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BENGAL YEOMANRY CAVALRY 1857-1859

Alan Harfield

The article *The Bengal Yeoman(ry) Cavalry*, by Tim Ash, published in the Autumn 2004 edition of *Durbar* (Vol. 21, No3, pp 85 to 91) raises a number of interesting points. It is hoped that the following notes will help to clarify the situation regarding the official title of the volunteer cavalry corps. The document quoted in the article appears to be the only one in which the title ‘Bengal Yeoman Cavalry’ is used, although this title does appear in *Regiments – Regiments and Corps of the British Empire and Commonwealth 1758-1993* compiled by Roger Perkins (Newton Abbot, 1994) at page 527.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the author did not make reference to the book that was written by John Tulloch Nash (JTN) *Volunteering in India or An authentic Narrative of the military services of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry during the Indian Mutiny and Sepoy War* which was published by George Philip & Son, London, 1893. Throughout this book Nash, who served with the regiment, refers to the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry. He was wounded twice and the details are recorded in his memorandum as follows.

J.T. Nash, Slightly, musket ball in thigh, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1858

J.T. Nash, Sabre cut on head, 17 April 1858

Those members intending to research the history of this volunteer cavalry corps may wish to examine the documents which confirm that the authorised title of the unit was ‘Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry’ and the following references, in date order of publication or compilation, give the relevant details:

*The Calcutta Gazette* dated Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1857, Notification of the formation of the corps, in which the salient point is:

[The Governor-General in Council] directs that a Corps of Cavalry be formed to be called Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry and to be equipped and prepared for duty in the disturbed districts. The Regiment shall be constituted as follows: One Major (Commandant); One Captain (Second in Command); One Adjutant; Four Lieutenants; Eight Cornets; One Doctor and two hundred men; of four troops, one Lieutenant and two Cornets to each troop.

*Memorandum of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry 1857-1858* by J.T.N. (identified as John Tulloch Nash), 1<sup>st</sup> Troop, Right Squadron, Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry, published by J.F. Bellamy, Englishman Press, Calcutta. The Notice, which was signed at Camp Bustee, Goruckpore District, is dated 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1857 (this being the date that the corps was formed and not the date on which the manuscript was written). It is believed that the actual publication appeared in 1858. Within the ‘Notice’ JTN writes:

The writer has confined himself to pure unvarnished facts, and, if he has partially succeeded in briefly recording the doings of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry....

The despatch (No 241) written by Brigadier (F) Rowcroft dated 19<sup>th</sup> April 1858 confirms the title as he wrote:

I ordered Major Richardson in command of the right Squadron Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry to move from my right flank and charge this body of the enemy.

At page 25 of the memorandum a list of casualties is recorded under the heading 'Obituary of the members of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry who fell during the Campaign of 1857-58'. The pamphlet is held by The National Army Museum under reference 7802-3.

In the British Library (Oriental and India Office Collection) the manuscript medal lists in respect of this cavalry corps for the award of the Indian Mutiny Medal 1857-1858 give the following titles.

L/MIL/5/77 dated 8 October 1858 listing 255 names of the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry'.

L/MIL/5/87 dated 7 January 1862 listing 80 names of the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry'.

L/MIL/5/100 dated 3 August 1862 listing 1 late claim for the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry'.

L/MIL/5/101 dated 4 September 1862 listing 1 late claim for the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry'.

In the book *The History of the Indian Revolt and the expeditions to Persia, China and Japan 1856-7-8*, W & R Chambers, London 1859, a brief mention is made at page 470:

17<sup>th</sup> April (1858)...The sepoys, almost for the first time in the war, endeavoured to resist a cavalry charge in British fashion, by kneeling in a line with upturned bayonets; but a corps of Bengal yeomanry cavalry [sic] made the charge with such impetuosity that the enemy were overthrown and a victory gained.

There is a brief mention in Volume II of Colonel G.B. Malleon's book *History of the Indian Mutiny 1857-1858* (William H. Allen, London, 1879) at page 434, which reads:

The Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry was composed of men, many of them Eurasians, some Europeans and well born, who enlisted for that special service, on special terms, to aid in suppressing the mutiny in June and July 1857.

The next book noted, in publication date order, is *Volunteering in India or An authentic narrative of the military services of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry during the Indian Mutiny, and Sepoy War* by John Tulloch Nash, George Philip & Son, London, 1893. This is a much-expanded version of the Memorandum by 'JTN', which was published in 1858, and throughout he refers to the corps in which he served as the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry'. The disbandment of the corps was notified in the General Orders in 1859, which Nash reproduced, in part, in his book as follows:

His Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India cannot allow the officers and men of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry to separate, without expressing in General Orders his acknowledgement of the excellent services they have rendered, and his admiration of their endurance, and of their gallant bearing on the many occasions in which they have come in contact with the enemy.

The *Gazettes* of the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 27<sup>th</sup> April, 11<sup>th</sup> May, 6<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> July, 13<sup>th</sup> August, 12<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1858 and the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> January and 9<sup>th</sup> March 1859, all testify that the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry have borne a distinguished part in the several operations therein recounted.

Long marches, exposure, fatigue, and harassing patrol and picket duties have from the first fallen to the lot of this young corps, and they have borne the whole in a truly soldier-like spirit.

The Governor-General in Council desires to convey to the officers and men of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry his best thanks for the good service they have rendered to the State, and in disbanding the Corps, he wishes the members of it a hearty farewell.

The author of the book *On the Queen's Errands*, Philip H.M. Wynter, (published by Sir Isaac Pitman and Sons Ltd, London, 1906), is one of the volunteers named on page 10 in *Memorandum of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry 1857-58*, by JTN. The book contains material relating to his service as a volunteer with the volunteer cavalry corps.

There is a slightly confusing reference made to the corps in the book *History of the Indian Mutiny*, Vol. III, by G.W. Forrest (published by Blackwood, London, 1912), at page 518, in which he refers to the column in the Gorruckpore [Gorakhpur] district commanded by Brigadier Rowcroft and erroneously calls the 'Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry' the 'Royal Yeomanry Cavalry'.

In the following year the book *Tigerland. Reminiscences of forty years' sport and adventure in Bengal*, by Charles Elphinstone Gouldsbury was published by Chapman & Hall, London, 1913, and contains a brief reference to the formation period of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry but does not deal with any of the campaign actions in which the corps was involved.

In 1937 a short note, written by Colonel M.A. Carlisle Crowe, was published in *The Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Vol. XVI, page 120, Note 413 in which he quotes from Nash's book of 1893.

Following the disbandment of the Auxiliary Force (India), publishers Gale & Polden of Aldershot produced a regimental history under the title *Calcutta Light Horse A.F.(I) 1759-1881-1947* in which reference is made to the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry on pages 11 to 17. At page 15 an interesting 'Discharge Certificate of L/Cpl Stoke of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry dated '1<sup>st</sup> February 1859' is reproduced. There is also an illustration of the 'Mutiny memorial to the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry 1857-8' on which the names of the casualties and Battle Honours were recorded. This tablet was erected in St James's Church, Calcutta. At Appendix Six (page 148) is reproduced the notification of the formation order that was published in the *Calcutta Gazette* of 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1857.

The following books, which contain a mention of the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry, were published in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

*British Battles and Medals* by Major Lawrence L. Gordon, Gale & Polden, Aldershot, 1962. Details of the Indian Mutiny Medal (1857-1858). The list of units has been compiled from Medal Lists held in the British Library (Oriental & India Office Collection) and the volunteer cavalry corps is mentioned by name (Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry) on page 187.

