

## DURBAR Volume 12, No.2, Summer 1995

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### INDIA AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

#### The Editor

We have just witnessed the events marking the 50th anniversary of VE Day and I thought we should mark in some way the part played by the Indian soldier in securing that victory. (In the next issue we will say something about the role in the Far East leading to VJ Day).

I was fortunate to be invited to a talk given by Dr U.P. Thapliyal, Director, History Division, Ministry of Defence, New Delhi, at the Nehru Centre of the High Commission of India in London on 19 May. Dr Thapliyal outlined the part played by the Indian Army throughout the war; the arrival of 1 Indian Infantry Brigade in Egypt in August 1939, just prior to the outbreak of war with Germany; deployments in Persia and Iraq in 1941; the part played by Indian troops in North Africa in 1942/43 (Montgomery's comment on the deployment of 4th Indian and 7th Armoured Divisions to strengthen First Army's attack on Tunis - "I sent First Army my best, 7th Armoured and 4th Indian"); and their involvement in Italy from 1943 to the surrender of German troops in May 1945 including, of course, the role of 4th Indian Division in the attack on Cassino 16 February - 24 March 1944. (Dr Thapliyal also covered, of course, the war in the Far East and Burma).

In the absence of any specific articles on the role of the Indian soldier in the front line in Africa, the Middle East or Europe, I thought to use this edition to list those Indian Army recipients of the Victoria Cross and George Cross (awards for Burma and the Far East will appear in the next issue). The information is extracted from a booklet published by the National Army Museum in 1962, *"The Victoria Crosses and George Crosses of the Honourable East India Company and Indian Army 1856-1945"*

#### VICTORIA CROSS

The first Indian Army VC of the Second World War was won in Eritrea by 2/Lt PREMINDRA SINGH BHAGAT (Royal Bombay Sappers and Miners). In February 1941, during a pursuit of the Italians, Bhagat cleared fifteen minefields and fifty-five miles of road. Twice his carrier was blown up, many of his men being killed, but he went on for 48 hours non-stop until he collapsed.

The fighting in Tunisia in April 1943 saw the award of two VCs to the Indian Army. Subedar LALBAHADUR THAPA (1/2nd Gurkha Rifles), the first Gurkha to win the decoration in the War, killed six Germans while leading his men up a narrow gully - the only passage by which a vital hill at Rassha Zondi could be seized. He and his riflemen reached the summit, the enemy fled and the Gurkha company was able to advance.

At the Djebel Garci, Company Havildar-Major CHHELU RAM (4/6th Rajputana Rifles) dashed through machine-gun and mortar fire and silenced an enemy post which was holding up the advance. He was seriously wounded while attending his dying company commander, but reorganised the troops to meet a counter-attack and inspired them by his example and

exhortation. He was again wounded, and died on the battlefield. The VC was awarded to him posthumously.

During the campaign in Italy in May, 1944, after the crossing of the River Gari, Sepoy KAMAL RAM (3/8th Punjab Regiment) went ahead on his own and killed the Germans holding two posts, whereupon the remaining enemy troops nearby surrendered. He then helped to capture another post, and in the subsequent hard-fought advance rushed a house, killed a German and brought back two more prisoners. (He was the youngest Indian ever to win the award).

In July 1944 a posthumous VC was bestowed upon Naik YESHWANT GHADGE (3/5th Mahratta Light Infantry) during the drive along the upper Tiber towards the Gothic Line. When all his section had been killed or wounded he rushed a machine-gun post and captured it single-handed. He knocked out the gun, shot some of its crew and beat to death the others with his tommy-gun, having no time to change the magazine. Then he was shot by snipers.

In September 1944 Rifleman SHER BAHADUR THAPA (1/9th Gurkha Rifles) not only silenced several German machine-guns and checked enemy troops who were trying to infiltrate onto a ridge, but he also, when his ammunition ran out, rescued two wounded men under fire. He was riddled with bullets while returning the second time.

Another posthumous VC of the Italian campaign went to Rifleman THAMAN GURUNG (1/5th Royal Gurkha Rifles) who, during the advance on Monte San Bartolo, compelled the surrender of a German party about to fire on the leading Gurkha section. His firing enabled his men to reach the summit and he later, by twice crossing the skyline and either shooting at the enemy or hurling grenades, covered the withdrawal. He was killed while firing a Bren-gun on the summit.

In April 1945 two Indian Sepoys won the VC during the crossing of the River Senio. When his company commander and two other men were wounded and the rest of the attacking party killed, Sepoy NAMDEO JADHAO (1/5th Mahratta Light Infantry) carried one wounded man through the water, up the bank and through mine belts to safety. He brought out a second man in the same way, and then crossed the river and silenced three German machine-gun posts on the far bank. Having done this he waved on the remainder of his battalion across the river. Sepoy ALI HAIDAR (6/13th Frontier Force Rifles) destroyed a German post and took four prisoners. Though wounded, he charged a second post and then, having been wounded twice more, he crawled forward and silenced the post with grenades. His success enabled his company to cross the river and establish a bridgehead.

#### GEORGE CROSS

- Subedar SUBRAMANIAN, Q.V.O. Madras Sappers and Miners, Indian Engineers - Cassino, Italy, 24 February 1944 (gazetted 30 June 1944).
- Sowar DITTO RAM, Central India Horse (21st King George V's Own Horse) - Italy, 23 July 1944 (gazetted 13 December 1945).
- Lieutenant St. J. G. YOUNG, Royal Tank Regiment seconded Central India Horse (21st King George V's Own Horse) - Italy, 23 July 1944 (gazetted 13 December 1945).

While it is right to focus on the gallantry of those at the front, we should not forget the essential part played by those who served in support roles. The following article by Alan Harfield epitomises such service.

