

VOLUME 1, Newsletters Nos.1-4, 1984

NEWSLETTER No.1, February 1984



EDITORIAL

The first newsletter of many, we hope, and designed mainly to put members in touch with each other and to lay the groundwork for our first Journal. We would like to bring out the first Journal in the late spring, but that will depend on the number of members (and the consequent state of the Society's bank balance) by then.

The number of members is increasing slowly but steadily and should pick up when, as we expect, the Society is publicized in some of the British journals. We owe a special thanks on that score to: A.M. Shaw, editor of *The Medal Collector*; the editor of the *C.S.M.M.I. Bulletin*; and to John Laidecker for a very flattering "plug" in his last catalogue. Thanks too, to all those members who have spread the word and given the Society their support in its as yet unproven efforts.

We hope that this newsletter will feature a number of regular items of general interest, while leaving the Journal as the main forum for original articles and research by members. Some of the features included on a regular basis will be:

Membership List: current, updated and address changes

Wants & For Sale: where members may advertise needed or surplus pieces at a minimal cost (Cdn. \$1.00 for every five lines, to be included with advertisement) to help defray costs.

Web site note: Membership details and 'Wants & For Sale' details have been deleted from this web version

Research Resources: lists of such research materials as members have and are willing to share with others. (We hope members will co-operate both by making such data available and by including self-addressed envelopes when requesting help, e.g.: P.E. Monahan has recently acquired a good, anecdotal history of the Corps of Guides for the years 1846-85, with some rolls and casualty lists and will check individual names of officers or men for the period.

Queries/Replies: members questions will be answered and/or put to the members at large - either specific details or larger research questions - in a regular column organized by M.C. Johnson

Articles: future articles will be announced and solicited In the first issue of the Journal we hope to publish articles on the following topics:

- researching Indian Army medals for the Great War
- how one member traced the war service of an Indian Order of Merit winner for the battle of Ctesiphon

- at least one article from an ex-officer (I.A.) on the second World War

Our President, Tony Sudlow, will contribute an opening letter and short article and we encourage any member to submit articles or shorter "notes" on items of interest.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

INSIGNIA

- - we are considering designs for a device or logo for the Society and would welcome suggestions or comments
- - should be easily identifiable, representative and easy to reproduce (black line on white)
- - suggestions to date include: modified badge of the Star of India; the elephant of the "Assaye" regiments; line renderings of the reverse of the I.G.S. 1895 or 1908 Medal.

ARTICLES/NOTES

- - should be typed, double-spaced and with one inch margins all around - editors reserve the right to edit all submissions for length and suitability
- - except by prior arrangement with the author, copyright remains with the Society

MEMBERSHIP LIST

- - please check the entry for yourself and notify F. Monahan #102 or M.C. Johnson #101 of any errors or changes you wish made - we hadn't complete information on some members interests
- - we have included a "dealer" designation to those members known personally to us as such - this can be removed or added to any entry if desired.

Web Site Note – we now only maintain a membership list for the purposes of mailing *Durbar*. It is no longer published.

Any announcement of "general interest" may be placed in the Journal or Newsletter free of charge by sending it to M.C. Johnson

NEWSLETTER No.2, April 1984

"COLUMN"

Welcome to my as yet unnamed column. Those of you who remember *Medals International* or read its successor, *Medal News*, will be familiar with this format as the one used by Geoffrey Moore. In the first portion of the column I will discourse on some topic and in the second answer various questions put by members. Hopefully other members will have questions. I have a fairly extensive reference library and have access to the University of Toronto Library. If I can't answer the question I'll throw it open to the membership at large.

My guess is that, if you were to combine the knowledge of all the Society members there would not be too many blank areas.

It will not be my intention to use the column to expatiate on the joys of collecting Indian; there's little point in preaching to the converted and as the Cheshire Cat says in *Alice In Wonderland*; "You must be or you wouldn't have come here." Instead, the purpose will be to deal with topics that aren't covered in any of the basic "how to" books, and to pass along useful bits of information that tend to turn up in the course of my own research. Every so often it is brought home to me that not everyone has the same resources and expertise that many of us have developed over several years and that, for the novice, "How do I research an Indian medal?" is a very perplexing question. Most of us learned by experience or else by word of mouth advice from other collectors. Until someone writes the Indian Army equivalent of A.A. Purves' *Collecting Medals and Decorations* it will probably stay that way.

And now on to more practical matters:

Question; I have an IGSM 1936 to a sepoy in the 2-12 F.F.R., confirmed as a P.O.W. casualty after Singapore. Is he entitled to the India Service Medal?

Answer; The terms of reference for this medal are three years non-operational service. Your man was captured before he had served the three years non-operational. In addition, he had entered an Operational Area, which "stopped the clock". Having already qualified for the 1939-45 and Pacific Stars by entry into the Malayan theatre after Dec. 8, 1941 and having received the War Medal for 28 days' service, he could not qualify for any further medals during his captivity.

M.C. Johnson

These are four designs for the IMCS logo currently under consideration by the Executive.



Comments from the membership at large would be appreciated.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members:

When Michael Johnson and Peter Monahan first wrote to me in Sept. 1983, outlining their plan for an Indian Military Collectors Society and setting out the aims of the Society, I thought "How absolutely splendid - what a pity no one has made a similar proposal here in the UK." I was not, however, prepared for the pleasant shock which I felt at their generous invitation to be your first President, an invitation which I accepted with a mixture of alacrity and humility. They had read various articles of mine in British medal magazines, either about the Indian Army or with references to soldiering in India, which prompted the invitation.

It is an odd fact that following an article in *Medals International* three years ago, I had many letters from collectors in Canada and the USA - the last only a few weeks ago - yet the article caused little interest in the UK. At least, nobody wrote to me about it.

The very first sentence of their initial letter to fellow collectors sparked off the very fact that so often infuriates me - lists which offer you an IGSM or whatever with the information 'native recipient' or even sometimes 'native regiment', as if neither fact was of importance. Ranks are important, names even more so, for, with study, the name is often an indication of race, caste or even religion of the recipient. As to omitting the regiment, this is indefensible. Mahrattas, Jats, Dogras, Rajputs, Sikhs and Punjabis, both Hindu and Mussalman, served Queen Victoria, Edward VII, George V and George VI with gallantry and fortitude on a thousand battlefields, together with their neighbours from Nepal, the Gurkhas.

Traditionally, Indian formations have included one British battalion per Brigade and the Gunners, except the majority of the famous Mountain Batteries, have been British. I have yet to meet a British soldier who is not proud to say that he served in an Indian Division or alongside Indian and Gurkha troops. As for we fortunates who were privileged to be their officers, the pride and tremendous esprit-de-corps that we enjoyed will remain with us all of our days.

