

DURBAR Volume 11, No.2, Summer 1994

GREAT WAR IDSMs BY THEATRE

Christopher Peterson

While Tamplin & Abbott and Bullock address numbers of medals awarded by year for this period, it seems that no-one has addressed the relative numbers awarded by theatre. Total number awarded continues to be somewhat problematic, in that the above authors use different time spans for covering the Great War period.

I have used Hayward's "*Honours and Awards - Indian Army - August 1914-August 1921*". Recipients, Regiments and Theatre, as well as numbers were taken from the HMSO publication published in 1931 as "*Roll of Honour Indian Army 1914-1921*".

Second award bars have been included as medals for ease of tabulation. Tamplin & Abbott list 23, Bullock lists 25, and I find 22 double entries. Considering that we are dealing with different inclusive dates, I think this is very close.

I have some preconceived ideas about relative numbers and, therefore, what might be considered scarcer awards. The results were somewhat surprising.

Theatre	Number
Mesopotamia	1376
France	635
Egypt	452
East Africa	245
Waziristan	204
Northwest Frontier	139
Kut-Al-Amarah	96
Gallipoli*	88
Aden	59
Persia & S. Persia	41
Bushire	38
Transcaspia	28

Baluchistan	25
S.E. Persia/Sistan	20
Assam Burma Frontier	19
Salonika	15
Kachin Hills	10
Somaliland	5
Mekren Force	4
Turkey**	2
Black Sea	2
British Military Mission, Meshed	1
Kohat Kurrum Force	1
Pishen Moveable Column***	1
Escaping from Captivity	1
While Prisoner of War	1

* This includes awards listed under Dardanelles

** Could these be awards for actions during POW service?

*** Same soldier, Subadar Mansar Ali, listed twice, once under 101 Grenadiers and once under 102 Grenadiers

The total awards come to 3508, which again is different than given in Tamplin & Abbott or Bullock, but it must be remembered that we are dealing with different dates inclusive. This little exercise has certainly helped me in placing awards into perspective and again serves to underline the varied campaigns and theatres in which these men were called to fight.

[Editor's Note: As we recorded in Vol. 3, No 2, members interested in this subject may also care to refer to an analysis of IDSMS prepared by C.W. Parrett which appeared in the OMRS Journal, Summer 1986.]



Lt Col A A Mains

At an Indian Army Association function the other day, one of the members was talking about his experiences during the partition disturbances, and recounting how he had to threaten an Anglo-Indian driver at Rawalpindi station, implying that the man was an arrant coward.

This made me think of the occasions when I had personal experience of Anglo-Indians; the drivers and firemen from Rangoon shed taking refugee trains up to Mandalay and bringing them back for another trip, although Pegu on their route was perilously close to the Japanese; the train crews in Assam when sabotage was rife and I had seen the body of a driver whose engine had rolled over him after a derailment; the courage of the Inspectors and Sergeants of the Rangoon Police remaining and obeying orders up to the final evacuation, when the Indian constables had mutinied and been evacuated; my body guard and interpreter, Sergeant Rivers of the Mandalay District Police, remaining with me until we reached India. These were not isolated incidents but part of a tradition of service to the Raj.

I will use for simplicity the term Anglo-Indian to denote also Anglo-Burmese, as Burma was, until 1935, part of India. The term Anglo-Indian came into use in the twenties to tidy up the terms then in use; European, Domiciled European and Eurasian, mainly to define the community for representation under the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms. The legal definition was of "a person who was of pure European descent in the male line and who was a native of India". The salient points were, first, that there was no mention of British descent and thus many Goanese domiciled in India claimed such status (I knew an Anglo-Indian officer who was of French origin); the second point was that, contrary to popular belief mixed blood was not a criteria and while most Anglo-Indians did have some admixture, there were a number who did not - those who earlier had been classified as "domiciled Europeans". A simple legal declaration was all that was required to claim Anglo-Indian status

Prior to the 1850s there were a few families, such as the Skinners, who had acquired estates in India, but the bulk of the community originated about the time of the Mutiny when railways, telegraphs and industrial enterprises such as coal mines, cotton and jute mills came upon the Indian scene. The Europeans provided the senior management, the Indians the clerks and menials, but the middle tier, the skilled educated artisan, was missing. The gap was filled by recruitment in Britain or from time expired British soldiers. These men formed a class of their own and in the early days many took Indian wives, though this had largely ceased by the turn of the century, except in Burma where it continued to a lesser degree until at least the inter-war years. The community then married within itself.

