

## VOLUME 2, Newsletters Nos.1, 2 & 4, 1985

(Originally published as Durbar)

### DURBAR Volume 2, No.1

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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Sirs,

I agree with Tony Sudlow's review of *Freedom at Midnight* insofar as it provides a well-researched, interesting and readable account of the independence and partition of India. But I have serious reservations about its frequent references to the Indian Army, some of which will be quite indigestible to members of a serious society which has a particular interest in the accurate researching of military history.

I did not particularly enjoy all the 596 pages of the paperback edition (Avon BOOKS, New York, 1975), which took me more than a few hours to digest. The authors' style, similar to their other, earlier books, such as *O Jerusalem*, is professionally and artfully developed to create a popular best seller and is smattered throughout with journalistic licence. If one assumes that our membership is in general at a very elementary stage of learning about Indian Army history, then I would respectfully suggest that we might benefit from some words of caution before settling down to the presidential feast.

It is fortunate in some ways that two of the appetizers offered to us are obviously misleading and inaccurate. The officers who raised and commanded irregular regiments in the HEIC service are painted by the authors as "free-booting mercenaries...avaricious, brutal louts interested principally in the accumulation of wealth" and I object strongly to such generalized character assassination. Men such as Skinner and Gardner were motivated by ambitions and cultural pressures of a broader and more complex nature, and are unjustly slighted in the authors' attempts to add colour to their backcloth of earlier Indian history. The authors' statement that William Hodson "made his fortune by falsifying his mess accounts" is, as many of us know, spiteful and slanderous rubbish. Hodson was totally exonerated by judicial process from this trumped-up charge some years after his death. We are told that Skinner's Horse wore apricot-coloured mess kit, but this is misleading. Chris Rothero's excellent small volume *Skinner's Horse* (Almark, 1979) does not venture further than an occasional reference to primrose yellow, quite the opposite direction to apricot yellow in its meticulous descriptions of the various uniforms worn by the Canaries or Yellow Boys. So please let us continue to accept that Skinner's Horse wore yellow and put apricot back on the shade cards. Whilst we all have a lot to learn, I have been impressed by the breadth and depth of knowledge of I.A. history demonstrated in correspondence from various I.M.C.S. members since I joined the Society, quite apart from the 1984 Journal and the first four newsletters. I therefore suspect that a mass I.M.C.S. rising is likely to be inspired more by the need to denounce the mistreatment by Collins and Lapierre of some important facets of early Indian Army history than to applaud Tony Sudlow for resurrecting a well-worn and sensation seeking best seller. On the latter count I for one shall remain firmly seated.

Yours sincerely, C.J. Parrett

Dear Sirs,

Following Dr Klietmann's very interesting article, I would like to point out a book which contains references on Indian medals. Mr Ivo SEUTENS, from Belgium, wrote the *Bibliographie Numismatique* in 1969 and prepared the second volume in 1977. It is, as the name suggests, a bibliography of books on orders, medals and decorations of the world. It also lists articles in journals, if they are the only source of information on a particular country or order.

In this particular case the 1969 edition (actually Volume 1 of the work) mentions the following work about Hyderabad: "Former independent Indian state, incorporated into the Republic in 1956.

1. *Tamga-i-Hilal-e-Osmani*
2. *Tamga-i-Khusraw-e-Deccan*;
3. *Tamga-i-Asafia*."

Notice the spelling of *Tamga-i-Asafia*. Although I cannot be 100% sure, I feel that Mr Suetens used the spelling of the book.

Hope you find the above of interest.

Sincerely, V. Koundjakian

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#### A PARTLY REUNITED GROUP - R.I.S. LCRS

In the Newsletter No.3, July 1984, I suggested that the abbreviation "R.I.S. Lcrs" on an IGS 1908 medal referred to the 1st Patiala (Rajindra) Imperial Service Lancers.

As a result of this note I received a letter from Cliff Parrett (128) in Singapore saying he had the IMSM to Trptr Maj Dfr Bhagwan Singh to which I referred in my note. Cliff also had the soldier's British War Medal, the group having been split in India before it came into his possession, and he offered to sell me the pair.

Although at the time of writing the note I had not purchased the three bar IGS 1908 which prompted the article, I subsequently did so. I was therefore delighted to accept Cliff's generous offer and the three medals are now reunited. Sadly the 1914-15 Star and Victory Medal are still missing, but one lives in hope. By way of extension to my previous note, I give below the various designations on the three medals:  
IMSM - 840 TRUMPET - MAJ. BHAGWAN SINGH, PATIALA I.S. LCRS.  
BWM - TR - MAJ - DFR BHAGWAN SINGH, PAT. RAJ. LCRS.  
IGS '08 840 TRPTR - MAJ - DFR BHAGWAN SINGH, R.I.S. LCRS.

I received a couple of letters pointing out the variety of naming styles on medals to Patiala units, and indeed, I have a couple of single 1914-15 Stars to "PATIALA I.S. Lcrs." and

Victory Medals to "PAT. RAJ. LCRS." which support the point, so I feel happy in laying this one to rest.

Finally, I should like to clarify a point in my previous note. I said that Rampur was the only State with the initial "R" which maintained a Lancer unit during the IST scheme. I seem to have caused some confusion, for which I apologize, but I stick to my remark. The emphasis is on the word "Lancer". Rajpipla maintained a cavalry unit, the Rajpipla Cavalry, but this was not formed until 1924, by which time the IST scheme had given way to the 1920 Indian State Forces scheme. The unit subsequently became known as the Rajpipla State Bodyguard, but was not accepted into the 1939 ISF scheme and was disbanded. Ratlam maintained a grand total of five mounted soldiers, known as the Ratlam Imperial Service Despatch Riders. Raised in 1909, they served with the Kathiawar Signal Troop during the First World War, and were disbanded in 1930. Rampur was, therefore, the only "R" State to maintain a Lancer unit under the IST scheme, at which time it was known as the Rampur Imperial Service Lancers. Much later it became the Rampur Rohilla Lancers. I hope this clarifies the matter.

Tony McClenaghan

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## MILITARY AND POLICE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Some members may be interested in the formation of a new society in Canada, devoted to the study of Canadian military history. The Military and Police Historical Society of Canada is "dedicated to Canada's Forces, past and present and to the preservation of the records of Forces service and history." The Society publishes 4 journals a year (32 pages per issue) which feature articles, buy & sell lists and an identification section and seem to us to be of high quality. Anyone interested in more information about this organization is urged to contact the president, Mr Grant McKillop, at: 43 Upcott Crescent, London, Ontario N6E 1S6.

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## MEMBERS' QUERIES

### ● The Badge of The Madras Guards, Auxiliary Force (India)

1. This badge, which was the final form, comprised:

- The Royal arms encircled by a "garter" and surmounted by "Queen Victoria's Crown."
- The garter was inscribed "Madras Infantry Volunteers".
- Outside the garter was a laurel wreath and underneath on a scroll the motto "Ready Aye Ready", and underneath again the date "1857".
- Tucked away between the bottom of the laurel wreath and the scroll on each side was a "1" (or I) V G" enclosed by a minute laurel of its own.

2. There are several matters of interest. Is the wearing of the Royal Arms on a unit's badge unique? I always understood that the Royal Coat of Arms (as distinct from the Royal Cipher) was personal to the Sovereign and was not granted for unit badges. The inscription on the garter bears no relation to the unit titles, which were: raised 1857 as "Madras Volunteer Guards" / 1917 - "1st Madras Guards, Indian Defence Corps" / 1920 - "Madras Guards,

Auxiliary Force (India)". What is the significance of "1 V G". The most likely explanation is that it stands for 1st Volunteer Guards, but the unit never bore this title.

I would be very grateful for any information.

A.A. Mains

● Indian Unattached List

W.J. Sheridan has recently acquired a group of medals (BWM/IGSM 1908, 1908 LS & GCM - GV) to a W.O.1/Sgt Major of the 7th Hussars and the IUL. He wishes information on the possibility of researching medals to members of the IUL and further details on what exactly the Indian Unattached List was.

● Mr Johnson would like to hear from members knowing of IGS 1854 to the 44th Bengal Infantry (later 1/8th GR) with the bars "1889-92" or "Chin Lushai".

Also, is it possible to get service records for members of the Brigade of Gurkhas?



#### INDIAN ARMY BADGES

May I comment on some recent articles in the Newsletters and Journals - all, most enjoyable reading?

A) The Journal (p.17)

The 34th Poona Horse shoulder title was worn 1903-22. It also appears as a pagri badge with pin fitting.

The 14th Sikhs shoulder title was worn 1906-22. Before 1906 the title was plain, without the Prince of Wales' plumes.

The United Provinces Horse badge is a collar badge. The cap badge is slightly larger and faces the other way.

B) The Journal (pp.18-19) and the Newsletter (No.3, p.3)

Up to 1942-43 there were no universally issued cap badges for Indian Other Ranks. These came in once berets became commonplace. Before that any cap badge was made under regimental contract. Shoulder titles were, however, first issued by Ordnance in 1922-23; again prior to that date it was left up to the regiments to order them privately. As the writers note, the India officers and soldiers did not always have a cap badge as we now know it. The problem is that there was no rule - many regiments wore pagri badges in full dress and not otherwise; in some only the Indian officers wore badges; not all were cast. Many headdress badges for Indian ranks were particularly well made in the 1880s-1890s. Madras and Bombay regiments tended to wear badges more than the Bengal regiments. Pioneers were especially partial to badges - all of them wore some distinction on collar or headdress. Infantry wore headdress badges rather more than cavalry.

The only real work done on sepoy insignia was by the late Major F.G. Harden. Copies of his notes are in the National Army Museum and the Army Museum Ogilby Trust.

The position with British officers is equally confusing, but for different reasons. Mention is made of the disregard for Dress Regulations. In most cases the regiments responded to requests from Army headquarters to describe what they were wearing, rather than the other way round. Thus the descriptions given in Dress Regulations varied greatly in quality and depended on how conscientious the Adjutant of the day was in recording and describing dress embellishments - or even, in so many cases, in remembering what was worn in the different orders of dress. In some cases the regiment sent in no returns and thus the detail is left blank in the next publication of the Dress Regulations. Again, some regiments were very dressy and covered themselves with different badges, titles, buttons, waist-belt ornaments, pouch belts and so on. Others were much more austere. Most regiments had their own Dress Regulations, but these mostly laid down what form or order of dress was to be worn and omitted detailed description of insignia. Lastly, the regimental tailors had a lot to do with the designs. The badge makers would work to a general description and send out drawings or even prototypes for approval. Some of these were very imaginative; others less so. Sometimes the regiment didn't bother much and took what was offered. At other times they did not even check the designs. On this last point there is an interesting misprint in the 1925 and 1931 Dress Regulations for the 10th Gurkha Rifles, where their badge is described as crossed kukris with "15" above; this being a misprint for "10". Some bazaar badge maker promptly produced the badge with "15" above - and this is still quite common on dealers' lists.

The final category of badges is those to followers and regimental servants. Virtually all followers wore badges of some sort at some time and it was for them very important to be identified with their parent regiment. These bearers and followers badges often worn on the breast - are commonly mistaken for sepoy's insignia. They are all cast and many are extremely interesting in design, particularly those worn by khansamahs and other mess staff.

J.L. Chapple



#### THE JACOB MEDAL

During the several years I lived in Iran, I spent many enjoyable weekends searching bazaars and junk shops for British military -firearms and came across, amongst many others, a Swinburn double-barrelled carbine made for the Scinde Irregular Horse and a Snider carbine with Peshawar Arsenal stamps on the stock. Memories of these early gun-collecting days were brought back into focus two years ago in Bombay when I bought what appears to be a shooting medal which may have some association with a particularly interesting and scarce Indian Army rifle.

The medal (illustrated) is best described as The Jacob Medal and, insofar as it is not named, dated or otherwise inscribed, may never have been officially issued. It is relatively large, weighing 2.4 ounces, with a diameter of 1.8 inches. The obverse bears the diademed head of the young Victoria, usually found on W. Wyon's designs but with the name Heaton (or possibly Beaten) embossed on the base. Above this is what I believe to be the Sindhi translation of the English words on the reverse. The design on the reverse comprises a laurel wreath encircling a vacant area (possibly intended for engraving the recipient's name)

surmounted by the words "THE JACOB MEDAL" in serif capitals. The simple ring suspender is attached to the medal by a conventional claw. I have not been able get the Sindhi script (a variation of the Persian form of Arabic) translated and I have approached a number of London dealers who have never seen this medal before and can tell me nothing about it. My best guess is that it is a regimental shooting medal associated with Jacob's Rifles and may have a specific relevance to the rifle patented by John Jacob himself.

