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TIPPOO SULTAN

Geoff Fawcett

Lt Col (retd) Daljit Singh's scholarly and extremely interesting article in Vol. 15, No 2 (Summer 1998) left Tippoo Sultan with "claws pared" and British supremacy in Mysore fully established in 1792. Perhaps I might be permitted to resume the story at that point and remind readers that Tiger Tippoo licked his wounds, restored his strength, and came out to fight the British once more in 1798. On this occasion he came up against the future Duke of Wellington who would achieve immortality at Waterloo.

At the age of 27, Colonel Arthur Wesley (the family had changed its name from Wellesley) had been in command of the 33rd Foot since 1793 when, in 1796, he was ordered to take his regiment to India. They were sent there to support the H.E.I.C.'s troops in countering the revival of French influence in India, particularly around its east coast areas. They arrived at Fort William, Calcutta, in February 1797. The Governor-General was based in Calcutta at that time.

Almost immediately the 33rd was ordered to proceed to the Philippines as part of a force under the overall command of General St Ledger. They were to act against the Spanish (an ally of France). But, en route, on arrival in Penang, they were ordered to return to Calcutta by the Governor-General because of worrying developments in Mysore. Colonel Wesley then left his regiment behind and travelled south to Madras to study the situation and terrain in the Mysore region, some 200 miles west of Madras, where he expected his regiment to be at war before very long.

As described by Lt Col Singh in his article, Tippoo had been defeated by the British some six years earlier. Since then, with French assistance, he had considerably strengthened his fighting capabilities. He was once again Britain's most dangerous opponent in India, dominating large parts of its south-central areas.

By the time of Arthur's return to Calcutta his elder brother, Richard, the Earl of Mornington, had succeeded Sir John Shore as Governor-General, with their younger brother Henry as his personal aide. For the next few years the fortunes of the Wellesleys (the brothers changed the family name back to its earlier form about this time) were very much tied up with those of India.

Mornington soon decided that Tippoo would have to be dealt with as he had once again declared his intention to drive the British out of India. He moved first to ensure the active support of the armies of Tippoo's northern neighbour, the Nizam of Hyderabad, who was himself nervous of Tippoo's intentions. A previous ally of the British, he too was now being courted by the French. By a combination of diplomacy and threats, the Nizam was persuaded to sign a treaty in September 1798. British troops were then sent to strengthen the Nizam's forces and a British Resident installed.

To the east, outside Madras, an army was being assembled in preparation for a move west against Tippoo. Arthur Wellesley and his 33rd were sent down from Calcutta to join it. The Governor of Madras was Lord Clive (son of a famous father) and the C-in-C of its army, General Sir George Harris. Although relatively junior, Arthur Wellesley with his enthusiasm and ability was allowed to play a major part in preparing the plans for the expedition (doubtless his seniors were conscious of the fact that he was the Governor-General's brother).

When reports were received that a French army was to be sent out from France, to fight alongside Tippoo, that Tippoo was adopting French Republican principles, that he was flying a tricolour and that French officers were leading his troops and calling him "Citizen Tippoo", Mornington decided to act and travelled to Madras to oversee operations. A letter was delivered to Tippoo calling on him to dismiss his French officers. He did not bother to reply (he was being assured of Napoleon's support). Although Arthur Wellesley had done much of the preparatory work, he was obviously too junior to command the force when it took the field and Sir George Harris was appointed. The main army, assembled around Vellore west of Madras, consisted of about 20,000 men of whom 4,300 were Europeans. He was also able to call upon a further 6,000 or so from the Bombay Presidency in the north-west under General Stuart. The Nizam's army was to operate on the right flank. His Chief Minister, Meer Allum, asked Mornington to put his brother Arthur in command. This he did, causing understandable resentment amongst those senior to him, including four major-generals.

Having already moved further west from Vellore to Amboor, Harris began his advance on 21 February. Arthur Wellesley's abilities in the logistical and supply fields had been put to good use and the army was well prepared, with over 100,000 bullocks and thousands of mules, camels, horses and elephants carrying sufficient food and supplies for three months. Tippoo probably realised that he could not expect to defeat the British in the field so he tried to destroy their supplies, attacking the transport at every opportunity. Stuart moving in from the north-west encountered resistance but was still able to threaten Tippoo's rear. After a significant engagement and a defeat for Tippoo at the village of Malavelley on 27 March, Harris arrived in the vicinity of Seringapatam, Tippoo's capital, into which his army had withdrawn. Harris had marched his troops 153 miles since 21 February.

Seringapatam is situated on an island formed by the separation of the River Cauvery into two branches. Harris knew that the monsoon would arrive in mid-May after which the river would be too deep to ford and, in any case, further operations would literally be bogged down. The island is about three miles long and one mile wide. The city was at its north-east corner and was surrounded by a fortress. Its walls were mainly of solid granite with occasional brick. It was large and strong and defended by guns.

An account of the short siege and the eventual storming of the fortress on 4 May would require a separate article. However, it is worth mentioning that before the fortress fell, Wellesley experienced the only defeat of his military career at the village of Sultanpetan - an affair about which he was said to be defensive for the rest of his life. During the storming Tippoo himself was killed, some reports say by his own hand to avoid capture. The British suffered 825 European casualties (181 dead) and 639 Indian (119 dead). The resulting prize-money from the spoils of the city ranged from £100,000 for General Harris down to £7 for a private soldier.

Wellesley was appointed Governor of Mysore and remained as such until June the following year when his services were required elsewhere in India, resulting in further military

successes in the next few years at Assaye, Argaum and Gawilghur. On 10 March 1805, he returned to Britain aboard H.M.S. Trident with the Napoleonic Wars still to come.

