

DURBAR Volume 16, No.3, Autumn 1999

'FIFTY DAYS IN A MULE TRANSPORT'

By Major E. Dev. Wintle, Journal of the Services Institution of India, Vol. XXXVIII April 1909, No. 175 (Edited from 5,500 to 3,500 words by Brian Small)

"Having lately been employed in bringing some 1,550 mules and donkey stallions from New Orleans to Calcutta, a voyage of 13,000 miles and lasting seven weeks, a few details of the undertaking may prove of use to others who may hereafter be similarly employed.

THE SHIP

The vessel chartered for this purpose was the SS. "*City of Edinburgh*," (Captain A. J. Elliott), belonging to Ellerman Lines, Limited, a large four-masted ship of 6,254 tons, built of steel, with iron decks; length 473 feet, breadth 54 feet, with a short well deck fore and aft.

Having been originally built for the cattle trade, this ship is provided with 10 hatches instead of the usual five or six. Since the hatches are the chief means of communication, lighting, ventilation and sanitation, it is obvious that the vessel was particularly adapted for the conveyance of such a large number of animals. Her tanks are capable of holding 2,500 tons of water, and her coal bunkers 3,200 tons of coal.

To obtain the greatest possible stability she was ballasted with 600 tons of coal and 300 tons of sand. The ship was fitted up for the accommodation of the mules and donkey stallions at Glasgow by Messrs. Barclay, Curle and Co., as follows:

Upper deck standings for	375 animals.
Main deck	545
'Tween	574
Fore hold	48
Aft deck	42

Total 1,584 animals.

Upper Deck, -To obtain the necessary accommodation, the well decks were roofed in, thus making the top deck flush from bow to stern. Stalls or pens were constructed along each side of the ship throughout its entire length and were divided off into spaces for six animals, allowing two feet for each. Some mid-ship stalls were also erected; one set fore, and the other aft. Houses for the muleteers were also erected on this deck, one house and its cook house or galley forward, the other aft. A latrine for the muleteers was erected on each side of the ship aft.

Main Deck, - Rows of stalls were erected on this deck according to space available, vis., from two to four rows of stalls, with two alleyways or paths four feet broad running along the entire length of the ship. On this deck, aft, were the single stalls for the donkey stallions.

'Tween Deck, - As many as five rows of stalls were in places constructed on this deck with three alleyways instead of two. The space on each side of the engines on this deck was too hot for mules.

The Holds- There being no deck at the bottom of the ship a flooring was made of coal which, having been trimmed or levelled, was then boarded over and stalls erected on this. There were no mid-ship stalls in the holds. The holds were found to be the coolest place in the ship.

FITTINGS

The upper deck standing was roofed in, so differed slightly from those of the other decks. Scantling beams to support the roof were bolted to the top of each front and rear stanchion, and rested on another beam fixed along the rows of stanchions. The above formed the framework of the stalls. Each piece is "bolted" to the other. In rough weather there is always a certain amount of straining. Bolts permit a play where nails would draw. The roof, back and sides of the stalls were of "feather and groove" boarding.

In rough weather it is very undesirable that there should be anything with sharp square edges against which the mules might be thrown. The mule kicked through the back boards in many places. A long voyage seems to make them very peevish but not bad tempered as they rarely bit or kicked any of the men. The disadvantage is that a heavy sea would very soon drive in the backboards. The Captain would avoid this happening by slightly altering his course. During this voyage it was necessary on one occasion to go about for 12 hours to save the upper deck standings.

To separate the mules the stalls were, as has been already mentioned, divided up. This was partly necessary to avoid the ship's fixtures, and also to prevent the mules falling about in rough weather. The "breast boards" were placed along the front of the stanchions resting in iron elects 4 inches broad. The top of the breast boards was about 3 feet 10 inches from the deck. The breast boards were made of wood 10 inches broad by 3 inches thick, rounded at the top and covered with tin. The stanchion from the top of the breast boards to a height level with the top of the mules' heads was also enveloped in tin. The mules gnawed all wood within reach. Wherever any woodwork was gnawed it was at once painted over with tar, which the mules did not seem to fancy. The bottom edge of the breast board should be rounded off, not square, the head of the staple of the ring should also be round. Several mules sustained severe wounds by bringing up their heads suddenly when feeding.

The bottom board on which the animals stand when the decks are of iron consist of planks one inch thick with four transverse battens. All the standings on completion should be thoroughly whitewashed. It is a great convenience, especially when embarking the animals, to have painted in large figures on the back of the stall the number of animals it is to hold.

Just under the roof of the upper deck stalls a canvas curtain was installed. The objective is to shelter the animals from very cold winds or from any spray that may come over. Salt water appears to blister the animals, so it is as well to have something to protect them from it. The curtain spread out level with the roof affords excellent protection from the sun on a hot day, without keeping out the air.

The fresh water-supply pipe was carried along the top of the stanchions, well above the heads of the animals. Water cocks were fixed into the pipe at intervals and the water poured into

large tubs placed below it. From the tubs the water was carried in pails to the troughs hanging on the breast board before each animal. These troughs are of zinc and are known as "Admiralty Pattern". The wire for the electric light, with which the ship was fitted throughout, was also carried along the top of the stanchions.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communication between one deck and another was obtained by "brows" or sloping gangways suspended in the hatches.

To avoid sharp turns, at least two hatches are required for each set of brows; the noise of the animals going up or down the upper brow would alarm those on the lower brow. The breadth of the foot way was 6 inches. The height of the sides should not be less than 5 feet to prevent the animals seeing over and becoming frightened.

