

CHAPTER XIX

PLACES OF INTEREST

THE district of Gulbarga is rich in ancient cultural traditions as also in historical associations. With its ancient capitals, historic battle-fields and architectural monuments, it attracts the attention of any enlightened visitor and takes him back to those days of the glorious past when kingdoms after kingdoms rose, reigned and declined over this ancient land. The district provides many attractions not only to the historian but also to the scholar, pilgrim, archaeologist, geologist and industrialist alike. A brief account of some of the more important places of interest in the district is given in the following pages in an alphabetical order.

AFZALPUR is the headquarters town of a taluk of the same name, situated to the west of the district headquarters. The town is associated with the name of Afzal Khan, the gallant Bijapur general under Ali Adil Shah II, who perished after his meeting with Shivaji at Pratapgad. **Afzalpur**

ALAND is also the headquarters of a taluk of the same name, situated 30 miles north-west of the district headquarters town of Gulbarga. Prior to the integration of jagirs in the former Hyderabad State, the town was administered by *paigah* administrators through an officer known as Duam Talukdar. The place has many historical relics. A stone inscription in Aland speaks of its association with king Tribhuvana Malla Vikramaditya of the 11th century. In the 15th century, a Russian explorer seems to have visited Aland and noted that the place was a centre of 1,000 villages called Aland Sasira. It is also noted as a pilgrim centre for many Hindus. It has the samadhi of an eminent saint, Shri Raghava Chaitanya Maharaj Paratpar Guru. Shri Hastamalakacharya, who was the guru of Shri Shankaracharya, is said to have lived here for some time. Muslims from all over the district congregate at Aland every year to pray at the Dargah of Ladle-Mushaik. Cottage industries have developed considerably in this place in recent years and the handloom sarees of this place are exported to neighbouring States and also abroad. **Aland**

- Aralgundigi** ARALGUNDIGI in Jevargi taluk is the birth-place of Shri Sharanabasaveshwar whose famous shrine is in Gulbarga town.
- Chhaya Bhagavathi** CHHAYA BHAGAVATHI is very near Narayanapur on the banks of the Krishna river in Shorapur taluk. The river runs into a fall at this place. A portion of the river runs into a cave and emerges out. A festival is held here on *Vaishakha Shuddha Tadige* when thousands of pilgrims congregate to offer worship to Chhaya Bhagavathi, a wife of the Sun-god.
- Chincholi** CHINCHOLI is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name in the north-eastern part of the district. The town is surrounded by hills and the valleys are rich in laterite and black soils. In the rearrangement of boundaries in 1905, Chincholi taluk received a few villages from Kodangal. Once the entire taluk belonged to Nawab Alam Ali Kairoz, a jagirdar. Chincholi town is on the banks of the Mullamari river. There is a fine Dargah here which is visited by a large number of Muslims. There is an imposing building, the Raja's Palace, which is also worth a visit. The Raimanghad temple here attracts a large number of pilgrims.
- Devapur** DEVAPUR village in Shorapur taluk is believed to be the birth-place of the great poet Lakshmisha, the author of the famous Jaimini Bharatha. But some other places in the State also lay claim to this honour.
- Diggi** DIGGI, situated on the outskirts of Shahapur town, is noted for its Sangamnath temple where a big jatra takes place about August every year. The nearest railway station to reach the place is Yadgir.
- Ghangapur** GHANGAPUR is a pilgrim centre in Afzalpur taluk, 10 miles south of Ghangapur railway station on the Madras-Bombay broad gauge railway route. It is highly venerated by the Hindus of both Mysore and Maharashtra States. The sacred temple of Shri Narasimha Saraswathi Datta Maharaj is situated here. Pilgrims visit Ghangapur throughout the year to worship at the temple and also to take holy bath at the confluence of the river Amerja and Bhima. There are two large Dharmashalas for the use of pilgrims. It is estimated that on an average 200 pilgrims visit this place daily to worship the Dattatraya Paduka. About the month of February, a big jatra is held at this place at which 60 to 70 thousand pilgrims congregate. Government road transport buses are run from Ghangapur railway station to this place every day. For the pilgrims, this place is known as Deval Ghangapur.
- Gogi** GOGI is about seven miles from Shahapur. It contains a big masjid and several tombs dating back to the Adil Shahi rule. Every year in the month of Shaban, an urus takes place here when nearly three thousand pilgrims attend from most of the

surrounding places. The nearest railway station is Yadgir and a bus runs from this place to Gogi.

