

DURBAR Volume 17, No.3, Autumn 2000

OBITUARY - JOHN GAYLOR- A FINAL SALUTE

John William Frederick Gaylor, "John" to his friends sadly passed away on 26 June.

Born on 16 January 1927, John went to India and Burma during the closing stages of World War II. He was then only in his teens, when due to his enquiring mind and ability to grasp languages, he was assigned to the Intelligence Corps. He served with The Royal West African Frontier Force and the 82nd (West African) Division in Burma. Whilst there he first came in contact with Indian soldiers of the XIVth Army in their final reconquest of Burma and defeat of the Imperial Japanese Army. It was from that time onwards that his admiration for the Indian soldier and his love for South Asia began.

Back in England after the war he subsequently served as a territorial with the London Scottish and The Special Air Service. His civilian life was spent with BP as their Chief of Information and his interest was reflected in his commitment to the Military Historical Society of which he was Hon Secretary for over 30 years.

I got to know John by pure accident. Twenty years ago based at Stockholm's University, far away from home and isolated from my interests, I chanced a letter to the Military Historical Society, UK, about contact with other historians with similar interests. Promptly a letter arrived, the first sentence read, "By chance you have hit upon the right man", and right man it was. From then onwards began our friendship based on our common interest in history and regimental badges of the Indian Army.

John will be best remembered in collecting circles for his classic work "*Military Badge Collecting*", which has run into several editions. With his friends in India and Pakistan and with those interested in the Indian Army, he will be remembered for his excellent work "*Sons of John Company- Indian and Pakistan Armies 1903-1991*".

John endeared himself to his Indian friends, not only because he was an Indophile, but also because, unlike most other British-Indian military historians who write about military history, he completed the full circle by delicately linking the past with the present and bringing the story of the Indian Army to date.

There were not many Indian or Pakistan Army Regimental Centres left which John had not visited. From 1996 onwards he would accompany me each year on my visits to South Asia in connection with research on the history and badges of the Indian and Pakistan Armies, and delighted in calling himself "My referee" for this project. On our last visit he presented copies of his books to Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw at his home in Conoor and to General Gul Hassen (now late) at Rawalpindi; two senior officers who command the highest respect in their respective armies

One of his greatest regrets was the partition of the old Indian Army which he felt was the dismemberment of the finest fighting machines to have ever existed in the history of

mankind. With his initiative and help from other members, the MHS produced a splendid poster showing the Regimental homes and insignia of undivided Indian Army 1939-1947.

A very brave man to the last, he refused to be admitted to hospital when it was discovered that cancer had struck his lung. He could hardly speak and the little he could was an effort. But he did not give up hope and fought to the last. We were often in touch over the phone and a few weeks before he passed away decided that I pay my last farewell and took the plane to London. He wanted to collect me from the Station, but I insisted that I would get to his house on my own. He, however, insisted that when it was time for me to leave he drive me to the station, in spite of his frail condition. That is the type of friend he was!

Our condolences to members of his family, his daughter Fiona, his son Andrew and to Sheila, his friend and companion.

He will be missed by all his friends and fellow collectors worldwide. John's name will live on as a foremost authority on British Regimental Badges and a splendid historian of The Indian Army.

A memorial service for John was held on Friday 29 September, at St Luke's Church, Sydney Street, London. Ashok Nath



INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Ashok Nath

Having studied and researched the subject in some depth, and in the process of completing my work on the Indian Cavalry/Armoured Corps, I enclose below some additional information which the Editor had requested for the readers of Durbar (Vol. 17, No 2, pp. 67/8). I would also like to correspond with those who may have any additional information on these units or who have a special interest in Indian Cavalry/Indian Armoured Corps.

100TH INDEPENDENT LIGHT TANK SQUADRON, INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Formed in 1941 by Major Jack Alford from 44th Cavalry (nucleus being the Jat Sqn of 8th Light Cavalry).

1941: 100th Independent Light Tank Squadron, IAC

1942: Captured in Malaya.

Battle and Theatre Honours None claimed

Ethnic Composition Jats

Regimental Badge IAC badge

101ST INDEPENDENT LIGHT TANK SQUADRON, INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Formed at Dera Ismail Khan in January 1942 by 8th Light Cavalry from their Sikh Sqn for service on the Frontier.

1941: 101st Independent Light Tank Squadron, IAC

1943: Disbanded, men to 8th Light Cavalry.

Battle and Theatre Honours	Nil
Ethnic Composition	Sikhs
Regimental Badge	IAC badge

'Z' RECONNAISSANCE SQUADRON, INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Raised 1941.
1941: 'Z' Recce Sqn, IAC
1942: Disbanded.

Ethnic Composition	Not known
Regimental badge	IAC badge with a "z" shaped lightning bolt

INDIAN LONG RANGE DESERT SQUADRON, INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

Formed in Damascus on 25 December 1941 by Major Sam McCoy from volunteers of 2nd Royal Lancers, 11 PAVO Cavalry and 18th KEO Cavalry.

1941: Indian Long Range Desert Squadron. (ILRS)
1943: Indian Long Range Squadron.
1947: Disbanded.

Battle and Theatre Honours	None claimed
Ethnic Composition	4 patrols based on ethnic composition: J (Jats);M (Muslims): R (Rajputs), S (Sikhs)
Regimental badge	Crossed lances with square tablet at intersection of lances, within tablet the letters "LR".

The "M" patrol was later absorbed into 11th PAVO Cavalry (FF) which had been allotted to the newly created State of Pakistan in 1947.

DECEPTION UNITS, INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS

65th Cavalry, Indian Armoured Corps
66th Cavalry, Indian Armoured Corps
67th Cavalry, Indian Armoured Corps

Raised 1942, these units existed only on paper and were meant for deception purposes. I have seen letter heads of these units, but again these were only on paper for deception purposes and did not exist as such, nor were these badges produced.

INDIAN ARMOURED CORPS CENTRE AND SCHOOL

There were three training establishments for imparting training to armour personnel in India in August 1940, which were later to expand.

THE ARMOURED FIGHTING VEHICLES SCHOOL, AHMEDNAGAR

Raised 1938 - trained officers and instructors for armoured regiments both from the IAC and RAC. There was also a Cadet Wing which was detached to form the Armoured Corps Officers Training School (ACOTS) which took in cadets from IMA and OTS after they had completed 16 weeks of basic military training. British cadets were also posted to this establishment and were sent both to British Armoured Regiments stationed in India and to Indian Regiments.

