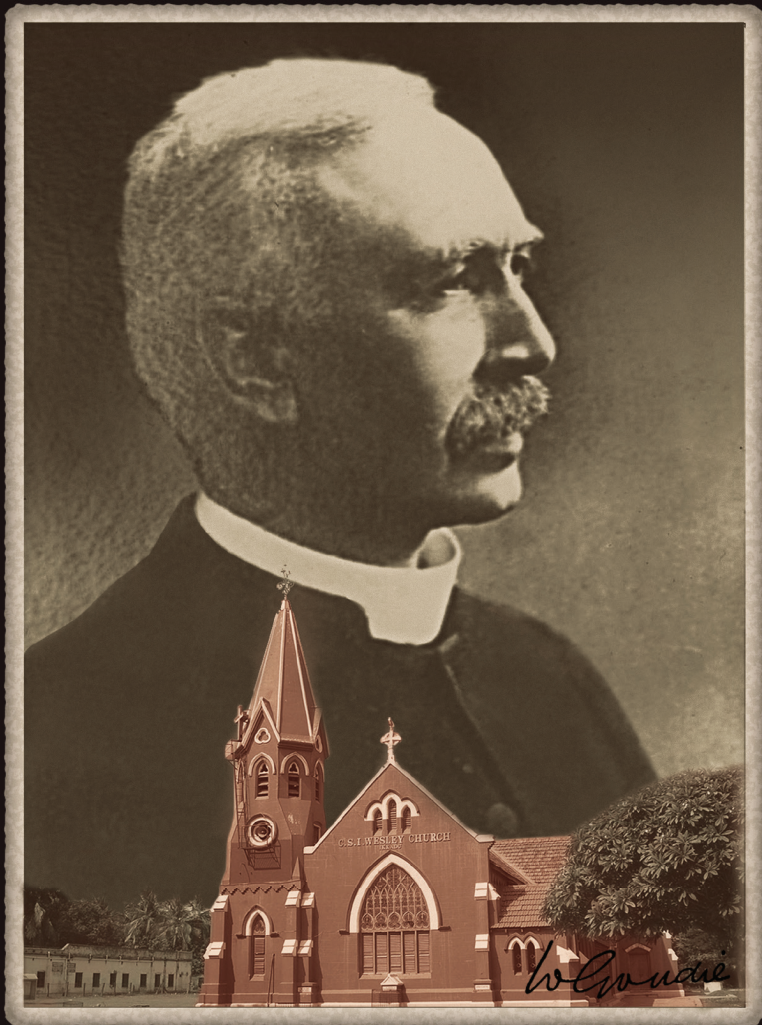


DANIEL MOHANRAJ. V



# William Goudie

A VERITABLE APOSTLE TO IKKADU



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# Chapter – 1

## Wesleyan Methodist Mission Society (WMMS)

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### Rev. John Wesley

John Wesley<sup>1</sup>, priest in the Church of England who was the inspiration and founder of the Methodist movement. The name “Wesleyan” is in honour of Rev. John Wesley. It was their disciplined routine (or method) of spiritual devotion that earned Wesley and a few of his friends in ministry the nickname “Methodists” beginning in 1735. The name stuck later to the unique new organizational structure Wesley designed to provide prayer and spiritual care for tens of thousands of converts who found Christ through their work.



*Rev. John Wesley*

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<sup>1</sup> Born June 17, 1703, Epworth, Lincolnshire, England – died March 2, 1791, London.

Wesley was an outstanding Oxford scholar, yet regarded himself as “a man of one book,” the Bible. It was while studying the Bible that he received assurance of his own salvation through faith. It was the Bible which motivated his vision for offering Christ to the common people of England in a way that led to that nation’s greatest spiritual revival. It was a biblical truth that inspired Wesley to develop a school for orphans, job programmes and medical assistance for the poor, efforts to reform inhumane prisons, and arguments for the abolition of slavery, a great evil of his time. Confidence in the Bible as “the only and sufficient rule for Christian faith and practice” (*to use Wesley’s own words*) is still a hallmark of the Wesleyan today.

## 1.1 Mission to East – Dr. Thomas Coke

Wesleyan missions “*among the heathen*” began in 1786, Thomas Coke<sup>2</sup> at sea en-route from Liverpool to Ceylon, English clergyman, first bishop of the Methodist Church, Father of Methodist mission, and friend of Methodism’s founder, John Wesley, who called Coke his “right hand.”

