

DURBAR Volume 18, No.4, Winter 2001

THE EVOLUTION OF INDIAN NAVAL FLAGS

The article on this subject by Maitland Thornton (DURBAR, Vol. 18, No 1, Spring 2001, pp19-24) excited quite a response. Space does not permit me to publish all letters in full and so I have attempted to collate the various points made and include them in a series of bullet points below. Reference to figure numbers are to the illustrations accompanying Maitland's original article. My thanks to Ian Sumner, Peter Freeborn, Tim Ash, and a non-member, David Prothero for their contributions. Ed.

- The earliest reference to an ensign appears in the Court Minutes of the London East India Company, dated 10 November 1609, when a silk ensign with the Company's arms (see illustration below - these are not the same as the HEIC's arms) 'in silk or metal' was ordered for the ship *Trade's Increase*. No further details are given, but the sheet was probably white.



- A Royal proclamation of 12 April 1606 stipulated that all British ships were to fly the new Union Flag at the main top; English ships were also to fly the flag of St. George at the fore top. Court Minutes for 16 March 1629 record that, when with other Company ships, the senior Company officer should fly the Union Flag alone as a mark of his position.
- From at least 1614 Company ships trading with Japan had begun to use a flag striped red and white to indicate their nationality, since the flag of St. George with its red cross was repugnant to official Japanese sentiment, at that time violently anti-Christian. From these beginnings the use of the striped flag in Eastern waters spread, possibly into Home waters as well because in March 1685 its use on the 'English side' of St. Helena was forbidden, and Company ships were enjoined to wear the flag of St. George and a Red Ensign.
- In 1660 the use of the Union Flag was restricted to King's ships only, so it is possible that the Company's striped ensign (Figure 1) dates from this period, suitably modified with a canton of St. George. The first mention of it does not occur until 1673, in a traveller's

account by Dr. John Fryer. The use of the striped ensign was restricted to Eastern waters and below St. Helena (15⁰ South) and these instructions were contained in sailing instructions to Commanders up to 1688 after which they disappear. Our correspondents differ in opinion as to whether the rule was later relaxed, and the ensign worn in Home waters as well, or whether Queen Anne's proclamation of 1707 prohibiting all merchantmen from wearing anything other than the Red Ensign would not also have applied to Company ships between England and St. Helena, especially as they were constantly asking for favours from the Lord High Admiral

- The British have a penchant for nicknames and the red and white horizontal stripes led to the ensign being referred to as the 'Gridiron' flag. The most likely number of stripes was twelve, but contemporary flag charts and books show wide variations.
- On 24 February 1824 the Company acceded to an Admiralty instruction that forbade the use of the ensign. All British merchantmen were now to wear the Red Ensign and no other. The Company's flag could now only be used as a jack or signal flag. For a corps d'elite such as the Maritime Service to lose its own flag must have been a wrench, and it may well have lingered on in Eastern waters after 1824.
- The use of the flag with vertical red bar Fig 4 - probably a modified White Ensign - was certainly in use by the time of the first Burma War in 1824, according to contemporary prints. Maitland made the point in his article that the vertical red stripe was not always apparent. Our correspondents differ in their opinions on this - one is of the view that the Bombay Marine adapted their ensign to include the red cross two stripes wide whilst the Maritime Service did not include it in their design, though East Indiamen when used as privateers did use it. Another is of the opinion that the cross appears to have been worn in Indian waters by all kinds of Company vessels up to 1821, and thereafter by the Marine alone.
- An Admiralty Warrant of 12 June 1827 granted the Bombay Marine the right to wear in addition to the Red Ensign, a Union Flag and red 'long' (i.e. commissioning) pennant, and this may have seen the end of the striped flag. Theoretically, therefore, the Red Ensign was worn by all trading vessels from 24 February 1824, by the Bombay Marine from 28 February 1828 (i.e. when the Warrant was promulgated in India) to 1 May 1830, by the Indian Navy from that date until 30 April 1863, and by the Bombay Marine again until April 1865.

A letter from the Secretary of State for India dated 28 February 1865 conveyed the instruction of the Admiralty that vessels of Bombay were henceforth to wear a (plain) Blue Ensign. This was modified in 1879 when an Admiralty letter dated 2 July 1879 granted a new ensign to the Indian Marine consisting of a Blue Ensign with the badge of the Order of the Star of India in the fly (Fig. 6), not an Indian 'Spinning Wheel (illustration below). The Warrant for the new ensign was not actually issued until 21 April 1884, though it is possible that ships jumped the gun and adopted the new design in 1879. This flag continued in use as the ensign until 11 November 1928, when the Royal Indian Marine adopted the White Ensign. The defaced Blue Ensign became the jack at the same time. (The Royal Bombay Yacht Club was still flying the defaced Blue Ensign at their premises near the Appolo Bundar in the 1960s.)



- The flag for Army Department vessels (Fig. 8) is as shown in various books, including “*In the Wake*” by Cdr E C Streatfeild-James and “*The Royal Indian Navy 1612-1950*” by Cdr D J Hastings, but is probably wrong in that it should probably be the Admiralty anchor (plain with no cable) rather than that of the Lord High Admiral (anchor with cable). There is also some doubt about the dates 1877 to 1897 quoted in Maitland’s article.
- Local Indian Government vessels were permitted a Blue Ensign with the lion crest of the Company in the fly in an Admiralty Warrant of 9 April 1884, though the illustration at Fig. 5 seems to be an adaptation in that the original crown between the lion’s paws has been changed for an orb, a factor which gave rise to the irreverent title of the flag as “the monkey and the coconut” flag. Additionally each department flew a pennant at the bows with the name of the department:

Customs	blue pennant	white letters
Water Police	white pennant	blue letters
Pilots	white pennant	red letters
Port Trust	red pennant	white letters
Medical	yellow pennant	black letters

Vessels in the Customs and Port Trust were supposed to fly a Red Ensign instead of a Blue one.

- The origins of the jack are even more obscure. Such striped flags (Fig. 10) were used in the early seventeenth century. The date at which the vertical red bar was added - probably a modified flag of St. George - is not known. It was used as a jack by trading vessels, and by the Bombay Marine prior to 1828 (though from 1801 onwards the latter tended to prefer the Union Jack). Its name was changed officially from ‘Company’s Jack’ to ‘Indian Jack’ by an Indian Naval Squadron Order of 22 June 1860. Its use as a jack ceased on 30 April 1863,

though it continued in use as a signal flag to denote a court martial on board, as a Flag Superior when making a ship's number, and as a jack by native pallinars. Peter Freeborn made the point that the term 'jack' in the modern and accepted naval sense is the small flag flown at the jack staff at the bow of a ship when anchored, moored alongside or aground. The 'Company's Jack' was more akin to a steamship company's house flag - a larger version of the jack possibly two or three yards long, which was displayed at the mainmast head in port and at sea when identification was required. It was this large jack that was ceremoniously hauled down on 30 April 1863.

- We have conflicting dates for the introduction of the jack with blue border (Fig. 12) - Admiralty Warrant of either 1879 or 21 April 1884, though the consensus is that it should not have been used before 1884.