NO 1 IAC TRAINING CENTRE

(Late Sam Browne's Cavalry FF and 15th Lancers Training Regts had merged) - Based at Ferozepur.

NO 2 IAC TRAINING CENTRE

(Late 20th Lancers) - Based at Lucknow

The metamorphose of the Indian Cavalry into Indian Armour became official on 1 May 1941. Due to the heavy commitment and expansion of the Indian Armoured Corps another training centre was created at Babina and the whole lot were again renamed.

IAC RECRUIT TRAINING REGIMENT, LUCKNOW

- for basic training of recruits.

IAC ARMOURED CAR SCHOOL, FEROEZPUR

- for technical training of recruits for Armoured car regiments.

IAC TANK SCHOOL, BABINA

- for technical training of recruits for tank regiments.

(Recruits at all of the above wore IAC badges; instructors from RAC and other Indian Cavalry regiments wore their own regimental badges)

The first badge of the Indian Armoured Corps were the letters IAC within a wreath in brass, the whole surmounted by a King's crown. The second badge, with small alterations, was almost the same as the RAC badge - "a mailed gauntlet for the right hand, fist clenched, palm to the front, with a billet on the wrist inscribed IAC; issuing from the wrist upwards, two concentric circles, barbed; the whole ensigned with the Five pointed Star of India".

The IAC cap badge was worn by Indian Army Officer cadets and recruits. In cases where units had no badge of their own the IAC badge was worn till the time their own badge was designed and approved.

Officer cadets on attachment to Armoured Corps Centre in Ahmednagar wore special shoulder titles - "Armoured Corps/OTS.

Regarding Maj Jack Alford's headstone, the badge was the general IAC badge. I also noted that the headstone of late Capt M.J.C. Allmand VC (Posthumous) had a similar badge when I visited his grave outside Rangoon in 1996. Capt Allmand was from 6th DCO Lancers (Indian Armoured Corps) and attached to 3rd Bn 6th Gurkha Rifles (now 5/5 GR FF) when he won his VC.

Further, the IA Post WW2 Reorganisation Committee had recommended that wartime units should not retain their numbers and the emphasis on Armoured Corps was underlined. Hence it was suggested all future regimental titles to be as under:

1st Indian Armoured Regiment (Skinner's Horse)

2nd Indian Armoured Regiment (2nd Royal Lancers, Gardner's Horse)

4th Indian Armoured Regiment (Hodson's Horse)

and so on.

This, however, was not to be as partition of India and the Indian Army into the Armies of India and Pakistan upset all such plans, but that is another part of history and not for this article

Cliff Parrett added the following:

Of the three other IAC headstones in the Kranji Cemetery, all are to the 3rd Cavalry and carry the 3rd Cavalry regimental badge. The three are Captain P A H Heneker (29 August 1942), A/2524 Lance Daffadar Muhammad Amin Khan (24 August 1942), and 745 Lance Daffadar Muhammad Yasin (31 October 1943). The 100th Independent Light Tank Squadron came off lightly, even during the long years of imprisonment. Only one casualty in addition to Major Alford is recorded in all of the Singapore and Malaya registers. This unfortunate man was I.O. 3586 Risaldar Alakh Ram who died on 24 February 1945, and he is commemorated on the Kranji Memorial as "Risaldar Alakh Ram" beneath his regiment's abbreviated title - "100 Light Tank Squadron". The memorial tablets do not, of course, carry unit badges, nor any details other than name and unit.

During the sixteen years that I lived in Singapore I was a frequent visitor to Kranji War Cemetery. It is a serenely beautiful place - imposing yet entirely peaceful. It is held in great respect by the Government of Singapore and its people. I recall that, as in The Netherlands, it was on the curriculum of a number of schools for children to visit the cemetery and memorial to pay their respects to those who had laid down their lives for them.

I knew Major Alford's grave very well. I went there several times with long-time neighbour, the late Colonel L T Firbank (CO 2-7th Rajputs in Burma) who had served with "Boy" Alford in Sam Browne's Cavalry in the pre-war days of the horsed cavalry. They transferred together to the 8th KGVO Cavalry in August 1937 when Sam Browne's had become a training regiment, and they had been close friends. There is much to tell of Leslie Telford "Binks" Firbank, one of the very few WW2 warriors to receive awards for gallantry in action with three different arms: cavalry (NWF); infantry (Burma); marine forces (Arakan). He commanded a flotilla of coastal craft based on the Naf River which supported commando activity against the Japanese along the Arakan coast. His motley crew soon came to be

known along the Arakan coast as “Binks’s Navy”, and there is an evocative and amusing sketch by his comrade, the well-known illustrator Major Frank Wilson (late 19th Lancers) depicting Binks in gumboots and Inland Water Transport kit, telescope under arm, entitled “The Admiral of the Naf”. Frankie Wilson himself spent part of the war operating a decoy unit, ferried around by Binks’s Navy and broadcasting military movement sounds to deceive Japanese units. They were both members of a small group of brave, highly motivated and multi-talented officers who volunteered for special service units in order to see active service. Their important contributions to the war effort are largely unknown.

THE MACGREGOR MEMORIAL MEDAL - UNIDENTIFIED JOURNEYS

Cliff Parrett

When the late Major Robert Hamond compiled his history of the MacGregor Memorial Medal¹, his main purpose was to describe the important and frequently hazardous work for which the medals had been awarded. Little has ever been made public concerning this aspect of the MMM due to the secrecy surrounding the medallists’ journeys. Not surprisingly, the most difficult gaps to fill were those relating to awards of the reduced size silver medals to NCOs and other ranks, as they were neither the leaders of the expeditions nor the authors of intelligence reports.

In spite of a broad field of research and inputs from a number of contributors, including IMHS members, the author was unable to identify the exploits of thirty three of the forty eight recipients of the reduced size medals awarded between 1889 and 1944 [last issue]. By contrast, he managed to trace the exploits of all but five of the officers who received the standard size silver medal. But rather than leave his mission unaccomplished, Bob Hamond arranged that a Register of awards should be maintained. “If any readers, Regiments, Societies, Museums or families of medallists have further information relating to the journeys /work carried out by medallists where little is known, please send information to [The Director, United Service Institution of India, New Delhi]. Information can be collected, inserted into the Register and this can then be reprinted from time to time without the necessity of reprinting the whole paper.”²

By pure chance, one of these unknown journeys has recently come to light. The information lies buried within the narrative of an intelligence report made by Lieut. G C Rigby of a tour through the Northern Shan States of Burma in 1894-95.³ Within the Indian Army organisation, military intelligence was the bailiwick of the Quartermaster General at AHQ Simla. The Burma District HQ in Rangoon was an element of Madras Army Command, but the Intelligence Branch attached to it was under the direct control of the exigent QMG’s Department which set high standards for its jealously guarded intelligence function.

