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“FRONTIER AND OVERSEAS EXPEDITIONS FROM INDIA” - compiled in the Intelligence Branch,  
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Shamus O D Wade  
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*(This account states that “At different times 469 native soldiers were sent as non-combatants to help in remount depots and to act as orderlies; 6,602 native non-combatants were also sent.” However, in the Public Record Office file WO 100/296 there is a complete list of names, ranks and units of the 1,677 Indian soldiers and 9,065 Indian followers etc. who received the Queen’s South Africa Medal. Space does not allow me to comment on the possible reasons for the difference in the figure)*

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All

(This concludes the series of articles on this subject)

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#### THE HONOUR OF THE MAHARANAS AND MEWAR'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CENTRAL POWERS<sup>1</sup>

Kenneth X. Robbins

Official correspondence between States is usually drawn up on formal stationery. Therefore it is quite surprising to see such communication from the Prime Minister of Mewar to the Judicial Council of

Tonk typed on the reverse of World War II propaganda postcards. Such usage is as unexpected as is the case of Sirmur postcards overprinted for use as court fee stamps and non-postal use of Mewar court fee and Rajkot revenue stamps on British Indian postcards.<sup>2</sup>

Considering Mewar's long history of not recognizing the superiority of, or even any alliance with, any suzerain or central power, it is very surprising to see any self-initiated statement supporting the war efforts of their British overlords.<sup>3</sup> Even in the present day, long after Mewar's Maharanas have been stripped of even their titles, a Maharana Mewar Foundation brochure states "'Maharana' is not a title or position given by any central power or external agency, but acquired by the Rulers of Mewar by service and sacrifices, and recognized and respected all over the country".<sup>4</sup>

#### THE PREMIER RAJPUT DYNASTY

This Sesodia Rajput dynasty dates its foundation to the sixth century and the family genealogical chart includes some seventy-six names. The Maharanas, though tracing their ancestry back to the son of the god Rama, did not consider themselves absolute monarchs but "were to hold the State as a sacred Trust" in the role of prime ministers of the state deity god Eklingaji. According to tradition, Harit Rishi of the Lakulish cult bestowed the Kingdom of Mewar in the eighth century to Bappa Rawal (734-53) in the name of the god Shiva. So the state was held in the name of the god Shiva but the ruling dynasty traced its ancestry back to Rama, an avatar or incarnation of the god Vishnu.

*(There is a genealogical list of the Rulers of Mewar in Brian Masters' "Maharana: The Story of the Rulers of Udaipur", published by Mapin Publishing, Ahmedabad, 1990, pages 133-4, but space does not permit its inclusion here)*

#### HONOUR AND PRESTIGE

Even the British noted "The Oudeypore family is the highest in rank and dignity among the Rajput Chiefs of India".<sup>5</sup> Mewar's reputation has long been based on willingness of its rulers, nobles and armies to maintain honour and unbroken martial spirit in the face of overwhelming defeat. For example, Rana Sanga (1509-27) never gave up his struggles despite betrayals, military defeats and some eighty wounds including a crippling leg injury and loss of an eye and an arm. As Colonel James Tod put it, "Mewar alone the sacred bulwark of religion, never compromised her honour for her safety...(T)he blood of her princes has flowed in copious streams for the maintenance of this honour, religion and independence".<sup>6</sup>

In 1970, Maharana Bhagwat Singh wrote to Indira Gandhi that "hardships are to be endured, but not dishonour".<sup>7</sup> The legitimacy and appeal of the dynasty was based on its maintenance of its dignity and honour rather than its power at any given time.

#### THE ROMANCE OF CHITTAURGARH (CHITOR): UNYIELDING RESISTANCE TO INVADERS

The mighty fortress of Chittaurgarh still stands today as testimony to Mewar's resistance to waves of invaders of the subcontinent. A recent tourist brochure described it as

"the essence of chivalry and courage, of battle scarred walls reminiscent of tragic love thwarted by Rajput ideals of honour and self-respect...A brave city, the pilgrimage of every warrior...a victory named Chittaurgarh."

The fort is dominated by the Vijay Stambh the victory tower built by Rana Kumbha (1433-68) commemorating his 1437 victory over Sultan Mahmud Khilji. Philatelists will recognize the Victory Tower from its appearance on India's 1949 one rupee postage stamp.

Chittaurgarh stands as a monument to the idea of death before dishonor or submission.<sup>8</sup> In the face of certain defeat by Alla-ud-din Khilji in 1303, the women submitted to voluntary self-immolation (*jauhar*) and the men, smeared in their ashes and wearing saffron robes, fought to the death. The same process of self-immolation and fighting to the death marked the 1535 siege by Sultan Bahadur Shah of Gujarat.<sup>9</sup> The Mughal Emperor Akbar took the city in 1567.

#### MAINTENANCE OF HONOUR AND PRIDE IN THE FACE OF MILITARY AND POLITICAL DEFEAT

In 1576, Rana Pratap (1572-97) was defeated at Haldighati by the forces of Akbar. Pratap's mortally wounded horse Chetak took him safely away so that he was able to undertake a long guerrilla war against the Mughals. A recent Amar Chitra Katha comic book proclaimed that "Rana Pratap's name is synonymous to the highest order of the revolutionary patriotic spirit of India".

The Mughals wanted Mewar to become a state in subordinate alliance with them. Therefore, an Imperial Mughal artist painted a scene where a courtier makes sure that Rana Pratap's son Amar Singh (1597-1620) really does bend enough to show a humiliating submission to Prince Khurram, later to be known as Shah Jahan.<sup>10</sup> Though Mewar was finally obligated to recognize Mughal sovereignty, no ruling Maharana ever deigned to serve at the Mughal Court or dishonour his heritage by sending a daughter to marry its emperors.

Jagat Singh (1626-52) dreamed of restoring his country's independence. Jennifer Joffe believes that this was the guiding motivation for much of his patronage activities.<sup>11</sup> He commissioned a fabulous illustrated manuscript of the *Ramayana*, the story of how his divine "ancestor" Rama had finally triumphed after being deprived of his kingdom, exiled, and having to fight again and again.<sup>12</sup> Jagat Singh built the Jagdish temple, which Joffe has called "Udaipur's equivalent" to the Tower of Victory at Chittaurgarh, to commemorate the "military conquests" of all the dynasty's rulers. Inscriptions labelled even the military defeat at Haldighati as a victory.<sup>13</sup> Certainly the dynasty's claims to legitimacy were enhanced by their proud refusal to quit or submit.

This proud tradition did not die. Though the British were much more powerful than Mewar in 1832, Jaswan Singh (1828-38) was quite seriously insulted when some British officials breached etiquette by entering the tent enclosure with parasols, symbols of rank and honour. C T Metcalfe, who negotiated the 1818 treaty, had no objection to any clause forbidding the English to compel any future maharana's attendance at a *darbar*. Such a clause was not inserted because both sides believed that this was understood.<sup>14</sup> In 1875, Sajjan Singh (1874-84) avoided presentation as a feudal subject to Prince Edward Albert.