It is difficult to estimate the size of the community, as it was constantly changing - on the one hand, girls often married Europeans and went back to Britain - on the other hand, time expired British soldiers took jobs in India and remained there with their families. This was particularly so in the thirties when there was mass unemployment in Britain, but an Anglo-Indian youth was ensured of employment in India, either in the police or railway service. My GSO II in Central Command, Major Bill Moorshead, was a Battery Sergeant Major RA, who took his discharge in India to join the Bengal Police as a Sergeant, married an Anglo-Indian girl and had no intention of returning to England. Had he had children, they would have qualified for the special Anglo-Indian vacancies in the police or railways. An educated guess would be somewhere between 100,000-150,000.

The main areas of Anglo-Indian employment were on the railways, in the police and in certain areas of industrial enterprise. Educated Indians were loath to take jobs involving a long apprenticeship of heavy or dirty work such as engine drivers, workshop foremen and so on; Indians had largely ousted the Anglo-Indians from clerical or administrative grades. On the other hand, the girls could get clerical and secretarial jobs, as well as nurses, since class and caste prejudice precluded Indian girls taking most types of employment.

All Anglo-Indians, except those in the police, were actively encouraged, if not ordered, to join the Auxiliary Force (India), a body of part time soldiers classified as British troops and raised mainly for internal security duties. The figures for 1939 gives the Anglo-Indian component of the AF(I) as nearly fourteen thousand, as against rather over seven thousand Europeans. Each of the major railways, state or company operated, had its own AF(I) unit in which the Anglo-Indian was in the majority.

The services of the community can be divided into three main streams; direct service in the armed forces, service in the AF(I), and civilian service with a bearing on the war effort, the last two dovetailing into each other.

SERVICE IN THE ARMED FORCES

It is not generally realised that Anglo-Indians could enlist in British units in India, provided they were medically and otherwise fit for service. I do not think that many did in peacetime, and it is doubtful if those of a very dark complexion would have been accepted. This changed after the outbreak of war and there is evidence that during the war 3,000 members of AF(I) joined the Armed Forces as officers and 3,400 as other ranks; it is reasonable to suppose that most, if not all, of those joining as ORs were Anglo-Indians. Further, a sizeable number were commissioned into the Indian Army either as British or Indian Emergency Commissioned Officers. At Independence, Nehru allowed those commissioned as British officers to transfer to Indian officer status and thus preserve their careers; several reached the rank of Lieutenant General. It is interesting that during the time I was GSO I at the Infantry School after Independence, out of 60 odd officers on the staff, we never had less than a dozen Anglo-Indians. Two notables were a Gunner and one from the Assam Regiment. Both retired as Brigadiers; the former, who had a Dutch wife, came to England where his son was commissioned into the Royal Navy; the latter, with a French wife, went to France where his son was last heard of commanding a Battalion of the Chasseurs Alpin.

SERVICE IN THE A.F(I)

The AF(I) could be used in peace and war in two ways - "called out" in aid of the civil power in some special emergency or, during the war, "embodied", which meant that the unit became an integral part of the Armed Forces. I will deal with call outs later as part of service in civilian jobs.

EMBODIED UNITS - INDIA

The first units to be embodied, in 1940, were the port defence units, Artillery, Engineers and Signals, at Bombay, Madras and Karachi (the Bengal Artillery was not embodied but, as it was 100% European, it does not come into this story). Anglo-Indians were very much in the majority in these units, for example 16 Europeans to 84 Anglo-Indians in the Bombay Coast Battery and 17 to 105 at Madras. The entry of Japan into the war produced the next batch of

embodiments, to defend southern India, which had been denuded of regular troops who had been sent to counter any Japanese threat to the north east. These included the oldest unit, raised in 1858, the Madras Guards of 46 Europeans and 872 Anglo-Indians. There were a few other embodiments for special purposes, notably the Bombay units which were embodied "in aid of the civil power" to deal with the chaos resulting from the Bombay Docks explosion, and a part embodiment of the Dehra Dun Contingent to guard a POW camp.

EMBODIED UNITS - BURMA

On the separation of Burma from India local AF(I) units passed to the control of the Government of Burma and were renamed the Burma Auxiliary Force. These units, in 1942, comprised one port defence Artillery Regiment, which included an Engineer section, one Heavy AA Battery, three Infantry and one Railway battalion. All these units were not only embodied but included in the Order of Battle of BurCorps.