A key member of Lieut. Rigby’s small party was his professional surveyor, Havildar Gunga Dyal Singh of the 2nd Queen’s Own Regiment of Bengal Light Infantry [attached to Intelligence Branch Burma]. This evidently talented NCO was subsequently granted the 1895 annual award of the reduced silver MacGregor Memorial Medal for outstanding military reconnaissance.

Judging by the quality of its reports, the QMG's intelligence gathering network appears to have been thoroughly professional. Rigby's 160-page document included a substantial narrative diary, appendices containing geographical, statistical, political and strategic observations supported by data tables. Equally essential for military intelligence were thirty-two detailed route reports and forty-five maps.

Almost all of the many fine "plane table sketch maps" in this report were drawn by Gunga Dyal Singh, and printed in Rangoon in time for publication of this confidential and most interesting report. The route reports are full of detail including distances and descriptions of river crossings, tracks and paths, villages, vegetation, and the type and activity of the local inhabitants.

The Northern Shan States comprised a Civil District of Burma which fell within the military district of Mandalay. They occupied a strategically important position along the frontier with China, and straddled a major line of communication between Burma and China which ran north from Rangoon and Mandalay, through Lashio and onward over the border into Yunnan. Relatively little was known of the Burma-China border regions in those days, and even fifty years later, when the route through Lashio into China gained international significance as the strategically vital Burma Road, it was still a largely unknown and far flung corner of the British Empire, with remote outposts held by Gurkha armed police from the Northern Shan States Battalion of the Burma Frontier Force.

Gerard Christopher Rigby was commissioned into The Duke of Edinburgh's [Wiltshire Regiment] in August 1888 and posted to the 2nd Battalion which had been serving in India since 1882. It was replaced by the 1st Battalion in 1895 - to which Rigby then transferred in order to stay out east. He was evidently a talented officer looking for active employment and advancement. He spoke Persian and Pashtu, and had professional army qualifications in transport and signalling, the latter obtained at Kasauli in India shortly before his Burma assignment. Unfortunately no similar information has been found about Rigby's surveyor. A check through contemporary Indian Army lists suggests that Gunga Dyal Singh was never commissioned. The two published histories of the 2nd Bengal Light Infantry [later 1st Bn 7th Rajput Regiment] are unhelpful because they both pre-date the 1895 period. An unpublished history of the 1st Bn 7th Rajputs recorded by Roger Perkins⁴ is held in the National Army Museum library and hopefully one of our members might look this up on a future visit to the NAM reading room to see whether the intrepid Gunga Dyal Singh is mentioned.

Lieutenant Rigby's tour of the Northern Shan States and the Yunnan border was not the first to be made in this area. Amongst others, Captain H R Davies [Oxford Light Infantry] had travelled through parts of it and had been involved in mapping the definitive Burma/China frontier in 1894 [see the standard size silver medal awarded to this officer in 1895 for recess and surveys on the Burma/China and Burma/Siam borders]. Without singling out any of his predecessors for criticism, Rigby was to conclude that his earlier work had many shortcomings.

"The Convention line laid down in 1894 as the basis of a definite frontier border between British and Chinese territory on our north-eastern border is, as far as the north-western section down to the Salween river is concerned, both geographically and politically a bad one. At the time the scheme was worked out, in the available maps illustrating the country dealt with between the Shweli and Salween rivers, a few points had been triangulated by Survey officers, but the greater part of the ground

had been sketched in from a distance and never closely inspected..... Although at the commencement not specially instructed to examine or report on the Convention line, we could not fail to be struck with its impossibility."

Clearly the role played by Havildar Gunga Dyal Singh was essential to the success of Rigby's mission, particularly in view of the significance that accurate surveying must have had to the Burma-China border issue. It is a matter of regret that so little is known about the exploits of Rigby's surveyor. But it is satisfying to reflect that this non-commissioned officer received the prestigious and rarely awarded MacGregor Memorial Medal, and that by wearing it [as he would have done on every possible occasion], he could be recognised by his contemporaries as a man who had achieved something important.

The USII would undoubtedly be glad to have the details of any other journeys made by MMM medallists which have not yet been recorded in the Register. Do any IMHS members have such information to offer?

Footnotes:

1. *"History of the MacGregor Memorial Medals 1889-1989"*. Major Robert Hamond, Lancer International, New Delhi 1994.
2. Hamond, page 24. The USII address is now:
USI Premises
Rao Tula Ram Marg [opposite Signals Enclave]
Vasant Vihar Post Office Box No 8,
New Delhi 110010,
Republic of India
3. *"Report on tour through the Northern Shan States by Lieut, G C Rigby, Wiltshire Regiment, attaché Intelligence Department. Season 1894-95"*. Printed by the Superintendent, Government Printing Burma for the Intelligence Branch, Rangoon August 1895 [British Library Oriental and India Office Collection: L/Mil/17/19/34]
4. *"Regiments and Corps of the British Empire and Commonwealth 1758-1993"*. Roger Perkins, Newton Abbot 1994 [p.460: "History of the 1st Bn 7th Rajput Regiment" by Col A H McCleverty; unpublished typescript held in the National Army Museum library]

THE MEERUT DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FORCE 1857 - "THE KHAKEE RESSALAH"

Tim Ash

In June 1857 Major Williams, the Superintendent of Police Battalions, had arrived at Meerut on his way to Agra, but it was impossible for him to proceed. Between him and the Magistrate, Mr Dunlop, it was arranged to enrol a body of volunteers. Major Williams was elected to be Commandant; Captain D'Oyly, Deputy Superintendent of the Haupper Stud, 2nd in Command; Captain Tyrwhitt, 4th Irregular Cavalry, Adjutant.

The Corps consisted of civil and military officers whose ordinary functions had ceased for the time, and other European residents of Meerut who were unemployed. These, with a few native Christians, some Sikhs and loyal Irregular Cavalry men, formed the mounted portion.

Two Sergeants and some Christian Drummers of Native Infantry Regiments, with a few Sikhs and about twenty of the Magistrate's trained Native Guard who had stood firm to their duty, formed the Infantry. Two Mountain Train Guns, i.e. one 3-lb and one 12-lb Howitzer worked by two Sergeants and some Native Artillery men, formed the Artillery. The strength is shown below and a Muster Roll, originally signed by Major Williams, is to be found at the conclusion of this article.

