



# CHOWKIDAR

Volume 5 Number 1 Spring 1988

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AIMS OF BACSA

This 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 a thousand, drawn from a wide circle of interest - Government; Churches; Services; Business; Museums; Historical and Genealogical Societies, etc. More members are needed to support the rapidly expanding activities of the Association - the setting up of local Branches in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Ceylon, Malaysia etc., the building up of a Record file in the India Office Library and Records; and many other projects for the preservation of historical and architectural monuments.

The annual subscription rate is £2 with an enrolment fee of £8. There are special rates for joint membership (husband and wife), for life membership and for associate membership. Full details obtainable from the Secretary.

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AN AMERICAN IN LUCKNOW

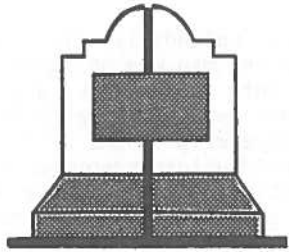
In the year that sees Australia's bicentenary splendidly celebrated, it is fitting that tribute should be paid to the man who designed its capital, Canberra. But how does BACSA come into the picture, why Lucknow, and who was the American? Walter Birley Griffin was born in Chicago in 1876. He was a pupil of Frank Lloyd Wright, the brilliant architect whose stream-lined 'Modern Movement' buildings epitomise the 30s style. In 1912 Griffin won a competition to design the proposed new city of Canberra. His ideas were grandiose, covering twenty-five square miles of land with monumental buildings. But disputes arose and he was sacked in 1920, with his scheme only half realised. Griffin and his architect wife Marion were not even invited to the official opening of the capital. A disappointed man, he and Marion embraced an 'alternative' life style, advocating ideas which have only recently found some favour. He was an environmentalist, long before the term became acceptable. Marion designed and wore her own clothes, Walter lived on nuts and vegetables. They were both followers of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, and committed 'anthroposophists', with a vague humanistic creed.

Turning their backs on an Australian society that had rejected them, the couple went to Lucknow in 1935, and during two short years there Griffin designed two large houses and the Pioneer Press offices, using many of the ideas he had learnt from his teacher, Lloyd Wright. Sadly Griffin died from peritonitis, caused by a perforated gall-bladder on 11 February 1937. He was buried at Nishatganj Cemetery, Lucknow. Several years ago a BACSA member and fellow architect, Dr. Monty Foyle, tried to find his tomb but was unsuccessful. Recently a Canberra writer Graeme Westlake, researching in India, thought he too had drawn a blank. Then one evening he called on the Reverend S. Masih, responsible for the cemetery, who got out the old records and found that Griffin was buried in Plot 11, No. 163.

It was obvious why the grave had remained undiscovered. It was merely a mass of tangled grass, with a number on it, with no stone or marker. Mr. Westlake speculates that possibly Griffin's widow left India so quickly after her husband's death that there was no time to erect a plaque, or that perhaps the couple's beliefs precluded them from planning a permanent memorial. But with the help of the Australian-American Association a stone has now been designed by the Institute of Architects and the assistance of the Lucknow Christian Burial Board is being sought for its erection at Nishatganj. The wording reads simply - 'In memory of Walter Birley Griffin/born Chicago USA 24-11-1876/Died 11-2-1937' and is reproduced on the following page. Its simple outline recalls that of Mughal architecture, rather than the style in which Griffin built. But it is an appropriate tribute to the 'lost' architect, whose work influenced so much of modern Lucknow.

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left: the proposed Griffin memorial designed for Nishatganj, Lucknow.

#### MAIL BOX

About 1821 a young English woman living in Lucknow attracted the attention of Nawab Ghazi-ud-din Haider. She was Mary Short, sister of Joseph, a doctor at Cawnpore. Mary became a Muslim, taking the name Murium and was made the Nawab's second wife, becoming a queen in the royal household of Oudh. After her husband's death in 1827, she re-converted to Catholicism and left specific instructions with Joseph that he should arrange for her burial in the Catholic cemetery of Kaiserbagh. Murium's closing years were sad - dying of consumption she pleaded with the new Nawab and the East India Company to be allowed to leave Lucknow. (The long correspondence is today at the India Office Library & Records.) By the time permission was granted in 1850 she was dead. Her re-conversion had probably alienated her from the Oudh household and meant she could not share her husband's tomb of Shah Najaf.