It must be emphasised that a number of units, such as those in Assam and the railway units, were not embodied as they were of more use in their civilian occupations than as a formed body of troops.

SERVICE IN CIVILIAN OCCUPATIONS

IN THE POLICE

There were not a great number of Anglo-Indians in the police as the force was, except for senior officers, almost entirely Indian. Anglo-Indians and time expired British soldiers could join direct as Sergeants, a rank reserved for them and ranking equal to a Sub Inspector. They could expect promotion to Inspector and, in a few cases, to Deputy Superintendent. Sergeants were used in large cities to deal with Europeans; they also served in the armed and mounted sections of the District Police.

BURMA

The Rangoon Town Police had about forty five Sergeants and Inspectors. These, together with five senior officers, was all that was left of a force of about 3,000 at the time when I was appointed Assistant Military Governor of Rangoon, close to the final evacuation in 1942. All the rest, Indian and Burmese, had either deserted or been evacuated, having refused to remain. Such order as we were able to maintain would have been impossible without these men who remained until the bitter end. Later Sergeant Rivers of the Mandalay District Police was attached to Field Security and became my interpreter and bodyguard until we reached India.

INDIA

The police in India were not affected by the War in the same way as those in Burma, but in some areas were badly affected by civil unrest - the disturbances over much of India in 1930-31 when my GSO II (Security) in Central Command was awarded an Indian Police Medal for his actions as a Sergeant in the Bengal Police at the time of the Chittagong Armoury Raid. The last paragraph of his citation reads:

"Sergeant Moorshead was in grave danger throughout but his presence of mind did not

desert him. He was able to put the town on the alert and made several plucky attempts to get into action against the revolutionaries".

In the same Gazette was the award of the medal to a Sergeant Wintle of Vizagapatam District for going to the rescue of his Superintendent who was being attacked by a mob.

"The gallantry, initiative and example displayed by Mr Wintle deserve the highest commendation".

The police had to deal with widespread disturbances in 1942 during the Quit India campaign and again in 1946-7 during the run up to and implementation of Partition. I have an official report of a serious riot in Amritsar in early 1947 when twice the police were driven back by the mob. On one of these occasions a Sergeant Wreaves, together with a Deputy Superintendent (Indian) remained behind to cover the retreat of the Foot Police, during which Wreaves suffered injuries from the brickbats. Later the Mounted Police Inspector, together with a Mounted Head Constable, were cut off and had to charge through the mob. The Head Constable was knocked off his horse but the Inspector stood by him until both were rescued.

ON THE RAILWAYS

BURMA

There is no doubt that, without the courage of the Anglo-Indian drivers and firemen, all railway movement in Burma would have been halted before the evacuation of Rangoon. Many accounts of the campaign tell of the use of trains to move units back, often almost from the front line. Conditions were very difficult for these men as they were often separated from their families who had been evacuated to Upper Burma. Regrettably, little effort seems to have been made to evacuate families to India and many died endeavouring to reach India on foot. The wholesale desertion of other railway employees meant that drivers and firemen had the arduous duty of coaling and maintaining their engines at the end of each trip.

INDIA

The railways in India were not involved in actual warfare in the same way as those of Burma, but were active in supporting the war effort. There is no doubt that, without the services of Anglo-Indians, the various railways would have been hard pressed to maintain services, particularly in times of civil unrest. During the disturbances of 1930-31 all the railway units, except the South India Railway Battalion, were called out, a total of 9 battalions, for such duties as Armoury and Station Guards and railway security generally.

The outbreak of war in 1939 put a great strain on an organisation already suffering from old and worn out equipment; the first additional task was the movement of coal throughout India. The usual route was the short haul by rail from pit head in Bengal or Bihar to Howrah by rail, and then by sea to ports around the coastline of India. Owing to the requisitioning of coastal shipping this ceased and the coal had to be moved wholly by rail; later a number of railwaymen were enlisted and sent to Iraq, Persia and the Middle East in Railway Operating and Construction Companies.