Coke was ordained as an Anglican priest in **1772** and served as *curate* at South Petherton, Somerset, from 1772 to 1776. After meeting Wesley, however, he was dismissed from his curacy for conducting the open-air and cottage services that Wesley recommended. In 1777 Coke formally joined the Methodists. He became the first president of the Irish Conference of Methodists in 1782 and two years later was appointed by Wesley as superintendent of the new missions to North America.

In 1787, during one of Coke’s nine visits to America, he was designated as “bishop” despite Wesley’s protest. As president of the English conference in 1797 and 1805, he sought to introduce the title among English Methodists. Rebuffed, he asked the prime minister, Lord Liverpool, to make him a bishop of the Anglican Church in India. This request was denied, Coke raised funds for his own Methodist mission to

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<sup>2</sup> Born Sept. 9, 1747, Brecon, Brecknockshire, Wales – died May 3, 1814, Atlantic Ocean.

India, and unfortunately he died during his first voyage to India. A prolific writer, he was an author of *Commentary on the Old and New Testaments*, 5 – volumes (1801–03); *A History of the West Indies* (1808–11); several volumes of sermons; and the *Life of John Wesley* (with Henry Moore; 1792). Coke ardently opposed slavery.



*Dr. Thomas Coke*

*(Credit: <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Thomas-Coke>)*

The project for a mission to the East, which had been in Coke's mind for many years, was now taking a definite shape. No pains had been spared to reach a wise decision. Colonel Sandys, Coke's friend and correspondent, visited the Sheffield Conference in **1805**. A committee was formed to consult him about a mission to India. After hearing its report the Conference instructed Coke to approach the Court of Directors of the East India Company. The colonel wrote several letters to Joseph Benson, and interviewed Lord Teignmouth, Mr. Wilberforce, and Mr. Grant (Chairman of the East India Company). Coke also visited Mr. Grant. Coke and the colonel concluded that the Court of Directors would not consent to the establishment of a mission in India for the conversion of the natives, whether instituted by us or by the Established Church itself.

Coke took every opportunity of consulting men who knew India, such as Mr. Morton, father-in-law of Dr. Beaumont and Dr. Morrison of China, and Dr. Claudius Buchanan. His intercourse with Dr. Buchanan convinced him that Ceylon was the best field for an Eastern mission. There were 500,000 nominal Christian inhabitants, with only two ministers. English, Dutch, and Portuguese were spoken widely in the island, so that the missionaries might be usefully employed whilst they were learning the native tongues. Coke was so much bent on a mission to the East that he actually offered himself to the Government to fill the proposed bishopric for India. He said he would resign all his prospects of usefulness at home if only that opportunity was granted.

## **1.2 Rev. James Lynch** (*Born 1775 – Died 1858*)

Rev. Lynch was born in **1775** in Ireland to Roman Catholic parents. However, as he grew up, his faith gradually began to focus on Jesus Christ alone for salvation. In order to promote his faith and his religious beliefs, he joined the YMCA in Londonderry, Northern Ireland, in 1808 at the age of 33 years. He then joined the Irish Methodist Missionaries and served as an evangelist in various Methodist Circuits in Ulster. Rev. Lynch's association with the Methodist Church gave him an opportunity to serve communities in India and Ceylon to preach the gospel and raise literacy.



*Rev. James Lynch*

Rev. Lynch joined a team of Wesleyan missionaries under the leadership of Dr. Thomas Coke who set sail for Ceylon via Bombay. They began their journey to Bombay in two ships which were owned by the East India Company; Dr. Coke, Mr. Clough and Mrs. and Mr. Harvard on board the 'Cabalva,' and Rev. James Lynch, Rev. Erskine, Rev. Thomas Squance and Mrs. and Mr. Ault on the 'Lady Melville.' They embarked on **29<sup>th</sup> December 1813** and sailed on the following morning. The missionaries encountered several setbacks, including the death of the mission leader Rev. Dr. Thomas Coke, and of Mrs. Ault, wife of one of the missionaries. Following these sad events, the exhausted mission team landed in Bombay on **21<sup>st</sup> May 1814** without its leader.

