

DURBAR Volume 9, No.2, Summer 1992

LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Following Brigadier Randle's article about food shortages at Imphal (Vol. 9, No. 1) R B Magor writes: "At Thonbal, one of the few peaceful areas at the time, we too suffered from a shortage of rations. However, Anti-Tank Regiments were equipped with .22 rifles for target practice, and as we were supposed to carry rifles these proved to be excellent weapons for shooting doves which were a very pleasant supplement."

● Cliff Parrett writes: "I was interested in the Editor's suggestion (Vol. 9, No 1, footnote to Lafayette Project) that the IGS 1854 "Hazara 1891" might have been issued to the Jodhpur Lancers. Some ten years back I noted an example of this exact combination on my IST file but unfortunately I did not record the catalogue or the recipient's name. This leads me to mention an IGS 1854 I once had, in this case properly recorded, to a unit which I was never able to identify. I bought it during the days when my primary interest was in Indian Cavalry, although I suspect the recipient might have been a mounted policeman. Details are as follows:

- IGS 1854 (silver), single clasp; BURMA 1887-89 named to NAIB DUFFR. HAKIM SINGH, CHOTA NAGPORE TROOP.

It seems most unlikely that the Chota Nagpore Troop had any direct linkage to the Chota Nagpur Mounted Rifles, a volunteer unit which received permission to recruit in August 1891 but did not actually get going until the following year. Can any of our members throw light on the Chota Nagpore Troop? Perhaps this is something for Mr Wade of the Commonwealth Forces History Trust to comment upon.

● Identifying "native" recipients in medal dealers' catalogues - a selection of extracts from your letters.

I . . . propose that, if available on the medal, name and number should be catalogued. . . . I always remind myself that the primary motivation of dealers is to make money, and so I would not expect them to invest time and effort in cataloguing activity which did not offer some reasonable chance of a financially rewarding return. If a bundle of IGS medals named to natives is worth no more than a bundle of 1939-45 Stars named to no-one, then why take the time to transcribe all the naming details? Whilst this is disagreeable to contemplate, it is better to recognise it as the root of the problem. . . . it would be naive to believe that a moral, intellectual or philosophical challenge would have any effect. My view is that the only lasting solution lies in the individual collector's attitude and readiness to contribute unselfishly to the dissemination of information and knowledge and in the long-term growth of interest in, and thus the value of, Indian material within the medal collecting fraternity. . . . private initiative in writing to a UK dealer is probably the most effective hands-on means of stalling the case. In addition, I propose that our President, on behalf of the Membership, sends a letter to all major dealers giving them a simple specification for cataloguing naming and asking them to consider complying with this for mutual benefit. . . . If [we] individually stop subscribing to catalogues, which do not meet the standards we demand, the dealers we

support will corner the Indian Army market and enjoy the rewards of their professional competence. But I will stand against any attempt to pillory or ostracize dealers who, for their own reasons, do not meet the Membership's standards on this particular issue. . . If their catalogues are inferior, let us not buy them. Cliff Parrett

As a collector of medals to Gurkhas in British Service, I wholly endorse your sentiments expressed in the Editorial of the Spring 1992 edition of Durbar. Individually, I suspect, we will not get very far in changing the practice of dealers in the way they advertise medals to Indian Army recipients. Collectively, we stand a greater chance of success. As a code of practice, which I suggest we pursue through the Orders and Medals Research Society, we should be demanding that dealers include the full inscription of medals they advertise for sale. As a marker, I believe the majority of auction houses already do so. . . As customers, we should accept nothing less. Lt Col J R Cawthorne

. . .there is no justifiable or acceptable reason for omitting the names of non-European recipients of medals whether they are Indian, African or Asian. .. the oft-stated opinion that non-European recipients are non-researchable is nonsense. . . As a matter of interest I have just reunited the OBI (Class 2)/Hyderabad 1843 pair to Daniel Israel mentioned by me in a previous DURBAR and would not have been able to do so had the recipient's name not been stated when the Hyderabad 1843 medal was listed in the UK recently. A N. Pamm

...dealers do themselves a disservice as well as to the collector for, as you write, opportunities to re-unite disassembled groups, whether awards or campaign medals, are lost due to lack of detail. The reply you received may well be a true reflection of the experience of that dealer and those he circulates to do not bother to put pen to paper. . . this is often laziness on the collector's part which, if our remarks can alter, will result in a welcome change. H King

. . The answer probably lies in the assumption, often false, that medals to natives cannot be traced in the rolls or other documentary source material, and are therefore of little interest to the 'vast majority' of collectors. . . It probably won't be until the medal dealer fraternity have understood the point that there are serious collectors and researchers of medals awarded to natives, that their attitudes will change, and after all it can only be in their interests to do so. The best way to achieve this is to [bring our views] to the attention of dealers who publish lists with 'to a native' entries by a suitable letter of comment. I think that eventually dealers would come to realise that by excluding names of Natives they are, unwittingly, doing themselves and their customers a disservice. T Ash

.....I enjoy picking up named (and cheap) WWII English series of stars named to Gurkhas etc. Why shake the cookie jar? We know what they are worth - so it may take a couple of extra letters of enquiry, some approval shipments perhaps, but 'mums' the word! Colin R Bruce



A.F.I. ANNUAL REPORTS - THE NORTHERN BENGAL MOUNTED RIFLES

C Walters

[Editor's Note: This article was received at about the same time as that by John Tamplin (Vol. 9, No 7, pp. 6-7) but I was unable to include it in the last edition. Nevertheless, it complements John's article very well.]

In his excellent book "*The Indian Army*", Boris Mollo lists a number of Auxiliary Forces on pages 186-188. My interest was focussed on North Bengal Mounted Rifles. It has been my experience over a long period of study that very little information is readily available on these Auxiliary units. They supported the Regular Army units in British India, which were required to man the areas of the N.W. Frontier in the main, owing to the strategic nature of the area and the constant hostilities there.

The accompanying extract is taken from the Yearbook for 1934/35. What is not mentioned in the details shown is that the membership was made up of various tea planters and other similar inhabitants of the Darjeeling District. I note that the formation date 1875 as recorded by Boris Mollo is at variance with the date shown in the Yearbook.

[Also shown]¹ is a postcard to H. Stevens Esq, Ghopal Dharan T.E., Nagri Spur P.O. from Captain Liddell, Adjutant, North Bengal Mounted Rifles, dated 28 July 1915. Incidentally, T.E. is an abbreviation for Tea Estate. The text reads:

- "There will be an Intercession Service and Public Meeting in Darjeeling on Wednesday 4th August 1915. 'A' & 'B' Squadron will parade at Vol: Hd: Quarters at 9-45 a.m. on 4th August. Dress "Drill Order" No Bayonets Khaki Mounted. Every member must attend".

