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1549 SOWAR BHAJAN SINGH 20TH DECCAN HORSE

Sushil Talwar

I would like to share with my fellow members details of a group of medals and other material relating to a sowar of the 20th Deccan Horse who died in Palestine during the Great War.

This group consists of the following:

- British War Medal: 1549 Sowar Bhajan Singh 20 Horse (regulation naming)
- Allied Victory Medal: 1549 Sowar Bhajan Singh 20 Horse (regulation naming)
- Death plaque in original packaging (see illustration)
- A letter of condolence on parchment from HE the Viceroy and Governor General of India, the Rt. H'ble Frederick John Napier, Baron Chelmsford (see illustration)
- A pair of shoulder titles (illustrated)
- A cap badge (illustrated on page)

On making enquiries from fellow Indian Army collectors I came to realise that none of them has ever seen or heard of a letter of condolence from the Viceroy to the next of kin of the deceased. One had always assumed that such a letter would be from the King Emperor. Why was this sent from the Viceroy? Was this a letter that accompanied the King Emperor's letter or did the letters from the King Emperor stop at a certain point in time and letters from the Viceroy take over? Was the letter from the Viceroy the norm for the Indian Army? I hope to be able to uncover the answers to these questions in time to come. In the meantime it appears that this is the only such letter known to be surviving today.¹ The record of Bhajan Singh's death appears in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's register for Port Tewfik Memorial as follows:

20th. Deccan Horse. Bhanjan (sic) Singh, Sowar, 1549. 20th. Aug. 1919. Son of Ghamanda Singh, of Kheri, Dhuri, Patiala, Punjab.

The register of Port Tewfik Memorial includes the names of 3,904 soldiers of the Indian Army who died in Egypt, Palestine and Syria during WWI. Bhajan Singh's demise is also recorded in *'The Deccan Horse in WWI'*, which includes his name on the roll of honour of 20th Deccan Horse. Following the end of hostilities, the regiment remained in the Middle East, and between February and September 1919 it was stationed at Aleppo in Northern Syria. Apart from performing a policing role, and protecting Armenians from hostile Turks, the regiment saw no action during this period, and it seems likely that Bhajan Singh died of sickness or disease.

Assuming that Bhajan Singh was a late wartime entrant into the Deccan Horse, and his death in Palestine in 1919 fits with this assumption, he would not have qualified for the 1914-15 Star, and the BWM and Victory Medal pair is, therefore, by deduction, his only medal entitlement. To further investigate this, I looked up *'Indian Army Honours & Awards 1914-21'* and found that almost all the IDSM and IMSM recipients of the 20th Deccan Horse have three digit personal service numbers. The

¹ If anyone else knows of the existence of such a letter I would be pleased to publish a follow-up article.

highest number is under 1200, the sole exceptions being just three numbers: 14xx, 34xx, and 37xx. These were probably men attached from other regiments or corps. All of this adds weight to the theory that Bhajan Singh enrolled sometime after 1915. This is indeed an evocative and unusually complete archive of WW1 period material relating to the services of an Indian Army soldier who paid the ultimate sacrifice. The material has clearly been kept in a very safe place. The shoulder titles and badge retain their original backers. The death plaque remains in its original inner and outer packing, along with the letter from the Viceroy to Bhajan's next of kin. The death plaque is dipped in candle wax, seemingly to avoid deterioration with time. In fact all items are in extremely fine condition, and one has the impression that an extraordinary effort has been made by the sowar's next of kin to preserve them.

20TH DECCAN HORSE

REGIMENTAL LINEAGE:

- 1816: 1st. Reformed Horse (Nawab Jalal-ud-Daula's)
- 1826: 1st. Regiment Nizam's Cavalry
- 1854: 1st. Cavalry Hyderabad Contingent
- 1890: 1st. Lancers Hyderabad Contingent
- 1903: 20th. Deccan Horse
- 1921: 20th/29th. Deccan Horse
- 1922: 9th. Royal Deccan Horse
- 1927: The Royal Deccan Horse (9th. Horse)
- 1947: To India
- 1947: 9 Horse (Deccan Horse)

BATTLE HONOURS:

- Central India 1859.
- WW1. Givenchy 1914, Somme 1916, Bazentin, Delville Wood, Flers-Courcelette (all three are subsidiary Battle Honours of Somme 1916), Cambrai 1917, France & Flanders 1914-18, Megiddo, Sharon, Damascus, Palestine 1918
- WWII: Meiktila 1945, Capture of Meiktila 1945, Defence of Meiktila 1945, Rangoon Road 1945, Pyawbwe 1945, Burma 1942-45
- Post 1947: Asal Uttar 1965, Punjab 1965, Chamb , Jammu & Kashmir 1971

REGIMENTAL MOTTO:

- Sanghe Shakti (Unity is strength)

REGIMENTAL DAY:

- Jordan Valley 23rd. September

REGIMENTAL MEMORIAL:

- At Pahuan-da-Chak in Chamb.

- At the regimental quarter guard called 'Yadgar' commemorating their dead of France and Palestine.

REGIMENTAL MARCH:

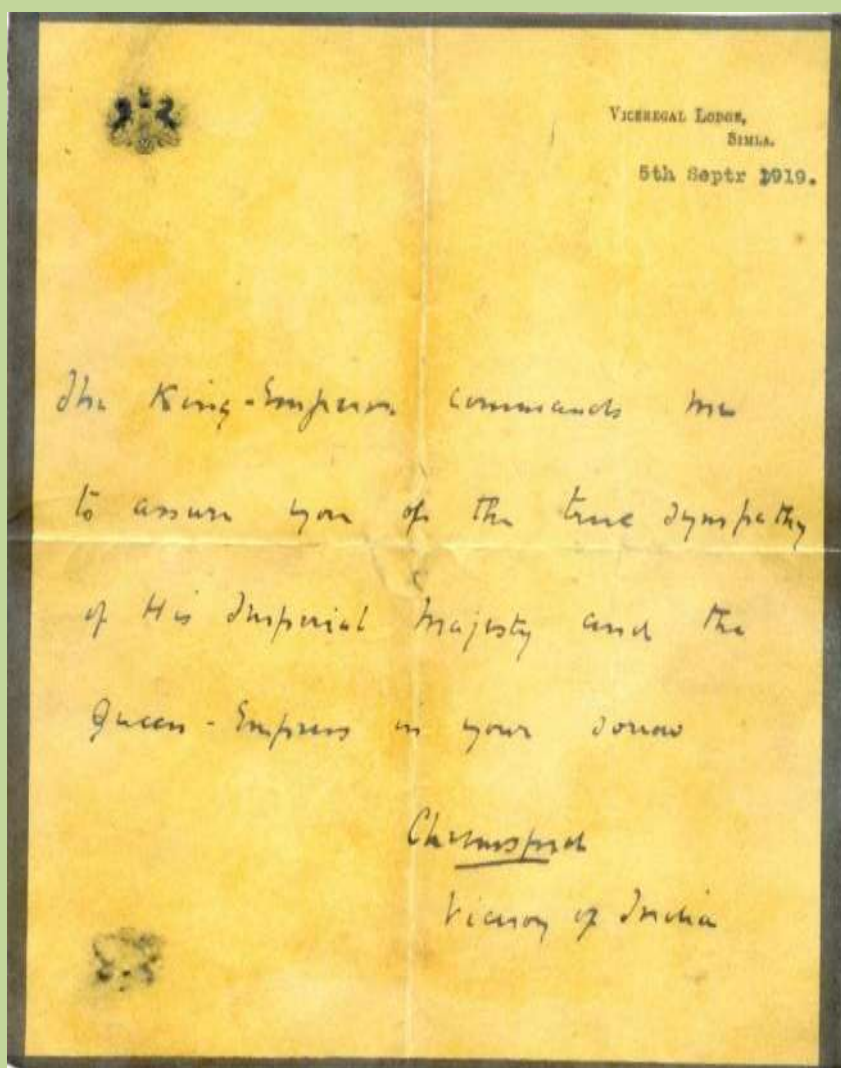
- Sons of the Brave

BOOKS:

- *A History of the Hyderabad Contingent*, by Maj. RG Burton, published by Govt. Printer Calcutta 1905.
- *The Royal Deccan Horse in the Great War*, by Lt. Col. E Tennant, published by Gale & Polden Ltd. Aldershot 1939.
- No post 1947 history of the regiment has been written.