In 1854 Jacob, then a Major in command of the Scinde Irregular Horse and, along with his many other accomplishments, an active inventor of firearms and ammunition, developed a four-groove military rifle with a single 38-inch barrel of 24 gauge (.588-inch calibre) together with an explosive shell with four studs to fit his rifle. With a powder charge of 2 drams, this rifle was effective up to 2,000 yards. Jacob's rifle was not generally accepted by the Indian Government who concluded that the two-grooved Minie or Pattern 1851 rifled musket, considered to be good enough for the Royal Army, was therefore also good enough for the soldier in India.

However, Jacob's formidable combination of rifle and explosive shell was obviously favoured by a number of officers on active service in the East, as the following extract from Captain Hunt's history of the 1856-7 campaign in Persia serves to illustrate.

“After moving a few hundred yards clear of the entrenchment, troops were halted to witness explosion of a very large quantity of the enemies powder....The pile of ammunition was fired by Lieut. Gibbard of the Horse Artillery and Lieut. Hassard, Adjutant of the European Light Infantry, with rifles and shell bullets of Colonel Jacob's invention, from a distance of about 150 yards. Both these officers were thrown down by the shock of the concussion. Did any doubts previously exist of the formidable character of this new weapon and projectile, the occurrence described fully removed it”.

Jacob persisted with his ambition to establish his rifle as the standard military issue in India, in the process of which he became converted to the concept of a double-barrelled version. Just before his death he raised the 1st Regiment of Rifles, which became the 30th Regiment of Bombay Native Infantry in 1861. He had the satisfaction of seeing this regiment issued with his double-barrelled patent rifle. The specifications of this rifle included double 24-inch barrels of 32 bore with four grooves making four-fifths of a turn, folding leaf rear sights provided for ranges from 100 to 300 yards and a folding vertical sliding bar sight for additional ranges up to 3,000 yards. It was armed with a substantial and business-like sword bayonet, and the cover of the butt-box was stamped with the words "Jacobs Rifles." An example of this fine weapon, manufactured in England by Swinburn & Son, is housed in the Pattern Room collection at the Royal Small Arms factory at Enfield.

## REVERSE AND OBVERSE OF THE MEDAL



My assumption that this is a shooting medal associated either with Jacob's Rifles or the Jacob Patent Rifle is pure conjecture. Do any of our members have a better informed idea of when or why The Jacob Medal was in fact issued?

C.J. Parrett

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## CAMPAIGN MEDALS TO VOLUNTEER

Captain J.R. Hutchinson, C.I.H.

In my article "Campaign Medals to Volunteers" in the 1984 Journal, I referred to an IGS 1908 for ABOR 1311 to Captain Hutchinson. It is an extra-ordinary coincidence that this rare single-clasp medal was listed in Glendinning's December 12, 1984 auction, catalogued as named to Captain J.R. Hutchinson, 38th (K.G.Q.) C.I. Horse and part of a fine Palestinian D.S.O. group of six including a 1914/1915 Star trio.

C.J. Parrett

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## UNIFORM DIVERSITY

A short while ago I read a very interesting article on the various types of headdress worn by the soldiers in the United States Army in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It was well written, dealt clearly with a complex subject and included a number of illustrations of various headgear from the author's collection. The thing that really caught my eye, however, was a photograph from the American Civil War period. It showed a large number of enlisted men of various branches of service, not one of whom, as far as I could tell, wore any of the types of hat referred to in the article! So much for uniformity. Within the week and totally by

coincidence, I acquired and read a copy of Stalky's *Reminiscences*. This is an autobiography of Major-General L.C. Dunsterville, the infamous "Stalky" of Rudyard Kipling's *Stalky & Co.* In it he recounts some of his experiences as an eager young subaltern when, as Adjutant of the 20th Punjabis, I.A., he tried to impose uniformity on the dress of the men under his command. In the same vein, I am often intrigued and amused by publications such as the Osprey "Men at Arms" series which, in their otherwise excellent works, will sometimes illustrate "uniforms" for groups as diverse as the Vikings, twelfth century Burgundians or World War Two partisans. Granted that these groups usually wore some form of insignia, common clothing style or some uniform elements of dress, these cannot really be said to be uniforms in the strictest sense of that word. This diverse uniformity can be seen in any group shot of combat troops from the twentieth century - Desert Rats, World War I "Tommies" or Royal Marine commandos in the Falklands. Off the parade square, and sometimes even on it, the average soldier thinks first of "what works", second of what he thinks looks smart and thirdly, if at all, of what the regulations lay down.

The dictionary definitions of "uniform" include not only the concept of "a distinctive dress particular to a group" but also the idea that such dress is "of one form/conforming to a rule." My own small experience of this, as a teacher in a number of schools where uniforms are the order of the day, is that even with the best intentions on all sides (and those are definitely not present in many cases) uniformity is an ideal rather than a reality. Leaving aside the inevitable "awkward squad" who "can't find it", "haven't been issued it yet" or simply "forgot" it, there are still the questions of old and new issues, different batches, tailors and manufacturers and innumerable "field modifications".

As a young painter of figures I was driven nearly to distraction by the impossibility of finding the "correct" shade of khaki, olive drab or what have you for uniforms, vehicles, etc. (A look at any colour shot of modern uniforms will show the myriad tones produced by combinations of age, sun and numerous launderings.) In later years I have devoted some time to such intriguing questions as whether puttees were wrapped "up" or "down", whether troops in combat did or did not wear their divisional patches, how many rows of braid was the "right" number for a junior subaltern of I.A. Cavalry, etc. etc. The results? Generally the answer seems to be "Yes and no" or, as the French are so fond of saying, "Ca depend."

Dunsterville, in his reminiscences, describes his first Guard Mounting with the Punjabis thus:

“Before inspecting each man I glanced along the line of heads and noticed several different ways of tying pagri, but I had of course learnt by now that Sikhs, Dogras and Pathans have each their particular way of arranging their head- dress. Then I noticed that some of the fringes were black, some blue, and some green, some composed of long strings, some of little cotton balls. Bodies and legs were uniform. But what fantasy was displayed in footgear! The first man had plain leather sandals, the next a good blunt-toed Punjabi shoe, the next a pair of ornamental sandals with gold thread and silk tassels, the next a pair of light Punjabi shoes, with thin ornamental points extending some inches beyond the toe. There were still other varieties which I need not detail.”

He goes on to recount the more than usually idiosyncratic dress of the officers. They wore the full dress of a rifle regiment in drab, but with lavish amounts of embroidery on the sleeves more appropriate for full Colonels than for junior subalterns. On the other hand some of the officers had adopted correct Rifles full dress, so that a Major might show less braid than a

new lieutenant. The net result was obviously something less than perfect and he records the remark of an inspecting General to his commanding officer: "Your officers are well dressed and smartly turned out, but before I see them again please see that they dress alike." He adds parenthetically that neither the second visit nor the requisite changes took place!

Dunsterville remarks on his soldiers' propensity for wearing parts of the uniform and records his own displeasure at the sight of a senior V.C.O. whose walking out dress consisted of tunic and medals, civilian pyjama trousers, very ornate chapplies and a regimental pagri adorned with red roses! While very peculiar sounding it did, as he admits, "look very nice", that being the only response of the Subadar Major to whom he took the matter.

His most amusing anecdote however, and one which probably explains many regiments "breaches" of regulations, again concerns the officers. It was long the practice of the elderly Subadar Major, Dunsterville's "bête noir" in these matters, to excuse all oddities of dress with the phrase "It is an old custom of the regiment." After he had succeeded to command of the regiment, he was again inspected by a general and, as he puts it, "badly caught out" over the new fashion of wearing khaki tunics with turned down collars over a khaki tie and shirt . (This he says began to occur in many units after the Boer War.)

"We took it into the regiment about 1906 and instead of wearing a black or khaki tie decided to start a bright emerald green one, that being the colour of the regimental facings... We were inspected by Sir Alfred Martin, who at once spotted the remarkable tie - he couldn't help it, you could have seen it a mile away. He promptly asked "Where on earth did you get that thing from? It's not regulation." Without pausing to consider I gave the usual reply, "It's a very old custom of the regiment. I saw the slip I had made and could not help smiling. The General smiled also, and without troubling himself to remind me that the open-collar coat had only been introduced a year or so ago, took the line of "direct action" by ordering me to discontinue its use at once. And that was the end of the green tie."

One can as easily understand and sympathize with the "offender" as with the "law" in this case, and such things are "exceptions to the rules" made.

The longer I look into the matter, the more convinced I become that for every rule there is an exception and for every "Yes" laid down by regulation there is a corresponding "No" (or at least a "Sometimes, maybe") provided by practice and custom. Any veteran of any army in the world will tell you of dozens of facts to which he can attest from personal experience, but which "just aint so" by all the best sources and references. This is not intended to be a council of despair, nor even an apology for imperfections and inconsistencies in reference works - it is more in the nature of a "reflection" (not to be too pretentious) on one aspect of the study of militaria. And, as I have undoubtedly said before, I plan to keep looking for that elusive "definitive answer", encouraged rather than discouraged by the multitude of inconsistencies which, in my view, add the very spice which makes the study worthwhile. If all the answers were cut and dried, I for one would be mightily bored with the whole thing!

P.E. Monahan



## DURBAR, Volume 2, No.2

### EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second year of my column. I've had some requests for information on how to research Indian Army medals (other than those to British Officers) and therefore this will be a basic information column. Those of you who are advanced collectors may now gather up your books and quietly leave the classroom.

First, we have to have something to research, so we will invent a hypothetical and highly desirable group: Indian Order of Merit, Second Class; IGS 1895, bar Punjab Frontier 1897-98; AGS bar Somaliland 1902-04; 1914-15 trio; IGS 1908, bars Afghanistan NWF 1919 and North West Frontier 1930-31. Our man is a Sepoy on the first medal, Naik on the second, Havildar/Jemadar on the trio, and Jemadar on the second IGS. The IOM is, of course, unnamed. His name may be Abdullah Khan, or maybe Ram Singh.

Looking at this group, there are a number of starting places, but the first is probably the Indian Army List for 1930 or 1931. He will be included there because he has achieved Viceroy's Commissioned Officer status (i.e.: Jemadar and above). We find that he is listed as Subadar Abdullah Khan/Ram Singh, under the 1st Bn., ...th Regt. If you read from left to right across the columns you will find that he joined the Indian Army on January 1, 1895, was commissioned Jemadar January 15, 1916 and Subadar January 15, 1928. Listed in brackets after his name are the numbers "32, 49, 126", which - when you consult the table of References at the beginning of the List - reveals that he holds a Ballooning Certificate, is qualified on Stoke's Howitzers and has Preliminary 1st Class Proficiency in English.

At the same time you have contacted a member of the IMCS who has P.P. Hypher's book on the IOM. From this you learn that: "On the 13th of December, 1917, Jemadar Abdullah Khan/Ram Singh crawled out under heavy enemy fire and rescued Captain Johnson of his Regiment, who had been severely wounded." (this being the citation to the award of the IOM). To make sure, and to verify the other medals, you check the January 1931 Supplement to the Indian Army List for War Services. This shows: "N.W. Frontier of India 1897-98 - Medal & clasp; The War of 1914-18, Operations in Mesopotamia 1916-18, Despatches London Gazette, 6 January 1919, I.O.M.; Afghanistan and N.W.F. 1919; N.W. Frontier of India, 1930." From here, you have two choices. One, you can pursue the details of the Regiment's service in Mesopotamia, using the Official Histories of that campaign found in many libraries and hoping that the Jemadar has not been detached to another unit. Alternatively, you can check with IMCS members and libraries for a regimental history of Abdullah Khan/ Ram Singh's unit. These may mention details of the action for which he was decorated, though this is more likely for the latter source.

Finally, if you are very lucky, you may find that at some time he served as a King's Indian Orderly Officer or senior Subadar. In that case he may well be featured in one of the group photographs in a book like Boris Mollo's *The Indian Army*, a general history of the N.W.F. or any of a number of magazines like *Tradition* which deal from time to time with Indian Army uniforms. If the gods really smile on you, you will discover that one of the honourable members has served, or knows someone who has served in Khan/Singh's Regiment and has personal facts to impart.

These ideas, while basic, should get you started. By the way, IMCS member P.E. Monahan has a 1930 Indian Army List and the list of regimental histories, though he hopes to pass the latter file on to another member soon. (More on that later).