*Indian Army Uniforms under the British from the 18<sup>th</sup> century to 1947 – Cavalry* by W.Y. Carman, Morgan Grampian, London, 1968. The Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry is listed at page 198 as a unit formed as a result of the Indian mutiny and at page 202 the details of the uniform worn by the regiment, which had been extracted from contemporary documents.

*A History of the British Cavalry 1816 to 1919*, Vol. II 1851 to 1871, by The Marquess of Anglesey, Leo Cooper, London, 1975. At page 418 the author deals with the use of a revolver which had been introduced from America, and states that 'officers quickly adopted it for their own use' having

purchased the weapon themselves. He notes that ‘Some of the Indian irregular regiments, including the Poona Irregular Horse, as well as the Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry, were issued with it....’

*Casualty Roll for the Indian Mutiny 1857-59* compiled by I.T. Tavender, published by J.B. Hayward & Son, Polstead, 1983. The Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry casualty list given at page 155 is only partially complete as during the first year of the campaign the casualty return shows that 1 Lieutenant, 3 Cornets and 12 volunteers had been killed and 19 wounded, with Trooper J.T. Nash having been wounded twice (see above) which is why some accounts give the number of wounded as being 20. The figures given in the ‘Casualty Roll’ show:

Captain	Killed – 1	Wounded - Nil
Lieutenants	Killed – Nil	Wounded – 2
Cornets	Killed – 1	Wounded – 3
QM Sergeant	Killed -Nil	Wounded – 1
Corporals	Killed – Nil	Wounded – 3
Troopers	Killed – 2	Wounded – 3
Totals	Killed – 4	Wounded – 12

The foregoing list is intended to confirm that the correct and official title of the volunteer corps of Cavalry raised at Calcutta on 23 July 1857 was the **Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry**. The books and material listed above are given as a starting point for any researcher wishing to study the history of this unusual Indian volunteer corps and I am quite sure that there remains much more to be found in various archives and in published books

I am grateful to member Cliff Parrett for his help in the compilation of the above Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry references.

(I shared this article with Tim Ash who went back to his own copy of the JTN Memorandum. Tim now accepts that the correct title is Bengal Yeomanry Cavalry and offers his apologies to anyone who may have gone off on a forlorn search for a Yeoman. And there we will let the subject rest. Ed.)

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SIR ARNOLD TALBOT WILSON KCIE, CMG, CSI, DSO, MP

Peter Chapman

Until my old friend and colleague Patrick Otter, author of the wonderful *Maximum Effort* trilogy chronicling the tribulations of Bomber Command 1959-45, mentioned him to me I had never heard of Arnold Talbot Wilson, 52nd Sikh Pioneers. I know now what there is to know of him. And maybe you do. But you may not know of his demise.

The Empire threw up these gallants and none of us can be expected to recall, at mention of a name, any one of them. A T Wilson was a clergyman's son, born in July 1884, schooled at Clifton College and at Sandhurst where he won both the King's Medal and the Sword of Honour. Commissioned in 1903, he joined the 32nd Sikh Pioneers the following year.

He was, as we might say nowadays, a political animal - indeed he was to become an MP – and within the Indian Political Department 'soldiered' in that most mysterious, fraught and romantic area where empires and countries meet, Mohammerah, Luristan, Persia, Baluchistan, Bushire. In a variety of increasingly important roles and positions - consul, assistant (special duties), deputy commissioner, political officer, he shone as a star in his firmament. In 1912, while Consul at Mohammerah and aged only 28, he was appointed CMG and, the same year, was awarded the MacGregor Memorial Medal.

At the outbreak of the war in 1914 he was the Deputy British Commissioner with the Turco-Persian Frontier Commission and his subsequent services in Mesopotamia were further rewarded with a DSO in 1916 and the CIE the following year. When the war ended he was the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. In 1919 he was appointed CSI and, in 1920, was knighted (KCIE). He was 36.

From 1921 to 1932 he was 'with' the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the following year became MP for Hitchin. Sir Arnold had married, in 1922, Rose Carver, the widow of Lieutenant Robin O Carver, RAF. As an MP he was a member of several associations and found time to write eight books. His life to this point had been distinguished, exemplary and rewarded.

But in 1939, when war broke out again, he decided at his home in Much Hadham, Hertfordshire, that he must again answer the bugle call. So it was that Sir Arnold Talbot Wilson KCIE, CMG, CSI, DSO, MP volunteered his services "to any branch of the services which will take me".

The RAF 'took' him. He was commissioned Pilot Officer. On June 1, 1940, and approaching his 56th birthday, he was killed in action over Dunkirk when the Wellington bomber of which he was a crew member was shot down. He was with 37 Squadron based at Feltwell, Norfolk, and is buried at Cambrai.

There can have been no other Knight Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire to have perished in his country's service in such a way.

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## THE PUNJAB UNIVERSITY BRIGADE SIGNAL SECTION IN WORLD WAR I

Major General VK Singh

Few people, even in the Punjab, know the role of the Punjab University Brigade Signal Section in World War I. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the section was raised in 1917, and disbanded just two years later in 1919, after the end of the Great War. The section saw active service on the Karun Front in Mesopotamia (now called Iraq), and performed exceptionally well. Until that time, the Signal Corps had been almost completely staffed by Britishers, with the first four signal companies having been raised only in 1911. Indians formed a minuscule percentage,

This unique contribution by the students of Punjab has gone almost unnoticed by military historians, and needs to be recognised.

Early in 1917 it was decided to raise a signal company comprising students drawn from colleges in the Punjab. Second-Lieutenant JL Cowan of the Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry (Signals Service) was selected to raise the company, which was to be called the "Punjab University Brigade Signal Section". The qualifications laid down for enrolment were only two - the candidate should have been a student in one of the colleges in Punjab, and passed the Matriculation examination. The raising of the section

was actually a bold experiment, since it was to be composed entirely of Indian other ranks, unlike other signal units in which at least one third of the personnel were British.

Raising commenced at Ferozepur on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1917 and volunteers were asked for. Of the 96 students who presented themselves, finally 60 were selected - 19 Mohammedans, 23 Sikhs, 15 Hindus and 3 Christians. Most of the rejections were on account of defective vision, since at that time visual signalling was an important means of communications. Training commenced on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1917, and continued for the next two months under the watchful eyes of British instructors. The residents of Lahore contributed 400 rupees to purchase sports gear for the students, so that they could play hockey and football during their leisure time. After two months rigorous training, the section, which now had a strength of only 50, left for Poona on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1917, where they were to undergo further training at the Signal Service Depot.

By December 1917 the men had made such excellent progress that the section was considered fit for active service and it was decided to send them overseas. Some more men had joined the unit in Poona, but a few had left due to various reasons, and when the section left Poona on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1918 it had a strength of 50, excluding drivers and followers, with about 15 men being left behind for further training, and to act as reinforcements. Muhammad Munir Khan was selected for promotion to the rank of Jemadar and became the first Indian Officer of the section. The section embarked on the H.T. Tortilla at Karachi on 7<sup>th</sup> February and reached Basra on the 13<sup>th</sup>, where they were to await their posting orders, which arrived after about ten days. Leaving Basra on 23<sup>rd</sup> February, the section sailed up the Karun River and arrived at Ahwaz, the Headquarters of the Karun Front, on the 28<sup>th</sup>. For the next year the section remained at Ahwaz, as part of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force.