GULBARGA CITY is the headquarters of the Gulbarga district, **Gulbarga** and also of the division. It is a rapidly growing town and is situated on the Madras-Bombay broad gauge railway line. The shortest distance from Bangalore to Gulbarga is 363 miles. According to the census of 1961, the town had a population of 97,069 and an area of about ten square miles.

Gulbarga town assumed great prominence during the Bahmani period. During the reign of Muhammad-Bin-Tughlaq, a revolt occurred in 1345 A.D. and two years later, one *amir* named Hasan Gangu ascended the throne of Daulatabad bearing the title, Muzaffar Ala-ud-din Bahman Shah. The dynasty he founded became noteworthy in the Deccan history as the Bahmani dynasty and this dynasty ruled the Deccan for nearly two hundred years. Soon after the Bahmani dynasty was founded in Daulatabad, the ruler selected Gulbarga as his capital city. The title Bahman Shah, by which name the founder of the dynasty was called, is mentioned in a Gulbarga mosque inscription and also found on the coins of the Bahmani dynasty. This title is said to have been assumed by Ala-ud-din in deference to the memory of Gangu, a Brahmin patron of his. But another version is that the appellation is traceable to a half-mythical figure of Persia, called Bahman, who was supposed to be the originator of the family. Gulbarga remained the capital till about 1424, when during the reign of Ahmad Shah (1422-1436), the capital was shifted to Bidar. Before Gulbarga was chosen as the Bahman capital, it was an old provincial town. Bahman Shah built the city tastefully with palaces, mosques, bazaars and other public buildings. At the time the capital was founded, it was centrally situated commanding its Kannada, Marathi and Telugu areas effectively. This ancient city has indeed a long and glorious history. It was a Hindu city of considerable importance and, before the Muhammadan conquest, formed part of the dominions of the Warangal Rajas. Warangal, Gulbarga and Bidar were successively captured by Muhammad-bin-Tughlaq early in the 14th century. Gulbarga lost much of its importance after Ahmad Shah transferred the capital to Bidar. In 1504, the city was occupied by the Bijapur troops and though recovered by Amir Barid in 1514, it was again occupied by the Bijapur troops and remained in the possession of the Adil Shahi kings until the Mughul invasion of the Deccan. From about this time, Gulbarga formed part of the Deccan possession of the Mughal rulers and later it became a part of the Nizam's Dominions.

The city is located on an undulating plain, presenting a vast expanse of rich black cotton soil. The city was made the headquarters of the district in 1873.

The fort at Gulbarga, originally built by Raja Gulchand and afterwards strengthened by Ala-ud-din Bahmani, is a fine work, containing 15 towers and 26 guns, one of which is 25 feet long. Within the ramparts of the fort, is situated a mosque 216 feet by 176 feet resembling the great mosque of Cordova in Spain. This is the only one of its kind in India. Towards the east of the city, there are many tombs of the Bahmani Sultans; these are huge square buildings with large domes. The tomb of Khwaja Bande Nawaz is venerated by both Muslims and Hindus; an *urus* attended by about a lakh of people takes place every year on 15th Zikhaida. No definite date can be mentioned of this *urus* in the English calendar since it varies by about eight to ten days every year. While the arches of the Dargah are considered a speciality of the Bahmani architecture, the paintings on the walls and domes are in the Turkish and Iranian styles. Some of the old relics of the saint are still preserved in the tomb along with some specimen art pieces of those days. There is also a library in the premises of the Dargah containing about 10,000 books in Urdu, Persian and Arabic on history, philosophy, religion and other subjects.

