learning work skills at Braddell and Matthews office after which he started earning a salary. The office later changed its name to Braddell Brothers. From 1887 onwards, he worked there as a clerk cum lawyers service worker for 50 years.

Being the sole Tamil clerk, he was well taken care of there. His son followed in his shoes and also began work as a clerk in the same office.

Mr Pillay lived with his children and grandchildren in a large extended family. He was well known to be a soft-hearted person who helped the community.



T. Pakirisamy Pillay





M. Kaduthosy

Mr M. Kaduthosy belonged to the Palavar Generation. Around 1820, his grandfather who was born in India, Koodatoor Manjangkolai side, was labelled a criminal for fighting for independence, banished by the British Government and sent to Singapore as a prisoner.

To reform him and break his spirit, he was made to destroy jungles and build roads and buildings in Singapore. Kaduthosy's grandfather was one of the prisoners who built the Saint Andrew's Cathedral. His grandfather had a son named Sinnakaruppan and two daughters called Magali and Ramayi.

Mr Kaduthosy's parents were Mr Maruthan and Magali. When his grandfather's sentence ended, he stayed in Singapore. Mr Kaduthosy invested in property and bought houses in Macpherson Road with his own hard-earned money.

PUGALENTHI SR



M. Kaduthosy



INDIAN PIONEERS OF SINGAPORE



S. Govindasamy Pillay

Mr S. Govindasamy Pillay was born in 1890 in Kaaraikaal. (French Ministry)

His parents were Mr Supparayalu Pillay and Meenatchiammal. He studied Tamil at a young age. He arrived in Singapore in 1903 at the age of 13 and began working in a provision shop. He had dreams to be a rich man.

In 1908, he became the asistant in a sarishop owned by Mr N. Ramasamy Pillay in Selegie Road.

Soon he branched out on his own and became the leading businessman of Singapore. He was well-versed in business and became successful. His provision shops were prosperous and his property in Serangoon Road was a stretch of houses.

He was wealthy and many people had a high opinion of him. He was also very generous.his donations to the Indian community were numerous.



S. Govindasamy Pillay





K.S.A.S. Somasundra Mudaliar

Mr Somasundrā Mudaliar was born in 1891 in Nagai Manjaikollai.

His parent were Mr Sockalinga Mudaliar and Mrs Valliammai Achi. He studied Tamil at a young age.

In 1905, he came to Singapore to do business in textile and books at the age of 22.

In 1914, he started selling traditionally prepared medicine and other products from India at 176, 178 Selegie Road.

He was an experienced businessman and knowledgable in the buying and selling of goods. Generally, he was a patient and generous person and within a decade he rose to become one of the prominent businessman in Singapore.



K.S.A.S. Somusundra Mudaliar





G. Maruthamuthu

Mr G. Maruthamuthu was born on 31st of Sithirai month. His father was Mr Rama Govinda Pillai who was the founder of Veerakaaliamman temple and a mandoor at municipal building works. He also did contract jobs. His mother was Thillaikannamal.

Mr Maruthamuthu studied Tamil and English and worked in a government office. After a while, he quit and began working as a chief clerk in Mr Mitter's office. He held positions in Singapore Vivekanandar Club, Singapore Students Tamil club and Indian Soccer club. He started an Indian pre-school and gave free education to poor children for 13 years.

He followed his father's footsteps and worked at the Veeramakaliamman temple as one of the Darmakathar. He was a generous man and in 1936, he fed the thousands who were affected by the work riots staged by the Municipal workers.

Mr Maruthamuthu was well known for his love for the nation and for Tamil.



G. Maruthamuthu





Thambimutto Sivapirasam

Mr Thambimutto Sivapiragasam was born on 11 Aug 1894. His father was Mr Thambimuthu from Yaalpaanam Vattukilakku and his mother was Kathirasi Pillai, the daughter of Mr Sinnathambi of the Merkadi caste.

Mr Sivaprasagam studied in Yaalpaanam English School. In 1910, he studied at the Methodist Mission English School in Malaya for one year. In 1911, he started working for the government. Until 1924, he worked in the General Hospital and then in Port Dickson as a Sanitary Inspector. He got a Sanitary Inspector Diploma in 1925 in an environmental test held in Singapore. He returned to Port Dickson and continued his job until 1928.

In 1932, he worked in Kuala Lumpur's Co-operative Society and was later transferred to Singapore to do the same job. While working in Singapore, he helped out as much as he could at Vivekananda ashram and brought about a few improvements. He started 2 boy's Education school and 1 girl's Education school with the support of the Singapore United Monetry club to help educate the poor people. He was a helpful person who was well respected by many.

★★ 74 ★★



Thambimutto Sivapiragasam





Souce Maria Nathan

Mr Nathan was born on 9 Mar 1890.

His father was Mr Souce Nathan, a Maniyakaran and Officer for Sellapathu, Sorapattu, Nayappattu and Thirappattu villagers in Pondichery, South India a French railing place. His mother was Adai Kala Ammal from Merpadi generations.

He learnt Tamil, French and English at Manjakuppam Kadaloore College. He came to Singapore in 1906 and worked in Jbon Aird & Co. Topham Jhones Co. Roalton Ltd. Company for 4 years doing what his officer ordered and he did outstanding work. He learnt well under the Europeans.