In 1986 the great grandson of Dr. Short, Dr. L.S. Speirs visited Lucknow with his wife Rachel and found Murium Begum's tomb in Kaiserbagh. Though there is now no longer an inscription, he compared it carefully with a family photograph of the 1930s and notes sadly that then the tomb, with its dome and pillars, was in beautiful condition in a well-kept cemetery. Now it is falling to pieces, with bits of sacking hung round the pillars and probably used by the chowkidar as a 'shed'. Because the tomb is under the care of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lucknow, the Speirs are trying through BACSA, to get it restored. They have been greatly helped already by Father Pinto and the Secretary to the Bishop in Lucknow. While the Shah Najaf is splendidly maintained, it is nevertheless sad that the Nawab's second wife lies in such dilapidated surroundings in the heart of the city. (see photograph on page 11).

Again in Lucknow, we learn that two years ago a BACSA member Lieutenant Colonel C.R.D. Gray visited the city and was told the story of an Indian heroine of 1858, by his host Major General Habibullah. Standing at the Sikanderabagh site, where some of the fiercest fighting took place during the recapture of the city, is a large peepul tree and beneath it a rather crude bust of a woman, wearing a sort of 'military sari'. An inscription on the base, in Hindi and English

records that a group of Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders in the garden enclosure was being picked off by a hidden sniper. An officer noticed that the fire was coming from above, and peering into the upper branches of that same peepul, spotted a movement and ordered one of his men, a Sergeant, to shoot. This he did and the body fell to the ground, revealing that it was the corpse of a woman. This stirring story was retold and embellished in the History of the 93rd Sutherland Highlanders, quoting Lieutenant Colonel Gordon-Alexander who was present at the Sikanderabagh and published his memoirs in 1898. But a close reading of Gordon-Alexander's book shows that a crucial piece of information had been omitted from the story. The dead woman was not Indian, but a negress from Africa. It is known that Wajid Ali Shah, the last Nawab of Oudh, whose deposition by the Company was one cause of the up-rising of 1857, employed both men and women from the east coast of Africa. Some may have voluntarily travelled to India and have been attracted up country by the prospect of work, but the majority were brought in as slaves by Arab traders.

The Nawab was proud of his troop of 'amazon negresses' who would accompany him, dressed in men's costumes, and riding on horseback, as part of his retinue. Gordon-Alexander writes of the few African women among the defenders of Sikanderabagh. 'These amazons having no religious prejudices against the use of greased cartridges, whether of "pigs" or other animal fat, although doubtless professional Muhammadans, were armed with rifles, while the Hindu and Muhammadan East Indian rebels were all armed with muskets; they fought like wild cats and it was not till after they were killed that their sex was even suspected'. Lieutenant Colonel Gray has requested a photograph of the bust commemorating the unknown woman who died in a foreign land, fighting a battle that was not hers. BACSA is trying to arrange this, but the story that has emerged is very different from that originally told, and may cause some surprise in Lucknow.

With the proposed Festival of France in India more attention is being focussed on the contribution of French adventurers of the eighteenth century to Indian Courts. A newspaper cutting recently sent in tells the story of one such man, Michel Joachim Marie Raymond, born in 1755. Following his father's footsteps, Raymond came to Pondicherry to establish a trading concern. But he soon abandoned this idea to enter the service of Hyder Ali. Subsequently he joined the French force under the Marquis de Bussy, one of France's most celebrated soldiers, in 1783. On Bussy's death two years later Raymond, who held the rank of Captain, succeeded to the command of the corps and joined the service of the Nizam of Hyderabad. The latter bestowed many titles on him, including that of 'Muthawar-ul-Mulk', but Raymond died suddenly on 25 March 1798 at the peak of his power. It is said he possessed more influence at the Nizam's Court than the British Resident and he had 15,000 well disciplined troops under his command. Raymond was buried on a small hillock near Hyderabad, called Myseram Tekkedy, which is thought by some to be an Indian corruption of his name 'Monsieur Raymond'. His tomb is marked by a granite obelisk about