A few years ago I visited Seringapatam (now called Srirangapatnam, the name used by Lt Col Singh in his article). I wandered around the battlements of what is left of the fortress, parts of the walls of which are quite well preserved. In the grounds there is a stone memorial bearing the words (in English) "the body of Tippu Sultan was found here". Having enjoyed Lt Col Singh's article which brought back memories of my visit, I hope members will enjoy my "sequel".

BLIND TERROR - 'THE MUTINY' IN JHELUM AND SIALKOT

Tim Wilsey

Apart from 1947 nothing has shaped Pakistan so much as the Great Mutiny of 1857 when the British were so nearly ejected from India by the sepoys of the army. The fact is that most landlords in what is now Pakistan supported the British and were well rewarded for their loyalty. Lands and titles were granted; a classic example being Mohammed Hyat Khan of Wah rewarded for carrying the body of the fatally wounded John Nicholson out of Delhi city to safety. He was knighted and made a Nawab; his son Sikandar became premier of Punjab; and his grandson Shaukat a cabinet minister. Two books in Urdu which suggest that the present political class owe their position to the Mutiny were banned shortly after publication and are still quite hard to obtain. In fact nobody can be proud of the Mutiny, least of all the British. It only happened because British officers lost touch with the concerns of their men. But once it started it became an event of epic proportions, which would make a superb Hollywood blockbuster.

One of the many fictions about the Mutiny is that all the action happened in India. Certainly the most famous episodes did; the outbreak at Meerut on 10 May 1857 when the sepoys rose and killed several British officers and their families, followed by the seizure of Delhi and the siege of Lucknow, the massacres at Jhansi and Cawnpore and the eventual recovery of Delhi by the British. However equally crucial events took place in what is now Pakistan. Uprisings in Peshawar, Lahore, Mardan and Nowshera were quickly suppressed by the Governor of the Punjab, Sir John Lawrence and the young Brigadier Nicholson. A 'Moveable Column' was formed under Nicholson to help retake Delhi but this meant removing most of the all-British regiments from this area. In the circumstances it is hardly surprising that the sepoys in Jhelum and Sialkot seized their chance.

The Jhelum Mutiny is told well in a fascinating book of letters home by a young army wife, Minnie Wood. The book is entitled '*From Minnie with Love'*, edited by Jane Vansittart. Poor Minnie Blane is swept off her feet in 1856 by a dashing Captain Archie Wood during his leave from India. Soon she is married and having to endure the four-month sea voyage to India with a husband she is quickly beginning to see through. Not only is Archie Wood heavily in debt but he is a weak, lazy man prone to self-pity and displays of violent anger. As if this were not enough Minnie, now with a baby, finds that Jhelum, their first posting, has nothing to recommend it, dusty, small and insufferably hot. She feels desperately cut-off

from home, letters taking two months via Suez, Bombay, Karachi and Multan. Then the Mutiny breaks out. It is difficult to imagine the terror of being in Jhelum with perhaps a dozen other British families as news of the atrocities in Cawnpore and elsewhere spreads, often in lurid and exaggerated detail. There seemed to be no way out in any direction. The GT to Calcutta was blocked by the mutineers in Delhi. The route by river from Multan to Karachi and Bombay was possible if risky but Archie did not have the money for the fare.

Archie was convinced of the loyalty of his regiment but he was wrong. On 7 July it mutinied just before a detachment of the 24th Foot (an all-British regiment) came to disarm it. Wood just got his wife and baby to safety in time but there was a whole day's fighting in which British troops came off second best as they tried to dislodge the mutineers from a fortified building in the town. Many of the 24th were drunk but fortunately the mutineers eventually fled in the night. Archie's letters to his mother-in-law are an excellent and thrilling read, marred only by a somewhat panicky tone and his usual fixation with money.

Two days later the regiments in Sialkot mutinied. This time there was no 24th Foot to the rescue and the British residents had a terrifying dash of some two miles to the old Sikh fort on the hill, their prearranged safe-haven. On the way several were hacked down by soldiers including the Brigadier and Major Bishop. Two medics, both called Graham, were killed in front of their families and there are numerous other stories of tragedy and some of miraculous escapes. After a harrowing night in the fort the survivors learned that the mutineers had set off for Delhi. On 12 July the latter were intercepted by Nicholson and over the next few days annihilated. Savagery was not only practiced by the sepoys in 1857. Captured sepoys were blown from artillery guns!

The two outbreaks can be recreated quite effectively today. In Sialkot the remains of the fort are still there and you can drive the exact route from the cantonment which those few families took that morning. Their graves are still at the foot of the fort mound and the two churches, Holy Trinity and the Catholic St James still contain memorial plaques. We learn, for example, that Bishop's widow had lost her infant son earlier in the year. Jhelum (only 90 minutes down the GTR) is even better for reconstructing the events of 7 July 1857. The rough sketches by Archie Wood can be matched with the town today. The church, St John's, consecrated in February 1857, gives us another marker. The modern bridge was then a 'bridge of boats' in the same position and the cantonment 'Centre road' is still there. In fact the present sleepy cantonment, although much bigger, still retains some houses from the Mutiny era. So you can easily trace the Woods' hell-for-leather flight through a hail of bullets to the relative safety of Major Brown's house. And the fortified building used by the mutineers, some half a mile north of the railway station still exists. As in Sialkot the cemeteries have been vandalised but I found the grave of poor Captain Spring, killed as he tried to urge on his drunken lads that scorching afternoon. A plaque to him and thirty-four other members of the 24th can be seen inside the church.