1942 was the year of the greatest strain on railway staffs. First, the Burma Army had to be evacuated and fresh troops sent up to Assam and East Bengal, where the lines were of metre gauge and low carrying capacity. The loss of command of the sea in the Bay of Bengal meant that ports from Madras round to Chittagong were unusable. Reinforcements of men and material from Europe had to be landed at Bombay and Karachi, and moved the entire width of India with a break of gauge thrown in. Both the weather and the disaffected then took a hand - in the west a fanatical sect called the Hurs went on the rampage in Upper Sind and it was some time before a force could be mustered to contain them. Night running had to be suspended and on one occasion they derailed the Karachi Mail, killing the engine crew and shooting up the train. There was some loss of life, but it was minimised by the gallantry of the Anglo-Indian train Conductor, who managed to summon help. In the autumn the Indus burst its banks and cut the main line to Quetta - it could not be fully restored for two months. Damage by flood to the main metre gauge line to Assam coincided with the outbreak of the "42 Rebellion" which cut all the lines into Calcutta from the west; they remained out of action for at least three weeks. Once again the Railway units of the AF(I) were called out for the traditional duties of guarding railway property. The final blow was the spate of sabotage derailments in Assam which continued into 1943, before sufficient force could be organised to protect the line.

All this may seem somewhat mundane, but the effect on the railway staff was considerable and, by 1944, the morale of the Indian staff was very low. Luckily the Anglo-Indian staff were not only completely loyal but extremely courageous. During my time as the Security Chief in Assam I knew of no case of any Anglo-Indian staff refusing duty, even at night. It must be emphasised that not only was the cost of basic foodstuffs soaring, but also the running staff were having to work exceptionally long hours, often in dangerous conditions.

There was a brief lull from late 1945 to early 1946, when the railways were plagued with disorderly mobs endeavouring to stop trains for political reasons, by sitting on the tracks or disconnecting the vacuum brake hoses. Matters were made worse by serious industrial unrest, mainly in the form of four hour strikes, often without warning. In spite of attempts at intimidation, the Anglo-Indian staff continued to work. What was more serious was the uncertainty in their minds regarding their future in independent India. The British Government made no attempt to define their position regarding repatriation, should this become necessary for Europeans. Luckily for them, and indeed for the country, Pandit Nehru, realising that without them the railways would be in a sorry state, assured the community that their privileges - reserved job vacancies, special schools, English as their regional language, would continue for five, later extended to ten, years. This stopped what might have been a mass exodus, as most Anglo-Indians remained in their jobs. The result was that, during the partition disturbances, the Anglo-Indians continued to run the trains and, without them, few if any refugee or other trains could have been run across the disturbed Indo-Pakistan border. A Railway tailpiece - travelling on the Bombay-Calcutta Mail in the first summer of Independence, I went forward to Allahabad to see the engines changed. What backed on was an elderly BPS Class 4-6-0, probably built before the Great War, with an elderly Anglo-Indian engine driver. The guard, another Anglo-Indian, came forward to report the load and, taking a long look at the engine and driver, he exclaimed, "Ooh, ould engine, ould driver, but right time Howrah!" The driver replied, "Aye, the old b ----- s the best", and it was "right time" at Howrah the next morning.

The AF(I) in general was very much involved in containing civil unrest in the period from 1919 to 1944 as, during this period, only in the years 1923/4/5 and 1936/7 was no unit called

out. The peak years were 1930, when 16 units were called out, and again 13 in 1942. In the latter year this was in addition to units called out or embodied for the war effort. In many cases both in 1930 and 1942 units were on call out for periods of over two months' duration.

Sadly, being classified as "British Troops", the AF(I) was stood down on the day of Independence, although in some of the disturbed areas, for a short time, their members were sworn in as Special Constables and paraded in uniform with their rifles but with "Special Constable's" armband. This ended 89 years of loyal service.

The community has shrunk considerably over the years since independence. In the early years some of the younger members claimed British nationality and came to Britain where, for those with railway experience, there was no lack of jobs. The demise of the steam locomotive dealt their railway service a body blow, as middle class Indians could drive a diesel or electric locomotive without the long, dirty and hard apprenticeship.

BATTLE HONOUR "BENI BOO ALI"

Tim Ash's article on the Battle Honour "Beni Boo Ali" was carried in DURBAR Vol. 10, No. 3, Autumn 1993. As recorded in Vol. 11, No. 1, Lieutenant General R I S Kahlon, UYSM, AVSM had replied on behalf of The Grenadiers saying that it was no longer carried on the Colours, but was still honoured in memory.

Major General Vijay Oberoi, AVSM, VSM, Colonel of the Maratha LI, has now written to say that the Battle Honour continues to be emblazoned on the Colours of 1 Maratha LI (Jangi Paltan) but not on those of 2 Maratha LI (Kali Panchwin), nor on the Colours of the Regimental Centre.

