



# CHOWKIDAR

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Editor: Dr. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

## British Association For Cemeteries In South Asia (BACSA)

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## Notes on BACSA

The Association was formed in October 1976 to bring together people with a concern for the many hundreds of European cemeteries, isolated graves and monuments in South Asia.

There is a steadily growing membership of over 1,800 (2004) drawn from a wide circle of interest-Government; Churches; Services; Business; Museums; Historical & Genealogical Societies. More members are needed to support the rapidly expanding activities of the Association – the setting up of local committees in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaysia etc., and the building up of a Records archive in the Oriental and India Office Collections in the British Library; and many other projects for the upkeep of historical and architectural monuments.

The enrolment fee and subscription rates are obtainable from the Secretary.



The Association has its own newsletter, *Chowkidar*, which is distributed free to all members twice a year and contains a section for 'Queries' on any matter relating to family history or condition of a relative's grave etc. There are also many other publications both on cemetery surveys and aspects of European social history out East.

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## MARY CARPENTER OF BRISTOL

Mary Carpenter was one of those indomitable Victorian spinsters who were driven by a mission to help the less fortunate. She was very much in the Florence Nightingale mould, but unlike the famous hospital reformer who talked so knowledgeably about India, Mary Carpenter had actually made four prolonged visits there, the first when she was nearly sixty years old. Mary was born in Bristol, in 1807, the eldest child of Dr Lant Carpenter, a leading Unitarian Minister who set up a small school, where his daughter later gained practical teaching experience. Inspired by her father's example, Mary started a number of schools herself in Bristol, including some to train women teachers, which were known as 'normal schools'. She was radically ahead of her time, against corporal punishment for children and disapproving of prison sentences for them. But it was an encounter when she was twenty-five years old that was to shape the pattern of her later life. Mary met the great Hindu reformer, Rajah Ram Mohan Roy in 1833 during his short, and fatal, visit to Bristol. She was one of the mourners at the Rajah's funeral, after his sudden death from meningitis on 27 September of that year. The young woman subsequently wrote a detailed history of *The Last Days in England of Rajah Rammohun Roy* which she dedicated to 'Indians ... who emancipating themselves from the thralldom of idolatry and superstition have devoted themselves to promote the elevation of their country'.

Mary continued with her concerns for India and entertained many Indian reformers, officials, lawyers and students over the years, such as Keshub Chander Sen, Satyendranath Tagore, Dr Goodeve Chuckerbutty and Sasipata Bannerjee, whose first child, Lant, was born in Mary's home and named after her father. (A later son would be named Albion, at Queen Victoria's request.) Mary wrote to her Indian friends and confided to her diary in 1864 'I here record my solemn resolve to devote my heart and soul and strength to the Elevation of the Women of India.' She wrote further of 'going to our distant India and there working with the spirits of my beloved father and the noble Rajah'. In 1866, aged fifty-nine, Mary left for India on the first of four long visits. Her original journals entitled 'Records of India', now in the Bristol Records Office, are detailed and well illustrated. Several of her accomplished Indian watercolours hang in her former home, the Red Lodge, now part of the City's Museum. She later published *Six Months in India*, two extensive volumes, in 1868. She appears to have stayed with, or met, most of the important British Raj officials and leading Indians of the period in Bombay, Poona, Surat, Ahmedabad, Madras and Calcutta. She lectured, badgered and inspired officials to build 'normal native female schools' and to reorganise the prisons.

The Viceroy, Sir John Lawrence, received her 'Memorandum on Female Education and Prison Discipline' and sent copies 'to be acted upon' throughout India. Returning to Britain, she bombarded the Government and India Office with missives asking for funds for girls' schools - both vernacular and English medium. She founded the National Indian Association in 1870 (there were to be branches later in India), and set up and edited its influential journal *The Indian Magazine*. These prodded the Government into overdue penal, fiscal and educational reforms, and established a climate of change that would bear much fruit later. She became so well respected that Florence Nightingale asked her to visit, and Queen Victoria invited her to Windsor to congratulate her. Mary Carpenter died on 14 April 1877 and is buried in Arnos Vale Cemetery, on the rising terraced hillside opposite the Bath Road entrance, under a very simple headstone. However, an engraved bust and epitaph were placed in the north transept of Bristol's Anglican Cathedral which celebrate her life and work in some detail. This plaque stands, most fittingly, within feet of the new statue of Rajah Ram Mohan Roy outside on College Green. (A biography published in 1988 by Norman Sargant entitled *Mary Carpenter in India* was noted in *Chowkidar* at the time: Vol 5, No 1)

Mary's story has been compiled by BACSA member Carla Contractor, a leading authority on the life and death of Rajah Ram Mohan Roy. And in a highly exciting discovery reported at the end of December 2004, Mrs Contractor has tracked down the death mask of Ram Mohan Roy, missing for 170 years. During his last illness, the Rajah was attended by Dr Estlin, who, realising the importance of his patient, summoned a sculptor who took the mould, from which the death masks were made, within hours of his death. One was sent to Calcutta in 1886 by Dr Estlin's daughter - and it is not known whether this still exists or not. So Carla did some detective work and tracked down an Estlin relative who told her that two masks had been made. And where was the second? 'In the 1830s, 40s and 50s there were collections of death masks in the medical schools. They were used to further the study of phrenology, a popular Victorian science', Carla told the *Bristol Evening Post*, who have given the story a three-page spread. 'During the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century there were only three places in Britain where medicine was taught - London, Dublin and Edinburgh. Estlin is a Scottish name, so I went on a hunch and tried there.' And the hunch paid off. Dr Estlin had given the second mask to his alma mater, and it was found in the care of a local trust, together with others from the original Edinburgh Phrenological Society. A photograph shows the benign-looking and peaceful face of the Rajah, a man of great character and one can see why he was capable of inspiring not only his own countrymen, but English women like Mary Carpenter, too.

It is ironic that the Rajah's elaborate Indian-inspired tomb, in the Arnos Vale cemetery, continues to decay and is in urgent need of restoration. The tomb, as reported in earlier *Chowkidars*, is so architecturally important that it is one of just a handful of graves in Britain to be given Grade II\* Listing. It is also the site of an annual pilgrimage on 27 September by the Indian High Commissioner and Indian and British pilgrims, who gather to commemorate the man regarded as one of the founders of modern India.

## MAIL BOX

So rich are Britain's funerary monuments in the East, it is sometimes easy to forget that we were by no means the only foreigners there, and that until the end of the 18th century the Honorable East India Company had several European rivals. These thoughts are prompted by the description of a particularly elaborate Dutch funeral that took place in 1692 at Surat, kindly sent in by Henry Brownrigg. The splendidly named Henrik-Adriaan van Reede tot Drakestein, Lord de Mijdrecht had long been in service with the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC), the Dutch East India Company, when he was appointed Commissioner General in 1684. The VOC was established in 1602, just two years after Britain's East India Company, and was initially much more commercially successful, with its headquarters in Batavia, and ports in south-east Asia. Trading posts were also established in Ceylon and along the Indian coasts, at Malabar, Surat, Coromandel and in Bengal. Van Reede's mission, as Commissioner General, was to stamp out corruption and unlawful practices in the VOC's offices, and he carried out this task ruthlessly, earning himself a controversial reputation. He died suddenly on 15 December 1691 while travelling from Cochin to Surat, after a brief illness. Given his character, it was rumoured that he might have been poisoned.

