DURBAR Volume 3, No.1

(**Web site note:** Although technically still called the Journal at this time, for the purposes of the web site we have chosen to re-name from here onwards as Durbar)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

It gives me great pleasure to welcome as an Honorary Member Brigadier J.P. Randle, OBE, MC, once an officer of the 10th Baluch Regiment, who went to the Devonshire Regiment after Independence and Partition. In WW2 he was Adjutant and a Company Commander of 7/10 Baluch, 17th Indian Division; our respective battalions served alongside each other in the Chin Hills in 1943, Imphal in 1944 and Meiktila in 1945. Brigadier John is not, to my knowledge, a collector. Probably he had his fill of military artefacts as Curator of The Devonshire & Dorsetshire Regimental Museum. However, he is willing to keep a benign eye on our activities and even, perhaps, weigh in with a few observations.

On the question of rambles down memory lane, the usefulness of which I queried after such a ramble, I do not know the answer. I have to apologize for misleading readers by my belief that the Indian Army Association is restricted to those who held commissions in the I.A., pre-1939.

Not only am I wrong, but I have been, unknowingly, an automatic member of the Association since its formation in the 1950s, by virtue of my membership in my own Regimental Association. The Association came into being with an admirable long-term idea. As the regimental and corps associations fade away with the death of their members, the I.A. Association will, in the long run, be the final representative of the old Indian Army. I must have been informed of this move by my own Regimental Secretary in the 1950s but, as I was then rather busy in other fields, the fact did not register. I will avail myself of my membership in due course. Membership is open to any officer, Regular, ECO or BSA - who served with a unit of the old Indian Army before Independence in 1947.

On other reminiscences concerning former I.A. officers, I must admit some factual element but point out a number of generalisations. These, one supposes, come with hindsight. Certainly every man's experiences will differ, and probably recollections become a trifle hazy. Where one Indian Unattached List officer had a hard time with his British battalion, something brought out by John Masters, another had a thoroughly happy time and says that some I.A. candidates so enjoyed their stay that they asked to be admitted to their British unit permanently.

Certainly, one has to be unusually thick NOT to know when one is unwelcome and my memory of our reception at the I.M.A. is not at all clouded - we were not at all popular. But then, we were part of a Draft, one of several and though doubtless some were volunteers, most were sent from British units in the UK, awash with junior officers. It is not human nature to send your best men for extra regimental employment and no doubt COs and Adjutants had a field day in shedding undesirables - troublemakers, drinkers and incompetents. Between the I.M.A. and the fighting battalions, however, were the regimental centres and I doubt if many misfits percolated the mesh, unless to jobs where they could do

little harm - Railway Transport Officer at some halt in the Scinde desert where the troop trains paused in their five-day journey to water and feed the soldiery.

Be that as it may, there are those who can say, with authority, "Not so - I was there and you are wrong!" I suppose that the fruits will come forth, but readers are free to make up their own minds. I am told that John Masters' descriptions of Sandhurst are exaggerated - I was not there so do not know. One who was there with Masters says that, except for the first six weeks, Sandhurst was not particularly tough because cadets had learned discipline at public school. Perhaps Masters does stretch a long bow a bit. Certainly his description of a mule kicking a Gurkha on the head and going dead lame while the Gurkha suffered a headache for several days does not ring true. As Animal Transport Officer for a while, I feel that a full-blooded kick from a mule would probably decapitate the recipient. One of my NCOs was kicked in the testicles and did not recover consciousness. Take your pick - I think that Masters embroidered his story, but the possibility is there that he did NOT. I hope for a response from some former RIASC Mule Company Officer - those unsung heroes, both mules and men - who will have some definite opinion.

A. Sudlow

THE FORTRESS OF MUD

INDIAN RESISTANCE DURING THE TWO SIEGES OF BHARATPUR

(Part Two of Two)

Twenty years rolled by, from 1805, during which Bharatpur became a rallying word for those princes and nobles disaffected by the expanding and interfering East India Company.

Ranjit Singh died at the close of 1805. His eldest son, Ranbir Singh remained loyal to the British and died childless in 1823. His brother succeeded him, dying eighteen months later, but leaving a six year old son. The British recognized this heir apparent but a cousin, Durjan Sal, held him captive and took over the throne.

The British agent in Delhi, Sir David Ochterlony, a successful general who had defeated the Gurkhas of Nepal and kept a harem of thirteen wives, promptly assembled a force to march to Bharatpur and reinstate the rightful heir. But the then Governor General, Lord Amherst, with an army and a treasury heavily taxed to maintain the Burma war, countermanded the order. Durjan Sal had meanwhile been collecting arms and sending messengers to all the princes and states of central India asking for support. "Who were the English to interfere in the internal affairs of Bharatpur?" he rightly argued.

When the British had successfully ended the Burmese war, attention was again drawn towards Bharatpur. Durjan Sal became a test case, with all India watching.

When it was finally decided that Bharatpur must fall, the question immediately arose, "Where was the man to take it?" "John Company's" Directors interviewed the Duke of Wellington, at that time England's foremost military genius. They asked him to find a man capable of taking the fortress. The Duke recommended Lord Combermere, at which they hesitated, saying that

they understood that Combermere was not a man of great brains. "Damn his brains", retorted the Duke, "I tell you he is the man to take Bhurtpore".

Lord Combermere was sent to India as Commander-in-Chief. By November 1825, an army of 27,000 British and Indian troops had assembled at Agra. Orders had also been given for the requisitioning of all heavy artillery numbering one hundred and fifty-four heavy guns.