I recently received an interesting letter from R.B. Magor in which he comments on my speculations (in Vol.1, No.4) about sepoys earning single British War Medals. He suggests that it may be possible for personnel serving with the King's African Rifles during 1914-18 War to have qualified for a single British War Medal (without Star or Victory) by serving in Somaliland during the Shimber Berris campaign. Anyone who can confirm or disprove this idea is invited to write in with the facts.

M.C. Johnson

(This is actually a composite column. Mr Johnson was unable to complete it, due to the pressure of personal affairs, and it was completed by the Editor, but he will be "back at his desk" next issue.)



## NOTICES and NOTES

### INDIAN ARMY POSTCARDS AND PRINTS

The National Army Museum has just sent us notice of new postcards they have issued. The samples we received include reproductions of water-colours of the 40th Madras N.I. (1835) and 4th Punjab Cavalry (1857) and a black and white photograph of No.4 Mtn Battery c.1897 (from F. Bremner's *Types of The Indian Army*). The coloured cards are 10p each plus postage and the b&w are 4p. It is unclear to us whether these are samples of a series or the only new cards, but the Museum has an extensive series of cards based on Lovat's *Armies of India* and we believe a list is available on request.

The NAM has also published a print of a watercolour from their collections: the 16th Lancers breaking the Sikh square at the Battle of Aliwal, by Michael Angelo Hayes (1820-77). The print sells for £3.00 plus postage, but buyer must agree to pay even if the print arrives damaged, as this has apparently been a problem with sales to North America in the past.

### CASUALTY RETURNS (INDIAN ARMY)

Following my article in the last Journal, in which I mentioned that I was not aware of a casualty roll of Indian Army officers for the 1914-18 War, I was very pleased to receive a note about it from the Biographical Department of the India Office Library in London. They point out that the Library holds numerous casualty returns including alphabetical lists of British officers for both World Wars. I have now had an opportunity to examine them.

The Great War volume (L/Mil/14/142) covers the period 1914-21 and lists casualties by rank, surname, Christian names), age, unit, cause of death, date of death and place. It details about 1500 names.

The attributed causes of death are quite often interesting, for apart from "Killed in action" or "died of wounds", there are such entries as "died as a result of a revolver accident", "Killed in a skirmish with robbers" and "committed suicide while temporarily of unsound mind."

The Second War volume (L/Mil/14/143) spans the period 1939-48 and is very similar in layout. It records some 1600 names and, unlike the other volume, includes British Warrant Officers and N.C.O.s.

The India Office Library also has a large collection of regimental histories and, on the open shelves, a very good run of Indian Army Lists and Supplements. They also hold an interesting unpublished bibliography of regimental histories. Not surprisingly, it is probably not complete.

As can be seen, this is a place well worth a visit if one has a chance.

Colin Message

#### INDIAN ARMY BADGES

L.B. Ryan, commenting on J.L. Chapple's article in *Durbar*, Vol.2, No.1, adds the information that the National Army Museum has photographic negatives of the collection of Major Harden, whose work on the subject Mr Chapple mentions. The negative numbers range from "2191-1" to "2191-43" or possibly further and it is believed that Mrs M. Harding of the Dept. of Records, NAM could advise on the cost and availability of prints. Mrs Ryan also points out that photos of Major Harden's collection appear in Vol. XIV, No.56 of *The Bulletin* of The Military Historical Society.



#### MILESTONES

##### WILLIAM STEWART

Bill Stewart, a member of our Society, passed away in March. He was a very prominent badge collector, well known in the Toronto area, and a long-time executive member of the Canadian Society for Military Medals and Insignia. His death will leave a definite gap in the ranks of expert badge collectors in Canada.

CAPTAIN RAMBAHADUR LIMBU, VC. The British Army's only serving Victoria Cross holder has retired. He was Captain (Queen's Gurkha Officer) Rambahadur Limbu of the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles. His V.C. was earned on November 21, 1965 during the Borneo campaign, while a lance-corporal with the same battalion. On March 25, Captain Limbu was given a special lunch in the officers' mess, inspected the quarter guard and was then taken to Gatwick by his C.O., Lt. Col. M. Cook. From there he flew to Hong Kong, enroute to his retirement in the village of Damak, East Nepal.

##### MAJOR-GENERAL ROBERT WORDSWORTH

Major-General Robert Harley Wordsworth, CB has died in Tasmania at age 90. He was one of the three surviving officers of general rank in the former British Indian cavalry.

Commissioned into the Australian Army in 1914, he transferred to the Indian Army in 1917, serving with the 16th Cavalry in Mesopotamia, Waziristan and on the North West Frontier during and after WWII. In WWII he commanded the 1st Indian Armoured Brigade and an armoured division in the Middle East. He retired in 1947, was made CBE in 1943 and a CB in 1945.

MAJOR WILLIAM BROWN

Major William Alexander Brown, MBE has died at age 61. He won an almost legendary fame in 1947 as the last British commander of the Gilgit Scouts. During the political troubles in Kashmir in 1947, Major Brown and his 600 Scouts kept law and order among the divided population, protected the city, treasury and State officials of Gilgit. In an area divided by religious disputes and menaced by neighbouring tribesmen, Brown kept the peace at the cost of only three lives until the arrival of the Pakistani Army, to whom he handed over control of the area. He was awarded the MBE for this work and went on to join the Pakistani Police, and later work for the ICI (Pakistan).

(Our thanks for these last three items to Lt. Cmdr. W.M. Thornton, MBE (163). We are informed by the History Bookshop of London that a new history of the Gilgit Scouts is being published in India. ED.)



A REGIMENTAL MEDAL OF THE 12th MADRAS N.I.

Two years ago I acquired a regimental medal, formerly part of an old collection. The medal is bronze, approximately 1.5 inches in diameter and is un-named. The obverse bears the small veiled bust of Queen Victoria, found on the Abyssinian and New Zealand Wars Medals, with the words "J.S. & A.B. WYON SC." (Joseph S. Wyon and Alfred B. Wyon) and the legend "VICTORIA REGINA", the whole within a beaded circle. The reverse has a wreath of oak leaves (left) and laurel leaves (right) and the legend "XII REGIMENT M.N.I." in three lines above a scroll with the battle honour "AVA".

Dating this medal was, at first, something of a puzzle. The 12th Madras Native Infantry were awarded the battle honour "Ava" in 1826. The medal obviously dated from the 1860's or later, as the two Wyons worked together in this period, the former dying in 1873. However, the 12th had also been awarded the honour "Sholinghur" in 1841. The solution came when I traced the lineage of the 12th M.N.I.: the 12th was raised in 1767 as the 16th Coast Sepoys Battalion, renumbered as the 13th Carnatic Bn. in 1763 and as the 12th in 1770. In 1796 it was the 2/8th Madras N.I., reverting to the title of 12th Madras N.I. in 1824. In 1898 it became the 2nd Burma Bn. and ceased to recruit Madrassis. This fact was recognized in the 1903 re-organization when it became the 72nd Punjabis (1922 - 3/2nd Punjab Regt.)

I believe that this is the medal for the centenary of the raising of the 12th and that it was accordingly issued in 1867. The failure to include the Sholinghur battle honour is difficult to explain but it may be that the designers felt that the reverse design would have been too crowded.

I have not run across any other specimens of this medal, so it is hard to say what the scale of issue (if any) was.

M.C. Johnson

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## LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Dear Sirs:

I read Cliff Parrett's letter with interest and do not mind a bit that he refuses to join in my glad acceptance of *Freedom at Midnight*, as I have fallen foul of him with my gullibility as to the colour of Skinner's Horse mess kit, and in accepting the authors' "character assassinations" of various prominent officers of the HEIC regiments. I have not delved at depth into the old HEIC regiments, as Mr Parrett obviously has - BUT - from my readings and dredging my memory, is it not on record that HEIC officers sometimes spent twenty to forty years in India and at the end of their time did not speak any language or dialect? Further, that the Company had a cadet college in India which had to be closed down because the cadets excelled only at whoring, drinking, gambling and duelling. In fact, they were a bloody nuisance, so much so that the Company founded their own college in the UK at - was it Addiscombe? - where "young gentlemen" were put under stricter surveillance. I have also read elsewhere that many - note that word - Company officers were soldiers of fortune, one hand on sword-hilt, the other stretched out to plunge into the nearest purse or coffer. Now - are all these views tainted with artistic licence? I do not know, for I was not there. If it seems out of character for "English gentlemen" to behave like blackguards, I accept they could, having met a few - a very, very few who would fit admirably the sobriquet "brutal louts" - four to be precise. One sixteen year old brute at school delighted in twisting the ears or arms of younger boys and was greatly feared. He had a very distinguished war career indeed, disposed of many of the King's enemies and doubtless thoroughly enjoyed doing so. Am I unkind; uncharitable? I do not think so, for I knew the boy who became the man.

So you see, I can place some credence in the description of some of the men whose names have echoed down history of the Raj as "unprincipled adventurers" (not necessarily those named in the book). Do not forget the evil times in which they lived; public executions treated like summer fairs with food pedlars and drink in plenty to make it an enjoyable day-out for the family. The last person hanged publicly in Britain was a seventeen year old girl, heavy with child. Her crime? Stealing food for her other child. This sickening spectacle finally persuaded the gentlemen who ruled the country to halt such public spectacles - in the mid-19th century. Flogging was not abolished in the Army until 1888; a commanding officer could hand out up to 500 lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails. Some naval captains were renowned for their flogging habits - a flogging round the fleet meant certain death. Brutal times, sir - press gangs or deportation to the colonies for offences which today lead to a fine; eviction of tenants without batting an eyelid. Oh, yes, I can envisage some of the HEIC officers as prize blackguards.

How much does journalistic licence creep in? I would imagine that there are still plenty of people about, not yet in their dotage, who could rebut any fanciful embroidery in the book about the actual mechanics of Independence and Partition. The minor issues anent the history of the Raj must have been culled from books not necessarily written at the time, or by people who were there. Victorians were great at lapping up heroic melodrama - Tennyson's "Charge of The Light Brigade" springs to mind, as do the ludicrous lines written by Sir Henry Newbolt:

“The voice of the schoolboy rallies the ranks; Play up, play up and play the game”

If I am any judge, the muttered responses from the ranks would have been "Play and play the game, my arse." Sorry to be crude, but I claim to know something about British soldiers, and I doubt if they vary a lot from generation to generation.

I enjoyed the book, especially the eye-openers about the way in which Mountbatten dealt with the political gyrations. At the time I was not in India and had other things on my mind. My initial impressions were that our former Supremo made a bit of a dog's breakfast, not realising that he had not wanted the job, and the spanner flung into the works by Jinnah in his determination on a separate Muslim state. If the book was an eye-opener for me, whose brief spell in the Indian Army encompassed about one per cent of the time-span of the Raj, I imagined that it would be electric reading for those who have a great interest in the subject but have not been to India. I can easily envisage that there are many people who never left their native shores who know far more about Indian history than I do, and I suspect that Mr Parrett is one of them, though he may have been to India for all I know. May I express the hope that he will favour us with an article or articles on the Presidencies' Armies of the HEIC? The aim and object of the IMCS is an exchange of information and I would read them with great interest. I regret that during my sojourn in India I did not take full advantage by taking leave to Kashmir; I have never seen the Taj Mahal or the places of historical interest at Lucknow and Cawnpore.

Be pleased to partake of the feast of *Freedom At Midnight* or not, as suits your fancy; I enjoyed it and found it instructive.

Yours sincerely, Tony Sudlow



#### TOY SOLDIERS - A REVIEW

(The information contained in this article was obtained from a regular column by H.I. Kurtz which appears in an American journal called *CAMPAIGN*.)

It seems that a number of relatively new companies have begun to produce toy soldiers of a quality which makes them of interest to serious collectors and historians. While the detail in toy figures obviously does not compare with that obtainable from unpainted lead figures, a very high standard is obtainable. In addition, the relative cost of a set of ready painted soldiers can make them attractive to the collector who wants something to set off a medal or badge display, as well as to those members who collect them for their own sakes.

A company called TROPHY OF WALES markets an extensive line of Indian Cavalry figures which Mr Kurt says are "a standard in the field" for uniform detail. They have lately released an excellent set of Second Afghan War figures, including several tribesmen, and produce a full range of Royal Artillery teams which include elephant, camel and mule batteries in service dress. A catalogue may be obtained by writing: Trophy Miniatures, 131 Plassey Street, Penarth, South Glamorgan, UK.