- I have been offered two versions to the origin of the title 'Admiral of the Mogul'. The first has the Company aiding the suppression of a revolt by the Sidis of Surat in 1759; the second has the Sidis as hereditary Admirals of the Mogul Fleet whose powers to protect the Mogul fleet from pirates had declined by 1759 and so the Bombay Marine stepped in to fill the vacuum. What is agreed is that the post of 'Admiral of the Mogul' was held by a Captain of the Bombay Marine between 1759 and 1829 and that the Admiral wore the Mogul's flag at the mainmast and the Company's flag at the forepeak. In his "*History of the Indian Navy 1613 to 1863*" C R Low wrote that the emoluments of the post were twenty times larger than the salary of the Governor of Bombay.

- The commodore of Company's convoys flew a broad red pennant (Fig. 15) from at least 1727. Commodore James, the Superintendent (Commander-in-Chief) of the Bombay Marine, hoisted his broad pennant in the *Pretender*, 44, in 1751. According to Bombay Marine regulations of c.1827, the Superintendent flew a broad pennant of St. George, a Commodore 1st Class, a red pennant, and the Commodore of the Persian Gulf Squadron a blue pennant. However, a dispute with the Royal Navy over the right of the Superintendent to fly a broad pennant led to an Admiralty Warrant being issued on 14 June 1848. The pennant was now to be red with a yellow cross and a yellow lion in the upper hoist canton (Fig. 16). One such very well preserved example, formerly flown by Captain Sir Robert Oliver, is held by the National Maritime Museum. The lower tail is some two feet longer than the upper, which is non-regulation, but appears to be how the flag was made up. By the same Warrant, Commodores 2nd Class wore the same flag, but without the lion. A blue version, for the Persian Gulf Squadron, was introduced by a Warrant of 24 April 1849. According to Hastings these Broad Pennants continued in use until 1863. A Broad Pennant for senior officers was re-introduced on 13 April 1909. Blue defaced with the Star of India, it was only worn in port when accompanied by other RIM ships. In November 1921 a red Broad Pennant was re-introduced for the Director of the RIM.

Trading vessels wore a striped masthead pennant with a double tail (Fig. 20), the Bombay Marine one with a single tail. The red pennant was authorised for the Bombay Marine on 12 June 1827; it was worn until 1 May 1830, and then by the Indian Navy until 30 April 1863.

- After Independence, Indian ships flew the national flag as a jack with the White Ensign at the stern until 26 January 1950, when the current ensign was introduced. The Pakistan Navy continued to use the White Ensign until 1956. The R.I.N.'s King's Colour, presented by King George VI, was laid up at Dehra Dun on Independence and replaced by a similar design

but with the lions of Asoka in the centre on the cross and a golden elephant in the lower fly corner.

- Although not addressed by Maitland Thornton, Roward has this to say about the Bombay Marine Battalion on page 36 of his work: ‘A letter from Captain D Campbell I.N. states, “As regards the Bombay Marine Battalion, I never heard of their having any special Regimental Colours. The Union Jack may have been used but it may have been the Company’s Jack with red stripes in the quarters.”’

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THE MACGREGOR MEMORIAL MEDAL AND DAFFADAR SHAHZAR MIR

J M A Tamplin

The MacGregor Memorial Medal has been the subject of a booklet by our late member Major Robert Hamond which was published in India in 1994. He was himself a medallist in 1939. He died in 1996.

The booklet contains a number of portraits of medallists which are largely British officers, and Indian officers post 1947. There are two pictures of Indian NCOs : Daffadar Shahzar Mir (1897) and Havildar Abdul Ghafoor (1933); naturally photographs of NCOs are not so readily available as are those to officers.

As it happens, Shahzar Mir figures in another work and in a better picture. It appears in *The Marches of Hindustan* by David Frazer (1907). He wears the IGS 1854 with one clasp (Hazara 1891), and the IGS 1895 with three clasps. Besides these he wears around his neck his MacGregor Medal.

Subsequently he was awarded the IDSM (G.O. 586/1907), and the OBI 2nd Class, 15 June 1912.

See also the article by A M Shaw in *The Medal Collector* of OMSA, March 1991, No 3, pp4-14; and *Journal* of IMC Society, 1985, pp2-4.

Web site note. This article carried a copy of the picture from Frazer's book but unfortunately the standard of reproduction does not bear repeating here.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY CORPS (INDIA)

Alan Harfield

The Indian Army suffered the loss of a number of regiments and personnel from corps and staff appointments as a result of the surrender of Hong Kong, Malaya and Singapore to the Japanese which, together with the losses during the retreat through Burma, created a need to release officers and soldiers from sedentary duties to join active service units. It was resolved that such posts could be filled by the formation of the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India) (WAC(I)) which took place in March 1942.

The corps was formed on the same basis as the women's service in the UK with the exception that corps personnel were "...to work with the Army and the Air Force in India..." unlike the British counterpart which had two separate organisations with the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) supporting the army, and the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) for the Royal Air Force. Later the WAC(I) was also to include a Naval section making it a tri-service corps.

Enlistment in the WAC(I) was open to "...all British subjects of any nationality who are over 18 years of age [and] have a good knowledge of English...". The regulations covering enlistment stressed that the "...Employment must be whole time..." and women serving in the Royal Indian Navy, the Nursing Service or the Censor's Department were not eligible to enlist. In this article it is intended to deal only with the army element and the details of naval and air force sections will be the subject of a later article.

Service was for the duration of the war and as recruitment was open to all, the composition of the corps consisted of domiciled Europeans, Anglo Indians and Indian ladies and in a report, published in 1945, the ratio was given as "...out of every eight auxiliaries one is European, three Anglo-Indians, three Indian Christian and only one a non-Christian Indian...".

The WAC(I) was controlled at GHQ New Delhi by a Directorate with the senior officer being of the rank of Chief Commander, although by 1944 the rank had been increased to Controller. The Commandant-in-Chief of the corps was H.E. Viscountess Wavell.

The officer ranks in the corps were:

<u>WAC(I) rank</u>	<u>Army rank</u>
Controller	Colonel
Chief Commander	Lieutenant Colonel
Senior Commander	Major
Junior Commander	Captain

Subaltern	Lieutenant
Second Subaltern	2nd Lieutenant

By 1944 the staff at the Directorate had increased to:

Controller
Director WAC(I)
Deputy Directors WAC(I) - six based at:- GHQ New Delhi; HQ North
Western Army; Southern Army; Eastern Army; Central Command
Delhi - all of whom had the title 'Regional Commander' (rank - Senior
Commander), and a Naval Wing which was commanded by a Chief
Officer.

By 1946, following the end of the Second World War, the staff officer establishment had been reduced and was then:

Director WAC(I) - ranking as Controller
Assistant Directors at Eastern and Northern Commands - ranking as Chief
Commanders (Lieutenant Colonel)
Deputy Assistant Director WAC(I) Naval Wing - ranking as First Officer.

The initial formation regulation stated that the corps would be organised in Local Platoons under the supervision and general administration of a local Administrative Commandant, or Station Commander, but under the direct command of a WAC(I) commissioned officer. Initially the scope of trades to be recruited was:

“...Clerks, typists and stenographers, in static formation headquarters including GHQ and Air Headquarters, or in static units or offices, or in field service units in such appointments which do not proceed overseas with the unit.