He formed a partnership with others and did his own business even consisting of import and export jobs. Many Europeans and Chinese heard of his trustworthy nature and loyalty. He was a Chief-partner in Tong Lan & Company since Mr M Kader Sultan Company staff, which sold beef and mutton in Singapore at that time, had a grudge against Mr Souce. With the help of Messers William Jacks and Co, Moine Conte and Co. Ltd, L.V.O. Hara Frenantle Western Austri and Messers Macalist &



Souce Maria Nathan




Co. Ltd, he became the Managing Director of his company, the Malayan Life Stock Company with the approval of his partners.

In 1936, he made the company Limited but still maintained his position as its Managing Director.

Due to the trust of his partners, the company expanded. He was an example of how experience and belief in a business, despite a multi-racial partnership, could still bring about success. He was a forgiving, pious, humble man fond of poor people and would not say no to whoever approached him for help even if he had to make a sacrifice.



S.N. Samy

 Mr Samy's father was Mr Sanguthevar who worked in the Post Office and was one of the first few people to come to Singapore. Mr Samy studied Matriculation in Anglo Chinese School. He became fond of his nation and race. He married the daughter of Mr Ponnusamy Pillai who was an interpreter in Singapore High Court.

Since Mr Samy was good at writing news in English, he became a journalist. Due to his ability to teach well, he was also a teacher. He wrote for the Singapore Free Press and Malay Tribune newspaper. He started a monthly newspaper called English Journal Indo Malayan Review for the good of the Indian and Sri Lankan people and wrote from his own experiences. He was forced to forgo the newspaper due to lack of support and wrote of the difficulties and losses that the Indians were going through in Singapore to uphold the name and fame of the Indians. He was also the editor for the Malay Tribune newspaper.

Since a lot of Europeans were involved in the newspaper, he quit and became a Superintendent in Kedah Government office. Before that however, he started the Singapore Hindu club and was the



S.N. Samy



secretary. He also built a Singapore Vivekanandar Aashirmam. He worked hard to raise funds for. He started an Indian, Sri Lankan sports club. When H.R.H Prince of Wales came to Singapore, he upheld the names and praises of the Indian and Sri Lankan people. He was also a secretary for the Singapore Hindi Temple committee, a member of its arbitrator committee and a member of the Hindu Advisory Board.

In short he worked hard for the advancement of the Tamils and he strived for praises, equality and excellence from a young age.



Narayanan Chettiar A. V.L.

Mr Chettiar was born on the 8th day of Margali month, Visha year. His parents were Mr Arunachalam Chettiar from India, Kaaraikudi, a generation from the Naattukottai Chettiar generation and Mrs Allagammaiaachi. He studied Tamil at a young age and became very proficient in the language.

In 1896, he came to Singapore to work in his father's import-export trade.

He was a good-hearted and generous man and was considered to be the most honest Chettiar in Singapore. He was well liked by the Europeans and other races. He was pious.

For the upliftment and reform of the Tamils, he participated in many events by the clubs and government unions and he worked in the Malayan states and India. He was a member in Anchu Temple worship, Piranmalai Kullakudi Governing Committee, World Perumal Chettiar club, Madurai Allakar Temple worship Governing Committee, Madurai Ramanatha Mugaanam Education Ministry club, King George's 5th Memorium Committee, Earthquake disaster fund, Sennappattanam



Narayanan Chettiar A. V.L.



Nattukottai resident's club, Merpadi Town's South India Trader's club, Thevakottai Mariyakkaarar club and many others.

He was the vice president of Thirruppathur Thalukka Board, Thirinappaly South India Trading Bank. He was also the president of Manachanallur Arbitrator club and Kaaraikudi Town Reforming Committee. He was the Rasri for Ellaiyaathangudi Sri Kayilasanathar, Sri Nithiakalyaniamman Samasthanam and Thiruchi Sri Varathevasthana Temple.

He was also the Kaaraikudi Municipal counsellor. He was a 1st class magistrate for 14 years in Merpadiyoore. He was the founder of Sri Imbukesvarapasumada Temple and Pathukottai Nanthavanam. He was the Singapore Nattukottai resident's trade club president. He served in the most number of clubs as a member, vice president and president.



Mrs B.C. Handy

Mrs B. C. Handy was the second wife of Mr J. M. Handy. She studied in Penang Saint George College, Methodist Girls' College and she received her higher education in the Singapore Methodist Girls' College. She learnt how to speak Singalam and she spent her time helping other Indian ladies.

In 1913, she travelled to England and Europe with her husband and she benefitted greatly from her experiences there.

She was very active outside her home life. She involved herself in social services for women and she was in the administration of the Sisuparibala Church.

She was also a member of Saint Andrews Hospital administration and Sri Lankan Malaria Kasta Nivarana committee. In 1935, she became a member in the organising committee for King George's Silver Jubilee as well as a member in the Nind Home.

She started the Singapore Woman's Club in 1937 and was appointed its president.

The club's building was in Moulmein Road and it was well received by the women in Singapore.



Mrs B.C. Handy



Mrs Handy was a kind woman, known for her sympathetic attitude towards women and children.

Author's note : There are many more women who did many social work to uplift the Indian community. In my later volumes, I hope to do justice to these remarkable women.



M. Akkisa Malumee

Mr M. Akkisamalumee was born in 1860.