The sheer horror of 1857 is almost impossible for us to imagine. Nowadays, once there is the slightest hint of danger overseas, the expatriate families are evacuated. Communications have removed much of the worry of and for loved ones. If the incident is serious it will be on the BBC and if you cannot get a phone call or fax through to UK then someone will have a satellite telephone. Contemporary accounts like Minnie's allow us to feel some of her fear, especially when you read her letters home sitting on the banks of the Jhelum River within a hundred yards of her home.

KUZEIK 1942

Christopher Peterson

Retreats are not often written about, save for the historical dissection of the policy decisions which were responsible for their necessity. These tend to be political or financial in nature, and have little relevance to the soldiers placed in these unenviable positions. Burma was a very long war complicated in the extreme by global politics and horrendous geography, and so the Burma retreat in 1942 is often given short shrift, relegated to disaster status. But bright spots abound, and the steadfastness and determination of the 7/10th Baluch at Kuzeik on the night of 11-12 February 1942, is a story worth telling.

The 7/10th Baluch was raised in Benares on 10 October 1940. It was commanded by Lt Col C J Dyer of the 3/10th Baluch, who had been wounded while serving with the South Waziristan Scouts in the 30's. If Lt Col Dyer had 'bags' of experience, the rest of the battalion did not. Only one of his company commanders, Captain Siri Kanth Korla, was a regular officer. Because of the exponential expansion of the Indian Army six months or less seems to have been the average length of service for soldiers of war raised battalions. As usual there was a leavening, if you will, of VCOs and NCOs transferred from the regular battalions.

In November of 1941 the 7/10th Baluch found themselves, together with the 3/7th Gurkhas and the 5/17th Dogras, on their way to Burma as part of Brigadier Roger Ekin's 46th Indian Infantry Brigade. At the same time the 16th Indian Infantry Brigade was sent to Burma to add to the reinforcement efforts. They joined the 13th Indian Infantry Brigade who had been in Mandalay since March of that year. Both the 13th and 16th were composed of regular pre-war battalions, albeit seriously depleted of experience due to the siphoning off of men for their new sister battalions. The 48th Gurkha Brigade rounded out the reinforcement scheme.

The policy handed down from Army Headquarters in Rangoon was that of 'far forward fighting', that is, contesting every inch of ground by constant fighting withdrawal. Unfortunately this let the Japanese choose the fighting ground and conditions. It was because of this that the 46th Brigade found itself widely scattered in February of 1942 out in front of Thaton. The 7/10th were alone just north of Kuzeik, well entrenched in an area approximately 600 yards across. By the 11th it had become obvious that the Japanese were closing and that a full scale attack was in the offing. What was not known was that this single battalion with no support was to bear the weight of the entire Japanese 215th Regiment supported by guns and mortars.

Just past midnight on 11-12 February the Japanese attacked. Now at this time in the war a night attack by battle hardened Japanese supported by machine guns firing tracer and led by sword wielding officers would have been enough to have given the most experienced soldier pause. The heaviest attacks initially fell on B Company, Punjabi Mussulmans under Lt John Randle, and C Company, Brahmin Dogras under Capt Siri Kanth Korla. As the fighting wore on the overwhelming odds and superior firepower gradually began to take its toll. All communications between company positions and command were lost and fighting became hand to hand. As February 12th dawned Lt Col Dyer became a casualty as he went forward to

make contact with the remnants of his battalion. Capt Korla was captured but turned up later in Thaton.
The battalion for all practical purposes ceased to exist. Only five officers, three VCOs and sixty five men managed to fight their way out and make it back to Brigade Headquarters. For their first battle this battalion fought a force five times their number for almost eight hours alone and without support. This is a truly remarkable feat given the lack of battle experience and youth of these soldiers. While I have not been able to compile a complete list of awards for this action, I do know that Capt Siri Kanth Korla received the first DSO to be awarded to an Indian Commissioned Officer for this fight. At least one IOM and one MC were also awarded.

I am fortunate to have the IGS 1936 medal with NWF 37-39 clasp to No 16692 Sepoy Sultan Muhammad, 3/10th Baluch Regiment. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission record the following casualty recorded on Face 39 of the Rangoon Memorial in Myanmar:

> Lance Naik SULTAN MUHAMMAD, 16692
> 7th BN. 10th Baluch Regiment
> Died: 12th February 1942
> Additional Information: Age 22
> Son of Mir Ahmed and Zaliha, of Shah Mansur, Mardan, Pakistan

This medal gives testimony to the youth of the 'veteran NCOs' of the Battalion. It seems that Sultan Muhammad could not have been more than 18 or 19 when he earned his Frontier medal.

The Rangoon Memorial stands in the centre of the Taukkyan War Cemetery. An open rotunda joins the covered walks, whose sides are formed by the piers bearing the names of the fallen. Engraved on the rotunda in English, Hindi, Urdu and Gurmukhi is the inscription:

THEY DIED FOR ALL FREE MEN

Sources:

"*Burma - The Longest War*". Louis Allen. St Martins Press, 1984

"*The Longest Retreat*". Tim Carew. Natraj Publishers, 1989

"*Sons of John Company*". John Gaylor. Spellmount Ltd, 1992

Indian Army Lists 1933 & 1939

Editor's note: I showed the above article to Brigadier John Randle who wrote:

I was 2/Lt Randle, aged just 20, with only five months' service, and as raw an officer as they came. In November 1941 we were training in Central India to go, in January 1942, to the Middle East, probably Iraq - one had hardly heard of Burma! It was Pearl Harbour and the Japanese attack on the British in the Far East in December 1941 which changed everything. 46 Brigade and my battalion did not in fact go to Burma until January 1942.

