

1639

The **East India Company** receives a grant of no man's land from a local governor. On this piece of land, 7 kilometers north of San Thome, protected on three sides by water, a fortified factory is built. This is christened **Fort St George** (after the patron saint of England, on whose feast day the construction was completed - April 23rd, 1640).



The Fort becomes Britain's gateway to India. And its establishment marks the birth of the city we know today as Chennai.

The men responsible for the Fort's establishment - **Francis Day, Andrew Cogan, Beri Thimmapa** and **Nagabaththan**.

1658

Triplicane, south of San Thome, is added to the main settlement.

1664



The first organised hospital in the country starts at **Fort St George. General Hospital**, which moved to its present location in 1772, opened its doors to Indians in 1842.

1678

Kaliyamman Kameswarar temple at Thambu Chetty Street is built. **Emperor Sivaji** and the famous Tamil poet of 20th century, **Subramania Bharathi** worshipped at this shrine.



1687

The **Corporation of Madras** is set up. This, the oldest municipal organisation in India, was the brainchild of **Sir Josiah Child** - the then Chairman of the **East India Company**.

1693

Egmore and Purusawalkam, along the road to Poonamallee, are acquired.

1701

Emperor Aurangzeb's general **Daud Khan**, attacks **Fort St George**. But the British manage to hold the Fort.



1715

The East India Company acquires Tondiarpet.

1726



Coja Petrus Usca constructs the 134 stone steps, which are still used to reach the summit of the 300-foot high **St Thomas Mount**.

1708 - 1742

Villages on either side of the road to St Thomas Mount are acquired: Nungambakkam, Pudupakkam and Vepery. Also Perambur and Vyasarpadi in the north-west are acquired.

1744



Robert Clive works as a writer at **Fort St George**. He goes on to become the hero of the Carnatic.

1746

The British lose possession of **Fort St George** to the triumphant French **Admiral La Bourdonnais**.

1749

Through the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle between the French and the British, **Fort St George** is restored to the British. And Mylapore and San Thome are added to Madras.

1760

George Town is developed over the debris of the first township in Madras - Black town (demolished because of the skirmishes between the French and the British).

1772

Madras' first organised water supply is started with the **Seven Wells Scheme**.

1785

The **Madras Courier** - the first journalistic publication in the city begins.



1788

Thomas Parry lands in Madras and begins a career in trading. Parry's is the oldest surviving mercantile name in the city. And their **Dare House**, occupied in 1940, is one of the most frequently quoted reference points for city commuters.

1794

The **Government Survey School** commences in **Fort St George**. This, the oldest engineering school outside Europe, is now part of **Anna University**.

1795



The **Wallajah mosque** is built in Triplicane in remembrance of **Nawab Wallajah**. Constructed without steel or wood, this edifice in grey granite is also called the '**Big Mosque**'.

1802

Rajaji Hall is built. Originally intended to be a Banquet Hall, the architecture of the building shows strong Greek-temple styling.



1815



St George's Cathedral is completed. This cathedral has a 140 feet high spire. The road on which this cathedral stands is called - The **Cathedral Road**.

1821

St Andrew's Kirk, Egmore, is consecrated. The 170-foot spire of this church surmounts a circular nave and a dome that rests on 16 ionic pillars.



1835



The **Agri-Horticultural Society** is established. Till recently, the city's annual flower show was held at this venue.

1840

Presidency College begins. This initially started as a preparatory school. Then it became the city's first college.



1844



Librarian **Abel Joshua Higginbotham** establishes **Higginbothams**. This chain of bookshops is not only one of the oldest, but also one of the largest network of bookshops in the country.



1849

Peter Orr starts **P. Orr and Sons**, which has been the city's traditional timekeeper for decades. This showroom and the three-faced clock tower, built in 1873, are city landmarks even today.

1903

Madras Veterinary College is founded in Periamet by **Lt Col. Dobbins**. This is the first Veterinary College in the country to get University affiliation and grant degrees.



1907



The **National Art Gallery** is built by **T. Namberumal Chetty** on a **Henry Irwin** design. This pink sandstone edifice boasts of spectacular designing on its facade.

1913

Ripon building (named after a former Viceroy) is built at a cost of Rs 7,50,000/- by **P. Loganatha Mudaliar**. This 252-foot long building, in dazzling white is, the headquarters of the Chennai Corporation today.



1914



Capper House at Marina opens its doors to 37 women students to become the first college for women in the city. From 1917 onwards this college has been known as the **Queen Mary's College**.

1922

The **Southern Railway Headquarters** building is opened. This grey edifice is one of the city's most impressive examples of Indo-Saracenic architecture.



1925

The most renowned Catholic college in the city - **Loyola College**, is founded by a Jesuit priest - **Rev. Fr Francis Bertram S. J.**

1928

The **Music Academy** is founded to foster a Carnatic Music culture that encourages both theory and performance. The Academy's **T. T. Krishnamachari Auditorium** (whose foundation stone was laid by **Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru** in 1955) is today the Mecca for Carnatic Music.



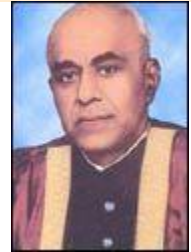
1931



The first Suburban Electric Train Service in the city commences.

1933

Dr Rajah, Sir M A Muthiah Chettiar becomes the first **Mayor of Chennai**. He was re-elected for another term in November 1934.



1936



Legendary Bharathanatyam exponent **Rukmini Devi Arundale** establishes **Kalakshetra** (the place for Art) - one of the finest dance schools in the country, credited with helping revive classical dance.

1954



Gandhi Mandapam - a memorial to the father of the nation, is opened at Guindy. The spot is immediately recognisable by the temple gopuram styling of its portals.

1959

The southern regional office of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) opens. This is Chennai's first highrise building. With its clean lines in concrete, steel and glass, LIC is one of the most recognisable landmarks in the city.



1962

Music Academy opens its **T. T Krishnamachari Auditorium**. The auditorium hosts the annual Music Festival, which has become the most significant synthesis of Carnatic Music study and practice.



1973



Anna Flyover (originally called **Gemini Flyover**, after the film studio, off its southern end) opens to traffic. This is the city's first Flyover.

1983



Vidyakar, a social worker in the slums of N.S.K. Nagar, receives a dehydrated baby boy; brought to him by a rickshaw puller, who had discovered it, abandoned in a cinema hall, after a night show. This marks the beginning of **Udavam Karangal** - an institution that now houses and cares for around 1500 inmates.

A fire guts the magnificent Indo-Saracenic structure of **Spencers** on Mount Road. The building was pulled down after the fire, to make way for the modern structure, from where the supermarket still operates.



1985

A devastating fire burns down **Moore Market**, which had been the city-shoppers', particularly the book lovers' main haunt since 1900.

1989



A storm uproots the trunk of the 200-year-old Banyan tree (the second biggest in India) in the **Theosophical Society** campus. But over 1000 roots have helped keep the tree flourishing. This tree shades over 40,000 sq.feet of ground.

1996

Madras is rechristened **Chennai**. While Madraspatnam was the English settlement near Fort St George, Chennapatnam was essentially a Telugu settlement near the Fort.

Chennai's wholesale vegetable and fruit market, at **Kothawal Chavadi**, is moved to the massive **Koyambedu Complex** on the city outskirts.



2000

Numerous Flyovers are built in the city to help reduce traffic congestion at key points.



The **Tidel Park** at Taramani is opened to Information Technology enterprises. This Software Park gives Chennai its very own cyber corridor.