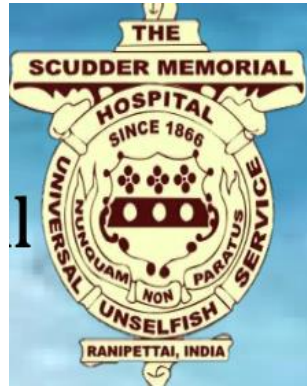


In the 1920s, *Scudder Memorial Association* and *Scudder Association of America*  
Both Contributed to the Completion of Scudder Memorial Hospital in 1928

compiled by Margery Boyden, Scudder Association Foundation Historian, ©2023 Scudder Association Foundation



When the Scudder Memorial Association with address of 1 Exchange Place, Jersey City, New Jersey filed its certificate of incorporation on 19 June 1911,<sup>2</sup> its sole purpose was to raise funds to complete the construction of the new Scudder Memorial Hospital facility. Within ten years, members of the Scudder Association of America, that was formed in 1912 to include social and family history purposes, also were contributing substantially to the building of the hospital through a part of the association's dues and personal donations.

Contemporary articles associated with mission work written in the 1920s report the need for and progress in the building of the hospital. In 1921, *Record of Christian Work* states:

Ten years ago was founded an association called the Scudder Memorial Association, whose purpose is to build a Scudder memorial hospital in India by the descendants of Dr. John Scudder, who with his devoted wife went out to India in 1819. The appropriateness of a hospital as a memorial will be recognized when we remember that Dr. John Scudder was the first medical missionary, and that eleven of his descendants were medical missionaries. The fifty or more Scudders who became missionaries within a century contributed about a thousand years of service. The association selected the Ranipettai Hospital to be the memorial hospital, as it had been begun by Dr. Silas Scudder, and has been presided over by Drs. John, Henry Martyn, Jr., and Lewis, and is now carried on by Dr. Galen Scudder.

<sup>1</sup> Scudder Memorial Hospital Crest, Ranipettai, India.

<sup>2</sup> Scudder Memorial Association Certificate, Corporations of New Jersey, Part I, 627, [http://www.njstatelib.org/slic\\_files/searchable\\_publications/corp/NJCORPn627.html](http://www.njstatelib.org/slic_files/searchable_publications/corp/NJCORPn627.html).

In ten years, the Association secured 80,000 rupees, the equivalent of \$25,000. But as the cost of building in the ten years has more than doubled, and the changes in the government of India have materially reduced the chance of securing adequate grants in aid, the Association finds itself up against the necessity of securing another \$25,000 if they are to carry out their original plans. They propose to raise this, first, by additional gifts from among themselves, then by an appeal to their cousins of the Scudder Association of America, and also by an appeal to interested friends. They also endorse to appeal for an endowment of \$100,000 to give the hospital a more adequate support.<sup>3</sup>

A 1927 update in the 1928 Yearbook of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions from the Arcot mission reports the excitement as the hospital was nearing completion:

Scudder Memorial Hospital,—Miss Noordyk, the Nursing Superintendent, reports: The medical work has been carried on in the old Hospital for over sixty years. As one looks at our old dilapidated building and then beholds the new one, very beautiful indeed and well fitted for modern hospital treatment, one realizes that there will be a tremendous difference, a great step forward in Medical Mission work as far as our Mission is concerned.

During the past, patients who came to our Hospital from the surrounding villages have made the hospital their home more or less. They brought with them their family and all that was needed to keep the family fed and clothed while the sick one was in the Hospital. Cooking pots, drinking vessels, chairs and a cot if they possessed them, a tin trunk containing clothing, firewood, rice, etc. We have at times had patients who brought a cow with them, tied it to the veranda and supplied the needed milk that way.

I have seen Brahmin patients who brought beautiful silver vessels with them. Then there are the large numbers of poor people, Christians, Mohammedans,

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<sup>3</sup> W. R. Moody, Editor, *Record of Christian Work*, Volume 41, no. 12, (East Northfield, Massachusetts, December, 1922): 867–868,  
<https://books.google.com/books?id=FKhVAAAAYAAJ&pg=PT27&lpg=PT27&dq=%22Scudder+Memorial+Association%22+1922&source=bl&ots=CauM4uDo-9&sig=ACfU3U0VOgGE5ZqNYJEjKv-ccoalMqpdCQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewiO2obbxcCDAXW5PUQIHcgyBeIQ6AF6BAgoEAM#v=onepage&q=%22Scudder%20Memorial%20Association%22%201922&f=false>.

