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AN OLD BADGE OF THE BALUCHISTAN POLICE

Bunny Storer



In all my fifty five years of collecting may I say that here's a down to earth, nitty gritty, clear cut, fair dinkum police badge that I have ever seen, worn by the men who swore to ensure that Her Majesty Queen Victoria's writ ran in the barren, hot, mountainous and inhospitable territory of British Baluchistan.

The man running this show made no excuses for a pragmatic approach to the nowadays vexed question of just what is proper to appear on the insignia worn by police persons. There was no place here for native flora or fauna, not a Harp, or a Bison or a Bird of Paradise, no call at all for fancy crests with mottoes and no need for community consultative committees; the message was very clear - just biff em, cuff em and slot em.

Surely everyone with an interest in the subject must be impressed with the attractive and balanced heraldic depiction of the whole piece, starting with the Royal Authority represented in the distinctive Victorian Crown surmounting everything else.

Now let us address the much revered HYATT style handcuffs. Any policeman from the good old days would be as familiar with this piece of accoutrement as he would have been with the ubiquitous motto 'DIEU ET MON DROIT' found on almost every piece of paper he handled. The sun never set on these symbols of authority, each playing its own part in ensuring that the legal status quo was maintained in all those areas depicted throughout the atlas in pink.

Next the crossed truncheons. Well, they look rather impressive here and I note that the cuffs are superimposed over them but I think the truncheon should take precedence over the cuffs in 'order of usage'!

Yes, at first glance this piece of desirable insignia presents a relic of bygone days, an intrinsic example of how things used to be done before someone, somewhere, in some academic

institution, stumbled upon a goose and watched it lay a golden egg inscribed 'Diploma of Police Studies'.

However, if we just take a step back, view the piece and really analyse the constituent parts, the Crown is essential and requires no further discussion - clearly representing 'The Great White Mother' protecting the local community against the depredations of those with criminal inclinations. The handcuffs; well they were just clicked around the wrists of an accused person as a 'restraining device'. Now the wooden truncheon. Well I guess there still are a lot of other old 'working coppers' out there who well remember the disquieting and disconcerting experience of belting some big, enraged thug around the head with one of these and it having no effect whatsoever.

So actually there is nothing too lethal in the badge, particularly if one reflects on the type of crime that its wearers were coming to grips with almost daily. Take, for example, a piece of local legislation, chosen at random - The Baluchistan Code of 10th September, 1890, which provided that, whereas in certain districts of British Baluchistan fanatics have frequently murdered or attempted to murder servants of the Queen and other persons shall, upon conviction, be punished either with death or with transportation for life, and all his property shall be forfeited to the Government. This applied even if the offender was killed while committing the crime or being arrested.

I rather think that the coppers in Baluchistan would have had a rack of something much more impressive at the Kotwali (Police Station), probably smooth-bore carbines, so the designer of this piece of insignia has exercised some sensitivity and restraint in excluding more lethal local weaponry from the 'logo' of the force.

For the more significant badges and medals in my collection I do enjoy building up a 'profile' of the 'society and environment' in which they were worn and won. You may see the type of criminal that the Baluchistan Police had to deal with in an illustration 'Captured Zhob Raiders' opposite page 138 of the excellent book '*The Frontier Scouts*' by Charles Chevenix Trench. You will also note that the old style Hyatt cuffs were not solely relied upon to ensure that, once having been arrested, offenders did not escape! (*the picture shows two men chained together and with leg restraints around their ankles. Ed*) I certainly did not strike anything the likes of these two in the main bar of the Shamrock Hotel in South Melbourne in the early 60's.

I do not believe that Rudyard Kipling ever waxed eloquent over anything that happened in Baluchistan and to my surprise, considering the nature of crime and criminals in the territory, between 1909 and 1947 the Baluchistan Police were awarded just fourteen King's Police Medals. Of course, one must remember that it was not a large force serving a large population (pop. 868,617 in 1931) unlike some of the other bigger provinces such as Bengal (234 KPMs) and Bombay (208 KPMs).

For the technically minded, the badge is a high quality die struck piece in brass with heavy, dark patina. Fitted with four screw post fastening devices, it is 77.55mm high, 66.22mm wide and weighs 29 grams. I acquired it back in 1958 from Chas B. Hill-Tout of Victoria, British Columbia, who had a magnificent police collection.