Finally, there is a [copy]² of an envelope addressed to Cpl R.C. Summerhayes at COCANADA, posted 6 November 1929. In the bottom left hand corner is a rubber stamp "S. P.M. Rifles" and initialled by the Captain of the unit. S.P.M. Rifles was the South Provinces Mounted Rifles 1904 A.F. Cav (see Mollo). Can anyone supply details of this unit?



THE NORTHERN BENGAL MOUNTED RIFLES

Auxiliary Force, India

FORMED on 6th August, 1873, as the Northern Bengal Volunteer Rifle Corps. Absorbed the Darjeeling Volunteer Rifle Corps on 5th August, 1881.

Reorganized on 15th February, 1889, under the present designation.

Crest: The Bengal Tiger, with Motto " FIDELITER ".

Headquarters: Darjeeling, N. Bengal.

Uniform: Khaki; Mess Dress - Scarlet, Facings White.

Composition: Regimental Headquarters.

- 2 Squadrons Cavalry, and Light Motor Patrols.
- 4 Platoons Cadets.

Honorary Colonel: His Excellency the Right Honourable Sir John Andersen, P.C., G.C.B., G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal. Appointed 29th March, 1932.

Commandant: Colonel J. A. Polwhele, V.D. (Honorary A.D.C. to the Governor of Bengal).

Regimental Journal: The N.B.M.R, Journal (published annually).

Regimental Sports Colours: Dark Green, with thin double stripes of White

(Tony Mains' excellent article on AF(I) which appeared in the Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research lists the unit as Southern Provinces Mounted Rifles and consisting of HQ. 2 Tp, I A/C Sec. 10 Motor Tps.) Ed.

Notes 1 and 2 - **Web site note** - neither attachment was of good enough quality to carry on the web site



KHITAB GUL - A LEGEND

Maj Gen. Chand N. Das OBE

On 13 July 1887, a 19 year old, five feet eight and a half inch tall member of the Bangash tribe walked into the lines of the 20th Regiment of Bombay Infantry (now 2 RAJ RIF) in Deesa, Gujarat, and managed to get himself enlisted. He gave his father's name as Said resident of Village Jaikhau in Tehsil and District Kohat and was classified as being a Mohammedan of Trans Indus Area. This was a remarkable feat, since he was the only Pathan in the Regiment. Even more unusual, in later years he did not contradict the story that he had come through to Rajputana to escape the consequences of a blood feud.

His climb to success was remarkable as he rapidly became a Naik on 25 July 1888, a Havildar on 10 December 1890, a Jemadar on 19 December 1891, a Subedar on 1 May 1895 and Subedar Major on 19 July 1901. Thus within four years he had reached the rank of Jemadar, in eight he was a Subedar and in fourteen Subedar Major, a rank and position which he was to hold for 20 years, a record hard to beat. This was the legendary Khitab Gul.

During the siege of Kut Al Amara in Persia in World War I, his exploits were famous for their daring, and he set a splendid example to the troops especially in the defence of Woolpress Village. He also gave a lead in eating horse-flesh, forced upon the garrison to avoid starvation, in spite of the religious repugnance it aroused amongst the jawans. After the capitulation of Sixth Division under General Townsend on 29 April 1916, the whole battalion marched into captivity in Turkey.

The Turks tried hard to suborn the Indian Soldiers, particularly the Punjabi Mussalmans, and induce them to join in jihad against the British. One of the attempts was on the festival of Id, when the Sultan offered the VCOs Swords of Honour. Khitab Gul, the senior present, threw his on the ground, saying that the Indian Soldier swore only once, and the others followed his example, notably among them being Sub Maj Hasson Mohammand of 104 Wellesely's Rifles later to be 1 RAJ RIF, who, being next senior and no less a legend than Khitab Gul, not only threw his down but stamped on it. They were both awarded seven months' solitary confinement.

On being released from solitary confinement, he was transferred to another camp at Broussa. No sooner, he made a daring attempt to escape along with General Mellis and an RAF Officer. If they did not succeed he was the least to be blamed. He was transferred to pension establishment on 19 February 1921, after 34 years' service, twenty of which in the rank of Subedar Major.

Lieutenant Colonel C G Butcher, a later Commanding Officer of the Battalion, stated,

"I first met him in 1936, when he arrived on a visit to the barracks in Kohat where, what had become our 2nd Battalion, was stationed. He strode in followed at his heels by two fat-tailed sheep, straight out of *The Travels of Marco Polo*. These 'dumbas' were later ceremoniously presented, one to the Officers' Mess, and the other to the VCOs. Although then aged about 70, he was still full of vigour, charm and humour, but retained the commanding bearing stamped upon him by many years of authority in the Regiment. In fact we all felt rather like newly joined subalterns in the presence of this patriarchal figure."

He had represented the battalion at the Coronation of King George V in 1911. He served throughout the Mesopotamian Campaign, being Mentioned in Despatches in every battle fought i.e., the battles of Quarna, Shaiba, Nasiriya, Kut Al Amara and Ctesiphon. He was awarded the Croix de Guerre, the Indian Order of Merit, the Order of British India 2nd Class and then promoted to 1st Class with the title Sardar Bahadur, and made an Honorary Captain for his services.

He was a prolific man in every sense. His marriages, before and after the Great War, produced a substantial crop of offspring. By the nineteen-thirties he had married an unprecedented nine times and his descendants and dependents in his village of Sheikhan, near Kohat, numbered about one hundred and fifty. He died at home peacefully on 18 July 1940, full of years and honours. In death, as in life, he was a privileged man as his battalion was located barely forty kilometres from his home and all ranks including British Officers, VCOs, Rajputs, Jats and Punjabi Mussalmans did a forced march to honour him at his funeral before sundown. Late Subedar Major Jai Lal, who was a Subedar Major in 1970, remembered, thirty years later, how he, a newly arrived soldier, was suddenly told to get ready and march forty kilometres in the afternoon sun to pay homage to a most glorious son of the Regiment during

his last journey, a thought he did not relish to begin with but never regretted thereafter. It was certainly a fitting tribute to the Grand Old Man of the Regiment.

The exploits of Khitab Gul in Kut al Amara were commemorated by a picture commissioned by the Battalion from Lionel Edwards, which has a place of honour on the wall in the Officers' Mess with, beneath it, his magnificent array of medals, which he bequeathed to the Battalion.

THE GRAVE OF MAJOR CHARLES PORTEOUS AT BENCOOLEN, SUMATRA

Alan Harfield

During the period from 1984 to 1989 the memorial to Major Charles Porteous was finally destroyed by the dense undergrowth that was gradually taking over the whole of the cemetery that had contained a number of military memorials. In 1989 a rescue operation was mounted to save the cemetery, and although the operation was generally successful it was too late to save the memorial to Major Porteous.