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## THE IAVC CENTRE, AMBALA DURING WORLD WAR II

Alan Harfield

The Indian Army Veterinary Corps was formed in 1925 from the Army Veterinary Corps, India and during the following fourteen years the Corps gradually established itself as an efficient, although small, organisation within the Indian Army.

At the time of the start of the war the Corps had been established into sections which were based in the main garrisons in India and the Depot was based at Ambala. The class composition of the IAVC sections was "...50 per cent Mussalmans, 20 per cent Sikhs and 30 per cent Hindus..."

Of the twelve sections ten were numbered and two were given the title of the area in which they served. The distribution in 1939 was:

- |                              |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • No 1 Section - Peshawar    | No 2 Section - Risalpur      |
| • No 3 Section - Rawalpindi  | No 5 Section - Lahore        |
| • No 6 Section - Meerut      | No 7 Section - Lucknow       |
| • No 8 Section - Quetta      | No 9 Section - Mhow          |
| • No 10 Section - Jubbulpore | No 11 Section - Secunderabad |
| • Kohat Section -Kohat       | Waziristan Section - Razmak  |

The number of Indian officers serving in 1939 was:

- |                                 |    |
|---------------------------------|----|
| • Captains                      | 11 |
| • Lieutenants                   | 4  |
| • Veterinary Assistant Surgeons |    |
| ○ Risaldar Majors               | 4  |
| ○ Risaldars                     | 17 |
| ○ Jemadars                      | 59 |
| • Total Indian Officers         | 95 |

There was an enormous and rapid increase in the use of animals in various theatres during 1941 and 1942 and this brought about a demand for a large number of veterinary units of all types. The task of mobilising, training and maintaining personnel for these new units was far beyond the capacity of the very small IAVC Depot that was in existence at Ambala. The idea of creating a large training centre was born and from 1 December 1942 the Indian Army Veterinary Corps Centre was established.

Initially there were many problems to overcome, the first of which was the actual establishment that had been approved by the staff at General Headquarters at New Delhi. The manpower requirement had been worked out by the AG's Branch, who had had a great deal of experience based on the formation of other training centres, but its proposal was rejected

by the Establishments Investigation Section at GHQ. This Section sent a Brigadier to Ambala with a brief to write the establishment for the new IAVC Centre. Unfortunately the officer concerned proceeded to write the establishment as he saw the requirement and this led to protests by the staff at the absurdity of a number of his recommendations. In one account of the formation of the training centre it is recorded that he recommended, for a training squadron of 400 recruits plus instructional staff, an officer 'cover' of one Lieutenant. He submitted his recommended establishment but with a note that the Commandant was 'concerned'.

Even with a totally inadequate initial establishment the Centre was required to function and to commence training long before it had time to be properly formed. Recruits poured in from other units which had been requested to provide men to help fill the new IAVC manpower establishment. As in all such cases where the selection was given to Commanding Officers, they did not send their best men and therefore the newly formed training centre had to deal with many unwanted and unsuitable soldiers.

A further problem facing the Commandant of the Centre was the lack of instructional and administrative staff and again these had to be obtained from existing units which were, naturally, reluctant to send their most experienced non-commissioned officers and men.

Despite these difficulties, and mainly due to the devotion and splendid work carried out by the small number of regular IAVC personnel, the Centre succeeded in turning out 11,256 all ranks during the first thirteen months of its existence.

One factor that helped the staff achieve this extraordinary training figure was the fact that the centre was able to establish itself in its own lines. The IAVC Depot was based in Harrismith Lines, which were far too small, and arrangements had been made for some branches of the Training Centre to be accommodated under canvas on a maidan adjoining the bazaar, which was not ideal for recruit training. Hardinge Lines, situated at the other end of Ambala, had an excellent range of buildings, a good parade ground, married quarters, guard room and other buildings which could be adapted. The lines were unexpectedly vacated by an Indian infantry regiment and, with the co-operation of the local Brigade Commander, who understood the problems that the Commandant was facing, the IAVC Centre went into the lines. The move was quickly made which proved to be fortuitous as GHQ had intended to allocate the lines to another unit but, on learning from Brigade that the IAVC Centre had already taken over Hardinge Lines, permitted the Centre to remain in occupation.

The Centre was at this time organised as follows:

#### Hardinge Lines

- Centre Headquarters
- The Training Regiment - which included three Squadrons, each for 400 recruits of Sowar Dressers, one Squadron for Sowars (Grooms) and Non-Combatant Recruits, the Duty Troop (with a strength of 101) for guard and escort duties.

#### Harrismith Lines (the old Depot)

- The Army Veterinary School and Record Office

Although the input of recruits was delayed the Centre had to deal initially with "...330 sepoys from Garrison Companies and Training Centres and 100 labourers from Pioneer Battalions ... They came from 22 different units, often without nominal rolls and occasionally accompanied by children..." The men were urgently required by the newly-formed Veterinary sections that had been established. Having cleared this initial intake the Centre then had to deal with the training of recruits which arrived at the rate of 200 a week from May 1943 and continued at this rate for the next six months.

The month of July saw the introduction of a revised establishment as by this time GHQ had realised that the initial manpower cover had been totally inadequate. The changes included the formation of a Depot and Duty Squadron which was separate from the Training Regiment. The OC Squadron grade was changed to that of Captain and the Officer in Charge of Records appointment was upgraded to the rank of Major.

The training given at the Centre included the following:

Sowar Dressers - ten weeks basic military training and six weeks 'technical training'. A report noted that the time given for military training was too short as many men were undernourished.

The technical training had to be of the simplest nature as very few of the recruits knew anything about the animals but had been persuaded to join the Veterinary Corps by the Recruiter who had enlisted the man. One report noted that "...a considerable proportion exhibited marked aversion to approaching either a horse or a mule which they clearly regarded as an unexpected occupational hazard... It reflects great credit on the permanent staff of the Centre that these new recruits were taught to overcome their fears and become valuable members of the increasingly expanded Corps.