The fortifications at Bharatpur had been strengthened and additions made, including one bastion called "Fateh Burj" or Bastion of Victory, because it had been built partly with the bones of those who had fallen in the last siege.

By mid-December 1825, Combermere's forces had cordoned off Bharatpur and his main army had taken up position outside the mud walls. The fortress was now defended by about 25,000 men, mostly Jats and a small contingent of Marathas and Pathans.

Lord Combermere spent nine days in survey and reconnaissance, and finally decided to attack the fortress from the east. The Jats delayed breaching the "jheels". This was a fatal error because when they finally tried the British intercepted them. The ditch remained comparatively dry throughout the second siege, giving the attackers a tremendous advantage.

With the fort cut off, the British went to work constructing entrenchments. It meant preparing gun positions as close as possible to the walls and yet safe from the enemy's guns. Trenches and gun pits had to be dug in the hard rocky soil - a thankless task for which European soldiers were paid an extra four annas per day and the sepoys received a free grain ration. (In those days, Indian sepoys provided and cooked their own food, mainly because of caste restrictions.)

The entrenchments paid off: the gunfire from the fort had no effect on the dug-in positions. The besiegers pushed their guns in closer, much to the dismay of the Jats who could not depress their guns to the required angle for effective fire. British artillery, especially the mortars, caused considerable damage to life and property within the city. It is to the credit of Combermere that all women and children were allowed safe conduct out of Bharatpur when he heard that his guns had caused casualties amongst the civilian population.

By the end of December, the British were as close as twenty yards from the walls, and most of the Jat artillery had been put out of action. It was apparent that the defenders were far less confident than their forerunners in 1805. The Jats were split because of a quarrel between Durjan Sal and his brother. Nor could Bharatpur count on much active help. Holkar and Amir Khand, who had helped in 1805, were now sanctified as rulers of Indore and Tonk and would not help.

In spite of heavy shelling - some 61,446 shells had been fired - little damage was done to the walls. The engineers under Brigadier T. Anbury were then given the task of mining the walls. It involved digging a hole, filling it with gunpowder, and lighting the fuse. The first mine exploded without much effect. Combermere, watching the operations, turned to Lt. Col. James Skinner of Skinner's Horse standing by his side and asked for his advice. He recommended mining with a very large quantity of gunpowder. Therefore, a mine filled with 10,000 pounds of explosive was dug and prepared for blasting under the north-east bastion.

It was planned that shortly after the explosion an assault at different points would be launched. General Nicholls was to take the Long Necked Bastion, General Reynell, the north-east bastion, and Colonel Delamin was to attack a point close to the Jageenah Gate. Two more columns were to attack, one on the left of the Long Necked, and the other under Colonel Wilson for a diversionary attack.

The attack was set for the morning of January 18, 1826. A mine planted near the Jageenah Gate was first exploded. The explosion alerted the defenders, who took up defensive positions on the walls and bastions. Eight hundred Rohilla Pathans manned the north-east bastion; they had been given the task to defend this sensitive position. Immediately the major mine was fired. An eye witness had this to say: "The ground heaved and rocked and with a dull heavy roar (shock waves felt as far away as Agra) half the bastion lurched and rose sullenly in the air, followed by clouds of thick pungent smoke carrying high into the air guns, gabions, Pathans, banners, swords and matchlocks to be strewn in their descent in one horrid confusion of mangled flesh and broken metal." Three hundred Pathans had been blown to pieces. Cheering loudly the attackers rushed in. In spite of half their numbers being decimated, the Pathans fought bravely, killing or wounding two brigadiers and several men. The other columns also faced fierce resistance: the Jats preferred death to surrender and we are told that the fighting was at such close quarters that the cotton clothing worn by the Jats was ignited by the flash of the muskets.

Bharatpur was now virtually gained. Durjan Sal with the help of some loyal followers shut himself up in the inner fort or citadel. Guns were brought to bear on the gates, which were blown open, but Durjan Sal and forty chosen followers made good an escape via the Kumbir Gate. He entered a small jungle, where he was joined by more fugitives, but was seen and pursued by Lieutenant Barbor of the 8th Bengal Light Cavalry and finally captured.

By four in the afternoon on January 18th, 1826, Bharatpur had fallen. The prophecy had been fulfilled: the "Kumbir" - for so they called Combermere - had indeed drunk up the waters of the ditch. It is believed that 8,300 defenders were killed and one hundred and thirty-four cannon were captured. One of particular interest is called "Father of Victory".

On a recent visit to England I went looking for relics from Bharatpur's two sieges. I was directed to Woolwich, home of the Royal Regiment of Artillery. At Woolwich I asked a British soldier for directions to the Bharatpur guns - He corrected me, saying "Ya mus mean Bhurtpore, mate. Well if it’s the Father of Victory you're looking for, the big fellow is by the park." The Father of Victory, a huge ornamented gun sixteen feet four inches long and weighing eighteen tons, stood imposingly on a pedestal. An inscription on it stated that it was made in 1677 for Emperor Aurangzeb.

I have since then wondered how many battles of Indian history this gun must have faced and perhaps shaped. But guns do not speak and so we shall never know. The Father of Victory stands silently and peacefully, so do Bharatpur's ramparts - the latter name is now synonymous with that of a famous bird sanctuary - and the history of the fort and battles are forgotten relics of the distant past.

Ashok Nath

Dear Sirs

The article on "Reunions and Reminiscences" in 'DURBAR' Vol.2, No.4 was interesting but not really accurate and could well give some false impressions. May I set some of these inaccuracies aright? The Indian Army Association is not restricted to those who held commissions prior to 1939. It is a federation of all Regimental/Corps Associations and /or Dinner Clubs. These groups consist of ALL officers who served in those Regiments/Corps, who are all able to attend the Reunion at Hurlingham. Since the formation of the Indian Army Association in the late 1960s there have been wartime officers on the Committee.