Near this tomb, a mosque, a sarai and a college were located by Emperor Aurangzeb in 1687. Visitors to Gulbarga town do not fail to visit the tomb of Khwaja Bande Nawaz. The Nizams of Hyderabad had made it a particular point to pay annual visits to the Dargah. They used to camp in the *Aiwan-e-Shahi* building with a large entourage. A vast town of tents used to spring up in Gulbarga during the visit of the Nizams.

Two groups of royal tombs are found in the city, one close to the southern entrance of the Gulbarga fort and the other to the east of the city. These two groups fall into two patterns. There are single tombs—simple square chambers having battlements and corner turrets and roofed by a solitary dome, the whole structure standing on a square plinth. There are the double tombs which can be said to be mere duplications of the single tombs. On a close examination of the structural details, many changes are noticeable from dynasty to dynasty. Sultan Hasan's tomb is typical of the Tughlaq style. Similar is the case of the tombs of Muhammad Shah, Mujahid and Dawood. The tomb of Ghias-ud-din presents a different structural aspect. This was built at the end of the 14th century and in the carvings of the prayer niche attached to the tomb, Hindu craftsmanship is noticeable. The fine mausoleum of Firuz Shah and his family is 153 feet by 76 feet and bears testimony to the growing strength of Hindu influence as well as to the new preference for Persian ornamentation. Muhammad Shah built two mosques in Gulbarga which are objects of interest. The earlier is known as the *Shah Bazar Masjid*, simple in style, imitating the Tughlaq architecture. The other, the celebrated *Jami Masjid* (1367), lies within the fort walls. The mosque has

stilted domes and narrow entrances typical of the Persian style. The squat arches of its cloisters, appearing for the first time, present a familiar feature of the Deccan type of architecture. The building has four shapely domes at its four corners. A fifth and larger one dominating the whole structure is raised above the prayer chamber.

Within the confines of the city and in close proximity to the Gulbarga talab (tank), the shrine of Shri Sharanabasaveshwara stands prominent. He was an eminent religious teacher and philosopher, who preached religious and social equality, devotion to duty and dignity of labour. This temple is attractive and is a famous pilgrim centre. Commencing from fifth day of Chaitra Bahula of every year, a jatra takes place here for a fortnight and is visited by about a lakh of people. The temple is also visited by the devotees all the year round.

The present city of Gulbarga has about 18,000 houses, mostly built in stone. The civic affairs of the city are managed by the Gulbarga City Municipality consisting of 34 members. The city has about 35 miles of roads.

Though not a major industrial city, it has a number of factories of which the M.S.K. Mills is the biggest. There are several smaller industrial establishments such as dhal factory, saw mill, iron workshop, oil mill and beedi factory.

Of late, pretty building lay-outs are coming up near the Aiwan-e-Shahi bungalow, and also near the Tir Andaz Talkies. The town is full of chawls built of stone and contain numerous dwelling units, the ownership being in one person. The chawls are found more near the Station Bazaar and also round about Jagat. New extensions are being planned on the other side of the railway line.

Of late, Gulbarga has stolen a march over many other district headquarters in the State in point of educational progress. There are several colleges in the city, viz., Government Arts and Science College, Sri Sharanabasaveshwara College of Arts, and Science, Seth Shankarlal Lahoti Law College, Engineering College, Medical College, Sri Sharanabasaveshwara College of Commerce, Government B.Ed. College, Veeramma Gangasiri Women's College, two Teachers' Training Institutes, a Panchayatraj Training Centre, a Government Polytechnic, a Government Junior Technical School, higher secondary schools and high schools for boys and girls.

