

The CHC School Journal

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Dumdum Chronicles

EXPLORE

THE
OLD
CALCUTTA
CHROMOSOMES

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Belgachia Villa



Belgachia Villa, also known as **Paikpara Rajbari**, was once a large garden house. It was considered as one of the most elegant mansions in India during the mid 19th century. It was a symbol of glamour, aesthetics and grandeur. This property initially belonged to an Italian gentleman

named **Mr. Auckland**. **Prince Dwarkanath Tagore**, the grandfather of Rabindranath Tagore, bought it from Mr Auckland in 1823 with the intention to hold parties for entertaining his influential European friends. Prince Dwarkanath hired an English architect for renovating the mansion and used furniture imported from England and Italy as authentic European decor.

The staircase of the villa was an example of construction marvel with its unique charm. The entire flight of stairs was constructed without any support from below, and was decorated with beautiful cast iron figurines.

This majestic house had a beautiful garden in its front during its days of glory. "Moti Jheel", a lovely rectangular water body with a bridge lay within the garden dividing it into two parts. The backyard of the building was equally attractive with a fountain surrounded by Venetian statues.

After the sudden demise of Dwarkanath in England in 1846 his son Devendranath was forced to find a way to sell the property to repay the huge debts of his late father. In 1856 this mansion was purchased by **Raja Pratap Chandra Bahadur Singh of Kandi** in an auction.

Since then, this mansion has been known as Paikpara Rajbari and stands till date in the **Milk Colony Area of Belgachia, North Kolkata**.



Prince Dwarkanath Tagore

St. Patrick's Church

St. Patrick's Church, locally known as '**Sadhu Patricker Girja**' is one of the oldest Catholic churches of Kolkata.

It is located opposite to Dum Dum Central Correctional Home, and is hardly ten minutes away from the Kolkata international airport. In 1783,

the British East India Company established their artillery headquarters in Dum Dum where regimental Irish troops gathered from different parts of the world, to work with the Bengal Artillery.

In those days, the Company did not officially encourage Roman Catholicism and thus its Irish followers had no place for worship.

In 1820, under the able leadership of **Joseph Barretto**, a plot of land was received as a gift from the Company to erect the **first Roman Catholic Church of North Kolkata**. On 9th February 1822, the foundation stone of St. Patrick's Church was laid.

On the eve of Good Friday, 1823, the Church doors were made open to public.

1955 marked a significant year in the history of St. Patrick's Church when it was first

established as a permanent parish.

A community of the faithful was thus created for pastoral care of the shrine. St. Patrick's Church, Dum Dum



celebrated its glorious Bicentenary on 6th February 2022 and still stands tall in Dum Dum with its extremely lavish decoration and serenity.

Jessop & Company

Jessop and Company is India's oldest engineering establishment. The roots date back to **1788** when **Breen and Company** was founded in Calcutta. In 1820, Henry and George, sons of William Jessop acquired Breen and Company on behalf of Butterley Company which had been established by senior William Jessop in England. At a later date the companies were merged and renamed to form Jessop and Company, the engineering giant with a sprawling factory in Dum Dum.

Jessop and Company has been a pioneer in engineering for various categories in India.

Between 1815 and 1840, Jessop and Company built the **first iron bridge in India** over the river Gomti in Lucknow also known as "**Lohe ka Pul**".



Howrah Bridge, the

first cantilever bridge of India and the iconic structure which is the symbol of Kolkata was built by them between 1937 and 1943.

They played a major part in the construction of the Parliament House .

It is this factory from where **India's first Electrical Multiple Unit (EMU) Train** was rolled out.

The company exists even today at **Dum Dum as Burn, Braithwaite and Jessop**, who built railway wagons.

Cossipore Club



Cossipore Club is a heritage Club of North Kolkata. This club was set up in the year 1905 for the recreation of the Europeans and Anglo-Indian employees of the nearby Gun and Shell Factory and allied military establishments.

The palatial building of the club located at **Seven Tanks Estate 4, Dum Dum Road** was at that time surrounded by same number of water bodies or ponds, locally called Saat Pukur or Seven Ponds. Out of these only five have survived till date.

The Club house has a gateway and two bridges across a tank leading to the majestically imposing double-storey building. The building has a row of 7 fluted columns which makes it look like an ancient Roman temple, rather than a Club house.

This building was enlisted in 1997, for preservation and conservation as a part of Kolkata heritage.

The Cossipore Club is considered as one of the oldest and prestigious sports clubs of Kolkata. It provides lot of opportunities to the young people for individual development and also inspires them for contributing collectively to the society.

The club now has a well equipped infrastructure for playing lawn tennis in hard court, a billiard room, a modern Gymnasium and a nicely arranged bar as well as a state of the art swimming pool to serve the elites with glimpses of its glorious past.

Bengal Veterinary College

Veterinary education in India began in Pune in 1862 through Army Veterinary College. Soon after the famine, the need was felt to address the issues of cattle plague and bullock health and accordingly **India's second Veterinary College** was set up in Calcutta in 1893, known as **Bengal Veterinary College**.

The College then operated on the program as per the **Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons in London** and was based on equine practice.



In course of time there was increase in the requirement of trained surgeons to cope with enormous animal disease problems in India. So the teaching programs were expanded and enriched and the college functioned under the University of Calcutta.

After Independence, agricultural development played a major role and so agricultural universities were set up which taught other disciplines like fishery, animal husbandry etc.

In 1974, Bengal Veterinary College was merged with Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya as a Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences. In 1995, West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences (WBUAFS) was established by separating veterinary and animal science departments from the Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwa Vidyalaya.