Switchboard operators, telephone orderlies, wireless operators, storewomen, dispensers, hospital orderlies, plotters in RAF, Observer Corps and Anti-aircraft operation rooms, Mess sergeants in reinforcement and other camps.

Motor drivers of staff [cars] and motor Ambulances etc.”

The original establishment of WAC(I) units was on a platoon basis with 1 officer and a minimum of 25 and a maximum of 71 other ranks. Within the platoon there was an Officer in command (Subaltern or Second Subaltern), one corporal clerk and one corporal storewoman. The remainder of the establishment was based on 'brick' sections of 1 sergeant and 22 other ranks or a sub-section of 1 corporal and 10 other ranks.

The authorised uniform of the corps was:

Jacket - khaki service dress, close fitting to waist, cut with front panel seam, back plain with centre seam split up to just below waist. Length to be according to height, but approximately 10 inches below the waist for a height of 5 ft. 6 ins.

Buttons gilt, GRI (Geo VI) pattern, four down centre of front, the lower button to be 2 inches below the waist, and four others, one on each of the four pockets.

Sleeves - pointed cuffs 5 inch at peak and 2¹/₄ inch deep at back (Officers jacket only).

Belt - same material, 2 inch wide with brass buckle.

Skirt - khaki, six gored type to reach 3 inches below the knee

Sari - For Indian ladies only - if preferred - fine cotton longcloth (khaki)

Shirt - khaki plain shirt with fixed collar, cotton.

Tie - khaki. Officers - silk if preferred. WO s and other ranks - same material as shirt.

Cap - khaki forage - same material as uniform with top pleated into a 2 ¹/₄ inch band, semi-soft and semi-stiff peak.

The scale of the uniform for WO s and other ranks to be purchased from uniform allowance was:

Jacket (serge) Winter	1
Skirts (serge) Winter *	1
Jacket, KD, Summer	3
Skirts, KD, Summer	3
Skirts, khaki twill (or Aertex pattern) collar attached	4
Ties, khaki	1
Buckle, brass	1
Caps, forage, KD, WAC(I)	1
Hat, pith with chin strap and bag	1
Shoes, brown, pairs	2
Laces, spare, pairs	1
Stockings, khaki cotton, pairs	4
Gloves woollen, pair	1
Greatcoat	1

*In the case of Indian ladies, Sari, khaki in lieu of skirt if preferred.

A khaki canvas handbag with a brown leather shoulder strap was later authorised for wear when proceeding to and from the place of work.

The following items were provided for all officers and other ranks:

Badge, cap, WAC(I)	1
Titles, pairs	1
Thongs, leather, whistle	1
Bottle, water	1
Brace, without buckle	1

Carrier, water bottle	1
Buttons, GRI (Geo VI) pattern, set	1
Haversack, GS	1

All members of the corps wore the authorised lanyard when on duty and on parade. A greatcoat was issued free to all ranks but was not provided in stations where the climate did not necessitate its use.

The wearing of the regulation uniform was restricted to when on parade, on duty or at an official function when attending in an official capacity. Members of the corps were permitted to wear 'bush jackets, with sleeves' in lieu of jackets during the summer months providing all members of the platoon were clothed the same. Also during the summer months a Platoon Commander could grant permission to dispense with the wearing of stockings and there is photographic evidence that members of the corps were permitted to wear khaki ankle socks and Indian pattern sandals. Also when wearing the khaki drill summer uniform the standard cap was, on occasion, replaced by the khaki drill pattern side hat with two GRI small buttons and the WAC(I) cap badge. Another alternative headdress was a khaki beret also worn with the corps cap badge.

The issue shoulder titles came in a variety of patterns as seen in a range of illustrations and included, brass numerals, khaki cloth 'slip-on' titles with 'WAC(I)' in black stitching, khaki epaulettes with 'WAC(I)' or 'W.A.C.(I).' stitched onto the epaulette material.

After six months training recruits could, if suitable, be selected for officer training while promotion in the ranks was based on the normal trade and rank structure that already existed in both the British and Indian armies. The WAC(I) platoons were widely scattered throughout India and by the end of the war the corps had 850 officers and 7,164 auxiliaries filling a wide variety of posts.

In the initial stages accommodation and food were not supplied and the volunteers generally lived 'at home', but this presented a problem to Directorate as in some areas volunteers were plentiful whereas in others few recruits volunteered, leaving posts unfilled. The recruiting terms were amended so that women volunteering could apply for 'General Service' which permitted them to serve in any part of India, or could enlist for 'Local Service' only. Those who wished to accept 'General Service' were provided with hostel accommodation.

The trade training and employment, pay and allowances and leave entitlement for personnel serving in the WAC(I) will be covered in a more detailed article.

Following the end of the war WAC(I) personnel were given the same facilities as British Troops in the pre-release Army Education Scheme and were also granted release leave. The leave schemes available for WAC(I) were governed by military regulations and the servicewomen who served between 3 September 1939 and 15 August 1946 qualified for a war gratuity.

The WAC(I) was disbanded in 1947 when independence was granted to India.

I am grateful to Mr W Y Carman, Mr C J Parrett, Squadron Leader (Retd) Rana Chhina and Mr Ashok Nath for kindly providing me with the majority of the research material on which this account of the WAC(I) has been based.



Three photos by R C Worts

A E PETRIE - WOMEN'S AUXILIARY CORPS (INDIA)

W Y Carman

To give substance to a now-departed service, the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India), a contemporary album and personal notes made by Mrs A E Petrie cover the years of her service in that Corps from 1942 until disbandment in 1947.

Agnes (always known as Anne) Elizabeth McMillan, born 20th June 1909 in Rathmines, near Dublin, worked with the Automobile Association when she became engaged to William H. Petrie in 1935. Unfortunately he had to take a post as an electrical engineer in New Delhi and it was not until 1938 that she was able to visit him and marry in India. In 1940 he volunteered to join the Auxiliary Forces India when he became a naval officer.¹

In 1942 Anne volunteered to join the Women's Auxiliary Corps, was commissioned on 15 October 1942 and soon was noted as such on her 'Identity card/Army in India' serial number 047603 dated 2 March 1943, which she signed but did not utilise the space for 'Left Thumb Print of Holder'. Added in green ink on the card is 'WAC/117', no doubt in reference to her military post. She was promoted to temporary rank of Senior Commander on 1 August 1943.

The official photograph in her identity card shows her in military dress, wearing a bush shirt of light khaki, turned-down collar and buttoned on the left, shoulder-straps carrying two metal stars of rank and the black (?) embroidered WAC(I) plus a dark-coloured lanyard on the left shoulder. Her folding F.S. cap of light khaki drill has two small buttons in front and the metal corps badge above.

In January 1943 Her Excellency Lady Linlithgow inspected No 2 Platoon of WAC(I) Bombay and the photograph of that event shows all the females in light khaki drill - cap F.S., bush shirt, skirt and hose with brown shoes, other ranks' chevrons in white tape, the strength being about one hundred. Around the waist a web belt with upright brass fasteners was worn. When not on parade a shirt and tie were to be seen.