Unusually, his funeral did not take place the day after his death, in fact it did not take place until the following month, in January 1692, but when it did, what a splendid event it was. A contemporary observer writes that Van Reede's body could not be taken through the walled city of Surat to the burial ground for 'in accordance with the regulations of the Moorish government, no corpse that died outside the city may be brought within the gates, nor carried through the streets to the common burial place.' So the cortège wound its way across the plain to the cemetery, preceded by fifty Indian sepoy, or soldiers, 'several pieces of artillery, three trumpeters, a flag bearer, a pair of chargers with Van Reede's regalia, spurs, gauntlets, helmet, etc, another horse in heraldic armour, an armoured man bearing the regimental staff, and lastly, the funeral bier', drawn imaginatively by four oxen, draped in black cloth, as was the bier, and followed by his friends.

Despite his status, the cost of Van Reede's princely funeral was met not by the VOC, but by his heirs, including a half-Indian daughter, Francina. It was Francina who had a huge tomb and memorial erected to him near Surat. (see page 109) This impressive structure acknowledged Van Reede's own keen interest in building and the natural world. While living in Cochin, in the 1670s, he had constructed not only his own residence, which extraordinarily, still stands today near the Parade Ground in the Fort, but also a botanical garden attached to it. The tropical plants grown in it were later included in a twelve-volume work *Hortus Indicus Malabaricus*, which was compiled by Van Reede and his assistants. Truly a remarkable man, who remains, even today, virtually unknown outside Holland. [With acknowledgements to *The Dutch Encounter with Asia 1600-1950* (2002) by Kees Zandvliet.]

And while we are still in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, an interesting memorial inscription has been sent to us recently, which is engraved on the church wall of St Bartholomew the Great, in Smithfield, London. It reads in part:

#### EPITAPH UPON CAPTAIN MILLETT MARINER

Many a storm and tempest passt  
Here hee hath quiet anchor cast.

Desirous hither to resort  
Because this Parish was the Port  
When his wide soul sett forth: and where  
His fathers Bones intrusted are.

The Turkey and the Indian trade  
Advantage by his dangers made;  
Till a convenient fortune found,  
His honesty and labours crowned.

OBIJT ANNO AETATIS 59 ANNO DOMINI 1660 DECEMBRIS 12

Mention was made in the Autumn 2003 *Chowkidar* of the short and sad life of Princess Gauramma, daughter of the deposed Rajah of Coorg, in Mysore, who was brought to England by her father in 1852. to receive a western education. The princess was 'adopted' by Queen Victoria, and converted to the Christian faith. Her bust, sculpted by Baron Carlo Marochetti, and commissioned by the Queen, shows a beautiful young woman in a sari, wearing a large crucifix as her only adornment. The Queen also commissioned a matching bust of another 'adopted' Indian favourite, the Maharajah Duleep Singh, who had also converted to Christianity, although he later resumed the Sikh faith.

Harbinder Singh, the Director of the Maharajah Duleep Singh Centenary Trust, writes to tell us that these two busts, of coloured marble, were more than coincidental. 'Records suggest' says Mr Singh 'that the British Government was trying to facilitate her marriage to Maharajah Duleep Singh, but that he was not in agreement.' The princess, in fact, married a British officer, John Campbell, and died at the early age of twenty-two, after giving birth to a child. Princess Gauramma's grave, which is presumably in Britain, is unknown and Campbell and the child mysteriously disappeared after her death.

What we do know now, thanks to research by David Beauchamp, writing in the Newsletter of the Friends of Brompton Cemetery, is that this was not Campbell's first marriage. His first wife, an Englishwoman called Margaret, also died young, at the age of twenty-six, after four sons were born from their marriage. A widower, with four boys, and clearly somewhat older than his second, Indian, wife, does not seem like a particularly good match, and the marriage was not surprisingly unhappy. Did it meet with Queen Victoria's approval, or did she drop her 'adopted' daughter after the proposed marriage to Duleep Singh fell through? There are a number of unanswered questions here, and we put out another plea for information. Somewhere there may be descendants of the child born to Campell and the Coorg princess, and somewhere surely, must be the princess's grave, in a Christian cemetery. It is possible that Gauramma adopted an English Christian name, so she may be recorded simply as '.....Campbell, wife of John Campbell, died in 1864'. And what happened to her father, the Rajah? Did he return to India, or is he, too, commemorated in Britain?

Not all the items sent in by readers dwell on the serious side of life and death in South Asia, and the following items amused us recently. A letter from the War Office, Whitehall, dated 1945 is addressed to an unnamed colonel, returning to India on duty. He is solemnly instructed that 'the consultant physician to the Army, Major General.....has asked me to arrange for the air transport of 1,000 mice to Calcutta for use by the Medical Research Council Team working there. It is essential that they be accompanied by an officer to ensure their safe arrival. Air passage is being arranged for you on the same aircraft as the mice, leaving the UK on 8 October 1945. The mice will be packed in crates and will need no special attention on the journey. Details of the air passage will be forwarded to you when received from the Air Ministry.' It could be a spoof, of course, but there is something so sublimely ludicrous about flying British mice to India, that it does have the ring of complete, military, authenticity. No doubt a BACSA member will know who the mice escort was.

Fort Marlborough, an East India Company outpost at Bencoolen, on the west coast of Sumatra, was considered something of a penal colony for disobedient Company servants. Hot, ridden with fever, not very profitable and liable to attack from local inhabitants, it seemed as much a place of punishment as a trading post in pepper and camphor. No wonder the unfortunates posted there spent most of their time drinking. In July 1716 it was found that the liquor bill amounted to more than the total value of pepper exported that year from Bencoolen. Indeed, there is on record a severe note from the Directors to the inhabitants of the Fort complaining about the huge sums spent on liquor: 'It is a wonder to us that any of you live six months, and that there are not more quarrellings and duellings amongst you, if half these liquors were guzzled down.' Three years later the Fort was burnt down, 'accidentally by fire' as the survivors claimed, though in fact it turned out to have been attacked by local insurgents, no doubt taking advantage of its drunken inhabitants. The Fort was rebuilt and in 1842 exchanged with the more sober Dutch, in return for Malacca.

During the French Revolution, Maria Grosholtz, who is better known today as Madame Tussaud, was living in Paris at the home of Dr Curtius who had opened a successful exhibition of life-size wax figures in 1770. Maria had been his pupil, and on the doctor's death, early in 1794, he left the exhibition to her. In the rapidly changing events of La Grande Terreur, Maria realised that the wax figures had become politically sensitive and that they had to be moved out of the country as quickly as possible. A shipment of twenty figures was packed up, which she sent with an Italian showman to Calcutta and Madras. The figures included, among others, Louis XV, the Dauphin, the Duchess of Polignac, Joseph II, the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, Lafayette and Mirabeau and 'for good measure, she sent a model of the Bastille and the decapitated head of Joseph-Francois Foulon'. The exhibition opened in Madras on 18 August 1794 in Old Mackay's Garden, and was then taken to Calcutta. It is thought to have remained in India for some eight months, before being shipped to England, where of course, it was to form the basis of the present-day Baker Street Museum. [From *Madame Tussaud – a Life and a Time* by Teresa Ransom, 2002] Unfortunately there is no mention of how the problems of exhibiting wax figures in the Indian summer was overcome, and theories would be welcome.