7 metres high, standing in the middle of an oblong platform. There is now no inscription on the obelisk, though the marks on all four sides show where plaques were once inserted. In front of the monument stands a small flat roofed building supported by twenty-eight pillars forming a kind of 'Grecian temple'. It was here that lamps and other articles were stored, which used to decorate the tomb on special occasions. Every year, on the anniversary of Raymond's death, before 1947, the tomb and platform were brilliantly illuminated and a grand fair held during the day, attended by thousands. Salutes were fired by the irregular troops, many of whom were descendants of Raymond's famous 15,000. Hours would be spent feasting at the tomb and recounting the stories of his greatness and kindness. He passed into legend as 'Musa Ram' to the Hindus and 'Musa Rahim' to the Muslims.

On a smaller mound nearby there is a similar monument believed to be the tomb of his horse, and there is also the grave of a married woman, Anne Jane Jenkins who died in childbirth on 26 November 1809, though what connection, if any, she had with Raymond, is not made clear. Raymond's tomb became a Protected Monument of the Archaeological Survey of India in 1952 and is well looked after and excellently maintained, being periodically repaired. Even today, the 25th of March each year is celebrated, though not on the former lavish scale, but it is still a tribute to a remarkable man who rose to power through his own abilities and left an enduring memory in the descendants of those whom he served and cared for.

The churchyard at Pussellawa in Sri Lanka contains three tiny graves that tell a tragic story in their inscriptions. They mark the resting places of Alice Daniel, Georgina Daniel and their brother Lindsay Daniel. The two little girls, aged four years and one year, nine months respectively, both died on 14 September 1866 and Lindsay died the next day. They were the nieces and nephew of Admiral 'Jackie' Fisher, then a young naval officer of twenty-five. The children's father, L.W. Daniel was a planter, with a business in Colombo, and their mother Alice, had decided to take the family from Kandy to Pussellawa for a holiday in a cooler climate. After an eleven-hour coach journey, the family settled in well, and five days later, the children, who had all been suffering from boils had 'picked up strength and health most rapidly'. Then came the mystery of the poisonous plant that was to kill them within forty-eight hours.

The grief-stricken father wrote home: 'A Mrs. Corbet brought a bundle of vegetables amongst which was something that looked exactly like young rhubarb. This was made for our dinner, but the eldest child asked for pudding and this being the only sweet ready, she ate nearly a plateful and my Georgie only about two teaspoonsful'. The two little girls were taken violently ill with symptoms that suggested cholera. Two doctors were summoned, and despite their frantic efforts, the children expired. The vegetables were at first blamed, and it was supposed that seeds of a plant called 'Viper's grass' might have got into the rhubarb tart, but later accounts point to a sudden

cholera attack as the real reason. Only the Daniel's fourth child survived, the baby Lucy, who was too young to partake of the fatal dish. A photograph of the simple tomb in the Pussellawa cemetery appears on page 11.

The sad story of the Daniel family was contributed by BACSA Chairman Michael Stokes, who has also sent in the following item: In the English Church at Lisbon are a window and a plaque which tell of a nineteenth century tragedy. They commemorate the deaths of 113 passengers, officers and crew of the India-bound SS Roumania, which was wrecked at the mouth of the Arelho River, near Peniche, some fifty miles north of Lisbon, on 28 October 1892. The Roumania was sailing from Liverpool to Bombay when it was driven on to rocks by a storm. Among the passengers were army officers (whose units included the Bombay Light Infantry, the 73rd Royal Highlanders, and the Indian Staff Corps), missionaries, business people, wives and a number of children, together with four unnamed ayahs. Five members of one family, the Boutflowers from Northumberland, were among the victims. The two passengers among the nine survivors were Captain G.F.D. Hamilton of the Bengal Staff Corps, who lost his wife and a Lieutenant R.P.S. Rooke. Two of the victims, Mr. A.H. Roper, a tea merchant from Bombay and one of the Boutflower children, were buried at Peniche on 1 November, after a service conducted by the Bishop of Gibraltar, the Right Reverend Dr. Sandford, who had himself lost a nephew and a niece by marriage in the disaster. The plaque, which lists sixty-two of those who died - the remainder being presumably Indian seamen - is a poignant reminder of the dangers, even at that comparatively recent date, of the sea passage to India.