His parents were Mr Muhamad Said Maluee, a wealthy businessman from India, Muhamad Banthar Parangi Area and Mrs Asha Muhamad Salalby, the daughter of Mr Aakisha Malumee from the same area.

Mr Malumee came to Singapore around 1904.

He worked in the cow business in Kader's Pakk's Company. He was later promoted to the position of manager. He joined Mr L. Muhamadkos Maraicayar and started Asatic Cattle Company. He also opened a money changing office at Battery Road called Brothers and a Diamond Merchant. He started a shop in Yawak Kampong Arab Street called Akkismalumi Brothers Limited which sold sarong. (Kaili) He also undertook other business ventures.



M. Akkisa Malumee





N. Thenappa Chetty

Mr Thenappa Chetty was born in 1920 in Ramanathapuram Kottaiyoore, India.

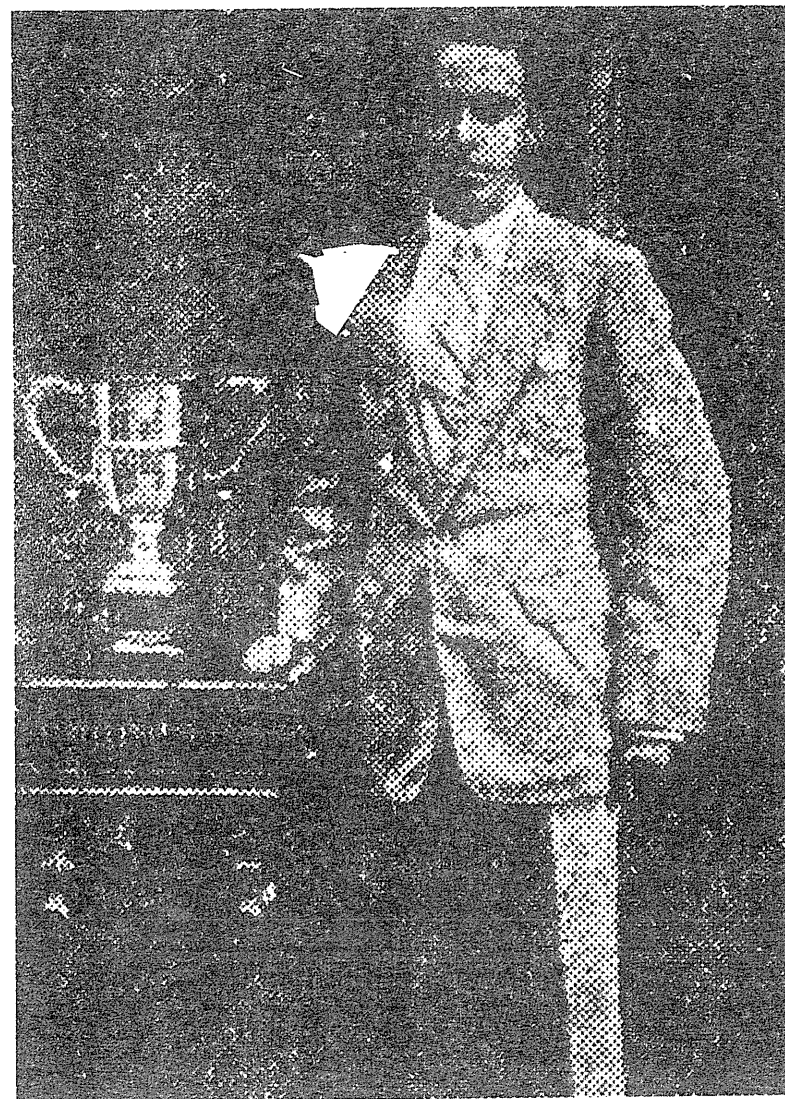
His father was Mr Muthaiya Chetty. He studied Tamil in India and came to Singapore to study English in Anglo Chinese School. His father was a well known money lender.

Mr Chetty travelled widely and visited his village in India many times. He also went to Burma. In 1922, he went to Sri Lanka.

He was a member or the Indian club and the Singapore Race club. In 1925, he bought his own champion race horse. In those days, not many Indians had race horses.

On 15 May 1926, his race horse won the Governor's Cup.

He was congratulated by many Europeans and Chinese on winning the cup.



N. Thenappa Chetty





V. Narayanasamy Pillai

Mr Narayanasamy Pillai was born on 19 Sept 1896 in Cairnhill, Singapore.

His parents were Mr K. Vayloo Pillai and Alamelu Achi. His brother was Mr V. Pakirisamy Pillai. After studying Tamil from a teacher arranged for by his parents, he went on to study English in Anglo Chinese School.

He started working in the Government War Tax Office and then in the Education Ministry. He quit the jobs when he wanted to and took the pension money. He too followed his parents to India for the temple visits in 1909.

He got married on 5 Feb 1923 and he had children. In 1934, he bought an office in Raffles Place and did business.

He was a real estate agent, selling houses and gardens to prospective buyers. He owned many houses. He built himself a house in Sophia Road and called it Cashmere House.

He occupied his free time doing charity and he was also a committee member and patron of Sri Ramakrishna Mission in Noris Road.



