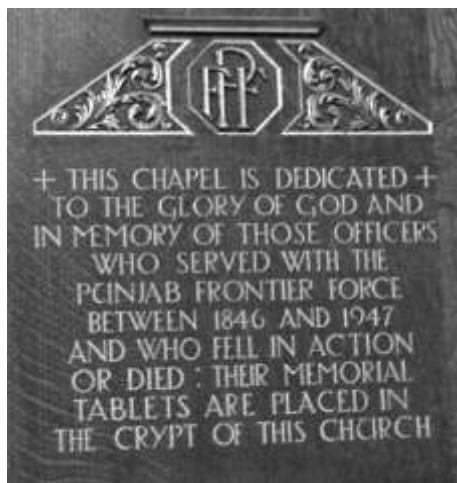


A Remnant of the Punjab Frontier Force in Chelsea

Barry Renfrew

A remarkable monument to one of the most famous formations of the old Indian Army stands almost forgotten just a few hundred yards from the cacophony of the King's Road in Chelsea. St. Luke's Church is home to the memorial chapel of the Punjab Frontier Force (PFF), a repository of the memories and traditions of a force that carved out an epic reputation on the North West Frontier.

The chapel was serene and resplendent on a recent morning. It is located on one side of St. Luke's, an enormous and soaring structure that is sometimes referred to as 'Chelsea's Cathedral.' Each of the regiments that made up the PFF, or Piffers, is commemorated in the chapel. Regimental badges are carved on a



glass screen, the wooden walls and on the chapel chairs. A good range of other items illustrate the story of the force, among them a plaque outlining its history and the origins of the chapel. Several flags hang in the chapel, including the colours of the 2nd Punjab Infantry, a forebear of the PFF, and the union flag that flew over the PFF Brigade Headquarters in Kohat and was lowered for the last time on the 15 August 1947. There is also the garter banner of Lord Ismay. Other commemorative items include a two volume Book of Remembrance listing the names of former PFF officers as well as a number of monuments and plaques to individual

officers. It is not hard to pause for a moment and imagine you are standing in a regimental chapel in another time and place.

The PFF traced its history back to the British annexation of the Punjab in 1846 after the Second Sikh War. A military force known as the Frontier Brigade was raised to help garrison the new territory and guard the North West Frontier. A mixed force of cavalry and infantry was formed between 1846 and 1847 as the Corps of Guides. Four regiments of Sikh local infantry were formed a few months later. Rapid expansion saw the addition of five Punjabi infantry regiments, six cavalry regiments and four mountain batteries by 1849. Yet another addition came in 1853 when the Scinde Camel Corps, which had been raised in 1843, was added to the Punjab force as the 6th Regiment of Punjab Infantry. The Frontier Brigade

became the Punjab Irregular Force in 1851, and the 5th Goorkha Regiment (The Hazara Goorkha Battalion) was attached from 1861.

The Punjab Frontier Force, as it was known from 1865, ceased to exist as a distinct entity after the 1903 Kitchener reforms, although its former constituents continued to carry a common sense of identity and tradition, with their individual titles suffixed by the distinction 'Frontier Force'. Under the 1922 restructuring of the Indian Army, the four former Sikh regiments of the PFF and the Guides Infantry were merged as the 12th Frontier Force Regiment, while the five Punjab Infantry regiments were united as the 13th Frontier Force Rifles. The Frontier Force regiments were mostly transferred to the Pakistani Army at partition in 1947, with the Sikh and Dogra companies moving to the Indian Army.



With the coming of independence, British veterans of the PFF were concerned about what might happen to the garrison churches associated with the formation and the many memorials and other mementoes they contained. A group of former officers, led by Colonel Charles Morris, arranged with the Pakistani government to have the memorials shipped to England. A pamphlet on the monuments says the Pakistani army and government were most helpful in this process. Finding a new home for the memorials in Britain turned out to be more difficult. Approaches to several London churches, including St. Mary Axe near to the site of the old East India Company offices, were not successful. St. Luke's was approached and agreed to house a chapel and the monuments, putting aside a large and very suitable space within the church. A plan for the chapel was drawn up by Michael Tapper and the work carried out by a company headed by an ex-Piffer, Lieutenant-Colonel A.R.E. Pollard. The chapel was opened on 3rd June 1951 by Field

Marshal Lord Slim, General Lord Ismay, the Bishop of London and others. It was dedicated to the PFF officers who were killed in action or died between 1846 and 1947. A wide range of tablets and other items transported from Pakistan were erected in the church, including memorials to its constituent formations, campaigns and individuals; the inscriptions recorded everything from the long list of the many PFF officers killed in the First World War to individuals who perished in prosaic hunting accidents. A memorial tablet to Brig. John Nicholson, that most formidable of Victorians, reads:

“In Affectionate Memory of Brigadier John NICHOLSON, C.B., once a deputy commissioner of this district who at the great siege of DELHI led the storm [and] fell mortally wounded in the hour of victory and died 23 September 1857 aged only 34. Gifted in mind and body, he was as brilliant in government as in arms. The snows of GHUZNEE attest his youthful fortitude, the songs of the PUNJAB his many deeds, the pace of this frontier his strong rule. The enemies of his country know how terrible he was in battle and we his friends love to recall how gentle, generous and true he was.”

As affecting was the monument to two brothers who both died in action:

“In loving memory of Quinton and Wigram, sons of the late George Wynyard BATTYE, Bengal Civil Service who fell fighting for their country. Quinton when 2nd in command of the Corps of Guides was mortally wounded before Delhi on the 9th June 1857 and died the following day in his 26th year. Wigram who was killed while leading the Guides Cavalry at Fattahabad in Afghanistan on 2nd April 1879 in his 37th year. Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.”

St. Luke's has one other surprise. In the vaults behind a locked door is a sanctum to the 3rd Gurkha Rifles. On its white walls stand a number of memorial tablets retrieved from the regiment's former cantonment churches, most of them dedicated to officers killed in various campaigns. The entrance is framed by a wrought iron memorial gate. The small, vaulted room with its austere white-washed walls possesses a moving and reflective atmosphere.

The chapel was a frequent visiting spot for veterans of the PFF and their relatives and friends over the years, and there were regular memorial services and other events to guard the memory and tradition of the force. Time inevitably told, and by the 1990s the number of survivors had dwindled. It was decided by the PFF Association to disband, and the memorials and other relics were donated to the National Army Museum in 1998. The 3rd Gurkha Rifles sanctum remains intact. Visitors who wish to see the PFF memorials, including those cited above, should apply to the NAM.

The church is proud of its association with the PFF and the chapel is maintained in superb condition. Histories of the chapel and the PFF feature in the church guidebook, which extols the formation, with its many constituent races, as a model of political and religious tolerance. Sadly very few people come specifically to visit the chapel these days. John Deal, an elderly verger who helps

care for the chapel and knows the story of the PFF, said there are one or two people who visit from time to time, and a wreath is laid to the memory of the PFF on Armistice Sunday. 'There are no Piffers left,' he commented. Even fewer people come to see the 3rd Gurkha Rifles memorial. A caretaker said that in the two years he has been working at the church there had only been one visitor to the Gurkha memorial, which is kept locked and has to be opened by a church official.

St. Luke's is a glorious building and the PFF and Gurkha memorials are fascinating for anyone with an interest in Indian military history. It is hard to think of anywhere else in London where such a touching and informative monument to the old Indian Army can be found. Many of us visit the National Army Museum when we're in the capital, and St. Luke's is on the way. It would be a fitting tribute if more members of the Society could visit. The church is open all day, and church officials could not be more helpful; they are clearly interested in having people visit the chapel. It may be best to call in advance if you want to see the Gurkha vault to make sure that somebody has the key.



ST. LUKE'S CHURCH, SYDNEY STREET, LONDON SW3, TELEPHONE 020.7349.0538

Operations in Mekran 1898 - 1902

Harry Fecitt, MBE, TD

Introduction

At the turn of the 19th Century, the Mekran¹ area of northwest India (now Pakistan) and adjacent southeast Persia was a remote dry strip of land running along the northern coastline of the Gulf of Oman and the Arabian Sea. This was (and remains today) one of the most hostile and inaccessible regions in the world. Mountains rising to over 10,000 feet formed a backdrop to the coastal desert. Habitation inland followed watercourses that ran through gorges in the hills where date gardens could be irrigated. Coastal communities existed on fishing and smuggling, with Muscat, in Oman across the Straits of Hormuz, being a major source of illegally-imported weapons. The camel provided a transport resource, as well as milk and meat. The standard of living was very low, bordering on wretched, for many inhabitants. The people were hardy and lawless Muslim Baluch tribesmen who resisted outside interference and who constantly intrigued and fought amongst themselves.

In the British-administered portion of Mekran, government of a sort was achieved by tribal treaty supervised by British Political Agents. The British presence was most evident on the coast where a telegraph line ran from Persia to Karachi. However, by 1898, British survey parties were working inland.

Deployment for operations in 1898

In January 1898, conflict broke out in Kej, where the Hindu *Nazim* Diwan Udho Das (a district administrator who reported to the ruler of the region, the *Khan* of Kalat) was disliked and disrespected by the Baluchi *sardars* (leaders) Baluch Khan and Mehrab Khan Gichki. The latter, with the complicity of Baluch Khan, attacked Diwan Udho Das on 6th January, imprisoned him in Kalatuk Fort and looted his treasury. Meantime, the unsuspecting British had deployed four surveyors, with Punjabi civilian support staff, into the Kolwa and Kej valleys, depending on the Baluchi *sardars'* levies for security.

On 9th January, the camp of one of the surveyors, Captain J.M. Burn, Royal Engineers,² was attacked by local tribesmen. The fifteen-man levy escort team,

¹ Known officially as 'Makran' in modern times, it was more generally referred to as 'Mekran' in pre-1947 military correspondence.

² Capt. J.M. Burn, R.E., appointed to Survey of India from 17 May 1891; 2nd Grade Deputy Superintendent, in charge of No. 24 Party, Baluchistan (*I.A. List*, January 1898).

commanded by Rhustam Khan, brother of Mehrab Khan Gichki, stood aside as sixteen support staff were slaughtered. The attackers and the escort party then seized thirty-five rifles and 15,000 Rupees. Captain Burn had been sleeping on a hill three miles away, and he was alerted by one of his men who had escaped from the camp. Burn started off on foot to Balor, thirty-five miles away. At Balor he sent messengers to alert the other surveyors, and he obtained a camel to ride to Urmara, whence on 11th January he telegraphed a report to Brigadier-General T.A. Cooke, the Officer Commanding Sind District, at Karachi.

Within two hours of the report's arrival, a military response was initiated. Lieutenant-Colonel R.G.C. Mayne, commanding 30th Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion),³ was ordered to proceed with 250 men to Urmara, seventy-five miles east of Pasni. Transportation was provided by the tug *Richmond Crawford*, with a local boat in tow carrying followers, baggage, 400 rounds per rifle, and rations for one month. Three British officers and one medical officer accompanied Mayne. Parties from the 21st Bombay Infantry were despatched to Chabbar and Jask in Persian Mekran to protect British telegraph facilities in those locations. Meanwhile those *sardars* wishing to avoid direct conflict with the British escorted the three remaining surveyors and their men into Urmara. At Urmara, Colonel Mayne landed his men, horses and supplies by using local *bunder* boats (ship-to-shore coastal vessels). More troops were being organised to join Colonel Mayne, and Pasni was chosen as the operational base. From Pasni, a direct route led north to Mehrab Khan's fort at Turbat and the nearby fort at Kalatuk where Nazim Diwan Udho Das was jailed. Colonel Mayne marched on 19th January with his men along the 100 miles of telegraph line to Pasni, repairing the line as he went.

The hostile *sardars* had sent instructions that the British were not to be offered camels to assist with transportation, but the British Political Agent for South-East Baluchistan, Major M.A. Tighe, quickly found camels for Colonel Mayne. None of the beasts were strong due to recent droughts in the region and many died under the pressure of work. By 27th January 1898, Colonel Mayne had under his command at Pasni the 30th Bombay Infantry (400 rifles), a section of No.4 Hazara Mountain Battery (two 7-pndr guns), and eighty-eight transport mules. Two days later the following troops left Karachi to join Colonel Mayne: 6th Bombay Cavalry (half-squadron); 30th Bombay Infantry (eighty rifles, tasked with guarding telegraph facilities at Urmara, Pasni and Gwadur); Bombay Sappers and Miners (one British and one Indian officer with twelve other ranks); No.42 Field Hospital ('C' and 'D' Sections); an additional twelve transport mules.

³ Lieut.-Col. Richard Charles Graham Mayne, Indian Staff Corps; commandant 30th Regt of Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion) from 10th April 1894 (*I.A. List*, April 1900).

The advance on Turbat

Colonel Mayne left Pasni with his men and the two mountain guns on 27th January, knowing that Baluch Khan intended to block his advance to Turbat. Four dry and dusty days later at 08.00 hrs, the column came across the hostile *sardars* and 1,500 of their men on hills 300 feet (ninety-one metres) above the mouth of a narrow six-mile long defile. When the advance guard under Lieutenant N.R. Anderson⁴ got within 850 yards of the enemy, it came under breech-loading rifle fire. Captain A. LeG. Jacob,⁵ with fifty rifles, was deployed onto a hill on the enemy's left flank where he met stiff opposition.

Lieutenant J.H. Paine⁶ and his gunners now delivered destructive blows by blasting the *sardars'* forces with shells. Colonel Mayne sent Captain R. Southey⁷ with fifty rifles to drive the enemy off low hills to the left (west) of the defile. At that moment Lieutenant H.T. Naylor⁸ appeared with thirty-two sabres from the 6th Bombay Cavalry. He had double-marched up from Pasni towards the sound of the guns. He and his men were deployed dismounted to support Southey. Colonel Mayne now moved his main body forward to seize the mouth of the defile whilst Captains Southey and Jacob got behind the enemy on their respective flanks. The guns moved forward to support the assault and fired case shot (exploding cannisters containing metal fragments) into all the enemy positions. This was a demoralising blow as the *sardars'* men had not previously faced effective artillery fire, and after taking hundreds of casualties the enemy ranks quickly thinned out as men fled. However some of the *sardars* were made of sterner stuff. Suddenly Baluch Khan and a group of his *ghazis* (warriors who fought for Islam) jumped out of cover, discarded their rifles, drew their swords, and shouting 'Allah! Allah!' they charged at Captain Jacob's group. Some got to within twenty paces of Captain Jacob before they were all shot down. Captain Jacob himself killed Baluch Khan with a revolver shot. The action was over by 11.45 hrs and Colonel Mayne's men moved tactically through the defile. The enemy had lost up to 250 tribesmen killed and about the same number wounded. Baluch Khan and four other *Khans* were dead. The cavalry had lost one man wounded, the gunners had

⁴ Lieut. Norman Ruthmen Anderson, Indian Staff Corps; appointed to 30th Regt of Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion) from 13 Jan 1896 (*I.A. List*, April 1900).