Our primary role at Kuzeik was to prevent the Japanese crossing the mighty Salween River from Pa-an. To attempt to achieve this we were ordered to establish company strength patrol bases north and south of Kuzeik; a third company was required to man positions on the river facing east towards Pa-an in case the Japanese made an assault crossing. This left only one company to attempt to construct defences on the 600 yard front to meet an attack from the west - as indeed happened. To say, however, that we were "entrenched" is an overstatement. The dug positions were negligible.

I did not know L/Naik SULTAN MOHAMMAD. From his home address he was clearly a Yusufzai Pathan in 'A' (Pathan) Company. They were holding the left of our position. However, the night before a platoon of 'A' Company and my 10 Platoon were in the company base five miles south of Kuzeik and were overrun - and virtually wiped out. He may have been killed there.

In addition to Siri Kanth's DSO, Naik AMIR KHAN of my 'B' Company got an immediate award of a posthumous IOM - a very high award. One of our company commanders was recommended for an MC, but it was not awarded.

INDIAN GENERAL SERVICE - A STUDY IN MINIATURE UNOFFICIAL CLASPS

Paul Brewster

(Editor's Note: Paul exhibited a collection of miniature Indian General Service Medals at the annual convention of the Orders and Medals Research Society in London in September and deservedly won a couple of awards. His exhibit included an extremely good monograph, copies of which he generously made available to others. The following extract on Unofficial Clasps is taken from that monograph)

BURMA 1830-32

An Indian General Service Medal 1854 with a clasp for BURMA 1830-32. The clasp is the standard type for this medal, but the wording is rather crude and not very clear. The medal was probably "made up" by someone who felt they deserved some form of reward for services carried out. But what happened in Burma during this time? In Lieutenant F G Cardew's excellent book, "*Services of the Bengal Native Army (1757-1895)*" this period is written of as follows:

> *"....the military operations of the next eleven years may be dismissed in a few words. These were, indeed, only necessitated by occasional demonstrations of turbulence and disaffection, none of which on this side of India reached an extent of any importance".*

Cardew then tells of three main *"demonstrations of turbulence and disaffection"*. The first of these was a religious war in Lower Bengal where a colony of fanatical Mohammedans of the Wahabi sect fell out with the local population and went on the rampage. They were followed by the 11th and 48th Bengal Infantry who eventually dispersed them, but with a loss of some seventeen or eighteen sepoys. The second disturbance was in Upper Assam in 1830 where an

incursion was made by the Singphos who were quickly driven back by a detachment of the 42nd Bengal Infantry under the Political Agent. The last, and most serious, of these events actually started in 1829 when two British Officers, Lieutenants Bedingfield and Burlton along with a detachment of the Assam Light Infantry were attacked and killed at Nanklao in the Khasiah Hills by some 500 Khasias. Their murder was avenged by Captain F G Lister who led the Sylhet Light Infantry and defeated the enemy at Mamlu, losing one sepoy killed and five wounded. Cardew ends with the following:

> *"A desultory conflict was maintained for two years in the difficult jungles of the frontier, until at length tranquillity was restored in 1832".*

Although the Honourable East India Company (HEIC) did issue medals to the forces they employed to reward campaign service, these awards did not extend to any Imperial forces who may well have fought alongside the HEIC troops in the same action. Indeed, many of the campaigns that the British were engaged in during their time in India were not rewarded with medals, but this is especially noticeable in the early years and is, of course, the reason that the Army of India medal was eventually issued in 1851.

This lack of reward was probably accepted by the officers and men who fought at the time but what were their feelings when suddenly in the 1850s it would seem that a plethora of medals were being issued to commemorate actions fought years ago? I suspect that it is at this point that someone decided that their efforts all those years ago deserved some form of reward.

But why use the IGS 1854 and not the Army of India Medal which would, looking at the dates concerned, seem to be a more obvious candidate? The answer to this will never be known; it may be that when this medal was put together by the tailor/jeweller he did not have any Army of India medals available and so used an IGS 1854. Another explanation is that the person who ordered this medal wanted to use "the new medal". It should be remembered that the first clasp issued with the IGS 1854 rewards those involved in the fighting in Burma in 1853 (clasp PEGU) and it could have been the issue of this clasp that prompted the disgruntled ex-soldier (or serving soldier) to have the medal made.

It would be interesting to see if there is any correspondence on this matter in the India Office as, whoever had this medal put together may well have tried to get their service recognised officially first, only resorting to making up a medal once this was refused.

WUNTHO

The medal in question is an Indian General Service medal 1854 with three clasps, "BURMA 1885-7", "BURMA 1887-9" and "WUNTHO". But where is Wuntho and what happened there that prompted someone to have a clasp made up for his miniature medal?

Again Cardew is a good first port of call and I was more than a little surprised when I looked in the index and found Wuntho listed. I fully expected to have to read from the Burma war on, in the vain hope that some mention of this place or area might be found. Under *Operations of 1886-87* Cardew describes the main events of the next twelve months in which Bengal troops were engaged. The force engaged in the Burma war had been split into six Brigades; it is the Second Brigade that is of interest.

"In the Second Brigade a mixed force under Brigadier-General Cox consisting of detachments of the 7th Bengal Cavalry, the Hazara Mountain Battery, Bengal Sappers, Royal Welsh Fusiliers (23rd Foot), and 26th Bengal Infantry, marched to Wuntho where a column from Shwebo co-operated; the latter was composed of detachments of artillery, of British infantry, and of the 1st and 12th Bengal Infantry. No resistance was met with, and the inhabitants of Wuntho were disarmed".