1549 Sowar Bhajan Singh 20th Deccan Horse



The King Emperor commands me to assure you of the true sympathy of His Imperial Majesty and the Queen-Empress in your sorrow.
Chelmsford Viceroy of India



THE LOSS OF THE *SS PERSIA* - 30TH DECEMBER 1915

The Editor

Those of you living in the UK may well have seen the BBC2 'Timewatch' television programme, "The Lost Liner and the Empire's Gold", broadcast on Friday 16th January, about the loss of the *SS Persia* on 30th December 1915. Those with especially sharp eyesight may have noticed the Society's name in the rolling credits at the end of the programme. This article explains the background.

The P&O liner *SS Persia* was a merchant vessel which, for a number of years prior to the First World War, had formed part of the essential maritime link between the UK and India, having made over 70 trips to Bombay. On 29th December 1915 she sailed from Valetta, Malta, with 500 people on board, including a number of officers and soldiers either returning to, or heading for the first time to, India. Shortly after midday on 30th December, she was sunk some 70 miles south of Crete by the German submarine U-38, commanded by Captain Max Valentiner. Over 330 men, women and children were lost.

One has to remember the context of sea warfare at the time. The Germans had originally deployed submarines as floating sentry posts, to be towed back into port each night, but gradually some of the more enterprising captains started to develop tactics for attacking battle ships, especially in the Atlantic. Having promulgated a declaration of intensified submarine warfare in the waters around Britain, however, the submarine U-20 sank the Cunard liner *SS Lusitania* off the western Irish coast on 7th May 1915, with the loss of 1,198 people, including 124 US citizens. The public outcry that followed led the Kaiser to order a halt to attacks on passenger liners, and to re-deploy the Atlantic-based submarines, including Captain Valentiner's U-38, into the Mediterranean. There Captain Valentiner started to attack merchant vessels, either by use of his surface-mounted gun, or by torpedo. Having attacked and captured the *SS Woodfield*, he found sealed Admiralty orders stipulating the requirement for merchantmen to attack submarines using the concealed weapons with which they had been fitted and this, according to Captain Valentiner's surviving diaries, seemed to have led to a determination to sink all such vessels rather than risk his own crew. In his opinion the *SS Persia* was a troop- carrying vessel, and she was armed, and was therefore a fair target.

As with many other sunken vessels, there the matter may have rested, but there has long been a rumour that the *Persia* was carrying a vast amount of treasure when she went down, including precious gems belonging to the Maharaja of Kapurthala. This led to a search and salvage operation being mounted by Alec and Moya Crawford and it was the recording of this activity that prompted the BBC *Timewatch* programme. The programme's researcher discovered that there were a number of Indian Army officers and soldiers amongst the ship's passenger list and she contacted us to see if we could help unravel the story behind their presence on the ship.

Those military personnel identified were:

Name	Survivor	Comments
Captain H L Ainsworth		1-10 GR attd 1-39 Garhwal Rifles see (a) below
Lt Col H Backhouse		not I.A.
Capt M G Bean		81 Pioneers

Capt E R Berryman	Yes	39 Garhwal Rifles see (b) below not I.A.
Col Hon. C C Bigham	Yes	56 Punjab Rifles attd 53 Sikhs not I.A.
Lt W C Cooper	Yes	Ind. Civil Vet Dept. Pagpar (CP)
Bombardier Curtis	Yes	3 GR see [c] below not further identified
Maj W O C Dawson		6 Jat LI. (J.B. on passenger list)
Lt G T Fisher	Yes	ADC Home Staff, 12 Cavalry not further identified
2 nd Lt J M Gardner	Yes	Offg AD S&T, 4 th Quetta Div. Not in CWGC
Capt J P Gilbert		122 Rajputana Inf. not I.A.
Lt O Gough		HR Police, C.I.; also 34 Sikh Pioneers
2 nd Lt J M Hallett	Yes	3 GR see [c] below 39 Garhwal Rifles see (b) below
Lt Col E A Howell		13 Rajputs, Shekhawati Regt. S&T Directorate, Adviser M.T.
Maj G Hutchison	Yes	IMS att. 3 GR See [c] below 83 Wallajhabad LI
Staff Sgt G H Keddy		63 Palamcottah LI
Lt H R Lawrence		93 Burma Inf. IARO att. 1-3 GR see [c] below not further identified. not in CWGC
Capt J T Lodwick		Royal Navy
Capt A G Lyell	Yes	IARO see (a) below not I.A.
Capt E W Marsh		9 GR see (a) below not I.A.
Col Lord Montagu of Beaulieu	Yes	39 Garhwal Rifles see (b) below IARO att. 2-39 Garhwal Rifles see (b) below
Capt J J H Nelson	Yes	63 Palamcottah LI
Lt Col A R Nethersole		not I.A.
Maj C M O'Reilly		as on passenger list. According to CWGC 107431 Private (no initials) 2 W Riding Regt.
Lt A C Pegg	Yes	
Lt J A T Robertson		
2 nd Lt W A Robertson		
Lt T A Roch		
2 nd Lt C W F Scott	Yes	
Lt T G Spinney	Yes	
Lt A F Spreckley		
Col St Aubyn		
Col E R Swiney		
2 nd Lt R A Tibbs		
Capt J E Torkington		
Gunner L Wellington	Yes	
Maj H H Wilson		

Cliff Parrett, Rana Chhina and I turned our minds to this topic during the quieter moments of our recent India trip. In fact, none of our material, which included corrected identifying details as shown above, was actually used in the final programme – the "human interest" part of the story being focussed on Miss Eleanor Thornton, secretary and lover of Lord Montague of Beaulieu, who was also on the ship, and who was the model for the now famous 'woman with wings' mascot of the Rolls Royce motor car. Miss Thornton died in the incident, though Lord Montague, at that time Inspector of Mechanical Vehicles in India, survived.

Nevertheless, we did turn up some fascinating accounts about some of the military personnel on board and, since the BBC had not used the material, they readily agreed to our using it in Durbar. All are extracts from the regimental histories shown.

- (a) *"The 9th Gurkha Rifles 1817-1936"*. Lt Col F S Poynder MVO OBE MC. London: The Royal United Service Institution, 1937. p.100.