Each hatch on each deck must be protected by a guard-rail otherwise mules approaching a hatch might become alarmed and a serious accident might occur. Guard-rails are also necessary to protect the men from falling down the hatches in rough weather. A wooden grating is placed over the hatches on the upper deck in rough weather, and a tarpaulin placed over the grating. The hatches on the decks below remained open.

ATTENDANTS

The Army Remount Department detailed two Salutris and two Jemadar syces. Having been despatched to England they joined the "*City of Edinburgh*" at Glasgow. To attend to the mules the Mountain Batteries in India were called on to furnish;

1 Havildar
2 Naicks
2 Lance-Naicks.
44 Mule Drivers.

49 Total.

On arrival in December they felt the cold considerably, and they were eventually provided with a pair of thick drawers and a vest. These necessary articles could, with advantage, be issued before leaving India. It was also very cold on the voyage to New Orleans and extremely cold at that place on arrival in the third week of January.

Though the men all worked most indefatigably and cheerfully throughout the voyage, it is doubtful if they would have been able to devote as much attention and care to the animals and maintained the necessary cleanliness and sanitation had not the Captain of the ship cooperated most thoroughly by telling off the crew to certain duties.

The crew consisted of

6 Quartermasters
2 Apprentices Europeans.
3 Carpenters
22 Lascars Natives.

The Quartermasters and Apprentices were constantly employed in repairing damaged head ropes. The Apprentices were employed in weighing out the fodder daily and in inspecting every 4 hours the 12 thermometers placed in various places if the ship. The carpenters were kept constantly employed in repairing the woodworks, attending to the water-supply, opening and closing of portholes.

The Lascars drew the daily supply of fodder lip from the holds and distributed it to various parts of the ship. They worked the winches which hoisted up the large dung baskets and emptied the contents overboard. They kept all the scuppers clear.

VENTILATION

Most of the foul air came up through the hatches. Of the 29 ventilators with which the ship is fitted, eight were fitted with electric fans to draw up the foul air. The fans were kept going night and day. The portholes were supplied with wind scoops. The portholes on the deck were opened as often as possible.

Portholes on the 'tween deck have often to be closed very suddenly, owing to a change of weather or a heavy swell coming up. It is not safe for anyone to go among the mules packed closely together as they are. At night when only the sentries are present it would be impressed on the muleteers that under no circumstances are they to open a port-hole. This is only to be done by a member of the crew acting under the direct orders of a ship's officer.

SANITATION

To clean out the standings all the mules in the first standing were taken out and fastened up in the most convenient place, near a hatch or in the alleyway. The dung was then shovelled out into small baskets. On the upper deck these were at once carried to the open spaces in the standings necessitated by ships fittings and from there emptied into the sea. Below decks, large baskets were collected in the hatches and the small baskets emptied into them. When the large baskets were full they were hoisted up by means of the derricks and steam winches, hauled to the side by some of the ship's crew standing on the roof of the upper deck stalls and emptied into the sea. As soon as all the dung was removed the standing was carefully brushed and then sprinkled with McDougall's carbolic powder.

The division boards being removed, the mules from the next standing were moved into the clean one and the division boards replaced. The mules of the first standing cleaned were finally put into the last standing. By this arrangement mules in unfavourable parts of the ship were not retained there permanently. When taken out of their standings the mules were examined to see they had no wounds or swollen limbs. At first the men were only able to clean out half each day, but they soon got to their work and the mules got to understand what was required of them and in a short time every standing was cleaned every day.

Holes had been cut in the cants of the mid-ship standings to allow the urine to escape into the alley-way. It was then brushed towards the nearest aperture where it ran out into the sea. The word "Scupper" was painted in large letters over the aperture so the men saw at a glance which way to brush.

Gypsum absorbed moisture more satisfactory than McDougall's carbolic powder, so it was always used in the alleyways. It was impressed on the men that standings and alleyways must be kept as dry as possible. After watering the mules the alleyways were always swept and sprinkled with gypsum. In the holes, the urine percolated through the coal into the bilge-water. Every day phenyl was poured through the sounding holes in the upper deck into the bilge-water, which was periodically pumped out

The air below decks never smelt foul during the entire voyage, the only smell perceptible being that of the disinfecting powder.

EMBARKATION

Previous to the arrival of the "City of Edinburgh" at New Orleans the mules and donkey stallions had all been brought down to the vicinity of the wharf. From the ground where the mules were encamped to the wharf a passage broad enough for mules in single file was railed in.

On the wharf this passage broadened out into a small enclosure, out of which two passages led to the loading doors in the ship's side.

After coaling was finished and the hay, which was supplied here, had been placed on board, there was only sufficient daylight to allow the 47 donkey stallions and 240 mules being put on board. The remaining 1,362 mules were settled in their standings on board next day in eight hours.

HEAD STALLS & HEAD ROPES

Before coming on board the mules were each supplied with a head stall and head rope. The headstalls were of leather and lasted well, in spite of their being considerably chewed. The mules seemed to like the head ropes, which were made of something closely resembling "Surkunda" grass. Though the ropes had been soaked in a decoction of aloes the mules sucked and chewed them incessantly. Some head ropes were made from the ship's rope, commonly known on ships as "Europe Rope." They remained untouched throughout the voyage.