Major Charles Porteous, of the 20th (or Marine) Regiment of the Bengal Native Infantry died on 8 April 1816 whilst serving at Fort Marlborough, Bencoolen, on the west coast of Sumatra. The officers of his regiment erected a monument to his memory on which the inscription read as follows:

Here lie the remains
of the late
MAJ^R CHA^S PORTEOUS
2nd Bn 20th Regt BNI
who departed this Life
the 8th April 1816
Aged 39 years
This monument is erected as a Small
Tribute of respect to his Memory
By the Officers of his Corps

[**Web site note** - the photograph of the tombstone which appeared in the original issue of Durbar is of too poor a quality to be reproduced here]

In order to appreciate why this officer was serving in this remote station of the Honourable East India Company it is necessary to examine, briefly, the events leading up to his death.

Detachments of the Bengal Native Infantry were stationed at the settlement on the west coast of Sumatra in order to provide a guard for the Governor and the fort and to providing a policing force for the settlement. The Honourable East India Company set up a factory at Bencoolen (now known as Bengkulu) in 1685. The original fortification was York Fort but by the early 18th century this was declared to be unsound and it was agreed that a new larger defence work should be built.

The site chosen for the new fort was some two miles from York Fort and the work was commenced during 1714. The Deputy Governor of Bencoolen, Joseph Collet, named the new fort after John Churchill, the first Duke of Marlborough. Fort Marlborough was situated in an area of swamp and jungle and this contributed to the high rate of sickness amongst the military serving in the garrison.

At the time of the construction of the fort the Honourable East India Company recruited direct from England to fill the posts on the establishment. The soldiers, who were to be employed on normal guard duties, were later replaced with locally recruited and were mainly Topaz, who were dark skinned, or half-caste, claimants of Portuguese descent and of the Christian faith. This system was changed and by the end of the 18th century recruiting was carried out in India where Sepoys of the HEIC were enlisted specifically for service in Sumatra. At the end of the 18th century the Governor of the Bencoolen Residency had Artillery and Infantry officers of the Bengal Army and Surgeons from the Bengal Medical Establishment posted on to the " . - Fort Marlborough Establishment . . ." and were listed as such in the East India Kalendars.

In 1800 the title of the post of the senior administrator was changed to that of 'Commissioner' and on the 29 January 1800 Walter Ewer assumed the appointment of Commissioner of the Residency. Ewer was unhappy about the defences of the settlement and complained that in the period January 1795 to December 1799 the fort had cost the Company 110,298 piasters. (The piaster was also known as the Spanish Dollar and the general rate for this was, at the beginning of the 19th century, five shillings sterling). Ewer objected to any money being spent on the defences of the settlement and although reluctantly agreeing that the already approved repairs should go ahead he commented

" . . When finished it will be useless against a European enemy. In order to make it tenable, the greatest part of the settlement must be destroyed; the most inveterate enemy could not do greater damage than the Commandant, who attempts to defend this fortress . . ." His final comment was as a result of an incident when the Artillery fired a salute on the previous Thanksgiving Day and, as a result of the gun fire, part of the old masonry had collapsed.

The barracks had been constructed outside Fort Marlborough at Mount Argyle and at the same time a house for the Commandant had been built. The house was for the incumbent of the combined post of Commanding Officer of the Bengal Native Infantry unit, who was also to be Commandant of the Garrison. The East India Kalendar for 1801 shows Lieutenant Colonel Thomas William Clayton of the 18th Regiment, Bengal Native Infantry being in command. During 1802 the Fort Marlborough establishment was reduced in size and Lieutenant Colonel Clayton and his Sepoys returned to Bengal. The settlement continued to be garrisoned by troops from the Bengal Presidency and in 1815 the duty was taken over by the 20th (or Marine) Regiment Native Infantry. At that time the regiment was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Shuldham who was stationed at Prince of Wales Island (now known as Penang Island) with detachments at Malacca and Bencoolen.

The senior officer of the 20th Regiment in Bencoolen was Captain Charles Porteous. The other officers of that unit serving in the Fort Marlborough garrison were :

- Lieutenant Charles R Skardon
- Lieutenant William L Truman
- Lieutenant Charles L Walker
- Lieutenant Thomas Haslam

The regimental dress at that time was red with blue facings, gold lace and with anchor buttons to denote that the regiment was a 'Marine ' unit.

By the following year, 1816, the detachment had been increased by one additional officer, Lieutenant John Gordon, and Porteous had been promoted to the rank of Major. The extremely unhealthy climate on the west coast of Sumatra continued to take its toll and on 8 April 1816 Major Charles Porteous died and was buried in the 'Bencoolen Burial Ground'.

Although the settlement was exchanged for Malacca under the Anglo-Dutch Agreement of 1824 the majority of the larger monuments were still standing, and in reasonable condition, when visited by C.J. Parks in 1918. A number of the monumental inscriptions were, however, missing and had either been removed or had fallen off and been lost.

The cemetery was visited in 1974 and the details of the inscription on the Porteous memorial were recorded at that time. The cemetery was largely overgrown with fast growing tropical vegetation and in one area the local kampong houses had encroached into the burial ground. In 1989 a major restoration programme was undertaken and, although a number of memorials were saved, the Porteous memorial had been so badly damaged that the brick and stucco memorial could not be saved. The actual location within the cemetery has been identified and marked.

A brief study of the life of Charles Porteous shows that he was born at Perth, Scotland on 8 June 1776, the son of Alexander Porteous, a merchant of Perth, and Helen Bell his wife. He became a Company Cadet in 1795 and an Ensign on 2 November 1796. He arrived in India on 3 March 1797 and spent the next nineteen years, until his death, in the East in the Company's service. He became a Lieutenant on 30 October 1797 and married Elizabeth, the daughter of Lawrence Rawstone at Berhampore on 24 April 1802. He was appointed Adjutant, 1st Battalion, Marine Regiment in 1803, and promoted to the rank of Captain on the 30 November 1804. In 1806 he moved with his unit which, in 1803, had been renamed 20th (or Marine) Regiment Bengal Native Infantry, to Prince of Wales Island (Pulo Pinang) and then served, on detachment, at Malacca from 1811. He was then sent, as the Senior Captain of the Regiment, to Fort Marlborough, Bencoolen. He visited India prior to moving to Bencoolen and had a Will made at Barrackpore on 20 January 1814. He was promoted to the rank of Major on 1 October 1815 and died just over six months later. At the time of his death his wife and three children were resident at Barrackpore. The children were Sophia Mary born 15 December 1804, Henry Alexander born 10 April 1810 and Frederick William born 3 May 1813.

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FRONTIER TOURS

Lieutenant Colonel A. A. MAINS, late 9th Gurkha Rifles

INTRODUCTION

I did three Frontier Tours - in the Khyber, in Baluchistan and in Waziristan. None of these were particularly exciting. The Khyber had become relatively peaceful, Baluchistan had really ceased to be Frontier, and nothing happened in Waziristan while I was there, although precautions could not be relaxed. The pattern of service, however, was very different to that in ordinary Cantonments and this is what I will try and recount.