Immediately after their arrival at Ahwaz, the section took over the communications on the Front and was officially named the "Karun Front Signal Section". Their job was to maintain telephone lines between the Headquarters and various outposts, which were located at distances of 30 to 50 miles. The local telephones at the Headquarters were also part of their responsibility. The section had to construct several new telephone line routes, as the requirements of the Karun front increased. This included the erection of an airline (raised telephone line using poles) to a new outpost located about 80 miles away, which a detachment of 20 men from the section completed in ten days. This was considered a stupendous performance, considering that the job was done during the summer months in intense heat.

The personnel of the section worked very hard, and their performance was well appreciated. Unlike British soldiers, who suffered from the extreme heat, most of the men of the section maintained good health and only four had to be repatriated to India on account of ill health. In September 1918, two NCOs, Havildar Rachpal Singh and Naik Hamam Dass were sent to Baghdad to undergo training as Assistant Instructors of Army Signalling. Both qualified on the course with credit and re-joined the section after three months. In October 1918 Jemadar Munir Khan and Lance Naik Pritam Singh left for India to join the Temporary School for Indian Cadets (TSIC), which had been opened at the Daly College at Indore to train cadets who had been selected for grant of King's commissions. Incidentally, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, the first Indian C-in-C of the Indian Army, was also trained at the Daly Cadet College.

After World War I ended, orders were received for the section to return to India. Three men elected to remain in Mesopotamia, and were transferred to other departments. Havildar Gopal Singh and Lance Naik Randhir Singh were transferred to the Agricultural Department in Baghdad, while Lance Naik Amolak Ram joined the Works Department in Basra. The remaining 51 men embarked on H.T. Bamora at Basra on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1919. The section was given a welcome by the reception committee when they reached Karachi on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Next day, they embarked on *H.T. Chakdina* and sailed for

Bombay. Disembarking on the 25<sup>th</sup>, the section left the same day for Poona, where they were accommodated in the Signal Service Depot. The section was finally disbanded on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1919.

Just prior to their disbandment, the men of the section decided to form a Union, which was to be called "The Punjab University Brigade Signals Union". The funds remaining in the sports fund were supplemented by a general subscription from all members, and Naik Hamam Dass was elected the secretary. The Government of Punjab issued a Press Communique, which was published in the Civil and Military Gazette of 9<sup>th</sup> December 1919, giving out the history of the Punjab University Brigade Signal Section. The Lieutenant Governor of Punjab also lauded the performance of the section during the 42nd Convocation of the Punjab University. The record of the section must be viewed in the light of similar experiments with students of other regions. Bengal and Madras University Signal Sections were also raised at Poona at the same time, as part of 43 Signal Company under the command of Captain JB Reid. The sections never came to full strength due to lack of volunteers and remained in Poona till they were disbanded in 1919.

The names of the men who served with the Punjab University Signal Section at any time are given below, in alphabetical order -

Ahmad Said Khakhar	Ahmad Shafi Butt
Amolak Ram	Asghar Ali Khan
Atma Singh Dhaliwal	Aziz Ullah Khan
Badan Singh Saini	Bali, K.N.
Balwant Singh	Basant Singh Sodhi
Bishan Singh Gill	Dayal Singh Gharjakhia
Dan Raj Singh Bhindar	Fateh Muhammad Khan
Fazal Qadir	Ganpat Rai Dhani
Gian Chand Khanna	Ghulam Hussain Ahmadi
Gobindar Singh Dulat	Gopal Singh
Gopal Singh Arora	Gurbachan Singh Chima
Gurbaksh Singh	Gurbaksh Singh Gyani
Hamid Ullah Khan	Harbhajan Singh Sodhi
Hardev Singh	Harish Chandra Khanna
Harnam Dass Bhanot	Hayat Muhammad
Hukam Chand Dhawan	Indar Mohan Lall
Ishar Dass Saini	Ishar Singh Brar
Ishar Singh Gill	Jagan Nath Chopra
Jala-Ud-Din	Jaswant Singh
Kartar Singh Gill	Khan Zaman Awan
Labh Singh	Lal Khan
Lazarus Alfred	Mangal Singh Gill
Muhammad Asghar Khan	Muhammad Bashir Khan
Muhammad Mehdi Qureshi	Muhammad Munir Khan
Muhammad Nur	Muhammad Shafi Sheikh
Muhammad Shah Beg	Mulk Raj Basudeva
Narindar Singh Botalia	Natha Singh
Nawab Ali Qureshi	Partap Singh Garewal
Prabhu Dayal Gulat	Pritam Singh Khashtria
Qadir Baksh Gujar	Rachpal Singh Ahluwalia
Raja Ram Sahgal	Ramji Lall Dathi
Randhir Singh	Sant Ram Sethi
Sawal Paul Singh	Shamshad Ali Khan

Sher Singh Ghumman	Sikandar Lall
Sita Ram Ahluwalia	Sundar Lall Sudan
Sunder Singh Arora	Teja Singh Girgia
Uggar Sam	Ujjagar Singh Brar

The subsequent careers of some of the members of the Punjab Signal Section may interest the readers. Muhammad Munir Khan and Pritam Singh, who had been granted King's Commissions after passing out from the Daly Cadet College, Indore, reached the rank of Brigadier in the Pakistan and Indian Armies respectively. Shamshad Ali Khan, Harnam Dass Bhanot, Indar Mohan Lall and Partap Singh Garewal joined the Indian Civil Service and became distinguished administrators. Harbhajan Singh Sodhi, Harish Chandra Khanna and Sunder Singh Arora joined the Forest Service. Incidentally, two of Sodhi's sons, Gurdarshan and Manohar, were commissioned in the Corps of Signals, with the second one (MS Sodhi), reaching the rank of Lieutenant General, and becoming the Signal Officer-in-Chief. Rachpal Singh remained in Signals till 1927, when he transferred to the department of Military Lands and Cantonments, retiring as the Director General. Mangal Singh Gill became a member of the Punjab legislature.

(The article is extracted from *THE HISTORY OF THE CORPS OF SIGNALS - VOLUME -I*, published in 1975 by the Corps of Signals Committee)

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## TWO OFFICERS OF 10th GURKHA RIFLES ON THE SS *PERSIA*

David Harding

This is an addition to the notes in *Durbar* Vol. 21 No.1 on the officers of the Indian Army who were on board the SS *Persia* when it was torpedoed and sunk in December 1915. Those notes mention two officers who served with 10th Gurkha Rifles. As a former member of that regiment and their Archivist until recently, I can add to the information given on these officers, and correct one or two errors. Both placed the safety of others above their own during the sinking.

### CAPTAIN H.L. AINSWORTH, 1ST BATTALION 10TH GURKHA RIFLES

Captain Harry Lawrence Ainsworth was born on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1881, the fourth son of Captain W. Ainsworth late of HM 53rd Light Infantry, of Spotland in Lancashire, and Twickenham Park. He attended St Paul's School, and was commissioned on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1901. His family still possesses his first Commission, which was in the 3rd Battalion The East Surrey Regiment, and indicates that he entered via the Militia rather than attending Sandhurst. He arrived in India on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1901, and spent the customary year with a British battalion (in his case the Durham Light Infantry, his brother's regiment, then in the Nilgiri Hills). He then joined 1/10 GR as a 2nd Lieutenant on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1903 in Burma — where his Battalion was stationed throughout his time with them. He took leave in India to study Indian languages in 1903-04, and ordinary leave out of India in 1906 and 1911-12. He was Quarter Master of 1/10 GR from 1<sup>st</sup> March 1905, and then Adjutant from 8<sup>th</sup> February 1909 until 8<sup>th</sup> February 1913. On the latter date he began a tour of extra-regimental duty with the Burma Military Police, serving as an Assistant Commandant at Myitkina and Kamaing [*History of Services, Police Department, Burma.*]. His date of rank as a captain was 4<sup>th</sup> May 1910.