	Mounted	Foot	Artillerymen	Total
Europeans	45	2	2	49
Natives	11	36	8	55
Total	56	38	10	104

This small force was the brainchild of Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop of the Bengal Civil Service, at the time Magistrate of Meerut, who served in its ranks as a volunteer. The purpose of the force was to restore the Government's authority in the Meerut District, to collect revenue and to maintain the security of communications with the force at Delhi.

The Meerut District was subject to the deprivations of the Goojur tribes who had risen in revolt against the Government. They were numerous throughout the North West Provinces and well known for their plundering propensities, which they were well able to exercise in the current circumstances. Nearly all the operations of the Khakee Ressalah were against Goojur leaders and their followers.

Mr Dunlop, in the following memorandum furnished to the General of the Meerut Division requesting aid to form the force, describes the situation.

The Goojurs throughout this district are in open rebellion and, either with or without his consent, have elected Kuddum Sing, of Purreechutghur, Rajah of the Eastern Pergunnah of Meerut. The police have been driven out of Purreechutghur and report that Kuddum Sing has there dug up three guns which were concealed underground, and mounted them on his fort, in furtherance of the plan of establishing a Goojur Government. The Goojurs of Booklana, Himmutpore, and a number of places in the vicinity of Purreechutghur, have attacked and plundered the well-affected Jat villages, burning their houses, and butchering the inhabitants. Kuddum Sing can command some 10,000 men.

The Zemindar of Bajrool, Sah Mull, alias Maho Sing, having plundered the town and Tehsil of Barout, having plundered the bazaar of Bhagput, and broken the bridge, has now at his command some 5,000 ruffians, nearly all Goojurs, of whom the most dangerous are 200 escaped prisoners of Meerut goal. Sah Mull is now reported to be about to destroy the bridge over the Hindun, which would, during the rains, interfere materially with our communications with Headquarters. [on the Ridge at Delhi]

The Goojurs, accustomed, many of them, to a life of robbing and danger, and assembling in thousands under regular leaders, who act without scruple in defiance of Government, are more than a match for our Jat friends. Scattered over a large territory, and without recognised chiefs, the Jats have almost invariably behaved nobly in the support of law and order; Junnaiyat Sing and Ruttun Sing having especially distinguished themselves in the service of Lieutenant Tyrwhitt, at Babooljhur.

The Rajpoots at Deolah under Nawal Sing are most anxious to be organized for the Government service; all the friends of Government throughout the district complain that their hands are tied while our enemies are free to act as they list. It will be the duty of the Meerut Volunteer Horse to raise the friends of Government throughout the district, to assist and encourage them in fighting our sworn enemies the rebel Goojurs, and in punishing such villages and bands of Dacoits as can be disposed of without regular troops.

It will also be the duty of the Volunteers to assist in keeping open the communication between this station and the neighbouring ones; in fact, undertaking, either within the district or beyond it, such duties as their limited numbers can perform.

In consequence of the district being at present left totally unprotected, it has become almost totally disorganized; wholesale butcheries and plunderings are prevalent throughout it, and unless some vigorous measures are taken to assist our friends and punish our foes, we shall be totally deserted by the mass of the people, those still faithful to us are becoming disgusted at our apparent apathy, and the mutiny and rebellion of today may become a revolution.

Mr Dunlop was obviously a man of energy, decision and perspicuity. He well knew that if nothing was done, and seen to be done, to quell the insurrection of the Goojurs in the Meerut District, disastrous consequences could ensue.

The Khakee Ressalah, so nicknamed because of the colour of the shirts its members wore, spent many arduous and dangerous times in achieving their aims and their adventures and successes were many. The following letter from the Supreme Government of India acknowledged its services.

From G.F. Edmonstone, Esq., Secretary to the Government of India, dated 25th March, 1858. Home Department.

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr Assistant Secretary Oldfield's letter, with enclosures, relating to the services performed by the Meerut Volunteer Force, during the late disturbances.

In reply I am directed to state that the Governor General concurs in the opinion formed by the Chief Commissioner of the gallant and valuable service rendered by the Meerut Volunteers, and desires that his cordial thanks be conveyed to all those who thus assisted by their personal exertions and at the risk of their lives, in suppressing rebellion throughout the Meerut District and its vicinity, and in making the authority of Government felt and appreciated.

His Lordship's thanks are more especially due to the civilians in the force, who, when their own functions were in abeyance, did not fail to undertake military duty in support of the Government they served, and to Major Williams and Captains D'Oyly and Tyrwhitt, to whose professional knowledge and direction and praiseworthy zeal, the organization of the Corps and its efficiency may be assumed to be mainly due.

The Governor General will recommend to the Honourable Court of Directors to grant steps of brevet rank to the above named officers for their undoubtedly valuable services. I have, etc., G T Edmonstone, Secretary to the Government of India.

After the fall of Delhi in September 1857 the Meerut Volunteer Force was disbanded and its members went on to do other things. Two of those that served with the Force have left the memories of their experiences behind for posterity.

- R H W Dunlop. *Service and adventure with the Khakee Ressalah or Meerut Volunteer Horse, during the Mutinies of 1857-1858*. London, Richard Bently, 1858. [Landendorf 256]
- Sir Charles Walters D'Oyly. *Eight months' experience of the revolt in 1857*. Blandford, H Shipp, 1891 [Landendorf 253]

In October 1857, after the fall of Delhi, the Meerut Light Horse was raised and subsequently disbanded in October 1858 [vide Bengal General Orders L/MIL/17/2/307 (1757)]. I do not know of any published history of this unit but, no doubt, its activities may be traced in the India Office Records.