The first list of Society members shows, even at this early date, a promising spread of interests, both in the Indian Army and the British Army in India. It is a vast subject with many facets - and soon it will be half a century since the 'Jewel in the Crown' went its own way; say what you will about imperialists, but to my dying breath I will submit that, if Great Britain itself has shown itself not too able at running its affairs, we made a superb job of governing India. We bequeathed a first class railway system and Post and Telegraph, a judicial fairness which is beyond question, and a magnificent Army which held its own with, and indeed conquered, the enemies of the King Emperor from China to France and Flanders. More - some of the regiments were of mixed religious denominations, yet, by Golly, it worked; Hindu and Mussalman, Sikh and Dogra went into battle with tremendous élan, sustained above all by the 'Pultan' - the Regiment - which the men, and their British officers had, in many cases, served from father to son for generations, They had style; they had panache and an overwhelming pride in themselves which has often been equalled but never eclipsed. That their deeds will be studied and carried forward by members of our Society must be a source of satisfaction and pleasure to all who are of a like mind.

I wish you all well and undoubtedly, d.v., I will be joining you at a convention in Canada in the foreseeable future.

Tony Sudlow, President, IMCS

THE BRITISH IN INDIA MUSEUM

In 1971 this museum opened at Colne in Lancashire. It contains and displays items connected with the British Raj. Address: Sun Street, Colne, Lancs. Tel: 0282 63129

Web site note: since re-located to Hendon Mill, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 8AD, Tel: +44 (0) 1282 613129

IT'S A "MISTRI"

Most medal collectors and militaria buffs can talk knowledgeably about "Privates", "Lance-Corporals", "Warrants" and "subalterns", but for many of them the ranks used by the Indian Army are a closed book. Even otherwise well informed dealers can show lamentable ignorance. For example, while it may not be self-evident that the abbreviation "Chap." means *Chaprassi* (orderly/clerk), the wild contradiction inherent in listing it as "Chaplain Mohammed Khan, 40 Pathans" is enough to make a strong "munshi" blanch.¹ The intricacies of separate ranking for infantry and cavalry and a host of unfamiliar "followers" are further complicated by the indifferent spelling and sporadic punctuation of Urdu-speaking clerks who compiled medal rolls in English.

While anyone with a passing knowledge of the Indian Army knows the standard ranks of N.C.O.s and Viceroy's Commissioned Officers,² some of the variations and abbreviations can be confusing: "*Farr. Hvdr.*" for Farrier Havildar; "A.L.D." for Acting Lance-Daffadar; "S.A.S. (IMD)" for a Sub-Assistant Surgeon of the Ind. Medical Dept. and "*Tpt Nk.*" for Transport Naik are some not uncommon examples. To add to the chaos, Madrassi units used the English "Private" in place of "Sepoy", but employed a "*Jaru-wallah*" (broom-man; where the Bengal Presidency used a "Mettah" or "Mettar" (sweeper). Most followers ranks were given in Urdu, the lingua-franca of the I.A., and they include the famous "Bhisti" (water carrier); "Doolie" (stretcher-man); "Langri" or cook; "Babu" or clerk; "Sais" or "Syce" (groom); the "Khallassi"s or labourers (sometimes meaning "tent-man") and the notorious "Mistri", a carpenter and later an electrician. Native regiments employed many craftsmen in their ranks and some of these won campaign medals. Later medals, especially the IGSM 1936-39 and GSM 1918-64 are often named in English to Clerks, Coolies, Tailors, Carpenters, etc. In addition, each Cavalry Regiment of the I.A. had a "woordie-major" or native adjutant and a "ressaider", a V.C.O. who was sandwiched into the rank structure somewhere between the Kot-Daffadars and Rissaldars (VCOs).³ Also seen are medals to "Chowkidars" (watchmen) attached to the Indian units operating in East Africa around 1900.

Indian names are, of course, a separate and vast field of study and a vast mine of information on the race, religion and geographic origins of the soldiers. "Khan" and "Shah" often indicate a Pathan or Afghani recruit; 'Singhs' are Sikh while 'Sings' are Gharwali, as are "Negis" and

¹ "munshi" - a language teacher (of the vernacular to British officers)

² Indian Army Ranks: Infantry: Subadar, Jemadar, Havildar, Naik, and Sepoy. Cavalry: Rissaldar/Ressaider, Jemadar, Kot-Daffadar, Daffadar, Sowar

³ This rank disappears c. 1900

"Bhists". ("Synges", of course, are another tribe altogether and were not normally recruited by "class" regiments.) Gurkhas are distinguishable, one tribe from another, by "Thapa", "Gurung", "Rai", etc. and in fact most Indian names have some caste or other meaning. The joker in this deck is the Parsi, many of whom adopted English words for trades as surnames, so that there are on record two D.F.C.s to the R.I.A.F. named to "Flying Off.....Engineer" which can be no end confusing. This is possibly the explanation for a Q.S.A. Medal to the Army Bearer Corps named "Bearer Pumper Lal". Is it a name or a rank?

I don't pretend to have more than scratched the surface of this fascinating (to me) topic and I expect some of the more linguistically able members will add to and correct my facts on it, but perhaps these few words go some small way to "de-mystifying" Indian Army ranking and nomenclature.

P.E. Monahan

THE BADGE OF THE 9th GURKHA RIFLES

The badge of the 9th Bengal Infantry was the figure "9" circled by a scroll and surmounted by a crown. At the time of its conversion to a full Gurkha regiment (1893) it was decided to adopt a new badge incorporating the kukri, as more in keeping with the new identity. At that time NO Gurkha regiment wore a crown and only one, 2 GR, a royal cipher, the Prince of Wales' feathers. It was thought inappropriate for the 9th (G.Rif.) Regiment of Bengal Infantry to wear a crown, as this would provoke jealousy among the older Gurkha units. Thus a badge of crossed kukris and "9" was adopted.

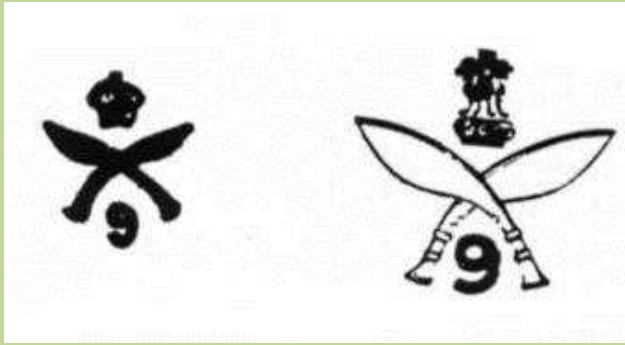
Later, 2GR adopted the royal cipher of Edward VII (1906). They have now reverted to Prince of Wales' feathers. 1 GR took the feathers in the same year, changing to the royal cipher of George V in 1910. Both of these regiments did not wear the crown as such, but as part of the royal ciphers of the monarchs. 3 GR had the royal cipher of Queen Alexandra surmounted by her crown (1908). 4 GR had the Prince of Wales' feathers (1924). The adoption of the lion and crown, from the colour staves of Royal Regiments by 5 GR, on their becoming Royal in 1921 meant that five out of ten Regiments had some mark of royalty in their badge.