## FREDDIE YOUNG

A short article in the Autumn 2004 *Chowkidar* on Freddie Young, sometime Superintendent of Police in the United Provinces, led to more reminiscences about this remarkable personality and the identification of his burial place.

BACSA member Tony Hartridge phoned in with useful information and other members added their own accounts of meetings with him. Clearly Freddie is not a man to be confined to a single *Chowkidar* article, anymore than he could be tied down by British bureaucracy. Lesley Lewis tells us that in the winter of 1936/37 she was staying with her uncle, Sir John Ewart of the Indian Police, then the Director of Intelligence. Sir John had to tour all over India and spent a week or so in Jaipur, with his niece. Freddie was working in the Maharajah's State with the police. 'He did not seem to be a family man at all', Mrs Lewis writes. 'He kindly gave me a bed, as there was not room for me elsewhere. It was some kind of hut, not in his house, patrolled at night by a watchman whose cough (possibly done to show he was awake all night on duty), rather disturbed my sleep. I think Freddie often stayed up all night and was apt to drop off to sleep during the day. I was usually with the Ewarts so did not have many meals [with Freddie] but they consisted of curry and other Indian food which I never met elsewhere. He did not go in for any of the usual social activities and I think had not much use for women. As I remember, he was a big, burly man, quite good-looking in a dark, rather foreign way. He was notorious as a 'character' about whom there were many stories.'

Mr HI Stewart sent in a little privately printed booklet *Bedtime Stories for the Military Minded* about his soldiering life, with the following anecdote: 'About a week later [this was in 1947], the Squadron, with its tanks was on its way by train to Babina. At Itarsi [in Madhya Pradesh], I asked the Station Master to ring the Chief of Police, Freddie Young (a good friend of my family) to ask him to come down to Bhopal Station to have a drink in my carriage while the train stopped for twenty minutes. The message was relayed, but got through that there were 150 Sikhs on the train coming to attack Bhopal! On arrival, I was met by fifty police, numerous Alsatians and of course Freddie Young (a cartoonist's dream), wearing starched khaki shorts, bush shirt, bush hat and eyeglass, all covering a very portly frame of at least twenty stone. Much laughter and enjoyment was had before the train moved on for Babina.'

And Douglas Young (no relation) has answered our query about Freddie's grave. 'I arrived in Bhopal in September 1957.....and rented a dwelling from the estate of the Nawabzada Rashid-ul-Zafar. I learned of Young from the royal family. When Young retired from the Indian Police, the Nawab appointed him Inspector General of the Bhopal State Police, a role in which he appears to have been held in considerable esteem. During World War Two, a prisoner-of-war camp was established at Bairagarh, on the outskirts of Bhopal city. This was provided for Italian POWs from the north African theatre of war.'

When Italian prisoners died, they were buried in a cemetery that they had been allowed to build, using available local materials supplied by the Government of India. The finished facility displayed skills of a high order in the working of masonry and wrought iron. I do not know the date of his death but can confirm that this is the burial place of Freddie Young. The grave is marked by a slab of red trap rock, bearing his name. I do not recall an inscription. When I left Bhopal in 1965, Young was the only individual sharing the graveyard with the Italians. On a visit in 1988 I found it in use by a growing Christian community. Old Bhopal has been absorbed by TT Nagar, capital of Madhya Pradesh. Numerous Christian burials had taken place, but the state of the graveyard left the impression that maintenance was lacking.'

By coincidence, BACSA member Richard Cochrane visited the Bairagarh cemetery late in 2004 and sent us a photograph of a plaque he found there. (see page 109) It reads: 'Between Spring 1941 and Spring 1944, in the Bairagarh concentration camp lived thousands of Italians, prisoners-of-war, captured in Egypt by the UK Army in December 1940. In that period, due to various diseases, 139 prisoners died. For them a war cemetery was built in this place. After our departure, the cemetery remained unguarded and sacrilegious hands devastated it and gravestones were removed. Afterwards the Archdiocese of Bhopal built a Catholic cemetery in the same place and the mortal remains of the Italian prisoners have been recovered and placed in an ossuary. This plate, as memento for posterity, has been written by Cirino Raciti who spent at Bairagarh three years out of the five of his captivity. Rome, May 2000' The site of the ossuary is not disclosed and Richard Cochrane is hoping to get more information on it.

### **CAN YOU HELP?**

A fine stained glass window (one of a set of three) in the church of St Mary the Virgin, at Stratfield Mortimer in Berkshire, was illustrated in the autumn *Chowkidar*. The three windows, which depicted buildings in Lucknow, were installed to commemorate Arthur RN Gould, who died in 1868. There was no indication in the inscription about Arthur Gould's connection with Lucknow, but David Blake, our archive assistant who recently retired from the India Office Library has sent us the following note: '*The Indian Mutiny Medal Roll 1857-1859 (British Forces)* compiled by KJ Asplin (1998) includes an entry for Lieutenant Arthur Robert N Gould of the 97th (Earl of Ulster's) Foot who was awarded the Lucknow Clasp' (a clasp awarded for operations between November 1857 and March 1858), during the recapture of the city in the Great Indian Revolt. So another query answered, but of course there are always plenty more.

The Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst contains among its very handsome buildings, the Indian Memorial Room, which was created in 1948 in the Academy's former chapel. As the name implies, there are memorial badges, costumes, paintings and much more, commemorating the regiments, officers and men who served in India before Independence. One 'gentleman cadet' who is remembered here has proved something of a mystery and 'Friends of War Memorials' a charitable group set up in 1996 is hoping to learn more about him. George Ayscough Booth joined what was then the Royal Military College on 1 February 1867 at the age of nineteen and died tragically only fifteen months later. He is buried in a unique and somewhat neglected grave in Barnack village churchyard, in Cambridgeshire. The highly unusual grave is carved from local stone and depicts a delicately carved fallen palm tree, with realistic fronds and bunches of dates.

The symbolism is clear, a youth cut down in his prime, but why a palm tree in Cambridgeshire, one wonders. An exhaustive search of all possible records has not found any information about the cause of George Booth's early death, but the Sandhurst archivist says there is a rumour that Cadet Booth either drowned in the College lake, or died of cholera, which was still endemic in England at the time. But perhaps he died abroad, which might partly explain the absence of a British death certificate? Research has found that the cadet's father was curate of Barnack in the 1850s and then moved to take over the living of Clandown in Somerset. The family later seem to have settled abroad in Europe. In memory of their son, the curate and his wife donated a handsome stained glass window in what was then the College chapel. But oddly the window contains a panel depicting the blue-uniformed French officer cadets from the St Cyr Military Academy, then located west of Paris. Sandhurst holds copies of correspondence between the curate, the College and the War Office about the design of the window, which required the approval of the then Commander-in-Chief, the Duke of Cambridge, who for some reason took a personal interest in the project. So there we have it, a palm tree grave in Cambridgeshire, and a reference to a French military academy at Sandhurst. It may have nothing at all to do with BACSA's remit, but perhaps members can provide a clue?