PART I - THE KHYBER

THE KHYBER PASS

The Khyber Pass is the most northerly of the Passes leading into Afghanistan from what was India, and is now Pakistan. Contrary to general belief, the Pass is not the frontier but is several miles inside Pakistan. It connects the Peshawar plain with the Jalalabad plain and is not particularly high as the summit is not much over 3000 feet.

The Pass has two roads, one for motor traffic and one for caravans. A railway was built in the early twenties through the Pass terminating at Landi Khana a mile or two short of the frontier. When this place was abandoned for reasons of health, services were cut back to Landi Kotal at the top of the Pass, although the track remained for strategic reasons.

The Khyber was far and away the most peaceful of the occupied tribal areas. This was because of the heavy subsidies paid to the Afridi tribes who lived adjacent to it; these subsidies were in lieu of the tolls, which in earlier years had been paid by the caravans passing through. To qualify for the subsidies the local tribes undertook not to molest travellers and to maintain a tribal force of 'Khassadars' to enforce this. This allowed Officers to travel to and from Peshawar unarmed and without escort.

THE KHYBER BRIGADE

The term Brigade was something of a misnomer, as the troops consisted of six Battalions located in three separate areas.

LANDI KOTAL

Brigade Headquarters, two Mountain Batteries and three Battalions (one British and two Indian or Gurkha), together with the Combined Indian Military Hospital and other ancillary units were located in the camp. One Battalion had a two-company detachment at Charbagh Fort, which was positioned on a ridge overlooking the Afghan post at Torkam. There were also a number of small Forts known as 'Pickets' on the hills overlooking the Camp and Charbagh; each had a garrison of a section. In peaceful times half of these were handed over for the local tribal guards, the Khassadars, to man.

THE ALI MASJID GORGE

This was half way between Jamrud at the entrance of the Pass and Landi Kotal at the summit and was guarded by a Battalion at Shahgai Fort with a company detachment at Ali Masjid itself.

THE KHAJURI PLAIN

This area lay south of the Khyber Road between Jamrud at the entrance to the Pass and Peshawar, and was the traditional winter grazing ground for the Afridi tribes of the Tirah. Although it had been occupied several times, to deny the grazing as a punishment for some misdeeds, with the exception of Jamrud, no permanent military posts had been established until 1930. In that year the Afridis spurred on by 'Red Shirt' disturbances in Peshawar City, attempted an attack on Peshawar Cantonment. The permanent occupation of the Khajuri Plain was the result. Two Battalions were deployed - one at Fort Salop with a detachment at Jamrud - the other at Bara Fort with detachments at Fort Milward and Jhansi Post. Although commanded from Landi Kotal, these Battalions were supplied from Peshawar.

THE WINTER RELIEFS

The British Battalion did a one-year tour in Landi Kotal only; the other Battalions a two year tour at any of the various Posts. For climatic reasons the moves, both external and internal, took place between October and March: it was usual for an incoming Battalion to do two six months tours in the Khajuri or Shahgai and the final year in Landi Kotal. As my Battalion was relieving the British Battalion we came straight up to Landi Kotal and remained there for the whole of our tour.

LANDI KOTAL CAMP

Landi Kotal had originally been the Headquarters of the Khyber Rifles, who had mutinied and been disbanded during the Third Afghan War in 1919. After this war a permanent Army garrison was located in the Khyber, first at Landi Khana at the exit of the Pass and, when this was abandoned as unhealthy, at Landi Kotal. A new fortified hutted camp was built around the old Khyber Rifles Fort.

The original Frontier posts were small, the largest containing no more than one Battalion and were real Forts such as might be depicted in a 'Beau Geste' film; their object was to contain the tribesmen within tribal territory rather than control them. The "forward policy" of the control of tribal territory necessitated much larger garrisons - larger than could be accommodated in a Fort. The three posts built in the inter war years, Landi Kotal, Razmak

and Wana were fortified camps. They were like a concentration camp, except the barbed wire was there to keep the tribals out instead of the inmates in. The whole area was surrounded with barbed wire illuminated at night with watchtowers and searchlights.

The lines of the fighting units were located around the perimeter and they were responsible for the defence of their sectors with the Command and ancillary troops in the centre. Brigade Headquarters and the Hospital were located in the old Khyber Rifles Fort, now demilitarised. The Railway Station was outside the Camp; the Station buildings were constructed as a fort, which was garrisoned by Khassadars.

Sports Grounds were located outside the wire, and an area demarcated by white stones around the Landing Ground was available to the garrison to take exercise, but everyone had to be back in camp before the Gates were closed at Retreat.

Like other Frontier stations, Landi Kotal was non family, but was different in that the Khyber was sufficiently peaceful for the road to be used during daylight hours without any special precautions. This allowed married Officers to go to Peshawar, one hour away, for weekends, and ladies were allowed to go up the Khyber to lunch in the various Messes on Sunday, until the digging of defences in the winter of 1939-40 put a stop to it for security reasons. The Brigade Commander was a keen rider to hounds and he persuaded the Political Agent to have the road picketed by the Khassadars from 4.30am on hunting days so that Officers could attend the Meets of the Peshawar Vale hounds.

ROUTINE

TRAINING

Individual Training was carried out as elsewhere but there was little collective training. The peaceful nature of the Khyber did, however, allow occasional Battalion exercises, even those which involved the use of blank cartridges. For troops to go on exercises without live ammunition would have been altogether too much for the tribesmen, always on the lookout to loot rifles or other weapons. For protection, one section in each rifle platoon and a percentage of MMGs and LMGs carried live ammunition. To prevent accidents all personnel with live ammunition in their pouches had them tied about with red cloth, and the ammunition boxes had red cloth covers. Officers could carry out reconnaissances outside of the camp provided they had a Khassadar escort and went unarmed; a revolver was of more importance to a tribesman than a dead Officer.

COLUMNS

Twice, and sometimes three times a year, the Brigade less one Battalion left to guard the camp, marched out on a 'show the flag' exercise of about a week's duration. The actual column was very long as, away from a road, everything had to be carried on mule or camel, and progress very slow. Only about five to eight miles were covered in a day, as the commanding heights on each side of the route had to be picketed, and on arrival in camp a stone wall had to be built and Machine Guns laid on night lines to prevent any body of tribesmen rushing the camp during the hours of darkness. I only took part in two columns and on neither with my own Battalion. In the early part of 1940, I was appointed acting Staff Captain to the Brigade while the real incumbent was on leave. A column was scheduled shortly after his return, and the Brigadier selected me as the Brigade Orderly Officer to deal

with the interior economy of British Headquarters; a miserable job as I was the most junior Officer in Headquarters and a complete dogsbody. What was worse was that the fatigue party detailed to put up and take down the Headquarters Camp was found by a different Battalion each day. Their party usually arrived late, disliking the task and with no knowledge of what was required.