⁵ Capt. Arthur LeGrand Jacob, Indian Staff Corps; appointed to 30th Regt of Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion) from 18 Jan 1889 (*I.A. List*, April 1900).

⁶ Lieut. J.H. Paine, R.A.; appointed to No. 4 (Hazara) Mountain Battery, Punjab Frontier Force, from 22 Feb 1897 (*I.A. List*, January 1898).

⁷ Capt. Robert Southey, Indian Staff Corps; appointed to 30th Regt of Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion) from 6 Nov 1885 (*I.A. List*, January 1898).

⁸ Lieut. Henry Trevor Naylor, Indian Staff Corps; appointed to 6th Regt of Bombay Cavalry (Jacob's Horse) from 11 Jul 1897 (*I.A. List*, January 1898).

lost one man killed and one man wounded, and the 30th Bombay Infantry had lost two men killed and ten wounded, one of whom later died. Lieutenant Naylor and his cavalry re-mounted and pushed on to the River Kej where they skirmished, killing four and wounding five of the enemy. Colonel Mayne and his main body approached Turbat Fort at about 16.30 hrs, fired a few shells into the fort, and camped for the night. During the hours of darkness the fort's defenders, led by Mehrab Khan Gitchi, withdrew into the hills. Mayne's column occupied the fort the next day, the 1st February.

Demolitions

The detachment of Bombay Sappers and Miners, under Lieutenant W. Bovet,⁹ arrived twenty-four hours later, having marched forty miles that day. There was no rest for them as they immediately marched on with Colonel Mayne for another thirty miles to Charbak, and blew up the towers of the fort there. On 7th February Lieutenant Bovet's men used their gun-cotton to demolish forts at Gushtang, Kaori-Kalat and Kala-i-Nao, the adjacent villages having already been burnt by the infantry on 2nd February. Visits were made to the other valleys of the hostile *sardars* and a flying column under Major G.E. Even¹⁰ was sent north to the higher Bolida valley where the forts at Chib and Koshk were demolished, whilst the Bet fort was occupied. Major Even then seized Kalatak fort and released Diwan Udho Das.

Colonel Mayne marched to Tump, where the fort was surrendered by the defenders, and then on towards Mand near the Persian border. Here Lieutenant S.G. Knox, Political Assistant at Kalat,¹¹ interviewed the headmen and chiefs of the area, obtaining their signatures on an agreement acknowledging their loyalty to the *Khan* and their willingness to remit revenue to him. On the return journey, Phulabad fort was demolished. At Turbat Lieutenant Knox held a *darbar* which was attended by the headmen of Kej and Mekran. Fines totalling 50,000 rupees were inflicted, which had to be paid within three years. As part of the punishment, none of the local crops that the sepoys and sowars had consumed during their marches around the region were to be paid for.

⁹ Lieut. W Bovet, R.E.; appointed to Corps of Bombay Sappers and Miners (No. 1 Company) from 24th May 1897 (*Indian Army List*, April 1900),

¹⁰ Major George Eusebe Even, Indian Staff Corps; 2-i-c 30th Regt of Bombay Infantry (3rd Baluch Battalion) from 21 Oct 1892 (*I.A. List*, January 1898).

¹¹ Lieut. Stuart George Knox. Indian Staff Corps; appointed to Political Department from November 1894; Political Assistant at Kalat, and Political Agent in charge of the Bolan Pass (*I.A. List*, April 1900).

The withdrawal from Mekran

Having acted in a decisive and energetic manner, demonstrating how lethal artillery fire can be and how damaging gun-cotton can be (a total of thirteen forts were demolished), Colonel Mayne split his force into three groups. A small detachment of the 30th Bombay Infantry remained in Mekran to support the Kalat State troops who garrisoned the forts at Turbat, Kalatak, Tumo and Bet. A column under Captain Jacob composed of the cavalry, mountain gunners, sappers, and ninety rifles marched back to Quetta via Kalat, demolishing forts at Sharak, Nag, Ser and Hor Kalat on the way. Colonel Mayne and the remainder of his command marched to Urmara and then sailed to Karachi aboard I.M.S. Canning.

Awards for the 1898 operations

Order of the Bath (Companion, Military Division)

Lieutenant-Colonel R.C.G. Mayne, 30th Bombay Infantry

Distinguished Service Order

Captain A.LeG.Jacob, 30th Bombay Infantry

Lieutenant J.H. Paine, Royal Artillery

Indian Order of Merit (3rd Class)

Subedar Ahmed Khan, 30th Baluch Infantry: For conspicuous gallantry in action at Gok Parosh, in Mekran [sic], on the 31st January 1898. The Subedar was with the left flank attack, with Captain A.LeG. Jacob, and showed conspicuous gallantry and courage in leading a small party of his men, in the face of heavy odds, against superior numbers of the enemy, and dislodging them from strong positions.

Brevet rank of Major

Captain Robert Southey, 30th Bombay Infantry

Mentioned in despatches

Lieutenant H.T. Naylor, 6th Bombay Cavalry

Lieutenant J.H. Paine, R.A. No 4 (Hazara) Mountain Battery

Jemadar Shaikh Khuda Baksh, No 4 (Hazara) Mountain Battery

Lieutenant H.H. Turner, Royal Engineers (Transport Officer)¹²

Major G.E. Even, 30th Bombay Infantry

Captain R. Southey, 30th Bombay Infantry

Captain A. Le G. Jacob, 30th Bombay Infantry

Subadar Ahmad Khan, 30th Bombay Infantry

Jemadar Fazl Shah, 30th Bombay Infantry.

Lieutenant S.G. Knox, Political Agent.

¹² Lieut. H.H. Turner, R.E., appointed to Survey of India from 22 Apr 1897; Assistant Superintendent, attached to No. 24 Party, Baluchistan (*I.A. List*, Jan. 1898).

The 1901-1902 operations – the situation in Mekran

In an attempt to control banditry along their common border during the cold weather of 1901-1902, the Persian government agreed to co-operate with British forces. Local Lieutenant-Colonel H.L. Showers, Political Agent at Kalat,¹³ and his escort party moved to meet the Persians on the border. The escort commander was Major M.J. Tighe, D.S.O., 27th Baluchis.¹⁴ The troops in the escort were: 27th Baluch Light Infantry (300 rifles); 5th Bombay Cavalry (Scinde Horse) (fifty sabres); a section of the 9th (Murree) Mountain Battery (two 7-pounder guns); a detachment of Bombay Sappers and Miners (twenty-one all ranks from No. 4 Company).

On 16th December 1901, Captain Showers' party arrived in Turbat and met Colonel C.E. Yate, the Agent to the Governor-General Baluchistan.¹⁵ Colonel Yate stated that cross-border outlaws had seized Nodiz Fort which was located about eight miles west of Kalatak. The Nazim of Kej and his forces had been besieging the fort for over fifty days, but without artillery they could not assault it. Major Tighe was requested to assist the Nazim's forces.

The following day Major Tighe went to reconnoitre Nodiz Fort, accompanied by Lieutenant J.B. Corry, Royal Engineers, commanding the Bombay Sappers and Miners detachment.¹⁶ The Nazim showed them the fort which was a substantial one, and Major Tighe decided that he needed the guns to be brought up before an assault commenced. On 19th December, reconnaissances were made by all the infantry officers, and the next day at 09.00 hours the guns arrived under the command of Lieutenant E.G. Hart, Royal Artillery.¹⁷ The gunners were given an hour to rest before the assault began.

¹³ Capt. Herbert Lionel Showers, Indian Staff Corps; appointed to Political Dept 15 Jul 1890; Political Assistant 2nd Cl. and Officiating Political Agent (*I.A. List*, Jan. 1898, Apr. 1900).

¹⁴ Brevet-Major Michael Joseph Tighe, Indian Staff Corps; 2-i-c 27th Regt (1st Baluch Bn) of Bombay (Light) Infantry from 26 Apr 1901, and officiating commandant; served in Burma between 1886 and 1891 (DSO, *London Gazette*, 23 Aug 1889) and E. Africa in 1896 against the Mazrui rebels. He should not be confused with namesake Capt. Michael Augustus Tighe, Supernumerary List, who, having transferred to permanent civil employment, was currently Political Agent, Southern Baluchistan. He had served in Mekran in 1898 (*I.A. List*, Jan. 1900, Nov. 1901, Oct. 1902).

¹⁵ The Hon'ble Colonel Charles Edward Yate, C.S.I., C.M.G., Ind. Staff Cps; appointed Agent to Governor-General and Chief Commissioner Baluchistan, from 20 Nov 1900 (*I.A. List*, Oct. 1902).

¹⁶ Lieut. John Beaumont Corry, R.E.; attached to Bombay Sappers & Miners from 29th December 1897 (*I.A. List*, Oct. 1902).

¹⁷ Lieut. E.G. Hart, R.A.; attached Murree Mountain Battery from 2 Jul 1901 (*I.A. List*, Nov. 1901).

Camp Orders regarding Attack on Nodiz Fort

Major M.J. Tighe, Nodiz, the 20th December, 1901

The attack on Nodiz fort will take place this morning, immediately after the arrival of the mountain guns from Turbat. The orders for the attack are as under.

- i. A guard of forty rifles will be detailed to guard the camp. Particular attention should be paid to the *karezes* (underground water channels) west of the camp.
- ii. The *Nazim's* levies will be directed to occupy their present *sangars* round the fort, and on no account to leave them.
- iii. The guns, with an escort of ten rifles, will take up a position to the south-east of the fort, and will have as their objectives:
 - (a) The loop-holed tops of the west flank towers;
 - (b) The top of the main tower; [and] when the tops of west flank towers have been demolished, the Officer Commanding the guns will sound his battery call. This will be the signal to the infantry that the gun fire has been turned from the west flank tower to the main tower
 - (c) Captain Hulseberg, 27th Baluch Light Infantry,¹⁸ will guide the guns to the position selected, and will rejoin the infantry.
- iv. The infantry will be disposed as follows:
 - (a) Forty rifles, covering party—Lieut. Grant (27th Baluch Light Infantry)¹⁹
Sappers and Miners—Lieutenant Corry
Fifty rifles, supports
The whole under Captain Hulseberg.
Eighty rifles reserve, at disposal of Officer Commanding. This will form the main infantry attack, which will be directed on the south-west bastion of the fort, through the date groves.
 - (b) Fifty rifles under Lieutenant Orton²⁰ will push their way to the east side of the fort and occupy the mosque which is outside the fort, or take up such a position as will prevent the enemy escaping.
 - (c) The cavalry will take up a position in rear of the guns, ready for pursuit.
 - (d) Hospital and reserve ammunition with the reserves.
 - (e) The position of the Officer Commanding will be with the supports.
- v. The battery call will be the signal for the gun-cotton party to advance.
- vi. No bugles will be sounded except by order of the Officer Commanding.
- vii. Sketch of position will be given to all British Officers.

¹⁸ Capt. Hubert Hulseberg, Indian Staff Cps; 27th Baluch Lt Infantry from 17th June 1896 (*I.A. List*, Nov. 1901).

¹⁹ Lieut. George Patrick Grant, Ind. Staff Cps; att'd 27th Baluch Lt Infy from 27 Aug 1901; transferred to 126th Baluchistan Infy from 30 Jun 1902 (*I.A. List*, Nov. 1901, July 1904).

²⁰ Lieut. Ernest Frederick Orton, Indian Staff Cps; 26th Baluchistan Infy from 4 June 1897; posted to the 7th Bombay Lancers (Baluch Horse) from 7 Mar 1902 (*I.A. List*, Nov. 1901, Oct. 1902). During the Mekran operations in 1901-02, as Intelligence Officer, he accompanied the 5th Bombay Cavalry detachment (*Frontier & Overseas Expeditions*, Vol. III p.263).. However, he was an infantry officer and qualified to command fifty rifles.

The assault on Nodiz fort

As the infantry deployed to their start lines the guns came into action 550 yards from the fort, and their appearance was greeted with enemy rifle fire which fortunately was high. The mule teams were sheltered in an adjacent watercourse. At 11.20 hrs the first shell struck the fort. Meanwhile the Baluch infantry to the south-west advanced through date groves and cotton fields until they were 200 yards from the fort. Marksmen then fired on the loopholes. The infantry on the east side also advanced as ordered and engaged the loopholes to their front.

When all the battlement loop-holes had been destroyed by the guns, Lieutenant Hart's bugler sounded the Battery Call and switched fire onto the main tower. The enemy, who did not lack courage, promptly returned to the battlements and fired wildly. When the assault party and the sappers were in position, Lieutenant Corry was ordered to breach the fort wall with gun-cotton. Whilst the infantry provided covering fire, the Sappers dashed to the wall and found that the artillery fire had caused a sufficient breach. They returned to report this information. Major Tighe stopped the gun-fire and his bugler sounded the Charge.

Lieutenants Grant and Corry raced to be the first through the narrow breach, which only allowed one man at a time to pass through. Naik Baryam Singh and Sapper Noor Din, both Grant's men, followed them through and this quartet killed eight of the enemy before the defenders organised a response. By this time, Subedar Hamid Khan, 27th Baluchis, with about thirty of his men, had also managed to enter the fort. An enemy sniper in the tower above put down effective fire onto the attackers, and enemy groups wielding swords counter-attacked both flanks. This resulted in Grant and Corry and three sepoy being shot and wounded. Unable to hold their position, the storming party dragged their wounded and the loose rifles back through the breach. The first assault had been repulsed.