So that would seem to explain the unusual clasp. Someone was awarded his full size medal with the two normal Burma clasps, but also wanted to commemorate his service at Wuntho with the Second Brigade and so had a clasp "made up" for his miniature.

If only life was that simple! I had shown the medal to Denis Poole and asked him if he had ever heard of WUNTHO. Although he hadn't he did promise to see if he could find anything out for me. The information that was kindly forwarded to me a few days later put an entirely different light on the origins of this clasp. The information came from an article by Alex G Stone in which he lists the Indian Campaigns 1778-1914 - "*A Chronology of the Military and Naval Affairs of India".* To quote from this article:

"The services which qualified for the India General Service Medal 1854 bar BURMA 1889-92 consisted of the following operations:

16 April-16 May 1889	*Poukhan Expedition*
17 Dec 1889-8 April 1890	*Tonhon Expedition*
1-4 Jan 1891	*Operations of Thetta*
8 Jan-14 Feb 1891	*Chinbok Column*
27 Jan-28 Mar 1891	*Momeik Column*
18 Feb - 7 May 1891	***Wuntho Field Force***
29 Mar-3 April 1891	*Tlang-Kang Column*
25 Dec 1891-29 Feb 1892	*Baungshe Column*
15 Dec 1891-18 April 1892	*Irrawaddy Column*
15 Dec 1891-7 April 1892	*North Eastern Column*
1-20 Jan 1890	*Chinbok Column "*

So was the clasp made up to commemorate the Operations carried out by the Second Brigade between 1886-87, or the Wuntho Field Force in 1891? Trying to decide which of the two options is correct is almost impossible; the first would mean that the clasp was made in addition to the two Burma clasps - was Wuntho garrisoned and is this why it was added on; whilst the second would mean that the clasp was put on instead of the official clasp BURMA 1889-92 - but why?

MANIPUR 1891

The clasp MANIPUR 1891 was found on an Indian General Service medal 1854, along with the clasp BURMA 1885-87. The medal is a standard (if there is such a thing) miniature IGS 1854, although there is no claw connecting the suspender to the medal.

As with all these unofficial clasps the question is, "what service does this represent, and why is there not an official clasp?" Fortunately this clasp has a date on it so tying down the events associated with this clasp is fairly easy. Being familiar with many of the Indian campaigns I had little or no trouble identifying the particular expedition associated with this clasp.

Whoever had this clasp made should in fact have had N.E. FRONTIER 1891 put on his medal as this was the "official" clasp for this campaign. This is a fairly scarce bar to the IGS 1854 with approximately 3000 being issued.

Manipur is a small state near to Assam and Burma. Although it had a small army it relied on the British to protect it from attacks by the Burmese. In 1886 the Rajah, Chandra Kirti Singh, died leaving eight sons, each of whom wanted to be enthroned as the new Rajah. However, one son occupied the post of Senaputti (Commander-in-Chief), so he deposed the ruler and appointed a Rajah of his choice, his brother Kula Chandra Dhuya Singh.

The Chief Commissioner for Assam, Mr J W Quinton, was instructed on 21 February 1891 to remove the Senaputti. He proceeded to Imphal with a small force led by Colonel Skene. This consisted of 400 Gurkhas of the 42nd and 44th Bengal Infantry (there was already a company of the 43rd Bengal Infantry as a garrison force). Although he was well received by the Rajah he was unsuccessful in getting the Senaputti to leave his post. Diplomacy having failed, the Senaputti's residence was surrounded by the British on 24 February and an attempt was made to remove him by force. This failed and the small force was attacked by the Manipur army, forcing it to retire to the Residence there. Late that evening Mr Quinton, Colonel Skene and Lieutenant Simpson were asked to attend a conference at the Rajah's palace. They must have felt confident to leave the Residence but this was misplaced and on arrival at the palace they were put to death. With the leaders of the expedition dead the Residence was attacked again, forcing the garrison to withdraw.

The response of the British was swift and predictable. An expedition consisting of three columns was put together; the Kohima Column commanded by Major General H Collett CB, the Silchar Column commanded by Colonel R H F Rennick, and the Tammu Column commanded by Brigadier General T Graham CB.

All three Columns reached Imphal on 27 April, but only the Tammu Column had suffered any serious opposition. On 25 April it had come across an entrenchment at Bapam, six miles north of Palel. The Column attacked the Manipuris who, realising that they were trapped, fought almost to the last.

Once Imphal was occupied all serious resistance ceased, and although all of the senior Manipuris had fled they were captured within a short space of time and put to death.

To go back to the question I asked at the beginning; why did this person have the clasp MANIPUR 1891 made up and not use the official clasp N.E. FRONTIER 1891? There are two possibilities; the first is that many of the reference books actually refer to this campaign as the "Manipur" expedition. It may be that the owner of this medal, hearing that there was going to be a clasp issued to commemorate the campaign "jumped the gun" and had a clasp made up but did not guess the correct wording. The second possibility may be that the wording on the official clasp was meaningless (to him personally) so he had one made up that gave, as he saw it, the correct description for his service.

If any member knows of any other unofficial clasps I would be pleased to hear, either directly or via the Editor.

INDIANISATION - A MIXED BLESSING

Mike Cunningham

Prior to 1914 officers destined for King's Commissions in the Indian Army either graduated from the Royal Military College (RMC) Sandhurst, or transferred to the Indian Army from the British Army. They were all "Europeans". In 1919, the first batch of Indians entered the RMC and were commissioned as KCOs. This scheme had its drawbacks. The failure rate was higher than that of the British cadets. It was decided eventually to abandon the RMC scheme and train the Indians at a newly formed Indian Military Academy (IMA) at Dehra Dun from 1932. However, 142 Indians had been commissioned before the scheme was discontinued, which represented the 88% pass rate (*not exactly as massive failure rate*). The new IMA was designed to produce 60 officers a year - a significant increase - and also 20 officers for the Indian States Forces (ISF), a much needed reform.