#### THE HEARSEY FAMILY GRAVES

European memorials in India, even recent ones, are often in such a poor condition that the casual visitor passes them by with sadness that so little time elapses between interment and neglect. It is therefore all the more satisfying that Chowkidar can report on a small family cemetery at Lakhimpur Kheri, ninety miles north of Lucknow, which is in pristine condition. Containing graves of two of the great Anglo-Indian families, the Gardners and the Hearseys, the majority of stones date from the latter half of the nineteenth century. The first Hearsey with an Indian connection was Andrew Wilson, who entered the Company's Service in 1765 and had a successful military career, at one time serving under Sir Eyre Coote in southern India against Hyder Ali. Another branch of the same family was represented by Captain H.P. Hearsey, who was with Lord Lake at Agra and Delhi, when the latter was taken, and who later explored Chinese Tartary. It was this romantic Captain who married a Princess of Cambay, sister of Colonel Gardner's wife, and it is H.P. Hearsey's descendants who settled at Lakhimpur Kheri on land inherited by them through their female Indian relatives. Eva Georgina is buried here. She was the daughter of Lieutenant General J.B. Hearsey who served with honour during the 1857 up-rising. Born in Barrackpore on 12 October 1860,

she died at the family estate on 27 April 1879. Did she ever visit England, one wonders, during her short life? An adjoining slab commemorates George Arthur Canning Hearsey, Taluqdar of Palia Estate, born 24 July 1884 and died some time during the 1950s. A chance encounter by Chowkidar's Editor with a young relative of the family, has led to the inclusion in BACSA's archives of a splendid set of photographs. Emily Anderson is a professional photographer and during a recent visit to Uttar Pradesh she visited the private cemetery with its neatly trimmed grass and gleaming white stone to record a part of her own, and India's past. (See illustration on page 10).

#### WAR WIDOWS IN INDIA

Last October a party of twenty-eight widows and relatives who had lost family members in India during the second World War, paid a journey of remembrance to India to visit Commonwealth War Graves in Delhi, Madras, Calcutta and Kārkee, near Poona. Some of the group then travelled on to Burma. For the majority it was the first time they had been to the sub-continent. The trip was made possible by new legislation brought in after the Falklands War, when it was felt that the British Government should sponsor such visits for bereaved relatives, and it was administered by the Royal British Legion and the Ex-Servicemen's Association. The average age of the group was seventy-five years, and they were accompanied by a doctor. Many of the widows were very young women at the times of their husbands' deaths. Not all were killed in action. Some died from heat-stroke, malaria or small pox. Two were shot by a British deserter in Lucknow and others died after the end of the war.

For the widows, most of whom never re-married, it was the dream of a lifetime to be able to place wreaths on the graves in the beautifully maintained Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries. There were mingled feelings of bitterness and regret, but others expressed gratitude for the serenity of their relatives' last resting places. Mrs. Jim Richardson recalled that her husband was a very keen photographer and sent her 'lots of beautiful snaps of India. Now that I have seen the place', she said 'I recognise what he tried to show us'. Mr. D. Smith, a member of the group who lost his twin brother during the war, was overcome with emotion on visiting his grave. 'I had thought I had put his loss behind me and would not be upset by the sight. But visiting it I relived the whole tragedy' he said with tears in his eyes. This will probably be the first and last occasion for such a visit, but its importance was marked by extensive coverage in both Indian and British newspapers. While it is well-known that the Commonwealth War Graves are well-maintained, what is not generally known is that the headstones were centrally manufactured by the War Graves Commission in France, and replacements for headstones, eroded by the effects of the local climate, are being despatched, even to this day by the Commission from there. This ensures symmetry of all the stones, in size, shape and texture.

