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MR TAYLOR AND AN INTERRUPTED GAME OF CHESS

Tim Ash

In the Spring 1990 DURBAR our Editor published a general article, "Civilians of the Indian Mutiny". I trust it will be appropriate, therefore, to follow up with a specific civilian whose experiences may be considered of interest in a district of India which appears to have been given scant notice in many histories of the Mutiny.

When the Indian Mutiny medal to JOHN TAYLOR came to my attention my first reaction was to wonder how many John Taylors I would have to trace to pin the medal to the right chest - or even if I would be able to achieve this basic objective.

I was very lucky! On searching through the Medal Roll for Uncovenanted Civil Servants (IOR: L/MIL/5/86) I found the following; "Taylor, John. Assistant in Charge of Ordnance, Hissar Cattle Farm", and though I looked through further civilian rolls no other John Taylor did I find.

Hissar, about 90 miles NW of Delhi, is in Hurriana which interposes between Delhi and the Punjab. It was, therefore, during the Mutiny, of some strategic importance, although no British troops were stationed there. The only troops were local levies, mainly of the Hurriana Battalion.

Searches through various histories of the Mutiny produced nothing on the subject of Hissar, and precious little on Hurriana, until I came to Charles Ball's "*The History of the Indian Mutiny*" (London Printing & Publishing Co., 1858-59, 2 Vols.). Ball laments the lack of detailed information as to the events at Hissar, but goes on to state:

"For several days prior to the attack, alarm had been felt by the inhabitants of Hissar, in consequence of an unusual number of villagers and Khanjurs having collected in the vicinity of the place; and as a measure of precaution the gates of the city and fort had been kept closed and vigilantly guarded. Nothing however occurred to increase the feeling of disquietude until the afternoon of the 2nd of June when the servant of one of the European families rushed into the apartment in which her master was sitting, with information that some of the Delhi Sowars were at the gate of the city, holding conversation with the sentries." (At this stage of the Mutiny the Delhi Field Force had yet to arrive before Delhi). "A rumour of their approach was floating about early in the morning; but, as the gate was closed, and no communication suffered from outside, the intelligence could not reach the unfortunate persons within the wall, few of whom escaped the vengeance of the infuriated rabble".

After a few sentences of further comment Ball produces his *pièce de resistance*. "The following statement by one of the survivors, a gentleman in the civil service of the Company, will afford some few particulars of an event which in other respects has little record beyond the agonized memories of the surviving actors of this tragedy. This gentleman says, "On the morning of the attack, Mr Wedderburn (the Collector) went to his office about ten o'clock; and about one, while Mr

Taylor and myself were at chess, we were startled by a servant rushing in to say that some Delhi sowars were outside the city gate, and that Lieutenant Barwell had gone down to see what was wrong. I immediately took up my pistols and went outside the verandah, calling my wife as I passed her room. When Mr Taylor and myself got into the verandah we saw two sowars ride up to the sentry, and after giving him some instructions, turn round and dash off. Mr T and myself then went down to the gate, and I passed through the wicket. I then saw that Mr Taylor had no arms, and told him to get his gun. He was then inside the wicket; and on turning, a volley was fired at us, one ball striking Mr T in the hand, another knocking my hat off. The wicket was immediately slammed-to by the sentry. On seeing the wicket closed, I entered the garden outside the fort and endeavoured to get into the house by the garden postern, but found it locked. The two sowars (Dadree) on sentry at this gate drew on me; and their comrades, who were picketed in the garden, rushed to the spot. I gave up all hope of being able to effect my entry into the house, where I might have rescued my wife. I accordingly made for the city wall, and had to shoot one Sowar, which checked the others for a few minutes, during which I managed to scramble over a wall and dropped into the canal, over which I waded into a tank overgrown with rushes, in which I lay concealed till 8 p.m., when I struck through the Bheer for Jhind, which I reached the day after. I will give Mr Taylor's escape in his own words:- 'I ran from the gate through a volley of bullets, and thought I heard you fall close behind me, as we both turned on hearing the first shot from the guard room. The last I saw of your poor wife was standing at the railing; she screamed as she saw a fellow jump out of the rabbit house at me with a sword. I had just time to get into the house and seize either yours or Barwell's sword, and cut the fellow down; and going to the back of the house to get time to tie up the wounds on my left hand, from which there was a stream of blood, the brute fired at me again from the top of the office steps, but a pillar of the verandah saved me. I was hid for three days in the Bheer, near Tulwundee; came to Thannesur in disguise, reaching the border of Putteala the first night; came on to Umballa and joined the company of volunteers. Lieutenant Barwell entered the garden two minutes after me, and tried to get in by the garden gate; he was cut down by the Dadree sowars. The force in Hissar at the time of the outbreak was two companies of Hurreanas inside the fort, ninety-six sowars of the irregular regiment we were raising, picketed outside the fort, and about eighty Dadree and Jhujjur sowars, fifty of them picketed in the fort garden. There was a guard at the Tehsel, as also the Cutcherry. The treasure, one lac 70,000 rupees, was in the magazine of the fort. I heard most of the particulars of the loot and massacre from the brutes who came down to bathe, about twenty yards from where I was concealed. They stated that sowars were out hunting for those who had escaped, who were to be brought in to be burnt in the houses'.

