

CHAPTER III

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE HIRANGKHOLS OF NORTH CACHAR HILLS IN ASSAM

The North Cachar (N.C) Hills District is located on the southern part of Assam State, lying between Karbi Anglong District on the north; Khasi and Jantia Hills on the east; and Cachar on the South.¹ Since the British annexed Cachar in 1832, and connected Railway line in 1896, all areas of N.C.Hills was ruled by British². Hence, a cultural crisis was created. Western culture, education, opium and technology were introduced. Thus, the arrival of British had a tremendous impact on the life of hill tribes. In course of such situation, Christianity entered into N.C.Hills during the first decade of 20th century.

A. THE COMING OF THE GOSPEL

1. The Prelude:

In early 1813, the first Serampore convert named Krishna Chandra Paul was sent to the Khasi Hills in Meghalaya, and he won two converts of Khasi.³ Since then the Gospel was gradually spread far to Jowai. In 1890, the Biate of Jowai received the Gospel from the Khasi evangelists and then carried on the Gospel to N.C.Hills in Assam⁴. The Biate convert name **Haia** or **Haite** of

¹ A.Mackenzie, *The North-East Frontier of India*, Reprinted, Delhi, 1989, p.145.

² Dr.S.K. Barpujari, "Haflong : A Historical Appraisal" in *100 years, Haflong, Centenary Commemorative Souvenir*, Haflong, 1995, pp.181f. See also S.M. Dubey, *North-East India: A Sociological Study*, New Delhi, 1978, p.12.

³ Frederick S.Downs, *Christianity in North East India: Historical perspectives*, New Delhi, 1983, pp.89f. See also Mathew Mattumana, *Christianity in Assam and Inter-Faith Dialogue*, Pune, 1984, p.16. Cf.O.L. Snaitang, *Christianity and Social change in North East India*, Shillong, 1993, p.65.

⁴ *Souvenir of Cachar Hill Tribes Synod GOLDEN JUBILEE (1929-1979)*, English Edition, Synod House, Haflong, 1979, p.36. Hereafter cited as *Souvenir of Cachar Hill Tribes Synod GOLDEN JUBILEE*.