It was previously mentioned that the hay for the mules was put on board at New Orleans. It was of exceptional quality and was consumed eagerly by the mules. It however had been pressed very badly. i.e. usual measurements of bales of hay for loading on board ship are said to average from 130-150 cubic feet per ton. These bales varied from 220-250 cubic feet per ton, and considerable difficulty was experienced in getting the large quantity required on board the ship. The bales were also found to vary in weight from 40 lbs. to 140 lbs. The disparity being so great it was necessary to weigh out daily the amount required, instead of issuing so many bales. There is never too much room on board a ship, so it took some time each day to weigh out from 180-220 bales to make tip the day's ration.

The following timetable will give an idea of the day's work:

5-45 am.	Water.
6-00	2 lbs. hay per mule.

6-15	Commence cleaning standings.
7-30	Issue of fodder for day from hold.
10-00	Issue of 1/2 oz. salt per mule; water.
10-30	Donkey stallions exercised and groomed.
11-00	Issue 2 lbs. hay per mule.
12 noon	" Break off."
2-00 pm.	Water.
2-30	Clean standings.
4-30	Donkey stallions exercised.
5-30	Issue 4 oz. salt. ; water,
6-00	Issue 3 lbs. hay per mule.
8-00	Night sentries posted.
1-30 am.	Night sentries changed

Cleaning stalls and feeding the mules took up practically the whole of the day.

The donkey stallions were brushed every day on the face, neck and back. Having very heavy coats they felt the heat and were perpetually rubbing themselves against the boards.

A short walk reduced the swelling of the testicles which long standing engendered. Sufficient space was only available to exercise six at a time. That number were exercised every morning and evening. It was not possible with so few men to groom the mules at all, and except when moved to clean their standing they got no exercise, there being no room to do so.

WATERING

It will be noticed that the mules were watered four times daily. They were always eager for the water. Previous to getting their water, 1/2 an ounce of salt was put in the troughs. They at once licked this up. On very hot days their troughs were filled up with water after they had their usual drink. At night sentries had orders to give water at once to any animal appearing distressed and having a difficulty in breathing. Generally the distress abated at once.

FEEDING

On coming on board, bran was issued to the mules and donkey stallions. They all refused it. For nearly a fortnight various plans were tried to make them eat it. Finding that the mules were apparently doing very well on 10 lbs. of grass per mule per day, the bran and grain ration was discontinued, and the mules kept very fit on the hay alone.

The hay was given in small quantities at a time. This was to prevent the mules wasting it by trampling on it, consequently every scrap of it was eaten. Considering the large number of animals there was very little sickness, and it seems in a great measure due to the mules getting plenty to drink and getting no grain to heat the blood and induce constipation. On a long voyage under-feeding is better than over- feeding.

SENTRIES

It has been mentioned that mules appear to get very nervous during a long voyage and that when they get a leg over a head rope or in any way entangled, they struggle considerably. On

this account it is advisable never to leave the mules un-watched. During the day there were so many people passing to and fro on the upper deck that special sentries were unnecessary, but all through the night there were two sentries on duty.

While the simple ration of hay seemed to suit the mules so well, a great deal of their immunity from sickness must be put down to having had very little rough weather, cool breezes, comparatively little rain and little excessive heat.

ROUTE

The route taken after leaving the Mississippi River was by the North-West Providence Channel through the Bahamas Islands. This channel passes south of the Great Abaco Island. On reaching the Atlantic Ocean a straight line was made for the Cape of Good Hope. The North-Eastern Trade Winds were steady and kept the ship cool. There was very little rain in the Doldrums, but there were a few days, which were trying to the mules on the Equator. On getting into the South-East Trade Winds it cooled down again.

It was unusually calm going round the Cape of Good Hope and only blew hard just as the ship was getting into Durban. Previous to arrival of the ship it had been very hot there, but the wind reduced the temperature and was followed by rain. The mules therefore had cool weather while at anchor. The voyage was then continued through the Mozambique Channel to the east of Johanna, one of the Comora Islands, round the Seychelles Islands and through the Maldiva Islands to the east coast of Ceylon and from thence up the Bay of Bengal. On the south side of the Equator the South-East Trade Wind still kept the ship cool until she hit the North-East Monsoon which continued up to the head of the Bay of Bengal.

TEMPERATURE

It was a remarkably fortunate voyage. The highest temperature recorded in the ship was 94 and the lowest 63. Although 94 is not a high temperature in the open air it is quite sufficiently trying to animals shut up between the decks of a ship. As the temperature rose some cases of very high fever generally occurred.

CASUALTIES

The deaths that occurred during the voyage numbered seven and all except one occurred before reaching the Cape of Good Hope. Six of the above casualties were Mules, and one donkey stallion, the causes of death being;

- 1 case of pneumonia.
- 2 cases of concussion of brain.
- 2 cases of heat apoplexy.
- 1 case of congestion of lung.

On a death occurring it is at once entered in the ship's log. On arrival at the port of disembarkation, an extract from the log should be obtained, giving the following information:

1. Description, Number, Sex, Age.
2. Date of death, Longitude and Latitude in which the animal died.

This extract should be signed by the Captain.

GRAIN & FODDER

The quantity of grain and fodder shipped from Glasgow for the mules was as follows;

62 Tons	maize in bags of 235 lbs.
62 Tons	oats in bags of 145 lbs.
440 Tons	hay
170 Tons	bran in bags of 112 lbs.
2 Tons	salt in casks of about 500 lbs.

DISEMBARKATION

The disembarkation of the mules, owing to the position of the mooring buoys and the size of the Jetty at Garden Reach, could only be carried out through one leading door instead of two, and occupied 8 1/2 hours. Mooring was not completed till 4 pm but the disembarkation was proceeded with till 10-30 pm by the light of the large cluster lights with which the ship is provided and about 1,000 mules walked ashore. Next morning the donkey stallions and the remainder of the mules were all on shore in two hours. In carrying out the disembarkation one mule unfortunately broke its pastern and had to be destroyed.