Ball records the names of those who escaped from Hissar. There were but six:

- Doctor Waghorn, Mrs Daniels and child, Sergeant Shiells, Mr Hallett (Taylor's chess companion), and Mr Taylor. After the Mutiny a memorial to those who died was erected beside the little church at Hissar. It recorded the names: - John Wedderburn, Esquire, Collector and Magistrate; Mrs Alice Wedderburn and infant son; Lieutenant C V Barwell, Adjutant, Hurriana Light Infantry; Mrs Margaret Barwell; Mr David Thompson, Tuhlseedar, and his sister Mrs Hallett; Mrs Mary Ann Smith and five children; Mrs Jeffries. The monument also recorded the names of 4 men, 4 women and 10 children who died at the neighbouring town of Hansi - I wonder if it has survived?

In his account Mr Taylor stated that he joined a company of volunteers at Umballa. From there it would seem likely that he joined General Van Cortlandt's Hurriana Field Force, and possibly accompanied the troops which entered Hissar on the 26th of June. Van Cortlandt certainly mentions Mr Taylor as partaking in a cavalry pursuit of a large body of rebels which attacked Hissar on the 19th of August 1857 (IOR: MSS.EUR.D.1019 Vol. 3). Thereafter, in Thacker's Bengal Directory, up to 1865, Mr Taylor is noted as being in charge of the Ordnance Cattle Farm at Hissar on a salary

of Rs 400 per month. After 1865 he has just faded away but I hope I may yet, in due course of time, trace more of his life, both before and after his interrupted game of Chess.

AN OFFICER'S COATEE OF THE NAIR BRIGADE, TRAVANCORE

Tony McClenaghan

A recent militaria auction by Christie's South Kensington Ltd featured a senior officer's coatee and shabraque of the Nair Brigade. The single-breasted coatee of scarlet lightweight ("ragee") cloth was adorned with rich oakleaf embroidery to the blue collar and cuffs (Figures 1 and 2) and a similar device on the coat tails (Figure 3). The ten front and two back buttons were identical and featured a conch within an eight-pointed star and garter, the garter containing the inscription "NAIR BRIGADE" (Figure 4).

The coatee, dating from the mid-nineteenth century, bore a striking similarity to British patterns, although the quality of embroidery suggested it belonged to a senior officer. This raised the question of why such a strong British influence should be found in an item of "Native Army" uniform.

Travancore, the southernmost Indian State, first signed a Treaty of Friendship with the HEIC on 17 November 1795. Under Article III of a subsequent Treaty of Subsidy, signed at Jeroovanapooram on either 12 or 17 January 1805 (conflicting dates in source material) Travancore was required to pay Rs 7,83,111 in support of a Subsidiary Force, comprised of three battalions of Sepoys, one company of Lascars, and one additional Regiment of Native Infantry.