#### FATEH SINGH: THE IRREPRESSIBLE MAHARANA (1884-1930)

It was a matter of principle to Maharana Fateh Singh that he not compromise his claim to precedence in position over any other Indian prince. Learning that his assigned place in the 1903 Coronation Durbar procession and assemblage was below that of some other princes, Fateh Singh did not attend because he was "ill". Rather than soil the dignity of his dynasty, he threatened to commit suicide before the 1911 Coronation Durbar. He was appointed one of the five "ruling chiefs in waiting", exempted from paying *nazar*, named a Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire, and was the first Indian ruler to be presented to the King-Emperor. Once again he "fell ill" rather than joining a procession and assembly where other princes would take precedence over him.<sup>15</sup>

During his reign, Mewar did not join other maharajas in the Indian States Forces scheme to protect the British Empire. During World War I its Lancers were so limited in number that they could not be employed as a separate unit. Mewar did provide men to train remounts within India.<sup>16</sup> Fateh Singh refused to raise a battalion of troops in 1918 but out of largesse contributed considerable sums of money to the war effort.<sup>17</sup>

Maharana Bhagwat Singh (1955-1984) recalled his predecessor's resistance to pressures to support the war effort in the following terms:

He said, 'When there is a fight in India, Europeans don't come here to die, so why should we send our Indians to die when Europeans fight?' But at the end of the war the British sent him the highest decoration for war services and they brought this GCIE<sup>18</sup> in a velvet case and he looked at it and said to his interpreter, 'It is the sort of thing that *pattwallas* (attendants) in offices wear. Put it on the horse. It looks better on a horse than a king.'<sup>19</sup> The interpreter on his own told the British officials that this was not an auspicious day, so His Highness would put it on some other time. Later when somebody asked him why he got such a high honour for doing nothing, he said, 'Because I rendered the British the highest service. While the British were away fighting the war in Europe I didn't take over Delhi. Isn't that a big enough service?'<sup>20</sup>

Whatever the strength of his small army, Fateh Singh proudly saw himself as the successor to brave kings like Rana Pratap.

Fateh Singh fought the powerful pro-British political faction in Mewar. He usually refused to appoint modernizing or pro-British administrators and capable powerful prime ministers. Failure of the Maharana's government to control political dissent also worried the British. In 1921, the British forced him to delegate his ruling powers to his son. His title, honours and ceremonial position as head of state were not affected.

The Maharanas always avoided issuing coins in the name of either the Mughal Empire<sup>21</sup> or the British. In 1931-2 after Fateh Singh's death, Mewar did issue milled coinage inscribed "*Dosti Landhana*" meaning "Friendly with London" or "A Friend of London". The coins were back-dated to 1928, two years before his death but after his powers had been taken from him.<sup>22</sup>

#### POLITICAL WEAKNESS AND COMPLIANCE IN SUBORDINATE ALLIANCE WITH THE BRITISH

Fateh Singh's refusal to acknowledge British might and suzerainty was in keeping with the dynasty's proud tradition but other nineteenth and twentieth century maharanas were often forced to comply with British demands. For example, in 1870, the young Maharana Shambhu Singh (1861-74) was not only required to attend a Viceregal *darbar* at Ajmer, but he was made to become a Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India. The British ignored his objection that it would be derogatory for him to accept the title of a simple 'star' as the Maharana had been traditionally honoured as *Hindua Suraj* (Sun of the Hindus).<sup>23</sup>

Swaroop Singh (1842-61) protected Europeans on Jagmandir island during the so-called "Indian Mutiny". This was seen as a matter of honour. His actions were compared to the sanctuary given to Prince Khurram (the Mughal heir, who had previously subdued Mewar) on Jagmandir by Rana Karan Singh (1620-28).

Despite the maharanas' concern with their prestige and position, British power had to be acknowledged. The treaty Bhim Singh (1778-1828) made in 1818 stated that the maharana "will always act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government, and acknowledge its supremacy".<sup>24</sup> This treaty was signed by the destitute and virtually powerless maharana because the devastating rapine of the Marathas and Pindaris had led to financial ruin and civil anarchy in Mewar.

The first Political Agent, Colonel James Tod, author of *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, was greeted with cries of "Firangi raj ki jai" (Victory to the foreign government). He took personal control of the government. In 1863, Lieutenant Colonel Eden took over complete control of the government.

A number of Mewar paintings document the presence of Colonel Tod and other British officials at the durbars and activities of Bhim Singh after 1818.<sup>25</sup> Visits of British officials to the durbars of other nineteenth century maharanas like Jawan Singh<sup>26</sup> and Saroop Singh are also known. Paintings by Tara and F C Lewis document Sir Henry Lawrence's 1855 visit for the signing of a treaty to settle the chronic disputes between the maharanas and their *sardars* (nobles).<sup>27</sup> A painting of the enthronement durbar of Bhupal Singh (1930-55) shows L W Reynolds, who was Agent to the Governor-General for Rajputana, sitting on a silver throne beside the Maharana. Five other British officials complete the first row of dignitaries.<sup>28</sup> Even Fateh Singh had a painting made with British officials at his court, though it is unclear to the author whether this was meant to enhance his prestige because they were coming to his court.<sup>29</sup> No other school of Rajput painting featured British officials so prominently.<sup>30</sup>

## MEWAR'S PARTICIPATION IN WORLD WAR II

Mewar's participation was somewhat greater in the Second World War than the First when Fateh Singh had been maharana. In 1933, Mewar joined the Indian States Forces scheme for protection of the Empire. Maharana Bhupal Singh's honorary rank was only that of Lieutenant Colonel and, unlike many other prominent princes, he was the honorary colonel of any Indian Army regiment.

The Bhupal Infantry, first raised in 1932, joined the Indian States Forces the following year as a Class B unit but was earmarked for overseas service as a General Service Unit in 1940. It was employed on internal security duties until June 10, 1941. It was sent to the Middle East until November 1944. The Maharaja of Jaipur was instrumental in avoiding a crisis when these troops arrived.

“In Khartoum I was staying with General Sir William Platt and got a message from HQ to come and help them as a State Battalion of Bhopal was arriving there...Being a Battalion from Bhopal and composed of Muslims, beef was their chief ration. Everything was worked out on a grand scale as this was the first time a State Force battalion was to be seen in this area...To my horror I found it was a battalion from Udaipur and not Bhopal...I hurriedly got on to the Q Branch and told them that the Battalion...was not from Bhopal but from Udaipur and the reception they had arranged was likely to cause a mutiny<sup>31</sup>...They had misunderstood the signal which said the “Bhopal Infantry Mewar” will be arriving. Nobody at Khartoum had ever heard of Mewar. So naturally they took it to be Bhopal Infantry from Bhopal State.”<sup>32</sup>

In February 1945 the Bhupal Infantry was posted to Baluchistan for anti-locust duties.