By the late twenties, the officers of 9 GR felt that circumstances were now different to 1893 and that the proven record of 9 GR in World War I would merit a return of the crown to their badge, the right to which they undoubtedly had. This was at first unofficial, but accepted with the tacit consent of higher authority and the actual sanction in Dress Regulations in 1936.

From at least 1930 until the alteration of the badge in about 1953, the crown was worn on officers' cap badges, GOs and GORs' cap badges (Kilmarnock), stationery, crockery, etc. Unfortunately the regimental buttons had not changed by 1947 as there was a large stock existing and it was impossible to get new stocks in wartime.

If, as I understand, the wearing of the Indian state emblem is dependent on the old right to the crown, strictly speaking neither 1, 3 nor 5 GR should wear it, as they did not have the right to the crown as such.

A.A. Mains



Pre Independence Badge (left) Post Independence Badge (right)

BOOK REVIEW

● *TRADITIONS OF A REGIMENT - The Story of The Rajputana Rifles*. Lt. Gen. Sethna and Lt. Col. Katju. Delhi: Lancer Publications, 1983

Regimental histories are elusive creatures; although much sought after by collectors they often seem to exist only in bibliographies. My advice is to snap up any regimental history to the Indian Army, for if you can't use it, someone else will. I was pleasantly surprised to find this book. The Indian regiments are beginning to come of age and in many cases have forty to fifty years' service that has not been written. The result has been a number of Indian regimental histories.

As with many histories, the recent events are the best described. Nevertheless, this book deals with the colonial period, and it is clear that it is all part of the regimental tradition. The chapter on regimental heroes gives three Victoria Cross winners from the Mutiny, and "Central India" is still a battle honour, though no longer carried on the colour.

Besides giving the history of the regiment, this book goes further and delves into what might be called the psychology of the regiment. Chapters deal with the cultural background of the Rajputs, Jats and other races who are recruited, and with the Officers, JCOs and NCOs and men, giving a very clear and fascinating picture of the temper of the regiment. There is a separate chapter on the Officers' Mess.

The post 1947 military history of India is well covered, including India's part in the United Nations operations in Korea and the Congo. The book is well illustrated with modern photographs. Awards to the regiment are given in depth after 1947, and some are given for the earlier period.

I would highly recommend this book. The price from the publishers is US\$16.00 plus postage.

Lancers Publishers also produce the following military titles:

- Maj.Gen. E. Habibullah - *The Sinews of Indian Defence*.

- Nibedon - *Nagaland; The Night of the Guerrillas* and *Mizoram - The Dagger Brigade* (Note: these two books deal with guerrilla operations on the N.E. Frontier of India. Mizoram was formerly the Lushai Hills area.)
- U.S. Bajpai - *India's Security*.
- Girish Bihari - *Civil Insurgency and Intelligence Operations*.

These books are available from Lancers Books, P.O. Box 4236: 46 Ajit Arcade, New Delhi, INDIA 110048

M.C.J.

A GALLANT AND DISTINGUISHED GURKHA OFFICER

In 1983, thanks to the good offices of the Military Attaché at the Indian High Commission in London, I was able to renew a friendship which goes back to 1943, for he gave me the address of one who was once my good companion in 1/10 Gurkha Rifles. I knew him as Subadar Manbahadur Rai MC, IDSM of D Company, which I had the privilege of commanding at the end of the battle of Imphal, though I had served with the Company for over a year as the 'Company Officer'- another name for general dogsbody.

In 1947, four of the ten regiments of the old Gurkha Brigade were selected for service with the British Army, stationed initially in Malaya. Later, when Malaya became independent, the Gurkha elements of the British Army were based in Hong Kong, where they remain to this day (where they will go when the treaty with China over Hong Kong expires toward the end of the century remains to be seen).

The four regiments were 2 GR, 6 GR, 7 GR and 10 GR; everyone in them had the choice of opting for British service, or being retained in the Indian Army. Manbahadur was offered a King's Commission if he stayed with British service. However, as his two brothers opted to stay with 10 GR, he decided to go to the Indian Army, initially with a short service commission - that despite his two gallantry awards and the fact that he had served on the Frontier, in the 1942 retreat out of Burma, the fighting in the Chin Hills in 1943, the battles around Imphal in 1944, and the drive to victory, via Meiktila and central Burma in 1945.

Of the ten Regiments of the Gurkha Brigade, two were from Eastern Nepal, 7 and 10 GR, which recruited mainly Rais (pronounced Rye) and Limbus (Limboo). Those who elected to stay with the Indian Army from 7 and 10 GR were formed into a new unit and designated '11th Gorkhas'. Among those who went were Ganju Lama VC, MM, formerly of 1/7 GR, 17 Indian Division; one holder of the IOM, 9 MCs, 8 IDSMs, 21 MMs and 45 who had been Mentioned in Despatches.

Manbahadur was awarded the IDSM for taking command of D Coy on 23 November 1943 when his Company Commander was wounded most severely; the Company had carried out a classic counterattack against a Japanese battalion at Milestone 52, south of Kennedy Peak in the Chin Hills. The Japs over-ran 1/16 Punjab after two desperate nights fighting, and D Company hit them at dawn as they were sorting themselves out after a hard night. Four Jap officers went down under a hail of fire, including their CO, and 44 dead were counted before ammunition ran low and the Japs started to pull themselves together. D Company suffered only one fatal casualty and a handful of wounded, but Captain Alec Smith was among the wounded (in head, arm, shoulder and - worst of all - his leg was shattered). Manbahadur

skilfully extricated D Company, and was rewarded with the IDSM, as were Naik Guariman Rai and Rifleman Are Rai, the latter being later killed in action. Captain Smith received a very hard-earned MC - we felt that it should have been a DSO, and an MC for Manbahadur. However, the IDSM he was awarded made him unique in the four battalions of 10 GR, for he was the only GO to be awarded this decoration. VCOs had always been eligible, but in WW2 it seemed that a trend started towards rewarding them with the same decoration as their British, Canadian, Australian and NZ counterparts - the MC. VCOs had, of course, been eligible for the MC since it was introduced in December 1914, but it was awarded fairly sparsely in the Great War.

His MC came in 1945, after over three years of almost continuous fighting against a brave and savage enemy. Manbahadur was all fight, would have been totally incapable of understanding the meaning of fear, and was a happy and cheerful companion. Rais were in the majority in 1/10 GR, and a merry lot they were, as against the somewhat more grave Limbus. 'Mane' spoke perfect English, though never to British Officers, as was customary. He began as a Boy Recruit and rose to the rank of Jemadar in the Signals Platoon before it fell to the good fortune of D Company to have him as Second-in-Command. He taught me a lot, his sense of humour and mine were of a kind, and we formed a lasting friendship.