Hindus and outcastes who come to us. They, too, bring their families but as we cannot feed them all, some the family must return to their villages leaving one relative to attend to the sick one....

Our Maternity Ward is situated in a wide open space without any wall protection, and any one has access into it at any time, day or night. It is not uncommon when one makes rounds a little late in the evening to find on the floor the fathers and the husbands sound asleep by the side of the patients. I go around waking them all and advising them to spend the night on the veranda if they must be near. They all give their assent, but I know that half an hour after I am gone they return to their former place. One evening this week I made rounds and found one man, two women and six children sleeping by the bed of a patient. I inquired why all the children were there and was informed that they had come to see the patient rather late, it grew dark quickly and so they stayed the night.

Of course all this amuses one at times, but it is not conducive to the proper conducting of a Hospital. And that is where a great change will take place in our new Hospital. With proper doors, gates and even a partially built compound wall we may limit the number of attendants strictly to one. But what a campaign of education will be necessary in the beginning! We may be able to say more about that next year.

We are grateful for what has been accomplished in the past and pray and trust that 'even greater things' shall be done in the future.

It is a great pleasure to have Dr. Galen F. Scudder back with us again to assume the greater burden of the work....

We have worked together in Christian fellowship for the sake of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. May we be ever ready to serve Him better.<sup>4</sup>

This same issue of the 1928 Woman's Yearbook contains a list of all the female Scudders then serving in the Arcot Mission (and to these add the husbands of those cited as "Mrs."): *Vellore*: Dr. Ida S. Scudder, Mrs. L. R. Scudder, Miss Julia C. Scudder, Miss Ethel T. Scudder.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Year Book of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions Reformed Church in America*, (New York: Containing the Story of the Year 1927 in the Mission Fields and the Fifty-fourth Annual Report for the Year Ending May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1928: 35-37, [https://issuu.com/vanwylenlibrary/docs/44\\_womans\\_board\\_of\\_foreign\\_missions](https://issuu.com/vanwylenlibrary/docs/44_womans_board_of_foreign_missions).

*Ranipettai*: Mrs. Galen F. Scudder

*Punganur*: Mrs. Henry J. Scudder

*Tindivanam*, Mrs. Walter T. Scudder.<sup>5</sup>

From this list we know that the year before Scudder Memorial Hospital was completed, that at least three single female Scudders and four Scudder couples were serving in India for a total of eleven. With this many of their relatives involved in dedicated service, the motivation for their siblings and cousins back in America to support their efforts is understandable.

During its second decade, two presidents of the Scudder Association of America were from the missionary family. In 1921, the president of the Scudder Association was Silas D. Scudder, Jr., son of the founder of the original Scudder Memorial Hospital in 1866 and a cousin to all the rest.

According to *A Thousand Years in Thy Sight*, those Scudders who were assigned to the Arcot mission in 1928 when the hospital was completed were: Dr. and Mrs. Lewis Rousseau Scudder, Miss Julia Scudder, Rev. and Mrs. Henry Johnstone Scudder, Rev. and Mrs. Walter Tracy Scudder, Dr. Ida S. Scudder, Dr. and Mrs. Galen Fisher Scudder, Mrs. Ruth Scudder deWolfe, Mrs. Helen Scudder Bouchier, and Mrs. Beth Scudder Thoms.<sup>6</sup>

In 1925, the president of the Scudder Association of America was the Rev. Charles Judson Scudder, brother of Dr. Ida S. Scudder, founder of the hospital at Vellore (later Christian Medical College, CMC-Vellore) and Rev. Henry Johnstone Scudder at Punganur and the Rev. Walter Tracy Scudder assigned to the mission station at Tindivanam, Tamil Nadu, who was apparently on a temporary furlough when the others above were listed. It is for him that the Walter Scudder Higher Secondary School in Tindivanam is named. A concise biography of the Rev. Walter Tracy and his family is available at <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/79500151/walter-tracy-scudder>.