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#### CAN YOU HELP?

Scottish connections with India are many and well documented, but what happened to those 'nabobs' who survived the rigours of foreign service and returned home as rich men? A fascinating piece of research has been carried out by Margaret Tait from St. Andrews, Fife, which throws some light on these Scots 'lords'. She has carefully traced the inhabitants of George Square, Edinburgh, between 1766 - 1866 and was struck by the number of nabobs who settled in the fine Georgian buildings there. Of the sixty dwellings in the Square, no less than twenty-two housed people with Indian connections. There was Captain Archibald Swinton, surgeon who served with Clive and was wounded at the battle of Arcot; Colonel Sir John Cumming, who commanded the Company's troops in the service of the Nawab Wazir of Oudh; and Lieutenant Colonel Robert Bruce, of second Rohilla War fame. But the person who has prompted her query is Captain William Loraine of the East India Company Bombay Marine, who lived at No. 52.

He bought his house in 1800 and 'decorated the interior regardless of cost - Italians were employed to paint fruits and floral decorations, which were still in evidence before 1914' and rediscovered under wallpaper when the house was bought by Edinburgh University. After Loraine's death in 1812, his lawyers had some difficulty in seeing his only daughter Margaret inherited, as the Captain was illegitimate and such people then could own, but not assign property. Margaret lived there in state until her death in 1854, aged eighty-eight, then a nephew, Captain William Geddes of the 53rd Foot took over. Despite extensive research, our enquirer was not able to find out where William Loraine died, until she came across a reference in the Souvenir Chowkidar to his memorial at Silchar, Assam. Details of the plaque, which was removed from the old Anglican Church there are being sought, and it looks increasingly as though Loraine forsook his lovely painted rooms in Edinburgh for one more shake of the 'pagoda tree', which was to prove fatal. Any theories on his death would be welcomed. Incidentally, Margaret Tait surmises that Sir Walter Scott must have garnered materials for his Indian novel The Surgeon's Daughter by listening to the tales of the Scottish nabobs in the Square.

Most readers will be familiar with the charming 'Indian Love Lyrics' set to music by Amy Woodforde-Finden, which were so popular in the 1920s (and are well worth reviving). But how many people know that the author of the songs was 'Laurence Hope' a pseudonym of Adele Florence Nicolson? Adele was the wife of General Malcolm Hessels Nicolson, and she tragically committed suicide in 1904 in Madras, the same year that her husband died. Our correspondent, John Jealous of Yorkshire is writing a biography of the poet, who was born in 1865, and has several queries. The Nicolsons were buried together in St. Mary's Cemetery, Madras. Does the grave still exist, and could a photograph be obtained? Also, does Dunmore House, Teynenpett, Madras still stand and could any BACSA member direct Mr. Jealous towards letters or diaries of this gifted woman? As Thomas Hardy wrote in

her obituary: 'The author was still in the early noon of her life, vigour and beauty, and the tragic circumstances of her death seem but the impassioned closing notes of her impassioned effusions'.

BACSA member J.B. Reid from Middlesex has undertaken the happy task of re-writing his war-time diaries 'against the remote possibility that fifty years hence one of my grand-children may display a mild interest in my mundane doings in far off places'. One of the 'far off places' was Darjeeling in 1943, and Mr. Reid is trying to re-establish contact with Colin and Vivienne Wilkinson who lived 'above the shop' of Lloyd's Bank there. Colin had already been in India for twenty-three years when our correspondent met him. He was a great reader and a first class horseman, having ridden at the Tollygunge course. His wife was a delightful woman, daughter of a British stock-broker in Calcutta and a Norwegian mother, and who numbered the playwright Henrik Ibsen among her relatives. Though BACSA is 'primarily concerned with the dead' as Mr. Reid writes 'what fun if it provided a conduit to the living!' The Wilkinsons had a daughter named Karen Victoria Linda, and any information on the family, not seen since 1944 would be much appreciated. (Incidentally, they are not related to our Secretary.)