On 'Battle of Britain Day' 1943, a parade was held with the local services being on duty and on this occasion Mrs Petrie wears an unusual headdress which may be a cotton covered

W.A.A.F. peaked cap with the WAC(I) badge in front. In March 1944 there was an inspection. On this occasion Air Chief Commandant Dame K J Trefussis Forbes CBE inspected the RAF company of the WAC(I) in Bombay with the intention of exploring the possibilities of employing women more intensively with the RAF. This must have been successful as a photograph taken on Mrs Petrie's birthday, 20 June 1944, shows her wearing WAAF eagles (white on dark blue rectangles) on both upper arms, engaged in recruiting duties and later meeting Sir Roger Lunley. It would seem that the officers of this section of the WAC(I) now wore the RAF side cap.

'Battle of Britain Day' 1944 brought another parade, still in light khaki with dark lanyard and brass buckle to cloth waist belt, but as commanding officer a peaked cap is worn. In December 1944 at the Officers' School in New Delhi all are wearing peaked caps and many seeking promotion wear numbered arms bands.

Two further group photographs show other ranks wearing the peaked cap, not the cap F.S., although some women have no headdress and wear a sash/shawl over the left shoulder and all seem to have the dark lanyard. The occasional white socks are to be seen with a collared shirt and a tie. In 1946 the war was over but the unit went to Burdwan Camp in Alipore and medals were issued, the War Medal, 1939-45 and the India Service Medal 1939-45, both for three years continuous service. In October certain officers and senior staff were at an AD Conference when all were wearing a large dark beret with the Corps badge over the left eye. The AD Conference in February 1947 was the one for disbandment and they were addressed by the Commander-in-Chief. In November 1947 Mrs Petrie was Commandant of WAC(I) at GHQ New Delhi with remnants of the unit and wearing the cold weather serge and the rank badges of a crown and two stars on the shoulder straps plus the dark WAC(I) title. The gorget patches on her tunic denote her position. But with Partition all was over for the WAC(I).

Notes:

1. William Henry Petrie, normally called Henry, was born on 1 January 1902, the second child (although the eldest son) of William and Charlotte Petrie. He was educated at St. Andrew's College, Dublin, and then apprenticed to the firm of A G Bruty, Electrical Engineers, Eden Quay, Dublin. In 1935 he was advised of a vacancy for an electrical engineer in the firm of F&C Osler in New Delhi, noted for the installation of beautiful chandeliers in the palaces of the great Maharajas. After being called to London for an interview, he applied for the job and was accepted.

In 1938 he married Anne McMillan and on the outbreak of war he continued his civilian work, but in 1940 he volunteered his services to the Army. He then purchased all necessary items for an officer. However, when he received his call-up papers he found that his electrical knowledge would be better suited to the Navy, abandoned his military garments and spent most of his years in Bombay as a DGRO - Degaussing Range Officer.

In 1945 the war ended, he applied for a regular commission in the Royal Navy and, after passing through the Officer's Selection Board, was granted the rank of Lieutenant. He was sent home at the expense of the Crown, where he managed to meet his wife before being appointed to HMS Achilles. This ship was later purchased by the Government of India and re-named HMIS Delhi, when he was promoted to the rank of Commander and returned to India in her.

On partition in 1947 British officers were no longer required in India and so he left with a gratuity and a pension. He spent a period in Cairo training the electrical branch of their navy before returning to England and resuming a civilian life, eventually dying in Surrey in 1969.



(Whilst still on the subject of women, see the note on “CHINTHE WOMEN - Women’s Auxiliary Service Burma 1942-1946” at page 128. Ed.)

NORTH WEST FRONTIER TOUR

George Dalton

(The proposed tour of India with members of the Military Historical Society, scheduled for January/February 2002, has been postponed because of the current political situation, as has another tour of the North West Frontier organised by David Saunders. It is fortunate, therefore, that George Dalton recorded these details of the May 2001 tour, since a repeat in the foreseeable future seems unlikely. Ed.)

Participants included Tim Ash and his wife Ruth, David Saunders and myself. Our guide was Naeem, from Karavan Leaders, and we were in the safe hands of several fine drivers over a period of three weeks.

ITINERARY and HIGHLIGHTS - 9 to 28 MAY, 2001.

9 May: Travel first to Lawrence Gardens (Bagh-e-Jinnah) for gentle stroll in the leafy surroundings. From there to Lahore Library (Quaid-e-Azam), the largest library in Pakistan. Then to Iqbal Park to climb the Minar-I-Pakistan, a 200 foot tower with fine views across the city. The day concludes with a drive along the Grand Trunk Road to Wagah, on the border with India, where we watch the ceremony that marks the closing of the border at sunset. The performance of the Pakistani Rangers was truly impressive.

10 May: The day began with a visit to the Garrison Church (St. Mary Magdalene). From there to the Lahore Central Museum - outside of which is found 'Kim's Gun', the great Zam Zammah. Then to the Badshahi Mosque, followed by the massive Lahore Fort built by Emperor Akbar. Our last stop is to admire the numerous fountains at Shalimar Gardens. The day ended with a 45 minute flight to Peshawar.

11 May: Late start today beginning with the Garrison Church, followed by the Frontier Corps Museum, in the Bela Hissar Fort, and on to the 'Old Bazaar' where there are several shops with British campaign medals.

12 May: Travel to the Khyber Pass (escorted by a member of the Khyber Khassadar Force) with a stop at Jamrud. Then on to Landi Kotal for a picnic lunch at the Michni Post, from which we could gaze through the Pass into Afghanistan. Return trip included views of Ali Masjid Fort and the splendid array of regimental crests/badges for units that have served in the Khyber; these were set into the bluffs above the road. Naeem surprised us with a stop at the Khyber Rifles Mess, where the Mess Secretary provided refreshment and engaged each person in conversation. We also toured the grounds and several rooms with impressive exhibits.

13 May: The Grand Trunk Road through Nowshera, which is the site of many Pakistan Army service schools, and where the road is lined with WWII vintage tanks. Next we board a launch for a ride to the confluence of the Kabul and Indus rivers, and to view Attock Fort (presently a major prison). David Saunders had arranged with the Pakistan Embassy in London for us to visit the Guides Chapel at Mardan, and we also spent time at the Guides Memorial for their stand at Kabul in 1879. Back in Peshawar it was a visit to the 'New Bazaar' (more medals), and then to Naeem's friend - "Abid Ali's Carpet Palace", where we enjoyed stimulating conversation and a presentation of fine carpets while sipping good Pakistani beer.

14 May: Ambela, Buner and Malakand Passes - eleven hours and 500 KM by mini-bus. Winding roads with everything from grossly overloaded lorries to tractors hauling harvesters - also busses and heavily burdened camels. Beautiful mountains and lovely valleys. Nothing much of military significance, though when we stopped for directions at a Police Post, they had never heard of "Craig Picket", but they did serve up cups of true Pakistani tea (hot, strong with lots of milk and sugar - all boiled together!).

15 May: Kohat Pass and the Handyside Arch (he was an Indian Police legend in the 1920's). All vehicles were being stopped and searched from top to bottom. There was one lorry so overloaded that it got stuck under the Arch. In Kohat we visited churches, cemeteries and the Cavagnari House (he was Commissioner there from 1866 to 1877 and died with the Guides at Kabul); the present Commissioner invited us in for a tour (but no refreshment).