The Sajjan Infantry, raised and categorized as a Class B unit in 1942, was soon reorganized as a State Service Unit (SSU). The Mewar Lancers, first raised in 1908, became a Class A unit in 1938, but was relabelled as SSU. A demonstration platoon was transferred in 1943 for service at the Infantry School, Saugor.<sup>33</sup>

A British cigarette card circa 1937<sup>34</sup> and a Mewar World War II Victory Medal both use the image of the Victory Tower at Chittaurgarh, showing the continuing meaning of the long past glories of the rulers of Mewar. Certainly, Mewar's dignity was not sullied by official use of two comic postcards lampooning enemies.

## CONCLUSION

Today Mewar no longer exists as a state, nor do the Sesodias even reign anymore. Arvind Singh Mewari has no political power and cannot even use the title maharana but he still radiates the familial aura of grace, confidence and service.

Whatever the political misfortunes of Mewar's ruling dynasty over fourteen centuries, its family honour and dignity remain unsullied.

...the Maharana's position was never founded upon the possession of land or the ownership of castles, but on trusteeship, on the maintenance of what had been granted in trust to the ancestors. That is why it is impossible to find, throughout the many turbulent years of struggle in the battlefield, any instance of aggression on the part of Mewar. Their wars have been uniquely defensive, in obedience to their vows of honour, decency and hospitality made to the deity Eklingaji.<sup>35</sup>

#### FOOTNOTES

1. I would like to thank Milo Beach (Freer Gallery & Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian) for sharing his wide knowledge of India and energizing me with his enthusiasm and encouragement to do projects like this one. I am very grateful to Tony McClenaghan (Indian Military Historical Society), Rachel McDermott (Barnard College, Columbia University) and Andrew Topsfield (Ashmolean Museum) for their comments and support as well as to Jennifer Joffe for the opportunity to utilize her as yet unpublished papers. The errors are mine.
2. Mehta published two examples of Rajkot general stamps affixed to King George V postcards. He suggests that court fee stamps were required because requests for actions like information and adjournment were treated as petitions. See Dhirubhai Mehta "King George V - Quarter Anna post cards". *Philatelic Journal of India* Jan-Feb 1976.
3. In the body of this paper I will also document exceptions to this age old posture.
4. *Dynastic Sketch (6th to 20th Century AD)*, page 3. Mewar: Maharana Mewar Foundation, no date
5. C V Aitchison. *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements & Sanads relating to India and Neighbouring Countries*, Volume IV, page 3. Calcutta: J L Kingham, Foreign Department Press 1864. This comment is derived from Captain Brooke's *History of Mewar*.
6. James Tod *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, page 303. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass 1971.
7. *Dynastic Sketch (6th to 20th Century AD)* page 8
- 8 An interesting study would be to compare Mewar's pride in Chittaurgarh with Israel's attempt to buttress its army's resolve by taking them to Masada, whose defenders committed suicide rather than submit to the Romans. This story is now topical since the Chief Minister of Punjab, impressed by Israel's Yad Vashem memorial to persecution, picked its architect to design a site for the tercentenary anniversary of the Khalsa. The structure will be inspired by the architecture of Indian forts.
9. Different authors have given conflicting dates for this event and the building of the Vijay Stambh.
- 10 Milo Beach and Ebba Koch *King of the World* number 7. Washington: Sackler Gallery 1997. This extraordinary work of scholarship is the definitive work on a great illustrated manuscript, the Windsor Castle *Padshah-nama*.
11. Andrew Topsfield, in a personal communication to the author dated May 27, 1999, disagrees with her position: "I think Jagat Singh built the Jagdish temple out of piety to Vishnu and to achieve religious merit, rather than a triumphalist equivalent to the Jayastambha at Chitor".
12. Jennifer Joffe *Art and Politics: The Patronage of Kagat Singh*. Plan project submitted for degree of Master of Arts to the Department of Art History of the University of Minnesota, December 20, 1996.

13. Jennifer Joffe "The Art of Politics, The Politics of Art: The Jagdish Temple in Udaipur". Paper presented at the American Council for Southern Asian Art Symposium in Charleston, South Carolina, November 1, 1998
14. Ram Vallabh Somani. *Later Mewar* page 160. Jaipur: Shantidevi Somani, 1985
15. The author has taken a large map of the 1911 Coronation Durbar and added fiscal stamps, ephemera, photographs and postal covers to document the identities of princes attending.
16. Tony McClenaghan. Personal communication, February 18, 1999
17. Paliwal says it was Rs100,000 to the Rajputana Aircraft and Machine Guns Fund and Rs 200,000 to the Indian Relief Fund. He says that Mewar also gave a loan of Rs 800,000 whose interest was to be used for war purposes. Somani says the Maharana contributed Rs200,000 to the Imperial Indian Relief Fund and Rajputana Aircraft and Machine Guns Fund and Rs2,000,000 towards the war loan with Rs18,333 in interest utilized for "Ford Motors" for the Indian Army.
18. This is incorrect. Tony McClenaghan (personal communication May 10 and May 11, 1999) says that Fateh Singh was named a Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire as a 1911 Coronation Durbar award. He was made a Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Victorian Order in 1918.
19. Perhaps it is this disdain for *pattawallas* that somehow contributed to the lack of stamped papers and court fee stamps to be attributed to the time of his reign in Koeppel and Manner's standard catalogue of Indian States fiscals.
20. Charles Allen and Sharada Dwiwedi *Lives of the Indian Princes* pages 96-7. London: Century Publishing, 1984
- 21 There were local issues from Bhilwara in the names of Shah Alam II and Muhammed Shah.
- 22 During Fateh Singh's dynasty a new style of coinage was issued with the names of Chitor and Udaipur but the Udaipur mint continued to issue the old style Swarupshahi coinage first struck in 1851. The latter coinage was also in the name of "Dosti Landan" but Fateh Singh eliminated this inscription from the coins introduced during his reign.
- 23 D L Paliwal "Mewar under the British (1818-1921)" in D L Paliwal (Editor) *Mewar through the Ages* pages 60-1. Udaipur: Sahitya Sansthan, 1969.
24. C V Aitchison op. cit., page 11.
- 25 see Andrew Topsfield *The City Palace Museum Udaipur: Paintings of Mewar Court Life* numbers 24, 25. Ahmedabad: Mapin, 1990. For a listing of paintings of Tod and Bhim Singh see pages 70 and 73 and Joachim K Bautze *Indian and Western Painting 1878-1910: The Ehrenfeld Collection* page 157. Alexandria, Virginia: Art Services International, 1998
- 26 Bautze. op. cit., numbers 39-40
27. Andrew Topsfield *Paintings from Rajasthan in the National Gallery of Victoria* number 273 and figure 2. Melbourne: National Gallery of Victoria, 1980
28. Andrew Topsfield *The City Palace Museum Udaipur: Paintings of Mewar Court Life* number 72. Ahmedabad: Mapin, 1990
29. see Geoffrey C Ward *The Maharajas* Chicago: Stonehenge Press, 1983. pages 142-3. There is also a Fateh Singh era painting of Europeans among the spectators watching boats, and women dancing, at the Gangaur festival. They are not in prestigious positions. See Andrew Topsfield *The City Palace Museum Udaipur: Paintings of Mewar Court Life* number 62. Ahmedabad: Mapin, 1990
30. Andrew Topsfield (personal communication to the author) added to this remark "but no other Rajput school remotely rivalled (Mewar) in the sometimes near-exhaustive reportage of the main court events and tamashas in each reign carried out by court painters".