The training for the grade of Sowars and Non-Combatants was only of one month's duration, during which time they were taught elementary drill and received only the very basic amount of military training as this grade was not armed and therefore did not have to be taught rifle drill etc. They did, however, have to be taught handling of animals, particularly horses and mules, and grooming and feeding. The one month allocated for their training was really inadequate but under the circumstances it had to suffice.

Following the period of basic training the Sowar Dressers were given one month's leave, having completed four months training, but the Sowars and Non-Combatant men were not granted leave unless they were destined to join a unit that was being mobilised. Once again the report on the Centre shows that there were problems at this stage "...as many men failed to return. Their month in the army had failed to endear them to a military career, they had money in their pockets ... and preferred to seek pastures new.....

When the Centre had been formed the Army Veterinary School became part of the new organisation, with the Commanding Officer being either a Major or a Captain. The establishment of the AVS included a First Aid Wing, which had 2 VCO instructors, and a Farrier Wing with 26 instructors. The First Aid and Farrier courses went on continuously. The revised establishment for the Centre, which was approved in July 1943, upgraded the Commanding Officer to that of a Lieutenant Colonel but also made him responsible for two offices, one in Harrismith Lines and the other in Hardinge Lines, two miles away, which proved to be an unsatisfactory arrangement.

The initial pressure to provide men for the IAVC gradually eased off and in September 1943 the intake of recruits diminished and the Centre was able to take stock and catch up on many of the administrative matters that had been delayed due to the initial rush to provide men for the newly-formed Veterinary Corps sections.

The second phase of the development of the IAVC Centre coincided with a further change in the establishment. These changes included the addition of a second-in-command, with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, for the Centre. The Army Veterinary School received an additional Captain and each of the squadrons in the training organisation was supplemented with a 'Subaltern Officer'. The rank of the Officer Commanding the Depot was upgraded to Major and a number of additional clerical posts were authorised.

At this stage an Officers Training School was also approved and, although the intention was for this school to introduce graduates of the Punjab and Madras Veterinary Colleges to the army veterinary systems and procedures by means of a two month course, insufficient numbers were forthcoming. The short-fall was filled by newly-qualified British officers who became available from the UK and these made up about 50% of the students during the 1944 training year. The establishment of the Officers Training School was:

- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| • Commandant                                 | Lieutenant Colonel     |
| • Veterinary Instructors                     | one Major, one Captain |
| • Infantry Officer (basic military training) | one Major              |
| • Adjutant/Quartermaster                     | any rank               |

Later an additional Lieutenant was added to the establishment to instruct on 'Meat Inspection'. During the year seven courses were run which were attended by 79 RAVC officers and 74 IAVC officers.

The other rank training was also changed during that year and the Sowar Dressers and the Sowars were all given 16 weeks basic military training followed by 8 weeks trade training - which was referred to within the Centre as 'Technical training'.

A fourth revise of the establishment was promulgated which brought about the reduction of one training squadron. This had become possible as the initial build-up of the Corps had been completed and the number of recruits passing through the training centre had been greatly reduced.

The Army Veterinary School was given its own establishment and became independent of the IAVC Centre and was therefore deleted from the Centre's establishment. As the school was at that time still located in Hardinge Lines, two miles away from the Centre, this was seen as a very practical solution to what had been an administrative burden on the Headquarters staff of the Centre.

The revise also brought an increase of two officers, which were a Captain to act as Second-in-Command of the Depot and an Assistant Adjutant. Other changes that had been approved by GHQ included the granting of the status of 'Veterinary Instructors' to 4 VCOs, IAVC and 18 NCOs IAVC which then put them on an equal rating (including the right to extra pay) as the other instructors. Two of the VCOs were Jemadar Quartermasters who were to train selected men as QM Daffadars.

Colonel George Barnett, OBE, MC, who had been Commandant of the IAVC Centre from December 1942 and continued in that post until July 1946, wrote commenting on the state of the Centre at the end of 1944 “..... by the end of the year [1944] the improved establishment, better instructors, intensified training with fewer recruits had combined to establish a centre very different from the shambles of 1943. The permanent staff were taking a pride in their work, the quarter guard was worth seeing.....”

The statistics for the training centre in broad terms show that:

- 2073 recruits, including 332 transfers from other arms, had passed through the Centre.
- 1195 men entered the Depot from field service areas etc.
- 2647 men were drafted out of the Depot.
- The approximate average strength was:

▪ Officers	23
▪ VCOs	25
▪ Indian other ranks	1986
▪ NCEs	129
▪ Unenrolled personnel	197
- Total strength 2360

As the war drew to a close the Centre was asked to take on the task of training men in agriculture prior to their demobilisation and return to their homes. This was seen as an essential part of the task of rehabilitating the officers and men of the IAVC as it returned to a peace-time establishment and the new commitment was readily accepted.

Rightly, the IAVC provided contingents for the various Victory Parades that were held following the end of the War in August 1945.

In October 1945 the establishment of the Centre was once again changed in order to cover its new role.

The Officer Training School was closed; one Training Squadron was abolished owing to the much reduced requirement for Dressers and Sowars; the Depot was reorganised to include 'X' Wing to deal with officers and 'B' Wing for Indian other ranks. C Squadron was converted from its wartime training role and became the Demobilisation Squadron to deal with the men who were to pass through the Centre on their return to civilian life.

The Centre was required to expand its role to provide this special training and it:

- Built, stocked and equipped a model farm and provided instructors for agricultural courses which lasted over a ten week period.
- Provided instructors and all equipment for ten different cottage industries. Each of these courses lasted 2 to 4 weeks.
- Arranged a ten week course for NCOs and Dressers who had experience in animal hospital routine.