The second column was in the autumn and my own Battalion was remaining in Camp; I, myself was on 'notice' for an intelligence appointment overseas and was something of an odd job man. A new Brigadier had arrived and put the fear of God up everyone, so the Brigade Major asked me, as I knew the routine, to volunteer for the job of Brigade Orderly Officer. I agreed on one condition - that, provided my Commanding Officer agreed, I could take a permanent employment platoon from the Battalion. This was agreed and I had a very pleasant and interesting Column, a well-drilled platoon to do the work and, further as I was by now a temporary captain I was no longer the dogsbody.

THE RUSSIAN THREAT

The mobilisation plans for a war with Afghanistan existing in 1939 were based on a rapid forward advance. The alliance of Germany with Russia in that year meant that now we were faced instead with a possible invasion by Russia through the Khyber. Higher authority decreed that defensive positions were to be laid out and dug; each unit took a hand in this and even those on the Khajuri were ordered to send up detachments to assist. The terrain consisted of solid rock or hard shale so very little was achieved for a very considerable effort. The most bizarre part of the plan was that of anti-tank defence; there were no anti-tank guns of any sort in India, but there were in store the old (horse drawn) 13pdr guns removed from the Royal Horse Artillery units on mechanisation. Someone had the bright idea that if these were emplaced and fired at point blank range over open sights, they might stop a Russian tank. Four of these were sent up to Landi Kotal and the next problem was to find personnel to man them. Gurkhas from my own Battalion were selected and started to train but the ploy petered out without either the defences being manned or the guns fired.

CHARBAGH FORT

This was a typical two company Fort as distinct from a Camp. It was located on a hillside directly above the Afghan Post of Torkam; this location being probably the reason for its existence. It had several disadvantages as regards defence - first, it was not on the crest of the ridge, necessitating the garrisoning of the ridge itself by four section pickets, two manned from the Fort and two by the local Khassadars, and second, as it was built on the hillside it was on two levels. The motor road from Landi Kotal ended at the Main Gate situated in the upper portion. Inside was a courtyard surrounded by buildings on three sides but with steps on the fourth leading down to a second and lower courtyard. The buildings on the upper yard were two storied but single storied on the lower. All windows on the ground floor were on the inside only, as were those on the upper floor, but the rooms on this floor had a heavily barred opening to the outside, which could be closed by a loop holed steel shutter. Troop barracks and storerooms were on the ground floor, with the Guard Room adjacent to the Gate. Three bedrooms, a mess room and kitchen for Officers, rooms for VCOs (they were fed from the men's cookhouse), a dispensary and a room for the Sub Assistant Surgeon were to be found on the upper floor, all opening on to an interior verandah.

For added security, two watchtowers were incorporated at diagonally opposite corners of the Fort. Except that they were joined to it by a common exterior wall, they were self-contained, with an entrance on the upper floor, gained by a steel ladder; this was drawn up at night. Should hostiles gain a foothold within the Fort, the tower garrisons would still be able to fire down onto them.

The mule standings were outside and should a mule get loose or require attention in the night, the night guards would stand to and a muleteer would then go down on a rope ladder; on no account would the Gate be opened.

I have said earlier that the Khyber Road was specially picketed before dawn on hunting days, but I was three miles or so on the wrong side of Landi Kotal. My road, however, was overlooked by two of my pickets and also by the large picket at Michhni Khandao, situated where the Charbagh Road joined the main road from Torkam. I managed to get permission to leave Charbagh before dawn at my own risk, provided I took certain precautions. My modus operandi was to line up my car behind the Main gate and the three pickets were warned of my impending departure.

The Fort Guard then stood to, the gate was opened and off I went. The garrisons of the pickets also stood to and had orders to watch the car headlights; should the car come to a halt or the lights go out, the nearest picket was to send a party to investigate. I did this several times without any incidents.

(To be continued)



SIACHEN - THE HIGHEST BATTLEGROUND IN THE WORLD AND THE BATTLE OF BILAFOND LA

Ashok Nath, FRGS

Members may already have heard about the on-going conflict in Siachen, a glacier in Northern Kashmir, circa 40kms from K-2, the world's second highest peak. We now have a very interesting account of a battle fought in September 1987 and narrated by Major K.G. Chatterjee, MVC of the 3/4th Gorkha Rifles (Chindits), but before we go on to the Major's account, I would like to acquaint the readers with the background to the conflict and the geography of the area.

THE BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

The Siachen Glacier is a part of a region which remained undemarcated when the Ceasefire line of 1949 was superseded by a Line of Control under 1972 Simla agreement between India and Pakistan (this, after conclusion of the third Indo Pak war-1971). While the 1949 agreement spoke of the line going north to the glaciers, after the last recorded Grid Point NJ9842, the 1972 agreement was silent about the status of the 70-odd km of territory north of the line to the Chinese border. At best it was considered far too inhospitable terrain and hence 'No man's Land'. The Siachen region is precipitous, rugged and glacial. The altitudes in the valley range from 2500m to 6500m. Passes are located between 5000 to 6500m and peaks tower upwards of 7500m. The main flow of the glaciers is from north to south, although some

subsidiary glaciers flow from east to west. The area is also mainly snowbound throughout the year. Temperatures here are known to fall to below -50 degrees C.

In 1974, Pakistan opened up Karakoram to foreign expeditions. The accounts of the expeditions, published in mountaineering journals abroad, resulted in all American atlases and official maps showing Grid Point NJ9842 to the Karakoram Pass as Pakistani territory. Based on this Pakistan laid claim to the area. Subsequently, to counter this India planned and conducted a number of expeditions in the area. It rapidly developed into a matter of prestige on who would occupy Siachen. A military successful occupation of Siachen depended on which side would occupy the heights immediately west of Siachen called the Saltoro Ridge. In 1983 the Indians claim they had intelligence of preparations by Pakistan to occupy the heights. In actual fact it seems more likely that both armies made a bid to occupy the dominating heights and important passes on the Saltoro Ridge line. Conflict broke out in June 1984, when a Pakistani patrol en route to occupy the Glacier met an Indian Picket already on the Bilafond La.

By occupying the high ground of the Saltoro Ridge, the Indian Army was able to hold off repeated probes and attacks by the Pakistani Army. It has, so far, been largely an artillery duel and the Indian Observation Posts (OPs) perched on the heights overlooking Pakistani positions have given the Indian side an advantage. Pakistan has launched small-scale attacks, mainly to set up OPs to neutralise the Indian advantage. For a brief period they succeeded in maintaining a post at 6,410m (21,153ft) (called Quaid) overlooking the Indian base near Bilafond La. However this was eliminated by an almost primordial struggle by men of the 8th Battalion Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry. The loss of Quaid post eliminated the only Pakistan toehold on the Saltoro Ridge. In an attempt to regain prestige, Pakistan attempted a brigade size attack to capture Indian posts in the vicinity of Bilafond La in September 1987.