V. Narayanasamy Pillai





V. Pakirisamy Pillai

Mr Pakirisamy Pillai was born on 11 Dec 1894 at Cairnhill Road, Singapore.

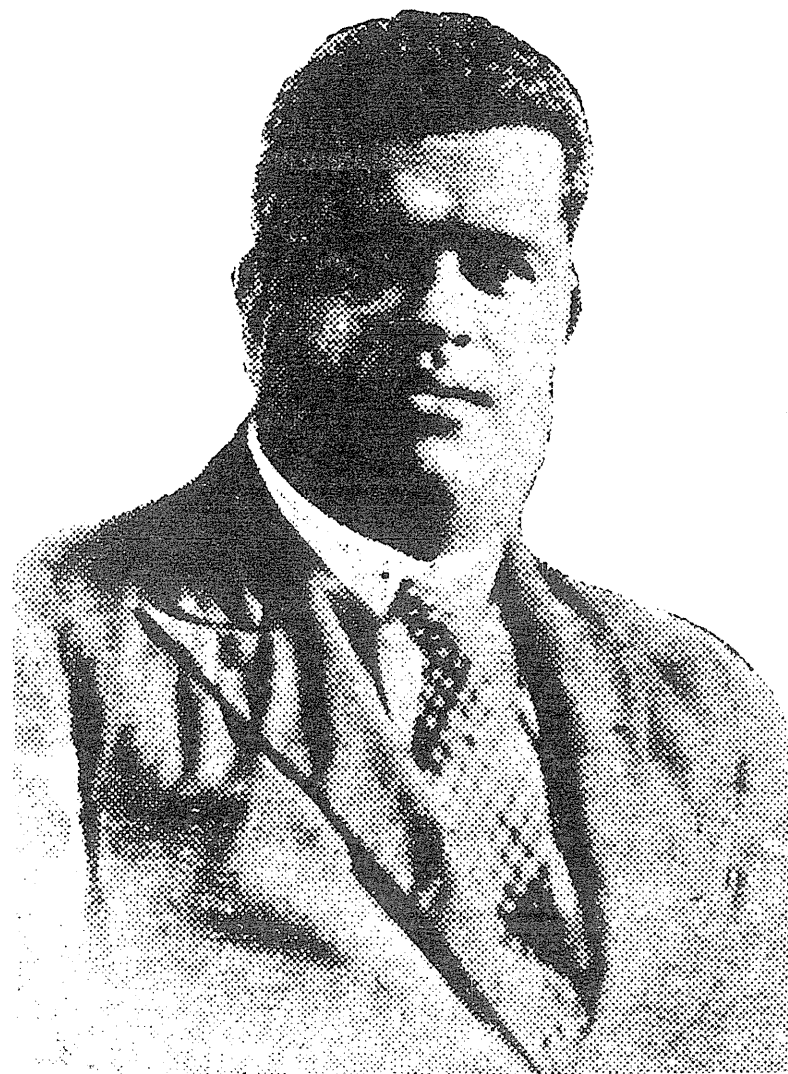
His parents were Mr Koonay Vayloo Pillai and Alamelu Achi. From a young age he had a great deal of respect for his parents and he abided their instructions and did work for them as conscientiously as if he were doing work for God.

His parents arranged for Mr Pakirisamy Pillai, his brother and other Tamil children in the Tanglin area to be taught by a Tamil teacher as there weren't any schools which taught Tamil as a mother tongue. He also learnt English at Anglo Chinese School in 1905.

His teachers were fond of him because he was a well behaved boy who did not mix with bad company, remained out of fights, listened to the teachers and paid attention in class.

He inherited one of his father's best characteristics and that was thriftiness.

In 1909 he went to India with his parents to visit the holy temples. While he was in Kaasi, he got diarrhoea. With the blessings of Kaasi Visvanathar, his parents', the blessings of his elders



V. Pakirisamy Pillai



and his powerful will to live, the disease was cured within a day. Unfortunately, his uncle, aunt and eldest sister who also contracted the disease died, one after the other, within four days.

His mother was aware of his good fortune. She arranged for his marriage to Ms Lakshmiammal, the sister of Dr S. Kannupillai (a famous doctor) and the daughter of Mr R. Suppaiya Pillai, a well known interpreter in the Civil Court when Mr Pakirisamy was only 18 years old on 8 Jun 1911.

He had many children.

In 1915, he began working in the government. 3 months later, he quit and started work in Messrs, Allen and Gledhill's office as the Chief Clerk in April 1916.

At the same time, he also did his own business. He owned a lot of land and many houses. He was highly respected by the Tamils, Europeans and other races as well.

In June 1935, he became a member and a president of the management committees of the Sri Mariamman Temple in South Bridge Road and Narashima Perumal Temple in Serangoon Road respectively.

These temples were under the Mohamedan and Hindu Endowments Board, together with the Sivan

Temple in Singapore Orchard Road and Kaliasman Temple at the junction of Kiliny Road and Somerset Road. He was also the trustee of Sri Krishnabagawan Temple in Waterloo Street and a patron of in Sri Rama Krishnan Mission.

In his father's memory he built a Malai K Vayloo Pillai Hall on the 2nd floor of the Sri Rama Krishnan Mission. His son Mr P. Veerasamy Pillai studied in London University College for a L.L.B degree and was a Middle Temple Justifying person. Believing that through charity one could reach heaven, Mr Pakirisamy Pillai gave multiple donations and took part in many charitable works.