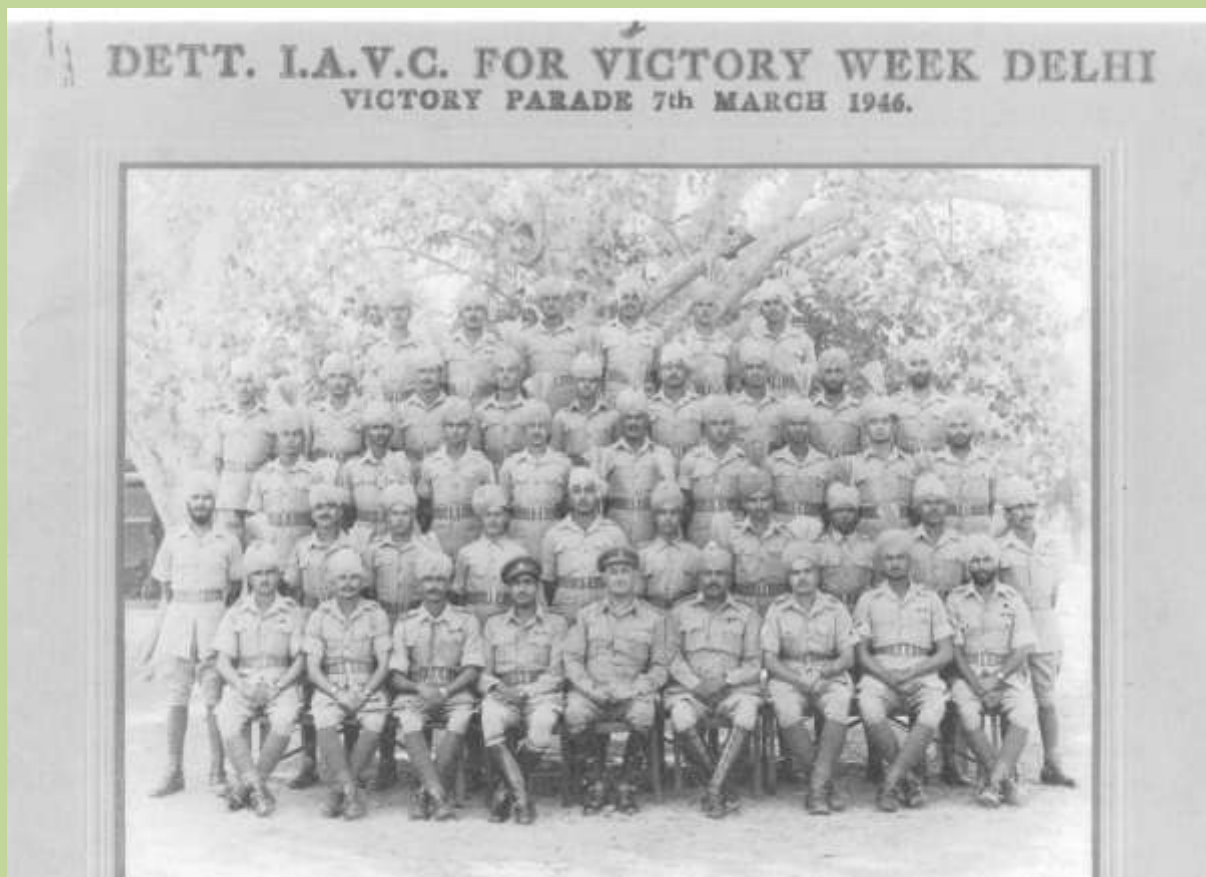
The Centre dealt with all the men returning to their homes and gradually returned to a role of peace-time training until the partitioning in 1947.

That the IAVC Centre fulfilled its war time function there can be no doubt but it is interesting to note that from the early start, when it was under-staffed, overcrowded and struggling to provide competent trained soldiers, it became a highly organised training establishment which brought the following comment following the 1946 Annual Inspection by GOC Lahore District:

"...An excellent Centre in every way. No special problems. Man-management of a very high order. I hope that officers from Area HQ when visiting Ambala will not fail to look round this Centre which is in many respects a model for all..."

#### References

- The Indian Army List, July 1939, pages 697-699 and 699A.
- Article "The Indian Army Veterinary Corps Centre, December 1st 1942-July 16th 1946", by Colonel George Barnett, OBE, MC, published in *The Journal of the Remount and Veterinary Corps*.



## "LADIES OF THE RAJ"

Peter Chapman

None of us is unaware of the recurrence of surnames in the annals of British India. From the first days of the HEIC until Partition, the same names appear again and again, the names of British families who created minor dynasties in trade, the military, the civil administration, the church and the arts in India. As reminders - should not a perusal of the army lists prove sufficient - the medal auctioneers' catalogues occasionally include 'family groups' chronicling the service of generations.

Mary Isabella McIntyre was born in 1828, the daughter of Donald McIntyre who had established a well-known business in Calcutta. On November 19, 1849, she married Captain James Travers, 2nd Bengal Grenadiers, who had already seen service in Afghanistan from 1840-42 and on the Sutlej at Sobraon in 1846. Her elder sister was married to Dr Brydon, the only survivor of the retreat from Kabul, a man immortalised by Josephine Butler's painting. Her elder brother John, Madras Artillery, became a General and her younger brother Donald, 2nd Goorkhas, won the VC fighting the Looshais in 1872.

In the Mutiny her husband - the son of Sir Robert Travers, last Colonel Commandant of the Ionian Islands before they were ceded to Greece in 1864 - also won the VC and, in the fullness of time, also became a General. Few of her family, though she had no children, remained undistinguished and a niece married the sculptor George Wade whose equestrian statue of Field Marshal Haig in Edinburgh is well known.

Mrs Travers, a doughty Scot, having proved that India was certainly not detrimental to her health, returned to her native Bridge of Allan and celebrated her 101st birthday in 1929. When we speak of 'family groups' we can imagine none more illustrious than at that particular birthday party.