It was at this stage that 3rd Battalion of the 4th Gorkha Rifles (3/4 GR) arrived on the Siachen to relieve 8 Jammu & Kashmir LI (8 JAK LI). During the process of this relief the Pakistan Army launched its attack with heavy shelling.

MAJOR CHATERJEE'S ACCOUNT

"Indian Army posts named Ashok and U Cut are on the northern shoulder of the Bilafond La and dominate the pass. On 18 September, the enemy started shelling all our posts along the front. On 21 September this pattern changed and he concentrated on 'Ashok', 'U Cut' and the neighbouring localities. On 22 and 23 September the shelling intensified and the enemy also fired TOW missiles at our position. We called for artillery and mortar fire and were able to inflict casualties on the enemy. During the period we too suffered our initial casualties.

While my boys and I were at Bilafond La and in the process of taking over from 8 JAK LI, my Commanding Officer, Colonel Puran Gurung, rang me up to find out the latest position. I explained the situation to him. He ordered me to defend the posts at all costs. I immediately instructed the boys to move to Sohrab Top. On reaching there, I ordered 5343213 L/Nk Hira Bahadur Thapa and one boy of 8 JAK LI (who were already at Sohrab Top) to rush to the highest point and pass on information of the enemy to me. As they were moving up, the rifleman of 8 JAK LI (unfortunately I never got to know his name) was shot enroute. Despite the firing, L/Nk Hira Bahadur continued undeterred alone to the top and started passing information.

With accurate information provided by him, I called for effective artillery and mortar fire on the enemy. Meanwhile, I ordered 2/Lt A. Shanna to rush with five boys to 'Ashok'. I later learnt that Subedar Lekh Raj's (8 J&K LI) head had been blown off by a TOW missile. Subedar Tol Bahadur Ale was also at Ashok Post and subsequently moved forward to the Ashok Listening Post (LP); and was engaging the enemy though he was under intense artillery bombardment. At about 11.00 hours, when the enemy had closed in, he ran with the LMG to Ashok Post. While he was rushing to the post he was hit by a splinter. His stomach was torn open but he came back to the post with the LMG and refused to be evacuated. I ordered his evacuation but he did not survive and succumbed to his wounds later. Subsequently, I moved to the highest point on Sohrab Top where Hira Bahadur was passing valuable information to me and moved into his trench which commanded a good vantage point. However, his trench had now been observed by the enemy and therefore we were getting a heavy pounding by artillery and mortar fire besides bullets. Despite the enemy fire, we effectively engaged the enemy. I was in the trench with Hira when he suddenly yelled "Sahib". The next thing I heard was a whizzing sound and Hira was blown to pieces by an enemy TOW missile. With my face splattered with Hira's blood, I realised that he had shouted "Sahib" to caution me and perhaps saved my life in the process.

I noticed that the enemy continued climbing, with approximately one company each towards 'Ashok' and 'Sohrab' posts, with a company each following. Despite our MMG, LMG, artillery and mortar fire, the enemy kept advancing suffering heavy casualties. Their attack was finally beaten back by about 1600 hours. The enemy was thereafter seen withdrawing. I was then ordered by the CO to move to Ashok post and strengthen it. Rifleman Chet Bhadur Thapa and two more jawans accompanied me all under intense shelling. Enroute Rfn Chet Bhadur was hit in the stomach by a splinter from a shell and was bleeding profusely. I tried to help him but he said "I will be alright sahib, you carry on". Since my presence at Ashok post was important, I left him there, and immediately on reaching the post, sent back some boys to evacuate him. Fortunately, Chet Bhadur survived.

On the night of 23/24 September, the Pakistanis launched yet another attack on Ashok Post. The attempt however appeared half hearted, as the enemy was not able to come too close. This was possibly due to accurate artillery and air defence (AD) gunfire; AD guns were used against the advancing Pakistan Infantry. These guns played a key role in dispersing the advancing Pakistanis and the attack petered out by 0200 hrs. the next morning. Rifleman Jai Kumar Gurung was at Ashok LP. Despite the snow and bad visibility with dense clouds engulfing the area he showed an uncanny sense and smelt the enemy! He spotted enemy through a peephole in the clouds and came panting down to me. "Sahib some civilians are climbing towards our piquet". Having informed me he ran back towards his position and started engaging the enemy with the MMG located there. (Jai Kumar was injured later due to enemy shelling and was evacuated, fortunately he survived).

In order to defend the important Ashok post I placed Nb Sub Bhim Bhadur Thapa towards the left approach and Nb Sub Ram Kumar Thapa on the right approach, while I, along with some boys was guarding the Ashok top. I was woefully short of weapons. The one HMG (Heavy Machine Gun) that was with us had been rendered ineffective by the enemy; this had happened on the night of 23/24 September, the HMG was very effectively engaging the enemy. The Pakistanis thus resorted to firing TOW missiles to silence this weapon. The missile pilot was good. He achieved a direct hit resulting in killing all the four boys in the HMG bunker and damaging the gun. The boys had been blown to smithereens; it was difficult to identify the bodies.

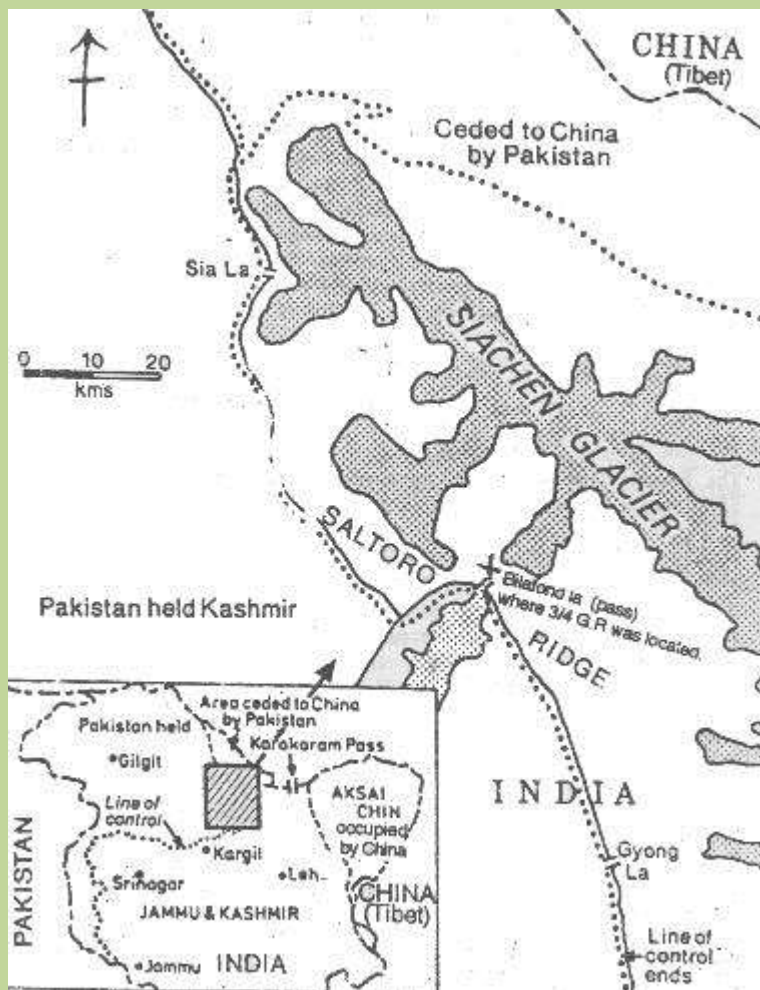
I placed one LMG each with Nb Subedars Bhim Bhadur and Ram Kumar on each of the approaches and balance weapons on Ashok Top. I asked for artillery and mortar fire ahead of Ashok Post and asked the AD guns to fire at enemy trying to climb Ashok Post. Since we had some time before the enemy would close up, we filled all the LMG magazines and tested our weapons so that they could not jam at the crucial moment.