BACSA member Betty Mackenzie has a story to tell about a many times great uncle, brother to an ancestor of hers. The brother was called Murdoch Mackenzie, and he was a lieutenant in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion of the 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders, a regiment that had been raised in 1794 at Fort St George in Madras. Lieutenant Mackenzie's service with the regiment included the storming of Ahmednagar in 1803/4, at the end of the Mahratta wars and the battle of Assaye.

Family legend has it that his Indian wife, whom he intended to leave behind when the battalion was ordered to move, poisoned him. He died on 24 February 1807, and indeed, this was the year that the battalion moved from Gujerat to Goa. He is buried in Bombay, leaving behind a daughter. This young girl, whose name is unknown, was subsequently sent to the Mackenzie family estate at Letterewe, in the extreme north-west of the Scottish Highlands. She brought with her Lieutenant Mackenzie's sword and ring, which were later lost. Betty Mackenzie would like to find out more about this daughter, uprooted from her home in India and her mother. Perhaps readers could advise her on where to start?

A long article in *The Daily Telegraph* in November 2004 was headlined 'Historic colonial graves left to rot in India: Remains of the Raj's servants could be lost' Although this initially looked like another alarmist story, it was in fact a well-researched and written piece that not only gave full credit to Theon Wilkinson for setting up BACSA in 1976 but also detailed the role of the British Government which had adopted a policy of non-intervention. The journalist who wrote the article is Peter Foster, and while collecting material he confessed that he had a personal interest in the Jhansi cantonment cemetery, where a relative is buried. Lieutenant Lancelot Anthony Gilliat was out hunting when he was mauled by a wounded tiger and died on 22 May 1935. He was twenty-five years old and unmarried. His grave has not yet been found in the large, previously overgrown, cemetery but recent initiatives have led to partial clearing of undergrowth and the identification of a number of graves.

With help from BACSA, who have sent two grants, the little gothic gatehouse has now been restored, even to the extent of matching the original roof tiles. (see page 108) The perimeter wall has been raised, and perhaps a third, maybe nearly a half, of the undergrowth has been cleared from the cemetery itself. Date palm seedlings are being dug up and the larger plants cut down and hopefully destroyed by pouring kerosene on and burning. BACSA member Richard Cochrane, who has just returned from visiting Jhansi, says that the quality of the work done is excellent. The person masterminding the repairs to the gatehouse and to the perimeter wall is Captain Roy Abbott. The huge task of organising the clearance of the undergrowth is being tackled by Mrs Peggy Cantem. Also assisting are two members of the international engineering company Mott MacDonald Ltd, stationed in Jhansi at present - Mr Chris Davey and Mr John Prytherch, who have been able to provide valuable advice and assistance. So everyone is pitching in to restore this historic cemetery, and it will surely not be too long before Lieutenant Gilliat's grave will be rediscovered. Perhaps readers can throw more light on his unfortunate early death?

Helpful responses have come in from readers responding to queries in the Autumn 2004 *Chowkidar*. In particular, Elizabeth Talbot Rice has found 'two natural children to William Decluzeau (who died at Karnal in 1826) - John James and Thomas Frederick, both baptised at Cawnpore on 22 August 1815.' Lady Rachael Ezra of the philanthropic Calcutta family, was remembered by Betty Mackenzie, who met her in the 1950s at the Grand Hotel, Calcutta. She was then 'a rather ancient lady', who was very friendly with Betty Mackenzie's mother-in-law. A useful book by Mavis Hyman, *Jews of the Raj*, published in 1995 was pointed out to us by Ronald Rosner, who noted that the book was dedicated to the author's grandfather, Meir Ezra.

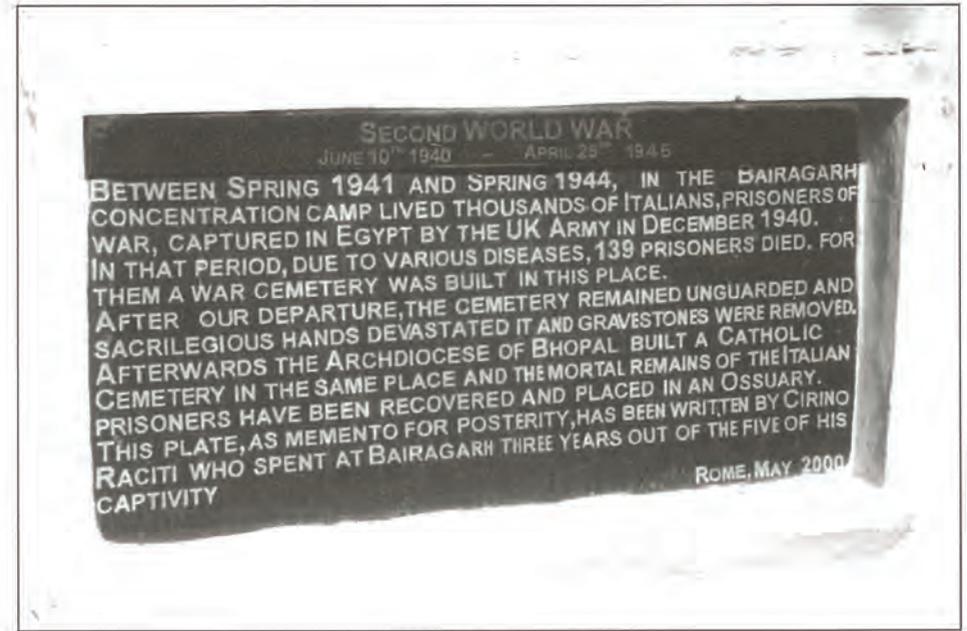
## THEON AND ROSEMARIE WILKINSON

2004 saw the (partial) retirement, after twenty-eight years, of Theon Wilkinson as Honorary Secretary and Rosemarie Willkinson as Membership Secretary. There were several special events to mark the occasion, including a celebratory lunch at the Chor Bazaar Indian restaurant in Mayfair in March 2004, organised by Eileen Hewson. BACSA members contributed generously to a 'retirement present' fund for the Wilkinsons and a small sub-committee was set up to choose an appropriate gift. Luckily it is something which can be reproduced in *Chowkidar*; and our back cover shows a copy of the picture presented to them at the General Meeting in October 2004. The Wilkinsons got an original 'Company painting' watercolour, executed about 1840, which was then lithographed for *Memoirs of a Griffin, or, A Cadet's First Year in India* by Captain Bellew, published in London in 1843. Copies of the book are rarities, and an original painting even more so. A few changes were made to the lithograph and a caption was added, which reads: Tom Rattleton receiving the morning report of the 'Fat Lord' and the 'Red Lion'. The upright bearing of the two soldiers, Moti Sahib and Lal Singh, is in contrast to the two griffins, or newcomers, relaxing over morning tea and hookah.

Theon and Rosemarie wish to record their thanks to all those members who contributed to such a wonderful and appropriate present, and also to all those who sent letters and cards expressing kind messages and hopes for a more restful future. The key words for their future are 'more restful' as while they have been relieved of the arduous duties which now fall on the shoulders of Robert Sykes (Honorary Secretary) and Christopher Carnaghan (Membership Secretary) Theon continues in the role of Projects Co-ordinator and Publications Officer (including secondhand books), under the roof of BACSA's Registered Headquarters, which remain at Putney.