From Finland comes a query about Charles Bruce, founder of the Assam tea industry. Charles Dawson wants to know if there is any connection between his shipping of tea by the ships of the City Line of Glasgow and whether he was related to David Bruce who shipped jute from Calcutta to Dundee in his Dundee Clipper Line ships.

Cyril Walters from New South Wales has been trying to trace a member of the Hatton family for some time. An uncle of his, Stanley A. Hatton was an Engineer during the second World War and worked at the King George V Docks in Kidderpore between 1942-45. He then worked with the jute industry at Gauripore and it was here that he died in 1945/6 and was buried at the Lower Circular Road Cemetery there. Can anyone help with more specific details of his date of death and the present day state of his grave?

Mrs. B.D. Bramwell from Co. Tipperary is hoping to obtain information on her grandfather John or James Cannon, who, she is told, was Headmaster of Lucknow College. He died while quite a young man, and his three children, including Mrs. Bramwell's father then aged four, were brought to England by their mother in 1886, so presumably the father had died in 1885/6. It has not been possible to identify 'Lucknow College', possibly a short-lived institution, but old Lakhnavites may be able to throw some light on it.

Somewhere in Nagpore there is believed to be a plaque to the memory of Brigadier Henry Prior who played an important part in the up-rising of 1857. It was due to his prompt action in 'cowering the mutinous and treacherous' and causing the arsenal 'not to be available to troops' coupled with his disarming of the native cavalry that prevented more serious trouble. Brigadier Prior was in the Madras Army and stationed

at Kamptee in command of a brigade. He did not die in India so the plaque must simply record his actions during 1857. Does it still exist, one wonders?

#### TRAGEDY AT SEA

Lieutenant General Stanley Menezes, who was recently elected an Honorary Member of BACSA in recognition of all he has done for us in India, tells us of a fascinating link which his family has with this country. His uncle, Roque E. de Mello, came to Britain from Karachi at the age of seventeen and took a law degree at Downing College, Cambridge. Because of the first World War he was forced to relinquish his ambition of joining the ICS and he entered Gray's Inn. In 1916, after qualifying as a barrister, he decided to return to India and in February he embarked on the SS Maloja. On 27 February the Maloja was torpedoed in the Channel by a German submarine and Poque de Mello was among the many who were drowned, his body being washed ashore in the Admiralty Dock at Dover.

On a recent visit to this country, General Menezes was able to locate the grave of his uncle, which is in St. James Cemetery, Dover, in a beautiful position above the town. He has sent us a copy of a memorial poem written by a great friend of his uncle, who was a fellow-student at Cambridge. The first stanza runs: "He is not here, He is arisen/Grieve not for him", the shining one replied;/ "This flesh was but his transitory prison/The cast-off garment of the glorified." The poem also reveals that although Mr. de Mello was wearing a life-belt at the time of the sinking, he took it off and gave it to a stranger, a fellow passenger, whose need he deemed to be greater than his own. A photograph of the headstone of the Dover grave is reproduced on page 10 and the verse on it reads: 'As a snow white lily/cut down in its bloom/he has been taken to his/eternal home'.