The West Bengal University of Animal and Fishery Sciences is the present institution with the century-old legacy of Bengal Veterinary College.

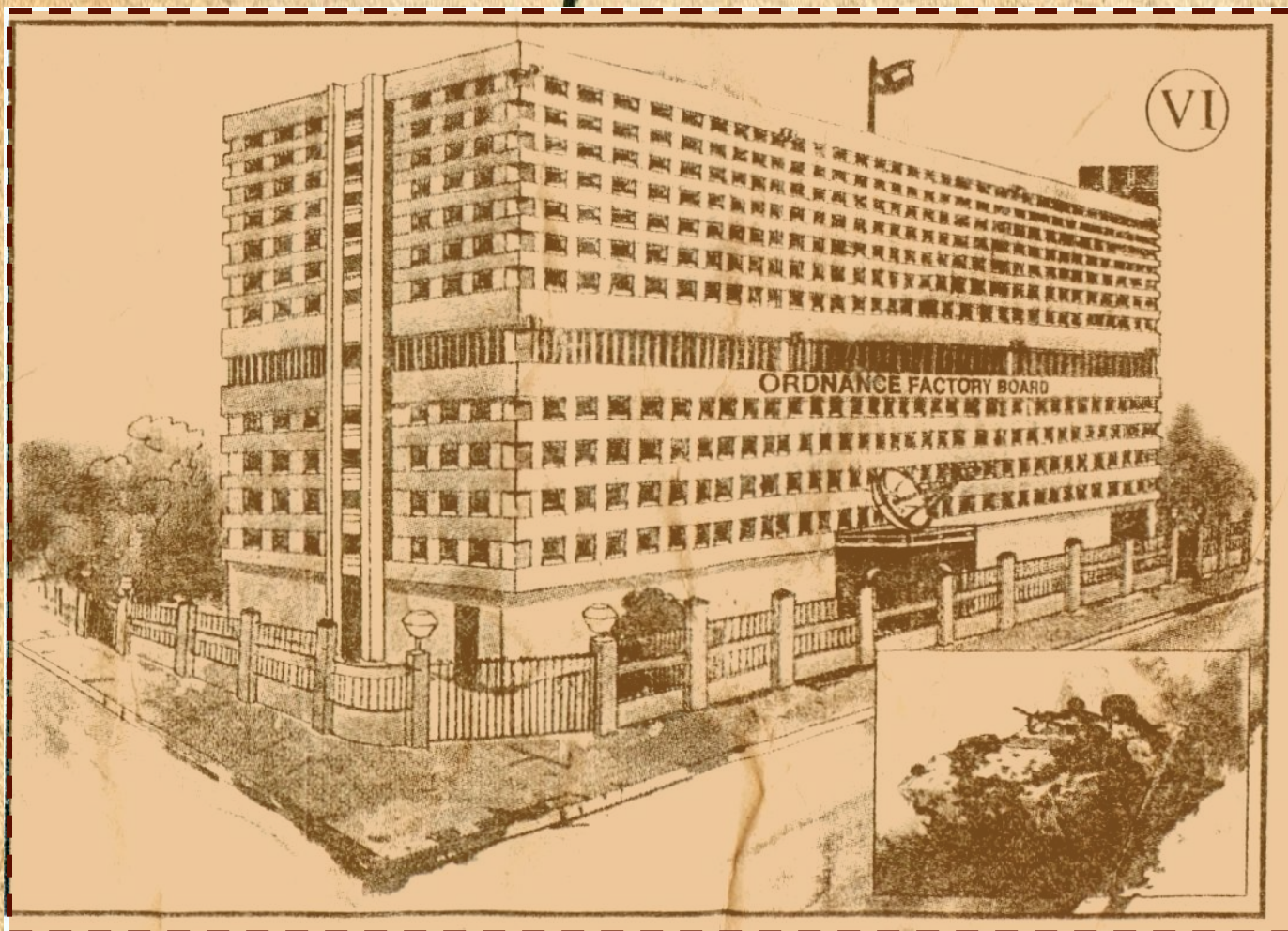
The present university has many faculties situated at different places of West Bengal for Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Fishery Sciences, and Dairy Technology etc.

The headquarter of the university is situated in Belgachia, Kolkata and is housed in the imposing building of Bengal Veterinary College built during the British Raj.

Cossipore Gun And Shell Factory

Cossipore Gun and Shell Factory is the oldest surviving factory in the Indian subcontinent. In 1801, a Gun Carriage Agency at Cossipore was established. It was later known as the 'Gun and Shell Factory'.

This is the first industrial establishment of an 'Ordnance Factory' which has continued till the present time. The function of the Cossipore Factory changed to the production of guns in 1829. By 1830, it was renamed the 'Gun Foundry Factory'.



In 1857, the factory produced 30 field guns a month. From 1855, the Army had been taking delivery of breech loaded rifled barreled guns.

The rifles being imported from England required elongated shells so it was decided that Cossipore should produce these.

In 1890, a facility was opened for repair of breech loading guns and the manufacturing of quick firing guns was undertaken with the name being changed again to the Gun and Shell Factory in 1905.

In 1872, the army required elongated shells and thus it became necessary to expand and more land was purchased and a new workshop was constructed for Shell manufacture. Therefore, the factory was named as "**FOUNDRY AND SHELL FACTORY COSSIPORE**".

In 1910, Electric Power was introduced and the factory was further modernized in the period of 1916 to 192. The Tractor Project started in the year 1958.

Within two centuries of existence, Gun Factory had gone to the brink of closure thrice but came out successfully each time. The factory had regained its glory and going on serving the nation forever.

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