MARLBOROUGH sets include a splendid group of 15th Bengal Lancers in dismounted review order (a photo shows five troopers and a grizzled old Rissaldar) and the firm is currently working on a series of sets depicting the Delhi Durbar of 1902. The first of these

will apparently depict the Maharaja of Baroda - on his ceremonial elephant. Marlborough's United States distributor is: Star Collectables, P.O. Box 3912, Center Line, MI 43015.

A series which gets special mention in Mr Kurtz' column is an Indian Army Pontoon Bridge Planking Section put out by a firm called ALBION (no address given).

The editors also know of a firm called NOSTALGIA MODELS who in the past few years have produced a very large number of limited issue sets of British and colonial figures including a goodly number of Indian regiments and State Forces. In three years the company put out over 200 completely different sets and, if they are still doing so, may be contacted c/o Shamus O.D. Wade, 37 Davis Road, Acton, London W3, (We have not seen any recently for this firm, but they are probably still in business.

The Editor.



#### QUEEN'S SOUTH AFRICA MEDALS TO INDIAN CAVALRY

When the South African War broke out in October, 1899, the British government took the decision not to use Indian troops in what was to become known in India as "the white man's war." It was argued that the Indian regiments were for the defence of India and not for general use in Britain's colonial wars, despite the fact that Indian regiments had recently been used during the Egyptian and Sudanese campaigns between 1882 and 1898. It was therefore clear that there were more peculiar reasons why Indian Regiments were not sent to fight the turbulent Boers. Although Indian regiments did not serve as complete units in South Africa, detachments of Indian cavalry and auxiliary units did serve and therefore earned the Queen's South Africa Medal in silver, with bars where applicable.

In a recent OMRS Journal, Peter Monahan wrote an article requesting information on silver QSAs to Indian regiments. In the article, a figure of 2,626 is quoted for silver medals issued to Indians. Regardless of issue number, QSAs to Indians are very scarce, with only a few having appeared on the market in recent years.

In my own collection I have two medals with bars to: "1756 Sowar Sunder Singh, 18th Bengal Lcrs" (bars Cape Colony/ South Africa 1902) and "2264 Sowar Kirpa Singh, 2nd Bombay Lcrs" (bars Orange Free State/Transvaal/S.A. 1902). Both are impressed in the style commonly found on QSAs. With the exception of a silver QSA engraved to the I.P.D. (Indian Postal Dept.) and the bronze QSAs, all other QSAs to Indians which I have seen have been impressed.

In recent years I have seen, both privately and in auction catalogues, medals named to the following regiments:

3<sup>rd</sup> Bengal Cavy – no bar

1<sup>st</sup> Bombay Lcrs – Cape Colony

4<sup>th</sup> Bombay Lcrs – OFS/Trans/S.A. 1902

5<sup>th</sup> Punjab Cavalry – no bar

2<sup>nd</sup> C.I.H. – CC/OFS/Trans (with KSA)

In addition to the examples above, I have seen medals named to the S&T (Supply and Transport Corps); the ABC (Army Bearer Corps?) and a pair to the IPD. Glendenning's auction of April 1983 included "lot 150: medals to Major W.C. French, 2/3 Gurkha Rifles," The group included a three-bar QSA named to "Gurkha Rif." and is the only example I know of a QSA named to an Indian infantry unit.

Major General Gurcharn Singh Sandhu, in his excellent book *The Indian Cavalry* (vol. 1), states that Indian cavalrymen in South Africa were there on remount duty, having brought fresh drafts of horses from India for the use of British and colonial cavalry units. These detachments were small, hence the relative scarcity of this medal when issued to Indians.

The 1st Bengal Lancers, 6th Bengal Cavalry, 9th Bengal Lancers and the 4th Cavalry, Hyderabad Contingent are all mentioned in *The Indian Cavalry* as having sent remount detachments, with the 6th getting particular mention for having "carried out special duties" in South Africa. This regiment sent a detachment of 3 BOs and 33 IOs and Other Ranks, with two of the NCOs later becoming orderlies to Field Marshall Lord Roberts. It seems that "Bobs" had an extensive pool of Indian orderlies, as Daffadar Wadhawa Singh of the 9th Bengal Lancers also acted as an orderly throughout the campaign.

Apart from remount duty, many British Officers in India left their Indian regiments for active service in South Africa, where they attached themselves to both regular and colonial units. One such officer was Lt. F.A. Maxwell of the 18th Bengal Lancers, who won the Victoria Cross at Sanna's Post.

Maxwell, however, was not the only gallant 18th Lancer to be decorated for bravery. Maxwell's orderly, Sowar Dost Muhammed, was awarded the Indian Order of Merit for his gallantry at the same action, the only IOM given during the South African War and the only Indian soldier decorated in that war. The citation reads:

"No 1706 Sowar Dost Muhammed Khan, 18th Bengal Lancers, was admitted to the 3rd Class for conspicuous gallantry in action at Sanna's Post, South Africa on the 30th March 1900, on which occasion he, under a heavy rifle fire at close range, went with Lieutenant F.A. Maxwell to the assistance of a trooper of Roberts' Horse, whose horse had been killed, and helped him to mount and retire with the rest of the corps."

Dost Muhammed's gallant deeds did not stop in South Africa. He had enlisted in 1896, in the 18th, and saw action at once on the North West Frontier during the Tirah campaign (1897-98). After service in South Africa, he went to England in 1902 as a member of the Indian Cavalry Coronation contingent. Promoted Jemadar in 1907, his next service abroad was spent on consular guard duties in Isfahan, Persia between 1908-11. He was decorated in 1908 with the Indian Distinguished Service Medal for fighting off an attack while escorting a consular official. In 1911 he was promoted Ressaider and was present at the Delhi Durbar. He spent July to November 1914 as ADC to the Commander in Chief before going to France. There he was promoted Rissaldar in 1916 and in 1917 received the Order of British India 2nd Class. In 1921 his military career came to an end and he was pensioned off with the added distinction of Honorary Lieutenant; a fitting end to a marvellous career.

The book *Indian Cavalry Uniforms* by W.Y. Carman contains two illustrations that clearly show Indian officers wearing QSAs. In a 1911 Coronation group photograph taken in England, an officer of the 11th Probyn's Horse is wearing a QSA (medals to this unit would be named 11 Bengal Lcrs). Similarly, a colour plate of the Rissaldar Major of the 14th (Murray's Jats) Lancers, painted in 1909, shows him wearing a QSA (medals to this unit would be named 14th Bengal Lcrs). It should be remembered that all QSAs issued to Indian cavalry units "should" be impressed with the regimental title used at the time and not the new titles adopted following the 1903 re-organization.

Mark Sellar

#### Bibliography

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*Deeds of Valour, 1860-1925*; Hypher, Liddell's Press, Simla, 1927  
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*Indian Army Uniforms (Cavalry)*; Carman, Leonard Hill, London, 1961

(Lovat and MacMunn's famous book also shows at least six or seven plates of IOs and ORs with QSAs and KSAs.)

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#### MEMBERS' QUERIES

● M.C. Johnson seeks information on the bars and naming styles of 1854 I.G.S. Medals to the Assam Military Police battalions.

● H.J. Storer wishes information on the dress, ranks, organization and activities of the Punjab Border Police and the Frontier Constabulary, NWF Prov. (post 1947). He also seeks identifications for the following badges'

- In gilding metal, the letters "C.L.S.C." on two straight bars (shoulder title style)
- A button in brass with the Imperial Crown over "ERI" within a  $\frac{3}{4}$ " circle over crossed laurel fronds - by Firmin's Ltd, London
- Rough cast in two pieces, an Imperial crown over a scroll bearing the letters "C.N.M.R." in brass, on two crossed rifles with slings in silver.
- In white metal, a stag's head on a wreath over the letters "CCC" over a scroll bearing the motto "*Nunquam Non Paratus*"

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#### BADGES OF RANK OF VICEROY'S COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Prior to World War II, Viceroy's Commissioned Officers wore a uniform akin to that worn by British Officers (KCOs), but with a stand collar to the jacket, and a pagri or other native headdress. Badges of rank were the same as for British Officers viz:

Subedar Major: a Crown

Subedar: 2 Stars

Jemadar: 1 Star (Type A) (Rissaldar Majors and Rissaldars would wear the same ranking as Subedar Majors and Subedars respectively.)

As the number of Indian Commissioned Officers (KCIOs) increased, confusion occurred on frontier operations, when shirtsleeve order was worn and British Officers wore the pagri to prevent tribesmen identifying them. (Sikh commissioned officers wore the Pagri at all times.) Thus there was no way of distinguishing between an Indian KCO and a Subedar.

Indian Army Order 322/41 of June 1941 laid down new rank badges (Type B) for VCOs viz:

Subedar Major - three coloured strips (red-yellow-red) with a silver crown on each.

Subedar - Two strips and stars

Jemadar - One strip and star

This Order stated that these badges were for wear in "Shirtsleeve Order ONLY". The old badges (Type A) were to continue to be worn on the jacket provided it had a stand up collar.

Indian Army Order 1327/45 of Sept. '45 changed the badges back to the old style (Type A) with a single strip to distinguish between KCOs and VCOs. This Order is summarised as follows:

Para 1 - cancelled I.A.O. 922/41

Para 2 - stated that the Type B badges were "unsatisfactory" as they were difficult to distinguish. The real reason was probably their unpopularity. The silver badges cut across regimental traditions and the VCOs felt that they lessened their status, as they had previously worn the same badges as British (King's) Commissioned Officers.

Para 3 - stated that the VCOs would "revert to the pre-war badges with a single strip of braid (red-yellow-red)". Nothing was said as to the colour of the badges, only that they were to be "embroidered". I presume that Rifle regiments construed "pre-war" as allowing them to revert to black badges.

Para 4 - Stated that metal badges, "black where already authorized", would be worn on jackets on ceremonial occasions. I.A.O. 322/41 allowed the Type A badges to be worn on the jacket and as this order was now cancelled the red-yellow-red braid was now worn with both metal and embroidered badges.

A.A. Mains



## THE POLICE OF BRITISH INDIA

(This is a general rather than exhaustive survey of the uniforms, rank structure and rank badges of the Police - as distinct from the Army.)

### GENERAL

The police in India were organized on a three tier system of ranks and belonged to two separate services - the (Imperial) Indian Police Service and the Provincial Police Forces.

### THE INDIAN POLICE - THE TOP TIERS

This was the Secretary of State's Covenanted Service and provided the top tier only Gazetted Officers from Assistant Superintendent to Inspector General. These were equivalent to Army Commissioned Officers and were recruited in Britain and India by the respective civil service commissioners under terms of service fixed by the Secretary of State for India on behalf of the British Parliament. Only he could alter these terms. There was no Head of Service as its members were distributed amongst the various provinces, each with its own Inspector General.

### THE MIDDLE TIERS

Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors were the equivalent of Army VCOs. As it would have been impossible to get men of education to join as Constables, these two ranks were recruited 'direct' as Probationary Sub-Inspectors. With the exception of Sergeants promoted to Inspector, they were exclusively Indian. A few Inspectors were granted Gazetted rank as Deputy Superintendent, a rank reserved for them. They remained, however, in the provincial police force. The lowly status and lack of education of the rank and file of the Police meant that the Sub-Inspector carried out the duties done in the British police by Detective Constables and Sergeants, Desk Sergeants, etc.

Sergeants were equivalent to Indian Army WOIs - Conductors. This rank was reserved for Europeans and Anglo-Indians, who were recruited from time-expired British soldiers or direct, in the case of Anglo-Indians. They were found normally in the larger towns and Presidency Towns' forces, where they were used to deal with Europeans. They also served in the Armed and Mounted Police sections of the District Police in the more important districts. They were eligible for promotion to Inspector and to Deputy Superintendent.

### THE LOWER TIER

The ordinary policeman was the Constable, a man of little or no education. He was used, therefore, for beat work, crowd control and traffic regulation. He was not used for crime detection or investigation; this was done by the Sub-Inspector. A Constable was eligible for promotion to L/Naik, Naik and Head Constable; the latter rank was the Police equivalent of a Havildar.