#### SPENCE'S HOTEL, CALCUTTA

A query in the last Chowkidar from Roy Hudson of Thailand about this hotel produced a positive deluge of information. Two correspondents took the trouble to send in photo-copies from John Barleycorn, Bahadur by Major Harry Hobbs, which gives the history of the hotel, and other readers added their own reminiscences. Spence's, which stood in Well-lesley Place was undoubtedly the oldest hotel in Asia, being founded by John Spence in 1830. It beat Shepherd's Hotel, Cairo by eleven years. John Spence had originally gone out to India from Paisley, in Scotland. His young wife Elizabeth, died only three years after the hotel was set up, and she is recorded in the Bengal Obituary. Staying at Spence's was by no means cheap, even given the relative value of the rupee in the early 1830s. Ground floor rooms were Rs.250, first and second floors Rs.350 per month. This included 'board, except wine, and every other expense, exclusive of a gratuity of a few rupees (5 are quite enough) to divide among the servants'. The hotel dhobi charged Rs.3 per hundred for gentlemen's clothes, but Rs.4-6 per hundred for ladies.





Left: one of the beautifully maintained Hearsey tombs at Lakhimpur Kheri (see page 5)

Below: the Dover tomb of Roque de Mello, drowned at sea while on his way home to India. (see page 9)



Above: a 1930s view of the domed tomb of Murium Begum, Kaiserbagh, Lucknow, now sadly dilapidated. (see story on page 2)

Right: the three Daniel children are buried beneath this cross at Pussellawa, Sri Lanka. (see page 4)



The sight of fresh fruit, fish, meat and eggs together on a snow-white table cloth was one of the most welcome sights after months of long journeying on ships' fare, though oddly enough, good milk was difficult to obtain until well into the 1890s. But it was the British bar-maids of Calcutta that seem to have left the most lasting impression on travellers. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 made it comparatively easy for them to travel out, and they were engaged on a six-monthly basis. Many found husbands, all were in demand. 'The girls were something of social lionesses in their own circle, ruling over a little kingdom of their own'. It was common for them to receive proposals over the bar, after four pegs. A pretty Jewish lady received seven serious offers on her first night at the Adelphi Hotel together with seven pieces of jewellery, which the wise woman sold the next day. The bar-maids developed a strong line in repartee and 'put downs' towards their would-be suitors. One bumptious young man loftily informed a bar-maid that he had 'a handle to his name'. 'So have other things that are kept under the bed' was her rejoinder!

But back to Spence's, and it was here that the first passenger lift in Calcutta was installed, where women guests would be 'wound-up by a coolie' (it took ten minutes to the top floor). Their husbands lit cheroots and waited patiently for them to appear, as no men then used the lift for fear of being classed effeminate. By the 1930s the hotel seemed rather run-down, according to James Murray, a BACSA member who found 'a very wobbly iron bedstead with a large mosquito net over it, and a hard mattress and pillow. The lavatory and bathroom we all shared was at the end of the passage'. But he remembers the proprietor's pickled onions to this day, which were put in large jars with vinegar, spices and chili and left on the roof for several days before being brought to the bar.

Spence's, like Firpo's, has long closed its doors. D.E. Lloyd Jones of London has a sad little post-script to the latter. In 1972 he visited it with his wife to whom he wished to show it as he had often talked of it from Army days during the second World War. 'I found downstairs a darkened Indian Restaurant. Gone the ice-cream parlour and its marble-topped tables. The manager assured me that, although partitioned off, the grand staircases and the huge dining room on the first floor and the terraces where one could get drinks under an awning, were all there though empty and unused. He offered to take me up but I thought it would be too dismal to contemplate'. I wonder if any readers have photographs of it during its heyday?

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This issue of Chowkidar marks the first number of Volume 5, with a different coloured cover. Basil LaBouchardiere has kindly prepared an Index to Volume 4, as he has done for previous volumes, and it will be ready before the end of the year. Bound volumes with the Index will be available from the BACSA Secretary, Theon Wilkinson, at a cost of £2.50 plus 50 pence for postage and packing.