Does anyone have an illustration or even a description of the uniform that this piece of insignia was worn with? If so, I would be delighted to get the details. It is rather difficult to

identify precisely the period this piece was worn. By the terms of a treaty with the Baluchis in 1876 Quetta was leased to the Government of India. British authority progressively increased due to its strategic importance, and then the region was incorporated with British India in 1887 when it officially became the province of Baluchistan. Sir Robert Sandeman, the first Chief Commissioner, extended the British military presence into the Zhob Valley in 1891. I think the period worn would be c.1887-1901.

SELECTED ROYAL HUMANE SOCIETY BRONZE MEDALS WITH AN INDIAN INTEREST

(Taken from the RHS Annual Reports for 1901, 1907, 1911, 1913 and 1917)

Bill Fevyer
(Life Saving Awards Research Society)

The following selection of citations has been taken from our web site (search for LARS, try on search engine *Excite*, *Yahoo* etc.). As a Society we are trying to cover all citations for the bronze medal from 1870, i.e. 2nd type (wearable) medal up to 1917 (from this date citations cease to be published in the Annual Reports). At this time there is little known of this medal and usually, apart from name and date, there is no indication on the medal itself as to what it was awarded for.

We are hoping to avoid this as once (or if) we get all the citations on the web you will have easy access to them, any time and from anywhere. So far we have on our web site 17 years of selected items from Annual Reports.

BAZ, SHER - Police Constable Case 31134

On 15th August, 1900, a lad named Prem Dass fell down a well some 35 feet deep at Hazeo, in the Punjab, India. At great personal risk Sher Baz went down and rescued him.

NEWTON, ISAAC - Bombardier, Royal Field Artillery Case 31270

On 17th December, 1900, a soldier fell down a well 40 feet deep with 8 feet of water in it at Neemuch, India. At great risk, Newton was lowered down by a piece of rope, but after diving several times was unable to effect the rescue.

CHANNER, G.K. - Lieutenant, 3rd Gurkha Rifles - Bronze Clasp Case 31300

On 20th May, 1901, a native boatman fell from his boat into the lake at Nankatchiee, India. At great risk, Channer went after him, but being clutched, had a hard struggle to keep him afloat till they were picked up by another boat.

FARNALL, G. Private Case 31404

On 6th June, 1901, Private White of the Border Regiment, while bathing in the river at Bareilly, India, got into deep and weedy water and sank. Knowing the risk, Private G Farnall attempted to rescue him but failed, although he dived several times.

SINGH, OOMRAO

BURTON, R.W. Captain, Hyderabad Infantry Case 31612

On 23rd September, 1900, Oomrao Singh and Jummoo went into a tank at Unkareddypulley, India, to recover some shot duck when Jummoo became stuck fast in the weeds. Oomrao Singh tried to save him but failed. Knowing the risk, Lieutenant A N D Fagan, Hyderabad Lancers, went in to try and save him but also got caught in the weeds. Captain R W Burton of the Hyderabad Infantry plunged in to try and rescue Fagan, but was unequal to the task and Lieutenant Fagan and Jummoo sank and were drowned.

Memoriam to relatives of Lieutenant Fagan.

SINGH, BASANT - Lance-Corporal Naik (sic) 28th Bombay Pioneers Case 31742

On 12th August, 1901, a Sikh soldier, while assisting to get a steamer off a sandbank in the Shire River, East Africa, was carried away by the current. The river is much infested with crocodiles. Basant Singh, at great risk, jumped in and supported him till they were picked up.

MUSCROFT, J - Lieutenant 1st Gurkha Rifles Case 31754

On 10th April, 1901, a canoe was capsized while crossing the Webeyiro River, Jubaland, East Africa. The river was in flood with a strong stream running and infested with crocodiles. At great risk, Muscroft twice entered the water and succeeded in saving two of the occupants of the boat.

THOMSON, D. A. - Lieutenant Case 35111

On 7th October, 1906, Alam Khan went into the Ganges Canal at Roorkee to liberate a fishing hook which had become fast when he got into a whirlpool 16 feet deep. Captain M R Elles RE went in to try and rescue him but got into difficulty and was drowned. Lieutenant D A Thomson went in to try and save Captain Elles but failed, Alam Khan being also drowned. Memoriam to relatives of Captain Elles.

ALI, ZAMAN - Sapper, 1st P.W.O. Sappers and Miners

Case 35456 (note date discrepancy with above entry. Ed.)

On 9th October, 1906, Captain M R Elles, Royal Engineers, in an attempt to save a man who had got into difficulty in the Ganges Canal at Roorkee, India, got into a whirlpool and eventually lost his own life. Sapper Zaman Ali, 1st P.W.O. Sappers and Miners, gallantly went to his help but was unable to save him.