"On arrival at Basra, news was received of the torpedoing and sinking of SS Persia in the Mediterranean, on December 30th. To the great regret of all ranks of the Regiment, amongst those drowned in this disaster were Lieutenant A F and Mrs Spreckley and their youngest child, and Captain H L Ainsworth of the 1/10th Gurkhas, who had been attached to the Battalion in France, and wounded at the Battle of Loos; Spreckley had been wounded by a bomb earlier in September. Both "Spreck" and "Pinky", as they were familiarly known to innumerable friends, had recovered in England and were on their way to India to return to duty. Amongst the passengers who were saved were Lieutenant C W F Scott, then returning to India after having been severely wounded in Gallipoli with the Ceylon Planters' Rifles; this battalion had been in the initial landing at Anzac with the Australian and New Zealand Corps. Lieutenant Scott was posted to the 2nd Battalion on his eventual arrival in India."

p. 253. Spreckley, Arthur Freer ("Spreck"). Lieutenant 2nd Bn. Joined December 1909, joined 1st Bn with draft 2nd Bn August 1915. Wounded near Mauquisart, September 1915. (i.e. 2/9th Gurkha Rifles, attached 1/9th Gurkha Rifles)

p. 254 Ainsworth, Harry Lawrence, Captain 1/10th Gurkha Rifles. Attached to 1/9th Gurkha Rifles in France 1915. Wounded at Battle of Loos 25 September 1915.

- (b) *"Historical Record of the 39th Royal Garhwal Rifles, Vol. I, 1887-1922"*. Brigadier General J Evatt DSO. Aldershot: Gale & Polden Ltd. no date - for private circulation only. pp65-66.

"Brevet-Colonel E R R Swiney (who in the previous month had vacated command of 1st Battalion) lost his life, as did 2nd-Lieutenant R D Tibbs IARO, who was at one time attached to the 2nd Battalion. Captains A G Lyell and E R P Berryman escaped. The latter was awarded the Bronze Medal of the Royal Humane Society for saving life at sea on this occasion."

p. 149. Brevet Colonel Ernest Robert Rainier Swiney was born on November 18th, 1863. He was the second son of Major General Swiney, Indian Army, and was educated at Cheltenham College. He received his commission in the East Surrey Regiment, through the Militia, on May 6th, 1885, and in the following year joined the Indian Staff Corps, and was posted to the 9th Bengal Infantry, which in 1894 was formed into the 9th Gurkha Rifles. In 1901 he was transferred to the 2nd Battalion 39th Garhwal Rifles which was then being raised, and in 1911 was appointed to the command of the 1st Battalion, which post he held until November, 1915. He served through the operations in Burma, 1886-87 (medal and two clasps) and in Lushai, 1889 (clasp), also in the operations on the North-West Frontier of India, 1897-98 (medal with two clasps). When the Great War broke out he was on leave in England, but rejoined his Battalion at Port Said. After the fighting at Festubert in November, 1914, he was Mentioned in Despatches for gallant and distinguished service, and received the brevet of Colonel. He was severely wounded at the Battle of Neuve Chapelle. He was on his way to India shortly after vacating the command of his Battalion for further employment, when he lost his life by enemy action in the sinking of the S.S. *Persia* on December 30th, 1915. In 1901 he married Mabel Forster, and has issue Mabel Betty and George Derrick Beauchamp.



- (c) *"The Regimental History of the 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles from April 1815 to December 1927"*. Major General Nigel G Woodyat CB CIE. Simla: J Ray & Sons, reprint 1951. pp 127-130.

"A word about Capt J T Lodwick (Captain John Thornton Lodwick DSO) and the torpedoing of the S S *Persia*. Lodwick had made a study of machine gun tactics and was an acknowledged authority on the subject. He was also a very good all round soldier, a born leader of men and a sturdy specimen of the best type of British officer. Had he lived he should have gone far. His death was a great calamity for 3rd Gurkhas.

The loss of two officers of the regiment and the miraculous escape of a third, in one and the same catastrophe, appear to demand some notice in this volume. Details of the sinking of the *Persia* have, therefore, been obtained from Major G T Fisher, himself the "third" victim referred to above.

.....Lodwick, Robertson (Lieut. John Alexander Tower Robertson) and Fisher of the 3rd Gurkhas, as well as Lyall (sic)(see above) and Berriman (sic) (see above) of the Garhwal

Rifles, had meals at the same table. They had just gone down to luncheon when a "crump, crunch" was heard and the saloon filled with smoke and coal dust. The *Persia* had been hit in the engine room, on the port side, by a torpedo.

.....Fisher found that his cabin, and one or two on each side, had been blown up by the explosion. This made a hole from about ten feet below water level right up through all the decks, including the boat deck. He then went to his boat, which was on the starboard side, and found Lodwick and Robertson there before him. The vessel had taken a profound list to port and these officers found their boat swung inboard. No amount of pushing would induce it to hang over the side to make lowering possible. Exactly the same happened to all the other boats on the starboard side, so the women and children detailed for them were sent round to the port side where launching was feasible.

Fisher, having no life belt.....Luckily, Col. Swiney of the Garhwal Rifles (drowned shortly afterwards [see above]), with a deck cabin to himself, had spare belts and handed one over to Fisher.

Nets had been arranged on the port side for after-luncheon cricket. These interfered with the launching of the boats, and Fisher recollects seeing Lodwick very busy pulling them down. He never saw him again. (then quite a bit about Fisher's attempts to leave the *Persia*).....he was soon aware that it looked like a boat. He swam towards it.....Scott of the 2/10th Gurkhas then swam up (actually 2-9th – see above). He was wearing gymnastic shoes. With their help he managed to climb into the boat over Fisher's arms, and pulled the latter alongside him. The pair of them set about collecting anyone they saw floating. There were three other boats drifting besides their own. How these boats got away from the *Persia* is not known, except that one of them had floated off the stern, with one of the ship's officers in it.

Lyll and Berriman were in another. Berriman walked down the starboard side of the *Persia* as she turned over - another of the astounding marvels of this terrible afternoon.

Fisher and Scott pulled a French girl into their boat from the sea. She was engaged to be married to the Registrar of the High Court of Calcutta. An extraordinarily plucky girl. Even before she was dragged out of the water she screwed up some little joke. (We suggested this lady might be identical with another on the BBC researcher's list who was tentatively shown as ?French maid for Maharaja's wife? Ed.). Berriman had saved her life. He got her off the ship somehow. The details are wanting, but he was awarded a medal for gallantry in this occasion (Bronze Medal of the Royal Humane Society for saving life at sea - see above)

Nelson of the IMS and another man were washed down the funnels when the *Persia* turned on her port side; then belched out again. Their faces, clothing etc. were jet black. (Nelson, Capt J J H. Indian Medical Service. Ed.)

.....Hours before the rescue by the minesweeper Fisher had become unconscious, and remained so for some six hours. The ship's barber suggested he should be chucked overboard.....(the rest of the narrative talks about the finding of the boats)

(Lodwick was first commissioned into The King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment. Served South Africa War 1900-1902. Transferred to 2/3 Gurkhas February 1906. DSO - Gazette of India 583/18.6.1915. Mention in Despatches - Gazette of India 684/23.7.1915. Ed.)

MEERUT CEMETERY

The Editor

During our recent trip to India Cliff Parrett, Rana Chhina and I visited Meerut where Lieutenant General Mathew Thomas, his wife Jean, Dr Amit Pathak, a Radiologist and freelance historian, and Vinod Kumar, Secretary of the restoration project of the Meerut Cemetery, gave of their valuable time to show us around. All have devoted a considerable amount of time and energy, with others, in making information about the events in Meerut more readily accessible. A 15 year project to map the sites of the outbreak of the Mutiny in Meerut, each site now marked by a stone tablet with descriptive text in both English and Hindi, has been led by Dr K D Sharma, Department of History, Meerut College (two examples appear on page 21). The well-produced guide brochure, including an excellent map of the area, has been written from one particular perspective and clearly places the event in a context of 'the First War of Independence'. Not everyone will agree with the section entitled Myth and History – for example, of Mangal Panday, "But he has always been wrongly associated with Meerut". Apart from the existence of Mangal Pande Bazar in Meerut 'which a grateful people have named after their great hero' (A.S.Misra: *Nana Saheb Peshwa and the Fight for Freedom*) I doubt that anyone of this Society would associate him with that town. It is a matter of fact that he was a Sepoy of 34th Bengal Native Infantry stationed at Barrackpore when, on 29th March 1857, he attempted to subvert his fellow soldiers from their duty. But this remains a useful guide to Meerut and the events surrounding 10th May 1857.

