

## **Early History of Karnatak College Dharwad**

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### **I. Introduction**

The Indians have a long and unbroken history, heritage, culture and tradition because of its educational system from the early past. In Karnatak, there were a large number of educational institutions like *Agraharas*, *Brahmapuris*, *Maths*, and *Ghatikasthan*s. The Dharwad district of ancient Karnataka is well known for its educational institutions. Beginning from the period of the Chalukyas of Badami, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas of Kalyana and Vijayanagara kings were patronized such ancient educational centers in Dharwad region. Therefore even today Dharwad is popularly known as *Vidyakashi*. During the Muslim rule Education was imparted through *Mukhtab* and *Madarasas*. During the English rule, the northern parts of Karnataka including Dharwad became the part of Bombay Presidency.

In 1818, as a result of the spread of western education and literature the Christian Missionaries began to open educational institutions. Then the native *Gurukul* Education system began to decline. The English were also tried hard to promote western thoughts, education and philosophy and which was aimed to propagate their religion. At the same time the ancient Indian education was also confined to a few of higher strata of population, which the English came to know and began to popularize the English education along with vernacular culture.<sup>1</sup> To eradicate such a drawback, Elphinstone an English officer started imparting education through Bombay Education Society and Native Schol and Book Society. With these efforts Dharwad came to limelight by the foundation of Basel Missionary activities, establishment of English medium Schools, Sanskrit *Pathshalas* and K.E.Board Schools. At the same time by the year 1826 Marathi schools were also established as Marathi language became very popular in Dharwad region. The credit of establishing Kannada schools in Dharwad in 1831 and running it for three years at his own expenses goes to Eliot, the then Collector of Dharwad. He also convinced Bombay Government that Kannada was a native language or mother tongue of Dharwad area and it is very necessary to establish Kannada schools there.<sup>1</sup> Normal School was started in 1856 for training the teachers and later on it became Training College<sup>2</sup>. The beginning of these educational institutions showed the necessity of starting college for people of Dharwad. At that time after their early education, the students were required to go to Bombay or Pune for higher studies.<sup>3</sup> The students who had passed Metric education from Dharwad, Belagavi, Bijapur areas were to go there. Hence only few of rich were able to get higher education and poor class and downtrodden were deprived of higher education. There arose an idea of establishment of a college in this area by the teachers of Training College. Though such an idea of establishing college was sprouted in the minds of people of Dharwad as early as 1876, but it did not come true due to frequent natural calamities like draught, floods etc.<sup>4</sup>

By 1902, this idea was rejuvenated when the proposal of establishment of a college at Dharwad was placed before E. Gills, the then Public Instruction Officer of Bombay Government as there was a college at Bombay for higher education and there was a positive response to include it in University Grants Commission Scheme.<sup>5</sup> Later in 1904 when Governor Lamington came to Dharwad Municipality, demand for starting a college was placed before him<sup>6</sup>. For which the governor replied that establishment of a college is very expensive<sup>7</sup>. Rao Bahaddur Shrinivas Rodda, a representative of the Dharwad people made a petition to the Government in 1909 that there was an urgent need for establishment of Arts College and Technological College at southern part of Bombay presidency. He explained them the difficulties of people of North Karnataka to pursue higher education by going to Bombay and Pune. When Bombay Government proposed for bearing the expenses of establishing a college, Rodda Shrinavas Rao promised to collect one lakh rupees from interested people.<sup>8</sup> Later the Government expressed a view that the said amount was very less and asked them to form an association to pool funds, hence Karnatak College Association was established. Diwan Bahaddur Rodda became the President of the organization. The minister, Muke Mechanji had visited to an agriculture exhibition at

Dharwad and discussed the subject matter of establishment of a college. Later by 1912, Mr. Dattatreya Venkatesh Belvi presented a proposal for establishing a government model college at Dharwad.<sup>9</sup> There were 10 high schools in Bombay Karnatak region and those passed metric standard were required to go to Bombay or Pune for their higher studies, as the seats were limited in the said colleges and only meritorious could get admission.