SAUNDERS, E. - Lance Sergeant 2nd Bn. King's Royal Rifles Case 35149

On 2nd November, 1906, Sergeant Thos. Cooling, 2nd Bn King's Royal Rifles, was bathing in the Kosi river, India, and got into difficulty owing to the strong current. Lance Sergeant E Saunders of the same Battalion plunged in and succeeded in saving him.

HIRAJI, GOVIND - Police Constable Case 35199

On 21st June, 1906, a native girl accidentally fell down a well at Telnal, India, the well being 30 feet deep with 9 feet of water in it. Govind Hiraji, PC, jumped in and succeeded in saving her.

DAS, ABANI M. - Sub-Inspector of Police Case 35205

On 2nd September, 1906, a woman threw herself into a tank at Dumka, India, and sank in 10 feet of water. Abani M. Das, Sub-Inspector of Police, dived in and, at the third attempt, succeeded in saving her.

HOLMAN, H.C. - Major, Indian Army Case 35674

On 22nd September, 1907, a man in some way fell into the river Aare at Thonne, Switzerland. Major H C Holman, Indian Army, who was present, at once jumped in and succeeded in saving him.

SAMJI, A. - Police Constable Case 35766

On 7th May, 1907, a woman fell down a well at Manguna, India, the depth being 20 feet with 9 feet of water. A. Samji, PC, jumped down and supported her till a rope was got, and they were pulled up.

TAYLOR, C.H. - Captain, York and Lancaster Regiment Case 35774

On 15th November, 1907, a man threw himself into the harbour at Karachi, India, the night being dark, a strong tide, and danger from sharks. Captain C H Taylor, York and Lancaster Regiment, and D.F. James, 2nd Officer, Transport *Rewa*, jumped in and with the aid of a lifebuoy, got him on board, but he did not recover.

Vellum to D F James.

HAYDON, W.G.K. - Sergeant Case 38000

At 3.30 p.m. on 4th September, 1910, Sergeant Messam of the Calcutta Police, in trying to get into a boat, fell into the Hooghly, the current being strong and treacherous. Sergeant W G K Haydon plunged in and supported him till they were picked up by a boat 10 minutes later.

KHANMAHOMED, D. - Police Constable Case 38069

At 11 a.m. on 25th May, 1910, two women were bathing in the Indus at Rohi and were being carried out into deep water, the place being very dangerous. D. Khanmahomed, Police Constable, went in fully clothed and was successful in saving both.

BLATCHER, E. - Gunner R.H.A. Case 38118

At 6.15 p.m. on 12th March, 1911, a boy fell down a well at Meerut, India, the well being 26 feet deep with 10 feet of water in it. Gunner E Blatcher R.H.A. jumped down with a rope which broke; he then dived several times but failed to find the boy, who was drowned.

KHATTRI, J.S. - Rifleman, 9th Gurkha Rifles Case 38150

At 4.15 p.m. on 8th February, 1911, a man belonging to the 9th Gurkha Rifles in a fit of insanity threw himself into the Chitral River, which was full of snow water. Rifleman J S Khattri plunged in and rescued him in an unconscious state.

NASEB, YACOOB - Case 38300

At 8 a.m. on 5th March, 1911, two men belonging to the York and Lancaster Regiment were in a small boat which capsized in 15 feet of water at Karachi, India. Yacoob Naseb at once jumped in and managed to save both men.

MAKIN, W.H. - Private Case 38339

At 5 p.m. on 25th March, 1911, Private Fells of the 17th Lancers was bathing in the river near Sialkot, India, and got into difficulty in 18 feet of water. Private W H Makin jumped in and effected his rescue.

WELDON, E.G. - Captain, 8th Hussars Case 39765

On the morning of 30th October, 1912, Private Hague of the 8th Hussars was crossing the Goomti River at Lucknow on his horse and got into difficulty, the river being 10 to 12 feet deep and very treacherous. Captain E G Weldon, Captain A C Curell and Captain A F Henderson all went in and endeavoured to save him, but failed. Vellum to Curell and Henderson.

KHAN, BADAL - Police Constable Case 40019

At 5 p.m. on 26th July, 1912, a man and woman in trying to cross a submerged bridge over the Nala at Garmajor were swept off into 12 feet of water. Badal Khan, PC, plunged in and succeeded in saving both.

CHAPMAN, ERIC H. - Lieutenant 10th Pioneers, Indian Army Case 40443

At 10 p.m. on 30th September, 1913, a boy fell down from the Trinity Road quay into the harbour at Weymouth, the water being deep and the night dark. Lieutenant Eric H Chapman, 107th Pioneers, Indian Army, plunged in and succeeded in bringing him out.