Major Tighe then ordered his infantry up to the fort walls, and the sepoy used their bayonets to rive loop-holes through which they could shoot. The guns were ordered forward into a date grove only 100 yards from the fort. Here they had line-of-sight to the forts' roofs – the weak points. The roofs were shelled until they were set on fire, causing them to collapse onto the defenders. Major Tighe's bugler sounded 'Cease Fire' and then 'Attack,' and Captain Hulseberg and his Baluch infantry swarmed into the fort again, quickly overcoming opposition. The surviving sixty-three defenders surrendered inside the fort or to Lieutenant Orton on the east side. Fourteen enemy dead and seventeen wounded lay on the floor of the fort. Thirty-three of the captured enemy were Persian.

During the assault, Major Tighe's force expended 154 artillery shells, 1,830 rifle rounds and thirty-six pistol rounds. The action was over at 13.25 hrs. The force had lost three sepoy killed, and two British officers and six sepoy severely wounded, with a few more men slightly wounded. The fort was now knocked down with gun-cotton.

Awards for the attack on Nodiz Fort

Distinguished Service Order

Lieutenant J.B. Corry, Royal Engineers

Lieutenant G.P. Grant, 27th Baluch Light Infantry

Brevet rank of Lieutenant Colonel

Major M.J. Tighe, D.S.O., 27th Baluch Light Infantry

Indian Order of Merit 3rd Class

Subedar Hamid Khan, 27th Baluch Light Infantry

1991 Naik Baryam Singh, No. 4 Coy, Bombay Sappers and Miners²¹

1967 Sapper Noor Din, No. 4 Coy, Bombay Sappers and Miners²²

‘For conspicuous gallantry in action on the occasion of the capture of Nodiz Fort in Mekran, on the 20th December 1901, when they accompanied Lieutenant J.B. Corry, R.E., and Lieutenant W.O. [sic] Grant, 27th Baluch Light Infantry,²³ in the fore of the storming party, and engaged the enemy’s swordsmen. A heavy fire was opened on them from the towers, and both the British officers and several men fell wounded. The subedar and the two sappers [sic] named above stood their ground, and by their gallant conduct saved the lives of both officers and men.’

Mentioned in despatches

Lieutenant E.F. Orton, 7th Bombay Lancers

Lieutenant J.B. Corry, Royal Engineers

Lieutenant E.G. Hart, Royal Artillery (Murree Mountain Battery)

Captain H. Hulseberg, 27th Baluch Light Infantry

Lieutenant G.P. Grant, 27th Baluch Light Infantry

Advance to the Persian border

The next stage in operations was for Colonel Showers to make contact with a Persian delegation at Bampur on the Indo-Persian border in order to agree upon joint measures to limit lawlessness in Mekran. In effect, the Political Agent’s

²¹ Enrolled in 1889; commissioned in October 1904; advanced to subedar in May 1913; appointed to the 2nd Class OBI (supernumerary, for war service in Mesopotamia) on 24 Jul 1915; died or was killed on 1st April 1916, and is commemorated on the Basra Memorial.

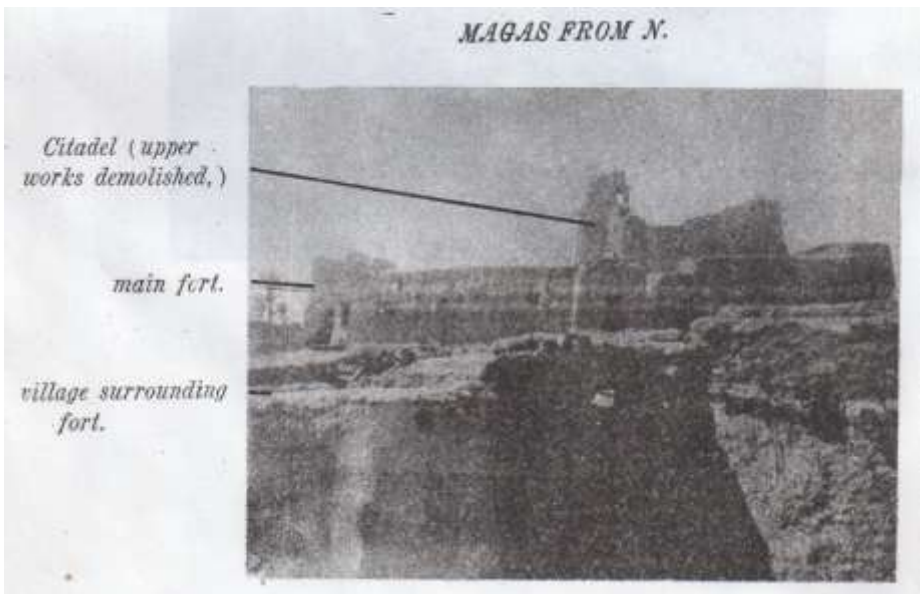
²² 1967 Lance-Naik Nur [sic] Din IOM, 3rd Sappers & Miners, son of Karim Bakhsh, of Mohri, Kharian, Gujrat, Punjab; killed or died 29 Oct 1914; commemorated on Panel 9, Neuve Chapelle Indian Memorial.

²³ This officer has been incorrectly recorded here, and should be Lieut. G.P. Grant. His namesake, Lieut. William Ogilvie Grant, also of the 27th Baluch Light Infantry, did not serve in Mekran (*Indian Army List*, November 1901; July 1904). A similar error was made by Sandes (*Indian Sappers & Miner*, pp.319-320) who describes him as ‘Lieut. J.D. Grant.’ John Duncan Grant was, at the time, with the 44th Gurkha Rifles (became 8th Gurkha Rifles in 1903) and was awarded the Victoria Cross for gallantry with this regiment in Tibet in 1904 (*London Gazette*, 24 Jan 1905).

Escort became a flying column of all arms, with a total strength of close to 600 officers, other ranks and followers. Hampered by a train of more than four thousand camels required to carry the requisite ammunition and provisions for man and beast, it stretched back over ten miles. As it progressed through the harsh Baluchistan landscape, a number of diversions were made in order to survey the territory. It was fortunate that the country was generally quiet, the fall of Nodiz having made a deep impression on the local tribesmen. They were plentifully armed with magazine rifles acquired via Muscat, mostly manufactured by B.S.A. (Birmingham Small Arms Company), and it would have been difficult to protect the column's lengthy tail from well prepared ambushes.

Magas

Forts linked with known bandits were destroyed en route, and there was only one place that threatened to put up any resistance. Near to the meeting point with the Persians was the formidably strong fort of Magas. The walls were some fifty feet high and far too thick for mountain guns to have the least effect.



The Persians had been unable to negotiate the surrender of the fort, but when the British troops approached the defenders melted away into the surrounding hills. From their supposedly safe retreats, the bandits continued to menace the

loyal *sirdars*, and Colonel Showers took the time to send them help. One of the more dangerous episodes in this process took place on the 9th February 1902.

Havildar Subhay Khan, 27th Buluch Light Infantry, with a party of thirteen men, had been sent by Colonel Showers from Magas to assist the *sirdars*. Taking with him three days' food, he boldly proceeded into the hills and, coming across a party of the enemy who fired at him, promptly attacked and dispersed them,, killing five and wounding four. Continuing his advance, he captured over 300 head of animals, all of which he brought in safely to Magas. It was a swift and bold raid against an enemy who imagined himself secure in his mountain fastness, and it had a most salutary effect. For his gallantry and leadership, the havildar was advanced to the 2nd Class Indian Order of Merit.²⁴ By the time the Escort returned to its depots, the infantry had marched distances varying from 1,200 to 2,000 miles. In its turn, the cavalry was proud to report that it had covered eighteen hundred miles in six months and, most remarkably, had not lost a single horse or mule.

Conclusion

Although Mekran remained relatively quiet after the departure of the British troops, events at Nodiz had persuaded the British government that the *Khan's* troops were unfit to keep order in the country, and the Mekran Levy Corps was formed. The strength of the Levy Corps was 137 cavalry and 203 infantry. The headquarters was at Panjgur (180 men) with detachments at Diz, Parom, Mand, Suntzar and Jiwani. The commander of the Corps was the Assistant Political Agent. The expenses of the Corps were met from Imperial funds.

When the Great War started German agents in Persia encouraged insurgency over the border in India and across the Straits of Hormuz in Oman. This resulted in disaffection in the Mekran Levy Corps and the launching of attacks on British positions in Mekran and Oman.

Sources

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²⁴ 959 Lance-Havildar Subhay Khan, 27th Baluch Light Infantry, was first admitted to the 3rd Class IOM for gallantry at Kitabu, East Africa, in 1898.

Dedication

The author dedicates this article to his Baluch comrades, particularly those killed or wounded in action, who served with him in the war in Dhofar Province, Sultanate of Oman, between 1973 and 1975. Baluch men flocked in their thousands to the Sultanate's recruiting office in Gwadar, Mekran, seeking enlistment in the Sultan's Armed Forces. They provided an effective pool of military manpower during critical times. Nowadays those brave and steady Baluch soldiers have been relegated from the Sultanate's historical memory, and their records have reportedly been destroyed. As A.E. Housman wrote:

*These, in the day when heaven was falling,
The hour when earth's foundations fled,
Followed their mercenary calling
And took their wages, and are dead.*

*Their shoulders held the sky suspended;
They stood, and earth's foundations stay;
What God abandoned, these defended,
And saved the sum of things for pay.*

Commodore George Douglas, A.V.S.M., D.F.C., Indian Navy

Vice Admiral (Ret'd) M.K. Roy

Commodore Douglas was born in Doom-Dooma, Assam, where his father had a tea estate. In 1930 he joined the British Merchant Navy and the Royal Navy Reserve as a midshipman. However, during the period of World War II he enrolled into active duty and was commissioned in the Royal Navy in 1946. After India's independence, he shifted to the Indian Navy where he pioneered naval aviation. He was a graduate of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington and the National Defence College, New Delhi.

In the early years of the World War II he volunteered for Special Hazardous Service Operations on H.M.S. Oakfield. Termed 'Operation Lucid' the mission was to attempt to fire-bomb the German wooden invasion barges with incendiary material and set them alight at Boulogne and Calais. The plan had the personal backing of Winston Churchill. As the mission was regarded as a suicide run, only volunteers were used. Several attempts were undertaken between September and October 1940. Each one was cancelled due to a variety of reasons until it was suspected that the secrecy of the mission was compromised. During World War II, Douglas commanded Torpedo Bomber and Fighter combat squadrons and wings, and saw combat service in the Battle of the Atlantic, the Battles of the

Mediterranean, North Africa, Burma, Malaya, and in the Pacific. In 1943 he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for gallantry while serving with Fighter Command, Royal Air Force. He was one of two navy pilots to receive this distinction, as normally such medals were reserved solely for R.A.F personnel. A year later he received the 'Commander-in-Chief's Commendation' (Portsmouth Command), and in 1945 was awarded the South-East Asia Command commendation by Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, Supreme Allied Commander, S.E.A.C.



As Captain (D), Captain Destroyers, he commanded the 11th Destroyer Squadron. From 1962-1966 he was the Principal Staff Officer to Government as Chief of Naval Aviation, making him the senior-most naval aviator in the Indian Navy. In 1966, he was awarded the AVSM. The citation reads: 'From the start of Naval Aviation in 1949, Commodore Douglas has been the driving force behind the evolution of the combatant Air Arm for the Navy. The development of aviation in the Indian Navy and the position it has attained are largely due to the initiative, hard work and leadership of Commodore Douglas. He has voluntarily undertaken several dangerous flying missions in order to set an example to young pilots.'

Commodore Douglas left India in December 1966, first returning to the UK and later migrating to Canada, where he started a teaching career in St. John's, Newfoundland. He retired to Victoria, British Columbia and passed away in 2008 at the age of 93 years.

This article appears by kind permission of the Editor of *The Purple Beret*, in which it was first published in September 2010.

Surviving Cavalry Standards of the H.E.I.C.'s Bengal Army

Part 1 – Bengal Irregular Cavalry

Introduction

The Indian Cavalry's general practice of carrying standards had ceased by 1864¹ and since then the nature of the standards, and the circumstances in which they were carried, have become relatively obscure. Only a handful of examples have survived.

The standard source on the subject is Captain Bullock's compact booklet entitled *Indian Cavalry Standards*.² Of the few standards that Bullock examined, at least four are now in the safe-keeping of Indian Army regiments. Two were carried by the 1st and 13th Irregular Cavalry regiments of the Bengal Army, and are now displayed in the officers' mess of Skinner's Horse (1st Horse); two were carried by the 6th and the 8th Light Cavalry of the Bengal Army and are now with the 18th Cavalry.³

The four standards in question have been photographed, in their frames, gracing the walls of the two officers' messes.⁴ The purpose of this article is to illustrate and examine each of them separately, keeping within the boundaries of Captain Bullock's study of the subject – but with some adjustment to the detail of his descriptions based on more recent observations.

Twenty-one detailed paragraphs on 'standards and colours' were included in the general regulations of the Bengal Army,⁵ but they concern only the 'regular' light cavalry and infantry regiments. As regards the irregular cavalry, the regulations that governed the design and use of standards, if they were ever published, have not been traced, and the general consensus is that these regiments made their own rules.

¹ *Regulations and Orders for the Army of the Bengal Presidency, corrected to 31 Dec 1872*: IV-6 – Colours and Flags. 'Standards are not issued to regiments of native cavalry: regiments now in possession are not to carry them on parade, or in the field.'

² Captain H. Bullock, *Indian Cavalry Standards*, Sifton Praed, London 1930. It consisted of only thirty-five A5 pages of narrative and twenty-three black and white plates.

³ The second and third squadron standards of the 7th Bengal Light Cavalry are in the National Army Museum collection. They were described but not illustrated by Bullock, and at that time they were in a private collection. They appear on a coloured postcard published by the NAM in 1988 (noted in *Durbar*, Vol.6, No.1, but not illustrated).

⁴ The photographs were taken a few years ago by Rana Chhina, our worthy Vice-President.

⁵ *General Regulations of the Bengal Army*, Adjutant-General's Office, Calcutta 1855; section xvi, pp.87-89.