31. The so-called Indian Mutiny of 1857 involved fears by Indian troops that the British wanted to break their adherence to religious traditions by making them use cartridges smeared with the fat of cows and pigs (*though this wasn't the only cause. Ed.*)
32. H H The Maharaja of Jaipur *The Indian States Forces* London: Leo Cooper, 1967, pages xviii-xix. Note that the Maharaja adds to the confusion by sometimes referring to Mewar as Udaipur. Udaipur was the capitol of Mewar and the state was often referred to in this manner. In addition, there was a Chattisgarh State called Udaipur which had nothing to do with Mewar.
33. Richard Head & Tony McClenaghan *The Armies of the Indian Princely States: Volume 1, An Historical Introduction* Buckinghamshire, UK: Military Press International, 1998.  
Tony McClenaghan - personal communication to the author, February 18, 1998  
*Report on the Administration of Mewar State for Years 1940, 1941 and 1942* pp50-1. Mylapore, India: The Madras Law Journal Press 1944. McClenaghan says that the Sajjan Infantry was first raised in 1933 as a Class B unit and recategorized as SSU in 1939. The description given here is from the state administration report.
34. Captain Bijai Singh, Adjutant of the Bhupal Infantry, and the Victory Tower are depicted on number 40 of the John Player & Sons cigarette card set showing Military Uniforms of the British Empire Overseas.
35. Brian Masters *Maharana: The Story of the Rulers of Udaipur*. Ahmedabad: Mapin Publishing 1990, page 29

**Web site note** – the original article included a number of illustrations that, while of interest, were peripheral to the content of the article. We no longer have the originals and the printing system used at the time renders the copies that we do have unsuitable for use on this site.

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## EARLY AWARDS OF THE IDSM, 1907-8

Peter Duckers

The Indian Distinguished Service Medal was instituted by Royal Warrant on 25 June 1907. It was designed to reward “distinguished service” rendered by Indian soldiers at a time when only the Indian Order of Merit (for gallantry) or the Order of British India (for long/distinguished service) were available to Indians.

The first awards of the new decoration were published in G.G.O. 586 of 28 June, 1907:

Ahmad Mir, Risaldar, 36th Horse  
 Ali Gul, Subadar, Corps of Guides  
 Ali Muhammad Khan, Daffadar, 18th Lancers  
 Aoliya Khan, Sowar, 34th Horse  
 Arjan Singh, Naik 1509, 52nd Sikhs  
 Arjun Rai, Subadar, Naga Hills Police  
 Aslal Rai, Naik, 1-2nd Gurkhas  
 Badan Singh, Subadar, 36th Sikhs  
 Bakhtawar Singh, Commandant, Bikaner Camel Corps  
 Bije Singh, Subadar, 123rd Rifles  
 Bunyad Ali, Subadar Major, 1st Sappers & Miners  
 Dhian Singh, Havildar, 27th Mountain Battery

Dost Muhammad, Subadar Major, 106th Pioneers  
 Gul Akbar, Subadar, 24th Punjabis  
 Jit Bahadur Gurung, Rfmn, 1-8th Gurkhas  
 Kaku Thapa, Havildar 1750, 1-8th Gurkhas  
 Karm Singh, Risaldar, 13th Lancers  
 Kharak Bahadur Thapa, Subadar, 2-3rd Gurkhas  
 Khoresh, Sepoy 2228, 52nd Sikhs  
 Mahibulla, Jemadar, South Waziristan Militia  
 Mangal Singh [1], Subadar, 35th Sikhs  
 Mansur Khan, Daffadar, 25th Cavalry  
 Mewa Thapur, Subadar, 1-8th Gurkhas  
 Miram Shah, Subadar Major, Kurrum Militia  
 Moghal Baz Khan, Ressaidar, Corps of Guides  
 Muhammad Ghali Khan, Subadar Major, Khyber Rifles  
 Muhammad Ismail Khan, Risaldar Major, Zhob Levy  
 Muhi-ud-Din Khan, Ressaidar, 31st Lancers  
 Nazar Din, Sepoy, 55th Rifles  
 Nuruddin, Sepoy, 53rd Sikhs  
 Padam Thapa, Rfmn, 1-1st Gurkhas  
 Purne Pun, Havildar, 2-8th Gurkhas  
 Raj Wali, Subadar, 127th Rifles  
 Ram Singh, Havildar, 23rd Pioneers  
 Ramaya Bhumaya, Subadar, 3rd Sappers & Miners  
 Roda Khan, Jemadar, Bharatpur Camel Corps  
 Rur Singh, Subadar, 32nd Pioneers  
 Sadhu Singh, Havildar 1637, 25th Punjabis  
 Sahibullah, Subadar Major, 40th Pathans  
 Sant Singh, Naik, 32nd Pioneers  
 Setea Gurung, Naik, 2-2nd Gurkhas  
 Sewa Singh, Havildar, 87th Punjabis  
 Shah Gul, Jemadar, 55th Rifles  
 Shahzad Mir, Jemadar, 11th Lancers  
 Sham Beg, Sepoy, Zhob Levy  
 Sharbat Ali, Jemadar, Kurrum Militia  
 Thakur Zalim Singh, Risaldar, 3rd Horse  
 Tikaram Kamal, Jemadar, 2-1st Gurkhas  
 Wariam Singh, Naik, 47th Sikhs

These were followed by a further nine awards notified in G.G.O. No 1 of 1 January, 1908:

Ambar, Naik, 40th Pathans  
 Bhagatbir Thapa, Naik 1776, 1-3rd Gurkhas  
 Bishn Singh, Subadar Major, 57th Rifles  
 Chattar Singh, Jemadar, 32nd Pioneers  
 Hunar, Sepoy, Zhob Levy  
 Khusal Khan, Lance Naik 2268, North Waziristan Militia  
 Lachman Dube, Subadar Major, 3rd Brahmans  
 Thakur Singh, Ressaidar, 21st Cavalry  
 Zargun Shah, Subadar Major, 55th Rifles