KHAN, M.A. - Ressaidar, 9th Hodson's Horse Case 40523

At 7.30 a.m. on 19th November, 1912, a man was thrown into the Jumna Canal at Jagadhari by the capsizing of a raft, the depth being 30 feet with a strong current running. Ressaidar M A Khan, 9th Hodson's Horse, swam over 50 yards, freed him from the raft and held him till they were picked up.

SINGH, RUP - Bearer, Combined Field Ambulance Case 43063

At 10.30 a.m. on 15th April, 1916, two men when collecting firewood fell into the Wadi River, a tributary of the Tigris at Orah, one man being near the side and the other 20 to 25 yards out. Bearer Rup Singh, Combined Field Ambulance, went in and got one man out, and then with Mahommad Hussain attempted to save the other, but failed. Vellum to M. Hussain.

CUMMINS, HAROLD L. - Lieutenant, Royal Indian Marine Case 43115

At 11.30 a.m. on 18th July, 1916, a coal-trimmer fell overboard from a hospital ship into the Tigris and was being quickly carried away by the current. Lieutenant Harold L. Cumming, Royal Indian Marine, jumped in and caught him and then swam with him to the bank.

REEVES, A.J.M. - Second Lieutenant I.A.R.O. Case 43116

At 11 p.m. on 5th November, 1916, an officer in attempting to swim across the River Tigris got into difficulty in the strong current. Second Lieutenant A J M Reeves, I.A.R.O., went to his help but was clutched and failed to save him.

THAPA, LAL S. - Naik, Lakhimpur Military Police Case 43170

At 9 p.m. on 9th September, 1916, a boy while bathing in the Lohit River, North East India, was carried away by the strong current. Naik Lal S. Thapa, Lakhimpur Military Police, plunged in and landed him some distance lower down the stream.

SINGH, RANJIT

RAWAT, GANPATI

RAM, DAULAT

SINGH, TAIL

SINGH, JAHANDA

SINGH, GURDIT

SINGH, UTTAM

All of the Chin Hills Military Police Case 43171

On 15th October, 1916, three men in trying to take a line across the Manipur River, in Upper Burma, were stranded on an island, the river being deep and the current strong. The above mentioned, all of the Chin Hills Military Police, went to their help and succeeded in saving all three.

MUKHARJI, BIRENDRA K. - Head Constable, Bengal Police Training College Case 43221

At 11 a.m. on 5th September, 1916, a man while bathing in the river at Surdah, India, got into difficulty in 20 feet of water. Four men tried to save him but failed. Birendra K. Mukharji, Head Constable, Bengal Police Training College, then went in and rescued him and also assisted the four men out.

FILOSE, A.A.E. - 39th Central India Horse Case 43251

At 10 a.m. on 4th October, 1916, a man while assisting with a raft in the river at Poona, India, became exhausted and sank 80 yards out in a depth of 15 to 20 feet. Lieutenant A A E Filose, 39th Central India Horse swam out fully clothed and dived, but failed to find him.

CARPENDALE, T.M. - Captain, Indian Army Case 43338

At 2.30 p.m. on 15th March, 1917, two nurses were thrown into the Tigris owing to a collision between two boats, the depth being 20 feet with a strong current. Captain T M Carpendale, Indian Army, jumped in with a lifebuoy and kept them afloat until a tug picked them up.

NEPEAN, H.D.H.V. - Lieutenant, Gurkha Rifles Case 43382

At 2 p.m. on 9th April, 1917, a native soldier while bathing in the Tigris was swept away by the current, the river being in flood. Lieutenant H D H V Nepean, Gurkha Rifles, went in fully clothed and succeeded in rescuing him.

RAM, JIWA - Lance Naik, Imperial Service Infantry Case 43498

At 12 noon on 21st April, 1917, a Sepoy fell from a bridge into an East African river, the depth being 10 feet with a strong stream. Lance Naik Jiwa Ram, Imperial Service Infantry, went in and was successful in saving him.

(possibly *Jammu and Kashmir. Ed.*)

SINGH, SURAIN - Sepoy, 27th Punjabis Case 43669

At 9 a.m. on 4th May, 1917, an Indian soldier while bathing in the Euphrates was swept away by the current, the depth being 12 to 16 feet. Sepoy Surain Singh, 27th Punjabis, went in and, after a swim of 800 yards, succeeded in bringing him to the bank.

STRANGER, E.R. - Lieutenant R.F.A. Case 43886

At 4.30 p.m. on 2nd May, 1917, an Indian Lascar fell from a barge into the River Tigris. Lieutenant E R Stranger, R.F.A., at once jumped after him, but failed to reach him before he sank.