The author writes "what a difficult institution the I.A. was to enter." I cannot say what the situation was regarding the wartime OCTUs, however, in the 1930s it was not that difficult to enter the I.A. from Sandhurst. There was in fact a paucity of candidates for various reasons. Some perceptive fathers serving in India warned their sons that independence was not far away. Other cadets did not wish all their service to be abroad. It was true that if you had a relative in the I. A., came from an I.A. family, or had some Indian connections it did help, but there were those who had none of these. I was such a one and was only a mediocre cadet but made it without difficulty.

It was also suggested that ECOs and British Service Officers Attached were not well received in many units. Of course, in all close knit groups you will find those who feel threatened by any influx of outsiders, and I am sure that every unit had one or two such older members. But on the whole, units, and especially the younger regulars, accepted these officers as equals. Often one did not know which officer was what. Of the officers coming in there were some who had been posted to India against their will and they made this clear - but that is but human.

Now to a small inaccuracy. Brigadier Prendergast was sent direct from India for the Norwegian campaign and was not on leave at the time (see his story in *Prender's Progress*). He was actually recommended for the DSO there but was only awarded a bar to his MC.

Apart from these inaccuracies, I feel that these "Reminiscence" articles are useful. We have numerous Regimental histories, often very dry, and many factual articles, but we do not have enough personal anecdotes, stories and reminiscences, which are also an essential part of history.

Almost every Regiment/Corps of the pre-1947 Indian army holds an annual reunion, be it formal dinner, luncheon or informal gathering. Unfortunately, numbers are dropping due to age and deaths and soon some of these reunions will not be viable. The Indian Army Association hopes to be the final group to which officers can turn as their Associations close. It was for this reason that individual membership was introduced a short time ago. It is hoped that the I.A.A. Reunions will continue for some years yet till the last two old 'koi-hais' call for their last ‘chota peg'.

P.J. Emerson

Dear Sir:

In Ashok Nath's interesting article on the siege of Bharatpur 1805 (Durbar, Vol., 2, No., 4), I was most pleased to see mention of the part played by the 2/15th Bengal Infantry, who later became the 2nd Queen Victoria's Own Rajput Light Infantry, and were finally designated 1/7 Rajput Regiment in 1922. The Brigade of Guards was raised by the Government of India in 1949 from various existing battalions of the Indian Army and the 1st Rajput became the 4th Battalion, Brigade of Guards. The senior battalion in the current Rajput Regiment is the 2nd Battalion, formerly the 4th Prince Albert Victor's Rajputs. The 1/7 Rajput Regiment had the distinction of carrying a third or honorary colour bearing the words "Lake and Victory" granted for the distinguished services in 1803 during the Maratha Wars.

A point that Ashok Nath made, and one of which we are well aware, concerns the prejudices and injustices dealt against the Indian military by both 19th and 20th century commentators. It was therefore refreshing to read Peter Fleming's work on the Tibet campaign of 1903-04: *Bayonets to Lhasa*, (1971). This book leaves the reader in no doubt as to what regiments won the laurels in the Tibet campaign: the 23rd and 32nd Sikh Pioneers, and the 8th Gurkha Rifles. The book also shows the folly of including an English regiment for the sake of prestige, in this case the Royal Fusiliers, whose inclusion created more consternation than confidence amongst the crack Indian units already trained and accustomed to arduous campaigning. Nevertheless, the glory of the Pioneers and Gurkhas gains little note in the medal world, where Tibet medals to the Royal Fusiliers are priced at more than 150% of the value associated with Indian regiments. Judging by the number of Tibet medals to the Fusiliers that remain unsold on dealers' lists, perhaps the medal collecting fraternity has at last realized its mistakes, but then again, economics rather than logic would be nearer the truth!

As a follow-up to Michael Johnson's theory on the issuing and naming of the GSM "S.E. Asia" to Indian and Pakistani recipients (Durbar, Vol.2, No.4), a similar supposition could be applied to the stars and medals of WW II. Considering that over 2.5 million volunteers served in the Indian Forces between 1939 and 1945, it is all the more surprising that in no reference book or learned article is it mentioned that the majority of WW II medals to Indians were officially named. The stars and medals were impressed in small capitals showing number, rank, name and regiment: certainly far more detailed than the "noted" Australian and South African issues, which give few details. I would not infer that all WW II medals to Indians were named, but of the ones I have seen, I would say that about 70% were named in India and Nepal, with only a very few in Pakistan named to Muslims in pre-Partition Indian units. Unfortunately, I can offer no details about the naming styles on Indian WW II medals. Part of the answer may lie in the different procedures of the Bombay and Lahore mints. Could it be that after partition, servicemen who transferred to the Pakistan Army had their claims dealt with by the Lahore mint, who issued their medals un-named, while the Bombay mint issued the Indian claimants with named WW II medals and GSMs?

M.D. Sellar

JOINING THE 9th GURKHAS IN THE THIRTIES

The late General "Oliver" Twiss, the last British Colonel of the Regiment, used to ask me why I joined the Ninth. I had to answer that it was more by accident than design and then turn away in shame that I had not wanted all along to be a Gurkha.