In subsequent correspondence with David Mahoney on this subject he raised the question of attempting to obtain brief details of those killed in or near Meerut and who are buried in the cemetery. This will be the subject of a separate article in the Summer edition of DURBAR.



CAPTAIN HENRY HARVEY LYONS

Peter Chapman

The attack on the Gumbaz Levy Post in February 1918 – an affair small enough in the great scheme of things betwixt 1914 and November 1918 – resurfaced, albeit briefly, in a recent saleroom catalogue from Bonham's of London. In October 2003 they offered for sale the MC and bar group to Captain Henry Harvey Lyons, an elderly man for his rank (he was 35), who, with Major J R Gausson (later Brigadier General) thwarted an attempt by Marri tribesmen to over-run the remote post.

Many of you subscribe to these excellent medal catalogues and I merely remind you that both officers were with 3rd Skinner's Horse and had only 80 men of that regiment with them to achieve their purpose.

The Marris, armed only with swords – and you must remember that particular phrase – made three attempts to capture the 'fort'. All failed and they withdrew "showering curses on the defenders".

Major Gausson was made C.I.E.; Lyons was awarded the MC. Daffadar Gurdiyul Singh, Acting Lance Daffadar Pritam Singh and Sowar Chhaja Singh were awarded the IDSM. Lance Daffadar Khem Singh and Daffadar Lel Singh were given the IOM. And here the mystery begins.

The latter, according to Peter Duckers' excellent and recent *Award of Merit*, the definitive chronicle of the IOM, was awarded his medal for "continually exposing himself to fire...until severely wounded. And when wounded was placed under cover...but a second bullet...struck him in the brain and killed him".

So, and briefly, were the Marri tribesmen, according to the regimental history, attacking only armed with sword, or were they armed with rifles and guns of some sort?

Or was Lal Singh's death an instance of "friendly fire"? I am quite sure no one will ever know. But I do wish retirement – and a reluctance to spend money on obtaining Captain Lyon's group – had not stopped me from doing so. I suppose this should be interpreted as (if ever my wife reads this – which she won't) friendly reluctance. They never know the sacrifices we make! (The medals sold for £1,000, incidentally.)

5TH (MUSALMAN) BENGAL NATIVE (LIGHT) INFANTRY

Sushil Talwar

WAR SERVICES 1803 - 1895

- 1804: 16th May Taking of Rampura.
- 1804: July–August Manson's retreat.
- 1809-12 Operations in Bundelkhand.

- 1817: 1st. March Action at Hariharpur by only a wing of 5th Bengal Lt. Infy.
- 1824: Jan-Feb Operations at Sylhet and Cachar.
- 1825: Jan-April Expedition to and taking of Arakan. Awarded Battle Honour 'Arracan' GGO 22nd April 1826.
- 1829-31 Disturbances on the Eastern Frontier.
- 1838-40 First Afghan War (1st phase). Awarded Battle Honour 'Afghanistan 1839' GOGG 19.11.1839: Also awarded six months Batta, GOCC 22.11.1839.
- 1840: Sept–Oct Operations in Kohistan and Baluchistan.
- 1842: March–May Fighting around Kandahar. Awarded Battle Honour 'Candahar 1842' GGO 4th Oct and 13th Dec 1842.
- 1842: Sept 5th Capture of Ghuznee. Awarded Battle Honour 'Ghuznee 1842' GGO 4.10.1842.
- 1842: Sept Occupation of Kabul. Awarded Battle Honour 'Cabool 1842' GGO 4th Oct and 8th Nov 1842: Further donation of six months Batta for the second campaign. All ranks awarded 'Candahar, Ghuznee, Cabul' medal, GGO 205 of 1843.
- 1845: Dec 18th First Sikh war. Battle of Mudki.
- 1845: Dec 21st. - 22nd Battle of Ferozeshah.
- 1846: Feb 10th Battle of Sobraon. Awarded Battle Honours 'Moodkee' 'Ferozeshah' and 'Sobraon' GGO 12.8.1846.
- 1857-58: Nov - Dec Operations in Central India.
- 1879: January Second Afghan campaign. Awarded Battle Honour 'Afghanistan 1879-80' GGO 418 of 1881 and six months Batta GGO 459 of 1880. Also awarded 'Afghanistan 1878-80' medal with clasp 'Kabul'.
- 1885-87 Third Burma War (first phase). Awarded Battle Honour 'Burma 1885-87' GGO 64 of 1891: Also awarded India General Service Medal 1854 with clasp 'Burma 1885-87', GGO 434 of 1887.
- 1888-89 2nd phase of the Burma War.
- 1891: March – April Operations in Manipur. Awarded Indian General Service Medal 1854 with clasp 'NE Frontier' GGO 652 of 1892.

Even though a part of this unit mutinied there is a remark “The men of the 42nd fought with great bravery at the Battle for Bithoor against the Madras European Fusiliers - this was a European Regt”.

EARLY SERVICES

1811-12 Bardhi: Towards the end of 1811, the 2-21st NI, under the command of Lt. Col. Tetley, was despatched from Mirzapur to coerce the Rajah of Bardhi, in Rewah, whose people had been making incursions into and plundering the Mirzapur district. The battalion was repulsed with some loss in an imprudent attempt, without guns, on the fort of Bhapawi, Col. Tetley himself being among the wounded, but eventually the Bardhi chief's forces were dispersed, all his forts destroyed, and the country restored to order.

The Nepal War 2nd Campaign Oct. 1816: Gen. Ochterlony was ordered to take the field once more with a force of about 17000 so as to bring the war to a favourable conclusion..... 2-21st NI was a part of the Right Column, first brigade under Col. W. Kelly and entered Nepal by Hariharpur.

Conquest of Arakan 1825: 42nd NI was a part of the Force under Brig-Gen. Morrison and commenced its march to Chittagong on 1.1.1825 and reached the town of Arakan in March. Actions took place on 26th & 27th and Arakan was attacked on 29th. At the end of the campaign the 42nd had earned their first Battle Honour 'Arracan' and on return to Dinapore the men were given a 6 to 8 months leave and six months batta.

Defence of Kelat-i-Ghilzie 1842:(Gen.) Nott moved out at once with a force of about 2000 men, which included 42nd and 43rd NI and gave the enemy a complete overthrow, inflicting on them heavy loss, while the casualties in his own force amounted to no more than one killed and 52 wounded. Gen. Nott received orders to advance to Kabul and on 10th he left Kandahar with the following force...(amongst others) 42nd NI.

1845 was the year when the muzzle loading 'Brunswick' rifles were introduced into the Bengal Army, the first to receive them being one company each in 42nd and 43rd NI. Less important, though, was the substitution of canvas haversacks for the old unwieldy knapsack (GOCC 22nd March 1844) and introduction of a forage cap for general duties.

DURING THE MUTINY

The regiment's record during the Mutiny was unusual and interesting. The majority of the regiment mutinied, and fought its cause bravely and with tenacity. From the British perspective, the 42 BNLI committed no atrocities, and proved its mettle as a fighting regiment, albeit on the other side! It was also the case that 50 of its officers and other ranks remained loyal to the British cause. It was reconstituted after the Mutiny and, when reorganized and renumbered in 1861, continued thereafter to carry the honours of the old 42nd Light Infantry on its colours. There is no particular study of the survival of so-called mutineer regiments in the post-Mutiny era, but I imagine that the record of the 5LI in this regard is exceptional.