After a while, his short service commission was made permanent and he became Adjutant of 4/11 Gorkha Rifles, before being seconded for special duties in Nagaland, where insurrection was rife. For his part in putting down the troubles, he was awarded his adopted country's second highest decoration, the Ashoka Chakra, one of two awarded to 11 Gorkhas. Now retired, he is a Deacon of the Nepali Baptist Church, living in Nagaland, now apparently much changed from the days when I knew it. His town of 14,000 inhabitants has 15 churches; when I first went there, headhunting was darkly mentioned as being only recently a popular sport.

His duties take him to villages around Imphal where as a young GO he waged war in his own implacable way. Today he fights against the Devil and backsliders from the Faith. In his last letter, he said that he was going to Churachandpur - a village I remember well, on the southern edge of the Imphal plain - to take one of his ministers to task. I do not envy that cleric when 'Mane' (pronounced 'Manny', a diminutive of Manbahadur - an intimate term used only after a long acquaintanceship) that little dynamo, gets his teeth into him.

Rank has ever had its privileges; unashamedly I made use of mine as President of the IMCS to induct Major Manbahadur Rai, 11th Gorkha Rifles (Retd.), holder of gallantry awards from the Emperor of India and the President of India - Ashoka Chakra, Military Cross, Indian Distinguished Service Medal, as an Hon. Member. I take it that there are no dissenters? Good - that's settled then. Manbahadur will read his Newsletters with interest, and, I hope, contribute an article in due time from his vast experience.

Tony Sudlow

BOOK REVIEW

● *THE GURKHAS*. Byron Farwell. W.W. Norton; 1984.

Mr Farwell is probably known to most of us for his last few books, *Mr Kipling's Army* and *The Great Anglo-Boer War*. In his latest, *The Gurkhas*, Farwell sets out to give a good solid account of the history of the Gurkha regiments, without becoming bogged down in minute details. He covers the major campaigns, and focuses in from time to time on individual vignettes. Many of the stories are familiar from other sources, but this does not detract from the work. Separate appendices contain information on Indian Army ranks; title changes; castes; and Gurkha tribes.

An interesting chapter covers the transition of six of the Gurkha regiments to the Army of independent India in 1947, which did not always go smoothly and produced some bitterness between the outgoing British and the incoming Indian officers. There is some coverage of the service of the Gorkha Rifles (the current Indian spelling) post-1947 but nothing later than the Ladakh campaign of 1962. On the British side the history goes to date, with coverage of the Falklands campaign.

Although it is not meant to be a specialist's book it contains sufficient information, in a very readable style, that it will be of interest even to the specialist. For the non- specialist it provides a clear picture of the Gurkhas. The book has an index and a very good bibliography. M.C.J.

George H. Dalton has compiled a monograph on "The Punjab Frontier Force on the North West Frontier, 1849-1872". It is obviously a labour of love and must represent weeks of work, as it uses almost a dozen sources to give details of all expeditions involving Piffer units between those years (in chart form) . It is very useful to the P.F.F. or IGS 1854 collector and worth getting for the bibliography alone. George has generously agreed to make copies available to members who write to him at: 6306 West 108th Street, Overland Park, Kansas 66211, USA.

The Executive have acquired a list of Honourable Secretaries for over thirty regimental and corps associations of the Indian Army (pre-1947). We do not wish to publish the entire list at this time, but are willing to make individual addresses available, on application, to our members.

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM

The Society has set up an "Indian Services Fund" especially for the purpose of obtaining items connected with the Indian Army. Persons who wish to join the Society can specify that their subscription go to this fund. Applications for membership may be made to Miss E. Talbot Rice, TD, MA, Hon. Secy. Society of Friends of the N.A.M., National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, London SW9 4HT.

NEWSLETTER NO. 3, July 1984

DURBAR

The above is the tentative name for my column; a '*darbar*' being an assembly or council. In Indian Army regiments a darbar of officers was held where questions that concerned the regiment could be discussed, and where the men could present any complaints.

The IMCS has been in operation for nearly nine months now. In that time we have acquired nine honorary and fifty-one regular members. I have found my dealings with members of the Society extremely gratifying and very useful. I have been very impressed with the spirit of co-operation that I have found, and I hope that other members have been making their own contacts. The Society can only reach its optimum by the involvement and co-operation of all its members.

One field in which I am seeking member involvement is the Newsletter and Journal, the latter of which we hope to have out by the end of the summer. Most of us have a prize group that we have researched, or a badge, which other members would like to hear about. Or, you can contribute some notes about other items in your collection.

Having made my pitch, I'll move on to the business at hand. My topic this issue will be collecting themes.

There was a time when Indian Army items were so scarce on the ground that the enthusiast was happy to take whatever he could find. Those days are, I hope, gone (except perhaps for the badge collectors), but I ask myself how many of us have settled down and found ourselves an area of specialization.

We do have a number of specialists in our ranks, but there are still a fair number of us who have not indicated any particular area of interest.

Some, of course, find a specialty too restrictive. Personally, I find that my interests change almost every year. I've jumped around a good deal: last year it was the North West Frontier 1919-21. This year I'm concentrating on the Dogra Regiment 1887-1984, Assam and Burma through the various campaigns (including the Assam Military Police), and Second World War gallantry when I can afford it. This doesn't stop me picking up the odd piece outside my areas of concentration just for interest's sake. This can pay unexpected dividends - a 1914-15 Star to the Army Bearer Corps turned out to be an IDSM winner for Gallipoli. But an area of specialization gives some sense of direction to a collection and ensures that one does not spend hours deciding how to allocate one's limited resources in a vain effort to cover six or seven pieces in one catalogue. The best pieces to any given regiment or campaign come along one or two at a time, often several months apart, allowing the collector time to save up in between.

My mail has turned up a couple of interesting requests for help. First: does anyone know the job description for a Bildar? (seen on a bronze IGSM 1854; attached to the Rifle Brigade.) I've had no luck with this one. Second: John Lundstrom, #126, is investigating the question of engraved vs. impressed gallantry awards to Indian and British troops in India and Burma

1942-45. He would be interested in hearing from members who have, or have had engraved IDSMs, DCMs or MMs in their collections. He has recently come across an instance where a Seaforth received an engraved DCM from Auchinleck and an impressed one from King George the Sixth two years later - surely a rather rare occurrence. I speculated that the engraved medals may have been issued in cases of immediate awards for that theatre, but I admit that I have no concrete evidence to support this opinion. The number of unnamed medals which have been offered on the market over the past decade raises a further question about these engraved medals. It is known that some medals were issued engraved, but the question remains: how many were issued this way and in what style were they engraved? Anyone with any information may write Mr Lundstrom direct or to me; I will pass the information along without mentioning names if that is requested.