The unfortunate missionaries encountered financial difficulties because the captain of the ship, Mr. Birch, had no authorization from Rev. Dr. Coke to hand over the money kept in his possession to any other member of the team. But they were fortunate to get support from a respectable banker, Mr. Thomas Money, to whom Rev. Dr. Coke had already written a letter of introduction. After about a month's stay in Bombay, the missionaries, with the exception of Mrs. and Mr. Harvard, who remained in Bombay as they were expecting a baby, set sail to Ceylon in the ship 'Earl Spencer' on **20<sup>th</sup> June 1814**.<sup>3</sup>

The first Wesleyan Methodist mission to India was established in **Madras** [now Chennai] in **1817**.<sup>4</sup> James Lynch went to Madras from Ceylon in response to request of some English Methodists who were living in Madras. On **23<sup>rd</sup> January, 1817**, he left Jaffna for Madras. On the way to that city he passed through Negapatnam and preached to certain persons who were anxious to hear him, so that it was in Negapatnam that the first message delivered by a Methodist Missionary was preached in India, on the way from Negapatnam to Madras, Lynch was the guest of the Royal Danish Mission at Tranquebar, and visited the graves of Pliitschau

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<sup>3</sup> Credit: <http://www.jccobauk.com/jcc-history/rev-james-lynch-anniversary/>

<sup>4</sup> G.G. Findlay & W.W. Holdsworth, *The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society*, vol.5, p. 177

and Ziegenbalg, the first Danish Missionaries sent out under Frederick IV of Denmark. He had mastered Tamil at Jaffna and his faithful preaching made a deep impression in Madras where he erected a chapel at Royapettah and another three miles away in Black Town, the chief centre of population. Elijah Hoole joined Mr. Lynch in **1822**. The work was growing steadily. When Tamil services were held at Black Town on Friday evenings, the doors and windows were filled by Hindus who were eager to hear the message, though unwilling to enter the chapel.

Mr. Hoole made preaching excursions into the Tamil country and everywhere found the people courteous and anxious to listen to the gospel. He translated some of English hymns into Tamil and soon had the pleasure of hearing the natives sing them to the tunes used in England. The Hindu festivals gave many opportunities to preach and distribute tracts. In **June 1818**, Lynch purchased a bungalow in Royapettah and on a site close to it built the first Methodist chapel in India, which was dedicated for public worship on **7<sup>th</sup> March 1822**. The second property acquired in a street of Black town known as Popham's Broadway. Here a piece of land, with some old buildings upon it, a new chapel was built by Rev. Lynch and dedicated on **25<sup>th</sup> April 1822**<sup>5</sup> and a bungalow was secured for Tamil preaching in December **1825**. Hundreds of heathen of all classes heard the Word and the native converts were roused to increased zeal.<sup>6</sup>

Followed by Rev. Lynch, many Wesleyan Methodist missionaries arrived in India; Mission work has rapidly taken to the major cities in India. Rev. William Goudie was one among them, however, his mission work and social responsibilities in India was extraordinary. By **1903**, mission work was underway in eight districts including Madras (Chennai), Negapatnam (Nagapattinam), Haiderabad (Hyderabad), Mysore, Calcutta, Lucknow, Bombay and Burma.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Centenary Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Synod, Madras, 1911*

<sup>6</sup> *John Telford, A Short History of Wesleyan Foreign Mission, 1906, P. 179*

### 1.3 Committee & Members of WMMS Society

The Methodist Conference of 1805 established a 'Standing Committee of Finance and Advice' to act as an executive through which the Conference would control its foreign affairs, under the General Superintendence of Coke. However, the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (WMMS) originated with the District Auxiliaries, the first of which was founded in Leeds on **6<sup>th</sup> October 1813** formed spontaneously for the support of overseas missionary work, without the sanction of Conference. By 1818, the proposals put forward by the District Auxiliaries were approved by Conference and embodied in a general missionary society. Meanwhile, following Coke's death in 1814, the London Committee of Finance and Advice was renamed as the 'Executive Committee,' and in 1815 an additional 'Committee of Examination and Finance' was established to conduct the detailed examination of missionary receipts and disbursements.

In 1817 the new Committee mooted the formation of a permanent constitution for the missionary department and in 1818 the Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (*the joint work of Richard Watson and Jabez Bunting*) were accepted by Conference and the WMMS was fully constituted. The new society embraced the Auxiliary Districts and Circuit Missionary Societies that had already been formed.

Despite its name the WMMS was not a self-regulated 'Society,' but rather the Methodist Church '*mobilized for foreign missionary service.*' The Conference appointed a new Executive Committee, which in the intervals between the annual Conferences was given superintendence of the collection and disbursement of funds from subscribing members and the management of foreign missions.

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