The first reference to Travancore's own army is to the 1st Battalion of a military body which took service under the Travancore Durbar in about 1740, and subsequently became known as Colonel Daly's Carnatic Brigade. This unit was re-organised in 1819, with the sanction of the Government of Madras, by Captain A. McLeod of the Madras Army, and in 1830 was re-designated 1st Battalion Nayar Brigade.

The answer to the uniform query can be found in a Memorandum on "*Native States and Armies*" produced in 1873 by Major Owen T Burne, CSI. In it he noted that the 1,211 regular infantry maintained by Travancore were styled the "Nair Brigade", to which five European Officers of the Madras Army were attached. The infantry were armed with smooth-bore Enfields, and "the clothing and equipment were furnished by the Madras Government on repayment".¹ The men were described as quiet and decidedly below the Madras Sepoy, and the regiment was only used for ceremonials, thus accounting, perhaps, for the rather grand style of adornment.

Travancore did not participate in the Imperial Service Troops scheme, introduced in 1888, and even after the introduction of the Indian State Forces scheme in 1922, it was not until 1935 that Travancore's troops were reorganised under it. Given the obvious early British influence this was something of a surprise.

Sources:

1. "Memorandum - Native States and Armies". Major Owen T. Burne, CSI, India Office, 4th April 1873 (IOLR L/MIL/17/6/74)

Acknowledgement. I am grateful to Mr Aubrey Bowden of Christie's South Kensington Ltd. who made it possible for me to photograph the uniform. Ed.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

Lt Col CHARLES VERNON OMMANNEY CBE

4th Battalion West Essex Militia, Suffolk Regiment, 15th Madras Infantry, 75th Carnatic Infantry, 109th Infantry, 2/30th Punjabis

A G Mann

Charles Vernon Ommanney came from a long line of Indian Army people. There were Ommanneys killed in the Indian Mutiny and his father was Edward Lacon Ommanney CSI, Bengal Staff Corps, Commissioner of Peshawar.

He was born on 29th December, 1872 at Peshawar to Elizabeth Capel (Ommanney). He was educated at Wellington College and Norwich Grammar School. His first commission was as a 2nd Lieutenant in the 4th Battalion of the West Essex Militia on 4th February, 1893.

He was commissioned from Sandhurst Military College as a 2nd Lieutenant into the Suffolk Regiment on 7th December, 1895. Promotion to the rank of Lieutenant came on 20th October, 1897.

He was appointed to the Indian Army on 1st March, 1898, as an officiating Wing Officer with the 15th Madras Infantry from where he was appointed as a double company officer on 8th January, 1900.

The 15th Madras Infantry was renumbered as the 75th Carnatic Infantry on 15th July, 1903. Further, he was appointed as Adjutant on 16th October, 1904 and promoted to the rank of Captain on 7th December, 1904. He was made a double company commander in the 75th Infantry on 15th July, 1908 and later transferred to the 1/109th Infantry as a double company commander and Regimental Officer for the Madrassi enlisted men.

Promotion to the rank of Major came on 7th December, 1913.

He raised the 2/30th Punjabis on 28th December, 1917 at Lahore and was appointed Commandant of this unit on 5th January, 1918.

Stations

Suffolk Regiment	Rangoon				
15th Madras	Rangoon				
	Belgaum	from	15	Dec	99
	Cannanore	from	18 Feb		03
75th Carnatic	Mauritius	from	11	Nov	04
	Colombo	from	6	Dec	06
	Trichinopoly		19 Jan		08
109th Infantry	Secunderabad		21	Feb	10
	Aden	from	7	Oct	1913
	Kohat	from		Dec	1917
	Derajat		Nov 19 - May 20		

Lt Col Ommanney retired from service on 29th November, 1922 and moved back to the UK where he took up residence at Capel Cottage, Boundstone, Farnham, Surrey, having served in the army for a period of 30 years.

He died on 11th April, 1952, aged 80 years and was buried at Woking.