'Bengal Native Army' by Cardew, reprint 1971 New Delhi, page 267

“In the Saugor district some fighting took place. There the Native troops consisted of the 3rd Irregular Cavalry and the 31st and 42nd Native Infy. The 31st remained true to their colours, but a greater part of the other two corps broke away and joined the rebels. The mutineers of the 42nd made their way northwards and at a later date were reported to have crossed bayonets with the 78th Highlanders in action at Bather. Towards the end of June a detachment under Maj. Gaussain of 42nd took the fort Balabet by storm with little loss. But in destroying the place immediately afterwards a premature explosion killed Ensign Spens of the 31st and several men..... In September a detachment under Lt. Col. Dalyell, 42nd, was repulsed in an attack on Naraoli, Dalyell himself being killed in action..... “

Cardew is a good source, but he has crammed a great deal into his 576-page history, and so it lacks some precision. He has bracketed together the Mutiny service of the 31 BNLI and the 42 BNLI, but the record of these regiments was entirely different.

The 2nd [late 31st] Bengal NLI remained loyal as a regiment, only 40 men deserting to the rebel cause. It received the Mutiny Medal, some with clasp Central India [I cannot read the very faded summary of 31 BNI medals, but it is either 355 or 855] and, as Cardew records, the battle honour for Central India. The record of the 42nd was a mirror image. It mutinied in a very definite and outright manner. Only 50 men remained loyal.

To mark the huge difference between the performance of the 31st and the 42nd in the Saugor district, I quote an incident from the 31 BNLI history.

“A sepoy of the 31st, standing guard over an officer's bungalow early one morning, shot dead a trooper of the 3rd Irregular Cavalry who threatened to enter the protected territory. The sepoy then brained another trooper with his empty carbine. The direct results of this were, first, that the other 3IC troopers ran away, and second, a pitched battle was fought between the loyal 31st and the 3IC/42BNI mutineers which went on for just about the whole of the remaining day. Meanwhile, the British [men women children and artillery] locked themselves up in the Saugor fort and remained there. They did absolutely nothing to help in spite of pleas from the 31st native officers. But in the event their help was not required. The 31st was commanded with great flair and a lot of aggression by Subadar Issureebuccus Sing on that day. He chased the 42nd out of Saugor and captured its colours along with 400 stands of arms, the magazine and 7 government Elephants. No wonder the 31st was eventually rewarded! No wonder equally that the 42nd was not.”

I mentioned the action at Fort Balabet, but this took place before the 42nd broke into open mutiny at Saugor, the disaffection spreading quickly thereafter to its various outstation detachments. In any case, one must be careful about drawing conclusions from the individual services of British officers from mutinied regiments. They remained on the administrative strength of such regiments long after they had been disbanded, and so were often described as being with their original regiments in Mutiny period narratives. Generally they were not, so these narratives can be very misleading. One cannot conclude from the fact that Major [Bt Lt. Col.] Thomas Dalyell 42 BNLI was killed on 8th Sept. 1857 during an attack on rebels at Nurrewala, a fort just six miles north of Saugor, that the 42 BNLI was present at this action. It was a 31 BNI action, if you accept the account of the action in the 2 BNLI's history. I expect that Dalyell was accompanied by a few of his men who had attached themselves to the 31 BNI, the latter being the only infantry unit in the area with its structure intact. But it is not an action which can be written into the 5LI record of services.

The challenge is to understand why the 42 BNLI were not disbanded. It was described in both 1st and 2nd editions of the 1858 and 1859 IA Register as "mutinied" and then, as if nothing had happened, this classification is dropped in January 1860 and it is shown as stationed at Fort William - right under Big Brother's thumb, but extant nevertheless - as if nothing had happened. The British officers and Eurasian drummers are not really significant to this conundrum. It is the fate of the 50 loyal Indian officers and other ranks which may eventually provide the answer to the survival of the regiment. Maybe this loyal remnant had a particularly outstanding record of service.

SERVICES DURING 1914-1918

Stationed at Nowgong, this was an unusual Regiment in that all its men during this period were Muslims. The recruitment into the regiment was as follows:

- Men of the Right Wing came from Rohtak, Hissar and Gurgaon.
- Men of the Left Wing came from Rohtak, Gurgaon, Ludhiana, Hissar and Mazaffarnagar.

Following the major events in Singapore in early 1915, some of the 5th were imprisoned in the Andaman Islands, serving hard labour sentences ranging from 'years', to 'life'.

The rest of the 5th were posted to East Africa where they served with distinction until the German commander finally surrendered on 22nd November, after receiving news of his High Command's surrender in Europe. From East Africa, they moved to Egypt before finally returning to India.

There was a huge amount of history and achievement in this fine old regiment. So why on earth was the 5LI selected for disbandment? Its final dissolution should make an interesting research project. Its 1921 class composition, two companies of Mussalmans from the Eastern Punjab and Hindustan, and two companies of Ahirs, should not have led to any discrimination against it. I suggest that the decision to dissolve the regiment went back to its role in the so-called Singapore Mutiny of 1915, upon which much has been written.

In his interesting book, Kuwajima projects some big political and regional ramifications from the Mutiny, but he has largely overlooked the more mundane elements upon which an Indian Army specialist might lay more emphasis. In effect the Mutiny of the 5LI was a badly planned affair, luckily so for the British community. It was a spontaneous reaction to bad leadership and poor interior management of the regiment, which coincided with the concern of Muslim soldiers at fighting the Turk – a potential problem that was kept under control [and under wraps] throughout the WW1 period with few significant exceptions.

To get a more mundane perspective on the Singapore event, I recommend an article published in the *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* [Vol. LXII, No251, Autumn 1984] by Ian Beckett entitled "The Singapore Mutiny of February 1915". Beckett gives a well-informed analysis of the interior regimental issues, in effect the bad management of the regiment by its British and Indian officers. The former had the majority of the responsibility and so Beckett quite rightly gives them the majority of the blame. The Mutiny was a tragic event, particularly for the soldiers and civilians who died or were executed as a result of it, or whose lives were otherwise disrupted in one way or another.

From the British point of view, it was essential to brush over this Mutiny so that it would have no wider repercussions. It could be a valuable propaganda asset in the wrong hands. For this reason, the decision was taken not to disband the regiment. After all, the men would have returned home if transferred to other regiments, and spread the word. The solution was to keep it together but to move it out of Singapore, away from India, and to one of the most obscure theatres of war. So, on 3rd July 1915, the remnants of the 5LI [595 officers and other ranks] were dispatched to West Africa where they were soon involved in the Anglo-French offensive against the Germans. It combined with the Royal West African Frontier Force in the Bare area between October and November 1915, and won five IDSMs for gallantry in action. It later crossed to East Africa [3 IOMs, 8 IDSMs, and 11 IMSMs].

Towards the end of 1917 it was sent to Aden, where it was now trusted to face the Turkish Moslem soldier. It returned to cantonment in India a year later - a relatively safe distance in time from the Singapore past.