[Whilst the Sandhurst graduates had been known as KCOs, it was, for reasons explained below, decided to distinguish the graduates of Dehra Dun destined for the "Indianisation" programme by calling them Indian Commissioned Officers (ICOs). These short titles are used, where appropriate, as shorthand in the following text]

The Indianisation policy began in 1923 when certain cavalry regiments and infantry battalions (but not whole infantry regiments) were selected to be manned by ICOs. As vacancies were created they were filled by Indians, if sufficient numbers were available. This was intended to avoid the situation whereby British junior officers would be subordinate to Indians. The scheme was modest to begin with, but was later broadened to include more units. Many of the small number of Indian KCOs refused to transfer, preferring to stay with their original units. They were concerned that they would be treated as second class officers.

The treatment of the ICOs was different to that of KCOs because the latter did not serve as platoon commanders in their regiments. Instead, they were assigned temporarily to British units. Effectively, this involved understudying British platoon commanders. This scheme had its shortcomings. Some regiments treated their Indian Army "guests" badly, which at least had the advantage of giving them some sympathy for their new Indian colleagues. The ICOs were posted to the units selected for "Indianisation" as platoon commanders and served in much the same way as their British counterparts. This was unpopular because they saw it as demeaning - being treated rather like VCOs. It also slowed down the opportunities for promotion. A lot of ICOs would be chasing a few senior regimental appointments, unlike their KCO "brother officers".

The scheme for employing ICOs as platoon commanders ("Platoonisation" (!)) also had its consequences for the Jawans. It would eventually restrict the careers of ORs to Warrant Officer. The number of these would be increased as certain VCO duties would devolve to them, but that was no compensation.

The other disadvantages that the "Indianisation" scheme had were concerned with pay and authority. ICOs were not paid expatriate allowances. This was logical because they were not expatriates. It did mean, however, that they were less well-off than their British colleagues and, perhaps more importantly, treated differently. The problem of authority stemmed from

the fact that KCOs were effectively interchangeable with British Army officers for extra-regimental employment. They could hold command and staff appointments in any theatre where British Army units were stationed. The status of ICOs was akin to that of officers of the Dominion armies whose authority was restricted to their own services and countries. When they were serving with the British Army they received temporary commissions to eliminate any problems. The ICOs were to have full command and control opportunities within India, or when serving with Indian formations, but were not interchangeable with the British service. Probably they would have been treated like Dominion officers and given temporary commissions. In practice this was never put to the test before World War II.

The Indianisation programme was unpopular with both ICOs and Indian politicians. It also indicated that British officers intended to remain with the Indian Army almost indefinitely. The Indianised units would not begin to produce senior officers in any numbers until the early 1950s, when it was estimated that 50% of Indian Army commissioned officers would be Indians. Full Indianisation was not expected before 1962. Of course, the scheme did not survive the early part of World War II. Indians were commissioned into most regiments (the Gurkhas remained the exception) and VCOs were re-introduced into the Indianised units. By the end of WWII there were 15,000 Indian officers other than VCOs.

There is little doubt that Indianisation was a mixture of good and bad. It pandered to the prejudices of those who could not envisage British officers serving as subordinates to Indians within regiments. There were those who thought, genuinely, that educated Indians did not have "officer-like qualities", and the behaviour of some of the Princes seemed to prove the point. There were others, like Claude Auchinleck, who supported the process. The pace of Indianisation was slow. However, it recognised that Indians should be included in the Officer Corps proper. The War accelerated the process, but it is unlikely that the pre-war system could have survived for long. The increasing number of Indians in the ICS, and the introduction of provincial governments headed by Nationalist politicians would have accelerated peace-time development. The Indian Army would not have been able to resist so significant a change. Even if World War II had been avoided, a fully-independent India would not have tolerated a British presence so long term.

FORGETTING THE SAGA OF SACRIFICE

Rear Admiral (Retd) Satyindra Singh

Many old timers would remember a very distinguished Indian from Lahore, Sir Ganga Ram. We had a hospital and school named after him in pre-partition Lahore and we have a hospital named after him in the capital. Sir Ganga Ram, apart from being a leading engineer, was also a great philanthropist who did the country proud.

In the capital in September 1998 was his great granddaughter who was born in Lahore in pre-partition India. The family moved to Delhi in 1947. She went to England to study law in the early 50's, did her LL.B from University College, London, and was called to the Bar from the Inner Temple. She later taught English to Asian children there and, in 1976, was elected Conservative Councillor for the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. In 1986 she

was elected Mayor of the Royal Borough, the first Asian woman to hold such an assignment. She was a British delegate to the Consultative Assembly, again being the first minority person to be a delegate to this Assembly from any Member State of the European Union. In 1990 she was elevated to the House of Lords, the first Asian woman to be a member of the British Parliament. She now carries the title Baroness Shreela Flather. A lady with a distinguished lineage and achievements who visited Delhi to sponsor a very worthy cause.

She met with a handful of Indian World War II veterans at the USI (United Service Institution of India) on 14 September. Present were four former Chiefs of Staff: Admiral Nanda, Generals Omi Malhotra and V.N. Sharma and Air Chief Marshal Mehra. Also present were General Candeth and a couple of others. The Adjutant General, Lieutenant General S.S. Grewal, was also there; I too was present by invitation.