A. V. Munusamy Chettiar

Mr Munusamy Chettiar was born on 5 Jun 1892.

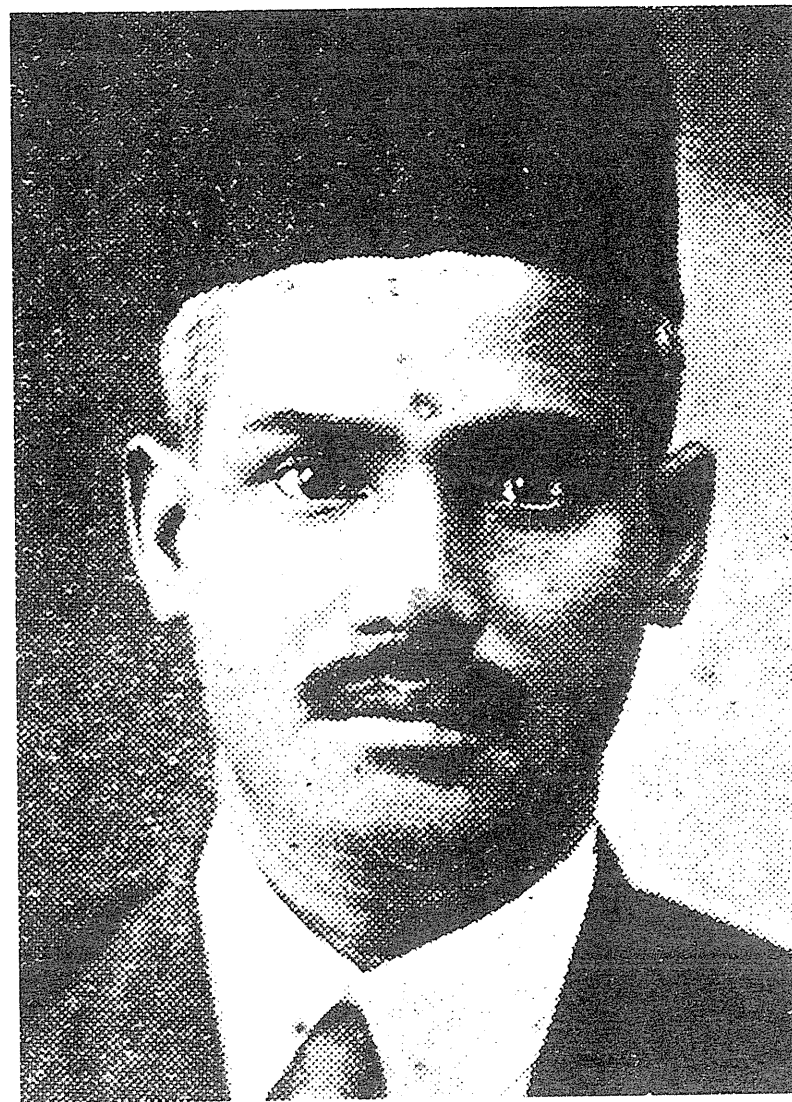
His parents were Mr A. Velayutham from South India, Thenarkaadu, Panrutti, a family well known for its charity (Thivaga family) and Kokilaammal. Mr Chettiar was devoted to God and his parents.

In 1911, he married Ms Kuppammalachi, the daughter of Mr Vytilingam Chettiar who was an intellectual person well praised by many.

He was a helpful, well known, respected and admired man from Jamine Soonaam, Koodalooore. Many people looked up to him.

Mr Chettiar and his brother Mr A.V. Sinnasamy Chettiar ran their father's business for 30 years, a shop called A.V Sons. In 1933 their sarong (kaili) business picked up and they merged shops with A.M.R. Company, which had many contacts worldwide and they did sarong business in Malaysia and India.

They were fair, generous people who were not envious of others and their business grew.



A. V. Munusamy Chettiar



They made a lot of money and spent most of it funding charitable deeds. In 1926, they funded the building of a home for the Thiruvaryl Nilayam to distribute free food to the poor in Vadaloo for Sri Ramalingaswami's divine grace.

In 1927, they also funded the renovation and Kambabishegam (house warming) of Sri Sundara Vinayagar Temple in Bandruti.

In 1929, they built a Charity School and provided all the facilities for a school in Merkudi in the home of Sri Ramalingaswami.

It was governed in their presence. It is now being run as one of the Grant In Aid Schools. They also gave almost 1 million dollars to charity in India.

Mr Chettiar became the proprietor of the New Straits Union English School in Robinson Road to uplift the school after its falling. He made arrangements for 9 teachers to teach 300 students and took a lease on 1700 Sathuraputtula land at Robinson Road Soccer field to build a bigger school building for more students. He arranged for the building plans and got government approval for its construction.

He was the Honorary Magistrate of Bandruti from 1930-1933. He served the people to the best of his ability and won their praises. His brother Mr A.V Sinnasamy Chettiar was a city council president,

Akkirasannar and a member in the village arbitrator committee from 1927 to 1937. They were pious, forgiving, Jeevakaarunyam, patient, favouring, considerate people who were good at heart. Above all this, they were also devotees of Sri Ramalingaswami. They kept many photos of him, conducted prayers for him and worshiped him.