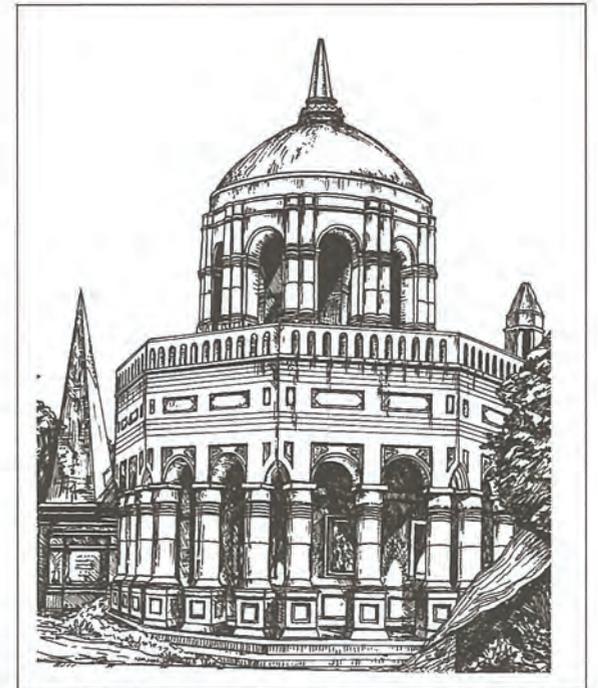


*The Jhansi Cantonment cemetery (see page 106). The gatehouse before restoration (above), and now fully restored (below) thanks to BACSA grants.*



*above: The 2000 inscription at the Bairagarh Cemetery, Bhopal (see page 104)*

*right: The Van Reede tomb in Surat (see page 100) reproduced from Two Monsoons by Theon Wilkinson.*



## BACSA BOOKS [Books by BACSA members]

### **Duel in the Snows: The True Story of the Younghusband Mission to Lhasa**

Charles Allen

In December 1903, a mainly Indian force was moved into Tibet from Sikkim to counter a perceived Russian threat, and was confronted by a medieval Tibetan army attempting to stop it by non-violent means. It was to be a clash between the world's then mightiest power, armed with Maxim machine-guns and Lee-Enfield and Lee-Metford rifles, and possibly the world's weakest, a land of mystery, governed by a reincarnate lama, then assumedly protected by the world's most formidable natural barriers. Leading this supposedly peaceful political mission was Colonel Francis Younghusband, explorer, geographer and mystic.

In 1893–94 he had been Political Agent in Chitral, and had then returned as *The Times* correspondent with the Chitral Relief Force in 1895. He had earlier been erroneously reported dead by *The Times* in 1891. (By a coincidence, when this reviewer was asked to review this book, he had just visited a private 3<sup>rd</sup> Royal Hussars Museum at Chessington, and been shown the fur-lined greatcoat then worn by Younghusband, and recently gifted to this Museum by a descendant.) With him was a group of young officers, who hero-worshipped him and who were as eager as he was to be the first Europeans in almost a century to gaze on Lhasa, the 'Forbidden City'. But commanding the military force accompanying Younghusband's political mission was Brigadier General James Macdonald, an officer determined to do things by the book. The result was a tragic conflict at every level, that both absorbed and shocked the world, several hundred Tibetans being massacred at Chumik Shenko in April 1904, being not only out-gunned, but also out-numbered. Lhasa's arsenal was found to be devoid of Russian weapons, and Lhasa's rifle factory proved to be a village workshop run by two Indian Muslims.

The author is well-known as an historian of British India, almost all of his books having been reviewed earlier in *Chowkidar*. (His indomitable mother's autobiography was also published by BACSA.) In researching this book, he has covered on the ground as much of the invading force's route to Lhasa as political constraints, set by the Tibet Autonomous Region, allowed. There is both panache and precision in this nuanced narration. It would not be correct to reveal the whole story of events in a short review, but suffice it to say that the Buddhists are largely beatific, the ostensible heroes not always heroic, and the villains always villainous.

History often as not is written by the victors, but in this case the losers appear to have the last word, the Chinese even making a film on this 1904 Mission (though ignoring that they had inflicted even greater atrocities on the Tibetans during their 1951 invasion). (SLM)

2004 John Murray ISBN 0 7195 5427 6 £20.00 pp350

### **Last Children of the Raj: British Childhoods in India. Volume 1 1919-1939 Volume II 1939-1950** Laurence Fleming

These are handsomely produced volumes with ample photographs. Their contents are briefly summarised on the dust jacket as 'Details of family traditions with deep roots in the Indian subcontinent, of going to school in India and Britain, of deep friendships between British and Indian children and with those who served the Raj. There are accounts of huge journeys and adventures available only in Indian childhoods. There is so much to be gleaned about fathers' careers, including the 'Heaven-born' - the Indian Civil Service - or members of the professional and technical services, fathers in the Army, in commerce and industry.' It is inevitable in a work of this nature that there would be some repetition as the domestic arrangements of British families in India were broadly similar. There is much, however, that describes unique and exciting experiences that range over the subcontinent. As an anthology to be dipped into from time to time it would make excellent reading and an invaluable historical witness.

What is striking is that these children of the Raj, almost without exception, adored life in India and were devastated when they had to return home to the much more spartan life of family and school in their mother country. Their sense of loss was palpable and their subsequent return to India a joyful and even ecstatic experience. Mark Tully typically voices this nostalgia: 'The very first day that I returned to India twenty years after leaving as a child, the scent of winter flowers in my hotel garden, the smoke from the malis' cow-dung stoves, the pungent aroma of the food they were cooking, suddenly brought back my childhood.' Patrica Banham also relates 'my fond memories of early childhood when British, Anglo-Indian and Indian children grew up together: we learned to be natural with each other, oblivious to ethnic origins, treating each other happily as equals...we did not know what racial prejudice was.' This devotion was reciprocated, as Zoë Wilkinson records: 'When I came back in 1970 and the servants came to garland me and the tears ran down their faces, I sensed that they wept for the lost security, the pleasant orderliness of the servants' compound, for the help with their children and the hope for the future, as much as affection for me.'

One gets the strong impression that most children were taught to respect servants by their elders. Maeve Kelly's parents told her in no uncertain terms never to speak roughly to servants: 'they work with us – and you treat everyone with respect.' Patricia McCoy testifies that 'two of our servants worked for my parents from 1923 to 1944. They married and had their family and to this day I am friends with their younger son and their daughter who became a nun.' The vignette I most enjoyed comes from Zoë Wilkinson: 'Among our servants, Babu Lal (the chief bearer), had a pension fund and by the time he left, he had built a very nice house and was a member of the Provincial Legislative Assembly for the Scheduled Classes, as was my father for the Europeans. They went off for meetings to the Assembly in a car together, Burra Sahib and servant.' In Cawnpore Theon Wilkinson's father introduced a welfare centre for his employees, organised the RSPCA locally and enjoyed an excellent relationship with a Hindu holy man whose temple he had saved from the progress of main drains. Pujas are still said for him on the anniversary of his death.