Lieutenant General O.P Kaushik, Colonel of the Rajputana Rifles, did reply but did not specify whether or not the Battle Honour was still used. However, Major General Chand N Das OBE wrote to confirm that 1/6th Rajputana Rifles, now 3rd Guards (Mechanised Infantry) still have the Battle Honour though, since the Rifles do not carry Colours, it is carried on the drums, the Maltese Cross badge on the Pouch Belt, and by Pipers on the pipe banners.

We are grateful to the three Regimental Colonels, to Chand Das, and to Major General S C Sinha, PVSM, Director of the United Service Institution of India, who passed on the query, for their interest.

By coincidence, I have just finished reading a recently published book which will, I am sure, be of interest to many of our members: *BATTLE HONOURS OF THE INDIAN ARMY 1757-1971* by Major Sarbans Singh p.s.c. (Retd), published by Vision Books, New Delhi, 1993. Rs495. ISBN81-7-94-115-6.

The book begins with a brief overview of the evolution of the Indian Army, dealt with in three phases - the Company period to 1857, the Crown period to 1947, and post-independence period 1947-1971. The latter section describes in some detail the operations against China and Pakistan for which various Honours were awarded. I was pleased to see that the Indian State Forces have not been forgotten.

Part Two of the book deals with the development of Battle Honours and I have to admit that I found some of this slightly repetitive, but the substance of the book and, for me, the most interesting and informative, is Part Three listing every Battle Honour and the units to which they were awarded. Separate chapters are devoted to pre-1914, The Great War 1914-18 and Afghanistan 1919, The Second World War, Jammu and Kashmir Operations 1947-48, Chinese Aggression 1962, Indo-Pakistan Conflict 1965 and Indo-Pakistan Conflict 1971. Honours which lapsed after the 1857 Mutiny, or which lapsed as units were later disbanded, or for which the sole recipient transferred to Pakistan, are identified.

There is a thought-provoking chapter on future battle honours, querying why units have not claimed Honours to which they might be entitled. The book concludes with several useful indices and maps and a very good index.

I found of particular interest the references throughout the book to 'Repugnant' and 'Non-Repugnant' Honours. I was aware that, following Independence, all Battle Honours had been reviewed with a view to their repugnance to national sentiments and those considered repugnant ordered to be removed from Colours. I have never before seen a list of these and it is interesting to note that, of the 95 Honours listed in the pre-1914 period, 43 were considered repugnant. The inclusion of those given for actions within India is not surprising, but there are some curiosities. For instance, PUNJAB FRONTIER (for 1897-98) was considered repugnant while the associated Honours for MALAKAND, SAMANA and TIRAH were not. Similarly, EGYPT 1882 was considered repugnant while TEL EL KEBIR awarded to the same units for the same action was not.

Finally, and this fact has been inferred in the replies to the BENI BOO ALI query by the Regimental Colonels, it was decreed that no more than 10 pre-Independence Honours could be carried on the Colours of the present day Indian Army regiments.

This is one book that deserves a place on the book shelf of anyone interested in the history of the Indian Army. Highly recommended. Ed.