THE PAGODA FALLS FAR FROM THE TREE

Ronald F. Rosner

In the 18th and 19th centuries Europeans seeking their fortunes in India were said to “Shake the Pagoda Tree”, the Pagoda being the common gold coin of south India.

It took very little digging to resolve the question I raised in my letter, regarding the currency of the rupee in late 18th century America, which appeared in the Spring 2000 DURBAR (p36). That estimable research institution, The Massachusetts Historical Society, quickly produced “*The Stranger’s Assistant and School-Boy’s Instructor*” published in New York in 1795. The book contains formulae for converting various monetary denominations into U.S. dollars and includes a table showing the values of the 31 different coins most current in the United States at that time. There in the table, along with U.S. Double Eagles (\$20 gold pieces), British Guineas, French Louis d’or, Spanish Doubloons and the Chinese Tale (sic), were the “Indian Pagoda” and the “Bengal Rupee”. The gold pagoda was worth 3 ½ rupees with 8 rupees being equal to one pound sterling, which was then valued at 4.65 U.S. dollars.

There can be no doubt that rupees were current in Boston in 1799, especially so, as the town of Salem, just to the north of Boston, was the centre of the considerable American trade with the “Indies”. Although merchants used bills of exchange and other types of promissory notes to move funds with relative safety, much business, particularly with India and China, was carried out in specie (gold and silver coins).

A further addition to the quantity of Indian coins circulating in America would have been the practice of East India Company officials to entrust American shipmasters with funds they wished to move out of India without the scrutiny of the Honourable Company.

(Members will recall that Ron Rosner asked what the contemporary value would be of the troops that Boyd was required by Scindia to sell to Filose for 35,000 rupees in 1798. According to this equation it was £4,375 or US\$20,343. Ed.)

INDIAN LABOUR COMPANIES

A few of us were corresponding by e-mail earlier this year about two interesting bronze British War Medals with the following details:

1/2338 Lab. Athonba 22 Manipur L.C.
2/1104 Cooly Mikrang Tang Khul 2 Manipur CC

None of us was aware that Manipur had either a Labour Company or a Cooly Company and this led to a discussion about Labour Company titles. Richard Head then produced a hand written list of such units existing in October 1918 that he had compiled some years ago and we thought it would be of interest to share this with other members. You will note that this doesn't help with the identification of the two medals, since the Manipur units are 39, 40, 65 and 66 respectively. Conversely, 22 refers to 22 Khasi Labour Company and, although like Manipur, this is in Assam, it was not a part of Manipur. "*India Services in the Great War*", page 243, refers to Manipur raising a Double Company of Infantry and one Labour Corps, and on the same page, to Khasi raising 2000 recruits for Labour Corps service in France. We are still working on it!

LABOUR COMPANIES

21 (UP)	48 (NWF)
22 (Khasi)	49 (NWF)
23 (UP)	50 (NWF)
24 (UP)	51 (Ranchi)
25 (UP)	52 (Santhal)
26 (Lushai)	53 (Santhal)
27 (Lushai)	54 (Santhal)
28 (Lushai)	55 (Khasi)
29 (Lushai)	56 (Khasi)
30 (Bihar)	57 (Oraon)
31 (Bihar)	58 (Oraon)
32 (Bihar)	59 (Burman)
33 (Bihar)	60 (Burman)
34 (Khasi)	61 (Burman)
35 (Naga)	62 (Burman)
36 (Naga)	63 (Bengal)
37 (Naga)	64 (Bengal)
38 (Naga)	65 (Manipuri)
39 (Manipuri)	66 (Manipuri)

40 (Manipuri)	69 (Garo)
41 (Ranchi)	70 (Kumaon)
42 (Ranchi)	71 (UP)
43 (Ranchi)	72 (UP)
44 (UP)	73 (Kumaon)
45 (UP)	74 (UP)
46 (UP)	75 (UP)
47 (UP)	76 (Kumaon)
	77 (Kumaon)

It will be noted that there are no entries for 67 and 68 - did they exist?