I passed into the Royal Military College at Sandhurst with a very high place, 5th out of about 130, with a Prize Cadetship. I came from a legal family, although my father had been a Gunner officer in World War I. I had, therefore, no particular influence with or preference for any special Regiment. My father was able to promise me a small allowance, £60 per annum, which was insufficient for anything but a good "County" Regiment. My school, Malvern College, where the late Jam Sahib, General Rajendra Singhji, and General Himit Singhji had, before my time, been scholars, was situated in the County of Worcestershire. The Colonel of the Worcestershire Regiment, Field Marshal Sir Claude Jacob, was keen that new officers should have a county connection. It seemed certain that, all being well, I would be commissioned into that Regiment.

At this time, there were usually about 40 vacancies per term for the Indian Army, of which some 30 were for open competition; the remainder were for Indian Cadets. My term was the last in which Indian cadets attended R.M.C. In my term and company there were three - one was Nawabzada Salim Khan, from a small State in the Bombay Presidency; he left the Army after a year or so. The other two were P.N. Narang, later Frontier Force, the son of Sir Gokul Chand Narang; and Usman, Baluch Regiment, later killed by the Pakistanis as a Brigadier in 1948. The Indian Army was not attracting British cadets at this time, as it had done previously, when the late Fie1d Marshal Montgomery was unable to secure a place. The threat of Indianization and/or Independence and a possible interrupted career had frightened off many, and nearly all prospective entrants had family connections with India. Thus, although the Indian Army still attracted a number from the top of the list, it was comparatively easy for anyone to get in.

During my last term, I began to wonder about the Worcestershire Regiment. The British Army, except for R.A., R.E., and R. Signals, had promotion by vacancy, so to become a Captain one had to wait until you reached the top of the subaltern's list of your Regiment. For an ordinary regiment, this was about fifteen years, due largely to a massive promotion block caused by World War I. I found that in the Indian Army, promotion was by time served: nine years for a Captaincy. The Indian Army had other advantages! 28 months for one's second pip, as against three years for British Service. British Officers of the Indian Army also had more responsibility and at an earlier age. In my case, I was commanding a company within two weeks of joining the 2/9th and, in 1939, as a Lieutenant with five years' service, I commanded the Battalion on a rail move from Dehra to Nowshera. My father's allowance, small as it would be for the British Army, would allow me to join any Indian regiment, cavalry or infantry. To the great annoyance of the Instructor Officer, who was looking after the interests of the Worcestershire Regiment, I changed my preference to the Indian Army. As I passed out 16th (2nd for the Indian Army), I was duly commissioned into the Unattached List, Indian Army on 1st February 1934, and received orders to join the 1st Battalion of the Dorset Regiment at Sialkot on a one year attachment.

The authorities wisely considered that the newly commissioned Cadets needed practical training as Platoon Commanders, before they were let loose on Indian Regiments as Company Officers or, as was more likely, as Company Commanders. Thus, all new Second

Lieutenants, including those later from the Indian Military Academy, did one year attachments to British Infantry Regiments, irrespective of which Arm of the Service they intended to join. Besides acting as Platoon Commanders, ULIA Officers were expected to pass their Lower Standard Urdu Examination, and to attend Courts Martial under Instruction. I passed my Urdu Examination in the Shikasta script, as at that time I was applying for cavalry; a great nuisance, as I had to change to the Nagri script on posting to Gurkhas.

Three other officers came with me to the Dorsets, and curiously, we were all from the same Sandhurst Company, No.4. They were Rowland Jones, son of an Indian Army Officer, who went to the Sikh Regiment; Harper, son of an Indian Sessions Judge, who went to 10th Gurkhas, and Marang, son of the Minister of Local Self Government of the Punjab, who went to the 13th Frontier Force Rifles.

It was usual for ULIA officers to contact the regiments which they wished to join and, if there was a vacancy and they were short-listed, a visit was usually arranged towards the end of the period of attachment. We did not qualify for privilege leave in this year but only for one ten-day period of casual leave, which was utilised for this visit. I was unable to find a cavalry vacancy, so my commanding officer in the Dorsets wrote to the Military Secretary at Army Headquarters about me. The M.S. was General Twiss, Colonel of the 9th Gurkhas. He suggested that I apply for the 9th saying "They play polo" and promising that, if I passed the test of the visit, he would guarantee my posting. But it must be all or nothing for the 9th Gurkhas. So a visit was arranged and, taking my football boots and shotgun, I set off for Dehra Dun.

Much has been said about the "vetting" process which was practiced by those regiments for whom there was competition, and who could therefore pick and choose. Most cavalry regiments, all Gurkhas, both Frontier Force Regiments, Baluch and some others vetted their prospective officers. This vetting was not to establish social status or anything like that; the next officer to join after me was from the ranks and a poor family background; he was one of our best officers and his death from mauling by a tiger was a great loss to the Regiment. The object of vetting was to find out if the candidate was the type who could "muck in" and turn his hand to any job, particularly in the summer when there were only three or four British officers present. The C.O. would ask his officers "Is this a chap you are prepared to live with?" The visit, except for being on one's best behaviour, was very pleasant; a shoot in the Nun Nadi beyond Ghangora, football with the troops, a Guest Night in the Mess and a visit to the Gurkha Officers' Club; the time soon passed and I was on my way back to Sialkot.

I found, on my return, that I had had an offer from Sam Browne's Cavalry, but decided that as I had made a decision, I would stick to it. This proved wise, as a year or so later Sam Browne's were converted to a Training Regiment and all the officers in the cadre dispersed to other regiments. So, on the 11th March, 1935, I joined the 2nd Battalion, 9th Gurkha Rifles. The first thing I had to do on arrival was change all my accoutrements from brown to black and from brass to silver. This was done with the assistance of various firms in Garhi Gaon who scraped one's boots, leggings and SB belt and then dyed them black. The brass buckle and fittings were changed and a new Rifle pattern sword hilt was fitted to my sword.