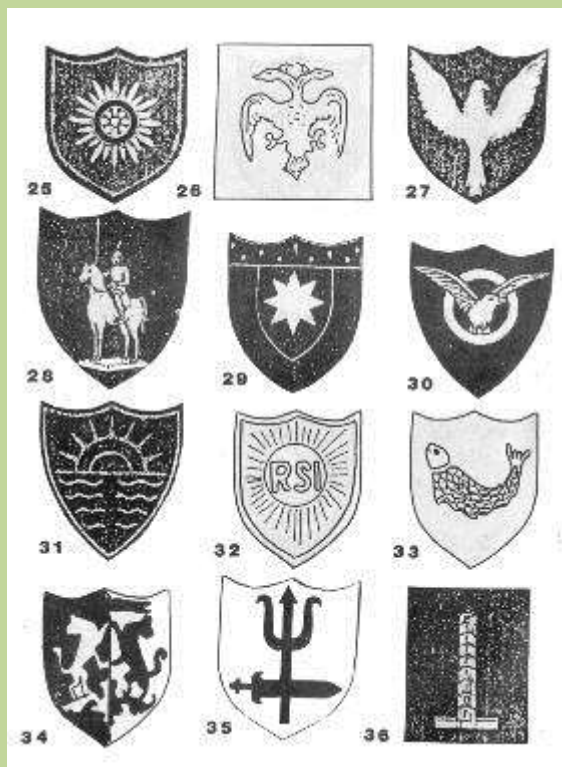
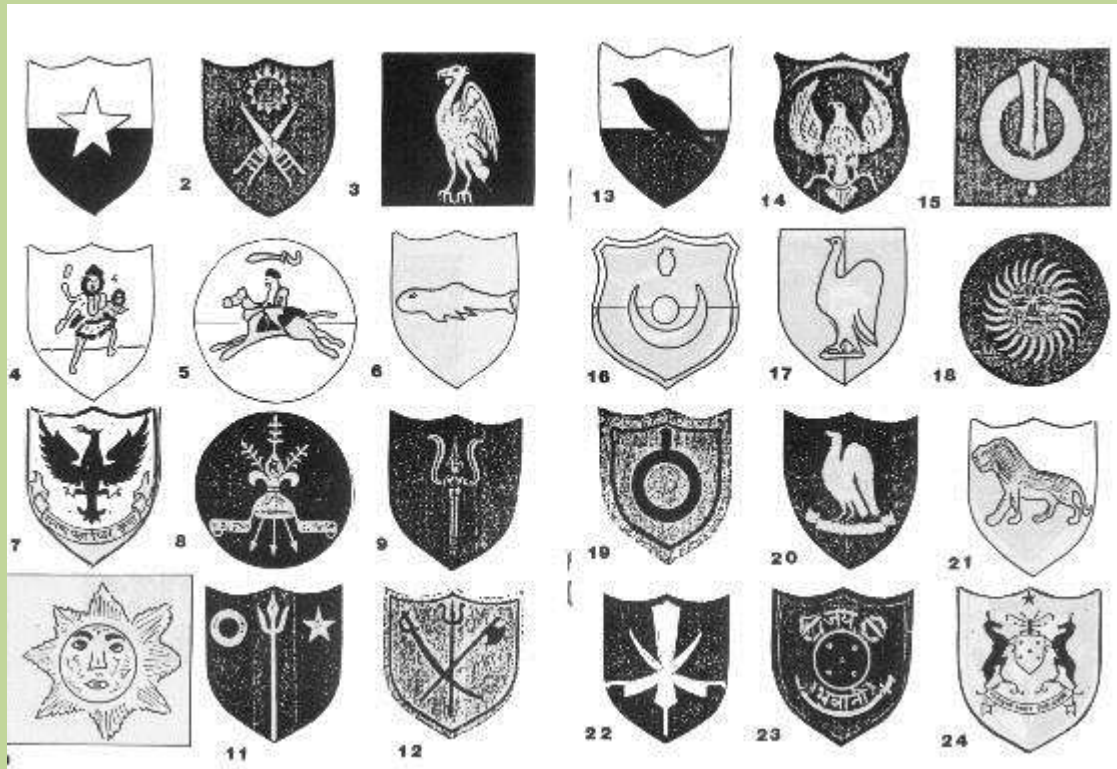


FORMATION BADGES INDIAN STATE FORCES

The drawings of ISF formation badges accompanying this article were provided by Major General Chand N Das OBE in response to a private enquiry. He in turn obtained them from the Ministry of Defence Historical Section in 1948/49. Though I have seen many photographs of ISF soldiers during World War II, I do not recall seeing any that showed such badges clearly. Nor was I aware that each State had its own badge. Indeed, I had rather assumed that ISF troops would have worn the formation flashes of the major formation to which they were attached so, with the exception of No. 1, I wonder in what circumstances these were worn.

1. Military Adviser-in-Chief, Indian State Forces. A white star on a background of dark blue (bottom) and light blue (top)
2. Alwar. Two daggers crossed (white) with sun in splendour above (white, red and black) against a red background.
3. Bahawalpur. White bird on black background. Howard Cole in his book "*Formation Badges of World War Two*" shows this as the pelican and it resembles much more closely the badges of Bahawalpur than does this example.