Thus concluded what is said to have been the longest voyage of such a large number of animals in one ship.”

(I should be grateful for any information or guidance that members may have regarding instruction manuals for Mountain Batteries and technical information on construction and application of the 2.5” and 3.7” ‘Screw’ Guns. Brian Small)

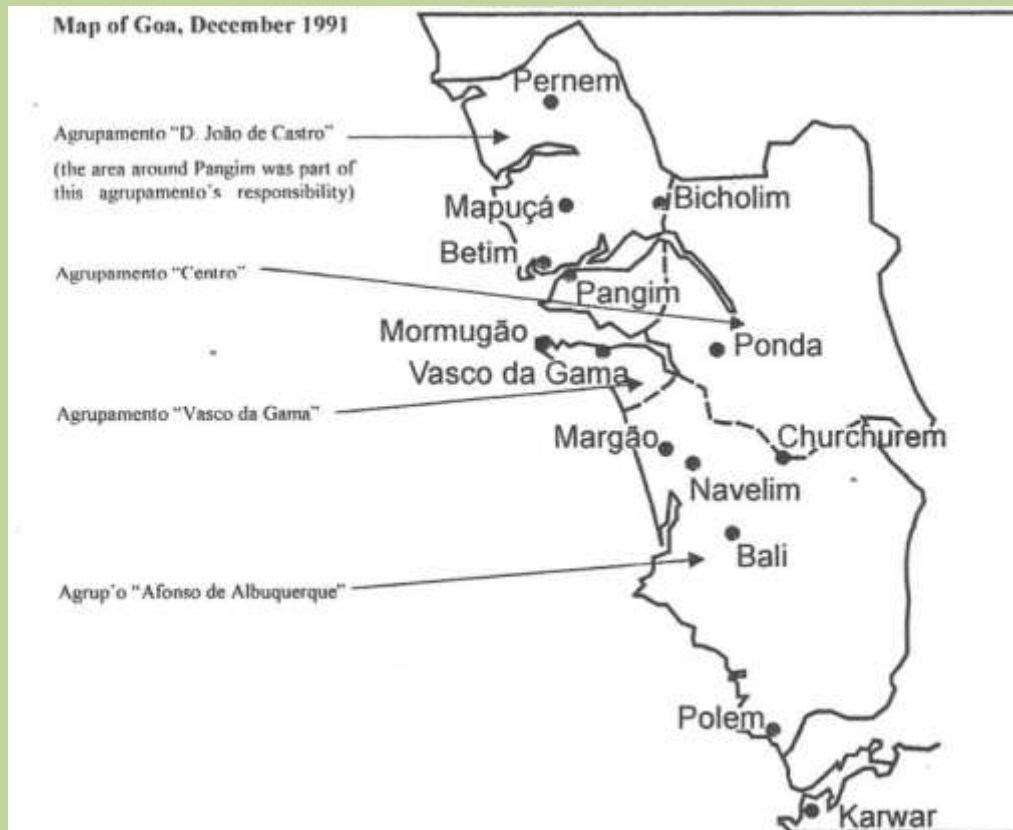


OPERATION VIJAY – DECEMBER 1961 - THE PORTUGUESE ORDER OF BATTLE

Duncan Maclean

I decided to put together this short article for two reasons. Firstly, the editor, rightly, continues to ask the readership to send in material to broaden the scope of articles in Durbar. My own interest is the post-Independence Indian Army and its operations. Secondly, although the Order of Battle of the Indian Forces is well documented¹ I hope that details of the lesser-known Portuguese forces will be of some interest to other members.

The details of the Portuguese forces were largely taken from de Morais's book. My Portuguese being non-existent I "translated" the paragraphs I required using a pocket dictionary! So, if anyone has any corrections or anything to add please send in your comments.



THE PORTUGUESE ARMY

Portuguese forces in India had undergone substantial reorganisation in the late 1950s prior to adopting the Agrupamento system in 1961. The outbreak of colonial wars in Mozambique and Angola merely hastened the process. In December 1961 the majority of their forces were naturally concentrated in Goa with smaller groupings defending the other enclaves of Daman and Diu. In Goa, there were four groupings – one each defending the enclave from attack from the north, east and south plus one in reserve (and countering the threat of an amphibious assault). There was a workshop company (Companhia de Manutenção de Material) based around Dabolim airfield which additionally had a few flak guns for defence.² There were no air assets (despite an Indian Intelligence assessment that there may be a few fighter-bombers plus bombers converted from transports³) but there was a small naval presence. This, however, is not the subject of this article.

Thus was the position that General Manuel António Vassalo e Silva found himself in when on 17 December 1961 he had to enact Plano "Sentinela" – the defence of Goa against Indian aggression.

INDIAN STRENGTH ASSESSMENTS

The Indian assessment of Portuguese strength was largely accurate although it appears as if they had missed the recent reorganisation as they still referred to battalions. Generally, Indian accounts of the action tend to overestimate the strength of the Daman and Diu garrisons. For example, the Official History (page 41) states that the Portuguese had three infantry

battalions in Goa with three companies each in Daman and Diu. As will be seen below the strength in Diu, in particular, was significantly overestimated.