The rank structure for each Corps was:

- 3 British Officers
- 4 Supervisors
- 1 Subadar
- 1 Jemadar Adjutant
- 1 Jemadar Quartermaster
- 1 Quartermaster Havildar
- 4 Headmen
- 4 Assistant Headmen
- 64 Mates
- 1920 Labourers
- 8 Interpreters
- 10 Clerks
- 16 Bhistis
- 16 Sweepers

Richard also produced a list of Labour and Porter Corps organised for service with the Expeditionary Force during the war, with the raising authority:

Labour Corps	A.D. Letter	Date
1	H 8363	9 Oct 15
2	H 8363	9 Oct 15
3	H 1853	11 Mar 16
4	H 5295	20 Jun 16
5	H 8033	9 Aug 16
6	11894	20 Oct 16
7	11894	20 Oct 16
8	11894	20 Oct 16
9	11894	20 Oct 16
10 (Jail LC)	6542	4 May 17
11 (Jail LC)	6542	4 May 17
12	16691	6 Nov 17
13	8371	25 Jun 18
14	8371	25 Jun 18
15	8373	26 Jun 18
16	8373	26 Jun 18
17	8373	26 Jun 18
18	7785	14 Jun 18

19	07273-1	20 Jun 18
20	11010	16 Aug 18
21 (Arab)	7490	31 Jul 16
22 (Persian)	7490	31 Jul 16
99	12322	30 Oct 16
100	12322	30 Oct 16
101	5497	27 Apr 18
102	10094	29 Jul 18
103	10518	7 Aug 18
104	11144	19 Aug 18
105	11789	31 Aug 18
106	13327	1 Oct 18
107	11010	16 Aug 18
108	9832	23 Jul 18
109	9832	23 Jul 18
110	1475	31 Jan 19
111	11010	16 Aug 18

The Depots for these Corps, located at Sitapur, Gauhati, Poona and Garden Reach, Calcutta, were staffed by:

- 1 Commandant (Captain or Lieutenant)
- 1 Adjutant and Quartermaster
- 1 Indian NCO
- 1 Head Clerk
- 20 Clerks
- 1 Bhisti
- 1 Langri
- 1 Sweeper

If anyone can add to this information I will gladly publish an update in a future edition of DURBAR. Ed.



OBITUARY

GAJE GHALE VC and AGANSING RAI VC

Just as I was despatching the last edition of DURBAR news was received of the death of Gaje Ghale VC, 2/5th Royal Gurkha Rifles. Born on 1 July 1922, he won his VC in May 1943 when, as a Havildar, he took his platoon forward under mortar fire during an attack along a knife-edge ridge in the Chin Hills, near Imphal. Though badly wounded by a grenade, he led assault after assault until the hill was captured at heavy cost to the Japanese. Only then would he allow his wound to be dressed.

Promoted Jemadar in October 1943, he stayed with 5th Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) on its incorporation into the post-Independence Indian Army and became Subedar Major of the 2nd Battalion. In retirement he lived in Uttar Pradesh and visited England on a number of

occasions under the auspices of the VC & GC Association. He died on 28 March 2000 aged 77.

Agansing Rai VC, also of 2/5th Royal Gurkha Rifles, was born in 1920 and won his VC in June 1944 in hand to hand fighting along the Silchar Track south of Imphal, the key supply route for 17th Indian Division at Bishenpur. C Company, 2/5th Royal Gurkha Rifles was ordered to retake an enemy position dominating the track - two mutually supporting outposts known as "Water Picquet" and "Mortar Bluff". They had already changed hands several times and Subedar NETRABAH DUR THAPA of the same battalion had been killed the previous night attempting to defend "Water Picquet", for which he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

After an initial artillery bombardment of the objective, C Company moved forward but became pinned down by machine gun fire. Agansing Rai led his section in an attack on the machine gun post, killing three of the four man crew. "Mortar Bluff" was then secured, but came under fire from a Japanese 37mm gun concealed in the jungle. Agansing Rai led his section in an attack on this gun, but lost all but three of his men before they had covered half the ground. Picking up his section Bren gun he continued the attack and killed the Japanese gun crew. Moving on towards "Water Picquet" C Company came under fire from a previously undetected machine gun bunker. Agansing Rai advanced towards it along a communication trench and killed all four occupants with a grenade and machine gun. "Water Picquet" was retaken a few minutes later.

Agansing Rai also stayed with 5th Gorkha Rifles (Frontier Force) after Independence and, like Gaje Ghale, served with the Indian Contingent of the UN Force in the Congo in 1962-63. He became a Subedar Major before retiring in 1971 with the honorary rank of Captain when he returned to Nepal. He died on 27 May 2000 aged 80.



BOOK REVIEW

● *Commonwealth Divisions 1939-1945*. M A Bellis (Author/Publisher) £7.50.

This is a soft-back A5 publication which sets out to '*describe the origin, order of battle and insignia of British Colonial Divisions extent (sic) during the Second World War (1939-45)*'. I am only in a position to comment on the Indian Divisions and my comments may well not apply to other sections of the publication.