By the time of the Great War, the IDSM seems to have established itself as a gallantry award pure and simple, being granted usually for instances of gallantry “in the field”. But the very early awards in the first two gazettes of 1907-08 do seem to have been nearer the spirit of the original warrant in recognising “distinguished service” over perhaps a longer period of time; it is notable that many of the very first recipients were long-serving Indian officers of higher rank. Where these first recipients were, or later became, officers, the task of locating their war services is simplified, since they will all appear in Indian Army Lists. For example, Subadar Badan Singh of the 36th Sikhs received the new IDSM in the first gazetting of the award in June 1907, but his latest campaign service before that date was in Somaliland in 1902-3, where he was wounded. Other officers on the list seem to have had no campaign service since the great frontier uprisings of 1897-8. Perhaps even more dramatically as an instance is Subadar Dost Muhammad of the 106th Pioneers, who received his IDSM in 1907, but who had not seen campaign service since his time in British East Africa in 1896.

Given the first award dates of June 1907 and January 1908 for the early IDSMs, (i.e. after the 1902 and prior to the 1908 Frontier campaigns), one would expect that those granted for specific actions were given for incidents for which a campaign medal was not awarded - small-scale skirmishes on the Frontier, clashes with bandits or robber gangs, issues in crowd-control or in dealings with other small, localised affairs. If one looks into individual instances of the award of these first IDSMs one does indeed find examples of rewards for such small-scale local actions. However, what intrigued me when I first looked into some of these early awards was the comparatively large number which could be shown to be retrospective - in some cases relating to instances of gallantry which went back over some years. In other words, instances of gallantry in action had been noted at the time but received no reward in medal terms, since they were deemed not to reach the high standard required for the award of the Indian Order of Merit.

As an example, the *History of the 52nd Sikhs* by Captain C W May (Jubbulpore, 1933, p.58) relates that the two awards of the new medal to 1509 Naik Arjan Singh and 2228 Sepoy Khoresh were both granted for an incident on the night of March 12-13, 1905, when the guard of the 52nd on duty at Kohat cells was attacked by an Afridi gang. The Afridis were repulsed but two soldiers were wounded - probably these two recipients; on the institution of the IDSM in 1907, they were both awarded the new medal, two years after the incident. Having established that the new award was indeed capable of being issued retrospectively for gallantry, I looked into the careers of some of the men who featured in the first gazetted lists.

Going slightly further back than 1905, I was interested to see that some of the awards were given for the Tibet campaign of 1903-4. For example, both of the awards to the 40th Pathans - to Subadar Major Sahibullah (or Shahibullah) and to Naik Ambar were for service in Tibet, though the Regimental History by Waters gives no indication of what they actually did to earn a gallantry medal. It is interesting to note that the Subadar Major's was gazetted in the first list of awards, the Naik having to wait until the second list (see *The History of the 5th Battalion (Pathans), 14th Punjab Regiment* by R S Waters, p.72). I suspect that several of the early IDSMs to Gurkhas were also for Tibet; those to Kharak Bahadur Thapa, Subadar in the 2-3rd Gurkhas and Subadar Mewa Thapur, 1-8th Gurkhas certainly were.

Other 1907-8 awards go back even further; at least two of the recipients in the 55th Rifles, Subadar Major Zarghun Shah and Jemadar Shah Gul, were awarded the IDSM for their gallantry in the Waziristan campaign of 1901-2 and both for the same incident. On 23 December, 1901, they both took part (then being Subadar and Naik respectively) in the attack on a hill position near Guri Khel; Zarghun Shah was wounded. Again, the two awards are

split between the two first lists of recipients - Shah Gul received his award in the 1907 list and Zarghun Shah in January 1908 (see Captain J P Villiers-Stuart, *History of the 5th Coke's Rifles, Frontier Force*, Waterford, 1908. p.94).

The two frontier campaigns of 1908 were the first occasion for a significant number of awards of the medal to be made for gallantry under immediate campaign conditions. They were granted for both the brief Zakka Khel campaign of February and the larger Mohmand campaign of April-May and all were published in Army Department Notification 527 of 26 June, 1908. The recipients for these campaigns were:

Alah Nur, Subadar, 22nd Punjabis  
Ata Khan, Jemadar, 52nd Sikhs  
Attar Singh, Sepoy 3556, 59th Rifles  
Badr Din, Havildar 3802, 22nd Punjabis  
Baghi Singh, Sepoy 1414, 55th Rifles  
Bahadur Khan, Subadar Major, 33rd Punjabis  
Bahadur, Sepoy 1506, 57th Rifles  
Bazid Khan, Sepoy 2534, 57th Rifles  
Bela Singh, Sepoy 1856, 55th Rifles  
Bhagat Singh, Jemadar, 57th Rifles  
Bir (or Bhagi) Singh, Sepoy 1414, 34th Pioneers  
Chanan Singh, Havildar 2235, 53rd Sikhs  
Chanda Singh, Lance Naik 857, 34th Pioneers  
Daud Shah, Jemadar, 55th Rifles  
Dewa Singh, Lance Daffadar 2589, 21st Cavalry  
Fauja Singh, Naik 922, 55th Rifles  
Galodu, Havildar 1001, 54th Sikhs  
Gul Akhmad, Havildar 2120, 53rd Sikhs  
Gyan Singh, Sepoy 2587, 57th Rifles  
Harwant Singh, Daffadar 2941, 21st Cavalry  
Hasamuddin Khan, Ressaidar, 23rd Cavalry  
Hashmat Ali, Havildar 1312, 54th Sikhs  
Jagat Singh, Havildar 1590, 57th Rifles  
Jahandad Khan, Jemadar, 59th Rifles  
Jalal Khan, Jemadar, 19th Punjabis  
Jawala Singh, Sepoy 4838, 22nd Punjabis  
Jawas Khan, Subadar Major, Khyber Rifles  
Jehandad Khan, Havildar 4947, 22nd Punjabis  
Kaka Singh, Sepoy 4442, 59th Rifles  
Kehr Singh, Sepoy 3573, 53rd Sikhs  
Kishn Singh, Havildar 1956, 53rd Sikhs  
Kwaja Muhammad Khan, Ressaidar, Guides Cavalry  
Kwaja Muhammad Khan, Subadar, 20th Punjabis  
Lal Mir, Sepoy 2558, 57th Rifles  
Madat Ali, Sepoy 3660, 59th Rifles  
Mangal Singh, Driver 766, 22nd Mountain Battery  
Mangal Singh, Sepoy 2995, 57th Rifles  
Mansur Khan, Subadar, 55th Rifles  
Mian Khan, Sepoy 2545, 54th Sikhs  
Mir Nabbi Hussain, Havildar 2623, 59th Rifles