A rather less conventional 'Lady of the Raj' was Lily Whitecross, born in 1869 at Mhow who, when she was last heard of in 1908, was very down on her luck. Her mother was Austrian, minor nobility it would seem, and her father an Irish officer serving with the 12th Lancers.

She was 13 when the regiment came home to billets in Manchester and 15 when she was sent abroad with an aunt only to run away and join Colonel Cody (Buffalo Bill) in Massachusetts where she became a "fearless rider and crack shot".

In 1889, tiring of her lot, she went to Austria, married an officer of the 17th Lancers, followed the drum for several years and went with him to the Cape when the South African War broke out. But Lily was an opportunist. She actually sold 'private information' to the Boers and was engaged as a runner by De Wet himself... thus fighting on the opposite side to her husband. Eventually she saw the light and dressed up in British military uniform, deserted the Boers and fought as a British soldier, particularly at Modder River.

This incredible yarn was revealed one day in Bradford in 1908 when Lily appeared before the beak for being drunk. She was then 39, spoke with a foreign accent and described herself as a professional circus rider and the mother of six. The beak took sympathy. Fine 2 shillings.

Regrettably I have been unable to find any trace of a Whitecross in the 17th Lancers - or indeed in Hart's - for the relevant period. And her maiden name remains a mystery.

(beak = magistrate) Ed.

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## THE INDIAN STATES ARTILLERY 1922-1951, A BRIEF SURVEY

Richard Head

With the implementation of the Indian State Forces Scheme in 1922 the way was opened for the States to offer artillery units for inclusion in the Scheme. The Scheme, which replaced the Imperial Service Troops Scheme, allowed any State to offer troops for inclusion, with the Indian Government providing the initial issue of arms free, the maintenance and replacement being the responsibility of the State concerned. There was no restriction as to how small a unit might be. By 1932 the Scheme was becoming too costly for the Government and a halt was made to new entrants; the free issue of arms was also stopped. Units were classified as A Class (available for external service), B Class (internal service) and C Class (irregulars). Class A units were equipped to Indian Army scales, class B equipped to a lesser scale i.e., no machine guns. In 1939 to further up-date the Scheme all units of less than a squadron/company/battery establishment were excluded. In addition, the classifications were changed to Field Service Units (earmarked for service with the Government), General Service Units (units which might be offered for service) and State Service Units (internal security duties).

Prior to 1922 only Kashmir had Imperial Service artillery batteries, it being allowed to do so as it was a frontier state with international boundaries.

In 1922 many States possessed artillery, which varied in organisation and strength from old muzzle loading cannon as fort defences or saluting batteries, to well organised mobile batteries, depending on the financial resources of the State and the military inclination of its ruler. Generally the guns and equipment were provided by the British from their old stock and they ensured that only ineffective weaponry was provided, usually smooth bore and worn out cannons.

Whilst a number of the States did provide batteries for inclusion in the Scheme, some States preferred not to do so for political reasons and others could not get their units accepted by the British as it was considered that the cost would be a burden on the State. In addition the British did not want too many well equipped artillery batteries, manned wholly by Indians, available for use against them. A further governing factor was the existence of treaties whereby some of the States were limited as to what artillery forces they could maintain.

### INDIAN STATES FORCES BATTERIES 1922-1947

These units differed in several ways from the Indian Army batteries. Firstly, they were officered wholly by Indians whereas the Indian Army units were officered by the British. Secondly, the batteries were only available for war service if they were offered by the ruler. It was not until 1935 that the first Indian Army field battery was raised; prior to this only mountain batteries existed (25 batteries) in the Indian Army.

When the State units saw active service they had British officers attached, sometimes to take command, as the State officers usually lacked active service experience.

The following units were maintained as Indian State Forces:

- Bahawalpur Mountain Battery. Raised 1943. Served on N.W.F. in 20th Indian Mountain Regiment and later in 29th and 30th.
- Bikaner Bijey Battery. Raised 1906 from existing units. 1924 reorganised as a camel pack battery and called Bijey Battery. 1942 re-equipped with mules. Served in 25th Indian Mountain Regiment on N.W.F., in Burma and Siam.
- Bikaner Artillery Training Centre. Raised 1941. 1944-46 transferred to ISF Training Battery. 1946 reverted to State. Disbanded 1946.
- Gwalior 1st Mountain Battery. Raised 1865 as 2nd Battery, then became 3rd Battery. 1898 re-designated 5th Field Battery. 1928 re-designated Gwalior Mountain Battery. 1940-46 re-designated 1st Mountain Battery - reverted to Gwalior Mountain Battery 1946. Served on N.W.F. in 20th Indian Mountain Regiment and later in 26th.
- Gwalior 2nd Mountain Battery. Raised 1940. Disbanded 1946. Served on N.W.F. in 31st Indian Mountain Regiment.
- Gwalior B Battery, Scindia's Horse Artillery. Raised 1861 as 3rd Company Artillery. 1863 re-designated 3rd H.A., 1863 2nd H.A., 1908 B Battery Gwalior H.A. Served on Frontier, later joined 6th Indian Field Regiment. Moved to Eastern frontier and joined 1st Indian Field Regiment, serving in Burma.
- Gwalior Artillery Training Centre. Raised 1929 as Mountain Battery Depot. 1937 re-designated as Artillery Training Centre. 1944-46 transferred to I.S.F. Training Battery. 1946 reverted to State.
- Hyderabad A Battery, Nizam's Horse Artillery. Raised 1861 as 1st and 2nd Field Batteries, these were combined to form The Field Battery. 1930 re-designated as A Battery, Nizam's H.A. Known as Nizam's Field Battery whilst on active service 1941-46. Served in Burma in 3rd Indian Field Regiment.
- Hyderabad Artillery Training Centre. Raised 1941. 1946 combined with Army Training Centre.
- Jind Mountain Battery. Raised 1874 as Mountain Battery No 5. The number was subsequently dropped. Disbanded 1932. Listed in some ISF documentation 1923-26 but not considered to have joined the Scheme.
- Kashmir 1st Mountain Battery. Raised 1857 as No 7 Battery. 1891 re-designated 1st Mountain Battery. 1942 transferred to Indian Artillery as 30th (Jammu) Mountain Battery: Served in East Africa and Syria. Returned to India and served on N.W.F. in 26th Indian Mountain Regiment. Disbanded 1946.
- Kashmir 2nd Mountain Battery. Raised 1872 as Body Guard Artillery. 1891 re-designated 1st Mountain Battery. 1942 transferred to Indian Artillery as 31st (Jammu) Mountain Battery. Served on N.W.F., Burma and Indo-China in 23rd Indian Mountain Regiment. Disbanded 1946.
- Kashmir 3rd Mountain Battery. Raised 1921 as 3rd Mountain Battery by amalgamation of Garrison Battery and the Horse Artillery. Also known as 3rd Reserve Mountain Battery. 1928 Artillery Depot amalgamated with it. Disbanded 1936.
- Kashmir Artillery Depot. Raised 1902. 1928 amalgamated into 3rd Battery.
- Kashmir Artillery Training Centre. Raised 1934. 1942 transferred to Indian Artillery,
- Patiala Mountain Battery. Raised as Horse Artillery Battery pre 1904. During 1920s there is reference to A Battery and B Battery, Patiala Artillery, the first horse and the