It is not unusual for this unit to be confused with the Khakee Ressalah and even a memorial plaque in his local church commemorating the life and service of an officer of the Khakee Ressalah compounds the confusion by stating that *he served with the Meerut Light Horse in 1857!*

ROLL OF THE MEN OF THE DISTRICT VOLUNTEER FORCE - MEERUT

No.	Name	Remarks
1	Major G Williams, Staff Commandant	Assistant General Superintendent and Joint Magistrate, on special duty.
2	Captain C W D'Oyly, 2i/c	Stud Department
3	Captain E Tyrwhitt, Adjutant	Commandant, lately 14 th Irregular Cavalry
4	Asst Surgeon H Cannon, Surgeon	Civil Surgeon, Moradabad
5	Mr F Williams	Commissioner of Meerut
6	Mr R Dunlop	Magistrate of Meerut

VOLUNTEERS

1	Mr G Turnbull	Judge of Cawnpore
2	Mr A Sapte	Magistrate of Boolundshuhur
3	Mr F Wigram	Joint Magistrate of Meerut
4	Mr S Melville	Joint Magistrate of Boolundshuhur
5	Mr A C Lyall	Assistant Magistrate of Boolundshuhur
6	Lieutenant Anderson	3rd European Regiment
7	Lieutenant Johnson	18th Native Infantry
8	Cornet Robinson	1st Light Cavalry
9	Ensign Blair	31st Native Infantry

10	Mr Parker	Canal Department
11	Mr Nuthall	Canal Department
12	Mr Furnell	Mounted Police
13	Mr Murphy	Collector of Customs
14	Tonnochy	Doing Duty Rs 25
15	Mr Pocock	ditto
16	Mr Fraser	ditto
17	Mr Orde	ditto
18	Mr Smith	ditto
19	Mr Miller	ditto
20	Mr B Rogers	ditto
21	Mr S Rogers	ditto
22		
23	Mr Knowles	ditto
24	Mr Parsons	ditto
25	Mr Tapsel	ditto
26	Mr Trotter	ditto
27	Mr Ray	ditto
28	Mr Gee	ditto
29	Mr Herdon	ditto
30	Mr Anderson	ditto
31	Mr Lincoln	ditto
32	Mr Owens	ditto
33	Mr Concannon	ditto
34	Mr Jones	Doing Duty. Infantry
35	Mr Munro	ditto
36	Sergeant Major Cornwell	4th Lancers. Doing Duty.
37	Trumpet Major Dunn	3rd Light Cavalry. Doing Duty.
38		
39	Trumpeter Hawes	3rd Light Cavalry. Doing Duty.
40	Trumpeter McKinlay	3rd Light Cavalry. Doing Duty.
41	Trumpeter Mohar	3rd Light Cavalry. Doing Duty.
2 Duffadars and 6 Sowars		Sikhs from Daly's Oudh Cavalry

8TH IRREGULAR CAVALRY

3 Sowars	Doing Duty in the Dacoitee Department under Major Williams, Assistant General, Superintendent
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INFANTRY

Sergeant Major Dawson	11th Native Infantry
Qr Mr Sjt Halloran	11th Native Infantry
20 Drummers	11th Native Infantry

SIKHS

1 Havildar and 15 Sepoys

References (other than those mentioned in the text)

British Library, Oriental and India Office Collections - L/MIL/17/2/492 - Mutiny in India - Narrative Events - Meerut District

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(Editor's note: Members will recall that a query about membership of the Khakee Ressalah appeared in the last edition of DURBAR (p65) and Tim's reply to Mrs Ball prompted this article. More recently Tim has written to say that, although John Joshua Marshall does not appear on the above roll of Volunteers, nevertheless it now seems that he did indeed serve with both the Khaki Ressalah and the Meerut Light Horse. Further research is being undertaken to verify this and we may have more on this subject in a future edition).

WORLD WAR ONE MEMORIAL PLAQUES

The Editor

My thanks to the many members who responded to the query raised in Vol. 17, No 2 (page 64). It is clear that Memorial Plaques were indeed issued for award to the next of kin of Indian servicemen killed during the war. Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, who pointed out that there are some examples in the Gurkha Museum, said that, when he joined in the 1950s, his battalion still had a large stock of such plaques which had remained undelivered to the next of kin. As Nepal was a closed country until 1954, it was difficult to get these to the hill villages, even if the home village was known, and many of the unclaimed plaques were used as 'decorations' in offices. Major Gordon Corrigan confirmed that he has several examples to Gurkhas. Major General Monty Palit told me at the AGM that his regiment had melted down the unclaimed plaques and cast them into a bell which has pride of place with the Quarter Guard. Richard Thornton, R P Morris and Dr M D Thomas confirmed that each has one plaque whilst Alan Wolfe sent me a pencil rubbing of his plaque named to SHERAZ KHAN. He said that some which he has come across over the years even had the grey folded cardboard container, and at least one had the original condolence note (perhaps reflecting, as others have said, that the next of kin could not be traced, the plaques remained undelivered and subsequently found their way onto the market). Cliff Parrett said that he has seen many during his travels in India and Pakistan but, with one notable exception, never accompanied by the medals. The exception was seen recently in Pakistan where the group was intact because it had until recently remained with the recipient's descendants. Remarkably, the group included a duplicate 1914-15 Star (though with a variation in the regimental number, perhaps the reason for the duplication) and consisted of:

1914-15 Star

1343 Sepoy Ghulam Mohd. 1/22 Punjabis

1914-15 Star	1433 Sepoy Ghulam Mohd. 1/22 Punjabis
BWM & Victory Plaque	1343 Sepoy Ghulam Mohd. 1-22 Pjbis Ghulam Muhammad

Ghulam Muhammad became a POW after the fall of Kut and is recorded in the “*List of Indian ranks and followers presumed to be prisoners-of-war in the hands of the Turks*”, in the POW rolls published by the AG’s Department on 18 June 1917 (BL- OIOC L/Mil/17/15/138). He died in captivity on Monday 1 April 1918 and his name appears on the Basra Memorial, Iraq, which commemorates more than 40,000 British, Indian and West African soldiers who lost their lives in Mesopotamia between 1914 and 1921. Cliff pointed out that since neither service number, rank nor unit are included in the embossed naming details on the plaques, and given the fact that many of the typical Indian names are widely used, it is usually difficult if not impossible to identify recipients, though one assumes this was not the case when they were first issued.

Coincidentally, an article appeared on the subject by Dennis G Blair in the August 2000 edition of *Medal News* in which he referred to the next of kin having to claim the plaque on special forms supplied by the Board of Trade, which was in turn responsible for vetting the applications and distributing the plaques. This, of course, raises a number of additional questions with regard to India. How would the next of kin learn of the existence of such forms, how would they obtain them, and who would vet the completed forms? Were the forms written in the vernacular and, given the level of illiteracy at that time, who would have completed them? Or was it left to the regiments to submit rolls for plaques to be manufactured and then trace the next of kin as best they could? If application forms were used, it is a wonder that any were ever delivered to the rightful recipients.



DEHRA DUN 1939

Tony Mains

DEHRA DUN

Dehra Dun was different from other Indian Military Stations; indeed it was probably unique among the cantonments of Northern India, both in topography and inhabitancy.

TOPOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

The cantonments of Northern India, in general, were built in the vicinity of existing Indian cities, but at a distance sufficient to prevent the spread of disease; they were laid out as rectangles of straight roads on the flat plain and were designed to house the troops and their families, so the erection of houses for civilians, European or Indian, was severely restricted. Indeed, the only Indians allowed to reside there were those serving the troops - shopkeepers and servants, who were segregated by the Sadr Bazaar.

Dehra Dun, by contrast, was situated, not on the flat plain, but in a narrow valley lying between the first range of the Himalayas at over 6000 ft. and the Siwalik foothills at 3000 ft.

The whole area was intersected with rivers running south from the Himalayas and flowing in deep gorges. No tidy rectangular road pattern was possible, the roads having to follow the configuration of the ground.

Here was a classic case of the 'tail wagging the dog'. Instead of the cantonment being built near an existing city, the town was established in the vicinity of the troops' lines. Prior to the Gurkha War of 1813, the Doon Valley was ruled by the Nepalese - one of the major battles of that war was fought at Kalunga, just outside the Dehra town, where a Memorial to both the British and the Nepalese dead still stands. One of the three regiments raised from the defeated Gurkha armies, the Sirmoor Regiment (later the 2nd Goorkhas), was cantoned in the vicinity of what is now the 'Club Maidan' and around them grew the town of Dehra.

The growth was largely due to the energy of the Hon. Fred Shore and Captain F Young, the respective civil and military authorities; in the early days, the civil authority, besides having magisterial powers, was inter alia responsible for the police, forest and irrigation departments - thus he was named 'the Superintendent of the Doon' instead of the usual title of 'Collector' or 'Deputy Commissioner' - a title that continued to be held by the District Magistrate until the end of British rule.

One of Shore's first acts was to open up the district by the construction of a cart road to the plains over the Mohan Pass - opened in 1823. The same year saw the establishment of the hill station of Mussoorie - the first house, a shooting lodge, was built by Shore and Young. Everest, the Surveyor General, started the construction of offices and bungalows for the Survey of India shortly afterwards. The next arrival was the Governor General's Bodyguard, who, in 1831, built lines for summer occupation to the north of the Rajpur Road.

The growth of Dehra made the 2nd Goorkha's cantonment, sandwiched between the City and Civil Lines, very cramped so, in 1869, it was decided to move the regiment to a new cantonment to the west, beyond the Bindal River, on to a plateau between that river and the Tons. Their new lines, Officers Mess, bungalows and ancillary buildings, were regimental property by virtue of the 'Charter of 1864' and remained in regimental ownership until the regiment was transferred to the British Army in 1947.

The cantonment was enlarged twice - in 1886, when the 2nd Goorkhas were ordered to raise a 2nd battalion, so new barracks were built to the north to accommodate them; and about 1900, shortly after the arrival of the railway, land to the south was taken for the Imperial Cadet Corps. This unit did not survive the Great War, and the buildings were used later to house the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College.

A major upheaval occurred in 1905 with the formation of the Dehra Dun Infantry Brigade; accommodation now had to be found for a Brigade HQ and ancillary troops, two further Gurkha battalions and two Mountain Batteries. The HQ, hospital, and Supply and Transport units could be found space in the cantonment, but a new ancillary cantonment would have to be laid out for the others. The decision was to move west again to the plateau between the Tons and Noon Rivers, although this would entail a new road through Garhi Village and down to the Tons River Gorge which was crossed by a high level girder bridge. One battalion of the 9th Gurkhas arrived and took possession of the eastern part of the plateau, near the evacuated village of Birpur, where they raised their 2nd Battalion and built their own lines - not being a 'Chartered Regiment' the buildings were taken over by Government. The Gunners took over the west side near Ghangora Village. Although the whole area was legally in the cantonment, it was never referred to as such, but always as Birpur and Ghangora. It

should be emphasized that in the thirties the only way in or out of Birpur or Ghangora was by the Tons high level bridge, as the low level 'Irish bridge' at the northern end of Birpur was not built until World War II.

The only other additions up to 1939 were the HQ of the Meerut (Military) District situated on the Rajpur Road in the Civil Lines, and the Forest Research Institute/Indian Military Academy enclave on the Chakrata Road about four miles from Dehra Town.

INHABITANCY

Compared with other north Indian 'plains' stations, which had very small Civil Lines containing only the civil and police administrative offices and officials' residences, the Dehra Municipality comprised not only the City but also a Civil Lines of several square miles inhabited by European and Anglo Indian permanent residents. These were retired officers, civil, military, police and railway, together with planters who, on retirement, made India their home; in some cases families were of considerable antiquity, dating back to the Mutiny or before.

They were of mixed social strata - from gazetted officers to subordinates, from railway superintendents to engine drivers. The Europeans and senior Anglo Indians tended to live in large bungalows off the Rajpur Road, the others, mainly Anglo Indians, in the suburb of Dalanwala where they had their own Club.

Dehra Dun had been chosen on climatic and amenity considerations - while not a hill station at 2000 ft., the summer temperatures did not reach the fierce heat of the plains, seldom reaching 100⁰F, and the summers were shorter. There were none of the disadvantages of a hill station - steep narrow paths from which motors were banned, but, if required, a hill station was literally on the doorstep. The abundance of water all the year round made Dehra a garden city.

There were no garrison churches in cantonments, but Anglican and Catholic churches in the Civil Lines each with a resident Chaplain. The Great War memorial tablets, together with private memorials of both Gurkha Regiments, were on display in the Anglican church; they were removed to England at Independence and the 9th Tablet has since been mounted in the Gurkha Museum. There was also a flourishing Masonic Hall.

The Dehra Dun contingent of the Auxiliary Force numbered 165 all ranks, organised as an HQ, 2 platoons, W/T section and 4 light motor platoons. One section and one light motor platoon were embodied in May 1945 for duty in the PW camp on the Chakrata Road.