Mobin Khan, Havildar 2917, 59th Rifles  
 Muhammad Hussain, Subadar, Kurrum Militia  
 Mukhmad Jan, Subadar, 59th Rifles  
 Munir, Jemadar, 57th Rifles  
 Natha Singh, Subadar, 34th Pioneers  
 Nazir Mahommed, Risaldar, 50th Camel Corps  
 Partab Singh, Sepoy 3997, 22nd Punjabis  
 Ralla Singh, Havildar 2894, 59th Rifles  
 Ramautar Patak, Colour Havildar 4207, 1st Sappers & Miners  
 Sansar Singh, Havildar 2635, 59th Rifles  
 Sarban Singh, Jemadar, 53rd Sikhs  
 Sarfaraz Khan, Havildar 3799, 22nd Punjabis  
 Sayyid Ali, Subadar, 53rd Sikhs  
 Summar Gul, Sepoy 2118, 55th Rifles  
 Umar Din, Havildar 2299, 53rd Sikhs  
 Umraz Khan, Subadar, 28th Punjabis

It is not especially easy to distinguish which IDSMs were awarded for the Zakka Khel campaign and which for the Mohmand, though given the comparative lack of action in the very brief Zakka Khel campaign it would seem that the majority were awarded for Mohmand. In terms of medal awards, Sir James Willcocks' Dispatch, as published in the London Gazette, identifies only those Indians who were recommended for the Indian Order of Merit and not those for the IDSM which, as noted above, were all published in Notification 527 of 26 June, 1908. Some - but by no means all - of the Indian Officers who received a "Mention" were subsequently awarded the IDSM; examples are Subadars Mukhmad Jan of the 59th Rifles, Umraz Khan of the 28th Punjabis and Sarban Singh of the 53rd Sikhs.

For those collectors interested in pursuing the story of the IDSM, contemporary gazettes, Army Lists (for officers) and Regimental Histories are the only easily available and detailed sources. Some histories, however, can be infuriatingly unhelpful in failing to name Indian soldiers and officers or as regards which men got the award for which campaign and why. The excellent History of the 55th Rifles by H C Wylly, for example, does not even name the six recipients of the IDSM for 1908 serving in the 55th, let alone refer specifically to any of the incidents for which they were awarded. The History of the 59th Rifles, as another example, does list the nine men who received the IDSM for the 1908 campaign and helpfully notes that Havildar Mobin Khan was awarded the medal for the Zakka Khel campaign. But it gives not a jot of detail as to why he should have received the award, even though this was not only the sole IDSM to the 59th for the Zakka Khel operation but the very first IDSM awarded to the regiment. The only serious fighting they seem to have taken part in which might have provided the opportunity for a display of gallantry in action was at Halwai on 21 February, 1908.

The History of the 54th Sikhs, quoted earlier, gives a little detail of the awards to its three recipients of the IDSM for 1908. Havildar Galodu, Havildar Hashmat Ali and Sepoy Mihan (or Mian) Khan all received the medal "for gallantry in the attack on the hill above Khuda Khel, Bohai Dag, on May 29th, 1908, Mohmand expedition." (p.187) This was during the attack on and destruction of the important village of Khuda Khel, when the 54th and the Guides Infantry were ordered to clear successive ridges overlooking the village to the south and west. The 54th attacked the hills to the west and faced considerable opposition as they passed through the village, attacking one range and then on to another. Gallantry in this attack earned the three men of the 54th their IDSMs. According to the Regimental History,

Havildar Pakhar Singh of the 54th Sikhs was “strongly recommended” for the IDSM for his gallantry in the rearguard fighting near Kasai, Mohmand, on 20 May 1908; he did not, however, receive the medal.

It would be well worth those with other regimental histories or Indian Army Lists checking the names of the first recipients of the IDSM for details of the circumstances of the award - especially those in the first two gazettes, since a retrospective gallantry award of this date is not such a common thing.

*(We drew attention, in Vol.3, No 2, 1986, to an article by our member Cliff Parrett which appeared in the Summer 1986 edition of the Journal of the Orders and Medals Research Society covering IOM and IDSM awards. Comparing that article with this one it seems that Peter has accounted for all but one of the 1907 and 1908 awards (Cliff mentions 66 for 1908 - the list above shows 65). Of the Edward VII issue (which is shown below), Cliff's figures show a further 10 awarded in 1909 and 12 in the period January - June 1910, after which the George V issue was introduced. Ed.)*



**The first issue (Edward VII obverse) of the Indian Distinguished Service Medal**



**Subadar Mansur Khan, 55<sup>th</sup> (Coke's Rifles) wearing his Own (and his father's) medals. Note that he wears the I.D.S.M. (awarded for the 1908 Mohmand campaign) at The end of his group, after the 1908 campaign medal; Presumably its order of wear had not by then been established.**

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## LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Brian Stevens writes:

Regarding Carl-Eric Granfelt's query concerning the designations and pay of the Followers in the several British Indian Armies (Vol. 16, No 2, p.84). So far as the armies of the Honourable East India Company are concerned the following may be of help.

The L.MIL.8 series of records in the Oriental & India Office Collections in the British Library consists of the annual Military Statements of the three Presidency Armies up to 1858 in the case of Bengal and Madras, and 1859 for Bombay. The Bengal Military Statements contain a wealth of information in that they show the Pay and Allowances of every European Officer on the strength of that Army for the month of April and indicate if they were present with their regiment on the 1st of May each year and, if not, whether they were on leave,

doing duty with non-regular units, or in civil employ. So far as the European other ranks and all Indian ranks are concerned, the Established strength of each Corps and Establishment, including Magazines and Arsenals, is given by rank and the actual number present on 1 May. Also included are the various Establishments under the Quartermaster, the Medical Officer etc. and, in the case where animals are held on strength, the number present against the established strength and the number of Syces, Sais or Grooms, and Grass-cutters, whether Jorawallahs who, for double pay, had to provide grass for two horses or simple Grass-cutters who were only expected to provide for one animal. In Artillery Field Batteries - whether drawn by horses, bullocks, camels or elephants - the number of attendants are given and their rates of pay and batta, if so entitled. In camel-draught batteries, the attendants were called Sowars as against Drivers for bullock-draught batteries. Elephant batteries had Mahouts and Coolies, the latter doing the menial tasks like mucking out.

For example, the Statement for 1843-44 gives the following rates of Pay & Batta.