In the conclusion to his article, Beckett points out that some official records of the Mutiny remain closed until the year 2015, and so what happened at Singapore in February 1915, and the immediate repercussions, cannot even now be totally clear. But he reflects that "Mutiny invariably casts a long shadow". It is interesting to note the fate of the Malay States Guides, a locally formed Sikh class unit which, upon the outbreak of WW1, had at first refused to serve overseas. It was later suspected of collaboration with the 5LI mutineers. This was never proven and, at this distance in time, it seems most unlikely. However, the prejudice against it was very real, and it was quickly shipped off to Aden where the Sikhs had no problem in confronting the Turk! But after excellent field service, the MSG was disbanded in 1919 soon after it returned from the war " Ostensibly because the government

considered the regiment too expensive to maintain. But its previous disaffection had neither been forgotten nor forgiven" [Beckett].

It seems reasonable to conclude that the decision to disband the 5LI was entirely due to the Mutiny in Singapore. The major reorganisations of 1922 gave the Indian Army the opportunity to do this discreetly and without the need to give a specific reason for its decision.

It might also be useful to trace the careers of the Indian officers serving with 5LI in Singapore at the time of the Mutiny, and those serving when the regiment was ultimately disbanded. My own lists tell me that nine pre-1915 Mutiny VCOs continued to serve with 5LI in West Africa - and the senior, Subadar Wahid Ali Khan, was appointed Subadar Major on 3rd June 1915, just before the regiment sailed out of Singapore en route for the West Africa theatre. On the same 3rd June date, five men [I assume from 5LI ranks] were commissioned Jemadar, although the regiment's full strength of Indian officers was not restored until December 1916.

If Government had it in for the 5LI as a regiment, it could certainly bear no personal grudge against its officers and men who had fought so well for the regiment against the foes of the King Emperor in East and West Africa, and on into the Aden hinterland. They deserved to be recognised and rewarded, and it seems that they were.

When the 5LI was disbanded, a number of its VCOs and other ranks were redistributed to other regiments. I am unable to follow the progress of other ranks, but the IAL gives details of six VCOs who thus found continued employment including one pre-Mutiny officer. Aziz-ud-din Khan was commission Jemadar on 13th Dec 1913 and was promoted to Subadar on 3rd June 1915 prior to leaving with the 5LI for West Africa where he was awarded the IDSM for gallantry in action. The October 1926 IAL has him serving with 3-7th Rajputs, along with three other ex-5LI officers [Suleman Khan; Ghulam Nabi Khan IDSM; Manzur Ahmad Khan]. Subadar Habib-ur-Rahman IOM transferred to 2-7 Rajputs, and Jemadar Abdul Nabi Khan went to the 1st Royal Bn 9th Rajput Regiment in which he was promoted Subadar on 26th April 1923.

The transfers of these officers may provide with some useful leads, as the chances are that a number of other ranks would have followed their officers. Maybe the historians of the present-day Rajput Regiment and Jat Regiment would trace some links back to the old 5LI officers and men. What stories they could tell!

BATTLE HONOURS

The unit received some of the most hard-earned battle honours:

"Arracan" "Afghanistan 1839" "Candahar 1842" "Ghuznee 1842" "Cabool 1842" "Moodkee" "Ferozeshah" "Sobraon" "Afghanistan 1879-80" "Burma 1885-87".

HONOURS & AWARDS 1863-1913

IOMs:

Sepoy Narain Sing, 5th. NI. - 3rd Class. (1866, Manipur, 8 of 1867 and 424 of 1867)

Naik Raheem Bux, 5th. NI. - 3rd Class. (1866, Manipur, 8 of 1867 and 424 of 1867)

Sepoy Bholar, 5th. NI. - 3rd class. (Capture of a Murderer at Benares, 255 of 1893)

HONOURS & AWARDS 1914-21

(Extracted from "*Honours & Awards of the Indian Army Aug. 1914- Aug. 21*", published JB Hayward & Son)

IOMs:

(For Mesopotamia)

3266 Acting Naik (then Sepoy) Mahmud Ali Khan.

(For East Africa):

2505 Hav. Habib-ur-Rehman Khan.

Sub. Maj. Wahid Ali Khan.

3291 Sepoy Abdul Khan.

IDSMs:

(For West Africa)

Jem. Rahmat Khan.

1973 Colour Hav. Ajmeri.

1975 Sepoy Munsab Khan.

2126 Sepoy Fiaz Muhammad Khan.

2728 L. Nk. (then Sepoy) Mazhar Khan.

(For East Africa)

2579 Sepoy Rahimdad Khan.

Sub. Aziz-ud-din Khan.

2351 L.Nk. Rustam Khan.

2506 Hav. Ghulam Nabi Khan.

2517 Hav. Maula Bakhsh.

3094 Temporary L.Nk. Karam Ilahi Khan.

1985 Naik Maru Khan.

Jem. Sikhdar.

IMSMs:

(For East Africa)

2799 Hav. Ahmad Din.

2433 HAv. Manzur Ahmed.

2308 L.Nk. Zafar Ali Khan.

3129 Sepoy Dullah.

1826 L.Nk. Ismail Khan.

2122 Sepoy Rahman Khan

2062 L.Nk. Allah Din.

2358 L.Nk. Ashraf Khan.

1982 Sepoy Kamdar Khan.

2829 L.Nk. Bashir Ahmad Khan.

1938 Hav. Sazewar Kahn.

(For India)

2863 Hav. Dost Muhammad.

3178 Naik. Muhmmad Akbar.

CLASS COMPOSITIONS

1864: VIDE AGC NBR. 117N OF 09.9.1864:

1. Brahmans - 2 companies
2. Hindustani Mussalmans – 1 company
3. Jats – 1 company
4. Gurkhas and other Hillmen – 1 company
5. Bundelas – 1 company
6. Hindus of inferior castes – 1 company
7. Trans-Sutlej Sikhs – 1 company

1883:

1. Hindustani Mussalmans – 2 companies
2. Brahmans – 1 company
3. Rajputs – 2 companies
4. Other Hindus (Jats) – 3 companies

1921:

1. Mussalmans from Eastern Punjab and Hindustan – 2 companies
2. Ahirs (Muslims only) – 2 companies

ROLL OF HONOUR

(I have been able to locate only the following casualties of 5th LI, though it is obvious that in a long and action filled history such as of this Regiment there must have been more.)

Lt. Spence (Moodkee on 18th. Dec. 1845)

Lt. Wollen (Battle of Ferozeshah)

Jem Rustam Patak (----do----)

Jem. Din Singh in the (----do----)

(no rank mentioned) Hiranman Misr (Battle of Sobraon 10th Feb. 1846)

Lt. Darrah, Asst. Commissioner (5th June 1887 in Taungma, near Pyumbwin, Burma)

One more 'man' (unnamed in records with me) was killed in the same action as Lt. Darrah.

LINEAGE - THE I.A. LIST GIVES A SUMMARY OF THE REGIMENT'S VARIOUS TITLE CHANGES.