THE DERAJAT COLUMN - NOVEMBER 1919 TO MAY 1920

Preparations for the advance from Jandola began on 11th December. Headquarters of the Derajat Column was with the 67th Brigade and other troops reached Jandola on the 17th, advancing up the bed of the Tank Zam.

The first mention of the 1/109th Infantry is on 20th December, when they and the 2/19th Punjabis, the 1/55th Rifles and the 2/112th Infantry attacked and took 'Black and White Hill and Red Rocks'. On 21st December the 109th and the 82nd Punjabis advanced to take 'Black Hill (Tarakai)' and this was completed by 1030 hours.

During this campaign the 109th Infantry seems to have been swapped between the 43rd Brigade, the 67th Brigade and the 68th Brigade.

'Mandanna Hill' was occupied and the picquet rebuilt on 25th and 26th December. So ended the first phase of the campaign between 17th and 28th December, 1919. The Mahsuds had fought as never before, but they never forgot the lesson of 'Black Hill' and their losses from artillery fire.

It did not take long to prove the point. Whilst the 67th Brigade remained at Palosna the advance by the 43rd Brigade continued on the morning of 29th December to Kotkai, about four miles short of Ahani Tangi - the capture of which was the next task of the striking force.

The 43rd Brigade under Brigadier Gwyn Thomas, consisting of the 4/39th Rifles, the 109th, 2/150th and the 2/152 Punjabis was ordered to leave Kotkai on 11th January at 0500 hours to attack two prominent features on the Konr Range overlooking the eastern flank of the Tangi. This operation was successful. On the afternoon of 14th January, 1920, two companies of the 109th were sent to drive the Mahsuds off a feature named 'Dazzle Hill' - they were too weak to achieve their objective. They held their ground and despite heavy casualties secured their ground from attack from the west. During this phase two of the 20 actions of the operation had been fought at Brigade level.

After its arrival at Sararogha the striking force (Derajat Column) began to consolidate the high ground up and down the Tank Zam in preparation for the advance on Makin, one of the two main Mahsud centres.

On 26th January, 1920, Brigadier Lucas left camp at 0500 hours with the 2/5th Gurkhas, 1/55th Rifles, the 109th Infantry and the 3rd Guides to take 'Barari Centre'. By 31st January the preparations for the advance were complete and the 109th Infantry took over all permanent picquets in the area. These included Barari Left Bank, Barari Centre, Ahmadwam, the Barrier, the Bagiwalla Tower, Gibraltar, and the Bluff.

DECORATIONS TO THE 109TH DURING THE TIME OF OMMANNEY

ADEN:

ORDER	OF	BRITISH	INDIA
Subadar Major	Alladitta	Khan	

INDIAN	ORDER	OF	MERIT
2007	Havildar	Shah	Nawaz Khan

2966 L/Naik Madju Dalvi

INDIAN	DISTINGUISHED	SERVICE	MEDAL
2663	L/Naik	Anant	Bhogle
2867 Sepoy Dost Muhammad			

MERITORIOUS		SERVICE	MEDAL	
1361	Colour	Havildar	Muhammad	Zaman
1707		Havildar	Karam	Khan
1607		Havildar	Gulah	Khan
2571	Havildar	Govind	Rao	Powar
2330	Havildar	Tukaram		Sinde
1689	Havildar	Muhammed		Khan
1459 L/Naik Sirpatrao More 2673				

Sepoy Karam Ilahi

EGYPT:

INDIAN	DISTINGUISHED	SERVICE	MEDAL
3915	Sepoy	Amrita	Masker
3713 Sepoy Fateh Muhammed			

WAZIRISTAN:

DISTINGUISHED		SERVICE	ORDER
Major Cyril Paige CIE			

INDIAN	ORDER	OF	MERIT
Jemadar	Barurao		Sonde
2322 Havildar Dhodi Sakpal			

INDIAN	DISTINGUISHED	SERVICE	MEDAL
Subadar	Amar	Ali	Khan
Subadar		Kurram	Khan
502	Sepoy	Bhago	Utekar
3582	L/Naik	Mahtab	Khan
3447	L/Naik	Bakhtawan	Khan
271	Sepoy	Sher	Khan
2230 Sepoy Krishna Mane 2573			