1st Irregular Cavalry (Skinner's Horse)

During the period from its first raising in 1803 until the year of 1864, after which standards were no longer carried, the titles of the regiment evolved from 'Captain Skinner's Corps of Irregular Horse' (very briefly) and 'Skinner's Horse' in 1803, to '1st (Skinner's) Local Horse' in 1823, '1st Irregular Cavalry (Skinner's Horse)' in 1840, and '1st Regiment of Bengal Cavalry' in 1861.

According to Captain Bullock's account, Skinner's Horse retained three troop standards of the 1st Irregular Cavalry in its custody, all identical. He provides a detailed sketch of a single standard rather than a photograph.



His record is amended by the late Ron Harris, in his article *Skinner's Horse 1815-1939*,⁶ in which he states that Skinner's Horse 'has in its custody four standards, all of similar design, two are red and two are faded yellow,' and provides a photograph of one red and one yellow standard, albeit reproduced in black and white. The standard on the following page, currently in the Skinner's Horse mess, is not one of those in Mr Harris's article, and so is presumably the second of the pair of pale yellow standards.

⁶ *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. LIX, No. 239, pp.127-139: R.G. Harris, 'Skinner's Horse 1815-1939.'



The number of *risalahs*⁷ or troops in the establishment of an irregular cavalry regiment, which varied over time, was routinely recorded in the contemporary Bengal Army List. Furthermore, the number of standards carried by a regiment can be deduced by the number of *nishanburdars* (standard bearers) recorded as being on the establishment. Thus, in 1840, the 1st Irregular Cavalry had ten *risalahs* and ten *nishanburdars*, and the logical deduction is that the regiment at that time carried ten standards. The number of *risalahs* and *nishanburdars* had reduced to six of each in 1852, and remained so until 1861.

There is consensus regarding the translation of the Persian script on this troop standard. Above the figure of the horseman are the honours CABUL and CANDAHAR, and alongside



are the honours GHUZNEE and BHURTPORE. Beneath the horseman is the personal motto of James Skinner: HIMMAT-I-MARDAN MADAD-I-KHUDA. This is loosely translated by Bullock as: 'Heaven helps those who help themselves.'⁸ However, the literal translation 'Bravery of Man...Help of God' became the basis of the English version of the regimental motto, appearing for the first time on regimental devices in 1896 when Skinner's Horse became a 'lancer' regiment (*vide* the sketch of an officer's shoulder belt badge illustrated here).⁹

The presence of four battle honours on the standards of the 1st Irregular Cavalry is an enigma. Prior to 1879 the regiment had been awarded only two honours: BHURTPORE and CANDAHAR 1842. Yet the same quartet, accompanied by the more recent honour AFGHANISTAN 1879-80, is also found on the embroidered scrolls of the officers' full dress *zari* pouch worn between 1885 and 1896, illustrated on the following page.¹⁰

The *raison d'être* for the wearing of unauthorized honours can be understood,

⁷ The correct contemporary term for the subdivisions of an irregular cavalry regiment was *risalah* (*ressallah*). It does not draw any distinction between troop or squadron.

⁸ This is an unfortunate rendition. One small error and the motto becomes: 'Heaven help those who help themselves.'

⁹ Captain Ashok Nath, *Izzat, Historical Records and Iconography of Indian Cavalry Regiments 1750-2007* (Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research, United Service Institution of India, New Delhi 2009), p.33.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.32

if not fully explained, by the following extract from the regiment's services:

In 1841 a further and large detachment joined the army of Afghanistan under General Nott, at Candahar. Numerous actions took place in which the 1st Irregular Cavalry shared, and the Corps in consequence bears amongst its honours the name CANDAHAR. The detachment of the 1st Irregular Cavalry was with the army during the march to Ghazni and Kabul, and was in daily conflict with the enemy. It eventually returned to India in 1842, *via* Jellalabad, and thence rejoined Headquarters at Jhansi. During the war, the detachment which numbered 180 of all ranks when it joined the army, lost 108 men killed in action and died of disease – a sufficient proof of the severity of the service in which they had been engaged.¹¹



Although it is evident that the regiment considered itself to be worthy of honours for GHUZNEE 1842 and CABUL 1842, it did not receive them.¹² Why there was this disaccord is not clear. The most obvious explanation is that the regiment was only represented in these events by a detachment, and thereby was not eligible. However, the detachment was sizable: three *risalabs*, with a strong officer element of five risaldars, five naib-risaldars, and a jemadar. In later terminology, this might be described as 'a wing less one troop.' Furthermore there are known exceptions where honours were granted to similar and even smaller detachments: SEETABULDEE to the 6th Bengal Light Cavalry where a detachment of three troops was present; DEFENCE OF ARRAH to the 45th (Rattray's Sikhs) Regiment of Bengal Native Infantry where a detachment of only fifty men was present.¹³ It might be said that these were granted for exceptional services in the face of great adversity. In the case of 1st Irregular Cavalry detachment, it may

¹¹ Major H. Roberts, *A Short History of the 1st Duke of York's Own Lancers (Skinner's Horse) 1803-1908* (Indian Daily Telegraph Press, Lucknow 1908); p.11.

¹² Major Sarbans Singh, in *Battle Honours of the Indian Army* (Vision Books, Delhi 1993, p.119), states that the honour CABUL 1842 'was granted to all regiments which advanced to or occupied Kabul after 6 September 1842,' citing GOGG of 4 Oct 1842 and GOGG of 8 Nov 1842.

¹³ The contemporary titles of these two units were: 6th Bengal Native Cavalry; 1st Battalion, Bengal Military Police.

have been refused honours simply because its services during the capture of Ghuznee and the reoccupation of Cabul were not considered to be exceptional.

It was by no means unknown for the irregular cavalry to ignore regulations when it suited them. Particularly with regard to dress and accoutrements, they were accustomed to getting away with it. But this changed when Field Marshal Lord Kitchener arrived in India. He was a strict disciplinarian, and he would not tolerate the flouting of even the most minor of regulations. Whether they liked it or not, the regiment was brought into line. By the time Skinner's Horse officers added the honour scroll for PEKIN 1900 to their shoulder belts, the two unauthorized honours had been discretely removed.

13th Irregular Cavalry

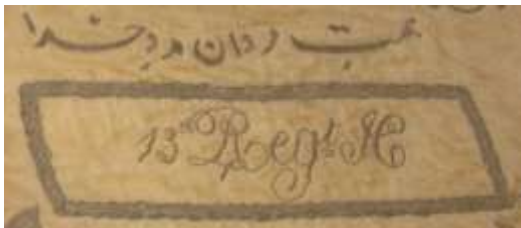
Another troop standard, displayed with particular pride in the Skinner's Horse mess, was carried by the 13th Irregular Cavalry. It is remarkable for the manner in which it is connected to Skinner's Horse, and its significance to the regiment is demonstrated by a photograph of the standard in *Sworn to Die* captioned: 'The Original Regimental Standard – laid to rest on 31st March 1971.'¹⁴ This appears to be the same standard described and illustrated by Captain Bullock, which was at that time 'in the possession of Colonel Hector Campbell, D.S.O., late of the Q.V.O. Corps of Guides Cavalry.'¹⁵ A second standard, of exactly the same design, is currently on display in the Skinner's Horse officers' mess (see following page). The Persian script, positioned above the rectangle containing the regiment's designation *13th Reg^t IC*, is the Persian motto of the Skinner family HIMMAT-I-MARDAN MADAD-I-KHUDA – written in a somewhat different style to the same motto on the 1st Irregular Cavalry standard described on pages 175-177 above.

In January 1846, the number of Bengal irregular cavalry regiments was increased from nine to seventeen. The 13th Irregular Cavalry, one of the eight new units, was raised at Delhi by Captain James Skinner, the second son of Colonel James Skinner senior. Drafts were provided by the 1st Irregular Cavalry (Skinner's Horse). The close link with his late father's regiment was demonstrated by Captain James Skinner's choice of yellow for uniforms, and the adoption of the family motto.¹⁶ This will explain the essential features of the standard treasured by Skinner's Horse, with its Persian motto and yellow ground. The family connection continued until the regiment's unfortunate demise. The third son, Captain Hercule Skinner, followed in his elder brother's footsteps in January 1852, commanding the regiment until it mutinied at Benares in June 1857.

¹⁴ Lieut.-Colonel M.A.R. Skinner, *Sworn to Die* (Lancer International, New Delhi 1984); p.120. This history of Skinner's Horse, written by Michael Skinner, great-great grandson of the regiment's founder, covers the fifty years from 1921 to 1971.

¹⁵ *Indian Cavalry Standards*, op. cit., p.11.

¹⁶ The link between the 13th I.C. and Skinner's has also been noted by IMHS member Brian Stevens (vide: *JSAHR*, Autumn 1980, Vol. LXI, No. 247, pp.196-197: 'Skinner's Horse').



It seems unlikely that, when its title evolved from 13th I.C. to 14th I.C. in 1847, the regiment would have continued to carry this same standard. After all, from that time forward there was another 13th I.C. that had been raised one year earlier as the 12th Irregular Cavalry. One might speculate, therefore, that the standard with this specific design was only used for one year of its life, and the survival of what appear to be two examples is remarkable.

Unidentified Hotchkiss Gun Section

The posed photograph (below) depicts a Hotchkiss Light Automatic Gun manned by Indian troops. A pencilled caption on the reverse states: 'Probably Pathan squadron of 10th Lancers (Hodson's Horse) in Ambala Brigade, near Querieu.' This same image was published as a coloured postcard in the series 'Daily Mail Official War Pictures' with the caption: 'An Indian Hotchkiss Gun at Work.' On the reverse of the postcard is the additional description: 'The strange kaleidoscope of the War produces this picture of turbaned Indians working a Hotchkiss Gun on the British Western Front.'¹ The background adds weight to its Western Front location. The neat fencing is more likely to be a feature of France than the Middle East, where property was demarcated, if at all, by walls.



On the face of it, the regiment is more likely to be the 9th Hodson's Horse, Indian Army, which served in France from 1914 to 1916. The '10th D.C.O. Lancers (Hodson's Horse)' did not leave India on field service until September 1916, when it embarked for Mesopotamia. However, a letter written by Captain V.C.P. Hodson, 10th DCO Lancers, dated 25th October 1914, regarding drafts sent to the 9th Hodson's Horse states: 'Eighty-two men and two officers have been sent as reinforcements for 9th Hodson's Horse, and I fancy the majority of us will get

¹ *Daily Mail War Pictures*, No. 110. The Daily Mail produced twenty-two series, each of eight cards. Some were in colour, others in black and white. There were a number of repetitions, as the whole series was based on 105 official photographs taken in 1916 by members of a small band of official photographers located on the Western Front.

to the front somehow or other eventually.’ Other drafts were to follow, and it is unlikely that they would have removed their ‘10L’ shoulder titles – these being the only regimental devices worn by Indian rank and file when in field service kit.

There is no visible detail in this relatively grainy copy, or in the matching postcard, that clearly identifies the Hotchkiss Gun section as 9th Horse or 10th Lancers, as the lettering on the tell-tale shoulder titles is illegible. However, it is known that 9th Hodson’s Horse (with its 10th Lancer reinforcing drafts) was with the Ambala Brigade in France until March 1918, and was located at Querrieu [sic], six miles north-east of Amiens, from 27th June to 19th August 1916. It was a period of relative inactivity, given over to training and preparation for the breakthrough on the Somme that never ultimately materialized.

There were two Cavalry Divisions within Indian Expeditionary Force ‘A’ on the Western Front, each containing three brigades of three cavalry regiments (one British and two Indian). The Brigade Machine Gun Squadrons were formed in February 1916 by merging the MG Sections of each of their composite regiments. Thus the 9th Horse provided drafts for the Ambala Brigade MG Squadron, commanded by Major F.W. Brook, 8th Hussars.

The establishment of each cavalry regiment of the Indian Army included a MG Section equipped with two Maxim guns. These Sections were beefed up in September 1915 with the addition of two of the lighter Vickers guns. In April 1916, two months after its MG Section had been detached for service with the Ambala Brigade MG Squadron, the regiment was issued with its compliment of four Hotchkiss Guns per squadron (sixteen for the regiment as a whole).

During the WW1 period, the establishments of both 9th Hodson’s Horse and 10th DCO Lancers included *inter al* both Punjabi Muslims and Pathans. It is not always easy to distinguished one class of Muslim soldier from another when wearing field service kit. However, the manner in which they have tied the *pagri* (turban) around the *kulla* (pointed cap) suggests that they are more likely to be Punjabi Muslims than Pathans.

Taking the foregoing into account, it is reasonable to deduce that the photo depicts a Hotchkiss Gun Section of 9th Hodson’s Horse, manned by reinforcements from 10th DCO Lancers (Hodson’s Horse), during training at Querrieu at the end of June 1916. However, this is not the end of the story. A reliable source, having seen a better-quality version of the same photo (no longer available for inspection), noted the gunner’s shoulder title as ‘15L’ indicating 15th Cureton’s Lancers. This has thrown the cat amongst the pigeons. Could the gunners belong to this regiment?

The 15th Lancers served in France, attached as Divisional Troops to the 3rd Lahore Division, from September 1914 onwards. It then left France for Mesopotamia, still with the 3rd Division, in December 1915, well before the Hotchkiss Gun was issued. The 15th Lancers was traditionally an entirely Muslim

class regiment employing Pathans and other tribes from the Dejerat District, and Punjabi Muslims were not recruited. Class composition changed after it arrived in Basra in January 1916 when some elements of the regiment refused to fight the Turkish enemy. As a result, two Pathan squadrons were replaced by Hindu Jats.

Until April 1916, the 15th served in Mesopotamia as Corps Troops. It was then posted to the Sealkot Temporary Brigade from April 1916 to November 1918. Although the services of this Brigade are obscure, two squadrons of 15th Lancers were detached to Persia in April 1916 - one to Shiraz and the other to Bushire.

It seems rather unlikely, but when the 15th Cureton's Lancers embarked from Marseilles in December 1915, did it leave behind a reinforcing draft in France which, attached to another regiment, continued to serve there? Do any members of the Society have access to a crisper copy of the original photo, in order that this dilemma might be resolved?