At that time Dehra Dun had as garrison one or two battalions each of 2 and 9 GR. Gurkha battalions did two years frontier and four years home service, so that every four years both battalions were together. When I joined only the 2/9th was present but the 1/9 returned from Waziristan in 1938. The other units were two Mountain Batteries in Ghangora, a British

battalion (from Chakrata) in camp in Ghangora for the winter only, two I.A.S.C. Mule Companies and the Combined Indian Military Hospital. There were also the Prince of Wales Royal Indian Military College, and the Indian Military Academy. The Viceroy's Bodyguard came to their permanent lines and farms on the Rajpur Road and the stallions of the Remount Department to lines in Dalanwala during the summer. The Survey of India was also in Dehra, but in much smaller premises than those subsequently built in the New Cantonment Road. The Doon School was not to open its doors for another year.

After two weeks of understudying the D Company Commander, I took over B Coy and, as officers started to proceed on leave, also got P.R.I. and Accounts Officer. When we went on battalion training in the autumn I was the only British Company Commander; all the others were commanded by Gurkha Officers.

All the GOs had served in World War I and I regarded them with great awe. The Subedar Major was Shamsere Mall and among the Subedars was Dhanraj Mall, later an Honorary Captain and Subedar Major of the regimental Centre during World War II. The famous Dehra Bohra fami1y were represented by Ganga Sing and Bhopal Sing Bohra, both Jemadars. Bhopal Sing's brother "Bimu" (Bhim Sing Bohra), who survived the Jap P.O.W. Camps to be killed in Poonch in 1948, was a Lance Naik in the Signal Section. Major Malla was a Jemadar in my company and Captain Chettrabahadar, Subedar Major in the P.O.W. Camps, was only a Havildar Major then.

Thus I became an officer in the 9th Gurkha Rifles, a step that I have never regretted and one on which I still look back with pride.

A. A. Mains

BOOK REVIEW

SENTINELS OF THE NORTH-EAST. D.K. Palit. Delhi: Palit & Palit, 1985, 344pages, 17 plates. Lists honours and awards 1890-1982.

The only history of the Assam Military Police/Assam Rifles until now has been Shakespear's *History of the Assam Rifle*s, which left off at 1924. Major General Palit has produced an excellent sequel. The early history of the Assam Rifles is recounted for those who do not have the earlier work (which has been re-printed in India). Four chapters deal with the Second War, including the operations of "V" Force with the Lushai Brigade, and there are some excellent maps, including one of the Chin Hills which shows the milestones on the Tiddim Road at 8 mile intervals.

The post war history is well set out, including the political background to the Naga and Mizoram unrest. Palit pulls no punches in laying at least part of the blame on government incompetence in handling the 60 year cyclical famine in Mizoram. Since most regimental histories give scant coverage to the background of the troubles in Assam, it is refreshing to find a work which does. The Chinese aggression of 1962 is also covered.

Honours and awards 1939-1982 are given in detail (i.e. regimental numbers), although no citations are given. MCJ

NOTICES & NOTES

NEW BOOKS

The following books may be of interest to members. All should be readily available in good bookstores.

Sandro Tucchi. *Gurkhas*. Hamish Hamilton, London, 1985, 110 pages, 90 illustrations. A profusely illustrated account of the recruitment, training and duties of the Brigade of Gurkhas.

Quentin Crewe. *The Last Maharaja: A Biography of Sawai Man Singh II of Jaipur*. London: Michael Joseph, 1985, 285pg.

Paul Theroux & Steve McCurry. *The Imperial Way: By Rail from Peshawar to Chittagong*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985. Largely pictorial account of a train trip across modern India.

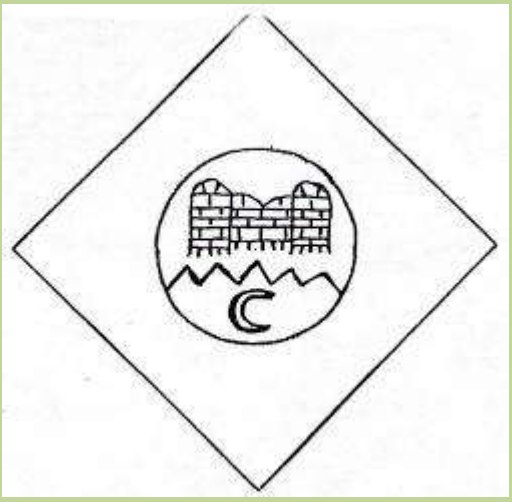
We are informed that Mr A. A. Farrington, of the India Office Library's Records Section has just completed arrangements with The London Stamp Exchange for the publication of a Casualty Roll for the Second Afghan War which is to include some 3000 names, over half of them Indian, with cross-references to gallantry awards and dispatches. This should be appearing sometime in May and promises to be an invaluable source for the Indian collector.

A last note: we are informed that the *1924 Indian Army List Supplement*, recently reprinted, and referred in Durbar 2#4, did not ever have an index. The index apparently appeared only in the Lists themselves, with Supplement entries indicated by italics.