Sepoy Bhan Deoker

INDIA:

MERITORIOUS		SERVICE	MEDAL	
2213	Naik	Muhammed	Ajaib	Khan
2546	Naik	Atmaram		Sawant
1977 L/Naik Ragho Rawool				

NOT STATED:

CROIX DE GUERRE (FRANCE)
2866 L/Naik Madhu Dalvi IOM

ORDER OF THE CROWN (RUMANIA)
Subadar Major (Hon. Lt) Kakshiman Kadam MBE

All of the above would have been recommended by Charles Ommaney during his service.

His own decorations and medals consist of: Commander of the Order of the British Empire LG 3.8.20 p8050, 1914-15 Star (Lt Col C V Ommaney 109th Infantry), British War Medal, as above Victory Medal with MID LG 7.4.19, p.4548, Indian General Service Medal - bars Afghanistan NWF 1919 & Waziristan 1919-21 with MID LG 3.8.20, p.8064

INDIAN CAVALRY 1857-1861

C.J. Parrett

Continuing the series, herewith the fact sheet for the 9th Bengal Irregular Cavalry (see page 10 of Vol.6, No.1 for abbreviations.)

9TH BENGAL IRREGULAR CAVALRY

9th Bengal Irregular Cavalry			IOL L/Mil/5 references			
Names on Roll	Ranks	Clasps				77(83V). Summary roll listing only British officers by name
		D				Remarks
Ferwick A.B.	Capt	1				2nd i/c & Officiating Comdt. Adjutant. Later commanded 9th Bengal Cavy (late 1st Hodson's Horse) 1864 to 1881. Served at Badli-ke-serai and at Delhi from June 8th. Raised and commanded a body of Police Cavalry in Oude 1858 (M.I.D. four times). Subsequently in China with Probyn's Horse 1860
Campbell H.L.	Capt	1				
Drummond W.L.F	Lieut	1				
All other ranks		239				Summarised but not listed by name
Total known claims		242	242			

COMMENTS ON HISTORY OF REGIMENT 1857-1861

The Commandant, Lt. Col. J.M.B.F. Tytler did not serve with the 9BglIC during the Mutiny period, but won fame and honours as the intrepid DAQMG of Havelock's Moveable Column during the 1st Relief of Lucknow. There is no evidence that Assistant Surgeon D. McDonald served with the 9BglIC during the Mutiny, although he is listed with the regiment in India Registers for 1857 (1st & 2nd eds.) and 1858 (1st ed.). The regt. was stationed at Hosheypore in May 1857, and a wing

accompanied the first siege-train to Delhi. A report in the Illustrated London News (p 147, 1857) confirmed that 2 BOs and 137 NOs/NORs of the regiment were at Delhi on 11th June 1857. The HQ wing reached Umballa on 25th June and Delhi on 2nd July. It appears that confidence was lost in the 9BglIC because it failed to act aggressively against a sudden-attack by rebel sowars on a picket of the besieging forces on July 9th. It might be said that they did better than the Carabineers who bolted, and it seems strange that so many Mutiny medals were issued to native troops if they had in fact mutinied or otherwise misbehaved. It is known that the regiment was split up into several detachments and sent back to the Punjab: most of these men undoubtedly remained loyal and were recruited into other regiments in 1861. However, there are two known incidents of mutiny: a small detachment left behind at regimental headquarters in Hosheyarpore deserted; a detachment marching northwards from Delhi to Bannu under Capt. Campbell mutinied at a village called Kalabagh on the River Indus. They were subsequently intercepted and destroyed by a body of 17BglIC under Capt. P.R Hockin. The various detachments of the regiment collected at Bannu and the 9BglIC was ultimately disbanded at this station in 1861.