Thanks are due to Alan Simcock for loaning the photo, and to Sushil Talwar, Rana Chhina and Ashok Nath for details of the regiments' services. Recourse has also been had to Chris Kempton's *Duty & Fidelity, The Indian Army August 1914-1921*.

Changed Designations of Regimental Followers 1922

Rana Chhina

Collectors of Indian Army medals frequently encounter medals named to individuals with odd ranks and designations. More often than not these medals have been awarded to the humble and unassuming regimental follower whose esoteric designations tend to confound the uninitiated.

The winds of change that swept across the globe following the end of the Great War blew east as well as west. Among numerous changes then being implemented to streamline and modernise the Army in India, the old nomenclature of the regimental follower was discarded and replaced by newer, professional designations in English. This change was recorded in Army Instructions (India), from which this article is culled.

In 1922 it was decided to classify regimental followers into two categories known as Class I and Class II public followers. The former accompanied the unit on field service and were included in its war establishment. They comprised: bhisties or pakhalis, carpenters, cooks, fort armament lascars, langris, saddlers and shoemakers, tailor, smiths, hammermen, bellows boys, cleaners, syces and sweepers. Class II comprised all other public followers who did not accompany the unit on field service and were only included in its peace establishment.¹

¹ Army Instructions (India) No. 287, 11th April 1922: 'Revised terms and conditions of service for regimental followers of British and Indian units.'

Later, in December of the same year, it was decided to revise the official designations of certain Indian combatant ranks, tradesmen and followers on the establishment of the army in India as shown in the table below. These new designations were to be taken into use forthwith. It was also ruled that designations which were not listed in the table would remain unchanged. The term 'assistant' tradesmen (except in the case of armourers) was no longer to be used. The term 'mistri' would similarly no longer be used, but in cases where a number of tradesmen were in the charge of one man, then that person would be termed 'head' followed by the designation appropriate to the particular trade (e.g. Head Watchman).²

<i>Earlier designation</i>	<i>New designation</i>
Assistant blacksmith	Hammerman
Bildar or sweeper	Sweeper
Bhistie or Pakhali	Water carrier
Chowkidar	Watchman
Chuckler	Leather stitcher
Cook	Cook for British ranks
Cutter and trimmer	Tailor
Dhobie	Washerman
Duftry	Head messenger
Fileman	Fitter
Fireman	Stoker
Forge assistant	Bellows boy
Kotwal	Inspector
Langri	Cook for Indian ranks
Markman or marker	Painter
Mochi or shoemaker	Saddler, bootmaker, or leather stitcher
Nalbund	Shoeing smith
Naick syce	Naick groom
Peon	Messenger
Sarwan	Camel driver
Sewing machine examiner	Fitter
Sikhligar	Grinder
Smith	Blacksmith
Syce	Groom
Durzie	Tailor

² AI (I) No. 1042, 19th December 1922: 'Revised designations of certain Indian combatants, tradesmen and followers on the establishment of the Army in India.'

Pack Mules from India, Force K-7 and Force K-6

Chris Kempton

Part 1¹

FORCE K-7²

On the 31st August 1939, three days before the declaration of war, the Secretary of State in London sent the following telegram to the Defence Department in India:

War Office ask [sic] us to make tentative enquiry as to whether you could supply from your animal transport resources two thousand trained pack mules about 13.1 to 13.3 hands, complete with pack saddles but without personnel.

On the following day, Delhi responded:

Is 2000 a gross total, a single demand, or are casualties to be replaced from India? On reply, prepared to provide [5] formed animal transport units complete with personnel and such veterinary and other services as we consider essential. We are reluctant to supply mules without their normal attendant personnel, as this would lead to avoidable casualties and impair the efficiency of the animals.

India made it quite clear from the start that it was unwilling to meet the commitment without also supplying the personnel. However, following a further message to London asking for the proposed destination, the Secretary of State replied, on 7th September, that the destination would be Europe but that Indians were required as the conducting party only, as conditions were considered unsuitable for Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC) personnel. It would appear that, at this point, probably for political reasons, it had been decided to limit the use of Indian troops in the European theatre of war.³ Nevertheless, there was some inconsistency in the position of the India Office, insofar as, very soon afterwards, London was prepared to accept Indian personnel for a second RIASC company, Force K-6.⁴

On the 25th September, the War Office advised the Military Department, India, that mules were required for two companies, 300 animals per company, with fifteen Animal Transport Carts for each company. Personnel were to be limited to the conducting party to France only, who would then return to India. The entire

¹ Part 2, scheduled for the next edition of *Durbar*, will include details of sources used.

² *India Office Records*, L/WS/1/32.

³ This remained the case until the Italian campaign of 1943-1945 in which three Indian Divisions fought with distinction.

⁴ In spite of the sequential numbering of these two RIASC formations, K7 was actually formed earlier than K6. The detailed services of K-6 are described later on in this article.

contingent should arrive in France by the end of November 1939. This request was made formal by Telegram 2072 dated 26th September.

Between the 25th September and 15th November, the 'personnel' issue created a continuous flow of messages between Delhi and London, and the correspondence concerning the use of Indians moved higher and higher up the chain of command.

On the 5th October, the War Office advised that Cypriot personnel would be recruited as drivers (Telegram 2255), and on the 9th October the Military Department asked the War Office to clarify the proposed usage of the mules.

Finally, on the 16th October, the Commander-in-Chief India advised the War Office that he was unhappy with the decision not to use Indian personnel:

...important work for which mules are required can be more effectively done if we sent them as formed bodies under their own British officers and Indian personnel. The latter would be Punjabi Mussulmans [sic]. Climatic and other difficulties are by no means insuperable and can be overcome.

The Commander-in-Chief was evidently overruled, and, on 15th November, War Office Letter 116/General/7702 was issued:

Authority for Two Pack Animal Transport Companies:

- a] 600 mules plus 20 replacements for casualties en route.
- b] 600 sets of saddlery.
- c] 34 Animal Transport Carts.
- d] Sufficient personnel to conduct the animals to a port in Egypt.

Animals will be taken-over on board ship in Egypt by British personnel assisted by Cypriot muleteers; Indian personnel to return to India at first available opportunity.

It is proposed that shipment of the above should take place after the despatch from India of the four Animal Transport Companies being provided separately by India, so as to arrive in Egypt on about 1st January 1940.

On 30th November, the Commander-in-Chief, India, advised the War Office:

Despatch of 600 mules and connected equipment is named scheme K-7, repeat K-7.

The following sequence of messages/events then took place.

5th December, from Principal Station Transit Officer West Indies [sic], Bombay:

Embarking 140 Indian personnel and 620 mules sailing date Bombay 17th December.

6th December, from G-O-C:

Embarking s.s. *Quiloa* 17th December, arriving Suez about 29th December.

7th December, from Director, Sea Transport:

To embark Suez – 11 British officers, 4 warrant officers, 25 sergeants and 476 Cypriot other ranks.

On the 15th December, the War Office proposed changing to two ships ex-Suez, to sail on 3rd January and arrive Marseilles on 8th January. On the following day, the *s.s. Quiloa* sailed from Bombay, and arrived at its destination on the 27th December, two days earlier than predicted.

In the meantime, there had been a change regarding the deployment of the RIASC personnel. The following signal was sent on the 25th December.

War Office to the G.-O.-C.-in-C. Egypt, copy to the C.-in-C. India:
Indian conducting party now to proceed to France.

Due to a severe shortage of suitable shipping and difficulty in assembling the Cypriot personnel, the Force had to be split up and eventually left Port Said in the *s.s. Quiloa* and two other ships on the 3rd and 6th January 1940. The Indian party eventually left Marseilles on the 23rd January to return to India.

Subsequently both companies were evacuated from Dunkirk, having abandoned their mules, and were located with the RASC at Melton Mowbray. Here they were formed into the 1st and 2nd Cypriot Pack Companies of the newly raised Cyprus Regiment and moved to Egypt from 4th August 1940, where they received new mules from Cyprus at the RASC Base Depot in October.

The Indian connection was not lost entirely. Both Companies were attached to 5th Indian Division in Eritrea in 1941, in particular during the Battle of Keren, and No.1 Company subsequently served with 5th Brigade, 4th Indian Division in Syria and was again attached to 4th Division during the epic battle of Cassino.

FORCE K-6

Section 1. India and France, November 1939 – June 1940

Force K-6⁵ consisting of Force H.Q with No. 3 Field Accounts Office, 22, 25, 29 and 32 Animal Transport Companies (Mule) RIASC, 47 Supply Depot Section [SDS] RIASC, No.1 Reinforcement Unit, Section Indian General Hospital [IGH], and Advance Remount Depot [ARD] was raised in November 1939 for service in France with the British Expeditionary Force, subsequent to an earlier request from the War Office in London. The Force came from the following locations:

HQ & Reinforcement Unit	Lahore	47 Supply Depot Section	Ambala
Advance Remount Depot	Sarghoda	22 A.T Coy	Rawalpindi ex Murree Hills
25 A.T Coy	Kohat	29 A.T Coy	Peshawar
32 A.T Coy	Landikotal	Section IGH	No.1 Coy Indian Hospital Corps [IHC], Rawalpindi

⁵ Details of Command & Staff will be included in Part 2, Section 3.(Durbar, Spring 20120

After assembling at Bombay the Force embarked on the 8th and 9th December as follows:

<i>s.s. Rajula</i>	29 Coy, 25 Coy (less three troops)
<i>s.s. Rohna</i>	22 Coy, 25 Coy (one troop), Section IGH
<i>s.s. Talamba</i>	25 Coy (one troop), Advance Remount Depot, Reinforcement Unit, 47 SDS
<i>s.s. Taiera</i>	Force HQ (less Commander and Adjutant), ⁶ 32 Coy, 25 Coy (one troop)

After sailing on the 10th, and following an uneventful voyage, the convoy arrived at Marseilles on 26th December. During the voyage only three mules died, these were from 22nd Coy whose mules, having worked in the Murree Hills for the previous two years, were not in the same condition as those in the other companies

Disembarkation started on the 27th with a maximum unloading time of 2½ hours per unit under weather conditions of bitter wind and heavy rain, which by the third day had turned to heavy snow. The Force Commander's report commented as follows:

The news of the arrival of the animals spread quickly and a large concourse of local inhabitants, military etc gathered to watch the disembarkation. The manner in which the animals left the ship was, I think, a great surprise to all of us; they came down the steep gangways as though they had been used to the procedure all their service and only two out of more than two thousand wished to be transferred to the Navy. With a little suitable persuasion they quickly changed their minds.⁷

Two camps were initially allocated to the Force, at Reynarde, some 11 miles from the docks, and Roi D'Espagne, close to Marseilles, both consisting of bell tents with the animals on meadow land or gravel rides. After a brief concentration the Force was re-distributed from 28th December initially as follows:

Rouvroy (S.E of Lens) – Force HQ
Roi D'Espagne – 22 Coy
Reynarde – Section IGH, 47 SDS, Remount Depot (462 trained mules), Reinforcement Unit
Wambrechies (4 km N.E. of Lille) – 25 Company, under command 5 Division, 2 Corps
Le Mans – 29 Coy, under No.2 Lines of Communication (L of C) Sub-Area
Orchies (north of Douai) – 32 Coy, under command 1 Division, 1 Corps

Shortly afterwards, 25 Coy moved to Marquette-les-Lille, Reinforcement Unit and Remount Depot went to Hautot (near Dieppe), and the Section I.G.H relocated at Dieppe, attached firstly to 1 British General Hospital [BGH] and then to 2 BGH.

⁶ Both the Force Commander and Adjutant travelled from India by air. The F.C arrived in London on 19th December and after various meetings moved to France on the 22nd. The Adjutant went directly to Marseilles, arriving on 19th December.

⁷ *India Office Records*, L/WS/1/355



FULLY EQUIPPED AND READY FOR ACTION – FRANCE 1939-1940

The weather continued to be bad with up to 27 degrees of frost, fog, snow, rain and hail but fortunately the troops had been equipped with winter scale clothing prior to leaving India. This proved to be adequate for the conditions, both in France during one of the worst winters for many years, as well as later in the U.K.

The troops were now accommodated in Nissen huts and, after some early local resistance to the use of animal transport, it soon became clear to British formations that mules were rather more useful than M.T. in the prevailing weather conditions. Demand soon outstripped supply, a situation which continued even after the weather had improved in the Spring:

Despite the severe weather sick rates never rose above 2.8% [amongst the mules]. Great difficulty was, however, experienced in keeping the mules from slipping on the paved ice-bound roads. The unusual winter had not been foreseen when the mules left India and the A.T units were without field forges and tools for hot shoeing; frost nails were scarce and the mules had to operate as best they could with unroughed shoes.⁸

During this period the Force was inspected on several occasions, on 15th January 1940 by H.R.H. Major-General the Duke of Gloucester, and subsequently by: The President of the French Republic; The Secretary of State for War the Rt. Hon. Oliver Stanley; Field Marshals Viscount Birdwood, Sir Claud Jacob and Sir A.A. Montgomery-Massingbird; and by the Duke of Gloucester for a second time. On 16th January, Viscount Gort sent the following message to the C.-in-C. India:

I want to let you know of my appreciation of all you have done to ensure that the first units of the Indian Army to arrive in France should be of such first-rate quality. The four mule transport companies that you have sent us are quite excellent and, in the short time they have been here, have created a very good impression on all sides. In discipline and military efficiency they leave nothing to be desired; they have settled down at once to their new conditions without any fuss; and their soldierly qualities are commented on by all who come in contact with them. I am quite sure they will prove a most valuable addition to the Expeditionary Force and I should like to thank you very much indeed for all your help in their selection, equipment and despatch to this country.⁹

The Force Commander reported that he had been asked to administer the reinforcements of the Cyprus Contingent¹⁰ and they would be attached as a section of the Reinforcement Unit.

Relations with the local French civilians were excellent and the French Army appointed an 'Officier de Liaison' to the Force HQ and an 'Agent de Liaison' (an

⁸ J. Clabby, *History of the R.A.V.C.*

⁹ *History of the Army Service Corps*

¹⁰ This was Force K-7 which has been described above, consisting of two companies of mules provided by India and taken over by Cypriot personnel upon arrival in France.