The principal bazaar of Gulbarga is at a little distance from the railway station and Government transport buses and tongas run from the station area of the old town, through a straight highway. The railway line was laid away from the town with the result

that around the railway station premises, a busy extension has come up with restaurants, shops and godowns. In the vicinity of the Shahapur road, public offices have been constructed, as well as quarters for Government personnel. The law courts, the Divisional Commissioner's Office, the Executive Engineer's office, etc., are all located near the railway station.

Within a mile from the railway station, the Aiwan-e-Shahi bungalow is situated. The building and the vast garden around it are visited by many. The Divisional Commissioner's office is located in this building. The Government Polytechnic, the Engineering College and the hostels attached to them are very near the railway station.

Nehru Ganj is some two and a half miles from the railway station. This is the principal commercial centre and huge godowns are located in this area. The road leading from Jagat, through the Chowk and then on to Nehru Ganj is full of shops, warehouses and eating establishments. The Gulbarga Central Jail is located on the main bazaar road and this prison house is the oldest in the region.

One of the attractions of the town is the public garden, Mahboob Gulshan, maintained by the municipality, which is situated by the road leading from the railway station to the main bazaar. This garden has fine lawns, good benches to sit upon and attractive walks. During summer months, people of all walks of life frequent the public gardens for fresh air and relaxation.

Close to the railway station, the Central Railway authorities are maintaining a two-suite retiring room. In addition to this, the State Public Works Department has a travellers' bungalow and the district authorities maintain a guest house. There are also some lodging houses.

Gulbarga town was the abode of the famous saint Khwaja Bande Nawaz (1321-1422). He was the disciple of Khwaja Nasir-ud-din of Delhi, popularly known as *Chirag-e-Delhi* (Light of Delhi) and came to Gulbarga to teach and propagate Islamic principles. He was primarily a Persian writer and has left a number of religious works in Persian. But in the Deccan he found his Persian not of much use, for Urdu was more easily understood here. Therefore, he had to learn Urdu to make himself intelligible to the common man. He has left a few treatises in Urdu also which deal with religious subjects. Khwaja Bande Nawaz lives to this day in the memory of the people of the area.

There is a spacious bus stand close to the railway station, from where express and ordinary buses ply to all the taluk headquarters and to other places in and outside the State. The bus terminus

has large waiting rooms, a well-kept restaurant and necessary booking offices. The main post and telegraph office as well as the public call telephone office are very near the bus terminus.

HAGARATGI is in Shorapur taluk, and is of archaeological interest in that some remains of old Dravidian culture are found. The Archaeological Survey of India have unearthed a number of objects for further study. **Hagaratgi**

HATTIKUNI, a small village situated in the interior of a forest area in Yadgir taluk, has assumed importance because of a project called the Hattikuni Project which is now under way. The project mainly consists of an earthen dam across the Gajarkote branch of the Hattikuni stream. The project site is actually located three miles upstream of the Hattikuni stream near the village of the same name. The site of the project is situated in the interior of the forest area. It is about ten miles from the Yadgir railway station. **Hattikuni**

HAYYAL BUZURG is in Shahapur taluk. It is noted for a big temple of Shri Lingeshwar, also called Hayyalappa shrine. About the month of January, a jatra takes place at this place. **Hayyal Buzurg**

JEVARGI is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name. Formerly this taluk was called Andola. This is a Jain pilgrimage centre and contains many basties. In the northern part of the town, the Bhima river runs southwards to join the Krishna. The Gulbarga-Bijapur road passes through Jevargi and enters the Sindgi taluk of Bijapur district to the west of the town. **Jevargi**

KAKKERA, a village in Shorapur taluk, has a shrine of Lord Somnath, which attracts a large number of pilgrims from all over the Karnatak. During the annual jatra, a cattle fair is also held here. **Kakkera**

KALGI in Chittapur taluk is a Hindu pilgrim centre where a jatra is held about May every year. There are two temples, Kalshwar temple and Narasimha temple. Throughout the year, pilgrims visit this place to worship the deities. Kalgi has a panchayat and is 20 miles from the Chittapur railway station which is on the Wadi-Secunderabad broad gauge section. Government transport buses run to this place every day from the district headquarters town. Tengali, 13 miles away, is the nearest bus depot from where buses run all over the district. **Kalgi**