Speaking of naming styles: I would like to hear from members who have GSM medals with the "S. E. Asia" bar to units which went to Pakistan on partition (these will have the names of Muslim recipients.) Those that I have seen to Hindus and Sikhs (who would have served with Indian units after partition) have been impressed in slightly rounded caps. I have, however, a group to the Regt.- Havildar-Major of one of the battalions of the 8th Punjab Regiment. All of his medals are impressed in small capitals, including his GSM. His unit is given as "3-8th PUNJAB R.", although he was undoubtedly serving with the 2-8th, as the 3-8th served in Italy and not in Burma. This leads me to believe that these GSMs were named post-1947, and were originally issued un-named. Those that were named may be to men who stayed in. I would like to hear from anyone who has further information either confirming or conflicting my theory. My findings will be published in the Newsletter.

I would remind members that if they have questions or research topics they may write to me and I will help them advertise for information. I've got several regular correspondents, but would like to hear from more of you.

M.C. Johnson

A SUGGESTED UNIT IDENTIFICATION ON AN INDIA GENERAL SERVICE MEDAL 1908

R.I.S. LCRS.

As a collector of medals to Imperial Service Troops and Indian State Forces I have long been puzzled by an IGS 1908 (bar Afghanistan NWF 1919) in my collection named to the "R.I.S. Lcrs." It was obviously an Imperial Service Lancer unit and since my experience in this field has shown that, in the vast majority of cases, the unit title on medals has included a reference to the parent state in abbreviated form, I tentatively put R.I.S. Lcrs. down as "Rampur Imperial Service Lancers". Rampur was the only State with the initial "R" which fielded a Lancer unit during the IST scheme. The main problem with this theory was that, during the Afghanistan campaign, the Rampur I.S. Lancers were employed on garrison duties in Madras and Jubbulpur and so would not have qualified for the medal.

The recent appearance in UK dealers lists of a three bar IGS 1908 (Afghanistan NWF 1919/Waziristan 1919-21/ Waziristan 1921-24) has, I believe, solved the problem. The medal in question is named to "Trptr Maj Dfr (Trumpeter Major Daffadar) Bhagwan Singh, R.I.S. Lcrs." A man of this rank and name, belonging to the 1st Patiala (Rajindra) Imperial Service

Lancers was awarded the Indian Meritorious Service Medal for service in Mesopotamia (Gazette of India 127, dated 20 Dec. 1918). The unit subsequently served in the Afghanistan campaign of 1919 although I have yet to verify its role in Waziristan which might qualify it for the last two bars.

These are the only references to the rank "Trpr Major Daffadar" with respect to the I.S. Troops that I have ever seen and I feel that they must refer to the same man. I therefore suggest that the initial "R" is for "Rajindra" and, unlike the majority of medals to State units, including other issues to Patiala troops, the name of the State has been completely omitted in the case of the IGS 1908, or at least in the case of early issues of that medal.

Tony McClenaghan



SOME RANDOM THOUGHTS ON BADGES

I think that even the most die-hard medal or equipment collector must from time to time look at a badge to some unit he knows and think: "That's nice. I should get one of those." Badges are small (hence easily stored and carried), most are not too expensive and they are almost always easy to identify and have far fewer of the fascinating/frustrating 'variants' found in medals or uniforms. Many have interesting symbolism or histories attached to them and are quite attractive to even the non-military types in the population. (Witness the interest in badges displayed by the "gentler sex" at any public show or display.

Having said all those things in a general context, I am going to contradict myself (and risk the wrath of some members) on the particulars of Indian Army cavalry badges. I have recently decided to try and acquire some representative badges to display with medals. Having made the decision, I quickly made several disturbing discoveries: Indian Army badges are not very common (in North America) and therefore not all that cheap. Most are modern and include inscriptions in a language which, while intelligible to many millions of people somewhere, is just Urdu to me. Lastly, the badges I have seen are, to be blunt, very uninspired as military art.

Perhaps the most disheartening fact to the potential Indian Army badge collector is the realization that many, perhaps most, I. A. units did not wear badges in the usual sense. Any unit with turbans was automatically excluded from the near ubiquitous "cap" badge (pace the Sikh Pioneers). British officers in such units wore them in only about half of the twelve orders [of dress], being themselves turbanned in the other orders. The, Gurkhas, of course, had cap badges, but most seem to have been small things. For the cavalry, all turbanned in the ranks and mostly among the officers too, one is left with a choice of belt buckles, pouch and sabretache plates or shoulder titles. The first three are in the "hen's teeth" league as far as availability and come in a truly mind-bending variety of styles even within a given unit (seven pouch plate patterns in Skinner's Horse between 1883 and 1922, by a quick count). The last fact was not helped by the cavalier disregard for regulations evinced by many units.

Shoulder titles, while not the most exciting type of badge, may in fact be the best bet for anyone trying for a "set". Almost all cavalry units seem to have worn them, they are fairly easy to identify and the odd one is quite elegant. 6th K.E.O. Cavalry, for example, used a brass VI BC, the numbers and letters separated by a silver Prince of Wales' plume to mark

the Hon. Colonelcy of King Edward when he was still Prince of Wales. Skinner's Horse, 1st and 3rd Bengal Cavalry before 1922, used respectively a "I DY O L" and a "3" above a curved scroll carrying the regimental title: Skinner's Horse.⁴ In the first, the "I" and "L" are twice the size of the other letters and have a nice balance and weight to the title. The 3rd S.H. title is a nice change from the usual straight bar, number & letter formula of most shoulders.

It is probably a gross generalization and a terrible slur, but most badges I have seen to Indian cavalry are similar in outline and not very distinctive. They generally feature some variation on crossed swords or lances, with the regiment's initials or name across the middle or underneath, and perhaps a crown on top. Not a patch on the splendid heraldic beasts of the "bird catcher" Scots Greys, the King's Dragoon Guards or the 3rd Hussars of the British. I have a Mysore Lancers button with a double-headed eagle (?) on it and a splendid 1st Gwalior Lancers gilt badge with two hooded cobras flanking the central numeral, but these seem exceptions to the general run. A pity, and perhaps a function of the relative youth of many I.A. units, but a loss nonetheless to the prospective badge aficionado.

Having said all that, I must add that I plan to keep collecting I.A. cavalry badges and welcome information on them.