- 1803: Raised in November this year at Fatehgarh Cawnpore by Capt. J.M Johnson as 1st and 2nd Bn 21st Regt Bengal Native Infy. The 1/21 was called Dooby ki Paltan from Maj. Simpson Dubois who was posted to the battalion on its formation and served with it for some years. 2/21 was called Jansin ki Paltan from Capt. Jeremiah Martin Johnson who raised this battalion.
- 1824: 41st and 42nd Regt Bengal Native Infy, on 6th May of this year.
- 1842: 42nd Regt Bengal Native (Light) Infy
- 1843: 42nd made into a Light Infy unit, GOGG of 4th Oct. of this year.
- 1857: 41st mutinied at Sitapur on 3.6.1857 and was disbanded. Some 11 officers and some bandsmen made their way to Lucknow and helped defend the Residency until relieved by Sir C. Campbell. 9 officers and 10 bandsmen survived the siege.
- 1857: 42nd now became 5th (Musalman) Bengal Infy

- 1861: 5th Regt Bengal Native (Light) Infy in May 1861.
- 1885: 5th Regt Bengal (Light) Infy in January this year.
- 1893: 5th (Musalman) Bengal (Light) Infy in April of 1893.
- 1903: 5th Light Infy
- 1918: 1st Bn. 5th Light Infantry (upon formation of 2nd Bn 5th Light Infy at Quetta on 13th. Aug. 1918)
- 1918: 2nd Bn 5th Light Infantry raised on 13th Aug. 1918 at Quetta.
- 1919: The 2/5 LI formed a part of the 'Additional Battalions' for the war effort of WW1 and was consequently disbanded soon after the war.
- 1920: 5th Light Infy (upon disbandment of 2nd Bn during 1919)

(After the disbanding of 5th Light Infy the now vacant slot of the numeral '5' went to the Maratha Light Infantry of the Bombay Army. By coincidence this 5th Bombay Light Infy, became 105 MLI and then with reorganisation of the Army in 1922 became the 5th MLI. It still remains so to this day.)

REFERENCE BOOKS

In the Bengal Infantry series of Regiments only 2nd Bengal Infy, 6th Bengal Lt. Infy, 25th Bengal Infy and 28th Bengal Infy. have published Regimental Histories. The following books might have something on this 5 Lt. Infy: (some of the books might seem out of place but still worth looking at)

1. *'The Bengal Native Infy 1757-1796 a Historical Record'* by Capt. John Williams, London 1817.
2. *'A Sketch of the Services of the Bengal Native Army to the Year 1895'* by Lt. FG Cardew. Calcutta 1903.
3. *'The Bengal Native Infy, 1796-1852'* by Amiya Barat. Calcutta 1962.
4. The brief section on the 5LI [42nd BNLI] in Gimlette's *"A Postscript to the Records of the Indian Mutiny"*.
5. *"The Singapore Mutiny"* by RWE Harper and H Miller, Oxford University Press, Singapore 1984.
6. *"Indian Mutiny in Singapore"* by Sho Kuwajima, Ratna Prakashan, Calcutta 1991.

It is difficult write an account on the 5LI without getting involved in a lot of detail, and it is invariably the case that official records of regiments disbanded in 1921/2 [or even earlier, such as 4th Punjab Cavalry] are difficult to trace or simply non-existent. The information here gives a reasonable backcloth to the WW1 services of 5LI. The 5LI was indeed disbanded in January 1922, and one must bear in mind that 1921-22 was a period of re-organisation as well as reduction when many regiments and battalions were disbanded. But, whereas it is easy to understand why the war-raised battalions were clobbered, the reasons for disbandment of some of the long-established regiments are not so obvious. Why was a fine regiment such as the 5LI, with its noble origins and history, disbanded so absolutely - never to be raised again, its honours never bequeathed?



RANA CHHINA'S MEDAL GROUP



Sqn Ldr (Retd) Rana Chhina at the 61st Cavalry parade and a close up of his medals which, by any standard, present a remarkable post-Independence group.

The award to Rana of the MacGregor Memorial Medal was covered in Vols. 20, No 1 and 20, No 2. The remainder of his group (with Rana's own comments) comprise:

1. Samanya Seva (General Service) Medal 1965; clasps 'Mizoram', 'Nagaland' and 'Tirap'. All for counter insurgency operations. With 57 Mtn Div in the Lushai Hills (Mizoram) and with 8 Mtn Div in the Naga Hills, mostly in 1981-82. Tirap - CI against Konyak Naga head-hunters in the Tirap District of Arunachal (NEFA). This is the successor to the old IGS series, starting with the Army of India 1799.
2. Siachen Glacier Medal. Whoever says hell is HOT, has obviously never been there!
3. Special Service Medal; clasp 'Sri Lanka' for ops with the Indian Peace Keeping Force 1989-90. Also entitled to clasp 'Suraksha', which I did not claim as I had just left the air force when it was gazetted. Am eligible for the latter clasp on both counts - for anti-terrorist ops in Punjab and Kashmir.
4. Sainya Seva (Field Service) Medal; clasps 'Bengal-Assam', 'Himalaya', 'Jammu & Kashmir', 'Marusthal' and 'NEFA' (North East Frontier Agency). The only clasp that I did NOT get, thank God, was 'Car-Nicobar'. Himalaya has since been abolished and the new High Altitude medal instituted in its stead.
5. Uchh Tungta (High Altitude) Medal. For service in areas above 10,000 feet.
6. Videsh Seva (Foreign Service) Medal; clasps 'Bhutan' and 'Sri Lanka'.
7. 9 years Long Service Medal.

BOOK NOTES

● *FRONTIER LEGION. With the Khassadars of North Waziristan.* Frank Leeson. Published by and available from The Leeson Archive, 108 Sea Lane, Ferring, West Sussex BN12 5HB, England. A5 laminated, 244 pages and 126 previously unpublished photographs, maps, glossary, index. £10 plus £1.50 postage, payable to F.L. Leeson. ISBN 1-904726-07-0.

In the concluding part of his series on The Armed Civil Forces of the North-West Frontier Province (DURBAR Vol. 20, No. 3, Autumn 2003, p.81), Tim Ash drew attention to the Khassadars, quoting from the 1926 official report on the subject. He included a brief reference to the North Waziristan Agency. I was struck at the time by the Committee's reference to the fact that "there is little co-ordination between the Scouts and the Khassadars". This fascinating book, by our new member Frank Leeson, not only takes the story forward from 1926, but also brings home forcefully the point about lack of co-ordination. As a young British officer serving at the Sikh Regimental Centre in Nowshera, Frank Leeson volunteered for duty with the Khassadars and found himself serving with the North Waziristan Khassadars during the momentous and troublesome times of 1946-1947. The book was first written in 1949-50 but failed to find a publisher at that time and so the script was passed to RMA Sandhurst and should then have been transferred on to the National Army Museum. For some unexplained reason it then found its way onto the open market and was recently recovered by Frank Leeson. Brought up to date, it now makes a welcome appearance on the market as a published source.

Much of the book is, of course, taken up with Frank Leeson's personal account of events at that time, though it includes many references to "The Politicals". In that regard, having recently reviewed Robin Hodson's *"The Story & Gallantry of the North West Frontier 1849-1947"*, it is interesting to see him mentioned several times as the last British Political Agent in Waziristan. Other chapters deal with the ever-present problem of the Faqir of Ipi and there may be some parallels between the operations described in this book and others reportedly going on in the area now against Usama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda followers, though one might assume that the firepower and air support being brought to bear is far in excess of anything experienced by the Khassadars of 1946. It is interesting to note, however, that "friendly fire" incidents by allied aircraft, a recurring theme of modern warfare, featured as far back as 1946!

I was initially slightly confused by Chapter Two – Waziristan and the Wazirs – since the attempt to describe the present political situation seemed out of context within what is otherwise an excellent historical account. Having read it twice, however, it made more sense. The book contains some interesting original maps, some of which require careful study to interpret them correctly, and it also contains many interesting and original photographs from Frank Leeson's own archive.

This book is a worthwhile addition to the library of anyone interested in the North-West Frontier.

ANM.

● *BRITISH AND COMMONWEALTH ARMIES 1944-45.* Mark Bevis. Helion Order of Battle, Volume 2. 94 pages, soft cover, no illustrations (except front cover) or maps. ISBN 1-874622-90-6. Helion & Company, 26 Willow Road, Solihull, West Midlands B91 1UE. Tel: 0121 705 3393, fax 0121 711 4075. email books@helion.co.uk. Website <http://www.helion.co.uk>.