KEMBHAVI is 15 miles north-west of Shorapur and is noted for its historical relics relating to the Bahmani dynasty. There are a number of tombs here held sacred by Muslims. **Kembhavi**

Khandala

KHANDALA is eight miles north-west of Aland and contains a shrine associated with the name of Sri Rama. Hindus from different parts of Karnatak visit this place to worship at the temple of Sri Ramalingeshwaraswamy.

Kodekal

KODEKAL is a place of religious importance visited by pilgrims throughout the year. The Shri Channabasa-veshwara temple situated in this place attracts a large number of devotees. During the jatra, some four thousand people congregate here. Kodekal is also noted for its Dargah which is venerated by the Hindus also. Kodekal is in the extreme south-west of Gulbarga district and lies some ten miles to the north of the Krishna river, in Shorapur taluk.

Korhalli

KORHALLI, a small village in Aland taluk, has, of late, assumed importance as one of the most progressive villages in the district of Gulbarga. The Panchayat of this village earned the distinction of being the best Village Panchayat in Mysore State during the year 1964-65.

Korwar

KORWAR, a village in Chittapur taluk, is sanctified by the Shri Annaveerabhadra temple, where a jatra and a cattle fair are held about May every year. The nearest bus station is Madbole which is at a distance of six miles.

Madan-Hippargi

MADAN-HIPPARGI is a village situated at the south-west corner of the Aland taluk, at a distance of 18 miles from the taluk headquarters. Madan-Hippargi was adjudged as a model village for the entire district of Gulbarga by the State Government in 1963. The place is well known for its handloom industries. There are a number of weavers in the village who have a Handloom Weavers' Co-operative Society.

Malkhed

MALKHED, known historically as Manyakheta, is now a small village on the banks of the Kagna river in Seram taluk. Malkhed is about 22 miles by road from district headquarters town and is on the Gulbarga-Seram road. The nearest railway station is Malkhed Road, four miles away on the Wadi-Secunderabad broad gauge route of the Central Railway. About eight miles east of Malkhed lies the taluk headquarters town of Seram.

Malkhed was once the flourishing capital of the Rashtrakuta monarchs who held power for over two centuries from A.D. 753. The period of Rashtrakuta ascendancy in the Deccan marked one of the most brilliant periods in Indian history. No other ruling dynasty of the Deccan played such a dominant part in the history of India till the rise of the Marathas in the 17th century. Amoghavarsha who ascended the throne in A.D. 814 developed the city. It lost its importance after the fall of the Rashtrakutas. Once a sprawling city with palaces and gardens, it is now reduced

to the level of an ordinary village with a meagre population. There are remains of old forts. The place is venerated by members of the Madhva faith as it has a samadhi of Tikacharya, the famous commentator of Sri Madhvacharya's works.

Malkhed was also a Jain centre in the past and contains a large number of Jain sculptures and bronzes. The place was intimately connected with the *bhakti* cult of Sri Madhvacharya. The second great outstanding personality of the Madhva movement, Jayathirtha, resided in Malkhed in the 14th century. He was the disciple of Akshobhya Tirtha who was one of the four disciples of Sri Madhvacharya. Jayathirtha made the old town of Malkhed his centre and acquired great fame as the commentator on the works of the celebrated Madhvacharya. This was the chief cause for the spread of the Madhva sect all over the Hyderabad-Karnatak region. Jayathirtha was a contemporary of Vidyanarya and earned for himself the title of Tikacharya. He also wrote two polemics, the *Pramanapaddhati* and *Vadavalli*. The brindavan of Tikacharya is situated at Malkhed and every year the followers of the Madhva mathas visit the place on the *Punyathithi* day of the saint.