	Pay	Batta	Total
<b>Elephant Light Field Battery</b>			
Jemadar Mahout	Rs10	+	Rs10
Mahout	Rs7	+	Rs7
Sirdar Coolie	Rs5	+	Rs5
Coolie	Rs4	+	Rs4
<b>Camel Light Field Battery</b>			
Sirdar	Rs7	Rs2	Rs9
Sowar (a)	Rs7	Rs1	Rs8
Sowar (b)	Rs6	Rs1	Rs7
Sowar (c)	Rs5	Rs1	Rs6
<b>Bullock Light Field Battery</b>			
Sirdar	Rs5.04	Rs2	Rs7.04
Driver (a)	Rs6	Rs1	Rs7
Driver (b)	Rs5	Rs1	Rs6
Driver (c)	Rs4	Rs1	Rs5
<b>Horse Light Field Battery</b>			
Jemadar } #	Rs7.08	Rs17	Rs24.08
Havildar } of Drivers	Rs7.08	Rs2	Rs9.08
Naik }	Rs6	Rs2	Rs8
Syce Driver	Rs5	Rs1	Rs6
Syce	Rs4	-	Rs4
Jorawallah Grass-cutter	Rs7	-	Rs7
Grass-cutter	Rs3.08	-	Rs3.08

Notes:

+ The single Elephant Field Battery was stationed at Dum-Dum where no Batta was allowed.

(a) Above 20 years' service

- (b) Above 16 years' service
- (c) Under 16 years' service

# Only 1 Jemadar Driver in the Bengal Army, a unique honour for services in Afghanistan

The term Follower does not appear to have been in use in the Company's Forces as the phrase used was "Establishment of People under the Quartermaster/Commanding Officer", and in the Train or Hospital Establishments the individuals are listed under their occupation, for example, Bhisti, Pakhali, Fireman, Fileman, Bellowsman, Dholi Bearer, Sicleegur, and Chuckler. Some of these were entitled to Pensions or Invalid Pay etc.

European Officers were entitled to a Tent Allowance, which varied according to rank, which was intended to cover the cost of animal transport to move their tents and the pay of Tent Lascars and Sweepers.

Horse allowance of Rs 30 per month per horse, according to the number of animals allowed to each officer, included the pay of the Syces and Grass-cutters, usually one of each per horse.

The individuals employed by officers and whose pay was covered by the two above allowances were Private Followers, although the term was not used, and were not in the employ of the State.

One of the appendices in Major V C P Hodson's "*Historical Records of the Viceroy's Body Guard*" includes a list of Artificer designations and explains what their occupation was, but it is not complete.



## TWO UNUSUAL MEDALS

(A group of us, not all members of IMHS, correspond on the Internet and share research, advice and queries. Members may be interested in two such recent exchanges. My thanks to Cliff Parrett, Sushil Talwar and Mark Sellar for these. Ed.)

## THE BUKHARA STAR

This started with a query from an Indian Army officer (it transpired 7 Light Cavalry) whose Mess is the possessor of a Bukhara Star. Cliff Parrett provided the answer and I quote from his reply:

I do not have any direct references for the decoration itself, but I am aware of it and I know of some awards to the Indian Army.

The Star was given by the Emir of the Khanate of Bukhara, which in the period up to 1920 was a Russian protectorate (it disappeared into the dreaded USSR thereafter). My recollection, although I cannot remember the source, is that it was not a highly regarded decoration. The Emir handed them out *ad lib* whenever he received

important visitors or made visits to other countries. His generosity was diminished by the quality of the decorations. A small number of stars were well crafted by jewellers, but the majority seem to have been made in the bazaar. I would imagine most recipients would have preferred a decent Bukhara rug!

The British military came across the Bukhara Star during the Bolshevik-Menshevik conflict in Transcaspia in 1918, when several Indian Army units were rushing in and out of the Emir's territory and Simla was up to its elbows in intrigue. As the Emir was ostensibly on the Menshevik side and, *ipso facto*, "one of us", he dished out a fair number of awards to Indian Army units. The Emir evidently awarded a total of 17 Stars (including one First Class) to 28 Light Cavalry (later 7 Light Cavalry IA), although I have never known whether the Stars were ever actually received.

*(Having confirmed that it is the 7LC Mess which holds the Star, this led to further exchanges about its provenance, whether or not it has its original ribbon, and does the regiment have any idea to whom it was awarded. We await answers to these questions. In the meantime :)*

The books to consult for 7LC awards in WWI (amongst others) are:

*THE 28th LIGHT CAVALRY IN PERSIA AND RUSSIAN TURKISTAN 1915-1920* by Major J A C Kreyer DSO and Captain G Uloth. Oxford: Slatter & Rose Ltd. 1926. This is a really superb book, full of detail, and crammed with fascinating contemporary photographs. It has several useful appendices, including gallantry awards to all ranks. Reprinted several years ago.

*RIDING TO WAR* by Gerald Uloth. Stockbridge: Monks. 1993. It is a valuable record as it is a compendium of contemporary diary notes, and is illustrated by some of Uloth's excellent photos.

*FARAWAY CAMPAIGN* by Major Frank James. London: Grayson & Grayson, 1933. This is an account of some hair-raising experiences in Persia during WWI with 28LC.

#### THE DURAND MEDAL

This one started with a ribbon query, a broad red ribbon with a dark blue stripe towards each edge - Royal Engineer colours. The first clue appeared in the Summer 1999 edition of the *Journal of the Orders and Medals Research Society* in which our Treasurer, John Tamplin, wrote an article about a visit to the museum of the Madras Sappers and Miners/Madras Engineer Group at Bangalore. Two of the photographs accompanying John's article showed two groups of medals, in both cases to a Subadar Major of the Madras Sappers and Miners, which included this ribbon on a very large medal (2.5 inches in diameter) identified as the DURAND MEDAL 1901. John also referred to an earlier OMRS article in which the medal was mentioned (Journal No 78 of April 1959, page 46) and, given that my OMRS Journals do not go back that far, he kindly looked up the original article for me. By L. Guille, it stated that the medal had been instituted in 1882 by Major General Sir H M Durand KCSI CB RE "as an annual award to the best Indian officer, NCO or Sapper of the Indian Sappers and Miners who distinguished himself as a soldier and as a sapper by good and efficient service".

Further work by John Tamplin, however, produced two articles which slightly correct the Guille version. The first is Robert Puddester's "*Catalogue of British India Historical Medals*" published by R C Senior Ltd, number 876.2, and the second article is by Hurmuz Kaus which appeared in Spinks *Numismatic Circular* of February 1968, and which Puddester

quotes. Both carry illustrations of obverse and reverse of the medal which was made by Elkington & Co, Regent Street, London.