While all this was happening, I intercepted a message on my radio set; "Janab, I am Major Rasheed. I have established a base on Ranbir and am awaiting for troops to fetch up for the past one hour. Despatch the troops fast, it is becoming dark". The enemy was building up and perhaps some special troops were being used (climbing Ashok Post from this side was very difficult as there was a 300 feet sheer cliff). The Pakistani company commander was definitely a mountaineer.

The first attack came around 2100 hrs. on both the approaches. On the right approach Sub Bhim Bhadur Thapa kept the boys together and controlled their fire as we had very little ammunition. He was cool and by effectively controlling the fire and actions of the boys managed to thwart the Pakistanis on this approach. He was temporarily blinded by an air burst shell but refused to be evacuated and stuck to his task. He was later to be decorated with the Vir Chakra. With effective artillery and small arms fire we beat back the first attack. Enemy managed to cut off Ashok Post from Sohrab Top by firing artillery, HMGs and TOW missiles. L/Hav Nar Bhadur Ale was the MMG Detachment commander at Ashok Post. He had been performing tasks efficiently and coolly all though the previous three days of battle. He suddenly jumped out of his post and shouted "*Saheb, Ab ma ini haru lia agaari anu dinna*" (sir, I will not let them come ahead now). He rested his MMG on his hip and started mowing down the enemy! This was indeed an unusual display of courage but he had to pay with his life for violating the rules - he was shot in the forehead. Posthumously he was awarded the MVC. Sacrificing himself, he managed to beat back the Pakistani attack. There was a lull thereafter.

At about 0100 hours on 25 September, I could see the enemy concentrating ahead of LP in front of Ashok, shouting "Allah-o-Akbar". As the enemy was only 50 meters away from my post, I asked for defensive fire (SOS). I told the boys who were all around me "we shall fight till death". The boys were all geared up to take on the enemy.

The attack finally came in at 0140 hrs. We opened fire with all weapons including artillery and mortar fire. 534211 Nk Prem Bhadur Gurung was performing duties of MMG Detachment commander No 2. He noticed two Pakistani soldiers stealthily climbing the post. He jumped out of his trench, unsheathed his kukri and hit the first soldier on the head, thus killing him. The second soldier fired with an AK 47 at Prem Bhadur's chest. However, Prem Bhadur lunged at him and hung on to him before dying. Another of our boys then shot the Pakistani. After this there was once again a lull in the battle. The Pakistani attack was once again beaten. I also learnt from a radio intercept that the Pakistani Major Rashid who was leading the attack had been killed. Shortly thereafter the few boys that were with me informed me that they could observe the enemy retreating. We had won the day!



MAP OF THE BATTLEFIELD AREA

The casualty figures as reported for this battle are:

- 3/4 GR: - 17 dead and almost every survivor wounded.
- Pakistan Army: - 150 dead.¹

The Brigade Group is alleged to have consisted of one battalion SSG (Special Services Group); 39 Punjab and 4 Sind.

3/4 GR was raised at Bakloh on 1st October 1940 by Lt Col J.M. Hobbs, MC of 5RGR. It formed part of the famous 111th Brigade and took part in the Chindit Operations. For its splendid performance during World War II the battalion was awarded Battle Honour "CHINDITS 1944" and Theatre Honour "BURMA 1942-45".

Although a wartime raising the battalion was not disbanded and served on in the Army of Independent India. After World War II it saw action in Kashmir 1948. In the Chinese Border war of 1962 the battalion was in Ladakh. During the 1965 Indo Pak War the battalion was deployed at Khem Karan in the Punjab. The 1971 war with Pakistan found the battalion at Aknur - Munwar Tawi-Chamb area fighting off 10 Baluch and a Squadron of Armour.

3/4 GR's epic 3-day battle at Bilafond La, the highest battlefield on earth will no doubt take a special place in the annals of military history.

As matter of interest all ranks of the battalion wear a special metal Chindit badge on the left breast pocket officially approved by Army HQ in 1982.

Note 1. These figures are taken from information available from published IA sources. Unfortunately no Pakistani sources or version of the battle are available.



INTERNATIONAL INDIANS

SOME INSIGNIA WORN BY INDIAN TROOPS IN MULTINATIONAL FORCES

Megan C. Robertson

Since gaining her independence in 1947, India has been dutiful in supplying troops in response to international calls for assistance. The first time that the fledgling United Nations sent a multi-national force to the aid of a beleaguered state was in 1950, when South Korea was invaded by Communist forces from the north. This operation was different from later UN activities, as the UN troops were under American command, they were not requested by all parties to the dispute, and they used force from the outset - they actually went to expel the Communist forces from South Korea rather than to keep the peace while the politicians negotiated.

Amongst others, India contributed to the International effort sending 60th (Parachute) Field Ambulance, which served in the Commonwealth Division. The Indian troops retained their normal head dress - often worn for religious reasons by those whose faith demands a particular style of turban - which was maroon; and the main badge worn was the pale blue 1st Commonwealth Division sign. This was a shield-shaped badge bearing a crown in yellow and the word "Commonwealth"; and it was worn as an arm badge, often on a brassard.

The Indian Field Ambulance also wore another badge which showed a blue wheel over crossed yellow swords on a saffron white and green background - obvious reference to the national flag. This was also worn as a sleeve badge below a shoulder title "India" printed in black on a red arc.

All personnel serving in the British Commonwealth Forces were awarded the Korea Medal issued by the British - this is unusual in that the Queen's head is uncrowned. This is because it was issued before the actual Coronation had taken place and so showing Her Majesty crowned would have been a breach of tradition! The ribbon is unequal stripes of yellow and blue, the blue being the shade used by the UN in its insignia. They were also given the UN Korea Medal (1), a bronze medal with a ribbon of seventeen stripes of UN blue and white.