The other presidents of *Scudder Association of America* during the 1920s were from other branches of the Scudder family but nevertheless gave their support to the effort to complete the Scudder Memorial Hospital: Winthrop Saltonstall Scudder, 1919–1920 and 1927, Marvyn Scudder, 1922, John Montgomery Scudder, Sr., 1922–1923, Rita Lord Scudder in 1926 and Theodore Townsend Scudder who began his decade's long term as president in 1928—1939.

During the 1920s, the *Scudder Memorial Association*, composed mostly of the missionary Scudder branch of the family was actively at work raising funds for the completion of the hospital.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Year Book of the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions Reformed Church in America*, (1928): 27.

<sup>6</sup> Dorothy Jealous Scudder, *A Thousand Years in Thy Sight*, (New York: Vantage Press, 1984): 335–336.

## Completion



View of Hospital from looking bridge. The view is the left in The Main Ward, to the right, The Nurses Ward, The main entrance to the Hospital.



View of Hospital, about April, 1928, before completion. Main Ward to left, Central Block, entrance, Completed Dispensary, Operating Room, Examination Rooms, X-Ray and Vaccination Department.

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In *A Thousand Years in Thy Sight*, D. V. Scudder, Mrs. John Scudder III, who arrived in Ranipet in 1929, reports that when Dr. Galen Scudder arrived in Ranipet, India in 1920, the cornerstone of Scudder Memorial Hospital had been laid but “there were not sufficient funds to start building until 1925. Galen had to carry on in the old army barracks and to improvise constantly.” Dr. Charles Judson Scudder, president of Scudder Association of America in 1925 was a brother of Dr. Ida S. Scudder who was at Vellore, and both, assisted by their cousins in both places, were recruiting assistance for the Scudder Memorial Hospital to complete the project.

Members of the Scudder family were at work in America and in India raising money for the hospital. By 1925, they had raised Rupees; 250,000; the Reformed Church in America gave another Rupees 50,000; and the Madras Government contributed Rupees 50,000. It was time to start building. A friend of Dr. Galen’s, Mr. Reginald Dann, an architect with the Government of Madras, gave his services gratis to design the most beautiful hospital in Indian, one which the Indians called, ‘The Taj Mahal of South India.’ When it was opened in 1928, Galen and all members of the Scudder family were justly proud of this beautiful, well-equipped, and up-to-date hospital.<sup>8</sup>

Dr. Galen Scudder’s 1928 report about the opening of the hospital is an important recital of the process of bringing the new Scudder Memorial Hospital facility to fruition and to the formalities of transferring its administration to the Arcot Mission of the Reformed Church of America and mentions major donors so it is repeated here in its entirety for its historical value:

The last annual report was written from the old hospital—the Cavalry Barracks. But the old order changeth and the new order cometh. We are now writing our first report from the new Scudder Memorial Hospital. After thinking and

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<sup>7</sup> *Ninety-seventh Annual Report Board of Foreign Missions, Reformed Church in America, 1929*, (New York: 1929.

<sup>8</sup> D. V. Scudder, 227.

planning for years and wondering many times whether we should ever see the new Hospital completed we are agreeably surprised to find our hopes come true. We are actually here!

The opening of the Hospital took place September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1928, and was attended with considerable ceremony and formality. For the past eighteen years the Scudder Memorial Association of India, assisted for the last ten years by the Scudder Association of America have carried on a vigorous campaign for the accumulation of funds for the buildings. Approximately Rs. 249,157 was raised by them. We have now received Rs. 50,000 from the Government as their contribution. We are deeply grateful for the Woman's Board of Foreign Missions for their contribution of Rs. 13,360 towards the construction of the Jubilee Nurses' Home, and towards the purchase of equipment and the erection of a Doctor's bungalow. Altogether Rs. 340,000 was expended including the electrical plant.

Our thanks are due to all who participated whole-heartedly in the raising of the full amount. Many gave liberally from their meagre salaries and with considerable sacrifice. Their names will never be known, but we hope that they will all take great pleasure in the thought that they have helped erect a living and life-giving memorial to the memory of Dr. John Scudder and his sons. No dead and lifeless monument is this.