Malkhed is still remembered as the place which produced the greatest *Apabhramsha* poet, Pushpadanta, who wrote *Mahapurana*, *Jasahara Charit* and *Nayakumara Charit*, under the patronage of the Ministers of the Rashtrakuta King, Krishna II and his successor. Pushpadanta carried to perfection the possibilities of *Apabhramsha* as a vehicle of poetry. His charming style and striking figures of speech recall the best traditions of classical Sanskrit poetry.

MASNAL is a village in Afzalpur taluk. The saint Shaha-buddin's Dargah situated in this place is visited by a large number of Muslims from all over the district. The nearest railway station to this place is Hotgi on the Madras-Bombay broad-gauge route which is 15 miles away. **Masnal**

NAGAI is a place of archaeological interest, situated one and a half miles from the Chittapur railway station on the Wadi-Secunderabad section of the Central Railway. In the past it had assumed importance as a seat of learning. From the recorded history, it is evident that the place provided a University type of education for 200 students of Vedas and 50 students of shastras with several teachers for the Vedas and the shastras and one each for other subjects like *nyaya*, *mimamsa* etc. The total strength of the Ghatika was 257 in all. The institution had adequate provision for clothing and boarding. All the old structures of this place are now in ruins. **Nagai**

Nagai is also noted for its inscriptions, many of which reveal the state of the country in the hoary past. The great minister Kalidasa Dandanatha who adorned the court of Vikramaditya and who was also the promoter of the prosperity of the Chalukya kingdom finds a mention in two of the inscriptions of Nagai (1085 A.D., M.A.R. 1914-15, paras 70-74). Kalidasa Dandanatha is described as possessed of a literary taste, as a great leader of the army, a Brihaspathi in politics, *Guruda* in daring and the like. A study of inscriptions found in Nagai discloses that Kalidasa I was the son of Madhusudana and his son Kalidasa II seems to have successively served Jayasimha II, Someshvara I and Vikramaditya IV in the exalted office of chief minister. Kalidasa I appears to have founded the Agrhara of *Nagavari* (modern Nagai) in the Gulbarga district for 400 Brahmins well versed in the Vedas and obtained a copper grant for it from Jayasimha II. Nagai is described as the capital city of the Eyalu 300 of the Kuntala country. Kalidasa's son apparently beautified the Agrahara by building in it a temple called Kataka-Komalarka in honour of the Trimurtis.

There is a temple in Nagai erected on 61 pillars with nice carvings and built in the Jain style. In front of the temple, a rectangular pillar, seven feet in height, contains an interesting inscription relating to the Chalukyan rule. There are also several old temples at this place. The Yellamma temple is visited by pilgrims from all over the district and also from outside. Marriages are celebrated in the temple as the precincts are expansive and there is adequate supply of water throughout the year.

Nalwar

NALWAR in Chittapur taluk was an urban area according to census details of 1951, but it was placed in the rural category in the 1961 census. The railway station of Nalwar is situated between Wadi Junction and Yadgir on the Madras-Bombay broad gauge route. Commercially, the place has assumed much importance in recent years. The ancient Chandrala Parameshwari temple in Nalwar attracts pilgrims from distant parts of the Mysore State.

Narona

NARONA, which is in Aland taluk, is associated with Sri Rama who in order to wash off his sin after destroying Ravana, it is said, stayed here for some time on his way back to Ayodhya. Hence the village came to be known as Na-Ravana which later became Narona. It is also said that the great sage Agastya was living here. A fine temple dedicated to Kartikaswami attracts thousands of pilgrims. The linga in the temple is associated with Sri Rama's worship. Narona has in all eight "thirthas" highly venerated by the Hindus of the district. The place is midway between Gulbarga and Aland. It has a high school and a health centre.

PADASWALI is ten miles to the west of Aland town. In ancient times, this place was known as Pattashali. A centre of Hindu pilgrimage, the place has a statue of Channakeshavaswamy in black marble. Though small in size, the image is extraordinary, in its beauty. Visitors from all over the Deccan come here to see the lovely image.