P Monahan

RESEARCH RESOURCES INDEX

Several members have suggested, in line with our stated objective of promoting research and inter-Society communication, that the Society put together some central reference list. I must thank Cliff Parrett, no. 128, for suggesting a card index of book titles. Perhaps foolishly (I am the aforementioned teacher on the exec.), I have decided to do this myself until some other "volunteer" appears. Any member with a book or books he feels could be of value is asked to send me the title, publishing details and a BRIEF description of contents (3-5 lines) on a standard index card (3"x5") with the title in block capitals on the top left corner. Please list topic, where not evident from title, on top right corner. Any member seeking such resources (or "volunteering") may write me next month or at any future date for copies of the index entries relevant to their speciality. (SAE please. Full list available for price of photocopies.) Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

P.E. Monahan

DURBAR, VOLUME 1, NO. 4, 1984

Well, at last we managed to get the Journal finished and mailed out to you. It was a lot of work and we didn't catch a lot of mistakes until it was too late, but on the whole it looks good. Next year we'll start earlier. Meanwhile I would encourage you all to start writing again, as we will need at least another ten articles for the next Journal, not to mention the newsletters that will be published before then. Really, it isn't all that hard!

⁴ 1st Skinner's Horse had the subsidiary title "Duke of York's Own,"

My topic this issue will be "broken groups" to the Indian Army, to be precise those containing First World War medals. We have all seen groups offered in various catalogues containing, say, a BWM, an IGS 1908 and an Indian LSGC. The more cynical among us think "broken group" and keep on looking. The more optimistic say to ourselves "Maybe he didn't serve outside India" and in some cases order the group. I've done so myself. One day not long ago, however, the penny dropped and I scrambled for my copy of Taprell Dorling (an early edition, c. 1945). It confirmed my suspicion. As I see it, based on the conditions of award for the British War Medal, it would have been practically impossible for an Indian soldier to earn a single BWM unless he served only in England or perhaps in Hong Kong or Malaya.

The reason for this lies in the requirement that the soldier serves in a theatre of war or have approved services overseas, having left his place of residence. It is under the latter condition that Canadian soldiers who served in Great Britain were awarded the BWM, as were British soldiers serving in India, but not the Victory Medal. Under the former condition the soldier would qualify for the Victory Medal and perhaps a Star. So it would seem that the only way an Indian could qualify for a single BWM would have been for him to have left India but not entered any theatre of war which would qualify him for a Victory Medal. Looking at the theatres of war set out later in Taprell Dorling, it becomes apparent that there were very few areas outside of India that did not qualify for the Victory Medal, although in some cases there are qualification dates that began after or terminated before the dates for the BWM (Aug. 5, 1914 to Nov. 11, 1918, with some local extensions). In practical terms, however, only England, Hong Kong, Malaya and Aden would allow for requisite service. (The last also assuming the soldier left before July 2-3, 1915 and had not been at Shaikh Said on Nov. 10 or 11, 1914 or at Perim on June 14 and 15, 1915).

What does this mean for the collector? Well, if you're a purist you can refuse to buy any group with a single BWM that cannot be shown to be correct and wait for a full group to come along. Of course, such groups are very rare. I only have three myself. Or, you can buy the group and add a single Victory as a placeholder. You might even get lucky and find the missing medal. (A number of dealers, including some of our members, have singles for sale.) The odds on finding a missing BWM are not good, but Victories and Stars have no precious metal value and seem to survive better. As a third option, one can collect only to officers, whose services can be traced and whose groups are less likely to have been split for the silver value.

This question shows the danger of carrying what might be called "British Army medal thinking" into the collecting of Indian medals. Many of the general rules we learned from the books and from other collectors have no application when dealing with Indian Army medals. The spelling of names is a case in point. When transliterating from one alphabet to another, any combination that sounds about right will do, so the spelling may depend on who is doing the naming. Indian Mint naming is often engraved and the style, while basically similar, will show individual differences: one engraver liked light spidery letters; another cut his strokes deeper. Impressed naming is often uneven; mistakes are not uncommon. Any number of factors that would lead one to reject a similar British medal are acceptable in an Indian one. Quite often one has to operate on "balance of probabilities." Admittedly, you will have to take risks, but this is reflected in the prices you will pay, and this factor is perhaps the only justification for the lower prices of Indian medals.

My thanks to Stan Paget and A.M. Shaw who, in answer to a question in Newsletter No. 3 informed me that a "bildar" is a manual labourer specializing in digging - a shovel man.

M.C. Johnson

DECORATIONS FROM THE STATE OF HYDERABAD

There is a large amount of literature on the history of orders, decorations and medals of the world, published in books, magazines and papers. Unfortunately, numerous areas and awards exist that have never been treated and are therefore unknown. Here is a notable example, about which the author would be happy to hear more from the readers. The Executive Council of the State of Hyderabad received, on January 19, 1942, the sanction of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad to establish Awards. It was found necessary to create Orders and Decorations to recognise merit on behalf of the state. After long preparation and study of similar instances in India, an Award was instituted on December 11, 1944. It was to be issued in three classes:

- First Class - *Tamga-i-Hilal-e-Osmani*
- Second Class - *Tamga-i-Khusraw-e-Deccan*
- Third Class - *Tamga-i-Asafia*.

The official description of these awards is as follows:

"The *Hilal-e-Osmani* Medal shall be of a lotus leaf design with five leaves and shall have on its obverse a crescent with a Royal turban in the centre. The Medal shall bear on the reverse the words "*Hilal-e-Osmani*", the name of the person to whom and the Fasli year in which it was awarded. The medal shall be suspended from the left breast by a dark green ribbon 27/32 inches in width with a central white stripe 3/32 inches wide, with one yellow stripe 1/16 of an inch in width on either side of the central white stripe.

The *Tamga-i-Khusraw-e-Deccan* shall be of three classes styled respectively as the "*Tamga-i-Khusraw-e-Deccan* of the First Class"; "...of the Second Class"; and "...of the Third Class". The Medal of the First Class shall be of Gold, the Second Class of Silver and the Third Class of Bronze. It shall consist of a circular medal and shall have on the obverse a circle of Lotus leaf design with a Royal turban in the centre. The medal shall bear on the reverse the words "*Tamga-i-Khusraw-e-Deccan*", the name of the person to whom and the Fasli year in which it was awarded. The medal shall be suspended from the left breast by a dark blue ribbon 27/32 inches wide with a central white stripe 3/32 inches wide with one yellow stripe 1/16 inches wide on either side of the central white stripe."

The third medal also had three degrees (as the Second Class medal) which are distinguished by their metal: gold, silver or bronze. The official description follows:

"The Decoration shall be of three classes in Gold, Silver and Bronze. The *Tamga-e-Asafia* shall consist of a star shaped medal with six points which shall have on its obverse in the centre a Royal turban with rays all around. The medal shall bear on its reverse the words "*Tamga-e-Asafia*", the name of the person to whom and the Fasli year in which it was

awarded. The medal shall be suspended from the left breast by a dark maroon ribbon 27/32 inches wide with one yellow stripe 1/16 inches wide on either side of the central white stripe.