10TH BENGAL IRREGULAR CAVALRY

10th Bengal Irregular Cavalry			IOL L/Mil/S references		
Names on Roll	Ranks	Clasps			None traced
					Remarks
All other ranks					
Total known clasps	MII				

COMMENTS ON HISTORY OF REGIMENT 1857-1861

There is no evidence of the issue of Mutiny medals to this regiment. It showed signs of disaffection at an early stage by refusing to act against sepoys of the 55BglNI who had mutinied at Nowshera on 21st May 1857, and again by holding back from the rigorous pursuit of mutineers of the same infantry regiment fleeing from Hoti Mardan a few days later. It was quickly determined to split up the 10BglIC and immediately thereafter to disband it. One half was marched to Peshawar, the other remained at Nowshera. They were then simultaneously disarmed, their arms, uniforms and horses being confiscated, and sent home in ignominy. Of the four British officers attached in May 1857, no Mutiny service has been traced. The regiment was never reconstituted.

BOOK NOTES

● *'IN THE SHADE OF THE MANGO TREE'*. Nan Varry. Worcester: Square One Publications, 1990. 208 pages. £10.95

This is a lovely book and a joy to read. Born in India in a howdah perched on an elephant's back - her parents were on a tiger hunt at the time - Nan Varry spent her childhood, youth and early married life there. Her father, Durham Ashdown, served in the Indian Police and ended his career as Inspector General of Police, United Provinces. Nan and her sisters shared in many of their parents' early travels and sporting expeditions and the book evokes in a wonderfully clear style the excitement, as well as the routine, of this lifestyle.

In 1922 she married Lieutenant (later Brigadier) Harbin Warry of the 14th Punjab Regiment, though he is referred to throughout the book as Edward. This apparently resulted from the book originally being written using pseudonyms and "Edward's" was the only one not changed on publication.

Nan's strength of character clearly shows through - a visit by the Viceroy and Vicerene to Baroda, where Nan and her husband were then stationed, led to an informal meeting through the Military Secretary and this in turn led to typical regimental jealousy from the wife of the Second-in-Command; "As mere Captain's wives you should not have created such a precedence for yourselves".

In 1938, while serving in Peshawar, her decision to run an ante natal clinic for the wives of Indian personnel attracted criticism from the wife of the District Commander who felt that they should attend the "hospital provided for them". Nan's sympathetic understanding of problems caused by the "caste" system, and her refusal to give up her project, reflect her deep understanding for, and love of, the country.

This is good creative writing. Buy it and enjoy it. The book is available from Square One Publications, Saga House, Sansome Place, Worcester WR1 1UA (add Â£1.30 postage and packing).

ANM

● '*10TH GURKHA RIFLES: ONE HUNDRED YEARS 1890-1990*'. Available from PRI, 10GR, BFPO 1, Hong Kong at £19.50/US\$35, inclusive of postage and packing (cheque/bankers draft made payable to Central Bank 10 GR)

Published in July 1990, I had a brief look at this magnificently produced book at the OMRS Convention held in London in September. Packed with photographs drawn from Regimental and private albums, many of which have not previously been published, the book includes historical notes to explain the Regiment's background in India, Burma and Nepal, and to draw attention to the most notable episodes in its fighting history. These include the Gallipoli and Mesopotamian campaigns of the First World War, Burma and Italy in the Second World War, the Malayan Emergency in the 1950s and the Borneo campaign in the 1960s.

Also available is 'A Short History' at £1.95. Both are very good value.

ANM



REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

● Dear Editor

43 Bengal Light Infantry

I have information which states that the 43rd Bengal Light Infantry was renumbered in 1861 to the 6th Regiment of Bengal Light Infantry. (*Indian Army*, Boris Mollo, Blandford Press, 1981).

The 43rd Bengal Light Infantry is also mentioned as being the Unit involved in the Dewangiri attack during the Bhootan Campaign. (*'British Battles and Medals'*, Joslin).

Nowhere is the 6th Bengal Light Infantry mentioned as being present in the Bhootan Campaign, However, in L/MIL/5/59 there is a list of 11 Officers of the 6th Bengal Light Infantry as having earned the Bhootan clasp for this campaign. I am presuming that this would be almost the full complement of Officers for a Regiment of those days.

I can supply these names to any person interested in having them.