That discrimination between all races existed in India is undeniable but some of its worst aspects were directed towards Anglo-Indians and Domiciled Europeans by British expatriates. It was, moreover, wholly inexcusable, particularly as Patrick Stevenage points out, the former 'served the government in many reserved occupations in the post and telegraph departments and on the railways and their ancestors had formed the backbone of the regiments, both British and Indian, which had conquered India and fought in so many of the wars of the Empire with more than a little distinction'. I found Volume I more interesting than Volume II as it describes the normative period of British life in India before the Second World War. Volume II, however, contains graphic eye-witness accounts of the terrible internecine strife amongst Indians and the revolting scenes of carnage that marred the last days of the Raj.

It is not easy, after perusing all these varied experiences, to form a definitive judgement on British life in India, nor on the larger question of the success or failure of the British Raj. Mark Tully's Introduction to Volume I attempts a balanced appraisal and his ultimate opinion is, I think, sage: 'We did lay the foundations of the largest democracy the world has ever known. What is more, we did it in partnership with Indians which is perhaps why we left behind great goodwill. In more than thirty years of living in India it has always been an advantage to me, not a disadvantage, to have been born a child of the Raj.' (PN)

2004 Radcliffe Press, London ISBN 1 86064 871 1, vol 1 pp348 and ISBN 1 86064 872 X, vol 2 pp350. £25 each volume

## **Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial Empire** Elizabeth Buettner

This book is a sociological study of British families who played a part in ruling India from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to Independence in 1947. It covers a catholic range of subjects and on these the author provides, making use of selected primary sources, a mine of very interesting information which cannot fail to interest aficionados of Raj history. However, as I read through them, I became aware of an undercurrent of deep hostility to British Raj professionals and their families. The cat was let out of the bag in the concluding chapter which is an unabashed assault on writers of Raj reminiscences (like MM Kaye, Rumer Godden and Charles Allen), accusing them of romanticizing and thus falsifying the real nature of the Raj. The author's final verdict on them is waspishly expressed: 'the ageing remnant of "a tribe" increasingly veering on extinction.' She has certainly earned her place amongst the post-war denigrators of the Raj.

The fact that, in the end, Britain gave up her Indian Empire suggests to Buettner that her imperial rule, despite Raj apologists, was never, in any way, acceptable to Indians. She needs, however, to cope with the simple historical fact (noted by so many historians), that there was something miraculous about the way in which a comparatively small number of soldiers and administrators were able to hold together four hundred million Indians and that Britain conducted a successful war against the Japanese in Burma without any significant rebellion of India's population. These facts suggest that, at the very least, there was an acceptance of British rule by the majority of Indians. (PN)

2004 Oxford University Press ISBN 0 19 924907 5 £25.00 pp310

## **The Forgotten Irish: Memorials of the Raj** compiled by Eileen Hewson

This book is an account of the Irish people who were deleted from late eighteenth and nineteenth century history. During that period England relied heavily on the Irish to staff the needs of the growing empire. At that time the option to work for the East India Company was a way of escaping the worsening poverty of Ireland. For the upper and middle classes, a commission in the Bengal Army could mean easy money followed by an early retirement. For the Irish peasant serving as a soldier it meant the hope of a full stomach and the prospect of adventure in a warm climate away from the cold and rain.

Entrepreneurs, quick to see a business opportunity, opened trading posts and were followed, much later, by the missionaries who saw the Empire as an opportunity to spread Christianity. Then there were the adventurers who worked as mercenaries for the Indian princes or had their own private armies, such as the notorious George Thomas, who became known as the 'Rajah of Tipperary'. Although few of their graves remain, it has been possible to compile the epitaphs and biographies from written sources for many of these remarkable men and women whose deeds have vanished into the past.

Drawing on a wide range of records, including the BACSA cemetery books, early 20<sup>th</sup> century Government publications, and the Genealogical Society of Ireland, the author has produced an impressive list of Irish men and women who served, or lived under, the British Raj. The book is divided into two parts: memorials in India to people of Irish origin, sometimes stated specifically on their inscriptions, or by implication in their surnames, and memorials in Ireland to those with Indian connections or service. So in the former category, we find, for example 'Rodger Bryan, late Private in No. 7 or Captain GC Marshall's Company. Hs. Ms. 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment. A native of Nenagh, County Tipperary, Ireland who departed this life 1st July AD 1836, aged 30 years. Leaving a disconsolate widow to lament his loss.' Private Bryan lies buried in the Patna City Cemetery, opened in 1765 to accommodate the many deaths in the large army contingent stationed there.

In Ireland itself (both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland are covered), we find the names of the great families of the past, the Montgomerys, Nicholsons, Wellesleys, Auchinlecks, and Lawrences, alongside the humbler telegraph engineers, forest officers and soldiers. Some of course, have no known grave, only an Irish memorial, like Lieutenant Thomas Rice Henn, from County Clare. His marble inscription in St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin relates his fall: 'Having led into action a detachment of the Bombay Sappers and Miners – the last of all the troops to leave the line of battle and of whom, save eight, were either killed or wounded – he perished gloriously on the fatal field of Maiwand in Afghanistan July 27 1880 in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of his age'. This places Lieutenant Henn in the disastrous second Afghan War of 1879/80. The book has a useful index to military memorials in Ireland and is recommended reading for anyone with Irish connections to the Raj. (RLJ)

2004 Published by Kabristan Archives, 19 Foxleigh Grove, Wem SY4 5BS. ISBN 0 9548979 0 0. £18 plus £1.50 postage UK (£2.50 Europe, £5.00 abroad seairmail, £7.00 airmail) pp330

## **Tracing Little by Lyttle: From Armagh, Ireland to Bengal, India** Jeremy Beaty

As the author reminds us, genealogy is now the second most popular subject on the internet, and the huge explosion over the past decade of family websites and archival holdings has inspired many to trace their ancestors. Few, one suspects, will go about it as meticulously as Jeremy Beaty. He caught the bug only recently, in 2001, and then 'my genealogy genes broke free with a passion that was surprising. My search for family rapidly accelerated with intensive and proactive research in England and Ireland as I caught up on family history of 200 years past...' Although this book is the story of the Little/Lyttle family (the name was changed in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century), it is also full of practical advice for people starting on a similar quest. At the outset, the author and his relatives sat down and pooled the few 'facts' they had about their grandfather, William John Lyttle. Of these, it later turned out, only fifty per cent were accurate, and this is the first lesson - that family folklore can be both helpful, and misleading. The excitement as the author embarked on research at the India Office Library in London, is infectious, as 'with chills running down my spine and hands shaking, I held the original Army Cadet papers of Francis Beaty, my great-great-grandfather' dated 1820.