Furthermore there were more than 300 students from Karnataka learning in those colleges. He also suggested that it is better to establish a college in this area<sup>10</sup> by that time Rodda also recommended the matter of establishment of Arts College at Dharwad. after long discussion there arose a curiosity that why there was no spirit behind establishment of college as it was there for starting college at Sindh, Gujarat and educational institutes in Maharashtra and to know the real situation at Karnataka, Minister of Education namely C.Hill and Sir George Clerk visited that and discussed with elderly people regarding the possibility of establishing college at Dharwad and promised that a college could be set up only if rupees two lakhs contributed.<sup>11</sup> Then Rao Bahaddur Aratal Rudragoudar promised that he would collect one lakh rupees from Lingayat community. Association has immediate purpose of pooling the fund and for which Rodda travelled in different districts and collected the money. At this time the world war was declared and non Brahmin movement, resultantly the Lingayats were collecting money at Bombay for starting a separate hostel for Lingayats. So it was difficult of Rodda to collect money.

It was at the crucial movement that when there was a serious proposal to establish college at Belagavi, the Brahmins and Lingayats unitedly pooling funds<sup>12</sup>. When a delegation went on demanding a separate hostel for Lingayats in Bombay Presidency and Clawd Hill, the member of Governing Council suggested that there is no use in contributing funds for establishment of a separate hostel for Lingayats at Bombay, as there was a proposal for establishing a college at Dharwad. By that time Minister Sir M.B.Choubal issued a notification that if two lakh rupees is deposited by 31<sup>st</sup> March 1917, a permission would be granted for establishment of a College.

Aratal Rudragowda and Rodda shoulder the responsibility of funds collection. Rodda went for collection of money from door to door and he also requested the people for contribution those who had residing outside by writing letters. He requested the Government servants to contribute. After prolonged efforts Rodda was able to deposit Rs 40,000/-to the treasury by 25<sup>th</sup> March 1914<sup>13</sup>. The Government agreed to accrue interest over the said sum. Rodda continued fund collection by making drama companies to present shows in view of contributing funds for college. Hence Rs. 1263 was collected from Kirloskar Drama Company, Rs. 450 from Gandharva Natak Mandali, Rs. 409 from Shirahatti Natak Company, Rs. 509 from Bharat Natak Company, Rs. 198 and 12 *Annas* from Karnataka College Drama Company, Rs 900/- by Industrial Equipments Exhibition at Dharwad, and Rs 142 and 08 *annas* from the Karnataka students residing at Pune. Thus in all Rs. 55,000/- was collected from several sources and was deposited to the treasury. Further around 100 school teachers of Dharwad, Belagavi, Bijapur contributed Rs. 709 and 15 *annas*. Whereas Aratal Rudragouda approached many rich people and collected the money. Chanabasappa Panchappa Kurubgond of Devihosur contributed Rs. 2000, Mallappa Shintri contributed Rs. 25, Ontamuri Sardesai contributed Rs. 07 and many different organizations also contributed funds. Apart from that he was able to get Rs 1,00,000/- from Belgavi District area and was deposited to the Government by March 1916. After depositing Rs 2, 00,000 to the Government, all the activities were started. The faculties were appointed; Mr. H.G Ravlinson became the First Principal of the College (English and History), G.B.Jatar (Logic and political Science), V.B.Ganeshgadkar (Sanskrit), Adikarve (Mathematics), Dewalalkar (Physics) were appointed. After the affiliation from the Mumbai University and College inaugurated on 20<sup>th</sup> June, 1917 by Sir M.B.Chowbal. At the beginning, it was functioning at Training College. Principal's room, laboratory, Intermediate classes etc were arranged and it was known as 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade College. By 1920 when the students' strength increased arose scarcity of accommodation and Principal H.G Rawlinson searched for the area to set up a College with an independent building. He elected Chota Mahabaleshwar area (now the Karnataka University located) and on 29<sup>th</sup> July 1919 the foundation stone was laid down by Governor George Loyd. He expressed his views in his speech that the days to come, the college should develop to such an extent that it should have different disciplines lie Science, forestry and Technology.<sup>14</sup> It should be able to be called a university. While returning he found a big building namely Southern Maratha Railway Company and thus got an idea of getting the said building for the college. There was correspondence between the Government and Railway Company. The building was valued for Rs. four lakhs which was borne by the government. By purchasing the said building premises the Government transferred it to Education Department. With an untiring efforts of an engineer namely Cooper, the railway building was made suitable for the convenience of Educational Institution. By June 1920 the academic year's activities started in new building. Governor George Loyd inaugurated a new building and addressed the gathering. Bombay Government gave permission to the college as First Grade College. The continuous pursuit of Sir Siddappa Kambali, the then Minister of Education, made this institution famous for education in north Karnataka in the different spheres and

the students of the College now serving in the various positions. Now the College is very popular for imparting knowledge in Karnataka. Today as a temple of education, the College is going to celebrate its centenary.

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