Indian men also served as part of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) sent to supervise the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Egypt in 1956-7, which remained in control of the buffer zone between the two countries until ordered out by the Egyptians in 1967.

Various units were sent during this period, including military police, infantry, supply, transport and signals. Indians serving in UNEF wore either the UN pale blue beret or a turban in UN blue. The UN badge (2) was worn on the right sleeve under the national title, while a national emblem was worn under the title on the left arm. The title was again "India" in black on a red arc, but the national badge was now a shield divided horizontally into red (above) and blue with the Chakra emblem in yellow.

The United Nations medal awarded to all those serving in UNEF (3) has a wide UN blue band down the centre of its ribbon, which is yellow - symbolising the Sinai desert. To either side there is one blue and one green stripe, blue for the Suez Canal and green for the Nile valley.

In 1959 Belgium announced their plans for self-government and eventual independence for the Congo (now Zaire), but by the summer of 1960 tribal violence was spoiling their hopes of an orderly transition to home rule. Against the wishes of the Congo government which had been established, Belgian troops were sent in to restore order, and in the ensuing chaos Katanga Province attempted to secede. Prime Minister Patrice Lumumba of the Congo called upon the UN for aid. The *Operation des Nations Unies au Congo* (ONUC) was swiftly formed to provide a peacekeeping force along with technical and military assistance to the Congo. Between 1960 and 1964 Indian troops, amongst those of many other nations, provided infantry forces, and medical, postal, staff and supply personnel within ONUC.

Gurkhas serving in ONUC retained their traditional headdresses, the wide brimmed Terai hat, but wore pale blue helmets when necessary. Other Indian troops wore pale blue berets or turbans. The national title remained the same, black "India" on red, but the badge was changed to a red over brown shield, still with the yellow Chakra.

All personnel serving with ONUC were awarded a medal by the United Nations. This originally was the standard UN Service Medal with a bar "Congo" (4), but this was changed in 1964 to a special ribbon (5) which had UN blue and white stripes at the edges and a dark green stripe in the centre, symbolising the Congo basin and the birth of a new nation.

Indians did not serve in UNEF II, the second UN force to attempt to keep peace between Israel and Egypt (1973 - 79), in the Lebanon with UNIFIL (1978 -present) or as part of the Multinational Force and Observers which has patrolled in the Sinai since 1982. So far, they have not been seen in Yugoslavia during the present (1992) conflict there.

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(Editor's Note: I think I am right in saying that the senior UN military officer in Yugoslavia at present is an Indian.)



BOOK REVIEWS

● *FIELD SECURITY: VERY ORDINARY INTELLIGENCE*. Lt. Col. A.A. Mains. Chippenham: Picton Publishing, 1991. £12.95. 181 pages, photos.

This book provides, as Sir John Chapple says in his Foreword, a useful inside view of a little recorded aspect of war - Field Security.

What is now a relatively well ordered and organised aspect of Military Intelligence (though it is no longer called Field Security) was, during the Second World War, in its infancy and the

practitioners of those days had to make up the rules as they went along. Tony Mains was one of the first and was involved in much of this pioneering work. By its nature the book is something of a personal account and, therefore, something of an autobiography.

Commissioned in 1934 he joined 2/9th Gurkha Rifles in the following year. Five years later he attended the Command Intelligence Course but it was not until 1941 that he took up his first intelligence appointment as an instructor at the new Indian Intelligence School. This was curtailed after a few months when he was posted to Iraq as Chief Security Officer. Similar appointments followed in Burma, Assam and XIV Army and, after the war, as Chief Intelligence Officer in Central Command.

The book describes the confusion, the frustrations, the successes and some of the failures surrounding these early efforts at denying the enemy vital information about our own resources and capabilities. What is also clear, however, is that life at that time was not without its amusing interludes. Given the pace of events and the existence of other priorities, one wonders if all the hard won lessons were properly learnt when the war was over. Independence, partition and the reduction in the armed forces leads me to doubt it, a view reinforced by my own early experiences in the Intelligence Corps almost twenty years later. A number of problems recounted by Tony Mains seemed still to be with us then, but, perhaps, it is a typically human characteristic that we feel the need to re-invent the wheel every so often when in reality we would be better pausing to think about what has gone before. Tony Mains book allows us such an opportunity. A.N.M.

● *THE KASHMIR TANGLE: ISSUES AND OPTIONS*. Rajesh Kadign. Sittingbourne, Kent; Asia Publishing House Ltd. 1992. 200 pages. 7 halftones, 4 maps, hardcover. £13.95.

A well-researched and presented study of one of the world's longstanding trouble spots. Already the cause of two wars between India and Pakistan, Kashmir is once again on the boil and Rajesh Kadian's forthright analysis does much to clarify the reasons for the conflict. He also assesses the various options available to both India and Pakistan and pulls no punches in addressing the implications of these options. For instance, I am glad to see that, while raising the so-called China game (forcible exodus of Muslims from the Kashmir valley into Pakistan), he also recognises that such a move would be reprehensible for much of the Indian polity, would invite international condemnation and would precipitate another Indo-Pakistan war. His analysis of the historical reasons for the conflict similarly pulls no punches and virtually every "player" in the arena comes in for criticism to one degree or another.

It is difficult to find fault with the book. There are a few minor points that I raise; I was confused by references to the dividing boundary in Kashmir as the Line of Control (LOC) and subsequent references to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) - are these the same? Similarly the many references to the various alienated groups in the early part of the book were confusing and may have been made clearer by the inclusion of a diagram. I disagree with the contention on page 80 that the Kashmir Army (the J&K State Forces) "were not as highly trained as true professional army because their main function was not to repel an invasion but to provide internal security and to perform ceremonial duties". Four Infantry Battalions and two Mountain Batteries had just completed war service when the first troubles in Kashmir erupted; all were highly commended for their professionalism. M.B.E. stands for Member of the Order of the British Empire. (p.86); and although Lt. the Hon J.F.H.S. Roberts was the first to be awarded a posthumous V.C. (i.e. a cross was actually issued), he was not the first deceased recipient to be recognised by the award, though it was not until 1907 that

six earlier gazetted entries dating between 1859 and 1897 were re-gazetted and Crosses issued to surviving relatives. But these are minor points and they do not detract from an erudite, thoughtful and timely study.

As the author concludes ".....it is obvious that that the insurgency in Kashmir has ramifications far beyond that unhappy valley. It may greatly contribute to profound changes in South Asia".
A.N.M.

Finally, just as we were going to press, notification was received of a new book from Leo Cooper Pen and Sword Books Ltd. of Barnsley. South Yorkshire. This is *Lahore to Lucknow: The Indian Mutiny Journal of Arthur Moffat Lang*; edited by David Blomfield with an introduction by Christopher Hibbert. It is due for release at the end of June, priced £19.95. Too late to review it for this issue but a review will appear in the next edition of Durbar.