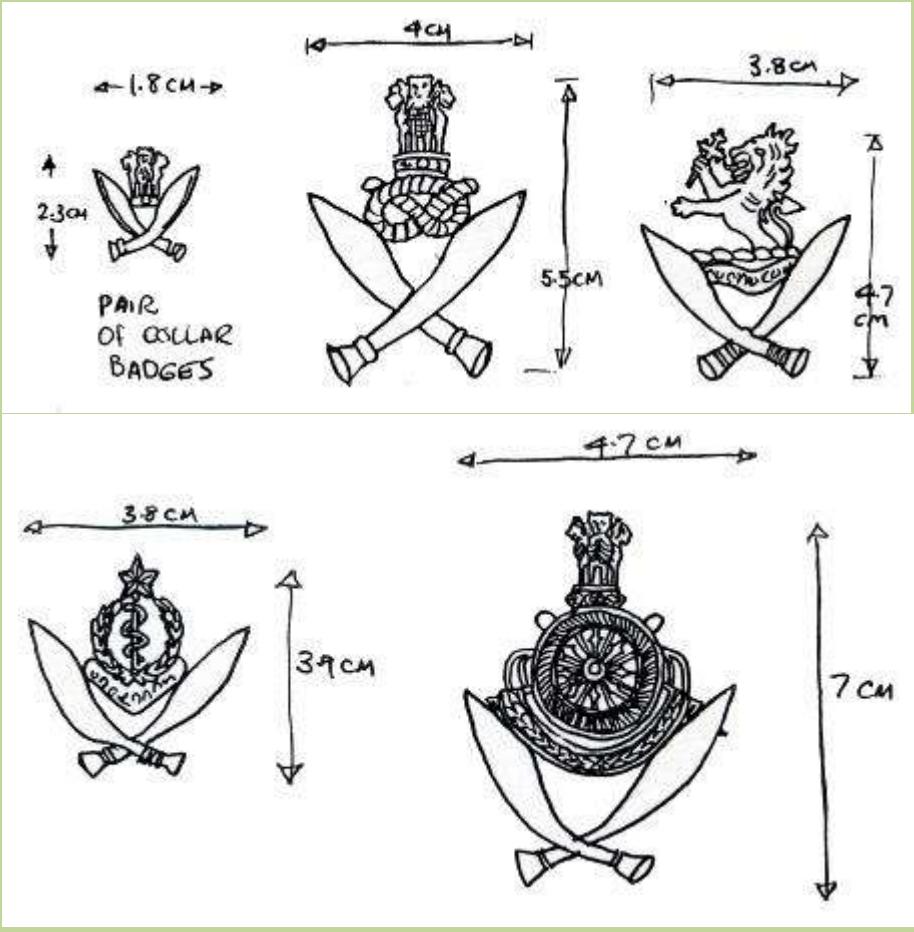
S.E. ASIA 1945-46

Regarding naming styles on the G.S.M. 1918 Medal as issued to Indian troops for S.E. Asia: M. Sellar has encountered two types, impressed small block capitals as seen on the "Iraq" bar, and deep but roughly engraved block capitals. He will try, on a March/April trip to India, to establish whether naming types are particular to certain units.

H. Storer seeks identification of the cloth arm badge/formation sign illustrated. The diamond is dull brick red, the circles embroidered in black worsted. Within the circle, also embroidered, is a fort, wall or gate (black on black) with a five-pointed top- Below is the letter "C" in white worsted. Believed worn in the N.W.F. Province, Pakistan.



W.M. Thornton wishes information on the badges illustrated. All are in white metal and appear to be sand cast. The largest has been identified by the Gurkha Museum as belonging to the Orissa State Transport Chowkidars but he wishes more data on that unit. It is possible that the others are similarly attributable to auxiliary units of the Indian Army with Gurkha connections.



One last badge from Mr Johnson's collection, for identification. Reasonably well cast in white metal. Crossed fronds of some sort, crossed kukris and a top piece which seems to be a footed bowl or chalice with some indistinct devices issuing from it, possibly including a peacock (at the very top).

NB: All Badges except the last, which is life size, are shown at about 2/3 actual size.

INDIAN ARMY MEMORIALS AT SANDHURST

While visiting England during the summer of 1985, I was privileged to visit the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst.

This was very kindly laid on for me by one of our Honorary Members, Lt. Col. A. A. Mains, late the 9th Gurkha Rifles, who even arranged that we be accompanied on our tour by a Gurkha member of Sandhurst's Demonstration Battalion.

The association between the R.M.A. and the Indian Army dates back to 1861, when the Honourable East India Company's Military College Addiscombe was united with the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. They are now commemorated in "The Woolwich Corner" of the chapel at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, with which Woolwich was amalgamated after World War Two.

Christ Church Chapel Sandhurst, built in 1879 to replace the college's original chapel, was rebuilt and enlarged after World War I to form the present Royal Memorial Chapel, a monument to those Sandhurst Cadets who were killed in the 1914-1918 conflict. To that end, the interior walls and pillars are lined with panels listing the various regiments and corps of the British Army and the officers of each killed in the Great War. The Indian Army is commemorated by two panels in alcoves either side of the main altar, which list the names of the 580 former Cadets who gave their lives while serving with the I. A. during 1914-1918. The names are in ivorine, let into oak, while the remaining lettering is cut and gilded.

An additional panel, situated behind a beautiful baptismal font made from the silver of the Machine Gun Corps, is dedicated "To The Glory Of God And The Memory Of 171 British Officers" of the Punjab Frontier Force killed in WW I. It lists the units of the P.F.F. under "Cavalry", "Royal Artillery" and "Infantry", but does not give names. Finally, the 1922 visit of Her Majesty Queen Mary resulted in the dedication of several marble plaques in the Chancel to the memory of regiments of which she was Colonel-in-Chief, including the 127th Queen Mary's Own Baluch Light Infantry.

