



## Mark Cubbon's Initial Endeavours at Modernizing Mysore and Administrative Strategies

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**Abstract:** An attempt is made in this paper to discuss the Administrative Strategies of Mark Cubbon which led to modernizing Mysore. Early Life & Career and Economic Impact of his efforts have briefly analyzed. In the conclusions it is mentioned that he was considered as pioneer in commencing administrative, economic, judicial reforms in Mysore which helped Mysore later on to earn the epithet of a model state.

**Key words:** Administration, strategies, Endeavors, modernizing, British army, bureaucrat, East India Company's

### Introduction:

March of Mysore towards modernity was seeded during the commissionership of Mark Cubbon. As an administrator & a proficient bureaucrat he was able to breathe in several administrative reforms in Mysore which later on became a legacy. Mysore was modeled & nurtured to devise its own administrative setup during his period. He encouraged & shifted the capital from Mysore to

Bangalore, helped reform the finances of Mysore, and created a peaceful and prosperous government. This paper focuses on the key areas of Mark Cubbon's administrative strategies & their impact on Mysore. The present paper spotlight on the several administrative works of Mark Cubbon which helped in becomes model state Mysore. Cubbon restructured the government of Mysore, helped reform its finances, and created a peaceful and prosperous state.



### Early Life & Career

Mark Cubbon was a British army officer with the East India Company who became the British Commissioner of Mysore state in 1834. He retained this office until 1860. Cubbon was born at the vicarage of Maughold, Isle of Man, the son of Vicar Thomas Cubbon and Margaret Wilks. He arrived in Calcutta in the summer of 1801, as a cadet. He soon gained an appointment to the 2nd Madras Battalion, and in July 1804 to the 2nd Battalion 5th Native Infantry, serving with the Field forces commanded by Col. Chalmers in Travancore. Cubbon had great admiration for the Sepoys and respected their religious views.

By 1809 he had secured a civilian appointment in the East India Company's administration in 1827 Cubbon succeeded Sir William Morrison as Commissary-General, and in 1831 served as Commissioner to inquire into the Mysore rebellion. He was appointed Colonel in the same year. In 1834 the Governor-General of India, William Bentinck, in pursuit of fiscal efficiency, appointed Cubbon as Commissioner of Mysore state.

Cubbon restructured the government of Mysore, helped reform its finances, and created a peaceful and prosperous state. Cubbon is credited with the construction of over one thousand miles of roads, hundreds of dams, coffee production and improvements in the tax and revenue systems. Mark Cubbon remained in the post till 1860, a period which included the 1857 rebellion, during which time he had the assistance of Krishnaraja Wodeyar III in keeping affairs under control. He strongly resisted an attempt by the British administration in 1860 to shift the centre of administration to Madras, resulting in the proposal's being withdrawn. Cubbon resumed duties as Commissioner, but resigned owing to a sudden and severe illness the next year. Soon after, he went to Madras to board a ship back to England. He died en route.

Mark Cubbon is known for his excellent handling of the kingdom. He made Bangalore the capital and divided the princely state into 4 divisions, each under a British superintendent. The state was further divided into 120 taluks with 85 taluk courts, with all lower level



administration in the Kannada language. The Amildar was in charge of a taluk to whom a Hoblidar, the caretaker of a Hobli comprising a few villages, reported. The office of the commissioner had eight departments; revenue, post, police, cavalry, public works, medical, the animal husbandry, judiciary and education. The judiciary was hierarchical with the commissioners' court at the apex, followed by the Huzur Adalat, four superintending courts and eight Sadar Munsiff courts at the lowest level. Mark Cubbon is credited with the construction of over one thousand miles of roads, hundreds of dams, coffee production and improvements in the tax and revenue systems.

### **Economic Impact**

The colonial government made institutional changes in agriculture by transforming traditionally circumscribed property rights into unencumbered private property characteristic of Western capitalism. The beneficiaries of these new rights varied in different parts of India. Improvements in transport services & facilities helped agriculture by permitting some

degree of specialization on cash crops. This increased yields somewhat, but the bulk of the country stuck to subsistence farming. Plantations were developed for indigo, sugar, jute and tea. These items made a significant contribution to exports. The laying of first railway line initiated during the regime of Commissioner Mark Cubbon, started functioning from 1864, when Bowring was the Commissioner. He was also responsible for the construction of new roads exceeding 2560 km in length. Coffee plantations, also started by him covered over 1.50 lakh acres. The work for public works demanded his attention & he founded the Public Works and Forest Departments. In order to District Savings Bank were started in Princely Mysore in 1870. Dewan Rangacharlu got the Bangalore-Mysore meter gauge rail line ready by 1882, by spending a sum of Rs.55.48 lakhs.

Diwan Purnayya raised a dam across the river Cauvery at Sagarakatte to improve irrigation facilities. The colonial government made some contribution towards increased output through irrigation. The irrigated area was increased



about eightfold, and eventually more than a quarter of the land of British India was irrigated. Irrigation was extended both as a source of revenue and as a measure against famine. The work on the line was started as famine relief during the severe famine of 1876-78, which took the toll of one million lives in Mysore State alone.

Sheshadri Iyer who initiated gold mining in Kolar region in 1886, created the Departments of Geology (1894), Agriculture (1898), and launched the Vanivilasa Sagara Irrigation Scheme in Chitradurga district. The Shivanasamudra Hydro-Electric Project, which supplied power to Kolar Gold Fields in 1902, later, also provided Electricity to Bangalore city in 1905 and for Mysore in 1907, was the first major project of its kind in India. Although it is interesting to note that in 1887, a Hydro Electric project was started at Gokak in a small scale. India was the first country in Asia to have a modern textile industry, preceding Japan by twenty years and China by forty years. Cotton mills were started in Bombay in 1851, and they concentrated on coarse yarns sold

domestically and to China and Japan; yarn exports were about half of output.

### Conclusion

Mark Cubbon was a good administrator & a proficient bureaucrat who ably breathed freshness by initiating several administrative reforms in Mysore which later on became a legacy. Mysore was modeled & nurtured to devise its own administrative setup during his period. He encouraged & shifted the capital from Mysore to Bangalore, helped reform the finances of Mysore, and created a peaceful and prosperous government. Thus, He was considered as pioneer in commencing administrative, economic, judicial reforms in Mysore which helped Mysore later on to earn the epithet of a model state.

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