Interestingly, as recounted above, the Indians expected to meet some aerial opposition. The Portuguese used the aircraft of their colonial airline TAIP (Transportes Aéreos da Índia Portuguesa) to transport units and one account refers to the possibility of these transports being converted into ad hoc bombers. In addition, the Official History makes mention that the air force planned to face a Pakistan squadron based at Goa-Dabolim. In the event, there was no opposition in the air.

THE PORTUGUESE OB

AGRUPAMENTO "D. JOÃO DE CASTRO"

Commanded by Major Acácio Nunes Tenreiro (HQ: Velha-Goa) and tasked with the defence of the Northern sector. Subordinate units commanded by and based at: Companhia de Caçadores No.1⁴ (Cpt. Ressurreição, Ilha de Goa), Companhia de Caçadores No.6⁵ (Cpt. Francisco Pires, Velha-Goa), Companhia de Caçadores No.8⁶ – only two platoons one each serving as garrison of Forte da Aguada and of Bambolin radio station, Companhia de Caçadores No.9 (Cpt. ?, Uçaçaim) and Esquadrão de Reconhecimento No.1 (Cpt. Silva Reis, Maputa). This sector was to see the major Indian thrust led by 50 Para Brigade.

AGRUPAMENTO "CENTRO"

Commanded by Major Francisco de Morais (HQ: Pondá) and tasked with the defence of the central Eastern sector. Subordinate units commanded by and based at: Esquadrão de Reconhecimento No.2 (Cpt. Manuel Engrácia Antunes, Bicholim), Esquadrão de Reconhecimento No.3 (Cpt. Hélder Matias, Pondá), one platoon ex-Companhia de Caçadores No.3 (Pondá) and a platoon of sappers at Pondá.

AGRUPAMENTO "AFONSO DE ALBUQUERQUE"

Commanded by Major José Rangel de Almeida and tasked with the defence of the Southern sector. Subordinate units commanded by and based at: Companhia de Caçadores No.3⁴ (Cpt. Martins Pereira, Pondá), Companhia de Caçadores No.10 (Cpt. Francisco Cabral Couto, Navelim), Bateria de Artilharia No.1⁴ (Cpt. ?, Alto Margão), Esquadrão de Reconhecimento No.4 (Cpt. António Pereira Coutinho, Bali). In addition one platoon from EscRec 3 was operating in this sector.

AGRUPAMENTO "VASCO DA GAMA"

Commanded by Major Joaquim Carneira de Silva and concentrated for the defence of Dabolim airfield. Subordinate units commanded by and based at: Companhia de Caçadores No. 2⁴ (Cpt. José Rolita Correia Caniné, Vasco da Gama), Companhia de Caçadores No.7 (Cpt. João Luís de Sousa Alves, Vasco da Gama), Companhia de Caçadores No.8 – less two platoons attached to Northern sector, Bateria de Artilharia No.2⁴ (Cpt. Fernando Lobo da Costa, Alto Mangor).

In addition, General Vassalo e Silva could call upon the services of a not inconsiderable number of police and customs officials for the defence of Goa. These men tended to be strung out along the border manning a series of posts.

DAMAN GARRISON – AGRUPAMENTO "CONSTANTINO DE BRAGANÇA"

Commanded by Major António José da Costa Pinto. Subordinate units were commanded by: Companhia de Caçadores No.11 (Cpt. José Simões Faria), Companhia de Caçadores No.12 (Cpt. Gustavo Rebelo de Sousa) and Bateria de Artilharia No.3 (Cpt. Felgueiras e Sousa)

In addition to these regular troops Major da Costa Pinto could call upon the services of some 200 Polícia and 33 Guarda Fiscal. This fairly large force of police probably explains the Indian estimates of a third company in Daman.

DIU GARRISON – AGRUPAMENTO "ANTÓNIO DA SILVEIRA"

Commanded by Major Fernando de Vasconcelos. Subordinate units commanded by: Companhia de Caçadores de Diu⁴ (Cpt João Manuel Maltez Soares) and Bateria de Artilharia No.4 (Cpt. Mário Pinto Rodrigues de Almeida).

In addition to these regular troops Major de Vasconcelos could call upon the services of some 33 Polícia and 50 Guarda Fiscal.

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Khera, P.N. *Operation Vijay. The Liberation of Goa and other Portuguese Colonies in India* (1961) Historical Section, Ministry of Defence, 1974.

Notes

1. See, for example, the official history “*Operation Vijay*” or any of the Indian Regimental Histories dealing with the campaign, such as Lt Col Ahmad’s “*Living up to Heritage. The Rajputs 1947 to 1970*” (Lancer, 1997)
2. Operation Vijay lists six 20mm AA guns amongst the equipment captured in Goa plus one other in Daman (pages 239-240).
3. Operation Vijay - page 42
4. An indigenous unit comprising native Goan troops.
5. This company formed the Commander-in-Chief’s general reserve.
6. The bulk of this unit was to pass to Agrupamento “Vasco da Gama” in the event of an invasion leaving behind its two garrison platoons.

(In the next edition of DURBAR I hope to carry an article on the latest “Operation Vijay” - that in Kargil. In the meantime those interested and with access to the Internet may care to look at the Indian Army’s web site for this operation - <http://www.vijayinkargil.org/operationvijay/html>. Surprisingly quick off the mark, it gives details, including citations, of the four winners of the Param Vir Chakra (two of them posthumous awards), plus details, but not citations, of nine Maha Vir Chakra (6 posthumous), two Vir Chakra (1 posthumous), six Kirti Chakra (all posthumous), twenty five Shaurya Chakra (13 posthumous), four Uttam Yudh Seva Medal, two Yudh Seva Medal and one bar

to Sena Medal (Gallantry). It also gives details of the fourteen Special Unit Citations. The web site includes good illustrations of each of the gallantry medals named above. I have searched in vain for a similar web site of the Pakistan Army. If anyone has found it I would be pleased to hear. (Ed.)