The *Indian Army List* for January 1915 shows Ainsworth as being with 2/10 GR, who were then in Egypt, but this is probably incorrect as it is not confirmed in any regimental records. The list of

officers on SS *Persia* that was published in *Durbar* Vol. 21 No.1, pp.6-7 shows Ainsworth as "1/10 GR attd 1-39 Garhwal Rifles". I cannot confirm this attachment, either from the *Indian Army List*, his newspaper obituary or other sources,<sup>1</sup> but if the information is correct, then it very probably means that he had taken a draft of Garhwalis from the Burma Military Police to France as reinforcements; Capt R.G.T. Gatherer of 2/10 GR did this in late 1914, and it is difficult to see how else Ainsworth reached Europe from Burma, as he was not due for home leave in 1914. On p.8 of *Durbar* it is correctly stated that Ainsworth served with 1/9 GR in France and was wounded at Loos. His obituary states more specifically that he joined 1/9 GR in France in April 1915 with a draft from India (which suggests he brought Gurkhas, not Garhwalis), and was wounded on 26<sup>th</sup> September. He was evacuated to England for treatment.

The 10 GR Regimental History states,

‘...all his friends were saddened by the news of the death of Captain H.L. Ainsworth in the sinking by enemy action of the P. & O. S.S. *Persia*, in which he was returning to the Battalion from England.

"Pinkie" Ainsworth was an outstanding officer who appeared to be marked out for a brilliant career. He was gay, debonair and universally popular and those who knew him were not surprised to hear that he had met death as he had lived, when after fastening his own life-jacket round a woman who was without one, he went over the side with a jest and a gay smile.' [B.R. Mullally, *Bugle and Kukri: The Story of The 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles* (Blackwood, 1957), pp.53-54.]

In the *Times of India* on 10 Jan 1916, an unnamed friend wrote,

‘As a personal friend of his I should like to add a short appreciation of the dead officer. A keen soldier, adjutant of his regiment, a thorough sportsman in the truest sense of the word, a fearless rider and the cheeriest of companions, his gaiety and charm of manner endeared him to all and sundry. He served in France during the greater part of the war and lost his life on the high seas by the foulest crime committed by Germany. Knowing him as I did, I can well believe he sacrificed himself in helping some other; anyhow I know that he went to his death as a very gallant gentleman:— *Requiescat in Pace.*’

Another newspaper notice mentions his talents in polo, hockey, rugby and football.

He was aged 34 when he died, and is commemorated on the Chatby Memorial, Egypt [Commonwealth War Graves Memorial Register No.41]. He is still well remembered by his family — his great-nephew Mr Thomas Kelly introduced himself to an officer of 10 GR in Bahrain in 1998, and spoke of ‘Pinkie’ with pride; also of two of his brothers, who were highly decorated officers in the DLI and RAMC.

LT C.W.F. SCOTT IARO

Curtis William Folliott Scott had an interesting career in WW1 that is worth expanding upon. He might be said to have led a charmed life — besides surviving the sinking of the SS *Persia*, he was wounded three times, including twice in Gallipoli.

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<sup>1</sup> Contained in BBC research notes passed to me, but if it cannot now be proven from David Harding's references I would suggest it is dropped. Ed.

The quotation from the 9 GR History given on p.8 of *Durbar* is inaccurate as to Scott's unit in Gallipoli. The reference from the 3 GR History on p.12 is in fact more correct in showing Scott as being 'of the 2/10th Gurkhas'. The background is as follows.

Scott did indeed come from the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps, but in Gallipoli he served as a member of the Indian Army Reserve of Officers (IARO) attached to 2nd Battalion 10th Gurkha Rifles. The 2/10 GR War Diary shows that on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1915 in Egypt, 2/Lt Scott (also 2/Lts R.C. Bolster and A.J.B. Chester), joined the Battalion on probation, being transferred from the Ceylon Planters Rifle Corps to the IARO [PRO: WO95/4428, 2/10 GR War Diary 1914-16, p.21, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1915]. On 16<sup>th</sup> April 1915, still in Egypt, these three IARO subalterns were examined in various subjects including Gurkhali [*Ibid.* p.51]. They landed in Gallipoli with 2/10 GR, and Curtis Scott (to trace only him, for present purposes) was 'slightly' wounded on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1915, in the battle of Gully Ravine [*Ibid.* 28<sup>th</sup> June 1915 and B.R. Mullally, *Bugle and Kukri: The Story of The 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles* (Blackwood, 1957), p.73].

He was Mentioned in Despatches for his work in Gallipoli, evidently for this initial period that 2/10 GR spent on the Helles front. [*London Gazette* 28<sup>th</sup> January 1916, MIDs to 2/10 GR for Gallipoli, including 2/Lt C.W.F. Scott IARO].

His wound removed him from the Battalion — we know this because by the night of 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2/10 GR was down to just three British officers, all of them subalterns, namely T.H. Battye, G.E.F. Campbell and A.J.B. Chester — but it is unclear how far back down the chain of medical care Scott went. Captain B.G.S. Clarke of 2/10 GR, in letters written at Malta while recovering from wounds received in the same action, states his belief that Scott was evacuated, perhaps to Alexandria, but had probably re-joined by 17<sup>th</sup> July 1915 [*The Bugle and Kukri: The Journal of The 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association* 2003, pp.25-26]. However, this is surmise, and it seems more likely that Scott went no further back for treatment than the Field Ambulance. He was with 2/10 GR in July-August when it (and the rest of 29th Indian Infantry Brigade) was on the nearby depot island of Imbros for a spell of rest, retraining and reinforcement, and when it landed back on the Peninsula, at Anzac Cove on 6<sup>th</sup> August 1915, to take part in the August offensive.

What is certain is that in early August 1915, 20-year-old 2/Lt Scott had the heavy responsibility of commanding No. IV Double Company of 2/10 GR in the difficult and crucial attack on the Sari Bair ridge. This Double Company, together with No. III D.C. and Battalion HQ, took part in an assault along Rhododendron Spur (from the Apex towards The Pinnacle and Chunuk Bair) with the New Zealanders, at about 10.30am on 7<sup>th</sup> August. At the last moment, CO 2/10 GR (Lt Col F.G.H. Sutton), sent his Acting Adjutant, Lt G.E.F. Campbell with Scott, probably because Sutton was anxious about Scott's youth and inexperience, whereas Campbell was a regular officer with three years' service. Like the Auckland Battalion to their immediate right, the 2/10 GR Double Companies were caught in enfilade by the Turks and suffered heavy casualties, including Scott wounded and posted missing, and Campbell killed. They made less than 100 yards' progress, and the survivors remained pinned down in a hollow until nightfall provided some cover for them to return to the allied lines. Even then 2/10 GR heard nothing more of Scott for some weeks, when it emerged that he had somehow got down from the Ridge — presumably being carried by New Zealanders, or by Gurkhas who then became casualties themselves before they could report back to 2/10 GR — and been evacuated to Alexandria or Malta. [B.R. Mullally, *Bugle and Kukri: The Story of The 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles* (Blackwood, 1957), pp.90-91; also PRO: WO95/4272, War Diary HQ 129 Ind Inf Bde; also 10 GR Regimental Archives. The story of this attack of 7<sup>th</sup> August 1915 is told more fully in *Bugle and Kukri* magazine, 1990, pp.58-64.].