### PROVINCIAL POLICE FORCES - MIDDLE AND LOWER TIERS (INCLUDING "PRESIDENCY TOWNS")

These forces were raised by the governments of the provinces of British India and of the Central Administered Areas (Baluchistan, Delhi, etc.). The local government fixed the terms

of service of its respective force, subject to overall control by the government of India. The police of the Presidency Towns - Calcutta, Bombay and Madras - were different in their chain of command and responsibilities. Their chief officer, the Commissioner, was an officer of the Indian Police seconded from the province concerned and ranking as a Deputy Inspector General. He was autonomous, insofar as he was responsible directly to the Home Department of the local government. In the provincial force the chief police officer of a district was responsible through his Deputy Inspector General to the Inspector General of the province. As stated earlier, the command of the provincial police was in the hands of officers of the Indian Police.

#### ORGANIZATION

The police in India were not autonomous like those of Britain but Government servants, and the District Superintendent was responsible to the District Magistrate and subject to his orders; in the same way the provincial Inspector General was subject to the orders of the provincial government.

The district was the basic unit for police work as well as administration and every district had a District Force under a Superintendent. The lowest unit was the Police Station with a Sub-Inspector in charge as Station House Officer. A number of stations would be grouped as a Circle, under a Superintendent. At the top would be the District Police HQ with, besides the District Superintendent., a Deputy Superintendent, as second in command and the Armed Police Reserve: about a platoon in strength, under an Inspector and armed with modern rifles. If the district was large, the 2 i/c would be an Additional Superintendent and there would be two or three Deputy Superintendents in charge of various departments - crime detection, traffic, etc.

There were no detective staff as known in Britain in a district, but they were found in Presidency Towns. For purposes of Supervision, Districts were grouped into Ranges under Deputy Inspector Generals, who reported to the provincial Inspector General. At Provincial HQ would be found the Provincial CID, also under a Deputy Inspector General. This was usually divided into Crime and Intelligence sections.

Officers of the Indian Police were, on appointment, posted to a province where they normally stayed for the whole of their service, except when seconded to the police of a Presidency Town or to a para-military force. They were gazetted as Assistant Superintendent-intendants and as such were junior to Deputy Superintendents (appointed from the ranks of Inspectors). This was in effect a probationary rank and an Assistant Superintendent started with a course at a Provincial Police Training School. He would then be posted to a district to continue practical training and, if he was a European, be required to pass the obligatory language test within a specified time. On promotion he went straight to Superintendent, "jumping over" the Deputy Superintendents. He would not be given a district right away, but would be posted to one of the larger districts as an Additional Superintendent. This gave him the legal power of a Superintendent but not the charge of a district; this would come later. As an encouragement to the provincial services, a small number of the smaller districts were reserved for them and the posts there filled by Deputy Superintendents promoted Superintendent for the last few years before retirement.

A curious feature of the system was the rank badges of Superintendents, which were determined solely by length of service: a newly promoted Superintendent wore three stars; later he was entitled to a crown and finally, when very senior, to a crown and a star.

(Part Two: Uniforms, Para-Military Forces and Frontier Corps & Appendix of Ranks & Abbreviations to be continued in the next issue.)



#### SOME CAVALRY BADGES, 1903-22

The following article is intended as a very general look at some badges in use before and during WWII. The drawings are very basic, rendered by a non-artist and I must emphasize that attributions as to period and order of dress or rank in which they were worn are very tentative. I have used all the sources cited below, but the majority are from the written descriptions in Dress Regulations and a splendid series of photographs sent me by J.L. Chapple, whose collection of Indian badges apparently provided many of the illustrations for William Cox's book *British Badges*.

I have tried to be as accurate as possible, using several sources wherever possible, but there are undoubtedly inaccuracies and obviously a lot of guesswork. This is especially true, oddly enough, with the better documented units, for which the more numerous photographs often dispute, as opposed to confirming, the written sources. A case in point is the badge of 1st Skinner's Horse - all the written sources quote the description of the one shown here and examples in my own and other collections bear this out. However, many photos and several of Chris Rothero's drawings suggest that the rose covers the crossing of the lances, though this style seems to date from a period after 1908. Another source of confusion is the fact that shoulder titles are visible in photos and illustrations but rarely mentioned in dress regulations and never so clearly as to specify for which orders of dress they were worn.

Unless otherwise stated, the upper illustration in each row is the cap badge as worn by British officers and the lower is the shoulder title worn, presumably, by all ranks. Any information in quotation marks is from the 1913 Dress Regulations, as published in *TRADITION* No.75. Some of the other sources are quoted after specific entries.

#### VICEROY'S BODYGUARD

- a) "gilt embroidery, worn on forage cap" crown only worn on field cap."
- b) B.O.s cap badge 1901-47; ORs had same pattern, slightly larger; shoulder titles were brass "G.G.B.G.", joined at bottom in usual fashion (Chapple)

#### 1st DUKE OF YORK'S OWN LANCERS (SKINNER'S HORSE)

- a) gilt, rose in silver "forage & field cap" 1899-1922; helmet badge 1903-22 was "1" on crossed lances, crown above crossing, scroll crossing butts reading "Skinner's Horse" (Chapple)
- b) brass; later replaced by "1L"(Rothero)

## 2 LANCERS (GARDNER'S HORSE)

- a) silver "field caps"; from 1890?
- b) brass 1903-22

## 3 SKINNER'S HORSE

- a) bronze - field cap; silver in 1915, also in gilt
- b) brass (Rothero-1905 on service dress; Lovett-1910 on blue kurta)

## 4 CAVALRY

- a) silver, scroll frosted "helmet, field & forage cap"; also in bronze; silver
- b) brass; 1900-1901 (Chapple); 1908 photo (Harris) also shows a shoulder title, though pattern undistinguishable

## 5 CAVALRY

- a) "silver - forage cap"; or gilt? (Chapple)
- b) brass 1903-22; "earlier" pattern "5BC"

## 6 KING EDWARD'S OWN CAVALRY

- a) "silver, cypher blue enamel, scroll red enamel ... forage & field cap"; pre-1906 cap & pagri badges were P.o.W. plumes, this or something like it used 08-22, though Chapple shows as a pouch plate
- b) brass, plumes silver 1903-22

## 7 HARIANA LANCERS

- a) gilt, "VII" in silver - "-forage cap" 1904-22; crown may be "optional"; other variants include a large crown on junction of crossed lances with "VII" below the junction, (cited as a Field & forage cap badge c.1912 by Chapple) and a large 7 over crossed lances, in brass (Harris)  
N.B. full title on scroll: "HARIANA LANCERS"
- b) brass 1904-28; 1901-03 was "VII BL"

## 8 CAVALRY

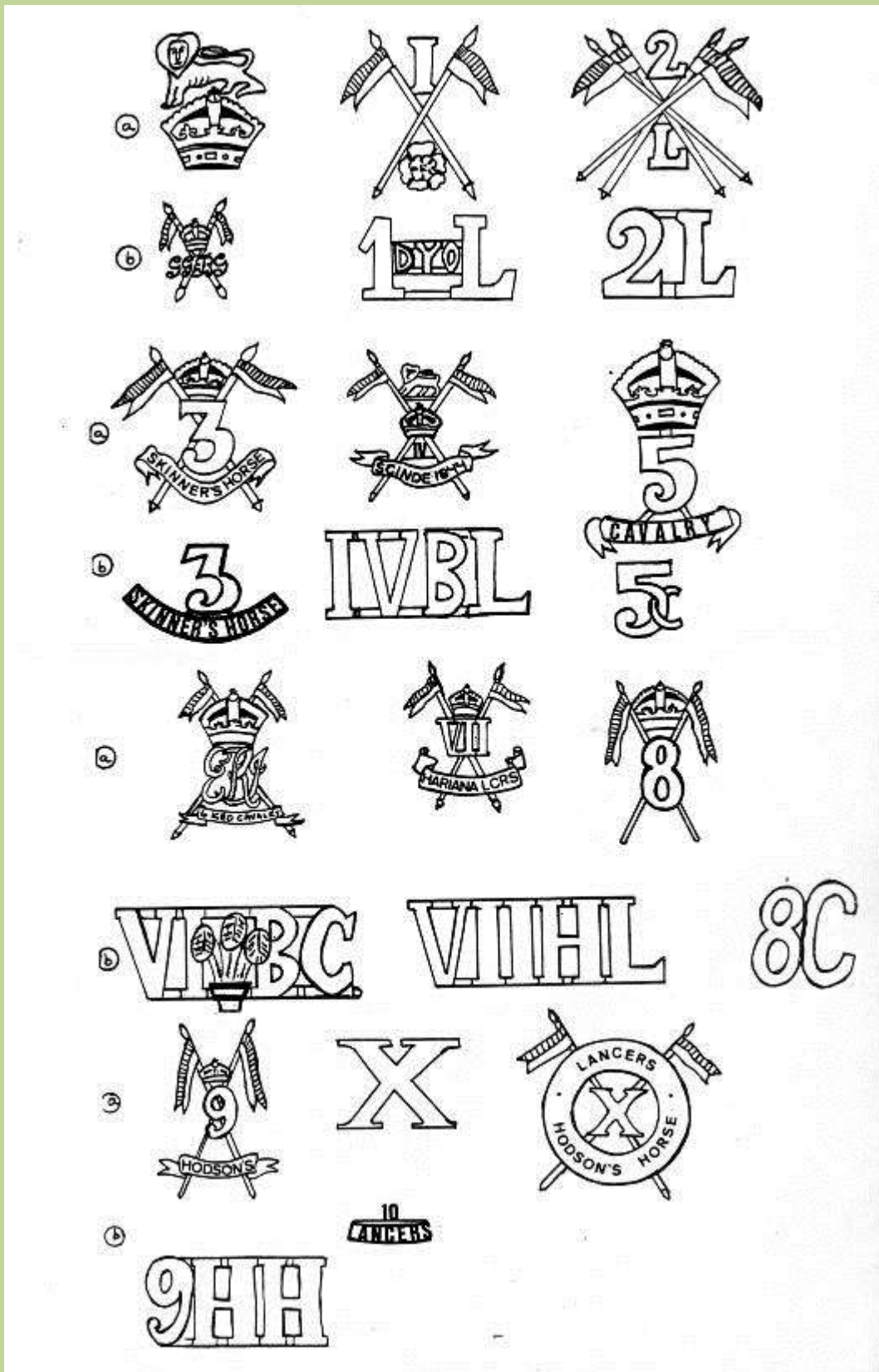
- a) gilt - "forage & field caps - crown seems to have been a variant - many examples do not have it
- b) brass 1904-22; "8BL" 1901-03

## 9 HODSON'S HORSE

- a) silver - "forage cap"/helmet & field cap - same badge "without crown"  
N.B. title on badge in full: "HODSON'S HORSE"
- b) brass 1903-22; "9BL" 1886-1903

10 DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE OWN LANCERS

- a) "silver "X" on field cap"/second pattern from Chapple and Harris
- b) brass 1303-22; "XBL" 1301-03; "X.L" 1874-1901



## SOURCES:

Sources used include: *Bengal Cavalry Regiments*, R.G. Harris; *The Indian Cavalry*, H.W. Bowling; *An Assemblage of Indian Army Uniforms* C.P. Chater; *Badges of the Commonwealth*, W. Cox; and 'Indian Cavalry Badges', W.M. Crooke from the Military Historical Society Journal.

A very special note of thanks to J.L. Chapple for his invaluable comments and assistance.

P.E. Monahan

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## DURBAR, Volume 2, No.4

### BUNDOBAST\*

This issue I intend to speak further about reference sources for the medal collector. These range from official publications (or their reprints) to collector compiled-works, such as casualty rolls. There is also the full range of histories of the various campaigns, too many in number to discuss here.

The object of research is to learn as much as possible about a recipient. As far as the published sources are concerned, this information tends to break down into three categories for the convenience of the publishers. These are Officers (including VCOs), Casualties, and Gallantry. The officers are to be found in the British and Indian Army Lists, including the *Supplement to the Indian Army List*, which contains war services. These lists tend to be hard to find, and expensive, especially those which contain war services. Recently, however, London Stamp Exchange has produced an edition of 200 copies of a reprint of the *Supplement to the 1924 Indian Army List*. This is a useful date to reprint, since it would pick up the post-war services of the Indian Army. It should be remembered, however, that the services of IARO officers are not included in the war services section.