16 May: A cup of tea and off to the airport at 4.45 am for the flight to Chitral. We made an extensive tour of the Fort (which is well preserved) and really 'lucked out' to be there on the day of a polo match. The whole town turned out - a band struck up across the way, then two male dancers came on the field to 'challenge' each other with foot-work, followed by a marching band of the Chitral Scouts, and finally polo (which was too fast a game for me). Half-time was fun - two teams of 'ruffians' fight for possession of a dead goat, which afterwards is roasted and shared between them.

17 May: Kalash Country - first stop was a school where David delivered notebooks and markers for fifty children; the materials had been paid for by a generous friend in England. The boys wear plain black caps and uniforms, whereas the girls' outfits are heavily decorated with beads. The Kalash people are descendants of deserters from Alexander the Great's Army (circa 325 BC), and they number only about three thousand now. We also were invited to visit a family's home, which was reached by climbing a steep flight of well-worn stairs.

18 May: Six hour, very uncomfortable, drive to Mastuj with a stop at Reshun - this was a sidelight in the Relief of Chitral. Next we meet the "English Family" - descendants of a British officer who married a local lady in 1896; they had received stipends from his estate until Partition. Again, the scenery was breathtaking.

19 May: Went to the fort at Mastuj and delivered another set of notebooks and markers to a local school. Spectacular drive through the Lowari Pass (10,280'), where we saw men cutting huge cakes of ice from a glacier that came right down to the road.

20 May: Climbed to the Churchill Picket, overlooking the Swat Valley at Chakdara. Then on to Malakand Fort, where we were allowed inside and to see the room where Churchill stayed while covering the campaign of 1897 for the Daily Telegraph.

21 May: Visited the Buddhist Stupa at But Kara, where David and I were interviewed by Pakistan Travel Bureau TV. Stopped at a memorial for Pakistani workers who died during construction of the Karakoram highway (a joint Pakistan/ China project from 1959 to 1978).

22 May: Drive to Gilgit with stops at Shangala Pass (2015'), Chilas for lunch, and the intersection of three mountain ranges - Himalayas, Karakoram and Hindu Kush; also a good view of Nanga Parat (8125'). Encountered six-eight busloads of Pakistan infantry when we stopped for tea - they didn't speak English, and had no unit markings, but were quite pleasant.

23 May: Stopped at a cemetery for 400 Chinese workers, again who died during the construction of the Karakoram highway. At Karimabad we toured the Baltit Fort - home to the Mirs (Rulers) of Hunza until 1945. The Manager of our hotel had medals awarded to his Great-grandfather (IGS '95, Relief of Chitral) and Grandfather (IGS '08, Afghanistan 1919). The following day we had lunch with his father, who served in the army from 1943 to 1971 - a very delightful individual.

25 May: En route back to Gilgit we stopped at Nilt, but not much remains of the fort.

26 May: Early flight to Rawalpindi. Toured the Army Museum, which had splendid displays both inside and out, then on to Margala Pass and the monument to John Nicholson. They were blasting at a nearby rock quarry - close your eyes and it was like the sounds of battle.

27 May: Visited Christ Church (1852), a Christian cemetery and the world's largest Mosque - the Faisal Masjid. Next to Shakarparian Park overlooking Islamabad, which is a beautifully laid out city. Dinner this night (our next to last in Pakistan) was special - David's room was the site because he had a refrigerator full of Murree Beer, which was enjoyed along with a fine meal provided by the hotel.

28 May: Train ride to Lahore - what a way to see the country, and the people. Checked back in to the "Gulberg Kabana" then off to Jahangir's Tomb, and finished up with a lovely dinner in a quaint part of the city.

29 May: Airport pickup at 2.00 a.m. followed by an uneventful trip home. Said farewell to Tim and Ruth at Heathrow (David had stayed in Lahore for another day).

The tour arranged by Silk Road Adventures New Zealand Ltd, www.silkroad.co.nz. E mail: Rubicon.Travel@extra.co.nz

Agent in Pakistan was Umer Aziz at Karavan Leaders in Lahore. E mail: karvan@brain.net.pk

After twenty five years of collecting medals and studying campaigns on the North West Frontier of the old British India, I considered this to be the trip of a lifetime. Unfortunately, after the events of 11 September 2001, such an experience may no longer be available to anyone else.

VELADI SAMMAI, A.M.

Tim Ash

Having read Mr Lindsay's article in the Summer 2001 Durbar, "*Hard Luck - The Albert Medal to a Khond 1926*", I referred it to Allan Stanistreet, a well-known authority on the Albert Medal. Allan very kindly responded with the following which may be of interest.

The London Gazette, Tuesday, 12 May, 1925.

Whitehall, May 12, 1925. His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to award the Albert Medal to Veladi Sammai, of Murwai Forest Village, in recognition of his gallantry in saving life.

On 9th November, 1924, Mr H S George, Deputy Conservator of Forests of the South Chanda Division of the Central Provinces, had just completed his inspection of a piece of forest and was returning to camp along a jungle path accompanied by Veladi Sammai, a Gond villager of the district who was carrying Mr George's gun and walked in front. Suddenly and without any warning a man-eating tiger jumped upon Mr George's back, seized him by the neck and proceeded to drag him into the jungle. Veladi Sammai behaved with extraordinary gallantry; he rushed at the tiger, placed the muzzle of the gun against it and pulled the trigger but was unable to discharge the weapon owing to the safety catch with which he was not familiar. He then shouted and waved his arms thus driving the tiger off for a short distance. Mr George was badly bitten in the neck and covered with blood but with the Gond's assistance he managed to stagger slowly along and reached his camp which was about two miles away. The tiger followed them for some distance but was kept off by the shouts and demonstrations of the Gond.

It was known that a man-eating tiger was in the neighbourhood and had killed several villagers but it had never attacked anyone on the path used by the forest officer, and neither

Mr George nor the Gond had any suspicion of the tiger's presence until the attack was made. Veladi Sammai's action was an extremely brave one and he gravely imperilled his own life. He certainly saved Mr George's as only his prompt and gallant action prevented the tiger dragging the forest officer into the jungle and eating him.

It appears that Mr George was subsequently taken to Murwahi village, then by cart 9 miles to Umennur, then by motor 33 miles to Allipilli; quite some distance for a wounded man in an obviously painful and dangerous condition. On 14 April 1926 Veladi Sammai was presented with his medal at Sironcha.

My thanks to Allan Stanistreet for providing the detail of this award to a brave Indian.

(see Allan Stanistreet's request for further information on those of the India Army awarded the Albert Medal at page 126 below. Ed.)

INDIAN INFANTRY MESS DRESS COLLAR BADGES 1922-1940

Trevor Kingsley-Curry

A curious and apparently inexplicable problem presents itself to a collector of one period of Indian Army emblems once he (or she) moves on to mess dress collar badges of the regular infantry regiments post-1922. For often one is presented with completely different badges - or even several of them - for a regiment, all of whose battalions wear a single-pattern headdress badge.

To explain the anomaly requires a look back at the regimental system that obtained between 1903 and 1921. As members will know, the twenty regular infantry regiments (excluding Gurkha regiments) formed in 1922 were raised from groupings of the 123 regiments that existed at that date, less the twelve that were disbanded. These, with some exceptions, were all single battalion units (except during the 1914-18 war) and the 1921 reforms were designed to bring the Indian Army into line with the British Army regimental system of several duty battalions and a training battalion. In order to achieve this, four to six of the pre-1922 regiments were to be merged as battalions of a single-title new regiment.