While serving with 2/9 GR later in WW1, Scott became a regular officer in the Indian Army (Lieutenant 14<sup>th</sup> October 1916), rose to Captain (14<sup>th</sup> October 1919) and was awarded the OBE. He died on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1971, aged 76, having been born on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1895.

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## TWO NAMES FROM THE MEERUT BURIAL REGISTER

17 & 18 MAY 1857

Tim Ash

There are two names recorded in Alan Harfield's "Notes on the Meerut Burial Register for 10 to 31 May 1857" (DURBAR - Winter 2004) which were well known to me and also have some connection. The first is that of Emilie Jane D'Oyly, aged 22, wife of Captain C. W. D'Oyly, 58<sup>th</sup> Regiment Bengal Native Infantry, who died in premature labour on 17<sup>th</sup> May and was buried 18<sup>th</sup> May. Emilie Jane was the daughter of Lieutenant Colonel George Nott of the Madras Army. She was married to Captain Charles Walters D'Oyly at St Mary's Church, Bangalore on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1855.

Previously, in October 1851, Lieutenant Charles Walters D'Oyly, as he then was, was appointed an Aide de Camp to the Governor General of India, Lord Dalhousie. He remained in this post until his promotion to Captain in 1855, married Emilie Jane and was appointed to the Stud Department. Emily Jane presented him with a daughter, born 6<sup>th</sup> July 1856 at Haupper and baptised Mary Lushington, by John Edward Wharton Rotton at Meerut on 4<sup>th</sup> September 1856.

In May 1857 Charles Walters D'Oyly and his wife were stationed at the Government Stud Farm at Haupper, about 22 miles south of Meerut. He writes that,

"I was living in a large house, well-furnished and with a beautiful park surrounding it, with horses, carriages, and all the comforts of life. A few weeks afterwards found me a fugitive, with simply the clothes I stood in, bereft of wife, furniture and property.... I consulted with Captain Parrott, my assistant, and we decided upon making the attempt to rush into Meerut, a distance of 22 miles, although the roads were covered with rebel soldiery and the villages en route swarming with armed ruffians. We sent out secret orders that the European portion of the establishment were to assemble just outside the Depot on the Meerut road at 8.30 p.m. We made a few hasty arrangements for our flight by putting together some changes of linen, refreshments for ourselves, milk for the baby. It was a moonlight night, which proved disadvantageous to us as we could be clearly distinguished, and form a mark for the rebels' firearms. The carriage contained my wife and child, then an infant of a year old, a native nurse, the coachman and myself. The Coachman at the last moment absented himself, and whilst we were waiting for him, the soldiers of the guard, suspicious that something was up, crowded round the carriage and one took hold of the horses' reins. I had a pair of spirited grey Arabs, who were not inclined to stand any rough usage. I shouted to the man to let go the bridle, whipped up the horses, who (sic) began to rear and jump into their collars, and so dashed off. In this manner we bade our adieu to Haupper. We found the rest of the party assembled at the bridge, and forming a strongish cavalcade started our flight at a quick trot. The Sergeants rode their own horses, Captain Parrot and myself in our respective carriages, and the Veterinary Surgeon, a Mr Burgess-Parry, a Dorsetshire man and fellow countryman, mounted on a grey Arab of mine, a noted horse on the Madras turf, called Prime Minister."

[Alan Harfield in his article "Bengal Army Veterinary Surgeons" DURBAR, SUMMER 2004 p. 66-72, records that Robert Burgess Parry served at the Haupper Stud but was at Delhi during the initial outbreak but escaped to Meerut arriving there on 13 May.]

"We reached the town of Haupper in two miles. Here we changed our tactics, and on a given signal galloped as hard as we could through the town, till we arrived in the open country, on the grand trunk road to Meerut. The rush was so sudden and unexpected that we passed unchallenged, though we heard after we had passed the discharge of firearms, which, however, proved harmless. At early dawn, as we neared the city of Meerut, we were suddenly stopped by the challenge – "Who goes there?" As we did not immediately answer, being taken by surprise, we narrowly escaped a discharge of grape-shot into us from a couple of Artillery guns. We reached Meerut, two miles further, in safety, and having deposited the ladies and children in a fortified entrenchment, called the "Dum-Dumma", I sallied forth to report my arrival to the General Officer, commanding the troops."

To introduce the second name as D`Oyly continues his narrative.

"In crossing the large open parade ground, adjacent to the Barracks, I met a fellow officer in uniform whose face I seemed to know. As he neared me he put up his eye-glass, for he was short-sighted, and I immediately recognised a dear old friend, who had been a fellow Cadet with me at the Military College, at Addiscombe, Edward Fraser, of the Engineers, a brother of the late Dr Fraser, Bishop of Manchester. [see below] I said - "My dear Ned, what are you doing here?" He replied - "I have just arrived with a Native Company of Sappers, from Roorki on our way to Delhi." He continued - "I have just been reporting the arrival of myself and Company to General Hewett." After a few words we parted, and I never saw him again alive. On my return from reporting myself to the General I was re-crossing the parade ground, when I observed a party of soldiers carrying something heavy. I approached and to my horror ascertained that they were carrying a dead body. On lifting the cloth that covered the face I recognised the handsome features of my friend Edward Fraser, with whom I had been conversing only a little before, in perfect health and rejoicing in the prospects of service in the field. I returned to the Fort, found it crowded with fugitives from all the surrounding stations, and most uncomfortable for ladies and children in such terrible weather. I fortunately fell in with General Harriott, of the Judge Advocate General's Department, who kindly insisted on my wife, child and nurse taking refuge in a comfortable house, not far removed from the fort. Considering my wife and child were both unwell from the effects of the night's adventure and likewise that the great body of the mutineers had gone clean off to Delhi, I chose, as I thought, the least of two evils and decided upon accepting the kind offer of the General and took them to the house. My wife was taken dangerously ill that night. I will not dwell upon the terrible sorrow which fell upon me. Within twenty four hours from that time I had lost and laid in her last home, with her newly borne babe by her side the partner of my life, who had acted so bravely and with such heroic courage throughout the scenes I have just described, and I was left a widower with a young child [Mary Lushington] to provide for and face with as brave a heart as I could command, but with a broken spirit, the terrible prospect which was opening before us."

D`Oyly does not give us the sex of the stillborn child, however, he inserted in the Domestic Occurrences of *The Mofussilite Newspaper*, published at Agra, Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1857 the following notices:

**BIRTHS** - At Meerut May 17<sup>th</sup>, the wife of Captain D`Oyly, Stud Department, of a son, still born.

**DEATHS** - At Meerut, on the 17<sup>th</sup> May, 1857, the beloved wife of Captain D'Oyly, Stud Department.



### **THE STATION GRAVE-YARD**

from *THE OLD MISSIONARY*  
by Sir William W. Hunter KCSI, MA, LL.D  
with four illustrations by Major General Sir Charles D'Oyly, Bart.  
1896

(Sir Charles Walter D'Oyly was an amateur Indian artist of some note as were his father (Sir John Hadley D'Oyly) and uncle (Sir Charles D'Oyly) both of whom served in the Bengal Civil Service)

Emilie Jane was buried on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1857 at Meerut by Thomas Smyth, Assistant Minister and John Edward Wharton Rotton, Chaplain. Thus did the Indian Mutiny deprive Charles Walters D'Oyly of not only his wife but also his only son and heir. Though he remarried in later life there were no children of the marriage. The baronetcy, which he inherited from his father in 1869, passed to his half-brother on his death in 1900. He lies buried at Charlton Marshall, Dorset, under a plain Celtic Cross **Sir Charles Walters D'Oyly. Born December 21<sup>st</sup> 1822. Died July 11<sup>th</sup> 1900.** Parted by distance and time from Emilie Jane at Meerut.