second bullock drawn. By late 1930s only Patiala H.A. is listed. 1942 converted to Mountain Battery. Served on N.W.F. in 30th Indian Mountain Regiment, later in 31<sup>st</sup>

- Patiala Artillery Training Centre. Raised 1943. 1944-46 transferred to ISF Training Battery. 1946 reverted to State. Disbanded 1951.
- ISF Training Battery, Mountain Artillery Training Centre, Indian Artillery. Raised 1944 as training and holding unit for ISF mountain batteries. Supported Bahawalpur, Bikaner, Gwalior and Patiala batteries. Disbanded 1946.
- ISF Wing, Training and Field Regiment, R.I.A. Raised 1944 as training and holding unit for ISF field batteries. Supported Gwalior and Hyderabad batteries. Disbanded 1946.

When the batteries returned from active service they were allowed to retain their 25 pounder field guns and the 3.7" mountain guns with which they had been equipped, though the British did not allow them to retain the gun sights, thus rendering them ineffective.

#### INDIAN STATES FORCES BATTERIES 1947-1951

At the time when the British relinquished control in India in 1947 the following batteries were part of the Scheme:-

- Bahawalpur Mountain Battery (GSU)
- Bikaner Bijey Battery (GSU)
- Gwalior Mountain Battery (FSU)
- Gwalior B Battery, Scindia's Horse Artillery (GSU)
- Gwalior Artillery Training Centre
- Hyderabad A Battery, Nizam's Horse Artillery (GSU)
- Hyderabad Artillery Training Centre
- Patiala Mountain Battery (GSU)
- Patiala Artillery Training Centre

With the partition of the country in August 1947 Bahawalpur State, with its army and Mountain Battery, was allocated to Pakistan. This Battery was subsequently converted into a field battery and later, in 1952, expanded to form the 14th (Abbasia) Field Regiment, Pakistan Artillery.

The Hyderabad Army, as part of the State's move for independence, was greatly expanded as a result of which B Battery, Nizam's Horse Artillery was converted into an active unit and C Battery was raised. The three batteries were grouped together as the Field Regiment of Artillery. The Hyderabad Artillery was disbanded in 1951.

In 1948 the Patiala Field Battery was raised from the Patiala State Forces and 2nd Field Company, Faridkot Sappers and Miners. The 1st Kashmir Mountain Battery was re-raised, in 1948, for service in its home State. The Bikaner Bijey Battery was converted from a mountain to a field battery in 1948. The Patiala Mountain Battery and Scindia's Field Battery saw service in Kashmir 1947-48.

In 1948 the Bikaner Bijey Battery, Scindia's Field Battery and Patiala Field Battery were grouped to form 41st Field Regiment, Indian Artillery. The batteries were later numbered 83rd (Bikaner), 84th (Scindia) and 85th (Patiala).

In 1953 the 23rd Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery, was raised with the Gwalior, Kashmir and Patiala Mountain Batteries. They were numbered 74th (Gwalior), 75th (Patiala) and 76th (Kashmir).