Baroness Flather mentioned that it was a sad fact that the enormous contribution made by the 'Old Indian Armed Forces' in both World Wars has never been fully appreciated or recognised in this country. There were nearly 3 million men from the Indian sub-continent who fought in the Allied Forces in Asia, North Africa and Europe. Every one of these men was a volunteer - it was the largest volunteer army the world has ever known! And we have many of our own volumes by Indian authors which categorically state that the Indian Army was never a mercenary army. A well-known columnist who still churns out many pieces and on diverse subjects had the temerity to state in one of his pieces nearly five years ago that "When Indians were fighting for independence and courting imprisonment, Britain was hauling rented men to the west to fight a war which was not theirs....". In my piece as a 'response' I had referred him to General Thimayya's biography, "*Soldiers Life*" and I quote from pages 123-124 where Thimayya records his conversation with Motilal Nehru when he was posted to Allahabad in the twenties and when the freedom movement was at its peak; Thimayya was a young Lieutenant at that time. In the wake of the frequent flag marches which Thimayya and his colleagues had to undertake at that time, they met Motilal Nehru and other leaders and told them that they were Indians first and that to help the cause of independence they were prepared to resign their commissions.

Motilal Nehru's response was both wise and so relevant. Said he: "Gentlemen, you have my sympathy. In my opinion the contribution that you are making to the cause is a difficult one". The officers protested. What was their leisurely life of games and a bit of marching compared to the efforts made by the patriots? Motilal Nehru brushed this aside. "First", he said, "nothing will please the British more than your resignations. For thirty years we have fought for Army Indianisation. We are now winning the fight. If you give up, we shall have lost it." The officers were silent. "But that's not the most important reason you must continue", he said. "We are going to win independence. Perhaps not this year, or the next, but sooner than later the British will be driven out. When that happens, India will stand alone. We will have no one to protect us but ourselves. It is then that our survival will depend on men like you." "You mean that we should stay on in the Army to learn as much as we can?" Thimayya asked. "Exactly", Motilal Nehru said!

In the wake of the "Quit India" movement in August 1942, Gandhiji was detained at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune. Captain Prem Bhagat, our first Victoria Cross winner in World War II, accompanied by another engineer officer, Arjan Singh, called on Gandhiji. Gandhiji responded quietly but firmly that they could best serve their country by continuing their chosen professions because when the country achieved Swaraj, it would need dedicated professional soldiers. I quote all this to debunk the very 'for the audience' and synthetic view

of some of our present day politicians that these were not our wars. And it was indeed hurting for our Foreign Minister, Pranab Mukherji, who took part in the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II (VE Day and VJ Day) in England and Tokyo, to compound matters by also declaring that these were not 'our wars'! They have many lessons to learn.

Baroness Flather said that she was saddened to see how little was done to commemorate the enormous contribution and sacrifice made by the peoples of the Indian sub-continent. Many people, however, recognised that this century could not be allowed to end without giving due recognition to this great army, not only to remember the past but also for the sake of future generations of Asians and the British, so that all may understand the sacrifices which made it possible for them to enjoy their freedom today. The Indian Army took part in some of the toughest fighting in the war in Burma, the Western Desert, Italy and in particular Monte Casino. Of the 27 Victoria Crosses awarded in the Burma Campaign no fewer than 20 were won by them. There were also cases of very gallant action by the then Royal Indian Navy and the Royal Indian Air Force. In the case of the former, the very gallant action of HMIS BENGAL, a small minesweeper of only 733 tonnes sinking a 10,000 tonne Japanese raider in November 1942 is near unparalleled. The second raider escaped but with considerable damage. Apart from the commander being awarded the DSO, two Indian sailors were awarded the IDSM and one Indian Petty Officer was awarded the IOM. It was truly like the biblical story of David vanquishing Goliath with sling and stone!

The RIN also took an active part in operations in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf, earning two Distinguished Service Crosses for outstanding gallantry.

Baroness Flather said that a site has been located in London for a suitable memorial for these heroes; it is to be the most prestigious location in London. The memorial will take the form of Gates across Constitution Hill at Hyde Park Corner. This is an ambitious project as Constitution Hill has five lanes and it also provides the Ceremonial Way from Hyde Park through the Burton Arch on to Buckingham Palace. The Gates, therefore, will be in three sections, double gates on each side for two lanes and another smaller double gate in the centre to provide for processions. It is estimated that this project will cost approximately £1.8 million. There will be four piers for the six gates and it is proposed to name each pier after one of the four countries of the sub-continent. She mentioned that many in the UK would willingly contribute their mite for this recognition of heroes. It is now our part to ensure the completion of the project before the end of 1999. The Baroness called on General V.P. Malik, the COAS, and she told me that the Prime Minister had also kindly agreed to meet her.

Baroness Flather stated that the debt to these soldiers is still due and must be acknowledged before the memory has faded for ever; it is a debt of honour and once these gates are completed and in place, they will be there for a long time to remind everyone, including Asian children, what is owed by all of us to their ancestors. It will truly be a gateway from the past to the future.

In response to Tim Wilsey's article "Men of Harlech: Chilianwala and the tragic 24th Foot" (Vol. 15, No 3, page 106), Brian Stevens writes:

In the grounds of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, there is an obelisk commemorating by name the 255 of all ranks of the 24th Foot who fell on 13 January 1849 at Chillianwallah (sic).