The First Class of these awards was bestowed by the Nizam of Hyderabad at the recommendation of the Executive Council. The other classes were issued by the Executive Council. The recipients received a bestowal and their names were entered in a list at the Central Records Office.

The designs of these awards were drawn up by the veteran engineer Nawab Zain Jung Bahadur, Chief Architect of the State of Hyderabad

Dr. K.G. Klietmann, Berlin

- (The use of the word "class" to describe some of the grades or degrees of the awards discussed above is not totally clear. Since it is unclear, however, whether the confusion is in the original award specifications or the result of a transcription error, we have not changed any of the references. We feel, with Dr. Klietmann, though, that the word "Degree" could be used in describing the Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals of the latter two awards. The use of "First Class" in the second last paragraph is especially unclear and suggested interpretations are welcomed.

The third medal mentioned, (the *Asafia* Medal) is rendered variously in the text as "*Tamga-i-Asafia*" and "*Tamga-e-Asafia*". Again, this has not been altered.

The Editors



BOOK REVIEW

● '*FREEDOM AT MIDNIGHT*'. Larry Collins & Dominique Lapierre. London: Collins, 1975

I must commend to all members a book that I recently read. It was in the local library, so is apparently still in print in the UK. If you get a chance to beg, borrow or even steal a copy, please spare no effort. I learned more about the wide background of the British Raj in the few hours that it took to read the book than I did in four years in India and Burma. The book is *Freedom at Midnight*, by Larry Collins and Dominique Lapierre, published by Collins, London in 1975. The over-riding story, brilliantly researched and very readable, is how Britain gave away, in a matter of seven months, an Empire that had taken over 300 years to build.

At the time, I thought that Lord Louis made rather a mess of the affair as last Viceroy - but how wrong I was! Firstly, he did not want the job, and told the PM, and his cousin, King George VI, that he did not. He even demanded absolute, plenipotentiary powers, thinking that it would put Attlee off. Not a bit - Attlee gave in like a lamb and the unfortunate Mountbatten was stuck with a thankless job. India had been clamouring for Independence for years, but as one country as far as Ghandi and his party were concerned. Not so Jinnah - he demanded separate states for Hindu and Muslim, with the declaration "We shall have India divided, or

we shall have India destroyed." This dogged man was the rock on which the tide of civil war broke, leaving a vast trail of bloodshed and ruin.

Mountbatten handled the job brilliantly - bullying where necessary, threatening to resign if the Indian leaders would not bow to the inevitable. After laying down the post of Viceroy, to his amazement, the Indian leaders begged him to stay on as Governor-General, once they realized the grim realities of their success: how to divide up the banks, the third largest railway in the world, the Post and Telegraph Services - and the magnificent Indian Army. The *babus* squabbled over the typewriters, the petty cash and the stamps in circulation; now that they had what they longed for they did not know how to cope with the practicalities.

The book also deals with the history, briefly and to the point. I was unaware that the HEIC came into being because the price of pepper rose by five shillings a pound - the Dutch had a monopoly of the spice trade from the East. Twenty-four merchants of the City of London gathered on 24 September, 1599 to found a Company with a capital of 4 72,000 from 125 shareholder They purchased one ship, the *Hector*, Queen Elizabeth signed a Royal Charter and on December 31 of that year the East India Company was given all trading rights beyond the Cape of Good Hope. Thus was the Raj conceived, and was born when the *Hector* dropped anchor near Bombay on 24 August, 1600.

Do you know that Skinner's Horse wore apricot-coloured mess kit, that the men who initially raised the Indian regiments which kept their names through the years were initially mercenaries, and some of them not particularly pleasant characters? Hodson used to borrow large sums of money which he refused to repay. He shot dead one man, and his son, who called to collect what he owed.

The break-up of the Indian Army was, as expected, conducted with decorum and dignity. Mountbatten had pleaded for the army to remain intact under a British C-in-C for a year after partition, to ensure stability. Again Jinnah was the stumbling block and the one force capable of maintaining order was dismembered. Officers and sepoy parted from comrades-in-arms beside whom they had fought against Germans and Japanese. They pledged eternal friendship - "We will always be brothers because we have spilled our blood together". Families were divided; one Muslim family had estates in India, and one brother stayed to serve the Indian Army. His brother decided to go to the Pakistan Army. A few months later he was leading a battalion against a hill in Kashmir which was held by the Garhwal Rifles. His brother was one of the company commanders of the Garhwalis. It is a superb book; read it and you will rise up en masse and thank me for putting such a feast in your way.

Tony Sudlow



702 SEPOY LAL SINGH, I.D.S.M., 15th LUDHIANA SIKHS

I was very interested to read Michael Johnson's annotations to *Honours and Awards, Indian Army* in the 1984 Journal. What particularly caught my eye was the list of names (one I.O.M., nine I.D.S.M.s) associated with the action on May 18th, 1915 during the battle of Festubert, in which Lt. J.G. Smyth won the V.C. One name especially meant something to me, that of 702 Sepoy Lal Singh, as I have a group of medals to him.

Lal Singh was one of a party of volunteers accompanying Lt. Smyth. They were attempting to reinforce the remnants of a company, cut off two hundred yards away in part of a captured trench known as the "Glory Hole", in grave danger of being captured by the enemy. As a curtain raiser to this extremely hazardous mission, two parties of the H.L.I. had already tried to go to their aid, but both had been shot to pieces in full view of the Sikhs left in reserve. Despite this chilling demonstration, every man volunteered to be in the relieving party and ten were chosen to carry two boxes of bombs along the shallow communication trench towards their beleaguered comrades.

Artist's impressions and an account of the exploit appear in *Deeds That Thrill The Empire*. According to this narrative, the last survivors of the venture, which proved successful, were Smyth and Lal Singh, all the others being killed or wounded.

Each man of that heroic band was decorated; Lt Smyth with the V.C.; L/Naik Mangal Singh with the I.O.M.⁵, and every sepoy, living or dead, with the I.D.S.M.

Sepoy Lal Singh definitely did not die at the action as Michael Johnson suggests. However a man of the same name evidently was killed and, of course, as the C.W.G.C. register indicates, he had a different number.

As is often the case with groups of medals to Indian soldiers, this one is incomplete. The medals for the Great War are missing, but there is his I.D.S.M. (engraved '702 Sepoy Lal Singh 15th Sikh Regiment'), a G.S.M. with clasp 'Iraq' (702 Naik...15th Sikhs) and an I.G.S. 1936 with clasp 'N.W.F. 1936-37' (Subadar...2/11th Sikhs). The 15th Sikhs became the 2/11th in the 1922 reorganization.

The January 1935 Indian Army List, which is the latest I have, confirms the presence in the battalion of Subadar Lal Singh, I.D.S.M. and shows that he enrolled in August 1911. He was promoted Jemadar in July 1928 and Subadar in August 1933. Exactly when he retired I have not so far been able to discover, but he served for some 24 years - not too bad a record for a dead man!