RUDRAWADI is ten miles to the north of Aland. It has an inscription relating to the reign of Chalukyas. Though sparsely populated, the place has been proclaimed as a model village with a nice community hall, maternity centre, co-operative society, school building, gramasevak's centre and the like. The village has a cowdung gas plant which provides light to the entire village.

SAGAR, a village in Shahapur taluk, is noted for its Dargah of the saint Shaik Sufi Sarmast Saheb. A well-attended *urus* takes place here annually. Sagar is situated at a distance of 25 miles from Yadgir railway station.

SANGAM in Yadgir taluk is a holy place where the Bhima river joins the Krishna. It is also called Naragadde. Throughout the year, Hindus from all parts of the country visit the place and take holy bath at the confluence. The Channaveera Basaveshwara fair is held here about the month of February every year. Sangam is very near the Krishna railway station between Raichur and Yadgir on the Madras-Bombay broad gauge route.

SERAM is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name and lies some 25 miles from Wadi Junction on the Wadi-Secunderabad broad-gauge route. It is located 42 miles south-east of Gulbarga town. At one time, the taluk had 45 jagir villages, but now all the jagirs have been abolished. The town contains many old temples and mosques. The Jama Masjid constructed in the lintel style is a place to be visited. The Panchalinga temple is another place worth a visit; it has carved pillars presenting an attractive sight. Besides, there are a Jain Mandir, Manikeshwar temple with a *Garudagamba*, Murulinga and other temples.

SHAHABAD is eight miles from Wadi Junction on the Madras-Bombay broad-gauge railway route in Chittapur taluk. It has an elegant masonry enclosure in the centre of the town. This is supposed to be the wall of an old palace. This enclosure has within it a big mosque and a well. The place has come into prominence on account of its big cement factory owned and worked by the Associated Cement Companies, Ltd. There are large deposits of limestone in the taluk. The place is also famous for its laminated limestones known as the Shahabad stones. Shahabad has now become an important industrial area and a large labour population resides here.

Shorapur

SHORAPUR is the headquarters of the taluk of the same name. The nearest railway station is Yadgir which is about 33 miles. It was known in the old days by the name of Surapura. After the advent of Muslim rule, it began to be called as Shorapur. Not only Shorapur is historically famous but it is also a place of some religious importance. It was the capital of a line of rulers whose domain comprised the area which extended from the Bhima river to the Krishna. It became prominent during the first war of independence in 1857, when the Bedar Raja of Shorapur revolted against the British rule. Prior to this, the Bedar Rajas had battled hard against Emperor Aurangzeb. A Hindu shrine in the town dedicated to the god Gopalaswami attracts devotees throughout the year. A big fair is held here during *Gokulashtami*. Col. Meadows Taylor who is the author of several historical novels lived here for some time. The house that he built is called Taylor's Manzil and is visited by a number of people. Soon after the 1857 revolt when order was restored, Shorapur State was made over to the Nizam of Hyderabad.

The town of Shorapur is situated on a high undulating tableland surrounded by hills. The slope of the country around Shorapur is generally from west to east. The total area of the town is three square miles and comprises Shorapur, Rangampeth and Timapur. Shorapur is situated on a ridge, while the other two suburbs are at the foot of the hills. The Krishna river is seven miles to the west of the town. The remains of the palaces of the Rajas are situated in the centre of the town. The town contains many temples, mosques and Ashur-Khanas. This place was once a cantonment for the Nizam's troops. It is centrally located in between Gulbarga, Raichur and Bijapur.