#### NON-INDIAN STATES FORCES BATTERIES

- Baroda Light Field Battery. Raised circa 1860. Bullock drawn. Disbanded 1940.
- Bharatpur Rajendra Elephant Battery. Raising date not known. Disbanded 1930.
- Bhopal Horse Artillery Battery. Pre 1870. Disbanded 1920s.
- Bikaner 2nd Camel Battery. Raised 1924, Camel drawn battery.
- Cochin Nayar Brigade Artillery. Raised 1809. Saluting battery attached to Nayar Brigade. Disbanded 1951.
- Gwalior A Battery, Scindia's Horse Artillery. Pre-1905. Disbanded 1950.
- Gwalior 3rd Field Battery. Pre 1908. Howitzer battery. Disbanded 1927.
- Gwalior Garrison Artillery. Pre 1908. Designated 4th Heavy Battery. Re-designated Garrison Artillery 1922. Disbanded 1927.
- Gwalior 6th Field Battery. Pre 1908. Disbanded 1927.
- Hyderabad B Battery, Nizam's Horse Artillery. Raised 1883 as Golconda Bullock Battery. 1930 re-designated B Battery, Nizam's H.A. Disbanded 1948.
- Indore Horse Artillery Battery. Known as 1st Battery H.A. prior to disbanding of 2nd Battery. Disbanded 1938.
- Indore 2nd Horse Artillery Battery. Dismounted pre-1922. Disbanded 1930.
- Jaipur Jinsi Najiban Battery. Raised to support the Najiban battalions, pre 1922. Disbanded 1926 when it was amalgamated with the Jinsi Tiligan to form the Artillery.
- Jaipur Artillery. Formed 1926 by the amalgamation of the Jinsi Tiligan and Jinsi Najiban Batteries. Bullock-drawn saluting battery. Disbanded 1951.
- Jind Sherdil Horse Artillery Battery. Raised 1838. Disbanded 1920s.
- Malerkotla Horse Artillery Battery. Reserve battery, H. A., referred to in ISF documentation 1922-23.
- Patiala Mechanised Battery. Documentation refers to this unit 1929-32. Possibly one of the H.A. batteries referred to under Mountain Battery, with a change in role and designation.
- Rewa Raghuraj Battery. Pre 1921, four batteries (1st-4th) artillery existed. 1921 reduced to 1st Battery and 2nd Battery H.A. 1926 batteries amalgamated to form a horse artillery battery designated Raghuraj Artillery. Disbanded 1948.
- Rewa Bandhogarh Garrison. Organised 1909 from Fort garrison into three companies (1st-3rd), later four, of heavy gun batteries drawn by bullocks. 1921 reduced to two batteries. 1931 further reduced to one battery, but disbanded in the same year. These were garrison units without transport.

Other States maintained saluting or fort garrison artillery troops, but these were not always organised as batteries. The above list is not deemed to be complete.

## BOOK NOTES

● "*SUNSET OF THE RAJ - THE FALL OF SINGAPORE*". Cecil Lee. Durham: Pentland Press Ltd, 1 Hutton Close, South Church, Bishops Auckland, Durham, UK - £15.50.

The second title "Fall of Singapore" is slightly a misnomer as there is only a small part of the work devoted to that, but it is a very readable account of the Malayan debacle, the long fighting retreat from the northern border to Singapore Island. What makes it so interesting is that the author spent some six years in the country as a businessman prior to the Japanese invasion, subsequently serving during the campaign as a sergeant in an armoured car unit of the P.M.S. Volunteer Force. Thus there is a different approach to that given in the many books written by soldiers or historians. The author also goes into the pre-invasion preparations, politics and command in some critical detail. On the other hand he is high in praise for the troops and junior commanders, particularly the regular officers of the Indian Army. He had the good fortune to see the war diary of Brigadier Selby, CO 2/9th Gurkhas and later Commander of 28 Indian Infantry (all Gurkha) Brigade, and to discuss the campaign with him. (Brigadier Selby was the reviewer's CO in the Khyber in 1940). The only criticism is that the author's sentences sometimes get somewhat involved, but this is a minor matter, and does not really detract from the worth of the narrative. Recommended. AAM

● "*THE RAJPUTANA RIFLES - BRIEF HISTORY*". Major General Chand N Das OBE. New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House. (135 pages) ISBN 81-85972-73-7. Available from The Rajputana Rifles Regimental Centre, Delhi Cantt. 110010, India. Rs 125/US\$25

It is, perhaps, inevitable that any "brief" history written now covering two hundred years of history, of which 150 were during the British period, will appear to skate over the first 75% and concentrate on the latter 25%. This is, however, a perfectly justifiable approach, especially where comprehensive early regimental histories already exist (in this case, for example, "*The Rajputana Rifles - A History of the Regiment, 1775-1947*" by Major M G Abhyankar). General Das has approached his task by dividing the book into five parts. The first 28 pages deal with the genesis and first 150 years of the regiment, up to Pear Hill 1945. Each major Battle Honour has one page devoted to it. The second part deals with post-independence campaigns in which the regiment has been involved (Kashmir 1947, Operation Polo 1948, the Chinese aggression of 1962 and the 1965 and 1971 wars with Pakistan). Part three covers counter insurgency operations (Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram) while the fourth part deals with the many occasions on which personnel of the regiment have been deployed in UN and similar peace keeping roles (Korea 1953, Indo-China 1954, Congo 1962 and Sri Lanka). Each narrative contains details of gallantry and meritorious service award winners. The book concludes with eighteen appendices covering subjects such as the regimental crest, motto, uniform, Battle and Theatre Honours, heroes (gallantry award winners - with many photographs), Regimental Colonels (again with photographs), sporting and adventurous achievements, commemorative days, class composition and battalion designations. The book contains numerous maps, sketches and photographs. An enjoyable read and a useful introduction to some of the more recent historical aspects of the regiment. ANM

## LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Dr R N W Thomas writes:

I was most interested in J R Cawthorne's article on 1/1st Gurkha's action at Wana in 1894 (Vol. 12, No 1, page 1). The CO at the time (Major G H Robinson) was my Great-Grandfather, who is mentioned several times in it. His life was saved at the beginning of the battle by a sepoy who despatched a ghazi about to kill him as he emerged from his tent (the action commenced before dawn). After the battle, my Great-Grandfather asked the sepoy concerned to give him his kukri as a memento and it has been passed down through the family ever since. I'm afraid that Col Cawthorne is wrong in stating that Robinson died in 1906 (p13 of the article); he actually died from heart failure on 6 August 1908 at his home in Bromley, Kent.

(Colonel Cawthorne replied that the details of Major Robinson's death came from 1 GR's History. He has forwarded a copy of the article and Dr Thomas's letter to 1 GR Association and the Gurkha Museum archives. Ed.)