Is this a case of a Regiment hanging on to its former name after a reorganisation e.g. the 43rd being listed as present during the campaign when it was in reality the new 6th, or did the 6th send its Officers along for the experience and they are not mentioned as being present?

My interest is that I have a medal to a Captain William Shaw of the 6th BNI with clasp Bhootan who served in the 43rd BNI prior to 1861.

Can anyone assist please?

Yours, Tony Mann

I've had a look through some of my own references and give below a few possibilities, though I hasten to add that I am no expert on the many reorganisations of the Indian Army and you may well get a totally different answer from someone more knowledgeable than I.

There seem to have been (confusingly) three different regiments which at one time or another had the title 43rd Bengal Native Infantry:

A

1803: 1/22nd Bengal Native Infantry raised (There had been earlier units designated 22nd which had been raised and disbanded).

1824: Became 43rd Bengal Native Infantry

1842: Became 43rd Bengal Light Infantry

1857: Disarmed at Barrackpore

1861: Reconstituted as 6th Bengal Native Light Infantry

1897: 6th Jat Regt of Bengal Light Infantry;

1901: 6th Jat Light Infantry

1921: 6th Royal Jat Light Infantry

1922: 1/9th Jat Regiment

B

1858: Aligarh Levy raised

1861: Became 43rd Bengal Native Infantry

1861: Re-titled 39th Bengal Native Infantry

1864: Became 39th (The Aligarh) Regt of Bengal Native Infantry

1890: Disbanded

C

1835: Assam Sebundy Corps raised

1839: Became Lower Assam Sebundy Corps

1839: 1st Assam Sebundy Corps

1844: 2nd Assam Light Infantry

1861: 47th Bengal Native Infantry

1861: 43rd Bengal Native Infantry

1864: 43rd (Assam) Regt of Bengal Native Light Infantry

1886: 43rd Gurkha Light Infantry, Bengal Infantry

1891: 43rd Gurkha (Rifle) Regt of Bengal Infantry

1901: 43rd Gurkha Rifles

1903: 7th Gurkha Rifles

1907: 2/8th Gurkha Rifles

On the face of it, therefore, it would seem to be unit C which was called 43rd Bengal Native Light Infantry in 1866 at the time of Bhootan. Certainly an earlier edition of "*Battles and Medals*" names 43rd Bengal Native Infantry as being present, as well as the latest edition of the work. I somehow doubt that 6th Bengal Native Light Infantry would have been allowed to "hang on" to a former title when it had already been reallocated and so my guess would be that the unit at Bhootan was C but, by strange coincidence, officers from A were present (this seems odd, and was it only officers? If so, who was left to command the troops of 6th while they were at Bhootan?). That these are not recorded in "*Battles and Medals*" does not surprise me - there are a number of errors in the work which have still not been corrected. Ed.

TRIPURA MAHABIR LEGION

This unit formed part of V Force in Burma during the Second World War. It was not, however, an Indian State Force unit. I would appreciate any information members may have about it. Ed.

REPLIES TO EARLIER QUERIES

The shoulder title P2G within a diamond shape (Vol. 3, No 2, page 25) was worn by the Paigarh Guard of Hyderabad State. Ed.

THE RAJ: INDIA AND THE BRITISH 1600-1947. A major exhibition to be mounted by the National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place, London, during the period 19 October 1990-17 March 1991.

The exhibition sets out to examine the relationship between British and Indian society over the whole period of the British presence in India, from the founding of the East India Company in 1600 to the withdrawal of the British and partition in 1947. It presents images of the British and Indians at all levels of society, through paintings and prints by both European and Indian artists, with a wealth of other material including textiles, furnishings and documents.

Throughout the period of the exhibition there will be lectures (free) and a series of films (Temporary Film Club Membership available at £1.00 for the period 1 November 1990-17 March 1991) Admission £3.50, Concessions £2.50, Family Ticket £10.00. Open Monday-Friday 1000-1700, Saturday 1000-1800, Sunday 1400-1800. Closed 24-26 December and 1 January 1991. Tel: 071 306 0055