Edward Fraser, unlike D'Oyly, did not come from a prosperous family. His father, a retired India merchant, lost money in the ironstone mines in the Forest of Dean and dying in 1832, aged, 54, left his widow and seven children poorly provided for. The eldest, James, born 1818, went into the Church but did not become the Lord Bishop of Manchester until 1870. Three of his younger brothers went into the Indian Army but only one, Alexander, born 1824, survived to old age and rose to high rank becoming a General, C.B., Colonel Commandant of the Royal (Bengal) Engineers.

At the time of Edward's death in 1857 his brother James was the Rector of Cholderton in Wiltshire, until 1860 when he became the Rector of Ufton Nervet, Berkshire, where both he and his mother are buried.

Edward Fraser had married in 1848, Sofia Matilda, who gave him several children. She was a widow, daughter of local Major Henry Forster, of an Anglo-Indian family who had raised the Shekawattee

Brigade in 1835. After Edward's death at Meerut, Reverend James Fraser erected, in 1859, a memorial window at Cholderton Church. It depicted, in two lights, the Healing of the Paralytic and Peter walking in the Sea. The dedication reads:

Capt. Edward Fraser, of the Bengal Engineers,  
who in the revolt of the Bengal Native Army  
fell by the hands of his own mutinous troops  
whom he was endeavouring to recall to their duty  
at Meerut, May 16, 1857. Aged 34 years.

#### Main Sources

1. *Eight Months` Experience of the Sepoy Revolt in 1857* by Maj. Gen. Sir Charles Walters D`Oyly, Bart. Late Bengal Staff Corps. Blandford. Henry Shipp, Printer and Publisher. Market Place. 1891.
2. *Dictionary of National Biography*. James Fraser 18 August 1818 - 22 October 1885.

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#### SARAGARHI

We published an account of the incident at Saragarhi (12 September 1897) in Vol. 14, No 2, Summer 1997 (pages 47-54) with a follow up in Vol. 14, No 4, Winter 1997 (page 169). Lieutenant Colonel Tim Villiers has recently loaned us some family photograph albums dating from 1897-1902 in connection with an article about his grandfather, Lieutenant General Sir Charles Godwin. Four of the photographs are of the ruins of Saragarhi and I thought it worth publishing them here. Captions taken from General Godwin's album – who spells the Fort as Saraghari).



Interior of Fort Saragarhi showing bastion beneath ruins of which many of the Sikh defenders are buried.



Side of the hill below fort, up which enemy climbed



Ruins of Fort Saragarhi from the cookhouse from whence volleys poured to smash up the door. The Lancer stands on the same bastion as in the first



Ruins of Fort Saragarhi from the North.

## LETTERS AND QUERIES

● In answer to Shamus Wade's query about the Gumbaz Levy (Durbar, Vol. 21, No. 3, Autumn 2004, p 118), written in response to a mention of the Gumbaz Levy Post in Peter Chapman's article on Captain Henry Harvey Lyons (Durbar, Vol. 21, No. 1, Spring 2004, p 14), Peter Chapman has clarified the position:

Gumbaz lies on a main east-west road in flat open country in southern Afghanistan, about fifty miles from the Baluchistan frontier (to the south), and about fifty miles from the Seistan frontier (to the west).

That there was a levy post at Gumbaz is a fact. But may I suggest that it was the levy post **AT** Gumbaz rather than a post for the Gumbaz Levies, of whom I have never heard. The Levies operating in this wild, open, under-populated area, lots of it desert, would surely have been the Baluchistan Levies, a wild lot but particularly useful to General Dyer during his incursion to the Sarhad...and to subsequent assorted forays west towards Persia.

● Cliff Parrett writes:

I made an error in my response (Vol. 21, No 2, Summer 2004, p 79) to David Mahoney's enquiry regarding his Mahratta Horse medal, for which my sincere apologies. The correct shelf mark reference is L/Mil/5/95 (folios 291r-292v) and not L/Mil/5/83 (folios 291r-292v).

● Shamus Wade writes:

Quite a few years ago I acquired a boxed set of 58 different toy soldiers, very well painted, depicting soldiers of the British Empire, possibly about 1897. Over the years I have managed to identify most of them but I am left with four mounted Indian figures. Can anyone identify the following? All were made by Heyde, the great German toy maker.

- a. Rounded beard. Dark red pagri with yellow stripes. Mustard coloured kurta with black collar, black stripe down the front and black and yellow cuffs. Red kummerbund with yellow stripe. White breeches. Black boots. Gold epaulettes. Empty handed. Light blue shabraque with gold edge.
- b. White rounded beard. Pagri with dark red top, white and light blue edge with bit hanging down the back. Red kurta with a lot of gold on and across chest, light blue facings. Light blue breeches with gold stripe. Black boots (only tips visible). Empty handed. Light blue shabraque with gold edge. Gold epaulettes.
- c. Black pointed beard. White pagri with light blue stripes and gold knob sticking out of the top. Red kurta with white facings. Dark blue breeches with red stripe. Black boots. Gold epaulettes. Empty handed. Very dark blue shabraque with gold edge.
- d. No beard (moustache only). White pagri with light blue and yellow stripes, dark red khulla. Red kurta with light blue facings. Light blue breeches. Lance with red and white pennant. Light blue shabraque with red edge.

● Rana Chhina has provided a possible answer to the query posed by Mr B Davis of Harlow, Essex, (Vol. 21, No 3, Autumn 2004, p 119) concerning what appears to be the centrepiece of the India Title Badge (RAO BAHADUR) fitted with copper loops and a split pin, though it doesn't seem to match exactly what was described by Mr Davis.

The first issue of King George VI title badges was delayed at the mint after his accession, with much whining that they had enough things to redesign already (and they were not best pleased at having started Edward VIII designs and then having had to junk them mid-project). Three options were advanced: (1) award George V badges with an apology and allow replacement (at cost to recipient) later, (2) award sanads only and send along George VI badges when they were ready, or (3) take old George V badges, grind them down, prepare a "quicke" George VI centre and glue it (literally) over the old badge so awards could proceed. Option "3" was elected. These were awarded ONLY in the first Honours List after the coronation of George VI (Birthday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1937). But the "quick fix" pieces did fall apart and, given the number of complaints received, replacements were issued (at no cost to the recipient). They are, therefore, rather rare. A few of these badges are known to exist in collections. The "seam lines" are visible at the top of the wreath.

There was never any change or exchange or re-engineering when the transition (from the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1933 badges) went from George V facing right to facing left. From the pencil sketch submitted by Mr Davis it looks as though his "oddity" is the earlier type with George V facing right.

The above description does not appear to fit what Mr Davis has described, unless the "grinding down" mentioned for the "quick fix" actually involved cutting out the centre, in which case that would be an interesting addition to the above story. In truth, however, one would have thought that if they were cutting out in order to fix a George VI "quicke" replacement centre they would not have been too careful about handling the old version and it would therefore be surprising if any had survived in the condition described by Mr Davis.