Mr Chettiar was one of the Tamil people in Singapore and Malaysia

who was highly praised for his charity work. He and his brother were well known and praised by many. They showed that the Tamils were a respectable race. Even though they became extremely wealthy, they remained humble people who spent their money wisely.



M. Vytilingam Pillai

Mr M. Vytilingam Pillai was born at Yaalpaanam West Kurichi. He worked in Sri Lanka, Kandi Magaanam as an overseer until 1875.

At that point in time, the government decided to send land surveyors, architects and overseers to the Malayan countries which they had recently colonised. Few people wanted to go there due to the stories about attacks from lions, tigers and bears in Singapore and Malacca as well as threats from the Orang Asli (early Malay fishermen in Singapore). Furthermore the journey from Yaalpaanam to Singapore was extremely long and tiring. During this period, the colonial government also treated Singapore and Malacca as a 'dumping ground' for convicts from India and Sri Lanka which further discouraged the people from going there.

When no one was interested or dared to go to Malaya, Mr Pillai was instructed to go to Singapore. He prepared to travel without informing any of his family members for fear that they would try to stop him. When his parents and his wife found out about his trip, they tried to talk him out of going but he refused to listen to them. Convinced that he would perish in Singapore, they conducted



M. Vytilingam Pillai



a death ceremony for him. Disheartened by the pessimism of his relatives, Mr Pillay travelled to Singapore on the ship 'Aargaya Puravi'.

He was the first person to come to Singapore from Sri Lanka.

In Singapore, he worked in the Municipal divisions roadworks and he was put in charge of the construction coolies and Mandoors. He was hardworking and he earned the respect of people like Mr Vytilingam, Mr Vengadasalam, Mr Achalinga Pillai, Mr Sockalinga Pillai and several others who were already in Singapore. He got married again to Mayillakanni Penunthevi.

Mr Pillai went back to Sri Lanka after three years and he was considered to be a rich man. He started to manufacture vehicles and was thus called Singapore Vytilingam Travel Pillai.

Mr Pillai helped many people realise that Singapore was a land of golden opportunities. There were a number of opportunities to study English and Road construction works in Sri Lanka and due to the high demand for road construction workers in Malaya, more and more Sri Lankans flocked to Singapore.

Communication was not a problem because most employers and employing agents were Sri Lankan. Furthermore most of the immigrants were

third and fourth grade English educated and had a recognised certificate with them.

Mr Pillai paved the way for immigration of Sri Lankans to Singapore. Without him, the Sri Lankan community in Singapore today might be non-existent.



Rev S.M. Thevathasan

Rev. S. M. Thevathasan was born in 1885 in Odupiti.

His father was Mr G. C. Muthalithamby, a teacher from Yaalpanam from a Pirakyathi recieved family. His father passed away when he was a young boy. His uncle, Mr Devadasan Suppaya who converted to Christian and studied and served at the American missionary, took care of him.

Rev. Thevathasan studied in Thellipalai Bothana School and later at Yaalpanam College. In 1905, he recieved his Madras B. A. Certificate. He worked as a teacher in Yaalpaanam college.

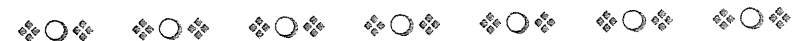
He furthered his studies at Madras Arasatchi college and got a M.A.L.T. certificate. In 1920, he abided a Methodist missionary and went to Singapore to become a senior teacher in Anglo Chinese School.

Under his missionary, he was dedicated to Christianity and soon became a Reverand. He was very dedicated to Christian Missions and works and helped in activities organized for the needy.

In 1912, he married Nianabaranam whose



Rev S.M. Thevathasan



parents were Mr Appaiya Stockto and the daughter of Mr Cadinar Sittrambalam.

They had 4 sons and 2 daughters. His eldest son studied in a Medical College while his eldest daughter studied in Raffles College.

He was the President of Sri Lankan Club around 1937.

He was an intelligent, good hearted, fair and decent person.



A. Athisayam

Mr Athisayam was born in 1885 in India, Tanjoore, Mannarkoodi, Malanath Village. His parents were Mr Appachi Mangkondar and Aachi Kannambal. After his basic education, he studied higher Tamil and English in Mannarkodi Pintle College.

He came to Singapore in 1906 to work in the government. This was the year electricity was first supplied to Singapore. After a while, he was promoted to High Court Chief Tamil Interpreter. He studied Hindustani and Malayalam and passed government tests in these languages.

His father was a well respected farmer in the village and held the position of village chief. Thus Mr Athisayam was brought up well in a wealthy environment. His two brothers held government jobs in India.

Mr Athisayam was actively involved in clubs such as the Tamil Methodist Church's Governing service and the Singapore Indian club. He started the Singai Kallar Maga Janam group. (Singapore kallar maga janam club) he also helped in fund raising for South Indian's flood victims.



A. Athisayam



A.R. Muthia Chettiyar J.P.