Colin Message

ADDENDUM (by M.C. Johnson)

I have had some correspondence with Mr Message concerning Sepoy Lal Singh, IDSM. We agree that it has been conclusively proven that 02 Sepoy Lal Singh was not killed and research seems to indicate that he is the only Lal Singh in the 15th Sikhs who received the IDSM in France; further, the Gazette date matches that for the IOM to Mangal Singh for the same action. There remain some interesting questions, however. Why are known casualties shown as dying on the 19th of May when the action took place on the 18th? In his book *Milestones*, Sir John Smyth VC states that Lal Singh was killed on reaching the trench. While it is true that he may have refreshed his memory from *Deeds That Thrill The Empire* (which states that Lal Singh was killed and that all members of the party received the IDSM - the latter demonstrably false) and so have perpetuated that work's error, it is strange that Smyth

⁵ Hypher gives the following on Mangal Singh's I.O.M: "A.O. 727 of 1915. Awarded the 2nd Class for gallantry and devotion to duty whilst serving with the Indian Corps in France and Flanders, No. 131 Lance-Naik Mangal Singh, 15th Ludhiana Sikhs".

would make that mistake about one of his own men, since he served with the 15th Sikhs. And what of 4749 Sepoy Lal Singh, who apparently did die on the 18th of May? Perhaps the regimental history would solve the problem, if any member has access to one.

JEMADAR PANJAB SINGH, I.O.M.

Several years ago I was offered a single British War Medal named to "Jemdr. Punjab Singh, 7 Ltrs." Who, the dealer assured me, was an Indian Order of Merit winner, though no details were given. *Honours and Awards, Indian Army* did list a man of that name (though they spelled it "Panjab") as winning the I.O.M. in Mesopotamia, so I ventured my seven pounds in hope of gaining at least one medal to a gallantry winner. (My collection was rather smaller then.) In due course the medal arrived and I set out to see what information I could unearth on my Jemadar.

The first researcher I approached was able to tell me two things: that the award had been gazetted on July 20, 1918 and that it was probably for the battle of Ctesiphon, fought in November of 1915. Not a great deal of help! In fact, I had decided that one of the two dates quoted was probably a misprint. A bit more work assured me that the 7th Lancers had been at Ctesiphon and that Panjab Singh was probably entitled to a 1914-15 Star to go with his BWM and missing Victory Medal and I.O.M. That was assuming that this was the same man, as the difference in the two names had me a little bit concerned.

My next recourse was to the helpful gentlemen of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, who supplied me with the following entry from their registers:

"Jemadar Panjab Singh, I.O.M. 7th Haryana Lancers, I.A. 22 November, 1915.

No Known Grave - Basra Memorial

son of Neku, of Samba, Jammu, Kashmir".

It appeared as if the man had been at Ctesiphon, had in fact been killed there, but that did nothing to solve the mystery of a three year gap between his date of death and the date of the award.

I was able to find out, again through a researcher, that Panjab Singh had enlisted in 1892, been promoted to the rank of Jemadar in late 1913 and was listed as killed in action on November 22, 1915. But why the late gazette? An oversight? Somebody deciding to retroactively recognize a gallant act? No clues to what was becoming a very nagging question.

The answer, because this one does have a happy ending of sorts, came almost a year later with the almost simultaneous arrival of two unrelated pieces of information. The first was the news that the local university library had a copy of the Official History of WWI for the "Mespot" campaign. The 7th Lancers formed part of the 6th Cav. Brigade under Major-General Melliss and led the advance on Kut-al-Amara, commencing on 22 Nov. 1915. (That date again!)

The account of the advance makes it clear that the 7th were on the very leading edge of the Brigade, the point of an arrowhead formation moving northwards. At Ctesiphon they were opposed by the Turkish "Iraq" Cavalry Bde., backed by heavy guns. The 7th, with the 76th Punjabis, 33rd Lt. Cavalry and 16th Cavalry (750 rifles, 977 sabres in all) came under heavy shellfire. They were "forced to advance dismounted and remain in exposed positions under fire for some hours", the 7th nearest the enemy. A number of horses were lost and the 7th had a total of 68 casualties. Next day the Turks were driven back and the advance continued. And Panjab Singh? The breakdown of casualties provided the first ray of light.

2 BOs wounded

2 NOs wounded

54 ORs wounded

9 ORs killed in action

1 NO missing in action

The second piece of the puzzle came at the same time. An excellent researcher in England was able to get me the text of the Gazette of India for July 20, 1918. Under Honours and Awards it said: "Awarded the Indian Order of Merit, 2nd Class... Jemadar Panjab Singh, Lancers.

For conspicuous gallantry on 22nd November 1915 in carrying messages under heavy fire. Twice he endeavoured to take a message through to two squadrons on the left of the line and it is believed he was killed in the second attempt. His widow, if any, is admitted to the pension of the Order with effect from the date of his death."

The key words, of course, are "it is believed he was killed...". Clearly, Panjab Singh was the one Native Officer "missing in action" that day and it seems likely that the award of his decoration was delayed until such time as it was finally established that he was dead and not a prisoner of war.

Jemadar Panjab Singh: one of those soldiers whose gallant act amid the "fog of war" was recorded and rewarded even though the man himself was lost. I now have far "better" and more complete groups of medals, but not, I think, any that give me more satisfaction or better represent the spirit that made the Indian cavalry some of the finest soldiers in the world.

Peter Monahan

RESEARCH RESOURCES INDEX

In the third Newsletter I aired a proposal made to me by several of the members: that an index of regimental histories and other relevant books owned by members be compiled and made available to researchers. This has proved more complex than expected and the publication of said list will be delayed for a few more weeks/months. There are, however, at least sixty titles in my files to date (most, I should add, sent in by three or four members.) At

present I am concentrating on the regimental histories and have the titles of the following (very rough counts):

Twenty five infantry regimental histories

Thirty five cavalry cavalry regimental histories

Ten Corps histories

Six divisional histories

These are divided between 19th C. accounts (about 40%) and WWI and WWII histories, with a smattering of post-Partition Indian publications. The Gurkhas are very well represented and one member has some very interesting (and rare) A.F.I. unit histories. I would once again urge members to make available the titles of books which you are willing to do research from for other members (especially unit histories. - you may well have the only copy of a book in the Society. Titles and publishing details, on file cards can be sent to me. Thanks!

Peter Monahan

RAKSHA MEDAL



(The Raksha Medal, awarded by the Indian government for the 1965 campaign against Pakistan. This was one of a number stolen from member I.S. Mane (H013) of Toronto.) **Web Site Note.** This image from Haynes and Chhina "*Medals and Decorations of Independent India*" replaces the original used in Durbar and is reproduced with the authors' permission.