4. Baria. Goddess Kali (shades of blue and grey with gold halo) carrying the victim of a devil standing against a horizon (light blue).
5. Baroda. Grey horseman with white sword above on background of green (bottom) and red (top).
6. Benares. Red fish on blue background.
7. Bhavnagar. Flying eagle (grey) with State motto in black on white scroll against red shield edged in black.
8. Bhopal. Lily argent resting on a helmet with three arrows reversed supported on a scroll (all white) against a green (top) and black (bottom) background.
9. Bikaner. Trident (yellow) on a red background
10. Chamba. Red sun on a saffron background.
11. Cooch Behar. A shield divided vertically into red, saffron and green. In the centre a trident, on the left a circle and on the right a star (all white).
12. Cutch. Trident crossed with sword and purshu enclosed with a border of red against a yellow background.
13. Datia. Red bird on yellow (top) and dark blue (bottom) background.
14. Dhar. An eagle surmounted by a sword with a cobra in his claws (yellow and black) against a red background.
15. Faridkot. Chakkar and Khanda (double edged sword) (white) against a green background
16. Hyderabad. Dastar (royal turban), bread and crescent (red) on a yellow (top) and green (bottom) background, edged in red.
17. Idar. Red bird on a shield divided vertically blue (left) and fawn (right)
18. Jaipur. Sun in splendour (yellow, black and red) on a maroon background.
19. Jind. Blue circle and Khanda on a yellow background with blue border.
20. Jodhpur. An eagle (yellow) on brown background
21. Junagadh. Lion (yellow and black) on a dark green background edged in red
22. Kapurthala. Khanda and crossed swords (white) on a blue background
23. Kolhapur. Crossed Mochals (red and yellow) behind a shield (blue) with white border and sword. Motto in yellow, all on dark green background with brown border.
24. Malerkotla. State crest in dark green on red background
25. Mandi. Yellow star with a blue ring in the centre on a dark green background with yellow edge.
26. Mysore. Gandabherunda (mythical double headed eagle) in yellow on red background.
27. Nabha. Flying hawk (grey) on blue background.
28. Nawanagar. Mounted lancer (white and black) on red background.
29. Panna. White star on green shield superimposed on a purple shield enclosed with red and yellow borders. The capital of the shield is decorated with nine white and yellow diamonds.
30. Patiala. Eagle (white and black) and a ring (yellow) on a black background.
31. Porbander. Rising sun (golden yellow) on a maroon shield with golden border.
32. Rajpipla. Sun in gold and orange with letters RSI in green in the centre, on a red background with golden border.
33. Rampur Fish (yellow and black) on green background Rewa. Two tigers rampant supporting a pennant on a vertically divided shield of green (left) and yellow (right). The left tiger is yellow and the right tiger green.
34. Sirmoor. Trident and sword (blue) on red background.
35. Udaipur (Mewar). Victory tower of Chittorgarh Fort (yellow) on background of blue (top) and red (bottom)



I have also seen a printed sheet from a book (details not known) which shows shoulder flashes of India and S.E.A.C., including a few ISF badges. According to this, Patiala consisted of a circle with a Khanda inside it; Jind consisted of a circle above crossed daggers, hilts uppermost; the flash shown in this set for Jind was accredited to Kapurthala (the Kapurthala flash shown here was not featured on the sheet); Nabha was shown as the Khanda

badge of the Nabha Akal Infantry, i.e., the central Khanda (double edged sword), the ring and the two curved swords either side (Miri and Piri).

Leaving aside my query as to the circumstances in which these flashes were worn, I do wonder if either of the lists is exhaustive. According to my records, there are a number of States not represented here which also had ISF units during WWII: Bharatpur, Cochin, Dhrangadhra, Gwalior, Indore, Kotah, Suket, Tehri-Garhwal, Travancore and Tripura. Some of these were deployed outside their own States. Did they also have shoulder flashes and does anyone know what they were like? Ed.

Web site note - since publishing this article I acquired a set of embroidered shoulder flashes for the Indian State Forces and these appear in colour in *THE MAHARAJAS' PALTANS – A HISTORY OF THE INDIAN STATE FORCES (1888-1948)*, Volume II. Richard Head and Tony McClenaghan. Delhi: United Service Institution of India in conjunction with Manohar, 2013, pp.762-763. In addition, pp764-765 carry further research based on W.M.W. Jackson, *THE INDIAN STATE FORCES*, an article that appeared in two successive issues of *THE FORMATION SIGN*, No. 203 (July-September 2001) and No. 204 (October-December 2001).

LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Major General Chand N Das OBE writes:

I refer to the recent articles by Cyril Walters. One of my hobbies is to collect stamps and First Day Postal Covers. I have a complete set of the First Day Covers of the Indian Army issued by the Postal Department. It may not be possible to obtain the older numbers but if any member is interested in them I can provide information from my collection. Should anyone wish to start a collection I can help in obtaining the new issues.