Under casualties there are now a number of publications: rolls are now available for the Sutlej (British casualties only) and for the European casualties of the Indian Mutiny. This latter work does not seem to cover casualties from disease, of which there were so many in that campaign. Anthony Farrington of the India Office Library has also written several articles giving casualty lists for British units in Indian campaigns; these have appeared in *Medals International* and *Medal News*. The ultimate source for casualty research for the 1914-21 and 1939-47 periods is the publications of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. I would mention here that the *Register of the Delhi Memorial (MR 43-44)* forms a casualty list for the Northwest Frontier from 1914-21. It is in seven volumes plus an introductory volume which gives a good basic account of the various campaigns. All the British casualties are contained in Volume One, arranged alphabetically; the other six volumes cover the Indian casualties, arranged by unit. Appended to Volume Seven is the roll for the Shillong Memorial, recording the names of members of the Assam Military Police/Rifles who died on the Northeast Frontier in campaigns such as the Kuki rebellion. At £16.00 (plus extra postage if sent overseas) this is good value, and you have the option of

buying only those volumes that contain the units that you are interested in. British Army collectors will only need the Introduction and Volume One, for a total of £4.00. There is the mild drawback with the CWGC registers in that they do not usually record the cause of death for Indians, although in most cases the British casualties have the cause of death indicated, probably added by the next of kin. However, since the date of death is almost always given, a supposition can be made from a reading of the unit's actions for that date. A check with the *Official History of the Great War* will often show a numerical listing of the casualties suffered during various operations, especially the major battles, and this can be used to confirm, to some degree, whether or not non-battle casualties also occurred.

Unfortunately, the Gallantry section has lagged behind in some areas. As was detailed in Colin Message's useful article "Some Useful References for the Gallantry Collector" (I.M.C.S. Journal 1984, p. 2), there is P.P. Hypher's work on the I.O.M. up to 1925. There is also the reprint edition of *Honours and Awards of the Indian Army 1914-21*, which will confirm an award and usually give the theatre (but see my comments on this in my article in the same Journal, p.23). O'Moore-Creagh's book covers the D.S.O. to 1923, and the V.C. to 1920 (the V.C. section has recently been reprinted and the D.S.O. reprint is still available). The *Register of the Victoria Cross* lists all V. C. winners, and has pictures and basic information on most of them; further research is simplified by a list of London Gazette dates. If you have access to microfilm copies of the London Times, the citations are usually to be found reprinted in the London Gazette section of the Times for the next day. A.W. Walker's book on the D.C.M. 1914-20 gives the awards to the British Army for that period, as well as the few Indian Army recipients, but the theatre is not often given, so it is hard to identify awards for Indian service. It remains to be seen whether or not I. McInnes will carry his interest in the M.S.M. to the conclusion of dealing with the Indian Meritorious Service Medal (Abbott and Tamplin's *British Gallantry Awards*, 2nd edition, deals with the basics of this award). Despite all this, there remain some blank areas: the Second World War, to begin with, and the I.D.S.M. to Indian troops apart from the First World War. Also, the M.M. to British troops for Indian Frontier campaigns 1914-24, which does not seem to have been covered, although the numbers would not be large. Perhaps one day these too will be available.

Some issues ago, I enquired about the naming on GSM 1918 medals with the bar "S.E. Asia 1945-46" to soldiers who went to the Pakistan Army. While I didn't get any response, I have seen another group besides my own (which I now suspect to be 8/8th Punjab Regt.). This second group was named to the Frontier Constabulary, with the GSM engraved. On the strength of this rather slender sample, I will go out on a limb and speculate that the medals were issued after Partition, and the Indian Army named those to its members, while the Pakistan Army did not. Units which went to Pakistan generally had non-Muslim elements which were traded for the Muslim companies of units going to India. It should therefore be possible to find named medals to these units which went to India. A medal with a Muslim name, impressed in the rounded Indian style, would probably be to one of the Muslims who chose to remain in India after Partition. If anyone has any further thoughts on the matter, I'd be happy to hear from them.

M.C. Johnson

\* "Bundobast", meaning roughly "arrangements", is the new name of Mr Johnson's column, its first title having been pre-empted for this newsletter. ED.

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## REUNIONS and REMINISCENCES

May and June this year seem to have been popular months for Indian Army reunions, luncheons and dinners; the Indian Army Association held its twenty-sixth annual garden party at the Hurlingham Club in the last week of May. This association is, I believe, restricted to those who held commissions in the Indian Army prior to the outbreak of war in 1939 and reminds me what a difficult institution the I.A. was to enter until the Japs had the bad form to chew up Hong Kong, Malaya and Burma in the space of a few weeks, leaving India as our sole bastion in the Far East. Then, though there were recruits in plenty to swell the ranks, there was a dearth of officers. Though there were Indian divisions in the Middle East - Persia and Iraq, Abyssinia and Eritrea - and divisions forming in India, the emphasis was on a war to be fought against the Germans on a mechanized basis. The rude arrival of hordes of Japs who preferred to fight on foot in country where mechanized warfare was restricted to the roads must have shaken the serene calm which, I do not doubt, ruled in Delhi.

Those leaving British OCTUs in 1940 and 1941 had to have a damned good reason to opt for the Indian Army - a relative serving or having served; being "country born"; or perhaps having a father in the Indian Civil Service. Two cadets from my company at OCTU went to the I.A. in September 1941 - one had a father with the B.B. & C.I. Railway, the other was the "country born" son of an I.C.S. official. However, such niceties were brushed aside when the Japs set to work, and prospective officers could find themselves posted for Officer Training at Mhow, Bangalore, or even the lofty Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun - the Sandhurst of India - which had been steadily producing Indian officers in anticipation of the inevitable Indianization of the I.A.

Officer Cadets were needed but they were very young in the main and the I.A. might have need of officers before the cadets were trained. In the British Army a subaltern could expect years of indoctrination before becoming the 2 i/c of a company or, ultimately, company commander. I.A. sub-units were commanded by VCOs, gentlemen of vast experience, while British Officers had key jobs such as Signals, Transport and Intelligence Officers and commanded rifle companies. When our 1st Bn. went to Burma in early 1942, three of the rifle companies were commanded by Emergency Commissioned second lieutenants and I doubt if they mustered six years' experience between them.

These Emergency Commissioned Officers were known as "ECO's", almost an epithet of distaste to some regulars, and were not well received by many units. Many were swallowed by the Staff for appointments in the new formations or to key training positions to cope with the envisaged vast expansion of the I.A. An even greater shock awaited the proud Indian Army, however; the posting in of British Service Attached officers to fill the immediate gaps. One can imagine the mingled reaction we received - varying from open hostility to bare tolerance. One can also realize the resentment of those BSA officers, who had been culled from units in the UK, brimming over with surplus officers, and posted arbitrarily either to Indian Infantry or the R.I.A.S.C.

I count myself lucky that I was posted, with two others, to the regiment of my choice, 10 Gurkha Rifles, for our reception at the hands of the Commandant, Colonel Humphrey Carruthers, could not have been more hospitable. Renowned for placing square pegs in round holes, the Army for once miscarried; no better choice could possibly have been made in the

man whose wisdom would shape the performance of four active battalions. He had been training Gurkhas all his adult life and had fought with them in Mesopotamia, Iraq and in the 3rd Afghan War in 1919. He was backed up by a hand-picked cadre of experienced Gurkha Officers; training the men would be no problem. Producing the officers to lead them was another matter. This the Commandant accomplished with a fine admixture of old-world courtesy, tact, understanding and charm. Those who overestimated the charm, however, were booked for a rough ride, for under the velvet glove lay a hand of steel. The Regiment came first, last and always and it mattered not to our Commandant if you were the son of a duke or a dustman so long as you put your all into your work.

As a measure of the esteem in which we ECO's and BSA officers held Humphrey Carruthers, a luncheon was held in his honour, and to mark his ninetieth year, at the East India Club in St. James on 21st May, 1983. Some twenty elderly characters who had passed through 10 Gurkha Rifles Regimental Centre between 1944 and 1946 gathered from all over the place, while letters of regret came from Canada and other outposts of the old Empire, from former "old boys" who were unable to attend. All four wartime battalions were represented, the largest number from 2/10 - appropriate because the guest of honour sprang from 2/10 and commanded the battalion in Syria in 1941, against the French.

To my great pleasure I saw Eric Axe enter the room - at least there were now two of us from 1/10 GR. Eric was also BSA (South Staffs) and one of four of us who had joined our battalion together from 10 GR on Christmas Eve 1942. We had not met for forty years and had much news to exchange. Another who had joined on the same day, Barry Gilbert (Hampshire Regt.) had landed in the UK from his home in South Africa only days before and was unable to attend. The fourth member' Dennis Gwynne (KSLI) has regrettably died some years ago. Eric and Dennis had both been awarded the Military Cross, as had two other BSA officers - Alec Smith (Gordons) and Fred Russell (Royal Scots). Fred was killed in 1945, Dennis and Barry had been severely wounded on the same day in May, 1944 and Smith had been most grievously wounded in winning his MC. The unwelcome news was that our Adjutant, Tom Boyes, MC, had died in January. Tom was an ECO and the only officer to land in Rangoon in 1942 and to fight all the way back again in 1945 without missing a battle. Dear Tom was a lovely fellow and a particular chum of mine and I was deeply grieved, for he was only a couple of years older than I, and younger than Eric.

When Colonel Humphrey rose to speak, forty-five years fell away from him like a cloak, transporting us all back to the time when we were all slim and fit, not portly and hideously unfit. It was a superb day and a well-deserved tribute paid by former amateur soldiers to a great professional.

Other regiments to hold reunions this summer were: The 10th Baluch Regiment; The Dogra Regiment; the Indian Grenadiers; the Mahratta Light Infantry; the 2nd, 3th, 15th, and 16th Punjab Regiments; the Kumaon Regiment; and the Rajputana Rifles. One or two familiar names stood out - the 8th Punjab luncheon was attended by Major Parkash Singh, who won his VC as a Havildar in January 1943, at Donbaik in the Mayu Peninsula on the long scraggy coast of Burma. Presiding over the Baluch reunion was Brigadier John Randle, OBE, MC, who was with 7/10th Baluch in 17 Indian Division. I encountered John a couple of years ago when investigating a medal and in the course of conversation we found that we were both former members of the famous "Black Cat" Division -our emblem an aggressive looking moggy, back arched and tail erect.

The 15th Punjab luncheon was headed by Brigadier J.H. Prendergast, DSO, MC & Bar. I am familiar with his decorations because he was the last Brigadier under whom I served in the TA. His MC and Bar must be unique - the MC for the North West Frontier before the war, while serving with the Tochi Scouts; the bar when he was on leave in the UK in 1940 and was grabbed as an expert on Mountain Warfare and sent to Norway. He performed wonders there with a scratch force; his DSO came later in Burma, while commanding a battalion.

A cool trickle of remembrance ran down my spine when I saw the notice for "16th Punjab Regiment". My mind went back to November 1943 when 1/16 Punjab passed through my position on Kennedy Peak in the Chin Hills. They established themselves between my position and 1/3 GR, who were holding Fort White, some seven miles away downhill. The Japs put in ferocious attacks against 1/16 two nights running. Beaten off both times, the second rebuff sent them into cover just outside the Punjabi's wire and when the battalion stood down in the morning, the Japs sprang to life. The CO and several other HQ officers were killed and their positions overrun. The Punjabi's stragglers came in all day to our positions, tired and haggard. I took their Signals Officer, set him down and gave him tea laced with rum. He broke down, then his head fell forward on the table, exhausted. I can hear again the screams of "Banzai", the clatter of automatics, the thud of grenades; recall the smell of death when I went down to see what had gone on after the first attack. Nearly 43 years ago, yet it seems like only a few weeks. The Punjabis gave a good account of themselves and under a new CO, John Bolam, went right on to the end of the war.

Whether readers are interested in such reminiscences as this, or whether they prefer learned dissertations on dress regulations and medal rolls of the old Indian Army, I do not know. Perhaps they are worthy of record because nearly half a century has passed since the twilight of the Raj and there are not too many of us about who recollect what matters were actually like. Perhaps, in years to come, young collectors might look back on these outpourings of a bygone age with the same air of incredulity with which we now read about an era when commissions were bought and sold, when a wealthy idiot could buy himself promotion over the head of a poorer veteran of many campaigns and years of service.

Tony Sudlow, President, IMCS



"MY LORD THE ELEPHANT"

One of my favourite Kipling short stories involves the famous, "soldiers three", one of whom strikes up what can only be described as a "friendship" with an elephant attached to the Artillery. The plot revolves around the mutiny of said "hathi", when he is pressed into service by the Supply and Transport Corps to carry tentage. Whatever the degree of dramatic licence employed in the story, Kipling displays an intimate knowledge of the abilities and intelligence of elephants and of their importance to the Indian Army.