Mr Bellis is clearly not familiar with the Indian Army, India or some basic military terminology. In the general introduction Indian Independence is postponed until 1948 and the introduction to the Indian section refers to no less than five Divisions formed by September 1939. In reality there were none - the intention was that the three districts, Rawalpindi, Meerut and Deccan, were earmarked to form 1st, 3rd and 4th Divisions respectively, but this did not materialise. The convention of the apostrophe " ' " in York's, Skinner's etc. is entirely ignored. The following spellings are from the "*Summary of Indian Regimental Titles*" - "Gardiniers", "Maharatta & Garwahl" - and from the ISF, Bhopur [for Bhopal], Bhwanagar, Jodhpur & Nabha Akel. Also in this section eleven of the Cavalry

regiments are incorrectly titled and The Kumaon Regiment is shown as separate, not as the changed title of the 19th Hyderabad Regiment. The Afridi Battalion, The Ajmer Regiment, Kumaon Rifles, Sikh Light Infantry, and all the regiments of the Nepalese Army are shown as States Forces while, conversely, the Gurkhas are indexed as Kingdom of Nepal.

For such a difficult project, if it is to be done properly, the bibliography is remarkably short and it is difficult to see how the HMSO '*Campaign in Burma*', Lunt's '*Retreat from Burma*' and Palit's '*History of the Regiment of Artillery Indian Army*' were able to contribute anything in the detail required. Joslin's '*Orders of Battle*' are, of course, only useful in relation to British units serving with Indian formations.

The actual Orbats are fairly superficial and are copied from Perry (who made a number of mistakes, particularly in regard to Armoured and Airborne Divisions) and the Sandhurst Memorial Panels, which also contain several errors. These are all perpetuated, together with a number of additions of the author's own making.

The Indian Divisions in World War II are a very difficult subject in terms of detail but if someone is going to tackle the subject they should at least take the trouble to get some general idea of the background, structure and history. Clearly Mr Bellis was not of this opinion, though I would have thought it would have been in his own interests, if he wished to be taken in any way seriously, to at least get the year of Indian Independence right.

In so far as the Indian Army is concerned, this is not a publication which can be taken in any way as being accurate and, in fact, it performs a disservice to research in this area.

C B L Kempton

LETTERS AND QUERIES

● A number of responses from members to Carl-Eric Granfelt's request for badge identifications (Vol. 17, No 1, pp37-8).

1. AKRF - Azad Kashmir Regular/Reserve/Rifles (different opinions) Force, a Pakistan unit. Major Niaz Ali has written to say that the word Azad means "Freed" and that, with Kashmir a disputed territory between India and Pakistan, Azad refers to that part originally occupied by freedom fighters known as Azad Kashmir Forces, subsequently the Azad Kashmir Regiment whose badge is different to the one shown. Field Marshal Sir John Chapple says that different versions of the badge exist with star and half-moon set at an angle.

2. Johore State Forces. Johore is the southernmost state of Malaya (West Malaysia). The State Forces were maintained up to the end of the 1950s.

3. G.G. - Government Guards of Aden (pre 1966)

4. Prince of Wales' feathers. Usually found with a brass/gilt coronet and is worn on an oval 'disc'. It was taken into use in 1930 and worn above the chevrons by NCOs of the 3rd Carabiniers (Prince of Wales's Own Dragoon Guards).

5. MODC - Ministry of Defence Constabulary - a post-partition body in Pakistan (others say India). Major Niaz Ali said that this was a uniformed force of the Pakistan Army who were

assigned the defence of POL depots, ammunition depots Air Force airfields and similar static installations, thus freeing regular soldiers from such duties. Their designation and badge has since changed.

(Thanks to Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, Major Niaz Ali, Barry Hammond, John Gaylor and Maitland Thornton for these replies)

● Carl-Eric Granfelt has since asked if the World War I Memorial Plaque issued to next of kin of those who lost their lives on active service was also given to the next of kin of Indian servicemen. I am certain the answer is “no”. The Plaque was “*to be given to the next of kin of His Majesty’s naval and military forces who have fallen in the war*” (Home Establishment, Western Europe and the Dominions for the period 4 August 1914 to 10 January 1920) and (to 30 April 1920 for other theatres, including Russia). The award of the Plaque was in no way related to medal entitlement and it was also given to the next of kin of those killed in the UK in training accidents and similar incidents. Some 1,355,000 Plaques were made with “He died”, and 600 with “She died”. But I have never seen a Plaque named to a member of the Indian Army, nor have I ever read anything which leads me to believe they were eligible to receive them. If anyone knows this not to be the case I would be delighted to publish an article or note on the subject. Ed.