After World War Two it was decided that memorials should be commissioned to honour all the Commissioned Officers of the Armies of the Commonwealth who gave their lives. The first of these was a Roll of Honour, dedicated in 1956, containing the names of all such officers, listed alphabetically by regiment or corps and followed by the year of death and theatre of war in which each died. The names for the British Army are followed immediately by those of the Indian and Burma Armies, then those of the other Dominions, Colonies and Protectorates. Further, and authorized by His Majesty King George VI in 1947, is a new organ and screen as the particular memorial to the Indian Army. The Indian Army Memorial was designed by Sir Hugh Casson and glorifies "the Memory of All Ranks of the Indian Army 1939-1945".

The final memorial, and probably the most recent to be installed at Sandhurst, is a series of teak panels inscribed with the names of the Regiments and Corps which made up the sixteen Indian divisions and numerous Independent Indian Brigades. This was conceived in 1980 and installed in June 1982, in the presence of Aileen, Viscountess Slim and numerous members of the Indian Army Association, which was instrumental in its design, funding and construction. I am somewhat ashamed to admit that I cannot now remember exactly where these panels are installed, but believe they line the main hallway of what is known as the "Old Building". This is also, if memory serves, the site of the Indian Memorial and Hastings Rooms.

The National Army Museum continues to maintain exhibits in the Royal Military Academy, including the Indian Memorial Room and the Hastings Room, which commemorate respectively the Indian Army and East India Company with displays of uniforms, weapons and regimental plate, paintings and colours. The former room is the site of the original chapel for the College, now fitted out as a large, fairly bare reception room; but featuring around its walls plaques bearing the badges of all the Regiments and Corps of the Indian Army and Auxiliary Forces (India). The latter is, I believe, a smaller meeting and reception room, with some display cases in it.

The museum's displays may be viewed by appointment, Monday to Friday. Application may be made, in writing, to: Assistant Director, N.A.M., (Sandhurst Departments), R.M.A. Sandhurst, Camberley, Surrey GU15 4PQ.

A visit to Sandhurst is planned for The Society of Friends of the N.A.M. on Wednesday, 18 June, 1986. If you have not already joined this very worthwhile group, now is your chance. Contact Miss E. Talbot-Rice, N.A.M., Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, London SW3 4HT for details.

P. Monahan

Sources:

- "Royal Memorial Chapel Sandhurst", (pamphlet, RMA, 1981)
- "The Indian Divisions Memorial 1939-1945" (dedication programme, 1982)

(My special thanks to Lt. Col. and Mrs Mains for their knowledgeable help, generosity and hospitality to my wife and I during our visit. Any errors of fact in this article are my own. P.E.M.)

TWO PROBLEM PICTURES

The first photograph is copied from an original *carte-de-visite* which is signed: "George Waterhouse l866". The photographer is Schwarzschild & Co., Calcutta. The military career of George Waterhouse, taken from Indian Army Lists, is below:

- 1863 - Ensign from 11 June, 1861, with 90th Foot. No entries showing actual service with 90th; possibly a purely "paper" appointment.
- 1864 - Lieutenant from 15th August
- 1865 (July) - doing duty with 12th Bengal Cavalry.
- 1867 (Jan) - 1st Wing Subaltern, 12 B.C.
- 1869 (Jan)- 3rd Squadron Officer 12 B. C.
- 1871 (Jan) - Captain 12th Bengal Cavalry
- 1873 (Jan) - absent from Army List

It would appear that all Waterhouse's service was with the 12th Bengal Cavalry between 1864 and 1872 and the uniform he wears in the photograph agrees in all particulars, less one. But what of the helmet, which appears similar in design to a German Pickelhaube but with a plate somewhat similar to that of a Lancer regiment in British service? It is known that the 6th Irregular Cavalry had a Pickelhaube type helmet, which was foisted off on them as a mark of appreciation by a visiting German princeling, Prince Waldemar. (See Ackermann Plate published 1848.) This regiment, however, eventually became the 4th Bengal Cavalry and had no connection with the 12th. In any event, the 4th had managed to offload their awful helmets by 1866. Can any reader supply description of this helmet and any reason why it should be worn by this officer?

The second photograph, copied from a *carte-de-visite* is also signed and dated, but in spite of this the subject and his regiment have eluded us. The signature appears to be "G.H. Horne, 1859", the photographer simply "W.A.C.C.". No officer with this name has been found listed in British or Indian Army Lists of that period. It has been suggested that he could be an officer of one of the Volunteer cavalry units raised during the Mutiny and which carried on for a few years afterwards. Any help with these two photographs, which have been kindly lent by Michael Prevezer of London, would be appreciated.

R.G. Harris

THE GOLIATH - The MAHARAJA of BURDWAN'S MEDAL

THE INCIDENT

The British Navy battleship, H.M.S. GOLIATH was launched from Chatham Dockyard in 1842. She did not enjoy a very auspicious career, being laid up in the Medway until after the Crimean War, in which she took no part. She was then converted to steam and her armament reduced to 60 guns. After about five years of service she was again laid up until 1870, when she was loaned by the Admiralty to the Metropolitan Asylums Board for use as a training vessel for workhouse boys - under the command of Captain Bouchier, RN with some other officers, and moored in the Thames opposite Greenhythe. She provided instruction to almost 500 boys, who called GOLIATH home.

Early in the morning of Wednesday, December 22nd, 1875, one of the boys, a lad named Loeber, knocked over a lamp, the oil from which caught fire. Loeber attempted to extinguish the flame by throwing his jacket over and sitting on the jacket. His bravery was useless, however, and the Goliath was soon in flames throughout her length. Most of the boys managed to escape by jumping overboard, but twelve men and boys perished.