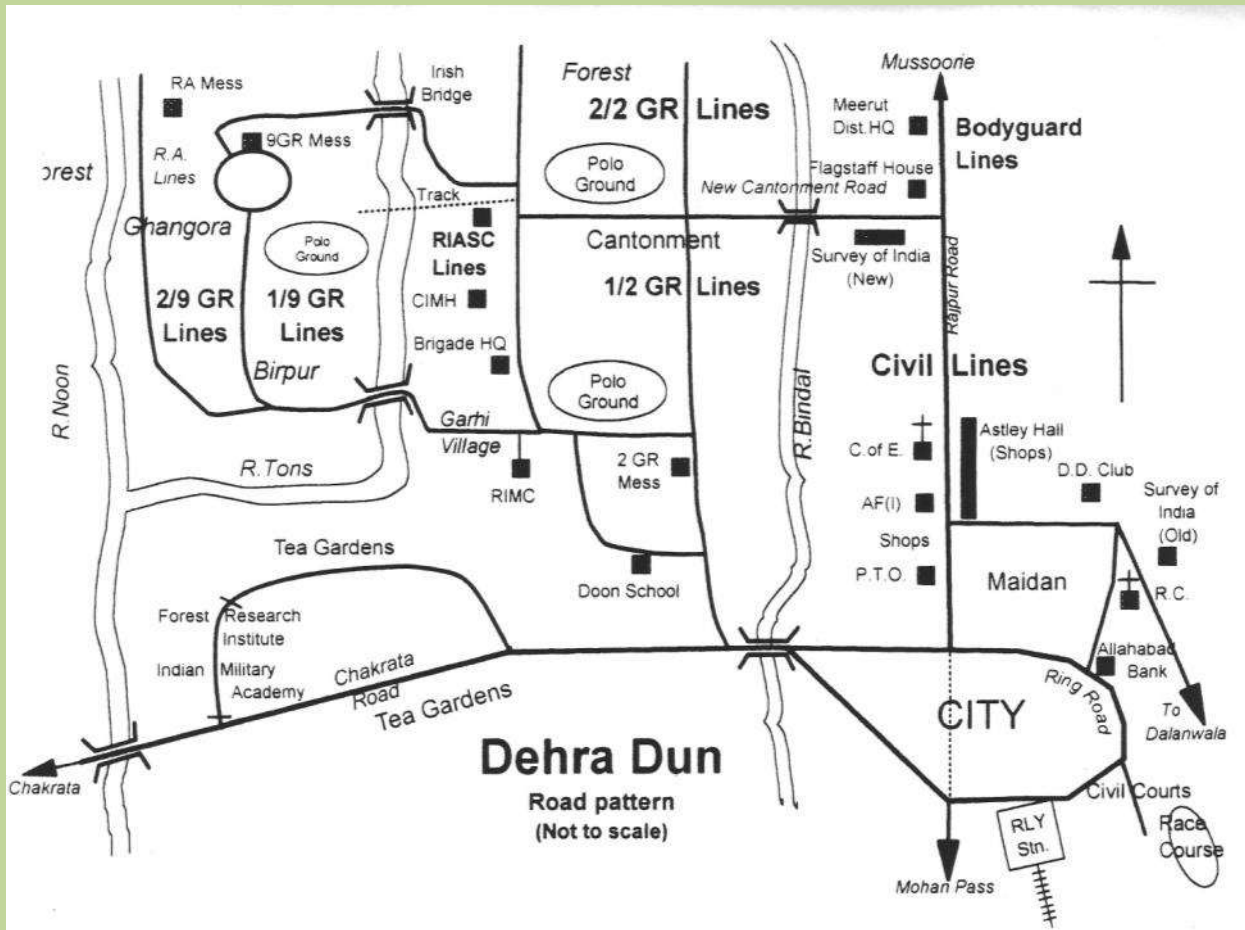
As might be expected, the shopping facilities and services were of a higher standard than those normally found in an Indian bazaar. There were branches of two major banks, the Imperial Bank of India and the Allahabad Bank, two European owned garages and service stations, and amid the shops of Astley Hall, the main shopping centre, a European goldsmith and silversmith.

Dehra's salubrious climate encouraged the establishment of schools. Pride of place originally went to the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College. This was a militarised 'Public School' run by the Army to accustom Indian boys to life at RMA Woolwich or RMC Sandhurst, and reverse the poor showing of the early Indian Cadets. It was overtaken by Doon School, which opened in the former Forest College in Cantonments in 1936 - known as

the 'Eton of India', it catered for the sons of new Indian professional and administrative classes. Halfway up the Mussoorie Road was Oakgrove, the East India Railway's school for Anglo Indian boys and girls. St Joseph's Academy and Colonel Brown's School for Indian boys in the Civil Lines gave an excellent secondary education.

This, then, was the Dehra Dun where I was stationed from March 1935 to October 1939.

(to be continued)



BURNING BRIGHT

Peter Chapman

Soldiers the world over know that it is not merely "the enemy" who causes the problems but also the conditions, the climate, the food...and the unfriendly livestock!

In May 1914, the village of Netrakona, 25 miles from Mymensingh in East Bengal, was plagued by what was thought to be a man-eating tiger. And when the beast had further mauled a man, the army turned out to bring matters to rights.

The 92nd Punjabis - so soon to be ordered to Egypt and, thence, to Mesopotamia - were ordered to provide a detachment by the local sub-divisional officer, a Mr Ross. The 25 men, under the command of Subadar Ahmed Khan, were guided by a villager to where the 'tiger' had last been seen. They had been issued with ball cartridge and ordered to fix bayonets. In extended order, and with Ross and the Subadar at their head, they set off gingerly, scouts posted ahead of them. Suddenly the animal broke cover - "a perfect cannon ball of snarling fur", reported the Calcutta Englishman. Ross fired his revolver but he missed. Then the two scouts had a go. And then a general melee ensued in which shots rang out and bayonets flashed and orders and screams mingled in the air. "The scene may be described," said the Englishman, "as a whirlwind of pagri and fur."

And then, as suddenly as it had started, it was all over. The 'tiger' turned out to be a panther which had tried to take two of the unfortunate sepoy with it. Both recovered, incidentally. The beast had seven bullets in it and eleven bayonet wounds. "Shikaris know" concluded the Englishman, "that a panther at bay is even more ferocious than a tiger and has a greater tenacity of life."

Such news would have been cold comfort 21 years later to the parents of Lancelot Anthony Gilliat, late of the Royal Dragoons. Lieutenant Gilliat, who was 26, was stationed with his regiment at Meerut when he went on a shooting expedition in the Central Provinces. Sixty miles from Jhansi, the unfortunate subaltern was mauled by a tiger and subsequently died in the Jhansi military hospital. And this time there was no doubt that it was a tiger.