NCO) to each company. The troops were particularly popular with the local farmers and smallholders, with whom they had much in common, and mounted sports and trick riding displays were organised

On 4th May, 22 Coy was moved from Roi D'Espagne (Marseilles) to Monneren, in the Saar Force¹¹ area N.E. of Metz. It arrived there on the 7th and was attached to the 51st (Highland) Division which was then under command of the Colonial Army Corps, French Third Army. At the same time, 47 SDS also left Reynarde (Marseilles) and moved to Le Havre, arriving on the 10th May.

The first leave party to England took place between 5th and 15th May. It arrived at Victoria on the 6th and over the following days visited London Fire Brigade HQ, the BBC, HQ Westminster ARP, The Woking Mosque, Windsor Castle and Hampton Court. Visits were also made to Selfridges and Harrods and there were several receptions for the party.

On 10th May, when Germany invaded the Low Countries, the dispersal of the Force was unchanged except for the moves of 22 Coy and SDS from Marseilles (already mentioned). Intensive enemy air action started in the north, and on the 12th May the Force suffered its first casualties. The train in which a draft was being moved to Metz was bombed, four IOR's being killed and two wounded by a direct hit on their compartment.

Because of the increasing confusion and chaos and the complexity of the various movements by units up to evacuation or capture, it is probably simplest to show them by unit:

H.Q. Force K-6 (with Reinforcement Unit and Advance Remount Depot)

Route details

18 May	HQ ordered to move to 2 Corps area and arrived at Hautot at 17.45 hrs.
21 May	Ordered to proceed to Le Mans via Cliponville [route not actually used] with the Reinforcement Unit and Remount Depot (300 personnel and 500 animals). The formation left between 15.00-16.30 hrs, halting S.W. of St. Laurent-en-Caix. The last unit, Remount Depot, arrived at 00.30 hrs on 22nd.
22 May	Moved to Caudebec-en-Caux, arriving at 06.15 hrs, crossing the Seine using the only ferry which took just 50 animals at a time. Crossing completed by 11.45 hrs. The formation bivouacked in the Forêt de Bretonne by 15.00 hrs after covering 45 miles. HQ was established at La-Haye-de-Routot, and a halt of 30 hours was made. All subsequent moves were made by night.
23/24 May	Forêt-de-Bretonne – St. Philbert Wood
24/25 May	St. Philbert Wood – Thibreville
25/26 May	Thibreville – area 5 miles north of Orbec
26/27 May	North of Orbec – La Ferte Frenel
27/28 May	Halt at La Ferte Frenel
28/29 May	La Ferte Frenel – Sainte Scolasse
29/30 May	Sainte Scolasse – Pervenchères area

¹¹ The name 'Saar Force' was derived from the River Saar in the region known as Saarland.

30/31 May	Halt at Pervençhères
31 May/1 June	Pervençhères – Ballon
1/2 June	Ballon – camp near Mulsanne (four miles S.E. of Le Mans). Reinforcement Unit and Remount Depot arrived by 05.00 hrs on the 2nd

The formation, joined by 29 Coy and the Section IGH (only up to 10th June), remained at Le Mans until the 15th when, after handing over animals and equipment, they were ordered to move to Casson, twenty miles north of Nantes. The move started at 14.30 hrs but the destination was immediately changed to Blain and finally Heric. The following day they moved to St. Nazaire, arriving at 17.00 hrs and camping in the fields south of Montoir. On the 17th June they set off for the docks at 11.03 hrs, arriving at 15.30, having taken some four hours to cover about five miles. Embarkation was at 18.30 hrs on the Stuck Line's *s.s. Floristan* which sailed at 19.20 hrs with 3,000 troops on board. The ship ran aground shortly after departing, suffering damage which required an overnight stay outside the dock. It finally got under way at 05.10 hrs on the 18th, joining a slow convoy which arrived at Plymouth at 18.30 hrs on the 19th June. After disembarking by tender on the 20th, the formation was reunited with 47 SDS [qv].



FORCE K-6, SOON AFTER LANDING IN MARSEILLES

47th Supply Depot Section, R.I.A.S.C.

After arriving at Le Havre on 10th May, the unit was heavily bombed on the 20th and the following day was ordered to move to Bernay with a large convoy of British troops, all placed under command of the Officer Commanding SDS. Having arrived at Caudebec-en-Caux for the Seine ferry crossing at 16.30 hrs on 21st May, the congestion was so great that the convoy had to wait until 06.00 hrs the following morning before being able to cross. Bernay was reached by 11.30 hrs, but on the 23rd May the unit was ordered to return to Le Havre where it remained until 7th June under more or less constant air attack.

At 18.30 hrs on the 7th, the unit entrained for St. Thegonnec, twenty-eight miles north-east of Brest where it arrived on 10th June, and remained there until the 17th when it moved to Brest and embarked at 18.00 hrs on the P&O's *s.s. Strathaird*, arriving at Plymouth after an uneventful journey at 08.00 hrs on the 18th. Disembarkation took place at 16.00 hrs on the following day, and the unit was reunited with the Force HQ when it landed on the 20th June.

Section Indian General Hospital

By the 21st May there were more than eighty patients awaiting evacuation, and on that day they were loaded, with great difficulty, onto an ambulance train which shortly afterwards was bombed and machine-gunned. However there were no Indian casualties. Subsequently the seriously ill were evacuated through British channels and the rest, together with the medical personnel, were sent by train to Le Mans leaving at 06.30 hrs on the 22nd in two cattle trucks. After arrival on the 24th they were attached to 9 BGH at Le Grand-Loc, twelve miles from Le Mans, and from 2nd June they were joined in the area by the HQ party.

On 10th June patients and staff, a total of seventy-two persons, entrained at 04.00 hrs and arrived at Le Baule Escoublac, ten and a half miles west of St Nazaire, at 20.00 hrs. On the 12th, evacuation from St Nazaire was ordered, patients being allocated to hospital ships and dispersed to hospitals on arrival in England. On the 14th, the medical personnel embarked at 15.00 hrs on the Polish *s.s. Sobieski* and sailed thirty minutes later. After suffering five bombing attacks on the journey, they arrived at Falmouth at 22.30 hrs on 17th June and disembarked the following morning.

22nd Animal Transport Company (Mule), R.I.A.S.C.

Apart from assisting with the entraining of the Cypriot (Force K-7) mules on 16th January, the company's stay in Roi D'Espagne (Marseilles) was uneventful and they were mainly involved in work at the docks. After moving to Saar Force on 4th May, the company was accommodated in an evacuated village two miles in front of the Maginot Line and employed with advance elements of the 51st Division. After the division was withdrawn to the Somme, the company remained

in the area to lift ammunition. It was scheduled to move to St Nazaire on 6th June, but this was postponed until the 16th. In the meantime, the 3rd French Army ordered an advance party to move to Nantes on the 14th, but this order was countermanded and the entire unit departed at 20.30 hrs on the 13th. After being able to move only twenty miles, Pont-à-Mousson was reached at 10.00 hrs on the 14th. The march then continued towards Nancy, and by 02.00 hrs on the 15th the 22 Coy arrived in Fleuvigny, thirty-five miles south-west of Nancy, having covered seventy-four miles in forty-seven hours. Orders were received to entrain at Mirecourt on the 18th, and the unit moved off at 10.00 hrs on the 16th May, arriving at Mirecourt at 20.30 hrs that same day.

On arrival it was discovered that the station had been completely destroyed and that the Germans at Gray had in any case cut communications with Dijon. There was no hope of any further withdrawal by rail. After waiting until 17.30 hrs on the 17th and being unable to get any further information or orders, the unit marched to Epinal, seventeen miles to the south-east where it remained until surrendering to a German Armoured Column on 23rd June. After the surrender, the officers, both British and Indian, were separated from the men and sent to different camps where both groups remained for the duration, with two exceptions.

Jemadar Jahan Dad,¹² having contracted acute rheumatism, was admitted to hospital at Selestat on 29th June. Two days later, on 1st July, he was transferred by lorry to the POW camp at Vilingen in Germany which was mainly occupied by French colonial troops. Here the Jemadar obtained a French Army uniform and managed to convince the Germans that he belonged to one of the French Maghrebian (North African Moslem) contingents. Under this guise, he was moved to the Ludwigsburg hospital at Stuttgart, remaining there for two months until 29th August, when he was transferred to a hospital at Kaiserslauten. On 21st September he was 'repatriated' with the French Colonial troops and sent to a camp at Luneville where he remained until the French troops were finally released on 11th November when he was moved, by train, to a hospital in Montpellier. On 14th December he was discharged and sent, under escort, to Fort St. Jean, Marseilles then to the Michel-Levy hospital where he attended a Mixed Medical Board on 4th January 1941 and was selected for repatriation. He left Gibraltar on 11th February and arrived at Greenock six days later.¹³ After medical checks and leave he rejoined the Indian Contingent in the rank of Paid Acting Risaldar. 'Risaldar Jehan [sic] Dad of 22 Coy reported his arrival on 20th March. He is fit, unshaken and cheerful.'¹⁴

¹² Both 'Jahan' and 'Jehan' are used in various reports and gazettes.

¹³ *National Archives*, WO 373/60-156

¹⁴ *India Office Records*, L/WS/1/355: Force Commander's Report No.8, 11 Dec 1940 – 21 Mar 1941.

Sub-Conductor T.W.P Hexley, in his MI9¹⁵ Report, stated that he was taken prisoner at 'Gerrard Mieux [Gerardmer] in the Vosges on 24th June 1940.' It is not clear what this warrant officer was doing here, thirty-three miles from Epinal, the day after his company surrendered. However, he must have been returned to Epinal and was then moved, with the other NCO's and OR's, via St Die, Colmar, Selestat, Strasbourg, Erstein, Colmar and Belfort to Longvic. There is no indication of how long this journey took, but it is at least 250 miles and ended up only circa 100 miles from its start point. Longvic, a suburb of Dijon, held a large POW Camp, Front Stalag 155, between July 1940 and April 1941. Prisoners were used for repair and maintenance work on Dijon airfield. Mr Hexley reported:

At Longuevic [sic] I escaped on 30th September with the help of local inhabitants, who gave me clothing and a bicycle, on which I rode through Baume to Chalons-sur-Saone. From here I walked to the Demarcation Line at Montceau-les-Mines where there was a mining community of some 7,000 Poles and where I was given assistance to cross the Line to Montceau-St-Vincent. I was then picked up by French gendarmes who, believing me to be a Pole, sent me to the English Hospital at Marseilles, which the Poles had made their quarters. I left Marseilles with Captain Wilkins on 27th October. Left Gibraltar on 21st May 1941 and arrived Glasgow on 14th July.

Taking account of the reports of Captain Wilkins¹⁶ and others, it is clear that the dates given by Hexley for his departures from both Marseilles and Gibraltar are wildly inaccurate. In fact, he travelled with Wilkins, leaving Marseilles on 21st February 1941 and travelling via Perpignan. They arrived in Barcelona on the 26th February, and they were arrested here, spending the next six weeks in various prisons before making up a party of sixteen transferred to Madrid on 21st April. Both men finally reached Gibraltar and sailed for Glasgow on 4th July 1941. Comparing this account with that given in the M.B.E. recommendation (see Part 2), it is easy to assume they refer to two almost entirely different escapes.

25th Animal Transport Company (Mule), R.I.A.S.C.

The company left its Lille location on 20th May and marched thirty-five miles to the Forêt-de-Nieppe, west of Merville, then on to Dunkirk staging at Le Temple aux Six Chemins. On the 26th the Commanding Officer, Major Wainwright, travelled some seventy miles in attempts to get orders and eventually reported to the Area Commandant Dunkirk, who ordered that animals and equipment were to be abandoned and personnel were to concentrate at Tétéghem, four miles east of the port. The unit then moved to the sand dunes near Fort-des-Dunes dispersing over a wide area and on the 28th was ordered to march the four miles to the Dunkirk Mole. Arriving at the head of the Mole at 02.00 hrs on 29th May, the unit

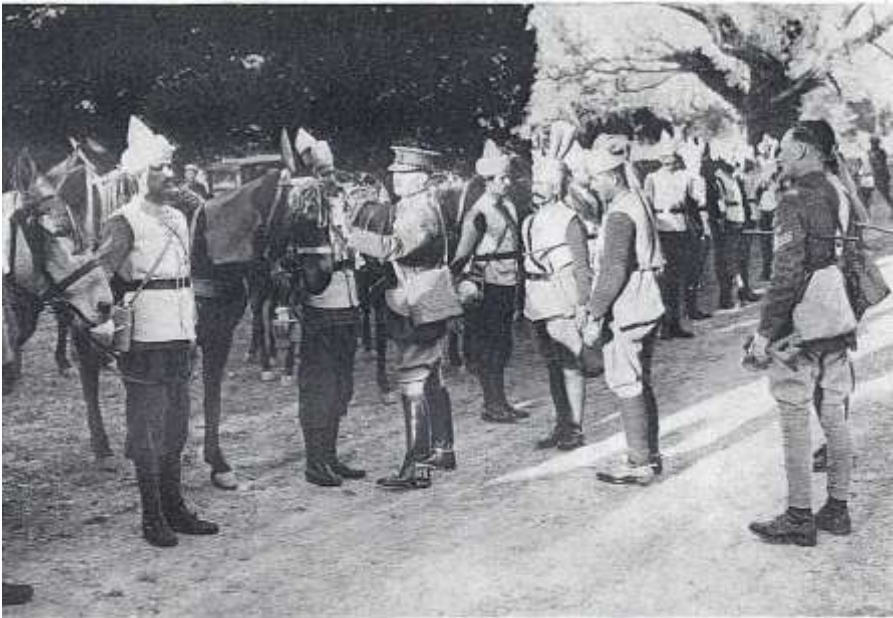
¹⁵ *National Archives*, WO 208/3304-356

¹⁶ *National Archives*, WO 208/3304-354

embarked on five different vessels at about 03.15 hrs and arrived at Dover between 09.00 and 11.00 hrs. Despite being bombed and machine-gunned, both in the sand dunes and at the port, no casualties were incurred.

29th Animal Transport Company (Mule), R.I.A.S.C.