I was critical of Volume 1 of this series covering the period 1939-43 when I reviewed it in DURBAR, Vol. 19, No 1, Spring 2002, p.34, on the grounds that it did not offer, as claimed, a complete guide to the organisation of British and Commonwealth armies, that it did not give a breakdown by unit of the components of Indian Infantry Divisions, and that it made contentious references to morale and training. This volume, covering the period 1944-45, does not offer much of an improvement with regard to the first two criticisms. British formations seem to be covered in great detail, with battalions and, in some cases, smaller support units listed. Indian formations remain much as in Volume 1 – very little by way of identifying information, even in Part 3 "Far East, Australasian and Indian Theatres 1943-45".

Criticism of the morale and training values has been addressed in a much clearer note at the beginning of the book (it would seem that other non-wargamers were similarly confused as I was by these definitions in Volume 1) and the clarified definitions leave much less cause for concern.

Unless you are a wargamer, however, I doubt there will be much of interest in this book to the average student of Indian military history. ANM.

LETTERS AND QUERIES

● Sir Charles Frossard writes:

I have been reading the series of articles on "The Armed Civil Forces of the North-West Frontier Province" (DURBAR Vol. 19, No 4 and Vols. 20, Nos. 1-3). A group not mentioned in the series was The Chitral Levies, established at the end of the 19th Century. Their duties were to keep open the route from the top of the Lowari Pass into the Chitral Valley. There were two forts: Ziarat and Minkhani. They were commanded by a Subedar, assisted by a Jemadar.

They were disbanded in 1942 when the Chitral State Scouts were embodied. The last Subedar, Jan Badshah, became the Gunner Subedar in the Chitral State Scouts. The last Jemadar, Mahboob, became a platoon commander in the Chitral State Scouts.

● David Mahoney writes:

I have a Mutiny medal, the naming of which I cannot interpret as it seems as if something is missing. What can be seen is NAIB RESS^R TAJ REG^T S . M . H (?South Mahratta Horse?). When I was in the USI in February 2003, I looked through their early Lists but without success. Any ideas?

I would also appreciate help with the following:

1. IGS – Afghanistan NWF 1919, named to H S K Mehar Chand 16 C F A – what do these two sets of initials mean please?
2. Victory Medal named to M-Eng W C Harrison IWT – is this Indian Water Transport?
3. Labour Coy – is information available on this unit?
4. Bronze British War Medal to 55153 Kanayalal A B C. I believe this is a Bearer Corps, but which one please?
5. Africa General Service medal with clasps Jidballi and Somaliland 02-04 to Sepoy Robleh Mahomed (H.A. ADAN ISA) L.S.L. – can anyone identify this unit please?

● NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM – ‘REGIMENTAL CRESTS’.

I received a letter from the National Army Museum concerning Peter Chapman’s article on ‘Regimental Crests’ (Volume 20, No 3, Autumn 2003, p.109), in which he referred to ‘the Indian Army Museum in Chelsea’. I should, of course, have amended this in the editing phase but failed to do so. Several of you contacted me to identify the Museum and I pointed you to the National Army Museum. Others worked it out anyway and contacted the Museum directly. My apologies, therefore, for the confusion.

The Museum has advised that there are a good many albums of crests in the print collection. If anyone wishes to purchase photocopies from these volumes they will need to visit the Reading Room to make a selection of the pages, or employ someone to do so on their behalf. This facility is open to holders of Readers’ Tickets only from Tuesday to Saturday, between 1000 hrs. and 1630 hrs. During the week, prints and drawings can normally be viewed on request, but on Saturdays they must be requested by prior arrangement.

In the Reading Room colour photocopies of the crests may be ordered at a cost of £1 per sheet, or black and white photocopies at 23 pence per sheet (prices inclusive of VAT). The more elaborate hand-coloured pages of Victorian collections cannot be photocopied for conservation reasons but they can be copy photographed instead.

● Colonel Richard Cawthorne writes:

In your introduction to the 61st Cavalry on the contents page to the Winter 2003 edition of *Durbar*, you state that it is *the last fully horsed unit anywhere in the world*. While I cannot comment about other armies of the world, the order of battle for the British Army includes the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (HCMR), which is a fully horsed unit. The Regiment consists of Headquarters Squadron, The Life Guards Mounted Squadron and the Blues and Royals Mounted Squadron. Each mounted squadron comprises a squadron headquarters and 3 mounted troops. The Regiment is commanded by a lieutenant colonel and has 20 officers, 321 soldiers and 254 horses (to include 4 drum horses). As well as furnishing the Queen’s Life Guard and mounted escorts for state occasions, the Regiment provides the horses from within its establishment for the Household Cavalry Mounted Band. While not wishing to detract from the excellent article on the 61st Cavalry, I nevertheless felt that the record should be set straight.

I have since replied:

The claim to be the last horsed unit anywhere in the world is one the regiment (61st Cavalry) is keen to foster. We (i.e. the team who contributed to the article) discussed at some length with the Commandant the role of the President’s Body Guard and the Household Cavalry, amongst others, but the point he kept making was that all had other functions as well. In the case of the President’s Body Guard they have a parachute role; the Household Cavalry has an armoured function and it is my understanding that the soldiers of that regiment are trained in both roles. I did mention at page 130 (of *Durbar*) the January 1989 decision to allocate a dismounted infantry role to 61st Cavalry, though it was a short-lived experiment and the regiment is once again limited to mounted duties. With hindsight I should, perhaps, have used the phrase “solely horsed unit”. (Or I should have stated in the introduction “which claims to be the last horsed unit.....”).

Ed.

● Brian Stevens writes:

In the Autumn 2002 edition of *Durbar* there was an article on Followers (pages 95-101). More specifically, on page 98, under the heading IGS 1854 Bronze – Jharowala Mauree (Sweeper) 2nd Madras Lancers. Clasp Burma 1885-7. From this I assume that Sushil Talwar translated Jharowala as Sweeper.

I have previously provided member Carl Granfelt with a list of followers and included amongst them was Joorawallah. He was a grass-cutter who, for double pay, provided himself with a pony and was expected to supply grass for two horses.

Government General Order No 186 of 1823, which was promulgated in a G.O.C.C. dated 19th December 1823, is the authority for the use of Joorawallahs in so far as the Bengal Army was concerned, but as it was issued by the Governor General it may also apply to the Armies of Madras and Bombay. However, the Madras Military Statement for 1856-57 includes a Troop Grass-cutter Chowdry per Troop and so many Grass-cutters, so it would appear that at the time Joorawallahs were not employed in the Madras Cavalry regiments.

Several subsequent orders altered the proportion of Joorawallahs to grass cutters but G.G.O. No 34 of 1846, promulgated in a G.O.C.C. dated 15th February 1846, fixed the proportion as 25 per Troop. Their use was confined to regiments of light (regular) cavalry, troops of Horse Artillery and Horse Light Field Batteries under the generic term of ‘mounted corps’.

As this did not tie in with Sushil Talwar’s explanation of the term I understand that Mr Granfelt wrote to him and I further understand that the former stands by his description of a Jharowalah as a Sweeper. Mr Granfelt has since written to me asking me to confirm my job description of the term and I have sent him a photocopy of the 1823 G.G.O.

In the publication “*Hobson-Jobson*” the spelling is Gorawallah but it is used as an alternative in Bombay for Syce, not a grass-cutter. Although there is no doubt that in the pre-Mutiny Bengal Army a Jorawallah was a Grass-cutter, I would be grateful if you could mention the various conflicting claims as to what a Jorawallah was – Grass-cutter or Sweeper.

(As well as the numerous spellings! Ed.)

