



Dr and Mrs R.S. Churchward – 1939 (Edition 1)

Dr and Mrs R.S. Churchward arrived in India from England in 1939. Dr Churchward had come to New Zealand as a young man and was converted during special meetings by Mr Gottlieb Nagel from India as a result of the Christian testimony at Glentunnel. Believing it to be the Lord's will for him to be a medical missionary he returned to Scotland and qualified at Edinburgh before going out to relieve Dr Henderson at Sankeshwar. In September 1940 he took charge of the hospital that was handed over to assembly missionaries at Tiruvalla, Mr Gordon Fountain and Mr Gordon Junck being two of the trustees. At that time there were 25 beds in the hospital. Work was immediately begun to extend the hospital and extra wards were added, a new women's ward being opened in 1942. The Lord blessed the ministry there and many patients were converted. Other outreach branch dispensaries were opened in villages so that by 1947 three were functioning in different areas. In 1948 Dr Churchward took a nine-month post-graduate course in surgery at Edinburgh. In succeeding years the work grew with training schemes for nurses and further extensions to the hospital. Others who helped at Tiruvalla were Dr Rea from U.K., Dr Gilmore Davies and Mrs Dr Fountain.

Dr Churchward was interested in the wider work of the whole area as well as the medical ministry and shared in conventions with Mr Gordon Fountain.

Dr and Mrs Churchward returned to U.K. in 1961 and took up a medical practice there. In 1972 the author visited Tiruvalla and was impressed by the size of that 170 bed hospital, the efficiency of the nursing staff and the quiet atmosphere of Christian grace that pervaded the establishment.

[Source entry has photo captioned 'Dr and Mrs R.S. Churchward']