This company remained at Mulsanne (Le Mans) and joined the HQ Group when it arrived there on the 1st/2nd June. Thereafter it moved and was evacuated with the HQ Group, embarking at St. Nazaire on 17th June.



INSPECTION OF PERSONNEL AND EQUIPMENT – FRANCE 1939-1940

32nd Animal Transport Company (Mule), R.I.A.S.C.

The company was located at Orchies, with sub-divisions at Lannay and Bourghelles allocated to 1st and 2nd Divisions. On the night of 11th/12th May, the Company, less the Bourghelles sub-division, moved twenty-five miles to Villers-au-Terte, whilst the sub-division moved ten miles to Faumont. On 18th May, the main body concentrated at Ostricourt and Thumeries. The company as a whole finally concentrated when it arrived at the outskirts of Dunkirk on 23rd/24th May, having staged at Neuve Chapelle, Vieux Berquin and Socx. After abandoning animals and equipment, the entire unit embarked at Dunkirk in the early hours of 25th May, arriving at Dover later the same day having suffered two casualties.

To be continued...

Captain Shivram Baburao Nangare, M.C.

1913 – 2011

Captain Shivram Baburao Nangare, M.C., passed away last April in Pune (Poona)



after a brief illness, at the grand age of ninety-eight. He enrolled in the Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners on 21st August 1934 and on 15th November 1942 was commissioned Jemadar. He saw action during WW2 in Burma, where he was awarded the M.C. and was also mentioned in despatches. After independence, he continued in service with the Indian Army, and saw further action during the India-Pakistan war in 1947-48. He was appointed Subedar-Major on 17th October 1961, and retired on 20th August 1966 as Honorary Captain. Thereafter he worked for

many years with the Pune's Vidyarthi Sahayak Samiti (an organization helping needy students).

Military Cross – *London Gazette*, 6th June 1946

Jemadar Shivram Baburao Nangare (Patil)

29th Field Coy, Royal Bombay Sappers & Miners, Corps of Indian Engineers.

19th Indian Division. 4th Indian Corps.

For constant leadership and devotion to duty from 15th May to 16th August 1945. Jemadar Shivram Baburao Nangare has shown outstanding courage and ability under fire in close support sapper tasks of mine clearance, engineer recce, and bridging, in spite of stubborn enemy opposition. During the advance of a Brigade Group up the Mawchi Road from 26th May to 22nd June 1945, this Jemadar was in command of sapper mine clearance parties operating under fire in front of the leading tanks, working through mountainous dense jungle. He frequently recce'd enemy demolitions ahead of the leading troop's positions, under close range enemy fire, enabling the engineer bridging efforts to be developed to the maximum. While in charge of bridge building operations, whether under Japanese fire or not, in heavy monsoon, by his courage and unflinching cheerfulness, he inspired his Mahrattas to efforts that enabled the tanks to be in support of the leading infantry. Throughout, Jemadar Shivram Baburao Nangare's conduct in action, his untiring devotion to duty, and his cheerfulness in all conditions have been an inspiration to his men

This obituary was received from IMHS member Sushil Talwar in New Delhi.



Colour-Havildar Girdhari, Deoli Irregular Force, circa 1887

Sean Weir

During the 1880's, Calcutta photographers 'Johnston & Hoffman'¹ produced a series of individual full length portraits of soldiers from a variety of Indian Army regiments. Several of these have been reproduced in books and articles, but not, to the writer's knowledge, the photograph on the facing page.²

An identical photograph is held by The National Army Museum in its comprehensive selection from the 'Johnston & Hoffman' series, accompanied by the Calcutta firm's original pricelist entitled 'A Series of Promenade Photographs.' The NAM has dated the photograph 'circa 1887' and, in the pricelist, the portrait shown here is described as: 'Mina (sic) of Rajputana, Havildar of the Deoli Infantry, Irregular Force.' The following notes are attached to the mount framing the copy held in the NAM archive:

- Deoli Irregular Force³
- Havildar Girdhari, caste Meena
- Enlisted 7th July 1867, height 5' 11", weight 11st 8lbs
- Has served in Afghan Campaign (1880-1881) – medal
- The Corps is now commanded by Colonel F.W. Boileau⁴
- It was raised at Deoli in 1857, and is composed of two troops of Cavalry armed with lances and carbines and eight companies of infantry.⁵ The Cavalry consists of Sikhs from Panjab (sic): and the Infantry is composed of Meenas from the Meenakerhar in Rajputana.
- It has served in the Kotah campaign (!858) – medal, and the Afghan Campaign (1880-81) – medal.

Colour-Havildar Girdhari's rank badge, clearly visible on his right arm, consists of crossed flags (red St George Cross on a white ground) above a single chevron, the whole surmounted by a crown.

While an identical rank badge appears in a Lovett illustration of a colour-

¹ Messrs Theodore Julius Hoffman and P.A. Johnston established their studio at 22 Chowringhee Rd, Calcutta, in 1882.

² The 'Johnston & Hoffman' portrait shown here is in the author's personal collection. The identical portrait in the NAM photographic archive is very faded.

³ The Deoli Irregular Force became the 42nd Deoli Regiment in 1903. The cavalry was mustered out in 1913, and the regiment was disbanded in December 1921.

⁴ Lieutenant-Colonel Boileau was appointed to the command of the Deoli Irregular Force with effect from 20th April 1884.

⁵ The headquarter establishment of the infantry wing of the Deoli Irregular Force included, inter al, eight colour-havildars and eight pay-havildars (*Bengal Army List*, July 1884 ed.).

havildar of the 43rd Erinpura Regiment,⁶ there is generally little consistency from regiment to regiment, the number of chevrons varying from one to three, and with the crown present or absent. An early example circa 1850 of crossed swords, surmounted by a single flag, above a single chevron, is illustrated by Bill Carman in his book on Indian Army infantry uniforms.⁷ A similar 'crossed swords and single flag' version, but with three chevrons, worn by a colour-havildar of the 11th Bengal Infantry in 1887, is depicted in another of the 'Johnston & Hoffman' series.⁸ One might conclude from these variations of a single rank badge that 'uniform' is not always necessarily uniform.

Girdhari's uniform is similar in many respects to those of the regiment's Indian officers described in the 1886 Dress Regulations: coat, rifle green cloth, four buttons down the front; cuffs, pointed, of scarlet cloth; pantaloons, scarlet; gaiters, white; boots, ankle.⁹

The prolific military artist Richard Simkin (1850-1926) appears to have used this photograph as the basis for one of his 'Types of the Indian Army' figures, reproduced on the 'The British Empire' website.¹⁰ The illustration shows the tunic's scarlet piping and cuff trefoil, as well as the scarlet and drab stripes of the pagri.

The left-handed salute raises an interesting question. Was this in accordance with army regulations? The answer is largely provided by Major-General Chand Das in his book *Traditions & Customs of the Indian Armed Forces*:

Salute is given with the right hand... In case where, due to physical incapability, the right hand salute is impossible, the left hand is used... Until the end of World War I, British soldiers saluted with either hand, with the left when passing an officer on the right and with the right when passing him on the left, so that they could look the officer in the face and avoid a possible clash of elbows.¹¹

Judging by the manner in which Colour-Havildar Girdhari is holding his right arm, which appears to be limp, this may well be an example of a left hand salute being given due to an incapacitated right arm.

⁶ Major A.C. Lovett & Major G.F. McMunn D.S.O., *The Armies of India* (Adam & Charles Black, London 1911), p.136

⁷ W.Y. Carman, *Indian Army Uniforms Under the British from the 18th Century to 1947 – Artillery, Engineers and Infantry* (Morgan –Grampian, London 1969), Pl.25B: 'Other ranks clothing, Madras Native Infantry, c.1850.'

⁸ *The Army in India 1850-1914, a Photographic Record* (Hutchinson of London, for The National Army Museum, 1968), Plate 92: Johnston & Hoffman 1887, O/N/PH 5138/10.

⁹ *Army Regulations, India*, Vol. VII, Dress (Government Printing Office, Calcutta, 1886).

¹⁰ <http://www.britishempire.co.uk/forces/armyuniforms/indianinfantry/42nddeoli1901.htm>

¹¹ Maj.-Gen. Chand Das, *Traditions & Customs of the Indian Armed Forces*, Vision Books, New Delhi 1984, pp.165-66.

Although saluting in the Indian Army most likely followed the British Army practice of saluting with the hand further away from the person being saluted, this cannot be confirmed until the appropriate India Army Order has been located.

Acknowledgements

Helpful comments and observations by Rana Chhina and Tony McClenaghan have been incorporated into the brief article. The General Secretary witnessed the unfortunate experience of an unwary subaltern when confronted with a left-handed salute. 'I recall serving with a Royal Military Police corporal in the 1970s who had lost his right arm under a tank track while on exercise. Though fitted with a prosthetic limb, they were far less moveable than the bionic man versions of today. The corporal therefore always saluted with his left hand. One particular day he passed a new 2nd Lieutenant and saluted with his left hand. "Corporal, as a member of RMP you are supposed to set an example. Don't you know to salute with your right hand?" "Sorry sir," said the soldier, unhooked his right limb, held it in his left hand, and saluted. Collapse of one young subaltern.'

The MacGregor Memorial Medal awarded to Subedar M.Z.A. Quraishi, Indian Engineers.

In his history of the MacGregor Memorial Medal (MMM), Bob Hamond recorded the award of two large (officers) silver medals, for the year 1945, to Captain P.A. Thomas and Subedar M.I.A. Quraishi, both of the Corps of Indian Engineers and contemporaneously attached to the Survey of India.¹ There are two inaccuracies in this record: both awards were granted for survey work actually carried out in 1943;² the subedar's initials should be M.Z.A., his full name being Muhammad Zafar Ali Quraishi.³

There was a degree of standardisation in the personalized naming on the rim of MMMs, most being inscribed with year of award, rank, initials, name and regiment of the recipient, followed by 'for valuable reconnaissance' or 'for valuable work.' However, a number of variations to this standard have been noted, exemplified by Subedar Muhammad Quraishi's medal. The inscription reads:

AWARDED TO SUBEDAR M.Z.A. QURAIISHI FOR HIS ASSISTANCE
IN TRIANGULATION SURVEY, IRAQ AND PERSIA; 1943⁴

¹ Major Robert Hamond, *History of the MacGregor Memorial Medal 1889-1989* (United Service Institution of India, and Lancer, New Delhi 1994); p.49

² The process of recommendation and approval required some time, and the awards were not actually granted until 1946.

³ According the Indian Army List. Muhammad Zafar Ali Qureshi [sic] received a direct commission as a subedar in the Corps of Indian Engineers on the 25th April 1941, and was straight away attached to the so-called 'Survey Group, Indian Engineers.' He was still on the active list and with the Survey Group in April 1945. Bob Hamond noted that he 'returned to Pakistan [in] 1947.'

⁴ Precise details of the engraving have been confirmed by a member of the IMHS, in whose

The recommendations were based on the efforts of these two sapper officers in connecting the system of triangulation in Iraq and Persia with the Great Trigonometrical series of India, thus completing the only missing link in the system of triangulation extending from the Europe to the Far East.⁵

The following extract from *The Survey of India during War and Early Reconstruction* by Brigadier Sir Oliver Wheeler (Dehradun, 1955)⁶ provides some background to this work:

Responsibility west of 48° East Longitude having been transferred to the War Office just before the war, the Survey of India was in a little difficulty in providing maps for the troops first sent to Iraq from India; this was corrected by transfer of material back from the War Office as time went on and eventually the military survey units sent from India took over practically all responsibility. These were gradually replaced by Mid-East units and by 1943 practically all Indian units had been withdrawn for service in the Eastern Theatre.

The first units formed by the Survey of India, No.1 Field Survey H.Q. and No.1 Field Survey Company, went to Iraq early in 1941 and were followed by Nos. 2 and 4 H.Q. and Companies besides one extra drawing section, one map supply section and one survey park section (whose business was to hold reserve instruments and stores). Each company had a map reproduction section with rotary printing machine and ancillary equipment and by the middle of 1942 a strong survey and map publication organization was functioning that was continually being reinforced by and eventually almost completely replaced by British units from Mid-East, to enable Indian units to move eastwards as the Japanese war developed.

During their time in Iraq/Iran the Indian Survey Companies surveyed or revised about 120,000 square miles in Iraq and over 100,000 in Iran, on quarter-inch and 1/100,000 scales by ground survey methods (plane-tableing); they mapped about 4,500 square miles from air photographs on the 1/50,000 and 1/25,000 scales.

To enable the above surveys to be carried out, triangulation of an accuracy approximating that of our Indian topographical triangulation supplemented in the flat desert areas by Hunter Short Base traverse was carried out over the whole area of survey.

Work was carried out in areas varying from sea level to 10,000 feet above it, in temperatures varying from 127° to zero degrees Fahrenheit. Out-turns in ground survey reached such high figures as 600 miles per month on quarter-inch work and 100 on 1/100,000 work.

The work carried out by the survey units of Paiforce and Tenth Army, up to the time most Survey of India personnel had been withdrawn, is described in detail in the report by Colonel G.F. Heaney, who was the senior Survey of India officer employed in Iraq, entitled *Report of the Work of Survey Service with British Troops, Iraq, Tenth Army and Persia-Iraq Force*.

collection this fine MMM resides.

⁵ *USII Journal*, Vol. LXXVI, July 1946, no.324, p.292; recording the award of the medals granted to Major Thomas and Subedar Muhammad Quraishi.

⁶ This extract has been kindly provided by Rana Chhina.

According to this extract from Brigadier Sir Oliver Wheeler's account of events in Iraq and Iran, the survey parties from the Survey of India completed their work in 1943. The award of Subedar Quraishi's MMM was therefore made for survey work in this particular year, as the inscription on his medal bears out.

Badges and Buttons; Bits and Bobs

Rana Chhina

Part I

The following is the first of an assorted collection of extracts from Military Department notifications published in the *Gazette of India*. They are related primarily to aspects of uniform and will be periodically published in *Durbar* for the reference of those members with an interest in the history of insignia. While some of the material may be available elsewhere, such as in Lieutenant-Colonel N. W. Poulson's seven-volume *Buttons of the Indian Army*, even this excellent work does not delve into the specific orders authorising the wearing of buttons and badges. While the listing to be provided in this, and subsequent, sections will be far from comprehensive, it may be a useful source of reference for badge collectors.