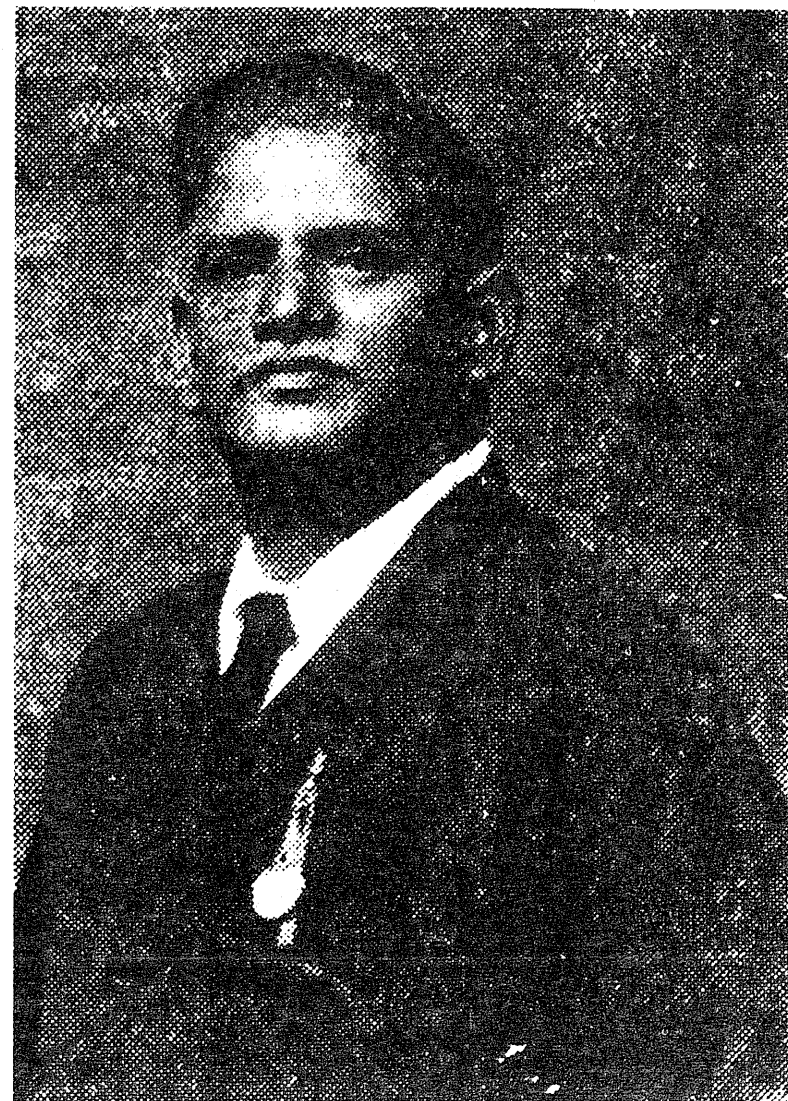
A.R. Mariappa Mallickondar

Mr Mariappa Mallickondar's father was Mr Rengasamy Mallickondar from Tanjoore, Manarkodi, Solapandi Village. Mr Mariappa studied Tamil and English at a young age.

He came to Singapore to work in the Post Office in the daytime and at night, he worked as an accountant in Singapore Municipal Kaadimathu contractors. He learnt a lot about the work of the contractors. In those times the contractors, kiranis, mandoores and other workers were good friends and to strike a deal with the contractors, Mr Mariappa quit his job at the Post Office to become a contractor.

Together with Mr Singaran Pillai, Mr Sivakadatchup Padaiyarchi, Mr K. Muthusamy Padaiyachi and Mr Vadivelu Padaiyachi, he put a contract proposal at a high price which was accepted by the Municipal officers. These people then became Danavandar among the Tamils. Most of them brought their wealth back to India to give to other people and failed to return to Singapore.

Mr Sivakadatchip Padaiyachi's earnings were spent in Singapore and India. However, Mr



A.R. Mariappa Mallickondar



Mariappa Mallickondar was the only generous one who worked for the advancement of the Tamils in Singapore as well as in his hometown.

He started the India Beginners Education Centre, providing it with all the necessary facilities to further educate the Indians in Singapore. He eventually passed away in his hometown in India. There was a 6 page article on him in Mr M. Swaminatha Opathiyayar's kallar publication proclaiming his achievements. He was the founder of Singapore Kallar Magasana club. The article also praised him for being a man of generosity.

Mr Athisayam was one of those who requested for weddings and prayers to be conducted in Tamil in Krishnan Temple. He was also the guest of honour when Janap Daud Shah, the Darul Islam author came to Singapore for a speech at Cityhall. He was a chairperson twice; once at the kudi Arasu author, Mr E. V. Ramasamy's meetings and the other at the author Mr R. Sockalingam of Ooliyan book, speech and gathering at Cityhall.

He was very popular and famous in Singapore. His good heart and friendly attitude won the respect and idolatry of the people. He was understanding of the plight experienced by other people. He had a profound fondness for language, culture and nation.



M. Kader Sultan J.P.

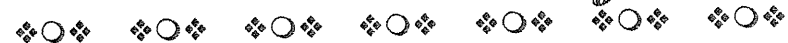
Mr M. Kader Sultan's birthplace was at French Alka Kaarakaal. He learnt Tamil and Arab languages. He started a cow business company in Singapore. He stayed in a huge bungalow in East Coast Road.

Around 1922, the French Government gave him the highest civilian honour of the country, the Chavalier Honour. It was not common for the French to award it to an Indian. For that honour, Kader Sultan celebrated it in his own way of spending 10,000 on a feast to feed the poor at his hometown.

