

**BRITISH ADMINISTRATION IN SAGAING DISTRICT
(1885-1923)**

Ph.D. (DISSERTATION)

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation studies the Administration of the Sagaing District (1885-1923). In studying the general administration of the Sagaing District the British at first divided it into two sections, viz:-the region of Sagaing and the region of Myinmu. In 1886 when the British divided Upper Myanmar into four divisions, the District of Sagaing was included in the Central Division. A British Commissioner was appointed to administer the four divisions of Upper Myanmar. The British Chief Commissioner had also introduced a Bureaucratic Administrative System by issuing his directive called "the introduction to Civil Officers in Upper Burma". In the general administration of rural areas, the village administrators were given the judicial as well as the powers to collect the public revenue. In the second part of which dealt with the study of the Judicial Administration, the British after annexing Upper Myanmar did not appoint judicial officers. A British Commissioner was appointed in 1897 to administer the Sagaing District which was included in the Central Division. The British then enacted the Upper Burma Law Act. In 1887, the British promulgated the Upper Burma Village Regulation, A Court of Justice was opened in Mandalay and a Judicial Commissioner appointed for Upper Myanmar. Judicial powers and authority were delegated first to the Deputy Commissioner and then at grass roots level to the village headmen. At first the village headmen could only try petty criminal cases. Later they could also try petty civil cases. In the implementation and enforcement of justice, the police had to support the village headmen. After the annexation of Upper Myanmar there were many criminal cases that occurred in the District of Sagaing. But soon after the enforcement of law and justice there were fewer crimes in

Sagaing. Third portion of this Thesis dealt with the Revenue Administration. Soon after the Annexation of Upper Myanmar, the British replaced the old Myanmar traditional revenue system with their own Colonial Revenue Administration. The British Revenue Administration has an important role to play because it helps to support the whole social, political and economic super-structure of a modern state. When the British annexed Upper Myanmar they abolished the capitation tax, but continued to collect the *thathameda* tax. However the land tax occupied the central stage in the British Revenue Administration. As agriculture was the basis of the economic life of the people of Sagaing District, the British were able to collect a lot of their land taxes from this region. Due to the huge number of toddy-palm growers, taxes were collected from the toddy-juice and jaggery businesses. As the Sagaing District lie between the Great Ayeyarwaddy and Chindwin River, taxes could be collected from the thriving fishing industry.

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