“FRONTIER AND OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONS FROM INDIA” - compiled in the Intelligence Branch,
Army Headquarters, India

Shamus O D Wade
(continued from Vol. 16, No. 2)

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(to be continued) (Several members have written to ask where copies of "*Frontier and Overseas Expeditions from India*" might be found. Shamus Wade says that his Commonwealth Forces History Trust has a copy of all seven volumes, as does the National Army Museum. It is possible that the Oriental and India Office Collection of the British Library will also have a copy. Ed.)



GORRUCKPORE HILL CORPS

Brian D N Stevens

One of the short-lived and now completely forgotten Corps raised by the British was, to use the contemporary spelling, the Gorruckpore Hill Corps.

Alternatively it was known as the Gorruckpore Hill Rangers. This was authorised by a General Order by the Vice President in Council dated 12 August 1815, although the Governor General had given a provisional authority on 16 April 1815. It was formed by Rajah RUTTAM SEIN of Butwal, on the Gorakhpur frontier, and his half-brother SOOK MORUNT (or MOORAH) SEIN was appointed as the Native Commandant.

It had an authorised Establishment of 8 Companies of the following strength (with rates of pay shown against each rank):

1 Subadar	Rs40
2 Jemadars	Rs15
4 Havildars	Rs11
4 Naicks	Rs9
2 Drummers	Rs6
120 Privates	Rs5
8 Hill Porters	Rs7

The Corps had a British Commandant together with a European Adjutant and Sergeant Major. The appointment of a Native Commandant, whose monthly pay was Rs100, was only to exist during the tenure of the initial holder. The effective Indian Staff comprised 2 Native Doctors, whilst there were the following non-effective appointments:

Drill Havildar
Drill Naick
Drum Major
Fife Major

All of these appointments carried a monthly allowance of Rs5, except for the Drill Naick who only received half that amount.

Each Company had, in addition, a Kote Havildar who was presumably a Pay Havildar. Whilst every Corps in the Bengal Army had a Pay Havildar I have not come across a contemporary instance of a Kote Havildar except in the case of this unit. It should be noted that at this time it was not necessary for the Pay Havildar to hold the rank of Havildar - the appointment could be held by a Sepoy or a Naick. It would seem that the ability to keep the company accounts was the prerequisite qualification for holding the position. It was not until the late 1830s that the appointment was restricted to substantive Havildars.

In addition to the fighting element of the Corps there was what was known as the Establishment, usually under the Quartermaster but in this instance under the Commandant. These Artificers and their monthly pay were as follows:

a Sallah (Hillman)	Rs15
a carpenter	Rs8
a Workman Carpenter	Rs5
two Moochis (leather workers)	Rs5
two Siglegars	Rs5

These last-named, according to Wilson's "*Glossary of Indian Terms*" were sword or knife grinders. In the days of horsed cavalry they kept the swords, lances and spurs burnished.

To what extent the Corps was employed in the war against Nepal I have been unable to discover but it was one of the casualties of the mass reduction of irregular corps directed by the G.O.G.G. dated 5 April 1816 which ordered its reduction and redeemed the promise made on their enlistment to the officers and men who were natives of the hills for a permanent grant of land on their discharge.

The Government of India, however, did not wish to dispense entirely with their services and ordered that two companies were to be added to the Gorruckpore Provincial Battalion; that a selected company was to be added to the Champarun Light Infantry which already included a Hill Company in its establishment; and a further two companies were to be transferred to the Rungpore Local Battalion. So far as the Gorruckpore Provincial Battalion and Rungpore Local Battalion were concerned, a corresponding number of existing companies were reduced to make room for those transferred from the Hill Rangers, but the reduction of an existing Champarun Light Infantry company was suspended. The reduced companies in both corps were to be composed of Natives of the Plains. (It should be noted that the Rungpore Local Battalion mentioned here was not that corps which in later years became the 6th Gurkha Rifles, but that which was disbanded in 1826 as the Dinagepore (Dinajpur) Local Battalion).

As the designation Hill Corps and Hill Rangers were both used in this Order it is difficult to determine what the correct name of the Corps was.

The Gorruckpore Provincial Battalion was reduced under the authority of G.O.V.P. of 20 January 1818 which directed that the personnel who were fit for service should be transferred to the newly raised Gorruckpore Light Infantry Battalion and the rest transferred to the Benares Provincial Battalion. As the Gorruckpore Light Infantry received drafts of Native Commissioned and Non Commissioned Officers from the Champarun Light Infantry and the Rungpore (Frontier) Battalion, it is likely that from these three sources some individuals who had served in the Gorruckpore Hill Rangers might have found their way into the new corps.

The Gorruckpore Light Infantry, together with the Champarun Light Infantry and Dinagepore (formerly Rungpore) Local Battalion, were disbanded under the terms of G.O.G.G. dated 2 September 1826.

Butwal today is within the frontiers of the Kingdom of Nepal but at the time of the war with Nepal seems to have been disputed territory.

The author of this paper would appreciate information on the following:

1. What is the modern way of spelling the names of the Rajah of Butwal, and his half-brother the Commandant?
2. What was the occupation of the Hillman individual described in the Establishment as a Sallah?

and from the same author,

THE MISSING CAVALRY SQUADRONS OF WORLD WAR I

In Appendix A to "*India's Contribution in the Great War*" published by the Government of India in 1923, mention is made of 43 ½ cavalry squadrons being raised during the course of the 1914-18 War.