His community service was extended to all Indians in Singapore regardless of race or religion.



M Kader Sultan J.P.



A.R. Muthia Chettiyar J.P.

Mr A. R. Muthia Chettiyar's father was Mr Arunasalanj Chettiyar from India, Sivarangai Aranmanai Siruvayal. His father worked in Rama Aru Aru shop in Singapore as an accountant.

Mr Chettiar studied Tamil at a young age. When he was 12 years old, he travelled to Singapore to work in his father's shop. He was later posted to the Aru Aru Somu M. Shop in Penang as a supervisor. He became a member of the Penang Hindu Advisory Board.

Due to his positions, he won the respect of the people and the government officials and so in 1925, he was appointed a Justice of Peace. He was the first Penang Chettiar to be awarded the title.

His two brothers were Mr Aru. Letchumanan Chettiyar and Mr Aru. Suppaiya Chettiar. His eldest daughter married Mr N. T Krishnan Chettiar and his youngest daughter married Mr S.P.K. Letchumanam Chettiar.

Mr Chettiar had shares in shops in Taipeng, Padang Serai, Singapore and Malacca. He was actively involved in charity issues and he helped a lot of Sivan Temples.

IFORMATION ARE WELCOMED

Dear readers

This book is an introduction to the Indian pioneers who contributed to Singapore.

Should you have any other data pertaining to other Indian pioneers in Singapore, may they be family members, clan members or society member, we will be grateful if you can send a copy of the data and information, plus your copies or sources of information to strengthen the credibility of the pioneers mentioned.

Should you have also more invaluable information of the pioneers included in this book, please send a copy of the information to us.

The Editor (Superadeebam)
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INDEX

<i>A.C. Suppiah</i>	14
<i>A.N. Ratnasingam</i>	45
<i>A.R. Annamalay Chettiar</i>	36
<i>A.R. Mariappa Mallickondar</i>	116
<i>A.R. Muthia Chettiyar J.P.</i>	114
<i>A. Athisayam</i>	109
<i>A.V. Munusamy Chettiar</i>	98
<i>A. Viswalingam</i>	31
<i>B. Govindasamy</i>	22
<i>D. Sundaramodaliyar</i>	48
<i>G. Maruthamuthu</i>	72
<i>G. Sarangapany</i>	11
<i>Koona Vayloo Pillai</i>	25
<i>K.S.A.S. Somusundra Mudaliar</i>	70
<i>M. Akkisa Malumee</i>	88
<i>M. Kaduthosy</i>	66
<i>M. Kader Sultan J.P.</i>	112
<i>M. Kandagnany G.H.A.</i>	39
<i>Arumugam Naganather</i>	57
<i>M. Murugasu</i>	62

INDEX

<i>Mrs B. C. Handy</i>	85
<i>M. Vytilingam Pillai</i>	102
<i>M. Sithanbaram Pillai</i>	119
<i>Narayanan Chettiar A.V.L.</i>	82
<i>N. Elyathamby Pillai</i>	50
<i>N. Thenappa Chetty</i>	90
<i>N. Veerasamy Naidu</i>	17
<i>O. Ramasamy Nadar</i>	20
<i>P. Abdul Kader Maricayer</i>	52
<i>Rev S.M. Thevathasan</i>	106
<i>S. Govindasamy Pillay</i>	68
<i>S. Muthukumar Pillai</i>	42
<i>S.N. Samy</i>	79
<i>Souce Maria Nathan</i>	76
<i>Thambimutto Sivapirasam</i>	74
<i>T. Pakirisamy Pillay</i>	64
<i>V. Murugasam Pillay</i>	60
<i>V. Narayanasamy Pillai</i>	92
<i>V. Pakirisamy Pillai</i>	94
<i>V.R.A. Thaver</i>	54



M. Sithanbaram Pillai

Mr M. Sithambaram Pillai's parents were Mr Muthuramalinga Pillai and Mrs. Ammani Aachi from South India, Tanjoore Naagapattanam. They were of Vellalar caste. He learnt Tamil and Sanskrit at a young age.

In 1876, he accepted an invitation from his uncle and went to Singapore. His uncle, Mr Ramasamy Pillai, was a Seargent in the Police Department.

He studied English in Raffles School. After his education, he worked in the post office for some time. He quit his job to start his own business in real estate, buying and selling of houses. He acquired land in Ipoh, Simmork, Tanjam and Rambutan. With the help of Mr Robert Adams, Mr Mathieus, Mr Birch, Mr Thampuchami Pillai and Mr Duraisamy Pillai, he opened up tin mines in these places.

Mr Pillai became the arbitrator for the Sri Muthumariamman Temple in South Bridge Road and the Sri Perummal Temple in Serangoon Road. He also bought and gave jewellery to Thandayuthapani Temple. He travelled to Penang



M. Sithambaram Pillai



annually to perform special rituals at a temple there. He was generous and gave funds to Thiruvannamalai.

He owned some land in Kampung Bahru, Singapore and when he passed away, the instructions in his will required the land to be sold at a good price and a portion of the money from the sale to be given to charity and the rest to be divided among his nephew Mr Rengasamy Pilai (son of his brother Mr Somasundram Pillai) and someone else. He died at the age of 65 and his wife passed away in the same year.