Dr. L. R. Scudder as the senior representative of the Scudder Association conducted the opening ceremonies. He has been responsible in large part for the inception of this enterprise and has all along been its guiding spirit. The guest of honor was the Hon. S. Muthiah Mudaliar, B.A., B.I., the Minister for Health with the Government of Madras. In the course of the speeches made, due recognition was paid to all those who have been instrumental in planning for and erecting these beautiful buildings. The gift of Mr. John A. Roebling<sup>9</sup> of the entire electric light

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<sup>9</sup> John A. Roebling was the generous employer of the 9<sup>th</sup> president of the Scudder Association of America, John Montgomery Scudder, Sr. of Trenton, New Jersey, who served as president from 1922–1923. John M. Scudder was an executive for John A. Roebling Sons of Trenton that manufactured wire rope and cables for many uses and pre-stressed concrete. This company also built suspension bridges beginning in 1883 with the Brooklyn Bridge in New York and later the George Washington Bridge that connects New York and New Jersey and the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, and from Canada to South America, the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco,

installation of the hospital was appreciatively acknowledged. This contribution of about Rs. 40,000 was the largest single donation made by an individual. We owe him a hearty vote of thanks.

In addition to these acknowledgments two formalities took place. The buildings and property which had been bought and *paid for by the Scudder Associations* were formally handed over to become part of the property of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Reformed Church in America. The President of the Mission, Mr. Arthur Wald, accepted this gift on behalf of the Board of Foreign Missions. The second important formality was the passing over of the administration of the new Hospital to the Arcot Assembly. The Rev. E. Savarirayan, as President of the Assembly, accepted this responsibility, responding in a few words of appreciation.

Just before the close of the function, Mr. C. Abdul Hakim, a wealthy resident of Melvisharam and a very public spirited citizen, announced that he would contribute Rs. 3,000 for the erection of a private ward block. Mr. Hakim was duly thanked by the Minister Mr. Muthiah Mudaliar on behalf of the management of the Hospital. The Minister then opened the doors of the Hospital to the public, announcing that it was ready for immediate use. Thus ended an important function. Thus began a new era in the medical work of our Arcot Assembly.

From the standpoint of the clinical work done during the year we find that the year does not differ very much from those that have just gone before. We have not had the usual incidents of conjunctivitis in the months of July, August and September. The little eye fly that is so prevalent in this part of India during those months did not put in its appearance. The result was several hundred fewer cases of external eye disease in our Outpatient Department. The incidence of blindness or partial blindness is greater than in any other country with the exception of China. During the past year we have done quite a number of cataract operations with good results. As the people of the surrounding area get to know that we do such work here we shall doubtless see an increase in this department of the hospital.

The statistics for the year show very little change from those of last year, except for the drop in the number of out-patients. This is accounted for partially by the fall in eye cases already mentioned and also by the fact that we have been rigid in the collection of the anna that is charged to all who can afford to pay for out-patient treatment.

The one item that is especially encouraging this year is the increase in income from local sources. The people are becoming educated little by little to the idea that medical attention is expensive and that in so far as they are able it is only right that they should pay for it. We hope that the day is not far distant when the hospital may become very nearly self-supporting. The funds sent out from America had up until this year always represented the major receipts of the hospital. But this year we have actually collected more from local sources than we have received from home. The increase has amounted to about 50% over that received in any previous year. This augurs well for the future. We should like the hospital to become less and less a burden upon the home resources and more and more the responsibility of those who benefit by it.

So ends another year in the history of medical work at Ranipet. We are sure that great opportunities and responsibilities lie ahead. May God guide and direct all to His glory and honor and to the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ in India.<sup>10</sup>

A year later, in 1929, Galen writes: “Not only in beauty but also in equipment, this hospital far exceeds anything we have had heretofore. Electric lighting, running water and a septic tank system of sewage disposal are three of its major advantages. The public wards as well as the private wards have been carefully planned to give a maximum of light and air and comfort.” Galen then says, ““Even as this report is being written we have had the pleasure of welcoming an addition to the staff of the hospital in the person of Dr. John Scudder III, the great grandson of the same name as the great grandfather in whose steps he follows.””<sup>11</sup> Dr. John Scudder III and his wife D. V. Scudder served in India until 1935. Dr. John and D. V. Scudder’s return to America in 1936 facilitated an enthusiastic resurgence of activity in the Scudder Association of America and its interest in India.

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<sup>10</sup> Report from Dr. Galen Scudder, *Ninety-seventh Annual Report Board of Foreign Missions, Reformed Church in America, 1929*, 30–32, [digcoll\\_18753.pdf](#).

<sup>11</sup> D. V. Scudder, 228.