● G K Fawcett writes:

Further to the recent article, and subsequent correspondence on Jews in the Indian Army, on a recent visit to Ootacamund I saw the gravestone of a Lieut. John Jacob of the Madras N. I. who died on 31st January 1849. The tablet reads:

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY OF
LIEUTENANT
JOHN JACOB
18t REGT M.N.I.
WHO DIED AT OOTACAMUND
ON THE 31st JANUARY
1849
THIS MONUMENT IS ERECTED
TO HIS NEMORY BY HIS
BROTHER OFFICERS AS A TOKEN
OF THEIR ESTEEM & REGARD

Later in the trip I saw the name Jacob over a shop and as the name of a building in Cochin. I am wondering if there could be a connection between the Jacobs of Cochin and Ootacamund and the famous Jacob of Jacob's Irregular Horse and the town of Jacobabad in Pakistan? Perhaps a member could help me with this. Incidentally, the Lieut. John Jacob grave was in a Protestant cemetery.

● Shamus Wade writes:

In a letter to the Sunday Telegraph on 1 May this year (about accusations of racism made against Sir Winston Churchill), P.B.D. Bunyan of Wembley, Middlesex, drew attention to the following quotation:

Churchill, when First Lord of the Admiralty, wrote in a memorandum to Admiral Little in 1939:

"There must be no discrimination on grounds of race or colour.... Each case must be judged on its merits from the point of view of smooth administration. I cannot see any objections to Indians serving in HM ships where they are qualified or needed, or if their virtues so deserving, rising to Admiral of the Fleet." (October 14, 1939, Martin Gilbert's *"The Churchill War Papers"*)

Does anyone know how many Indians served in the Royal Navy in World War II and what was the furthest up the ladder of promotion they reached?

● John Tamplin writes:

R.B. McCabe

In DURBAR, Vol. 6, No 1, 1989, at page 7, I had remarked on two memorials in Shillong following the death of R.B. McCabe. I can confirm his grave in Shillong Cemetery still exists (I photographed it in January 1994 on a visit there). There is also a bronze tablet to his memory in Shillong Church, which was rebuilt following the earthquake in January 1897 when McCabe was killed. I did not see the Memorial drinking fountain which I noted in the earlier DURBAR. Shillong Church contains a number of memorial tablets, and the Church itself was built in the late Victorian style with much stained woodwork and beams, and also windows with coloured glass; it was all highly polished, clean and well maintained.

● Two American authors have written to us as follows;

Aviation writer Thomas Wm. McGarry and R.E. Baldwin are working on a book which we hope will become the definitive work on Blood Chits, or Goolie Chits as they were referred to in the UK. These are documents, written in local dialects, which promise a reward for the return of soldiers unharmed. The fate of captured soldiers who were turned over to tribal women for punishment is well known, so the value of these items to the soldier is, of course, obvious.

An acquaintance who was on holiday in Spain last spring read an article in an English-language magazine which described, as best as he can recall, similar items being issued to British officers in the 1860s. He thinks these were written in Urdu and intended for Panta (?) tribesmen in the Khyber Pass area, and were to the effect that the bearer was the property of the British government. We have heard other rumours to the effect that Chits were first used by ground forces in India during the last century, but have been unable to find documentary evidence of such use. We would appreciate any information, including photos or photocopies, that your membership might be able to provide us in this regard. Also, if anyone is familiar with the above mentioned magazine article we would appreciate having a photocopy of it along with the address of the publisher.

The first chits of this sort to be used by aircrew were those of RAF pilots on Colonial policing duty in the Northwest Frontier Province in 1919. Their use by the RAF in India during the 1920s and 1930s is fairly well documented, but we would be grateful for whatever might be able to provide regarding these items as well.

The five examples shown (reduced size) are all from India. No 1 is the first RAF Goolie Chit (1919); No 5 is a double sided item.

[Any responses direct to the authors please, though the Editor would appreciate a copy for further mentions in DURBAR. The authors' address is The Blood Chit project, P.O. Box 11131, Berkeley, CA 94701-213 1, USA]

● Maitland Thornton seeks help in identifying the following four badges, all believed to be Indian Army. No 2 has white metal feathers, a brass coronet and two lugs on the back. No 4 is of solid brass with two lugs on the back. **Web site note** - three of these have previously been published; No.4 is new.