It seems more likely, therefore, that what he has is the equivalent of a "brooch-mounted" Rao Bahadur; someone has "reprocessed" the badge for later wear in some new fashion. Perhaps a widow (though one might wonder when an Indian widow was likely to wear such a device) or, more likely, someone finding a way to wear their badge after independence when, as Imperial awards, they became extraordinarily non-PC!

● Noted by Elizabeth Talbot-Rice in *Military Mail* dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1913 under the heading "Delayed Indian Mutiny Medals". In the annual report of the Seaforth Highlanders Regimental Association it is stated that two old comrades of the regiment have just received the Mutiny Medal, 54 years after they did their first service in India. They are Alexander Mollison and Sgt J Allison both of whom enlisted in February 1858 and were drafted to India in the course of the same year. Neither can have seen active service until the closing scenes of the Mutiny, which probably accounts for the delay in recognition of their claims. Sgt Allison had a peculiarly unfortunate beginning to his military career for he embarked on the *Lady Hodgkinson* in August 1858, was wrecked at Quillon, and did not actually arrive in India until the end of November 1858.

● Major Zafar Masood has pointed out that in the special issue on 61<sup>st</sup> Cavalry (Vol. 20, No. 4, Winter 2003, page 122) we referred to Bucephalia, the city originally named after Alexander the Great's horse, as Jalalabad in present day Pakistan. As he says, Becuphalia, now commonly known as "Phalia", is next to the city of Gujrat in Pakistan. Jalalabad is in Afghanistan. Our apologies for the error.

## BOOK NOTES

● *THE PRICE OF PEACE – A CATALOGUE OF RAF AIRCRAFT LOSSES BETWEEN VE-DAY AND END OF 1945* by Colin Cummings. 688 pages. ISBN 09526619 5 0. Nimbus Publishing, PO Box 3, Yelvertoft, Northamptonshire NN6 6ZE, England. £22 (profits to be donated to the RAF Museum and RAF Charities).

Members will recall a request by the author of this book for help from the Society in identifying the regiment to which 20 Indian soldiers belonged who survived the crash of a Dakota aircraft at Bekasi, Java, on 23 November 1945, only to be massacred by locals (Durbar Vol. 19, No 1, p31). Stephen Le Mere Goff provided a lead (Vol. 19, No 2, p50) while Cliff Parrett, drawing on Bisheshwar Prasad's *Official History of the Indian Armed Forces in the Second World War – Post War Occupation Forces, Japan & South East Asia* and Lieutenant Colonel A J F Doulton's history of 23<sup>rd</sup> Indian Division 1942-47, *The Fighting Cock*, suggested the unit as 2/19 Hyderabad Regiment. The RAF Historical Branch subsequently confirmed this.

This incident features on pp583-584 of this monumental work by Colin Cummings. All five RAF crew members are named, as are the one Naik, two Lance Naiks and 17 Sepoys lost in the massacre.

This is not the only aircraft loss that might be of interest to members of this Society. For example, exactly one month earlier, on 23 October 1945, another Dakota carrying passengers and freight to Hmawbi was lost after entering a cu-nim cloud formation. The seven Indian passengers were employed in different support roles for the RAF and would have moved around to new stations, or as new detachments were established away from main bases. They included a tailor, bearer, barber and several dhobis. There are probably other incidents of interest amongst the 688 pages, though I have not had time to read the entire book. Colin Cummings kindly sent a complimentary copy by way of thanks to the Society for the help of its members. A most generous gesture.

● *COLLECTOR'S GUIDE TO INDIAN CANTEEN TOKENS* by Praful Thakkar. 88 pages. Lavishly illustrated. There is no ISBN identification for this booklet which has been published by Thakkar Numismatic and Art Foundation, 102, Deanscroft Court, Cary, NC 27511, USA (email [thakkarnumisart@yahoo.com](mailto:thakkarnumisart@yahoo.com)). It is also distributed by Reesha Books International, 7 Sonal Darshan, Goshala Road, Mulund, Mumbai 400 080, India (email [info@reeshabooks.com](mailto:info@reeshabooks.com), web site [www.reeshabooks.com](http://www.reeshabooks.com)). US\$ 13 or Rupees 190.00 (India).

As Robert Puddester says in his foreword to the book, very little study by numismatists has led to published works on this subject. Major Fred Pridmore looked at tea garden, canteen and military tokens in *The Coins of the British Commonwealth of Nations, Part 4 India, Volume 2*. Michael Mitchiner reviewed some canteen tokens in *Indian Tokens: Popular Religious & Secular Art*. S K Bose and N G Rhodes covered tea garden tokens in *Coins and Tokens of Assam* while Robert Puddester wrote about *Railway Tokens of the Raj* for Spink's Numismatic Circular.

Praful Thakkar has identified well in excess of 300 tokens issued by mills, hotels, railways, banks, clubs, companies, co-operatives, and factories, as well as 20 issued by military establishments such as ammunition factories, ordnance factories and army contractors. Unit tokens identified are from 16<sup>th</sup> Queen's Lancers, 17<sup>th</sup> Lancers, 18<sup>th</sup> Hussars, Royal Artillery, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers, Durham Light Infantry and Royal Ulster Rifles. They cover, for example, 1, 2 and 8 Anna tokens for use in the coffee shops of the respective regiments.

An interesting and well-presented adjunct to military numismatics.

ANM

● *WILLINGLY TO WAR 1939-1945. AN EMERGENCY COMMISSIONED OFFICER IN THE INDIAN ARMY* by Paul Byron Norris. 189 pages. Photos, maps. ISBN 0 907799 81 7. Published by the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA) and available from them at 76 ½ Chartfield Avenue, Putney, London SW15 6HQ. £13 (including P&P), cheques to be made payable to BACSA.

Born in Bangalore of a Domiciled European family (Greek father, English mother), this is the third of a trilogy by Paul Norris (Nicachi) published by BACSA. As the author says in his introduction, "Anybody interested in the military history of the Second World War will be in for a disappointment...for my war effort was modest indeed. I hope, however, that it may serve its very limited purpose which is to describe the impressions of a young man, emergency-commissioned in the Indian Army...". This short book achieves its objective.

In the summer of 1941, having completed his schooling in Southsea, Norris volunteered for flying duties with the RAF but failed the eyesight test. Discharged after just 48 hours, he joined the army and the Hampshire Regiment but was quickly earmarked for a commission and found himself at Dehra Dun from where, in September 1942, he was commissioned into 15<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 7<sup>th</sup> Rajput Regiment, then stationed in Baluchistan. Initially trained as motorised troops for deployment to the Western Desert, this plan was scuppered by Montgomery's victory at Alamein, so 15/7<sup>th</sup> Rajputs were diverted to that more traditional Indian Army posting, the Khyber Pass at Landi Kotal. The author's time there was mixed, Animal Transport Officer coming at the lower end of the scale; a short period as company commander of Fort Ali Masjid only slightly better.