● Bunny Storer of Victoria, Australia, has responded to the request for badge identification submitted by David Harris (Vol. 11, No 4, page 149). He writes:

Illustration No. 1 - SUDAN POLICE SERVICE. I have this same badge in good quality die struck white metal. On the reverse of the piece behind the front horn are the raised words FIRMIN LONDON with the N of LONDON just above the head. This is the provincial badge worn by those Sudan Police Service personnel stationed in the Port Sudan Province. The Sudan Police Service wore the SPS badge (intertwined letters within a wreath) on the front of their head-dress and then the provincial badge on the left side of their head-dress on a diamond flash in red cloth. My opinion is that David Harris's badge is the earlier type. They, along with most British Colonial Police probably would have changed from brass to white metal in the late 1930s. There is a possibility that the two badges were worn concurrently (the) brass one perhaps by some kind of small armed detachment, hard to say.



Illustration No. 2 - TRIPOLITANIA POLICE FORCE (British Military Administration). I believe this is a badge of the Tripolitania Police Force or otherwise a badge worn in that territory during that period by some other Government officials. My similar example is well made die struck and chrome plated with lugs at 12 and 6 o'clock. The angle of the head is different to the illustration in DURBAR and has a scroll underneath with TRIPOLITANIA. Could David Harris's badge be this with the scroll broken off? I regret I am unable to identify the animals depicted but they obviously have some local significance.



**Web site note** – see also Ashok Nath's article *THE FRONTIER SCOUTS* (DURBAR, Vol. 13, No. 1, Spring 1996) for an identification of No. 2 as the Gilgit Scouts (FS22 in the article). The animal is an Ibex.

● H K King writes:

My main interest is in military history regarding my great great grandfather, William King, and his regiment, 2-2 Bengal Horse Artillery (also known as the Rocket Troop). I am interested in whether any members have similar ancestry or have any photographs, documents, medals and memorabilia relating to the Rocket Troop, or even William King and his wife Ann (nee Haslam widow - maiden name Simms).

[Mr King enclosed a chart which he has compiled but this does not lend itself to copying. Main points are as follows - though there are some questions. Ed.]

No 519 William KING, born Stepney (no date given, but between May 1818 and 10 April 1819). Enlisted 13 April 1840 aged 20 and scheduled for the Bengal Artillery. Sailed on the "Malcolm" 9 May 1840, arriving Bengal 10 September. At Dum Dum Barracks drafted to 2/2 BHA. 1st Afghan War 1839-1842 (medal with clasp GHUZNEE). Possibly also Relief of JELILALABAD under General Pollock. Fought under Sir Hugh Gough in a number of campaigns. Gwalior Star for MAHARAJPOOR (1843), Sutlej Campaign Medal with clasps FERZESHUHUR and SOBRAON, Punjab Campaign Medal with clasps CHILIANWALA and GOOJERAT. Later earned IGS 1854 with clasp NORTH WEST FRONTIER (December 1849) and Indian Mutiny.

[*"Battles and Medals"* does not credit 2/2 BHA with FERZESHUHUR. The IGS 1854 with North West Frontier also causes me some confusion since the chart shows that King transferred to 5th Light Cavalry in 1853 as Quarter Master Sergeant and this regiment did not qualify for the medal. Ed.]

In 1856 he transferred to Commissariat Department, becoming Sub Conductor in May 1858. In September 1860 he reverted to 3/3 BHA as a sergeant and then transferred to the Royal Artillery as a sergeant on 16 September 1861. He was apparently discharged to pension in India in 1862, aged 42 and after 22 years' service.

● Two queries from non-members, which I think are worth including.

● Colonel I.S. Kalra, Commandant of The Sikh Regimental Centre, Ramgarh Cantt (Bihar) 829 131, writes:

The centenary celebrations of the Battle Honour SARAGARHI, awarded to 36 Sikhs to commemorate the action on 12 September 1897 when 22 men fought an epic battle on the Samana Ridge, are due in 1997. As part of the celebrations it is planned to honour the descendants of the Saragarhi heroes by inviting them for the event. Despite our best efforts we have not been able to trace them and would be grateful for your help. Those who died were:

- |                         |                     |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| • 165 Hav Ishar Singh   | 332 Nk Lall Singh   |
| • 546 L/Nk Chanda Singh | 163 Sep Ram Singh   |
| • 182 Sep Sahib Singh   | 287 Sep Ram Singh   |
| • 359 Sep Hira Singh    | 687 Sep Daya Singh  |
| • 760 Sep Jiwan Singh   | 791 Sep Bhola Singh |

- 814 Sep Gurmukh Singh
- 871 Sep Jiwan Singh
- 1257 Sep Bhagwan Singh
- 1327 Sep Sunder Singh
- 1651 Sep Jiwa Singh
- 755 Hav Sundar Singh

- 834 Sep Narayan Singh
- 1221 Sep Nand Singh
- 1265 Sep Bhagwan Singh
- 1556 Sep Buta Singh
- 1773 Sep Gurmukh Singh
- 63 Hav Kala Singh

I replied to Colonel Kalra saying that I did not hold out much hope but that I would publish his request in case any of our members had made a study of the incident and might have come across details of home villages in any citations (all were awarded the Indian Order of Merit). I also forwarded a copy of the letter to the Indian Army Association. I subsequently received a letter from Mr A Wimbush of Ascot, a former officer of The Sikh Regiment during WWII, who had received a copy of Colonel Kalra's letter directly from India. He told me that he had been able to pass on the name of a man whose father served as a Jemadar in 4/11 Sikhs and whose father, in turn, was one of the Saragarhi heroes. If anyone can help I would be pleased to hear.

Ed.

● M. Jacques Jost, 2 rue Beau Site, 57540 Petite-Roselle, France, has written seeking any information on 100 Independent Light Tank Squadron, an Indian Army unit which served in Malaya/Singapore in 1941/42. He has been able to gather some information from the PRO about the despatch of the Squadron to Singapore in January 1942, and about an action on Singapore Island on 11 February, 1942, but apart from that he has drawn a blank. He would be interested to exchange information and details of sources consulted. If anyone can help I suggest they write to M. Jost directly, though I would appreciate a copy to publish in a future edition of DURBAR.

Ed.