Captain Bouchier's two daughters, who lived with him on the ship, saved themselves by swimming to passing craft, whilst the Captain himself was the last to leave his ship, which was completely destroyed. The boats of the neighbouring training ship ARETHUSA, saved many lives and the captain of that ship, Captain Waller, was subsequently awarded the medal of the Royal Society for The Protection of Life From Fire.

The Times of London January 1st, 1876, carried the findings and recommendations of the Coroner's Inquest:

> "Every boy behaved himself like a man. Had they not been well disciplined, calamity would have been widespread, but they were free from all panic and tumult. The 14 year old boy who dropped the lighted lamp (Loeber) in the lamp-room gave his evidence in an honest and manly way, as did all concerned."

In addition to various awards of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society, a rather special and unique medal (was) struck to reward those who had distinguished themselves in the rescue work.

THE MAHARAJA OF BURDWAN'S MEDAL

The London Times of 30th December, 1875 indicated that the Lord Mayor, William Cotton, was initiating a Mansion House Fund to "repair personal losses and to reward the bravery of the boys and officers of the GOLIATH." This report and others detailing the incident were seen by the Maharaja of Burdwan, who subsequently wrote to the Times and offered to present a medal to those who had distinguished themselves. His letter was printed in the Times of 22nd February, 1876 (page 12a) and reads as follows:

The Palace, Burdwan, India, Jan.28 1876.

To The Editor of The Times.

> "Sir - Having read with greatest admiration the account of the heroic conduct displayed by some of the boys of the training ship GOLIATH on the occasion of the recent destruction by fire of that ill-fated vessel, I have felt a strong wish to present a silver Medal to each of those who signally distinguished themselves on that occasion.
>
> I may have been forestalled in this wish, but I trust that I may be allowed to do something of the kind, as, coming from India, it will prove to the boys that deeds like theirs have not merely a local fame, but are marked and appreciated by their fellow subjects in the most distant parts of Her Majesty's Empire.
>
> I have taken the liberty of addressing you upon the subject, as I have been unable to ascertain the name of the Society to which the ship belonged - I should have written direct to its offices had I been able to discover it, and I have, therefore to beg that,

while pardoning me for the trouble I am giving you, you will do me the further favour of forwarding to the proper authorities the enclosed draft to cover the cost of the medals, and of intimating that, if necessary, I shall be happy to remit a further sum."

The finances of the Mansion House Goliath Relief Fund were therefore augmented by the donation from the Maharaja, the only record of that particular fund is a single balance sheet held in the records of the Corporation of London, which records the disbursement of £1,502 .6s .0d as follows:

- Cash grants to meet losses of Captain and Officers of Goliath ……£1,152 8s 6d
- Cash voted to C. Adams, injured at the fire …… £10 10s 0d
- Purchase of Savings Bank amounts for William Bolton …….. £10 0s 0d
- Certificates and medals to meritorious persons and purses to GOLIATH boys on leaving for sea ……. £133 7s 0d
- Money for purses (5/ each lad) and rewards for bargemen ……. £117 0s 0d
- Advertisements …… £48 17s 6d
- Printing …… £1 1s 9d
- Stamps, Parcels, etc. …… £2 5s 2d
- Balance sent to Marine Society ……... £26 16s 1d

£1.502 6s 0d.

The amount of ten pounds to William Bolton was for a purse and replacement of a watch which he had lost in the fire, but at the time of the award he had already emigrated.

The presentation of the Maharaja of Burdwan's medal was a private undertaking by the Lord Mayor and it appears that no listing of the recipients exists, although some recipients are named below.

The medal is described as:

Circular, silver, 1.4" diameter, fitted with a ring and suspended from a dark blue ribbon.

Obverse: bust of Queen Victoria, wearing coronet and veil draped behind, Order of Star of India on dress, below: JS & AB WYON, Leg.: "VICTORIA REGINA"

Reverse - Leg.: "THE GIFT OF THE MAHARAJA OF BURDWAN", in the field an inscription: "PRESENTED/BY THE/LORD MAYOR/OF LONDON/FOR/GALLANT CONDUCT/AT THE BURNING/OF/H.M.S. GOLIATH/22nd DECr./1875"

The medal to I. Longhurst is in the Maritime Museum. Captain Bouchier's medal, together with the Bamley-Moore Medal in Silver of the Liverpool Shipwreck and Humane Society awarded him for the same incident and the Maharaja's medal to his daughter, Miss Ethel Bouchier, are in a private collection in the United States. Medals are known to exist to Boy Bolton, R.Wanstell, W. Longhurst, and Captain Frederick Walter, RN.

An additional note, worthy of comment, is that the son of the Maharaja of Burdwan, the Honourable Maharaj Dhiraj Bijay Chand Mahtab Bahadur of Burdujan, was awarded the Indian Order of Merit III Class, Civil Division. On November 7th 1908, he interposed

himself between Sir Andrew Frase, the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, and a would-be assassin (Gazette of India, Jan 2, 1909). A lifesaving tradition passed on from father to son.

J. Boddington

Sources:

- *Dictionary of Disasters at Sea During the Age of Steam*, Hocking
- *Gallantry*, Wilson & McEwan
- London Times various dates
- *British Naval Medals* Adm. the Marquess of Milford Haven
- Corporation of London Records Office: Common Council Papers, 14 Dec. 1876 and general

Addendum

It has been brought to our attention by V. Koundakjian that A. A. Payne's book, *British and Foreign Orders, War Medals and Decorations*, lists a Maharaja's medal to a W. Murphy.

P.E.M.