The chapter about 'Creating a Genealogy Infrastructure' sounds scary to the amateur, but is in fact a useful list of relevant websites, electronic mailing lists, societies (including BACSA) and names, addresses, phone numbers and websites of a few key institutions. It explains the common acronym 'LDS' that crops up in all such research (it is the largest collection of genealogical records in the world, those of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints), which can be viewed at Family History Centres. By Chapter 10 the author has established the Indian connection and found that the Little/Lyttle family had spent ninety-three years in the subcontinent as 'hard working solid citizens who worked for every penny they earned'. Andrew Little, who enlisted as a private in an Irish regiment serving in India, worked his way up to become an honorary lieutenant, and died in Dehra Dun at the good age of eighty-seven, in 1926. There is remarkably detailed research here, with clear family trees, evocative photographs and learned notes covering topics from the Lawrence Military Asylum at Sanawar to Freemasonry. An interesting and useful book which is recommended. (RLJ)

2004 Published by the author at 2409 Lionheart Crescent, Mississauga, Ontario L5K 1S4, Canada. <jbt@sympatico.ca> ISBN 0 9735571 0 9. £17.50 plus £8.35 airmail postage or £5.75 seairmail postage pp142

**Haunting India: A collection of short fiction, poems, travel tales and memoirs** Margaret Deefholts

The author of this fascinating book is a well-known Anglo-Indian writer (nee Penn-Anthony) now living in British Columbia, Canada. The book is a delightful mixture of fiction and fact and Margaret Deefholts must also be an actress. She enjoys role-playing and writes in the first person from time to time in various guises, as well as recounting her true forays into the Indian cities of her past. I received a surprising jolt when I saw that she had reproduced my old school song, entitled 'Old Walls'. Under the title were the words 'attributed to Mount Hermon School.' I can assure her that this was indeed the old school song of Mount Hermon School, Darjeeling, and anyone who doubts that will have to deal with me!

The book is accompanied by several black and white photographs of scenes from her childhood, including a chapter entitled 'Railway Life in Anglo-India'. The Indian railways were the preserve of the Anglo-Indian community, thanks to Viceroy Dalhousie, and there is a wealth of information to be had regarding life in an Indian railway community. She also chases ghosts in Bombay and Calcutta - an account of her return to those cities with her Canadian children - and her final chapter deals with her nostalgia for India and her roots, which vie with her current life as a Canadian citizen. But as she says *Haunting India* is a tribute to the land of my birth... India was a cherished part of my childhood and youth; Canada has brought me to maturity. India was our family's inheritance; Canada offers us the gift of the future.'

I am left with this burning question: What has happened to the Anglo-Indians who 'stayed on' after Indian Independence? A good subject for an enquiring mind? Margaret...? (HC)

2003 CTR Books. UK Distributor Jean Chambers, Solent Breezes, Warsash, Southampton Hants SO31 9HG. Please make cheques payable to 'Calcutta Tillajah Relief, Inc. ISBN 0 9754639 2 6. £12 including postage. pp239

**Voices on the Verandah: An anthology of Anglo-Indian Prose and Poetry** ed. Margaret Deefholts & Sylvia Staub

This fascinating book is a 'must-read' for anyone who has ever visited, let alone lived, in India for any length of time. To an 'old koi-hai' like myself, it has poignancy all of its own, and it brings back many memories. As a school girl in a Himalayan hill boarding-school during World War Two, I numbered many

Anglo-Indian boys and girls amongst my friends, and later on, in my late teens and early twenties, I worked as well as socialised with them as an adult. (The term Anglo-Indian in this context refers to people of mixed race and not to the British of the 19th century and earlier who dubbed themselves 'Anglo-Indian'.)

Making up the (true) Anglo-Indian community are some of the most highly educated and sensitive people one could ever wish to meet, and they were often treated by a few of the archetypal, 'pukkah' Brits living in pre-Independent India with casual condescension and careless cruelty. But the Voices one hears on this Verandah are never raised in protest at this treatment, and there is no 'whingeing' in that direction. Most contributors, whether writing poetry or prose, paint a vivid picture of Anglo-Indian life in those far-off days, both at home and at work, as well as revealing the progress of those Anglo-Indians who left for the United Kingdom, the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, after Indian Independence.

The book came about as a result of an international Anglo-Indian Literary Competition held in 2003, and features the work of both well-known and new writers on India, Anglo-Indian and British. On the whole, members of the Anglo-Indian community come over as a group of highly-intelligent, cheerful and fun-loving people given to looking on the positive side of life. To-day, those survivors of a bygone era have children and grandchildren of their own who have rarely heard any voices on an Indian verandah and know very little of their ancestry. It is anthologies such as this which serve to remind us all so vividly of those 'old Indian summers' and the people who lived through them. (HC)

2004 CTR Books. UK Distributor Jean Chambers, Solent Breezes, Warsash, Southampton Hants SO31 9HG. Please make cheques payable to 'Calcutta Tillajah Relief, Inc. ISBN 0 9754639 0 X. £12 including postage. pp238

**Nine Months in Calcutta** David O'Regan

This is an unusual first novel and although the disclaimer states that it is a work of fiction, there is clearly a similarity between the hero, Clive, and the author. Both are chartered accountants, and both are martial arts experts, an intriguing mix anywhere, but doubly so in Calcutta, which is strange enough anyway to the first-time visitor. Clive, the newcomer, on a final holiday here before reluctantly joining the family business in England, is immediately introduced to some stock characters. But they are well drawn, including the foppish, wealthy Kumar, one of the 'brown Englishmen' who quickly becomes far less English

after Clive has an explicit sexual encounter with his sister. The unsavoury and aggressive Europeans, some of them 'charity groupies' hang around getting drunk and talking about capitalist oppression. Only one, Janet, points out that 'There are homeless people everywhere, all over Europe. There's no need to come to India and dress up in saris and eat curried fish, and stay in rooms costing fifty rupees a night, to do something worthwhile.' Arun, who runs a martial arts club in the rundown 'Banerjee Community Centre' encourages Clive to take up his neglected karate training again, and there are lengthy descriptions of fights and the philosophies behind the different schools, including *pahalwani*, or Indian wrestling. This is really more information than the average reader probably needs about the martial arts in India and it does slow down the narrative.

The second half of the book is stronger, and Clive's involvement with the chaste Loretta de Silva and her creepy father, the self-styled Bishop Paul, with his 'North Calcutta Evangelical Church', fundamentalist beard, and pseudo-American accent is particularly well done. O'Regan describes the de Silva family, on the wilder shores of Indian Christianity, without being patronising or sentimental, something that more sophisticated writers seem unable to do. This is an honest account of aspects of Calcutta life that the average tourist won't get to see and although the writing is at times naïve, and indeed the story shocking in parts, I felt sorry when I reached the end of this book. Recommended. (RLJ)

2004 Distinctly India Ltd, PO Box 361, Witney Oxfordshire OX28 5WZ <oregandavid@yahoo.co.uk> ISBN 0 9548700 0 X £11 including postage to BACSA members only. £13.50 including postage for non-members pp217

### **The Cross over Coromandel: A Brief History of St George's Cathedral, Chennai** FVN Paul

This is a well-produced booklet about the handsome church on Choultry Plain, Madras, that was opened for worship in 1815. Twenty years later the Directors of the East India Company sanctioned a new diocese for the expanding city. Daniel Corrie was appointed the first Anglican Bishop and the church became St George's Cathedral. In architectural terms it is a bit of a mongrel, - the pillared façade is a near copy of St Martin's in the Fields, while the steeple is closely based on that of St Giles in the Fields, both London churches. Nonetheless, this eclecticism works surprisingly well, and it is a much loved, and more importantly, a much used building.