Then came the problem of a regimental badge for the new composite units. I do not know how the final results were arrived at in each case but what seems strange is that the Indian Army Dress Committee that met in Simla in June 1920 appears to have set about the problem in several different ways. In some cases, the new badge was an amalgam of features of the old regimental badges. The headdress badge of the new 1st Punjab Regiment, for instance, cleverly and successfully incorporated the elephant of the old 62nd and 84th Punjabis, the dragon from the 66th Punjabis and the star burst from the badge of the 82nd Punjabis (Fig 2). The only one of its six constituent regiments with a distinctive device not featured in the new badge was the fish of the 1st Brahmins.

At the other end of the scale, the badge authorised for the new 14th Punjab Regiment was exclusively that of the old 24th Punjabis with only the regimental number changed and a scroll added. The other five constituent regiments did not get a look in. Similarly, the new 2nd Punjab Regiment chose only the galley of the 69th Punjabis although a quoit, a peacock, a dragon and a star burst featured in the badges of its constituent regiments; while the 8th Punjab Regiment used the Chinthe of the old 90th Punjabis to the exclusion of all the other constituent units.

The point of this rather lengthy and, perhaps, tedious preamble is to emphasise the fact that all the new battalions had previously had distinctive badges of their own and many, understandably, did not take too kindly to having lost their former identities. While there could be no argument with the wearing of the new badges on headdress as laid down by the new Dress Regulations, a certain latitude was allowed (or in some cases crept in) in respect of collar badges sported on mess dress. There were many instances, therefore, where officers of the new battalions chose to remain identified with their old units by wearing its badges in mess dress, so leading to some confusion for collectors decades later. The confusion is compounded by the fact that, in some instances, there were differing badges for hot and cold weather mess dress.

It may have been this situation that the Indian Army Dress Regulations of 1931 were promulgated to redress. I must confess, however, I have not studied the 1925 Dress Regulations which presumably were the result of the deliberations of the Dress Committee, although it does seem that the former were rather late in arriving on the scene, given the 1921/2 reorganisation. As the India Office Library does not appear to hold copies of any dress regulations between 1913 and 1925, I have no means of confirming this. Incidentally, the 1913 Dress Regulations make no distinction between headdress badges and those of mess dress.

So the situation by 1931 at least was that a third of the new regiments seem to have accepted the changes of badge gracefully - if resignedly. As far as I know, the 3rd Madras Regiment carried on using the badge they had inherited from the 86th Carnatic Infantry, now their tenth battalion, until the regiment was disbanded in 1928 and not re-raised until 1941. The 5th Mahratta Light Infantry (Fig 7) and the 13th Frontier Force Rifles dutifully wore the stringed bugle of their headdress, respectively numbered, as their mess dress badges throughout all the battalions; while the officers of the 9th Jat Regiment also opted to wear a common badge modelled on their new headdress badge (Fig 10). The 14th and 16th Punjab Regiments duplicated their headdress badges on their mess dress (Figs 19 & 24), with a special additional badge of the cypher of the Duke of Cambridge being sported by the second battalion (Fig 20) of the former. No regrets were experienced by the 18th Royal Garhwal Rifles (Fig 26) for they simply added a crown to the Maltese Cross of the former 39th Garhwal Rifles, all of whose four battalions were to form the new grouping, and used it on their mess dress also.

While officers of all six battalions of the 1st Punjab Regiment wore the elephant of the old 62nd Punjabis (Fig 1), a collar badge is in existence (Fig 2) duplicating the headdress badge in silver and gilt but who actually wore it is unclear. Although officers of five of the six battalions of the 2nd Punjab Regiment wore the regulation regimental galley embroidered in gold and silver wire on a dark green backing (Fig 4) and a version in silver (Fig 3) on white mess dress, those of the fourth battalion were allowed to wear facing dragons in silver (Fig 5), the badge of the old 74th Punjabis.

I am credibly informed that, while the regulations stipulated a gold embroidered grenade with the figure "4" in silver for the mess dress of the 4th Bombay Grenadiers, with the second battalion being allowed a special additional badge of the POW plumes, officers of the first battalion continued to wear the silver horse on a gilt grenade of the 101st (Fig 6), apparently in direct contravention of the regulations.

Rather than wear the stringed bugle headdress badge, officers of all battalions of the 6th Rajputana Rifles opted for the crossed katars of the old 13th Shekhwati Rajputs (now their tenth battalion), adding the POW plumes for the second battalion; while those of the 7th Rajput Regiment chose to ignore the new regimental device in favour of the single katar (Fig 8) incorporated in the badge of the old 4th PAVO Rajputs, with special additional badges of royal family cyphers for the first, second and third battalions.

Officers of the 8th Punjab Regiment were more amenable, wearing the Chintre (Fig 9) of the old 90th Punjabis in silver throughout with, in the case of the fourth battalion, a special additional badge of the POW plumes. This regiment was unique in having different buttons on the mess dress tunic and waistcoat - the figure "8" on a silver button and the Chintre on silver respectively.

The battalions of the 10th Baluch Regiment wore no service dress collar badge but on mess dress the officers of the 4/10th were allowed to wear the badge of the old 129th Baluchis, the cypher of the Duke of Connaught (Fig 11) while those of the first, third and fifth battalions wore special badges in the shape of a variety of royal cyphers. Incidentally, the initials on the cypher worn by the fourth battalion seem to bear no relation to the initials of the royal personage concerned. (While on this point, just as confusing is the number of regiments which wore these special cyphers - rarely seen on the market - above the normal mess dress badge.) Although no regimental headdress device was authorised to be worn on collars I have a pair of silver collars of the altered regimental badge introduced in 1942 (Fig 12). Perhaps by then the regulations had changed.

The 11th Sikh Regiment managed to get away with the officers of two of its battalions wearing their old regimental devices, all but the first and third battalions sporting a plain silver quoit (Fig 13), a badge of the old 15th Ludhiana Sikhs without the crown, although the 5/11th Sikhs wore a special additional badge of a royal cypher. The first battalion was permitted to wear the badge of the old 14th Ferozepore Sikhs (Fig 14), while the third battalion continued with the quoit surmounted by a dagger of 45th Rattray's Sikhs (Fig 15).

The situation with the 12th Frontier Force Regiment was different again. At least four types of mess dress collars were worn, only two of which are covered by 1931 Dress Regulations. The new regimental device of the number within a crowned stringed bugle, all over a scroll (Fig 16) was to be worn only by the first battalion (which also wore an additional special badge of the POW plumes) and then only on their hot weather mess jacket. The fifth battalion was allowed the earlier oval Garter crest of the Guides Infantry. The other two, not covered by the 1931 Dress Regulations (perhaps approved at a later date), for the first battalion (Fig 17) hall-marked 1939, and the third battalion (Fig 18) hall-marked 1935, did not remotely resemble those of either their old constituent regiments or their new one.