Given my initial prejudice, I could not but be struck by a short piece I received recently. Accidentally attached to a much longer article on a totally different subject, it was obviously the closing paragraphs of an article on draft animals in the Indian Army. Nevertheless, it can stand alone.

"The last appearance of elephants in battle was in the Afghan War of 1878-80, and they finally disappeared as Field Transport after the Chin-Lushai Operations in 1890. In Afghanistan they were employed in Heavy Batteries, each gun being drawn by two elephants, the total number on the establishment of a Heavy Battery being six. They performed great service at the Battle of Peiwar Kotal, packing four Horse Artillery guns up the steep ascent of the Kotal during the night, leading to the surprise of the enemy. Their immense strength, their silent movements, and aptitude for climbing over rough ground were of especial value for this purpose.

The drawback, however, to elephants in the Heavy Artillery is that they are gun shy, and it was for this reason, and the difficulty of providing them with their enormous rations, that they lost their place as War animals. A big animal of this kind is also a fine mark for the enemy, and when one is knocked out or rendered ineffective, it is relatively a serious loss of animal power to its unit.

Elephants in heavy batteries continued for some fifteen years after the Afghan War, and I recall those of a battery, and their stables (still in existence) at Jhansi, of which I had charge nearly thirty years ago.\*

As transport in the Chin-Lushai Expedition, the 70 animals employed proved most valuable and performed very excellent work.

The only association the Army of India now has with the elephant is the scale of diet still permitted to be retained in Army Transport Tables. "*Sic Transit Gloria Mundi.*"

Unfortunately, I haven't the original author's name, but it remains an interesting side note on the Indian elephant in the Indian Army.

P.E.M.

\* The article appeared originally in the Journal of the United Services Institute of India, circa 1912.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

There are one or two points in the interesting reminiscence by R.A. Blantern-Haine on the Unattached List, Indian Army in the 1985 Journal.

I am sure that his India General Service Medal 1936 could not have had a clasp or bar for "WAZIRISTAN". It would presumably have been one of the only two clasps issued with this medal, both with "NORTH WEST FRONTIER" and a date. His was presumably "1937-39".

The Leicesters' honour of a Royal Tiger and wreath with HINDOOSTAN dated from considerably earlier than the Mutiny. It was an honour awarded in 1825 for services by the 17th Foot in India between 1804- 1823. Their motto was not "*Primus in Indis*" (nor "*Indus*")

as printed). That motto was jealously guarded by the Dorset's and was awarded to the 39th Foot as being the first King's regiment to serve in India, in 1754.

I notice that the Leicesters' title is spelt wrongly a number of times. The direct descendant of the regiment continues today as a regular unit of the British Army as part of the Royal Anglian Regiment, whose 2nd Battalion has the subsidiary title "Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire and Leicestershire."

Yours sincerely, J.L. Chapple

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## THE FORTRESS OF MUD

### INDIAN RESISTANCE DURING THE TWO SIEGES OF BHARATPUR (PART ONE OF TWO PARTS)

If any fortress in India could have been with good reason called impregnable, that fortress was Bharatpur. In the early years of the nineteenth century, whenever the hands of the English fell heavy on an Indian state, the potentates of Hindustan would say "Yes, you may bully us, but go and take Bharatpur." Their belief in its impregnability was well founded, for in 1805 the British launched four vigorous attacks but failed to take the fortress.

The first siege of Bharatpur came as an aftermath of the Anglo-Maratha wars. Jaswant Rao Holkar's Marathas, hotly pursued by the British, had been given shelter in the Jat fortress of Deig. The fortress belonged to Ranjit Singh, Raja of Bharatpur. It was evident then to the British that in this single act Ranjit Singh had shown a hostile attitude and deserved to be punished.

An army under the command of the famous Lord Lake was despatched and on January 2, 1805 had swung into position under the mud walls of Bharatpur. The fortifications at that time consisted of a citadel and thirty four mud bastions. The mud walls were of no ordinary construction, consisting of rows of tree trunks, buried upright and covered with a thick coating of mud. A ditch or moat surrounded the walls, which were about four miles in circumference. A nearby "Jheel" or lake added to the defences. It was on higher ground and so could be breached to lay the surrounding countryside under water. It also provided, with the help of a link canal, water to the ditch. Local legend prophesied that Bharatpur could be taken when a "kumbhir", a long-nosed alligator, would drink up the waters of the ditch. Until then, the local peasantry believed, the fortress was impregnable, and this bolstered their confidence and morale in defending the fort.

On January 7th the British guns opened fire. The shelling lasted two days and concentrated on the south-western front, with the aim of creating a breach in the wall. Thick mud walls can sponge up artillery fire, however, a fact the British were ignorant of, Bharatpur being the first mud they had encountered.

The initial assault was ordered in a hurry. Lake hoped to take the fort in his usual dashing style, relying on the discipline and superior training of his British and sepoy battalions. The operation, however, was an utter failure. First his troops got trapped in a swamp and unfamiliar terrain at night and then the Jats were ready, firing at once with their muskets and

cannon loaded with grapeshot. The brave Scottish colonel leading the attack was killed and the troops were forced to withdraw.

Lord Lake, or "Lik Sahib" as he was called by his Indian troops took this failure calmly. Lake was a soldier's beau-ideal; an earlier episode illustrates his character. In a critical moment of a keenly contested battle against Scindia's forces at Leswarree, his horse was shot. His son, acting as his A.D.C., dismounted and offered his own horse. The next moment the youngster was hit by a cannon shot. "For a moment Lake forgot everything in the anguish of seeing his son's mutilated body and at the next moment he was galloping furiously at the head of his troops whom he led to victory." This personal example inspired his troops to rush forward. For many years afterwards Indian regiments carried banners or standards inscribed with the words "Lake and Victory".

Artillery was ordered to train their guns once more towards the walls and pounded them with fire for a week. A small breach became visible, but to get to it the troops had to cross the ditch. For this to succeed, a reconnaissance was needed to find the shallowest crossing point. It was a difficult and dangerous task, as it had to be undertaken in broad daylight and in full view of the enemy, but three volunteers from the 3rd Bengal Light Cavalry undertook to find a crossing place. Early in the morning the garrison of Bharatpur saw three sowars galloping hard towards the fort being chased by a number of other horsemen firing in their direction. The three fugitives flung themselves from their horses at the waters and shouted to the sentries on the ramparts, "Where can we get across? We are deserting the 'behen-chod' feringhees!" The sentries pointed to the crossing place and the three, one Daffadar and two sowars, scrambled onto their horses and galloped back, reporting the location of the ford. Interestingly enough, fifty-two years later eighty-five veterans from the same regiment would refuse to touch the cartridges at Meerut, be chained and humiliated, and prompt the whole regiment to mutiny and spark-off the powder keg of 1857.

The report of these three was accepted by Lord Lake, though several nineteenth century historians trying to explain the British failure write contemptuously that Lake believed "Native Cavalry". In other words, that the three sowars had lied. Such accusation is far from the truth and serves to show us that, as conquerors, the British were becoming more intolerant of Indians.

At three in the afternoon of January 21st, a second assault led by Colonel Kenneth Macfrae advanced towards the breach. In spite of portable bridges, the ditch was not easily crossed and those who managed it were shot down by accurate fire from the walls. With men dying in scores the force retreated, losing five hundred and ninety killed and wounded.

The second failure did not hinder Lord Lake, who had been reinforced by a division from Bombay consisting of three Bombay Native Infantry battalions and two British regiments. The besiegers were now better prepared. They had made several rafts and ladders while the artillery was brought nearer to the walls for greater effect. Lake waited for about a month before giving orders for the third attack. In the meantime, the Jats launched two spirited but unsuccessful attacks on the besiegers causing confusion and heavy casualties. The effect of their attack was felt on two very famous British regiments, the 76th Foot and the 75th Highlanders. They, seeing many of their comrades killed, lost heart and refused to advance. Two sepoy battalions, 12th and 15th B.N.I., were extricated from the jam. They managed to get across the ditch with great difficulty as the Jats released the "jheel" waters. Some men of the 2/15th B.N.I. managed to reach a bastion and plant their regimental colours.

However, with no help coming they were soon driven back by the stubborn resistance of the defenders. A British historian grudgingly admitted that it was a day rare in the annals of the British army, a day of panic. The third assault also failed with heavy losses to the attackers.

Next day, Lake addressed his troops on parade. Regretting the conduct of the British regiments, he called for volunteers to take part in a fourth assault. Every man, we are told, volunteered. The attack was launched with the same "ragged bastion" as objective. Men drove their bayonets into the walls and used the hilts to climb up to the summit. Their progress was checked by falling timber, and packs of flaming cotton dipped in oil, followed by pots filled with gun-powder, all thrown down from the walls. The disastrous results could be well imagined and the fourth assault, like the other three, also failed.

An incident that has no parallel in the history of any army in the world occurred and is worth mentioning here. The 2/15th Bengal Native Infantry, now the 4th Battalion Brigade of Guards, was taking part in the attack. As we noted earlier, their colours had been briefly planted on that "ragged bastion". The flag was exposed to heavy fire and was riddled with bullets and tattered by grapeshot. The colours were declared unserviceable and orders were issued for their replacement. The new colours arrived and were to be consecrated the next day, but until that ceremony took place, they were no more than coloured silk. In the morning it was discovered that nothing remained of the old colours - they had mysteriously disappeared. No British officer could learn what had become of them. It was a mystery not pursued and soon forgotten.

Twenty-one years later, the regiment came back to attack Bharatpur and the fortress was captured. It was discovered that the "Old Colours" of the 2/15th had reappeared. It transpired that the old colours had been taken away from the guard room and cut into fragments, each of which was later handed down from father to son. Their sons now brought out these fragments and tied them to the new colours, so that they might redeem by victory the "izzat" or honour of their fathers.

The first siege cost the British forces over a hundred officers and three thousand one hundred men killed and wounded. Lake now turned his attention on Holkar and his Marathas, who had camped not far from Bharatpur and had troubled his force during the siege with small sorties. Consequently, the siege of Bharatpur was formally raised, and though the Raja shortly afterwards sued for peace and had to pay a war indemnity, he had gained much prestige in Hindustan.

Ashok Nath

This article originally appeared in the India Magazine, March, 1985. Our thanks to the author for permission to reproduce it here.

Editor



## NOTICES & NOTES

### THE GURKHA MUSEUM

The regimental museum of the Brigade of Gurkhas is located at Queen Elizabeth Barracks, Church Crookham, Aldershot (off A287/B3013). Telephone: Fleet 3541, Ext.63. It is open Monday to Friday from 9:45 to 4:30 and Saturday from 10:00 to 12:00, the latter by appointment only. Admission is free, as is parking.

The museum details the history of the Gurkhas in British service, from the Mutiny to the Falklands. It includes displays of captured weapons and standards and paintings, photographs, medals, uniforms and equipment of Gurkha units through history. The pride of place, of course, goes to the Victoria Cross display and to a matchless display of badges covering all Gurkha units, units which recruited Gurkhas and the regiments of the Nepalese Army.

Crammed into an old barracks, the displays are looked after by the Curator, a recently retired Major of the 10th GR, and several serving members of his regiment. They are happy to talk about the collection and can provide a wide range of suitable mementoes, from postcards to badges to miniature kukris. Despite its being off the beaten track, this is very definitely a museum worth visiting.

P.E.M.

**Web site note:** The Gurkha Museum is, of course, now located at Winchester - see [www.thegurkhamuseum.co.uk](http://www.thegurkhamuseum.co.uk) for details

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### WILLIAM DAVID KENNY, VC

William David Kenny, VC served with the 4th/39th Garhwal Rifles in Waziristan and was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his actions on 2 January 1920. His medals have been loaned to the National Army Museum and any member wishing to obtain photographs of Kenny and of Fredrick Roe's painting of the event should contact Elizabeth Talbot-Rice at the NAM.

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### MILESTONES

#### MAJOR GENERAL HUGH STABLE

"Major General Hugh Stable, in Cape Town, aged 89. Indian Army 1932-1950. 1936-38 Military Secretary to Viceroy of India; 1945-46 Commander Lucknow Sub-Area; 1947 Commander Bihar and Orissa area." Daily Telegraph, 13 August 1985 (Our thanks to W.M. Thornton, MBE (163) for the last two items)

## QUERIES

● D. Francombe seeks information regarding Lumsden's Horse, a volunteer unit of Indian-domiciled Europeans which served in the South African War of 1899-1902.