The author, Francis Paul, Senior Trustee, has struck the right balance between the cathedral's history and its present day usage. Although a large chunk of records from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century have gone missing, Francis Paul has unearthed much of interest, including the fact that for the first ten years of its life, the cathedral had no lighting at all, and even more uncomfortably, no punkahs for the first thirty years. Pews could be 'rented' and an early Governor of Madras paid the then hefty sum of Rs75 per quarter for eleven seats for his family and friends. It is surprising to learn, given the ongoing debate over the role of Christian missionaries during the British Raj, that Indians were only admitted as members of the cathedral in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The cathedral boasts some extraordinarily fine sculpture, illustrated here in colour, including Bishop Corrie teaching a little Brahman boy, and the revered Bishop Reginald Heber with two Indian children. Gifts were lavished on the cathedral too, a fine marble font, a peal of eight bells, an altar table, and a patten and chalice of gold, adorned with diamonds which is still used for Holy Communion today. At Independence in 1947, four churches, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational, came together to form the United Church of South India and the inaugural service and consecration of the new Bishops was held in the Cathedral. Lucidly written and informative, this is a very superior guide book which is warmly recommended. No price is given, but Francis Paul suggests that a minimum donation of £2.00 or Rs100, payable to 'St George's Cathedral Trust', be made to the address below. British Postal Orders are the most acceptable method of payment. (Alternatively, copies can be purchased from Theon Wilkinson, Publications Officer, for £2 plus 50 pence postage.) (RLJ)

2004 Published by the author, 739, Anna Nagar Western Extension, Chennai 600 101 India. No ISBN. pp78

### **Books by non-members that will interest readers.**

**Simon Winchester's Calcutta** Simon & Rupert Winchester

A number of publications in 1994 marked the tercentenary of Calcutta's founding by Job Charnock, and a decade later two writers, father and son, have compiled this anthology, which brings together twenty-two pieces on the city. A good balance has been struck between Indian and non-Indian writers, and between historical accounts and contemporary authors. Among the former is an extract from a BACSA publication of 1990 *The Calcutta of Begum Johnson* by the late Ivor Edwards-Stuart, and BACSA member William Dalrymple

contributes pieces from two of his recent books. The foremost Presidency city of the East India Company, the former capital of British India, and the home of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bengal Renaissance is bound to be a place of continual fascination both for the historian and the present-day visitor too. Unfortunately it has almost slipped off the map for the foreign tourist, which is a great shame, and this has been largely brought about by a very bad press. Geoffrey Moorhouse's 1971 book, simply entitled *Calcutta*, related all that was horrible about the 'city of dreadful night' although more than thirty years later we should have moved on from his honest, but dismal, portrait. Of course Calcutta (now Indianised as Kolkata), does have immense problems, partly brought about by its huge number of poor refugees from Bangladesh, numbered in their millions. It is to the city's credit that it has not only absorbed this gigantic influx but is also actively seeking to ameliorate their wretched conditions. But to see Calcutta *only* as a place of grinding poverty is to do a huge injustice to its many other inhabitants who lead useful, fruitful lives, and to the sparkling intellect of the native Bengali.

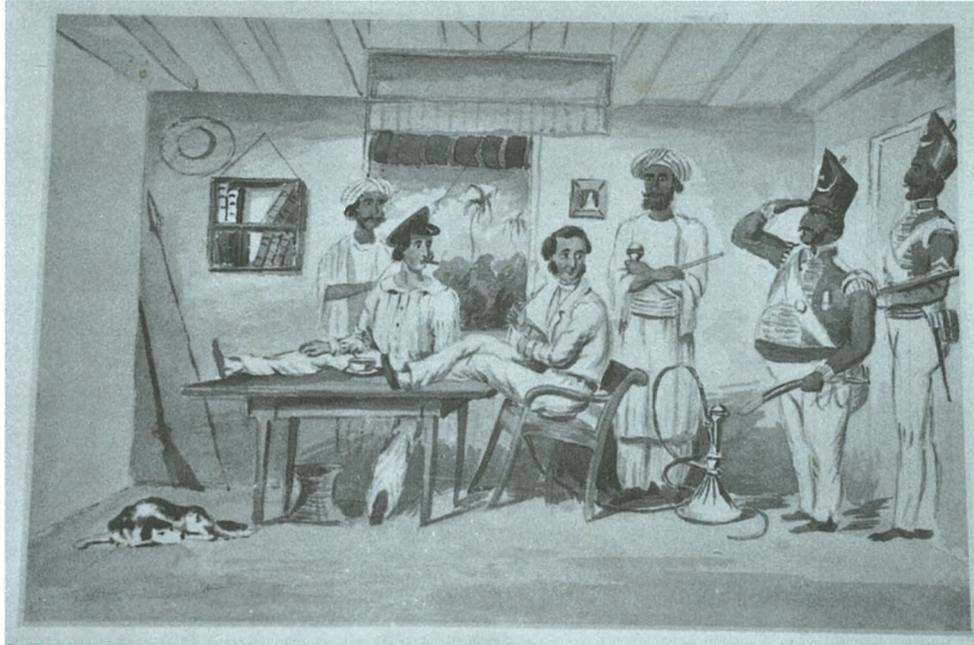
It is therefore with dismay that we read the introductions to this anthology by Simon Winchester and his son Rupert Winchester who describe it as 'a truly infernal city' and 'this dreadful, dreadful town'. All right, there are some caveats - Calcutta has a 'mythic quality' and it 'manages to delight and enthrall those who are stalwart enough to stay and brave enough to make an effort to look and to see', write the Winchesters, but the ultimate message is that this is a tough city. And its one that Simon Winchester hasn't sussed out. He tells us that he decided one day to visit Fort William, now the Indian Army's Eastern Command, and obviously a highly sensitive military area, equivalent in British terms to the MOD headquarters or the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst. So what does he do? Not seeks permission to go in as an interested journalist, but gets his Muslim driver to cruise around until he finds a ladder left against one of the Fort's walls by a construction firm, shins up it, and jumps down inside. He is eventually spotted by a sentry, and instead of being arrested, or shot, as he would have been had he tried the same trick in Britain, is escorted to the garrison commander, who offers him tea and a learned discussion on the history of Bengal. So in the end, it's all a jolly jape, something 'wonderfully symbolic about the city...Calcutta in a nutshell' but as long as we continue to see Calcutta only as an entertainment, or a horror film put on for the enterprising British traveller, we will never regain the respect we once earned in the former 'City of Palaces'. Skip the introductions and enjoy the extracts. (RLJ)

2004 Lonely Planet Publications ISBN 1 74059 587 4 £7.99 pp302

## Notes to Members

1. When writing to a BACSA officer and expecting a reply, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.
2. If wishing to contact a fellow-member whose address is not known to you, send the letter c/o Hon Secretary who will forward it unopened.
3. If planning any survey of cemetery MIs, either in this country or overseas, please check with the appropriate Area Representative or the Hon Secretary to find out if it has already been recorded. This is not to discourage the reporting of the occasional MI noticed, which is always worth doing, but to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

**\*Books from India:** where prices are given in rupees, these books can be obtained from Mr Ram Advani, Bookseller, Mayfair Buildings, Hazratganj PO Box 154, Lucknow 226001, UP, India. Mr Advani will invoice BACSA members in sterling, adding £3.00 for registered airmail for a slim hardback, and £2.00 for a slim paperback. Sterling cheques should be made payable to Ram Advani. Catalogues and price lists will be sent on request.  
Email: [radvani@sancharnet.in](mailto:radvani@sancharnet.in)



*Tom Ratteton receiving the morning report of the Fat Lord and the Red Lion (see page 107)*