

What Can You Remember?



Badami Kani Cave

What great event caused you to remember something really important, like the death of a family member? Most people recall the sad funeral of President John F. Kennedy. It usually takes an associated event to recall dates and times. That unfortunate fact makes most personal memories inaccurate. That is why it is so important to review actual recorded events, such as deeds, wills and marriages at the court house. As time passes, we marvel at how much time has passed! And we are astounded at our own age. Yet we realize that time moves on, especially as we see it in old black and white photographs (now a redundant technology) and the clothes worn by our grandparents.

That was not so long ago. Or, was it? When is an age "modern?" Today is modern, yet yesterday was old. Your own children will inform you of that revelation. As time flashes before our eyes we realize that our time on earth will also end, and that a hundred of years from now someone will be searching for us.

As records are digitized, we conclude that it will be easier for them to find us. Yet, there are words and symbols written upon the walls of old caves and pyramids which remain undiscovered or untranslated to this date. Pictured is Badami Cave 3 in India. High above the water there are towering cliffs of comparatively soft sandstone. Royal shrines were made in these cliffs with grand view opening over the former capital city.

The four cave temples of Badami were built by the son of Pulakesi I, viz: Kirthivarman (ruled in 567 to 598 AD) and his brother Mangalesha I (ruled in 598 to 610 AD). One cave is devoted to Shiva, two to Vishnu. Fourth cave is Jain temple.

Thus Chalukyas, just like several other successful dynasties of Ancient India, demonstrated religious tolerance. Fossilized records cannot be destroyed, but until the Rosetta Stone, no one could read them. And tombstones have not worn the fabric of time too well. Since the 16th century, India Ink has survived longer than anything else, yet improper care of documents and illegible colonial handwriting causes much frustration.

During the 1960s, wills were written on typewriters which generated spaces and incomplete letters. A marvel invention, we thought, yet an examination of the type struck upon these documents is disappointing.

There are some computer-generated birth certificates (dated during the 1960s) being floated as being genuine. For this reason, the genealogists has to be aware of the eras of technological inventions and discover additional information to validate questionable documents. If one is lucky he can locate a public cemetery with surviving records and compare those files

against the tombstone record. The spelling of names seems to be a major issue with genealogists, but one should realize that a census-taker is using his own version of the alphabet. As immigrants entered this country, they anglicized names.

Such anglicisations could be varied and changed over the generations. Example, variations such Champney, Chambless and Chambliss should be suspect. It is better to write down the entries for all of the spellings, and later discern which ones are not the same person. This is learned by observing deed descriptions, wills, estates and witnesses.