Some years ago the Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research (SAHR), Volume XLVIII, No 193, Spring 1970, included a note on a mural tablet in Rochester Cathedral to Ensign Francis Wrightson Robinson, 56th Bengal Native Infantry who was killed at Chilianwala. His regiment was pierced by the Sikh Cavalry and driven back and nearly destroyed, suffering a loss of 8 officers and 322 other ranks killed and wounded. The dead included, besides Robinson, Lieutenant W W Warde and four Indian officers. According to Fortesque in his "*History of the British Army*" Volume XII, page 458, the Brigade, the 4th of Sir Walter Gilbert's 2nd Division, composed of the 29th Foot and the 30th & 56th BNI incurred the following casualties: 29th, 241; 30th, 285; 56th, 316. These were presumably other ranks.

The article in the Journal of the SAHR mentions the 24th Foot and includes a sketch of the obelisk in Chelsea. However, according to the article there is or was also an obelisk on the site of the Field Hospital at Chilianwala which had the following inscription:

"*On both sides innumerable warriors passed from this life, dying in mortal combat*".

Notes on the graves of the officers at least are included in Volume II, part 2 of "*Biographical Notices of Military Officers and others mentioned in Inscriptions on Tombs and Monuments in the Punjab, North West Frontier Province, Kashmir and Afghanistan*" compiled by Captain G W de Rhe-Philipe and published in Lahore in 1912. The entry for Robinson's grave is No 752. It is possible that the text of the missing plaque mentioned by Tim Wilsey is contained in this volume.

In passing, it might be noted that the 24th (The 2nd Warwickshire) Regiment of Foot could be regarded as the unluckiest Regiment in the British Army as they formed part of General Burgoyne's force which was forced to capitulate at Saratoga during the American War of Independence. The refusal of the United States Congress to honour the terms of the capitulation and the subsequent treatment of the British soldiers by the American civil authorities remain a lasting stain on their reputations. This combined with Chilianwala and Isandlwana certainly give them a strong claim to that title.

In response to Tim Ash's article "*The Sappers and Miners at Meerut 1857*" (Volume 15, No 3, page 100) Brian Stevens has also commented:

Tim Ash mentions the death of the Commandant, Captain Edward Fraser, at the hand of an Afghan sentry. The 7th & 8th Companies of the Bengal Sappers and Miners were raised in 1843 from personnel of Broadfoot's Sappers and Miners which was raised for the service of Shah Shuja during the First Afghan War and which was in the process of being reduced. This

unit was a mixed one of Hindustanis, Gurkhas, Hazaras and Afghans. As reward for its distinguished services two companies were raised from amongst the remaining men and added to the Bengal Corps. The 7th & 8th Companies were amongst those present at Meerut at that time and this might explain the presence of an Afghan soldier. I do not think this point has previously been raised.

- Chris Kempton takes issue with a number of points contained in the article "*A Forgotten Hero - Subadar Barkat Singh GC, 4/2 Punjab*" (Volume 15, No 3, page 97):

Barkat Singh was recommended for the Medal of the Order of the British Empire for Gallantry (Military) which almost immediately (30 July 1937) changed name to the Empire Gallantry Medal (Military). In September 1940 the EGM was superseded by the George Cross and all living EGM holders were required to exchange to the GC. There is no record of Barkat Singh's action in the regimental history and this is a fairly common occurrence with both EGMs and Albert Medals, possibly because they were not 'active service' awards.

The last paragraph of the article is entirely misleading in that it gives the impression that there was a protracted struggle "well over thirty two years" to obtain a monetary award which had been denied Barkat Singh. It also seems fairly certain that a VCO (not then JCO as mentioned in the article), even the acting Subadar Major, would have been in "protracted correspondence" on such a matter.

In fact there was no gratuity attached to the EGM and the £100 annuity for the George Cross was only promulgated, for all living holders, under the third Warrant of 19 May 1965, published in the London Gazette of 15 June 1965. The delay therefore was from June 1965 to April 1971, just under five years, and this may well have been due to difficulties in tracing all the living recipients.

Barkat Singh was a fairly regular visitor to the VC & GC Association reunions in UK so it is possibly slightly surprising that he was not aware of the gratuity after nearly five years.

He died in India on 18 December 1991.

- T J O'Reilly writes:

Captain Kynand HAWDON 21st (FF) Cavalry (was 1 Punjab Cavalry). Served Waziristan 01-02, South Africa 1902 and North West Frontier 1908. Died Shinigan on 2 July 1910. A photograph of this individual is one of the few items I don't have.

Captain E G SUTTON 5th Bn (Napier's), 6th Rajputana Rifles. Commissioned 16 July 1920. Unattached List 1 October 1936. Served Waziristan 1921-24. Any information about him would be appreciated.

- Brigadier Sudhir Sharma, the Military Adviser at the High Commission for India in London, is seeking information about Major Francis Heyword Morley of 169 Battalion, LAA, Royal Artillery, who was killed in the battle of El Alamein at Bir-El-Gobi on 27 May 1942, possibly as a result of accidental friendly fire. His adjutant, Lieutenant Heggy, also died. Morley was mentioned in despatches. If anyone has studied this battle in detail, or was

there, and can add anything would they please contact Brigadier Sharma at The High Commission of India, Military Adviser's Department, India House, Aldwych, London WC2B 4NA.

BOOK NOTES

- **"***TALES FROM THE BURMA CAMPAIGN 1942-1945***"** edited by John Nunneley. Burma Campaign Fellowship Group, 6 Ashfield Close, Petersham, Surrey TW10 7AF. 183 pages. ISBN 0 9532138 0 3 £12.25

This lovely book contains 61 short contributions by those, both British and Japanese, who took part in the Burma Campaign. Each contribution reflects a particular aspect which the author considers significant, or which etched itself in his memory. The book is divided into ten main sections and the contributions cover on average two or three pages only. I enjoyed it enormously. (ANM)