Obverse - the bear head of Major General Durand facing right. Around the lower edge the inscription MAJOR GENERAL SIR H M DURAND KCSI CB RE

Reverse - The towers and walls of Ghuznee with British troops drawn up before a pathway up to the gate and a lone Afghan delivering the documents of surrender. At the bottom the inscription GATE OF GHAZNI 23 JULY 1839

Lieutenant Durand was responsible for the blowing of the gate at Ghuznee Fort on 23 July 1839 (Kaus quotes a reference to the fact that the reverse of the Ghuznee Medal, on which this reverse is obviously based, having been designed from a sketch made by Durand.

He later became Private Secretary to Lord Ellenborough when Governor General, then served at Chillianwala and Gujerat and, after the Mutiny, for which he got his CB, became Member of the Governor General's Council in charge of the Military Department (KCSI), then Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab in 1870. He was thrown from an elephant on 31 December 1870 and died at the age of 59 on New Year's Day 1871.

In 1876 a fund was set up by officers of the Royal Engineers in UK and India to commemorate Durand's memory in the form of a bronze medal to be awarded as described by Guille.

Puddester thought the medal had been awarded annually until at least 1949, and that about 75 had therefore been issued.

Mark Sellar in Singapore has since added to the debate, however, by quoting from "*Gurkha Sapper - The Story of the Gurkha Engineers 1948-1970*" by Major General L E C M Perowne CB CBE. It would appear that after Independence the medal continued to be available for award to both the Indian and Pakistan Engineers until 1970 (India) and 1958 (Pakistan) - why the different dates has yet to be ascertained. Nor is it clear if anyone was nominated for the medal in this period or if any medals were actually awarded.

In 1959 the Royal Engineers Institute decided to award the medal to Gurkha Engineers, not annually as previously awarded but once every three years. The first award to Gurkha Sappers appears to have been made in 1960 and of the four awarded up to and including 1970 two were to Queen's Gurkha Officers and two to Gurkha NCOs.

If anyone can add to either story I would be pleased to hear. I am aware that several members list the Durand Medal amongst their interests, but we have not featured it before.

Ed.



## BOOK NOTES

● *IMPERIAL WARRIORS - Britain and the Gurkhas*. Tony Gould. Published by Granta Books, London. 427 pages, illustrated, bibliography and index. ISBN 1 86207 284 1. £20

This is a monumental work to which the author has given a great deal of time and trouble in research. It deals with the units of the old Gurkha Brigade and its offshoot, the present British Brigade of Gurkhas, from the Gurkha War of 1813 to the present day; the tangled history of the Nepal Durbar is dealt with over the same period.

It is not a history of either, but a collection of incidents and anecdotes loosely strung together roughly in chronological order, culled from a mass of material - books, articles, diaries and interviews. I found it of very considerable interest, but will admit that I could have done with less of the blood thirsty behaviour of the Nepalese rulers and certainly without a complete chapter on Villiers-Stuart of the Fifth Gurkhas.

The tortuous and tardy negotiations leading to the 1947 partition of the Brigade is dealt with in detail, but I think the author has been too hard on the behaviour of British Officers at that time; there were one or two very anti British CO s designate who were looking for trouble - I know, as I was there and continued to serve in the Indian Army until 1953.

The author after 1947 concentrates on the British Brigade of Gurkhas, producing interesting chapters on the Malayan Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation, but even more interesting is the Brigade's fight to remain in the British Army during the various "run downs". I was amazed at his final conclusion that British Gurkhas may well be sunk by the Gurkha Army Ex-Soldiers Association agitating in Nepal for absolute parity with British troops. This might well be taken up by the Nepal Government producing an ultimatum - pay up or no recruitment. To agree would price Gurkhas out of the British Army. I think the author may well be right.

I was sorry to find two cases of incidents detrimental to a Regiment included unchecked; other witnesses being still alive who could have refuted the allegations. Nevertheless this is a good read and of very considerable interest and is therefore recommended. AAM

● *REWARD OF VALOR - The Indian Order of Merit 1914- 1918.* Peter Duckers. Oldham, Lancs: Jade Publishing Limited, 1999. 308 pages, index, illustrations, maps. £29.50

This is an outstanding reference work which will take its place alongside Hypher. It is strictly limited to the First World War (4 August 1914 to 11 November 1918) although four Egypt awards for 1919-20 and seventeen awards for the Russian Civil War have been included in separate appendices.

The book is arranged in eight chapters by Theatre of Operation with an additional two chapters for Miscellaneous and Untraced Awards, the latter mentioned by Hypher but not found in official records. In addition there are eight appendices, the two for the Egyptian and Russian awards already mentioned, and others listing 1st Class and posthumous awards and the Civil Order of Merit. The remaining three appendices, along with an introductory alphabetical list of recipients, make for a superb cross referenced index so that you can find an award by name, rank, theatre of war and notification date.

There are 11 good maps throughout the text and 25 illustrations of actions which led to the award. I have compared Peter's list with my own for Indian States troops and can find only three very minor areas for further work, all to do with the names gazetted or used in other publications, but even one of these is referred to in the index system.

This book represents an enormous amount of effort by Peter Duckers and is well worth the price. Highly recommended. ANM

● *SANDHURST TO THE KHYBER 1932-1940 - Pre-war Service with Gurkhas*. Tony Mains. The Memoir Club, £14.95.

I had not quite finished this book when it was time to put the final touches to this journal but it has been an enjoyable read, written in a light hearted anecdotal style with which those who have read his other works will be familiar.

After a brief introduction about Tony's family background he moves on to an amusing account of his time at Sandhurst 1932-33 followed by his year on the Unattached List Indian Army attached to 1st Battalion the Dorsetshire Regiment. The Gurkhas were not Tony's first choice - he had thought to go to a cavalry regiment - but 2/9th Gurkhas was to be his battalion and the rest of the book deals with his time in the battalion, as company officer, Signals Officer, Quartermaster and Adjutant. The theme of the appendix on Frontier Columns will be familiar to readers of this journal - Tony has written on the subject for us.

As I said, I have not quite finished the book, but it is an interesting and readable book with much fascinating detail. ANM

● *SEPOYS IN THE TRENCHES - The Indian Corps on the Western Front 1914-15*. Gordon Corrigan. Spellmount Publishers, £24.95. I attended the launch of this book on 26 November and will carry a review in the next edition of DURBAR.

● The First World War Collection in Accrington Library, Lancashire, holds some 1500 volumes of literature on the First World War. The collection dates back to the 1950s when subject specialization schemes were adopted in public libraries. Because of the town's connection with the First World War through the Pals Battalion, Accrington Library came to specialize in that War. With its incorporation into the Lancashire County Library service the decision was taken to continue with the specialization, but with an emphasis on being able to trace individuals. Apart from "*The Official History of the Great War*" (75 volumes) the Library has the CD-ROM of "*Soldiers Died in the Great War 1914- 1918*" and a complete set of Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers as well as records pertaining to the Pals. The Library is at St James Street, Accrington, Lancashire BB5 1NQ, Tel 01254 872385, Fax 01254 301066.