In late 1943 his release from the North West Frontier came when the battalion was ordered to provide two officers to 18/7<sup>th</sup> Rajputs, then doing famine relief work in Bengal. Mid-1944, however, found the battalion building and then guarding a camp for returned INA soldiers. Sometime later the 18/7<sup>th</sup> Rajputs were ordered to provide one officer, one Havildar and a section of sepoy for attachment to 4/7<sup>th</sup> Rajputs, then in Fifth Indian Division, to gain battle experience – a move not entirely welcomed by 4/7<sup>th</sup>. Shortly afterwards, however, Norris managed to get his section transferred to the Chamar Regiment in 268 Indian Independent Brigade, his first exposure to 'real' active service, though his sojourn with the Chamars was to be relatively short-lived since he was summoned back to 18/7<sup>th</sup> Rajputs to fulfil a requirement placed on them to provide an officer with Burma experience to 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, the Burma Regiment, to be employed on peace-keeping duties as the country was gradually liberated from the Japanese, and in the hunt for dacoits. The frustrations of the Comilla Transit Camp, occasioned by the feigned lack of knowledge of 2 Burma Regiment's whereabouts, were relieved by a chance encounter with an officer in another Mess who knew exactly where they were, and so Norris managed to get himself to Shwebo. A transfer to Mandalay, where Norris assumed command of B Company, replaced the short time he had spent on dacoit hunting in the Pakoku region. Later the battalion was transferred to the north eastern frontier of Burma where Norris assumed command of D Company at Sadon, his final military posting before demobilisation and going on to Cambridge University.

What of the impressions of a young emergency-commissioned officer? Norris' strong Christian faith lies behind many of his observations. What seems to come over in the book is the apparent ambivalence of regular officers towards their emergency-commissioned counterparts, forgetting, perhaps, that they had volunteered and not been conscripted. Above all, and this has not been noticed in other reminiscences, was the way in which Norris was shunted from pillar to post and ended his war years having served with five separate regiments. Altogether an interesting perspective on the Indian Army at that time.

ANM

A number of new books noted in publishers' and/or dealers' catalogues recently, though I have yet to read any of them. If anyone has read any of them and would be prepared to submit a review for the benefit of other members I would be delighted to hear:

● Pen & Sword Books Limited, FREEPOST SF5, 47 Church Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2BR. Tel: +44 (0) 1226 734222/734555. Fax +44 (0) 1226 734438. In each case the price quoted is exclusive of p&p which is, in all three cases, + £2.50 p&p UK/EEC, overseas £4 (per order) surface/£6 (per book) airmail.

*SECRET LETTERS FROM THE RAILWAY. THE REMARKABLE RECORD OF CHARLES STEEL – A JAPANESE POW.* Edited by Brian Best. ISBN 1 84415 118 2. 192 pages, illustrated, hardback. £19.99.

*TO FREEDOM THROUGH CHINA. ESCAPING FROM JAPANESE OCCUPIED HONG KONG 1942.* Anthony Hewitt. ISBN 1 84415 229 4. 228 pages, illustrated, hardback. £19.99.

*LOST SOULS OF THE RIVER KWAI. EXPERIENCES OF A BRITISH SOLDIER ON THE RAILWAY OF DEATH.* Bill Read with Mitch Peeke. ISBN 1 84415 127 1. 142 pages, illustrated, hardback. £16.99

● Spellmount Publishers, The Village Centre, Staplehurst, Kent TN12 0BJ. Tel: +44 (0) 1580 893730. Fax: (0) 1580 893731. Email – [enquiries@spellmount.com](mailto:enquiries@spellmount.com). Website – [www.spellmount.com](http://www.spellmount.com).

*CRISIS ON THE FRONTIER. THE THIRD AFGHAN WAR AND THE CAMPAIGN IN WAZIRISTAN 1919-20.* Brian Robson. ISBN 1 86227 211 5. 328 pages, illustrations, maps, hardback. £25.

*SENTINELS OF THE SKY. GLIMPSES OF THE INDIAN AIR FORCE.* Squadron Leader R K Pal. ISBN 1 86227 097 X. 180 pages, 320 colour and other illustrations, hardback. £45.

We have already reviewed Tony Heathcote's *THE AFGHAN WARS 1839-1919* and Brian Robson's *THE ROAD TO KABUL. THE SECOND AFGHAN WAR 1878-1881*, both of which appear in the same catalogue.

● Although not a review (we have already reviewed the book), more recently joined members, and especially those with an interest in medals, may like to know that I still hold copies of our Vice President Rana Chhina's outstanding work *THE INDIAN DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL*. Published by Invicta India in 2001, this book is *the* definitive record of that medal. The book retails at £29.95 plus £5 p&p, a total of £34.95 sterling, or \$45 plus \$10 p&p US, and is available from the Editor at the address shown inside the journal cover.

● Again, not a review as such, but those who subscribe to MAGGS Bros Ltd Military and Naval History catalogue will have seen a fascinating entry in catalogue 1355 issued in the Spring of 2004. The Rodney Foster archive consists of some five thousand, six hundred pages bound into twenty-two volumes. Eighteen volumes comprise the chronological account of his life and times created by Foster retrospectively during the years of his retirement after 1933, two are albums of his drawings, one is a ring-bound album of cuttings and another titled 'The Chitral Reliefs 1904'. As Maggs described it, "The archive in its final form is not an archive in the usual understanding of the

term.....Rather it is the purposed creation of its curator developed from...his own diaries, sketchbooks and ephemera. That Foster was an insatiable hoarder of ephemera and a compulsive recorder is evident throughout the work [including] Foster's arrival at Sandhurst at 4 p.m. on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August 1900 [and] the very train ticket for the journey."

Foster was born in India (his father was with the Indian Forestry Department, though other forebears had served in the Mutiny, and another had risen to Major General) and, on his return to India after Sandhurst he joined 3<sup>rd</sup> Brahmans and then 58<sup>th</sup> Vaughan's Rifles. During this four-year period he became a Station Staff Officer and a Magistrate, but he also rode escort command to a column relieving Chitral, obviously the source of one of his volumes.

In 1906 he was gazetted to the Survey of India as an Assistant Superintendent with the rank of Lieutenant and there, but for the years of the First World War, he remained, eventually becoming Director of the Burma Circle following the murder of his predecessor, though in truth his mission was to dismiss the staff and close the Survey down. He reverted to military duty for the period of the First World War and found himself on the frontier with 55<sup>th</sup> Coke's Rifles, commanding a double company of Usufzais and Khattaks. Promoted Major in 1916, he was Officer Commanding Depot when, at the end of 1917, the regiment was ordered to quell disturbances amongst the Mari tribes of northern Baluchistan. As Second in Command he made a hurried march from Kohat to Fort Munro from where he commanded punitive raids undertaken by a combined force of Coke's Rifles and Hodson's Horse.

He retired to England in 1932, though not before completing a family grand tour of India in a Chevrolet. All of this is recorded in great detail and, as with his other volumes, is accompanied by numerous maps, sketches, charts and plans.

Foster retired to Hythe, Kent, "Hell-fire Corner", and remained there during the Second World War. He joined the Home Guard and moulded a local platoon in Hythe into an efficient unit. He was moved on promotion to Captain to be Second in Command of a Company and then, in September 1942, promoted Major, he had five hundred and sixty men under command. He resigned after four months because his CO was "...one of the worst types of Staff Officers, a paper strategist and a sycophant." But Foster remained in Hythe and became an Air Raid Warden, a task not relieved even after D Day since Hythe was on the flight path of many of the V1 rockets heading for London, a number of which were shot down in the Hythe area.

At the end of the war Foster moved to Devon. In 1952 he presented to the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London, an Indian Mutiny encyclopaedia in six folios of notes and cuttings, a total of some twelve hundred manuscript foolscap pages providing a cross-referenced index, by name, regiment, geographical location and date, of every British soldier and official who was involved in any action in the Mutiny [MAGGS Catalogue, p. 12].

The Rodney Foster archive was advertised at £17,500. I am grateful to Mr Glenn Mitchell of MAGGS Bros. Ltd for providing me with the details of the archive, and to Peter Chapman for bringing it to my attention.