Officers of the 15th Punjab Regiment wore the new regimental badge, the device of the old 28th Punjabis *in brass* (Fig 21), but the second battalion was allowed it *in white metal as a*

collar badge only, gilt and silver apparently being frowned upon. Inexplicably, a completely new cap badge was designed for this battalion, incorporating crossed rifles and numerals (Fig 22), totally unlike the Maltese Cross of the old 26th Punjabis. The badge I have seems rather small to have been worn on the field service cap as per the regulations but the design may eventually have superseded the mess dress collars referred to above. That for the third battalion was virtually the badge of their old regiment, the 17th Punjabis, but squashed into an oval (Fig 23), while this was the only battalion allowed to diverge from the plain white metal half-ball button of its sisters - having an "XV" on its mess dress buttons.

Only the officers of the 1/17th Dogra Regiment were allowed a collar badge, and then only on mess dress, and that was simply the POW plumes. Nevertheless I have a collar badge in native silver incorporating the script regimental title of the old 37th Dogras under the POW plumes (Fig 25). As it is not hall marked, I have no idea if this was originally worn as a collar badge by that regiment. Possibly, at a later stage, the other battalions were allowed a collar badge, perhaps identical with their cap badge.

As far as can be ascertained, the various battalions of the 19th Hyderabad Regiment kept to the new rather spartan badge (Fig 27) although the choice was eclectic. The first and tenth battalions could, for instance, have stayed with the lion's head and cross of the old 94th and 95th Russell's Infantry, while the third battalion might well have elected to use the rather splendid ensigns of the old 97th Deccan Infantry. Instead, the 1st Kumaon Rifles took over the lion's head in preference to their old badge of a stringed bugle and regimental initials.

The gorgeous peacock of the old 70th Burma Rifles survived as the headdress badge of the 20th Burma Regiment (Fig 28) but the officers of the third battalion apparently chose to wear the crossed dahs (Fig 29) hall-marked London 1922 (later, I believe the device of the Kachin Rifles raised in 1945), rather than the striking Burmese devil of the former 85th Burma Rifles.

Truly this sector of any collection of post-1922 Indian Army badges is a veritable minefield for the committed collector.

Although outside the scope of these notes, it is interesting to speculate on the possibility of mess dress badges having been worn post-1940 by war-raised regiments. While mess dress would not have been worn during the war, some of them must have reverted to peacetime practice after it, up to Partition. I have come across only one example, that of the Assam Regiment, for which I have a facing pair of collars in silver (Fig 30) which, I am assured, were worn by the Commanding Officer.

Finally, again outside the scope of these notes but worthy of mention for their variety are the three collar badges of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps which had started this period as the Supply and Transport Corps, changed to the Indian Army Service Corps in 1923 and was awarded the prefix 'Royal' in 1935. It was the only mess dress badge that was enamelled on silver in each transformation, white as the S&T Corps (Fig 31), blue and white as the IASC (Fig 32) and, lastly, red and blue (Fig 33). My father wore all three during his twenty seven years in the Indian Army.

Badges not illustrated are those I do not have - any offers to fill these gaps will be warmly welcomed!

Before facing a barrage of criticism by other members, may I say that these notes do not purport to be 'definitive' on the subject. I offer them 'warts and all' from my limited experience in the expectation and, indeed, the hope that they will attract comment and constructive observations from other members.

Footnote

The Other Ranks of many of the newly-raised regiments were not entirely barred from this exclusivity but the subject of the metal shoulder titles of 1922-1947 is another story - and incidentally the dress regulations virtually ignore this form of identification.







LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Brian Stevens writes:

The story regarding the RIASC in France in 1940 (Vol. 18, No 2, Summer 2001) reminded me of the account of Force K6, to which these Mule Companies belonged, which appeared in Compton Mackenzie's *Eastern Epic*, published in 1951. The full story appears on pages 17 to 21 and is too long to repeat here, but briefly the account is as follows:

Force K6 disembarked at Marseilles on Christmas Day 1939. One Company was attached to 1 British Corps, one to 2 Corps, one to the Lines of Communication, and one to the French 3rd Army. The Hospital and other supporting units were stationed at Hautot, near Dieppe. According to Compton Mackenzie most of the men were Punjabi Mussalmans.

During the retreat to Dunkirk the Force lost 12 men when a train carrying reinforcements to the Maginot Line was bombed. Two companies were evacuated from Dunkirk, the Hospital via La Baule, and the remainder under Colonel R Hills came out through St. Nazaire on June 15. The troops at Hautot were lucky to escape unharmed as the camp was obliterated by German bombers only 15 minutes after the last man had left.

One account of Force K6 related in "*Eastern Epic*" concerns a letter, written by a British Officer Cadet, giving his reasons for applying for a commission in the Indian Army. He mentions that, whilst stationed at Lille in 1940, he was impressed by the off-duty behaviour of the Indian soldiers compared to that of some of the British ORs who got drunk and, as he put it, "Let the side down", but what most impressed him was the conduct of a party of Indian soldiers arriving at Plymouth from St. Nazaire. They were almost the only troops who had lost no equipment and who formed up on their markers on disembarking, were dressed off and marched away as a disciplined formed body of troops.

Another story concerns No 22 Company which was captured in France whilst serving with the 3rd French Army in the Maginot Line. When the French Army disintegrated, the CO had to make the best of a bad job. He managed to avoid capture for some three weeks but eventually the impossibility of obtaining water for the mules forced him to surrender. The local German commander received him with scrupulously correct formality at 9am and required him to bring his company in at 8pm that night, as until then the Germans were fully occupied with surrendered French troops.

According to Compton Mackenzie, the rest of the day was spent in polishing every bit of kit that could be polished, and the unit marched in to surrender as far as possible in ceremonial order, which so impressed the German commander that he permitted the company to remain together until being sent to a POW camp some weeks later. The British Officers were removed on surrendering, except for the Quartermaster who passed himself off as a white Indian who could not speak English. As the men were anxious to let Colonel Hills, K6 Force Commander, know what had happened to them, the QM was persuaded to attempt an escape from the POW camp. The story of how he successfully managed this is related in "*Eastern Epic*". Subsequently one of the VCOs managed to reach England.

I believe that the three companies which escaped were the 3rd, 7th and 42nd, and the three companies which arrived subsequently from India were the 25th, 29th and 32nd. The Risaldar Major, Mohd. Ashraf, was the only Indian soldier to be decorated personally by the King-Emperor with the Indian Order of Merit.

● Charlie Oldridge has provided photocopies of some recently acquired buttons of 1st Punjab Regiment. The first shows the distorted dragon wearing an Imperial crown and was thought to have been the only design for the period 1922-47. Two others have now surfaced, however, which show the same design as the cap badge worn during this period - see the illustration of collar badges at Figure 2, (above), for the design. The buttons are made of brass and have no maker's name on the reverse. Does anyone know who wore them and during what period?

● Ron Healing, now living in New Zealand, is hoping that someone in England with access to the relevant records might do some research for him into the life of Major General Alexander George Davison, a native of Sutherland who died at Glentunnel, New Zealand, on 12 July 1901. Born in 1825 of the Davison family of Tulloch, Ross-shire, he had been a cadet before entering the army in 1841 when he joined 29th Madras N.I. He served for 36 years in India and retired in 1877 when he moved to New Zealand. In 1851 he married Miss Graham, daughter of Dr. J M Graham of Cupar, Fife. Ron would also like to know the meaning of 'Tara Ghur', the name of the house he built in New Zealand.