● Shamus O.D. Wade of the Commonwealth Forces History Trust writes:

The list of Mutiny Veterans who took part in the Delhi Durbar of 1903, according to Stephen Wheeler’s “*History of the Delhi Coronation Durbar*”, includes the following:

Havildar Janki Pershad,	Barabanki Police
Sepoy Atar Singh,	Agra Mounted Police
Sepoy Bhagwan Singh,	Agra Mounted Police
Subedar Muhammad Ali Shah	late Nawab Jan Fishan Khan Cavalry
Jemadar Amir Singh,	1st Bailey Guard
Jemadar Kishan Sahai,	1st Troop State Regiment

Can anyone tell me about the units mentioned? The History states that the invitation to Veterans was confined to “the officers, non-commissioned officers, European, Eurasian and Indian, who had fought in the historic operations at Delhi and Lucknow.”

● A non-member, Mrs E A Ball, wrote to me about her great grandfather, John Joshua Marshall. He was a civilian veterinary surgeon in Agra between 1851 and 1856 and was later a Toll Collector at Boolendshur. In 1858 he was in the Meerut Light Horse, was awarded the Mutiny Medal and was mentioned in despatches. In trying to find a record of the Meerut Light Horse Mrs Ball came across a book written in 1858, “*The Khaki Resselah or Meerut Volunteer Horse during the 1857-58 Mutinies*”, by Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop and, convinced that her great grandfather was a member of this Khaki Ressala, has attempted without success to locate records, photographs or other information about this volunteer unit.

I replied that I thought she had probably found out as much as she was ever likely to, given the turmoil of the time and the limited life of the unit (1857-58). Dunlop’s book is listed in REGIMENTS, the only one for this regiment. Mrs Ball agreed with my observation, and replied that her copy of Dunlop includes the following:

“It was deemed at one time desirable that we should have a paper of our own at Meerut in the shape of a broad sheet printed, giving news of despatches, service expeditions etc. It was to have been styled in honour of the Corps, “The Literary Dustman” but as few of those amongst us who could edit the paper had time to devote to it, the project fell to the ground, and, as all Gazettes were then in abeyance, many who are well acquainted with less important services have never heard of the expeditions of the Khaki Ressalah.”

I did agree, however, to include a note in this edition of DURBAR in case any member has further information or photographs of the unit. I would appreciate a copy of any reply to publish in a future edition of the journal. Ed.

● I published a request from a non-member, M. Jacques Jost, in Vol. 12, No 2 (Summer 1995) concerning 100 Independent Light Tank Squadron. He subsequently sent us an article “Allied Tanks in the Malayan and Singapore Campaign 1942”, which I published in Vol. 13, No 4 (Winter 1996). M. Jost has now written to say that an Australian acquaintance recently visited Singapore and found the grave of Major Jack Alford, Officer Commanding 100 Independent Light Tank Squadron. The headstone shows a badge of the Indian Armoured Corps with the inscription

MAJOR J ALFORD
INDIAN ARMoured CORPS
12th FEBRUARY 1942 - AGE 38

The badge is based on the Royal Armoured Corps badge with the exception of the crown (replaced by a five pointed star) and the inscription IAC instead of RAC): a mailed gauntlet for the right hand, with a billet on the wrist inscribed “IAC”; issuing from the wrist upwards two concentric circles, barbed; the whole surmounted by with a five pointed star.



My understanding of the RAC badge during the Second World War is that it was worn by recruits in training or awaiting posting to regiments, or officer cadets who had never served with a particular armoured regiment. Did the same considerations apply to the Indian Armoured Corps? Individual armoured regiments, I believe, continued to wear their own badges, as did some war raised cavalry units, but I do not know of a distinctive badge for any of the following and wonder if they would therefore have worn the IAC badge:

100th Independent Light Tank Squadron IAC

101st Independent Light Tank Squadron (until it was absorbed into 8th Cavalry)

‘Z’ Recce Squadron IAC

Long Range Desert Squadron IAC, later the Long Range Squadron IAC
No 100 Garrison Training Squadron IAC
IAC Recruit Training Regiment
IAC Armoured Car School
IAC Officers Training School
IAC Tank School
IAC Centre and Depot, Lucknow

Can anyone confirm this?

Ed.

● Another request from a non-member for identification of the cavalry pouch with badge BLH - possibly Bengal Light Horse or Baluchistan Light Horse. Can anyone confirm?
Ed.