OBITUARY - GANJU LAMA VC MM

Just I was dispatching the last edition of DURBAR, which included the obituaries of Gaje Ghale VC and Agansing Rai VC, news was received of the death of yet another Gurkha holder of the award, Ganju Lama VC MM. Born on 7 July 1922, Rifleman Ganju Lama was the PIAT (projector infantry anti-tank machine gun) operator of B Company, 1/7th Gurkha Rifles. On 17 May 1944 he won the Military Medal for knocking out an enemy tank on the Tiddim Road during 17th Indian Division's advance to relieve Imphal. Less than a month later, on 12 June, by which time 48 Brigade had advanced only twelve miles further along the Tiddim Road, they again came under sustained artillery fire, followed by an infantry assault supported by tanks. Ganju Lama crawled forward with his PIAT and engaged the enemy. Although wounded in his left wrist, right hand and a leg, he held his fire long enough to ensure that, at only thirty yards distance, his first missile destroyed the first tank, and his next shot destroyed the second. As the crews scrambled from their burning tanks Ganju Lama engaged them with hand grenades, killing or wounding every tank crew member. Only then did he allow himself to be taken to the Regimental Aid Post. As I pointed out in Vol. 12, No 3, Autumn 1995, this action was re-enacted as part of the Royal Tournament held in London in 1995.

On Independence, Ganju Lama transferred to 11 Gorkha Rifles of the new Indian Army and in due course achieved the rank of Subadar Major. In 1965 he was appointed ADC to the President of India, was granted the honorary rank of Captain in 1968, and finally retired in 1972, having been appointed an Honorary ADC for life to the President of India, when he

returned to his home in Sikkim and was given land for farming by the Government of Sikkim.

He died on 30 June 2000, aged 77. This leaves six living VC recipients who originate from the sub-continent.

BOOK NOTES

There are still a lot of new (or reprinted) books appearing on the market. Colonel Michael Hickey's *The Unforgettable Army: Slim's XIVth Army in Burma*, first published by Spellmount Ltd in 1992, has now been produced by the same publisher in paperback at £16.95 (ISBN 1-86227-050-3).

A timely reprint, given the centenary anniversary of the Boxer Rising, is Lieutenant Colonel H B Vaughan's *St George and the Chinese Dragon* with a foreword by John Adamson, published by The Alexius Press Limited at £10.95 (ISBN 0 951 9886 4 6). A recently promoted Major serving with 7th Rajputs, Vaughan found himself, due to the absence of other officers, leading his battalion to China and on to the Relief of the Legations in Peking. This book, first published in 1902, is a fascinating record of that deployment. In addition to 7th Rajputs there are numerous references to 1st Bengal Lancers, 24th Punjab Infantry and 1st Sikhs, as well as other British and Allied units (Russian, Japanese, American, Italian and French, with a passing reference to the Australian Naval Contingent). This reprint includes reproductions of Vaughan's watercolour illustrations of soldiers of the international expedition, as well as sketches and maps. A slim volume at 139 pages, Vaughan's account nevertheless covers the ground well and includes interesting and often humorous comments on other related issues. The foreword by John Adamson is intended to set the scene for those unfamiliar with the Boxer Rising, though in introducing Vaughan's career it seems to use this as an excuse to dance across a much broader map of world affairs and one wonders if this was strictly necessary, though given Cliff Parrett's article on the MacGregor Memorial Medal on page 81, it is worth noting that, as a Captain, Vaughan was only the fourth recipient of that medal (in fact we mentioned Vaughan and *St George and the Chinese Dragon* in a very early edition of our Society journal (Summer 1985 - before it became known as DURBAR!). A good read.

A useful new book, though perhaps of marginal interest to members of this Society, is *The Armed Forces of Aden 1839-1967* by Cliff Lord and David Birtles, published by Helion and Company in a limited edition of 500 copies at £29.95 (ISBN 1 874622 40 X). The book concentrates in particular on the locally raised units that were a permanent feature of the armed forces of Aden. Indian and British Army units raised in Aden are mentioned, but not in as much detail as the local units. Some interesting photographs, including several in colour, appendices covering ranks, badges and medals, as well as a good index, serve to make this a valuable reference work.

Finally, a new book by Charles Allen - *Soldier Sahibs - The Men Who Made the North-West Frontier* has just been published by John Murray at £22.50 (ISBN 0-7195-5418 7) and I hope to carry a review of this in the next journal.

LETTERS AND QUERIES

Several members have responded to the query about the BLH badge on cavalry pouch (Vol. 17, No 2, page 69). The consensus is that it is almost certainly the BEHAR LIGHT HORSE (1884 onwards). In the early 1860s, memories of the Mutiny still preoccupied the European community in the Behar Division. "During the mutinies of 1857, the want of such a corps within these Districts was greatly felt."¹ Thus a group of civilians applied to the District Commissioner to raise a mounted volunteer corps to be called the Soubah Behar Mounted Rifles, and formal sanction to the formation of this corps was accorded by a Government of Bengal notification of 8 December 1862, although its official title was changed to Behar Mounted Rifle Corps from the date of its formation. Its designation eventually changed to Behar Light Horse in 1884 [GGO No 120 of 29 February 1884], and in time it became the senior regiment of the Auxiliary Force (India), retaining this seniority until it was disbanded in 1947. An undated white metal badge of the Bihar² Light Horse depicts the regimental device as a wild boar³, although this would not have featured on the pouch. In the regiment's annual report for 1912-13 there is some useful detail on "Orders of Dress"⁴, which *inter alia* specifies that officers full dress includes "brown leather cross belt and pouch with silver scroll and mountings", available from Messrs. A R Worby at Mozufferpore for 38 Rupees. It also mentions "BLH Leather Buttons and Fasteners" and "BLH Shoulder Letters".

Notes:

1. "*History of the Behar Light Horse*" Major G W Disney; Edinburgh Press, Calcutta, 1908.
 2. Spelling of the word "Behar" was brought into line with contemporary usage "Bihar" sometime after 1906 and before 1911.
 3. "*The Auxiliary Force, India*" article by John Gaylor, Bulletin of the Military Historical Society, August 1980
 4. "*Bihar Light Horse - Annual Report 1912-13*". Pioneer Press, July 1913.
- (Thanks to Sir John Chapple, Ron Rosner, Cliff Parrett and Trevor Kingsley-Curry for their contributions)

Trevor Kingsley-Curry would appreciate identification and any other information available on two military armbands. Both are professionally made and identical except for the initials - being on two bands of coloured cloth, red above black, and bearing the star of India in brass on the red band, with the initials 'M' and 'DD' respectively in red cloth on the black band. He would also appreciate identification of a button - large solid brass struck by Sell & Son, London, showing a couchant lion above the monogrammed letters IA (or AI).

Web site note - the illustration of the armbands was so poor that it does not merit reproduction in this web page.