THE ALBERT MEDAL

Allan Stanistreet of Somerset is compiling a book on all Service recipients of the Albert Medal who did not survive to exchange their original award for the George Cross in 1971 (about 250 of them), including a number of Indian Army personnel. The aim is to include as much biographical detail as possible, together with a photograph where available, and the full London Gazette citation for every award. The book is scheduled for publication late 2002 and anyone who can help with information on and photographs of the following is asked to contact Mr Stanistreet directly:

Capt George Hubert BLAND MC, 105 Mahratta L.I.
Capt Hugh CLARKE, RA, Indian Ordnance Department.
Capt Charles Creaghe DONOVAN, RA, Indian Ordnance Dept.
Cpl Patrick John FITZPATRICK RE, Military Works Service
Lt William GALBRAITH MC, 19 Lancers (Fane's Horse)
Capt Edward GILES, Indian Navy
Asst Commissary & Hon Lt Frederick HANDLEY, Ind. Ord. Dept.
Sub-Cdr Henry PARGITER, Indian Ordnance Dept.
Sub-Cdr Alfred Edwin PURKIS, Ind. Ord. Dept.
Sgt Arthur James ROBINSON, Indian Ordnance Dept.
Sgt George SMITH, Indian Ordnance Dept.
Lt Arthur Richard WADDAMS, IARO
Capt David Coley YOUNG, 4 Gurkha Rifles
3790 Rfn AIMANSING PUN, 1/6 GR (Quetta 1935)
Subdr Maj ELLAYA 1/88 Carnatic Infantry (Madras 1920)
Seedie Tindal FARABANI, Royal Navy (1880)
4351 L/Naik FIROZE KHAN 5/8 Punjab Regt (Quetta 1935)
L/Naik HABIB KHAN Bengal Sappers & Miners (1898)
8557 Rfn HARKBIR THAPA 2/8 GR (Quetta 1935)
7111 L/Naik HUKAM DAD 5/8 Punjab Regt (Quetta 1935)
L/Naik KABUL SINGH 4/19 Hyderabad Regt (Quetta 1935)
Spr KALLAN KHAN Bengal Sappers & Miners (1898)
Trumpeter MANGAL SAIN 2 Lancers (Gardener's Horse) (1919)
723 Sepoy RAGHU NANDAN SINGH 2/150 Infantry (1920)
1485 Havildar Major RUR SINGH 48 Pioneers (1921)
Tindal of Stokers SHAIKH MOHIDEN Royal Indian Marine (1913)
Sapper SHEIKH ABDUL SAMAND Bengal S & M (1898)

BOOK NOTES

The supply of new books of potential interest to members seems endless and space only permits mention of two in this issue.

● *CHINTHE WOMEN. Women's Auxiliary Service Burma 1942-1946.* Researched and edited by Sally & Lucy Jaffe and available from CHINTHE WOMEN, c/o Rock Hill Cottage, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 5BA. £5 inclusive of post and packing.

Compiled by the daughter and granddaughter respectively of Chief Commandant Ninian Taylor OBE of the WAS(B)s, this delightful 53 page booklet traces the story of these ladies, touching briefly on the early employment of some as cypher encoders but then, following the evacuation, concentrating on their continued work as front-line providers of mobile canteen services. More a collection of short anecdotes by those who served, and were served by them, than a formal history, nevertheless the booklet most ably brings home the selfless devotion to providing some respite from the rigours of the war in Burma. After the collapse of the Japanese Army some were transferred to Indonesia and Japan before the WAS(B)s were themselves disbanded, with a few moving on to join the WVS. Liberally sprinkled with photographs, there is also a 'kit list' which is even longer than that provided by Alan Harfield for WAC(I) at pages 97-98 above, though no reference to badges. Nevertheless, one can make out the Chinthe collar badge and WASB shoulder title in some of the photographs. The booklet does not carry a roll of all WAS(B)s - this can be found in the official history published by War Facts Press in 1946. Nor is there a list of honours and awards, though Ninian Taylor was awarded an OBE and at least one of the contributors a Mention in Despatches. The cover refers to other awards and it would have been good to see them listed - perhaps they too are in the official history. Lieutenant General Sir Oliver Leese is quoted in one letter of 20 December 1944 as saying that "the WAS(B) is the biggest single factor affecting the morale of the forward troops". This is a delightful reminder of that contribution, and at £5 inclusive of postage and packing well worth the outlay.

The compilers are also seeking help on two points. On page 37 of the booklet is a photograph of Ninian Taylor and others at a post war reunion holding a WAS(B) apron on which has been sewn the formation badges and other titles of the corps, divisions and other units that they served. This disappeared having been lent to someone. If anyone knows of its whereabouts the compilers would be delighted to hear so that they can retrieve it and present it to the National Army Museum. They are also seeking a copy of "*The Official History of the WAS(B)*", published by War Facts Press in 1946. Their copy has been donated to the Burma Campaign Memorial Library but they would like to donate one to the British Library.

● *VALOUR & GALLANTRY - H.E.I.C. & Indian Army Victoria Crosses & George Crosses 1856 - 1946.* Chris Kempton. The Military Press, Milton Keynes, 2001. 273 pages, including 8 of photographs, and a further 7 unnumbered pages of maps. £45 cased, £25 paperback.

With so many books on the Victoria Cross and George Cross, including the National Army Museum's admirable publication of May 1962 (though Kempton has found one VC not listed and disputes three of its entries), one's immediate thought is whether there is need for yet

another. For those with an interest in Indian military affairs Chris Kempton's book surely demonstrates that there is. While one might quibble with the publisher's claim that this is "...the first comprehensive and detailed listing...of the HEIC & Indian Army Victoria Crosses", as well as direct awards of the George Cross and exchanges from the Empire Gallantry Medal (they have previously been covered), nevertheless the book breaks new ground by including Albert Medal exchanges and, in the case of both the Albert Medal and Empire Gallantry Medal, by listing those who, for whatever reason, did not convert to the George Cross in 1971. (As mentioned above, Allan Stanistreet is attempting to take further the work on unconverted Albert Medal awards).

After a few short introductory chapters on the scope of the work and on the awards themselves, the bulk of the book is devoted to the Victoria Cross awards, sub-divided by campaign, giving biographical details, London Gazette entry and varying amounts of background to the action or campaign. The next section covers the George Cross, including those who exchanged the Albert Medal or Empire Gallantry Medal, followed by a section listing the VC s and GC s by regiment or corps, though frankly the layout is confusing. Finally there are three appendices: Recipients of the AM and EGM who did not exchange for the George Cross; a chronological index of recipients (there is already an alphabetical index in another part of the book); and a list of VC winners who subsequently served in the Indian Army. Some of the photographs are well known, others less so. Not a particularly easy book to use - the author seems to have attempted to cater for every possible combination in which one might search for an entry, whereas one comprehensive alphabetical index at the end would have been more helpful. And what a pity that three pages of maps have been printed upside down. £25 for the paperback edition represents excellent value for the amount of research that has gone into the book, though the quality of binding is such that it will be unlikely to withstand frequent use; an extra £20 for the cased edition seems difficult to justify.