One and a half of these may be accounted for by the addition of a 4th squadron to the Corps of Guides and the half squadron is likely to have been an augmentation to the strength of the Aden Troop. Two more are almost certainly replacements for those from the 7th and 23rd captured at Kut al Amara. A further 24 were used to form the 40th - 45th Cavalry. If the 46th (Alwar) Cavalry is counted as a new regiment rather than the taking over of an Imperial Service unit this would account for another four, but this still leaves twelve unaccounted for.

During the course of the war those regiments that remained in India were ordered to raise an additional squadron each and subsequently, in some regiments, a second. Some of these squadrons were used in April 1918 to form the 40th - 42nd Cavalry, each of which was raised by the transfer of a squadron or a half squadron from an existing regiment:

- The 40th - The 1st and 7th, one squadron each and A Squadron and two half squadrons from the 3rd.

- The 41st - F/26, F/39 and a squadron each from the 15th and 17th.
- The 42nd - F/35, a squadron from the Depot of the 10th and one each from two other regiments.

Additional squadrons were, I understand, raised by the 1st, 4th, 16th, 17th, 26th (two), 27th (two), 33rd, 35th, 38th and 39th, some of which were included in the formation of the 40th - 42nd.

I think I am correct in saying that the 1st, 5th, 8th, 17th, 27th, 31st, 35th, 37th and 39th remained in India for the whole period of the war and that the 3rd, 7th, 16th, 30th and 34th returned home from France and Mesopotamia during 1916. I am aware that some of these went to Mesopotamia in 1919 or 1920 but this was counted as a Peace Time posting.

The 43rd - 45th were all formed at Kantara, in Egypt, in August 1918 by transferring squadrons from regiments serving in Palestine and replacing them from the Replacement Depot at Kantara, where there were more reinforcements than were needed. These newly raised units were soon returned to India.

Can any member:

- Confirm any of the above or add any other regiments to the list?
- Quote an Order or other authority for the raising of these additional squadrons?
- Confirm that the Corps of Guides did raise a 4th squadron and, if so, its Class composition? In 1914, unlike all the other regiments, it was a three squadron unit.

LETTERS AND QUERIES

• Field Marshal Sir John Chapple writes:

Tim Ash's interesting article on the Seringapatam memorial contained an interesting lineage detail relating to the list of Native Troops. It has 1st Battalion 8th Regiment Madras Native Infantry and their 1907 descendant regiment as 10th Gurkha Rifles. The old 8th Madras Infantry survived until 1902 when they were mustered out and a new regiment was raised as a replacement. This was the 8th Gurkha Rifles (GOCC No 252 dated 12 April 1902). It was retitled as 2nd Battalion 10th Gurkha Rifles with effect from 13 July 1903 (GGO No 127 dated 13 July 1903). This title remained until 18 July 1907 when the regiment became 1st Battalion 7th Gurkha Rifles (IAO No 483 dated 27 September 1907). If the Mysore Government had commissioned this monument after July 1907 then they ought to have listed 7th Gurkha Rifles as the 'descendant' unit. In fact the lineage is not really by direct descent, since there was a break in succession in 1902. The new regiment inherited the funds, Mess and band property but not the seniority or honours of the old regiment.

BOOK NOTES

There have been so many new books appearing on the market recently that we do not have the space to carry detailed reviews of them all.

● Of particular note are the first five volumes of a six volume series *BUTTONS OF THE INDIAN ARMY* by our member Lt Col N W Poulson. Volume I covers Cavalry, II - Bengal Infantry, III - Punjab Frontier Force, Madras Infantry and Hyderabad Infantry, IV - Bombay Infantry and Gurkhas, V - Corps and support services. Volume VI yet to reach the market will contain a comprehensive index to the first five volumes, plus Battle Honours and a summary of the 1922 reorganisation. The Volumes deal with each regiment in the periods 1861-1902, 1902-1922 and 1922-1947 and each is listed by its various titles with its Battle Honours and colour of uniform lace described. There are numerous very clear hand drawn illustrations of the buttons. As Field Marshal Sir John Chapple says in his foreword, "No one has even had the patience or application to attempt this before". Neville is to be congratulated on producing what will undoubtedly be **the** major source of reference on this subject. Published by Military Press International, 1 Gallagher Close, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK8 OLQ, England, each at £29.99 (hardback) and £18.99 (paperback).

● *RIFLEMAN TO COLONEL - the memoirs of Major Gajendra Malla, 9th Gorkha Rifles* compiled by our members Elizabeth Talbot-Rice and Lt Col Tony Mains. Claimed to be the first memoir to be written by a Gurkha, Gajendra Malla was born in India the son of a serving Subedar in 2nd Goorkhas. He enlisted in 9th Gurkhas as a Rifleman (learner clerk) in 1917 but later transferred to the role of active infantryman. He was commissioned into the Royal Garhwal Rifles in 1941 and served in several intelligence appointments during the war. He transferred to 9th Gorkhas at Independence and reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, local Colonel, but as with his time in the pre-Independence Indian Army, he did not get on with superiors and found himself demoted to Major, posted to the Regimental Centre from where he retired after 37 ½ years' service. In many ways a sad story, and one cannot but admire the tenacity which kept Gajendra Malla going after so many disappointments. Published under the auspices of the General Palit Military History Trust by Reliance Publishing House, New Delhi (ISBN: 81-7510-105-9) at £10, profits from the sale are being donated to the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