Indian Staff Corps

G.G.O. No. 748 of 1869

Officers

Buttons: gilt convex, frosted, with scalloped edge; cypher 'V.R.' in a garter, surmounted by a crown, and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Staff Corps' in the garter.

Waist Belt Plate: a round gilt clasp, with the cypher 'V.R.' and a crown on the centre piece, and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Staff Corps' on the outer circle.

Subordinate Medical Department in India

G.G.O. No. 801 of 1869

Apothecaries and Assistant Apothecaries

Buttons: gilt, with the crown and letters 'V.R.', and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Subordinate Medical Department' within a star raised thereon.

Forage Cap: blue cloth forage cap with black silk oak leaf band and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) S. M. D.' embroidered in gold in front, and patent leather peak.

Hospital Apprentices

Buttons: small, plated, with the device 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) S. M. D.'

Indian Medical Department

G.G.O. No 1245 of 1869

Commissioned Officers

Buttons: gilt, with the crown and letters 'V.R.', and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Medical Service' within a star raised thereon.

Waist Belt Plate: a round gilt clasp, with 'V.R.', surmounted by a crown, in silver, upon the centre-piece, and 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Medical Service', with a laurel branch, also in silver, on the outer circle.

Shoulder belt:

Medical Officers ranking with Brigadiers and Major-Generals – black morocco with four rows of gold embroidery 1/4 inch wide, gilt chased buckle and slide (no breast ornament), pouch of black morocco leather, flap 6-1/2 inches wide, 3-1/4 inches deep, and pointed, with three rows of 1/4 inch gold embroidery, gilt chased 'V.R.' and crown ornament;

Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals – three rows of gold embroidery on the pouch belt, and two on the pouch;

Other Ranks – black patent leather, with a small case of surgical instruments, according to pattern.

Indian Medical Department

G.G.O. No. 873 of 30th August 1875 superseded G.G.O. No. 1245 of 15th December 1869, wherein the Right Hon'ble the Governor-General in Council was pleased to direct that the dress laid down in the Dress Regulations for the Army, dated Horse Guards, War Office, 1st November 1874, pages 68 to 72, for Officers of the British Medical Department, with the modification stated in the following paragraph, would be worn by Officers of the Indian Medical Department, without reference to the branch of the service to which they may be attached.

2. Buttons shall bear the words 'Bengal (or Madras or Bombay) Medical Staff.'

3. Two years from the date of this order is allowed for wearing out any uniform in possession.

Dress Regulations for the Army 1874 (extract from pp.68-72):

Officers of the Medical Department

Director-General and Surgeon-General after three years' service

Buttons: gilt, with the Royal Cypher and crown and the words 'Medical Staff' within a star;

Waist Plate: round, gilt, chased clasp, with a lion and crown in silver, on the centre-piece.

Pouch Belt: black Morocco leather, 2 inches wide, with four stripes of gold embroidery, each 1/4 inch wide, and gilt chased buckle, tip, and slide.

Pouch for Instruments: black Morocco leather, the flap 6-1/2 inches long and 3-1/4 inches deep, with three strips of gold embroidery 1/4 inch wide round the bottom

and sides, and in the centre, a gilt chased Royal Cypher and crown.

Surgeon-General under three years' service in that rank

Buttons: as for Surgeon-General

Waist Plate: as for Surgeon-General

Pouch Belt and Pouch: as for Surgeon-General, but with only three stripes of embroidery on belt and two on pouch.

Surgeon-Major

Uniform and Horse Furniture: as for Deputy Surgeon-General under five years' service with the following exceptions:

Belts and Pouch: the embroidered belts and pouch to be worn on State occasions, at balls and in Cavalry Regiments, whenever gold belts are worn by the other Officers; at other times, plain black Morocco leather belts and pouch are worn. The waist belt is a round gilt clasp, with the Royal Cypher and crown on the centre piece in silver, and the words 'Medical Staff' with a laurel branch in silver on the outer circle. The embroidered belts and pouch are always to be worn in Regiments in which gold belts are only worn by the Officers.

Public Works Department in India

G.G.O. No. 1159 of 1870

Honorary Commissioned Officers

Buttons: gilt, with the crown and 'Public Works Department' raised thereon.

Waist Belt Plate: a round gilt clasp with 'V.R.' surmounted by a crown in silver upon the centre piece, and 'Public Works Department' with a laurel branch also in silver on the outer circle.

Forage Cap: blue cloth, with black leather peak and chin strap, light blue band with 'V.R.' surrounded with a wreath mounted by a crown embroidered in gold on the front, with black button and trimming on the top.

BOOK REVIEW

Andrew Kerr, *I Can Never Say Enough About the Men – A History of the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles throughout their World War One East African Campaign*; PMC Management Consultants Ltd, 2010; 176 pages, case-bound, ISBN 978-0-9567537-0-0, <www.icanneversayenoughaboutthemen.com> £25 plus £3 p&p.

The First World War campaign in East Africa has received little coverage compared to Europe, though *The History of the Great War - Military Operations East Africa* (London, HMSO) provided an early account and there have been some more recent and extremely valuable works. Similarly, the efforts of the Imperial Service Troops (later Indian State Forces) have received patchy coverage, though the former princely state of Jammu & Kashmir has fared better than others with two exceptionally good books – Major K Brahma Singh's *History of Jammu &*

Kashmir Rifles (1820-1956) (Lancer International, Delhi 1990) and Major General Monty Palit's *Jammu and Kashmir Arms, History of the J & K Rifles* (Palit & Dutt, Dehra Dun 1972). Through these books and my own research, the name of Captain Alexander Kerr, who won a Military Cross in East Africa while serving with 2nd Rifles (Body Guard Regiment) of the Jammu & Kashmir army, and those of other British and Kashmiri officers who served with the regiment, have been known to me for several years. Now we have a detailed account of the Kashmir troops in East Africa thanks to research by the grandson of Captain Kerr. Based on a variety of sources, including diaries kept by Alec Kerr and other officers, the book brings to life some of the otherwise dry statistics of official records, and helps to identify the hardships and strains of the East African campaign. The title is taken from a written comment by Alec Kerr.

At the outset of the war, Kashmir was asked to produce half of the three battalion complement of Imperial Service Troops required for East Africa, or one-and-a-half battalions (the remainder of the complement had been provided by a combination of Rampur, Kapurthala and Jind troops). The complete battalion of 2nd Kashmir Rifles and half of the 3rd Rifles were mobilised in August 1914 and proceeded to East Africa under the command of Lieutenant-Colonels Raghbir Singh and Durga Singh respectively, with Majors R.A. Lyall and E.F.D. Money as Special Service Officers (Alec Kerr joined later). Thirty months later, after actions at Tanga, the Uмба Valley, Jasin, Lukigura and elsewhere they were returned to India. My researches had indicated that 2nd Rifles lost a total of two officers (including Lieutenant-Colonel Raghbir Singh) and thirty-eight ORs killed in action and two British officers, one Indian officer and forty-six ORs wounded. This book suggests the attrition rate was much higher at about seventy killed in action and many more wounded or incapacitated through sickness and malaria, with only about twenty-five men being declared fit at the end of the campaign out of a total of 1,315 who had passed through the ranks during the deployment – a ninety-eight per cent casualty rate. Nevertheless, the Kashmir troops withstood the rigours of the campaign far better than other Indian, South African or British troops. Some sections of the book are fuller than others, but that tends to reflect the amount of information recorded in the War Diaries – and anyone who has studied such documents will know how patchy they can be.

A significant joy of the book is the number of excellent and previously unseen photographs, putting faces to names (and not only the officers). The launch of the book was geared towards the 11th Regimental Reunion of the J&K Rifles but a very late withdrawal by an intended publisher led to a hasty requirement to find a replacement. As a result there are a number of typographical errors, but they should not detract from an excellent and welcome addition to the annals of this theatre, and of the role of the State Forces, especially one focused at a battalion and company level of reporting.

(Tony McClenaghan)

CORRESPONDENCE

Omer Tarin has written...

The 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles (FF) was raised in Abbottabad (now in Pakistan) in May 1858, as a Punjab Irregular Force unit, from various recruits of ‘Gurkha origin’ for duties on the Punjab Frontier (later NWF Province and Tribal Areas) – and Abbottabad remained the regiment’s home station until 1947 (Independence/Partition) when it was transferred to Indian command.

1. The 5th Gurkhas used to have a considerable presence in Abbottabad town and cantonment, in many ways, and their ways and their ‘signs’ used to be quite visible here ten to fifteen years ago, even. Over time, however, a large number of these have been obliterated and/or ‘subsumed’ within the new, post-Independence Pakistani entity.

2. An interesting ‘survival’ from the old days, when the 5th Gurkhas used to grace these environs, was a Hindu temple complex which contained, over an area of about an acre or more: (a) the Shiv Mandir (Shiv Temple); (b) the Temple bathing tanks; (c) Dusehra House, a guest house belonging to the 5th Gurkhas where guests/pilgrims were lodged; (d) the caretaker/*pundit*’s little residence/cottage; and (e) a few small quarters for the *mehtars* (sweepers/cleaners), mostly low-caste Hindus who were responsible for cleaning and looking after the whole complex. The area was given outright as a grant (not a lease, nor on a rental/payment basis) to the Gurkhas by the Army’s MEO (Military Estates Office). And even after 1947 this remained the case, with the MEO and the Cantonment Board, Abbottabad, continuing to administrate/manage the property. The MEO Survey Numbers for the complex are, today: 74, 75, 147, 221/25 and 316. The last of these, i.e. No. 316, was an adjacent/additional plot of land used as a graveyard/cremation site by the Gurkhas and other Hindu residents of Abbottabad.

3. After 1947, while most of the Hindu community left the town for good, a few of the *mehtars* remained. Their elder/head was one Jai Lal, who was entrusted by the 5th Gurkhas, as they left, with the care and custodianship of this Temple Complex. He carried out his duties effectively, until the 1960s, when the MEO and the Cantonment Board tried to take over this area a number of times with the aim of sub-dividing it and parcelling it out, parts of it to military units of the (present) Frontier Force and Baloch regiments, and the rest to private allottees. However, the late Mr Jai Lal and the remaining Hindu community here resisted, and obtained legal injunctions to stay these proceedings.

4. Thereafter, the Temple Complex was formally registered as a ‘religious and heritage site’ with the Government of Pakistan; and in the 1980s was incorporated under the Societies and Trusts Act as ‘The Shiv Temple Society [STS], Abbottabad.

5. Ever since then, and despite constitutional and legal protection in theory, the STS – and Abbottabad’s small Hindu community, now numbering some 70 to 75 souls – has been constantly pressurized by the MEO and the Cantonment Board and, over the last few years, gradually, parts of this complex, which is still used as a place of worship, have been illegally occupied and converted to various other uses, despite protests and appeals by the STS.

6. Now, in 2011, very shockingly indeed, the Cantonment Board has moved in and demolished part of the main Shiv Mandir – and, even worse, completely destroyed/bulldozed Plot/Survey No. 316, the old Gurkha graveyard/cremation site, and allotted this to the GHQ (Pakistan Army).



RECENT VIEW OF THE SHIV TEMPLE, PRIOR TO DAMAGE (COURTESY OF THE SHIV TEMPLE SOCIETY)

7. The present chairman of the STS, Mr Sham Lal (son of the late Jai Lal), has appealed to the President and the Prime Minister of Pakistan in September 2011, requesting that the remaining area(s) of the Temple and its surroundings be saved and restored/preserved and the local Hindu community allowed to retain possession freely and without hindrance; and there is yet no action in response from these high quarters.

So, what will be the ultimate result of all this? What will become of the Shiv Temple and Abbottabad's embattled Hindu community? Where will they worship and practice their religious rites and observances? One very important historical landmark, the old Gurkha graveyard/cremation site has been totally destroyed and lost to posterity. The Shiv Temple, or what is left of it, and Dusehra House, are now the very last proper vestiges marking the presence here, once upon a time, of the 5th Gurkhas and it is very likely that they will also be lost, gone, very soon.

David Mahoney has written...

Fellow members were very helpful when I previously asked for help in identifying various Indian tradesmen and units on medals. I should be grateful for assistance with the following:

[1] Acctt. L in Military Works Service; B-Man in K.B.; B-Boy in 1 B.T. Coy; B-S in A-Mule Dept; BT Man in Military Works Service; Cook A in 1 H C; Cook in 2 Argyle & Sutherland Hdrs; Driver OEO in 1 Works Coy; RM Driver in Military Engineering Service; E.R. KSB in Inland Water Transport; HLDR-UP in Inland Water Transport; Kahar in Medical Dept; K-Man in Mesopotamian Railways; S-Labr in Mesopotamian Railways; LUD [or LVD] in Army Hospital Corps; Rest C Dvr in RIASC (MT); T-R U-H AF in Indian E & M E.

[2] What were the purposes and duties of a naik in the Essex Regt and sepoy in the Border Regt and Durham L.I. on the NWF in 1930-3147?

[3] In the 1944 edition of Thackers, the Manager and Engineer-in-Chief of the Morvi Railway is described as 'Khan Bahadur N.R. Green BSc (Glas) BE MIE MInstruct E.' Was the title badge 'Khan Bahadur' awarded only to Muslims and. if so, could N.R. Green have been a convert?

Sikh Military Monument at Forli

On 13th August 2011, a large international gathering of Sikhs attended a ceremony for the unveiling of a new Sikh military monument at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Indian Army Cremation Memorial at Forli in Italy, two miles north of the town on the road to Ravenna. The Cremation Memorial at Forli commemorates 352 Sikh and 416 Hindu soldiers. They laid down their lives in the fighting in Central Italy between April and October 1944, and during the attacks on the Gothic Line and in the final breakthrough from August 1944 until April 1945. In the Indian Army War Cemetery at Forli, buried according to the rites of their religion, lie the mortal remains of a further 492 officers and men of the Indian Army, fifteen of whom are unidentified by name. There are two other Indian cremation memorials in Italy: one is within the Sangro River Indian Army Memorial, the other is in the Rimini Gurkha War Cemetery.