Sonthi

SONTHI, also called Tonchi and Sannathi by the local population, is about 12 miles from the Nalwar railway station on the Raichur-Wadi section of the Central Railway. Except during the festival days when buses run from Nalwar to Sonthi, pilgrims have to reach the place on bullock carts on other days. This place in Chittapur taluk, though a small village, has become renowned for its Chandralamba temple, which is visited by a large number of Hindus. In March-April every year, a *jatra* is held here. The temple faces east and is in circular shape. On either side of the main entrance, there are huge mantaps, beyond which there is a broad open space nearly 30 ft. wide. The *mantaps* are so constructed as to hold some 2,000 pilgrims at a time. In the centre of this enclosure, the *sanctum-sanctorum* of the Goddess is situated, with the main opening facing east. The outer *prakaras* are used by devotees to sing the praise of the presiding deity. It is said on historical authority that the great dynasty of the Western Chalukyas worshipped Chandralamba as their family deity. Even to this day the Goddess is the family deity of several communities in Gulbarga district. In the inner courtyard of this

celebrated temple, there are *Dwadasha lingas*, together with the images of *Mahakali*, *Mahalakshmi* and *Saraswathi*. In addition to the temple of Chandralamba, pilgrims go to the Sri Markandeya temple, the Marthanda Bhairava Pond and the *samadhi* of Sri Vishwambhara Dikshit.

The sacred Bhima river flows to the south of the Chandralamba temple and adds to the serenity of the place. According to local belief, Chandralamba is none other than Sitadevi, an avatar of Goddess Lakshmi. Sri Shankaracharya, who propagated the philosophy of *advaita*, has placed before the devotees a well-sung praise of the Goddess in the form of *Ashtottara*. Among those, who became bhakthas of the Goddess were Jagannatha Pandit, Mudduranga Guru Pranesha Vitthala of Lingsugur and the Swamiji of Coondapur, and to manage the affairs of this temple, there is an organisation called the Sri Chandralamba Seva Sangha.

Recently, some important ancient Buddhist relics as also inscriptions in Prakrit and Kannada have been discovered at this place.

THINTINI is on the bank of river Krishna in Shorapur taluk. **Thintini** It is held sacred by the Hindus as it contains the famous shrine of Lord Moneshwar. It is also called Monnappaiah Dargah after a Hindu sufi saint who was a Vishwakarma by caste. He was greatly attracted towards the tenets of Islam. His Dargah is visited by both Hindus and Muslims. Thintini is only 12 miles from the taluk headquarters town of Shorapur. A bridge has been constructed across the Krishna river connecting Gulbarga and Raichur districts. The Thintini bridge has facilitated direct traffic from Bidar to Bangalore without the necessity of passing through Andhra Pradesh.

WADI is a big railway junction in Chittapur taluk, 20 miles away from the district headquarters town. **Wadi** Before 1874, Wadi was an inconspicuous village. The place became an important junction after the railway line from Hyderabad was laid. Wadi has a large railway yard and loco-shed. Near the railway station, a township, mostly consisting of railway employees, has come up. A cement factory is being established at this place.

WAGINGERA, popularly known as Wagangeri, is another place of historical importance in Shorapur taluk. **Wagingera** It finds its place in the pages of Indian history for the battle which took place between the Raja of Shorapur and Emperor Aurangzeb. Wagingera contains the ruins of a well-constructed fort which at the time of the Rajas was considered to be invincible.

YADGIR is the headquarters of the sub-division and taluk of **Yadgir** the same name, situated on the Madras-Bombay broad gauge.

railway line, some 50 miles from the district headquarters town of Gulbarga. Close to the town and towards the east of the railway station, there is a hill well-fortified by the Yadava kings. An inscription found on the Nizam Buruz gives an account of Nizam Ali Khan's visit to the Governor of the place. The town contains a Jama Masjid. Because of its location on the principal railway route and also of its proximity to Wadi Junction, Yadgir has assumed commercial importance with a sizable import and export trade in foodgrains. The river Bhima flows close by. Yadgir is also a religious centre and the famous Mailaralinga temple here attracts a large number of devotees. A jatra is held once in a year.

Yergol

YERGOL is a small village in close proximity of Chittapur town. Jayathirtha, known to his followers as Sri Tikacharya, is believed to have written his celebrated *Nyayasudha* at this place.