● Slightly late for a review, but I have just read *1947 - A SOLDIER'S STORY - from the records of Maj Gen Mohindar Singh Chopra*, compiled and edited by his son, our member Pushpinder Singh Chopra, for the Military Studies Convention, New Delhi, 1997. Lieutenant Colonel Chopra was given command of SYLFORCE with the responsibility for ensuring law and order before, during and immediately after the referendum on partition held in Sylhet District in July 1947. After Independence he moved to Army HQ at New Delhi but was soon posted again, as a Brigadier, to take command of 123 Infantry Brigade at Amritsar in October 1947, including establishing the border check post at Wagah-Attari on the Amritsar-Lahore road. This book covers those two key events as recorded by General Chopra in his diaries and personal records, though they have been supplemented by historical research subsequently undertaken by his son, the editor of the record. A fascinating and well written story - very readable and highly recommended.

● *Dr BRIGHTON'S INDIAN PATIENTS December 1914 - January 1916* by Joyce Collins.
Published by Brighton Books (Publishing), c/o ETP, 9 South Road, Brighton BN1 6SB.
ISBN 1-901454-01-0. £5.50

This is a wonderful little book , just 33 pages long, which tells the story of the establishment of an Indian Military Hospital in Brighton at the outset of the First World War, not only in the context of the Indian troops serving in France but also of its impact on Brighton and its inhabitants. Lots of interesting photographs. The book also includes reference to special butchering and cooking arrangements for the different religions and the lady who gave me this book also lent me some postcards of the day, two of which I reproduce below. I am still trying to find out about “Mr Tate the butcher” in whose premises the photographs were taken, but my guess is that he might be the gentleman with the large moustache seated crossed legged in one of the photographs. Ed.





● *A SPECIAL CORPS - The beginnings of Gurkha Service with the British* by A P Coleman, published by the Pentland Press Ltd, £20.

The author, a war time officer of the 1st Gurkhas, is to be congratulated on the hard work which he has undertaken in writing this book. In addition to the history of the early Gurkha Regiments, he has detailed the often tortuous relations between the Nepal Durbar and the Honourable East India Company from the turn of the century to the Mutiny.

The book is in three parts - Part I from the turn of the century until the outbreak of the Gurkha War deals with the efforts of the HEIC to consolidate their territorial gains up to the Sutlej River in the face of the Gurkha Armies moving steadily west along the Himalayan foothills annexing as they went Kumaon, Gartwal, the Doon and Sirmoor, until they reached Kangra and threatened Jammu. At the same time Ranjit Singh of the Punjab was endeavouring to halt the Gurkha advance and also to increase his influence in the Cis Sutlej States. Ochterlony and Fraser stand out in this period.

Part II deals in detail with the Gurkha War and the raising of auxiliary corps of prisoners and deserters from the Gurkha Armies, many of whom were not Gurkhas but "hillmen" from the territories annexed by them. The Convention of 1815 allowed Gurkhas to take service in the HEIC's forces, but curiously this was not repeated in the Treaty of Segauli which ended the war. Thus were born the Corps which in due course became the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Gurkhas.

Part III deals with the difficulty of recruiting in Nepal in view of the hostility to this shown by the Nepal authorities. This led to the establishment of colonies of Gurkha pensioners adjacent to the three Gurkha garrisons and the enlistment of their progeny - there was also a large enlistment of "Hill Men", non Gurkhas from the Himalayan foothills. The establishment of the three Gurkha Corps on a permanent basis was largely due to their proven loyalty and the nagging fear that all was not well with the regular units of the Bengal Army.

There is no doubt that this work is extremely well researched and documented - besides nine appendices, there are twenty four statistical tables scattered about the text as well as thirty

pages of notes and references. I feel that this is very much a book for the scholar or ex officers of Gurkhas, but it is a heavy read and I wonder how much it will appeal to the general reader. AAM

● *WHEN GENERALS FAILED - The Chinese Invasion* by Brigadier Darshan Kullar. Published under the auspices of the General Palit Military Studies Trust by Manus Publications, New Delhi. £15

The author took part in the operations in the Kameng sector of NEFA in the China War of 1962. Much of the work is a personal account by a young officer, then of only one year's service, of the tragic events which caused the rout of the Indian Army on this sector. As Sir John Chapple says (in his foreword) it is "dramatic, vivid and rather saddening". It is particularly sad for me, as with my seniority (1934) and having served at the Infantry School 1948-52, I was personally acquainted with nearly all the Major Generals and Brigadiers involved, some being personal friends.

The author gives a lucid account of the reasons for the conflict and the state of the Army immediately before it - here he is somewhat starry eyed, particularly in view of the hash that the Army made of the Goa expedition the year before, in which the only organisations to earn any credit were the Railways. His Postscript on the lessons of the campaign is most interesting.

The junior officers, unlike their seniors, generally behaved well as is shown by their heavy casualties, but the behaviour of the "jawans" was patchy - only the Garhwal Battalion was dependable to the end - in one case they had to be used as the COs of the two Sikh Light Infantry Battalions admitted that they had lost all control over their men. The author mentions also the bad blood between the low caste Mazhbi Sikhs of the Sikh Light Infantry and the high caste Jat Sikhs of the Sikh Regiment and questions the wisdom of brigading them together.

This is a most interesting, if sad book, well put together, very readable and one that I would thoroughly recommend both to the military historian and to the general reader. AAM