● K. Parker wishes further details on a badge issued for war work in India during WWI. The badge is described as follows: "a silver lotus flower on a black oval inscribed "For Voluntary War Work 1914-19 In India" in a black leather case marked "H.M. Mint Calcutta". It was apparently issued with a certificate showing the recipient's name and a number. Mr Parker has seen only one other, in the Indian Gallery at Sandhurst, but believes it was a civil rather than a military award. Further information would be appreciated.

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"I HAVE THIS MEDAL" or "THE SAGA OF COL.C.H. GRACE"

We have all had the experience: an acquaintance accosts us one day and remarks that they have heard that we are interested in "old military things". The next line is usually to the effect that they have a medal at home somewhere, named to a father/grandfather/uncle/ or relative and that they will bring it around "sometime". Days of careful questioning elicit vague answers and typically the end result is a battered BWM and Victory pair to a Great War veteran or a 1939-45 War Medal to a Private in the Army Catering Corps. However, interest and hope spring eternal and we all jump like galvanized frogs to the magic words: "I have this medal."

I was approached recently by a colleague who had heard of my interest in things Indian and wanted to ask me about her illustrious forebear who, she said, had "served in the Army in India and been a diplomat or something". A few questions produced the apparently contradictory information that her great-grandfather, one "C.H. Grace", had joined the Indian Army in either 1855 or 1857 and had been awarded "a medal" which she had "somewhere" around the house and which featured the word "Punjab". Clearly, the story had been garbled in transmission but, medallic and pedagogical interests to the fore, I set out to "sort it out" for her.

My source was adamant that "C.H. Grace" had definitely been in some branch of the Indian Army and the family legend seemed to suggest a second career in the "civil side". An extant photograph, taken in one of Toronto's parks, shows a distinguished, bewhiskered civilian gent in an open carriage. The photograph is clearly old (c.1880-1910), but hardly helpful. I decided, therefore, to begin my research with the 1860, 1870 and 1880 Army Lists. The details I discovered there are as follows:

Colonel Grace, Charles Hallyburton

Commissioned: 14/3/1854 into 30th Madras N.I., Lieutenant: 23/11/1856, Captain: 14/3/1866, Major: 14/3/1874, Lt. Colonel: 14/3/1880, Colonel: 14/3/1884

In the 1867 Army List, Grace is listed as being "in civil employ" with the rank of "4th Class District Commissioner for the Central Provinces, Mundla District." He was subsequently serving in:

Dumok District - 1870, 4th Cl. D.C.

Nursingpore District - 1878, 3rd Cl. D.C.

Nursingpore District - 1879, 2nd Cl. D-C.

Jubbulpore District - 1881, 2nd Cl. D.C.

Nagpore City -1891, 1st Cl. D.C.

In this last post he also served as Commandant of the Nagpore Rifle Volunteers, A.F.I. On February 15, 1895 he joined the Unemployed Supernumerary List, I.A., on which list his name appears as late as 1900. Whether he emigrated to Canada while still carried on the rolls of the U.S.L. and Staff Corps or at a later date has thus far not been established.\*

An interesting if not exceptional career, but not one which could have entitled the good Colonel to any medal bearing the word "Punjab"! If he saw active service, it can only have been in the Mutiny, either with the 30th M.N.I. or on some attachment or staff posting.

A Search of more Army Lists produced only two other Graces commissioned into the Indian Army prior to 1914. One officer rejoiced in the initials "C.H.C.", for "Charles Hallyburton Campbell" born 1866; commissioned in 1887 and served with the 5th Bombay N.I. (later the 105th Mahratta L.I.) and in staff jobs until his retirement in November 1914 as a Major. Clearly a close relative of the Colonel - son or nephew at a guess - and a nice illustration of the well-known family nature of the Indian Army. Not, however, much help in the puzzle. His service might have earned him an India General Service Medal (1895) with at least one bar, but the original enquirer was vehement, if vague, that it was the Colonel and his period from which the elusive medal dated.

At this point the only sensible course was to suspend operations pending a look at the actual medal. The owner was eventually cajoled, coerced and pestered into unearthing the thing and producing it for inspection, a somewhat humbling moment for yours truly!

Despite my learned "pooh-poohing" and belittling thoughts on the inaccuracy of "amateur" reports, and against all apparent logic, the medal really did say "Punjab". The medal was in fact a no bar Army of The Punjab Medal named to Corporal James Grace of the 3rd Troop, 1st Brigade, Bengal Horse Artillery. Figure that one out! I have since discovered that the Corporal's troop was present at but in reserve for the battles of Chillianwalla and Goojerat, so presumably he was entitled to such a medal. More intriguing, however, is an entry in the roll of casualties for the Indian Mutiny which lists "Grace, James, Corporal - severely wounded at Delhi, 23/9/1857" while he served with 2nd/2nd B.H.A. The date is of some interest, as it is a full week after the official capture of Delhi, but of course the real question is: "Where did the Colonel acquire the Corporal's, medal?"

One could speculate that the two were relatives, that the Colonel bought or was given the medal of a coincidentally like-named O.R. or that said Punjab was added to the family heirlooms at some later date. "Deponent knoweth nought." The only things about which the descendants are certain (and they are quite certain) are these: that the illustrious ancestor is definitely the Colonel, not the Corporal, the photograph earlier mentioned is his (and places him firmly in Toronto, Ontario before 1920) and that the medal has been in the family "a long time". There is also vague mention of "another brother or cousin" who went to New York State in the last century and "won some medals" there - but that way madness lies!

And there the matter rests. Having eaten humble pie over my self-proclaimed expertise on things medallic and Indian, I am eager to redeem myself. Suggestions on how to pursue further the adventures of Gunner-Major-Corporal-Colonel Grace are humbly invited.

Peter Monahan \* The dates quoted are those for which I had access to "Hart's" and show only post and rank for that year.

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ULIES, ECOs and BSAs

The time has come, The veteran said, To talk of many things.  
Of Ulies, "warts" and ECOs, And other lowly things.  
(with apologies to Lewis Carroll)

I much enjoyed the reminiscences of the former Ulie in the 1985 Durbar, while deploring the fact that such uncivil behaviour was handed out by the 1st. Battalion of my own parent Regiment - the Leicestershires. That battalion ultimately went into the bag in Malaya, and the 8th Battalion - a war-raised unit serving in Iceland with 49 (West Riding) Division was converted to the 1st Bn. The ceremony was simple: the 8th Bn. The Leicestershire Regiment was ordered to "Lay down Arms"; the 1st Bn. The Leicestershire Regiment was commanded to "Take up Arms", and the Regiment had a 1st Battalion again.

In 1946, I was firstly Intelligence Officer and then Adjutant of that battalion. The CO, 2 i/c, and Senior Company Commander were ex-2nd Bn. officers, and its officers must have been a far nicer lot pre-war than those of the old 1st. My CO, Lt. Col. Tony Novis, MC, had not only a distinguished war record, but had played for England and the Army at Rugby football - seven times capped for England, and was captain in 1933 against Ireland and Scotland. Perhaps a VC might have enhanced his prestige but not by much. Major "Dafty" Daniels, DSO, and Major Douglas Dalgleish, MC, had both commanded columns of 2/Leicesters in the second Wingate expedition.

In his book, *Bugles and A Tiger*, John Masters, who spent his obligatory year with 1/DCLI before joining 2/4 Gurkha Rifles, recounted that "Ulies" were not always made welcome. He instanced the General who was the guest of a British battalion at dinner when he noticed a small party in exile, dining at a separate table. On asking who these outcasts might be, the Colonel replied "Oh, those are Indian Army people". The General said, "What a coincidence, so am I" - and joined the Ulies. Masters wrote that some British battalions treated their Ulies like dirt; Blantern-Haine mentions the fact that the Colonel of 1/Leicesters never spoke to Ulies during their attachment. The point was also made that some, not all, British regiments acted as did the Leicesters. I would imagine that they were in a majority.

We, the British, are a peculiar race. At the age of 8, children of the upper classes were sent away as boarders to Preparatory schools, where their lives were made miserable by 12 and 13 year olds. At the height of their powers at prep school, they were sent on to Public School, where once again they went to the bottom of the "pecking list", beaten by burly young brutes of prefects who did not know their own strength. Thence, the hardest went on to Sandhurst or Woolwich, where Under Officers savaged them during their off-duty periods and huge NCOs of the Brigade of Guards insulted and harried them during their waking hours on duty. On being commissioned, they joined their units as "warts", where again they were the lowest of the low. Apparently nobody spoke to them for six months and a brash youth, who had not benefitted from a lifetime of sadistic role changes, might have found himself the prisoner at a subaltern's Court Martial. The punishments could be savage - including being tarred and feathered. To have one's room wrecked and the contents flung through the window was a mild rebuke. Peaks and troughs made up the first twenty-odd years of a young man's life, if he opted to become a soldier. The pay-off came, of course, when a war intervened into the round of sport and social events, when those products of the system led their men with exemplary gallantry.

It was once my good fortune, as Guard commander, to listen to an Old Etonian and an ex-Borstal boy comparing notes around the guardroom fire. The ex-Borstal inmate expressed himself something along the following lines: "Christ, and your Dad paid for you to go to that place? Blimey, we'd 'ave bloody rioted if we'd 'a bin treated like that".

There must have been a reason for the eternal treadmill of being the pecked and, in turn, the pecker. My first company commander was a regular from 2/Leicesters, and he led me a dog's life. Slumped in an armchair after a twenty-five mile route march, I staggered to my feet as he entered the Mess. He eyed me stonily for a moment, then - "What have your men had for their dinner, Sudlow?" Wearily, I admitted that I did not know. "Then go and bloody well find out - and if ever I ask you the same question again and you give me the same answer - then God help you". After an exercise, he compared my two brother second lieutenant platoon commanders and me to a trio of bloody useless housemaids. He left to become Brigade Major of the newly formed 1st Parachute Brigade, and nearly twenty years were to pass until I saw him again, at a regimental weekend. By then, I was second-in-command of the same battalion, after many deviations. I approached him, well primed with gin. "Hello, sir. You won't remember me. You once compared me unfavourably with a housemaid - Sudlow - Norfolk, 1941". A look of resignation, as assumed by Brigadiers accosted by inebriated Majors with old scores to air, crossed his face. "I recall you now". Taking a deep breath, I said, "I've just came to thank you for teaching me the basic elements of what being an officer means". After that, it was gin and downhill all the way. He obviously thought that treading on "warts" sometimes paid off.

It also happened that in 1941 I was one of the few thousand young men dispatched to the I.A. in its hour of need. I arrived with the whole of 2 British Division, who later made such a name for themselves at Kohima. Our reception around the clubs of Bombay, where we stayed on board the trooper until trains could be organized, was not cordial. We for our part quickly realised that the British population had been completely unmarked by such familiar incidents as blackout, rationing, France and Norway in 1940, the Battle of Britain and the bombing of British cities. When it was rumoured that the Commandant of the IMA has allegedly referred to our drafts as "the cream of the scum of the British Army", we roared with laughter and did our best to live up to what we regarded as an unwarranted slur. All in all, relations were not serene.

These days I always read the list of admissions to, and graduations from, Sandhurst, as printed in the Daily Telegraph - in each case the school attended is noted. More and more cadets come from the middle range schools, even from what used to be called "elementary" schools. The graduation lists still show that young men taking up commissions in the Guards, Cavalry Regiments and the Royal Green Jackets emanate from top public schools. Middle of the road regiments come from lesser public schools, grammar schools or, again, comprehensive schools. Many of those commissioned to the technical Corps come from Welbeck College, the Army's sixth-form college, where the emphasis is on technical subjects - maths, physics, etc. Common to all, however, are the rigorous competition and selection procedures. As for the Royal Marines and Parachute Regiment, training for all ranks is stiff, as seen on TV documentaries. Even those of us who underwent Commando training in WW2 cannot say that the training is not rough in the extreme. The payoff came in the Falklands - the epic tramp across the island by the Marines must be comparable to the trials of the Wingate columns in 1943-44. The tremendous élan of 2 Para at Goose Green and the impressive arrival of the dirty, battle-weary Para battalion in Stanley, when they marched as if on parade back at Aldershot, impressed even the hardest old soldier.

Times change; methods change. Whether "warts" are still harassed as they were fifty years ago is open to doubt - I like to feel, without offence to the old and bold, that perhaps they are too intelligent to live in the past. That they are still jumped on from a great height by Adjutants and Company Commanders when they overstep the mark, I do not doubt. Neither do I doubt that they benefit from it - in time, when they are wise enough to appreciate it.

A. Sudlow