BACSA BOOKS (books by BACSA authors)

#### Viceroy's Agent Charles Chenevix Trench

This is not an easy book to review: it is risky to skip any pages, lest one misses some illuminating passage, or some spicy anecdote. It is fascinating, enchanting, especially to someone who served in the contrasting settled plains districts and in the hilly aboriginal areas of Bihar in north east India. It is a very timely book, for the author knew many of the actors in it, and the stage set, a set which perished totally in 1947. Soon it will be just history, like the times of Malcolm and Metcalfe and Elphinstone, of whom the characters here were the heirs. But in these pages the set and the cast come very much alive, largely because the author has been skilful or lucky enough, or both, to amass a huge number of personal reminiscences and anecdotes penned by political agents - and their wives and daughters. They parade before us, Barnes (murdered later), Bazalgette, Corfield, Cotton, Cunningham, Gould, K.P.S. Menon, Parsons, Trevelyan and many more. We are given a vivid picture of the set, the controlled anarchy on the Frontier, a system evolved over many decades. The intricacies of the relations with the north western peoples unfold, different for each tribe, Mohmand, Pathan, Afridi, Waziri, Mahsud and Baluchi. The story unfolds through the 20s and 30s, of adventures, raids and punitive counter-raids, jirgas to haggle about fines for tribal misdoings, angry confrontations with armed tribesmen dissipated by a joke (likely, coarse) made by the political agent, and so on.

By contrast idyllic pictures are painted of some tranquil flower-strewn valley in the high mountains where agents might be posted. But even there they could face complications; Jack Bazalgette (brother of Reggie, murdered in an Orissa state), living at 7,000 feet, had to cover relations with thirty-one separate states and terrain ranging from 2,000 to 20,000 feet above sea-level. This could involve, for instance, removing a ruler who with a cash flow problem organised a burglary of his own state treasury to improve the flow. As a foil to the north west the author moves us on to the princely states. Some covered only a few square miles and a population measured in hundreds, while Hyderabad was huge with a population four times that of Norway. And what dramatis personae to deal with. The only quality never met with in a ruler seems to have been humility; all the others were there. Nobility, meanness, licentiousness, puritanism, high intelligence, weak-mindedness, madness and just plain bizarre behaviour; rogues and men of great integrity. One maharaja collecting Rolls-Royces as we might collect Toby jugs, at the other extreme the immensely wealthy Nizam of Hyderabad, so mean that he rationed his sons to one bar of soap and one towel (he himself scarcely ever bathed).

The Frontier and the states might be feast enough, but Chenevix Trench goes on to a sort of aerial tour of the imperial web beyond India's frontiers manned by the Indian Political Service. Kashgar in Central Asia, Aden, Bushire and the Gulf, Persia, and Afghanistan. Then we



return to the post-1930s India. To the reviewer, who was at the epicentre of the Congress rebellion in north India in 1942, the short account of the troubles at that time in the eastern states carries a truly authoritative ring. The story would not be complete without a reference to the centre of the spider's web in New Delhi and Simla and its able Political Secretaries, and the Viceroy with their very varied characters. It is however fairly clear that the author's heart was not really there, but in the 'crisp, clean, bracing air of the Frontier' to use K.P.S. Menon's words. One suspects that Chenevix Trench faithfully reflects the views of his colleagues in his admiration for 'that man of honour, Lord Wavell' and the castigation of his seemingly less honourable, opportunistic, 'naive and optimistic' successor Lord Mountbatten.

After so much enjoyment from the book, it might seem rather sour to refer to any deficiencies in it, but hardly fair not to do so. To set against the excellent index and glossary, and the considerable number of interesting photographs, the maps seem too few and too sketchy. And while one's attention is rapt for the first nineteen chapters, it flags somewhat in the next two, since although they deal with the period after 1939, they go over the same ground covered earlier. A slip of the pen brings Attlee's Labour Government to power in July 1947. However, the final chapter brings us to attention, with its witness to the last days with all their sadness which was not mitigated by the possible inevitability of the end. I remember a French colonial administrator telling me at Oxford in 1948 that there had been nothing inevitable about Indian Independence in our lifetime and that the French could not understand why the British had so tamely abandoned India, and the fulcrum it provided for British world wide power - an idiosyncratic view perhaps, but surely Chenevix Trench is right in saying that the termination in 1947 was far too abrupt and ill-prepared? This book is highly recommended. (RNL)

Jonathan Cape Ltd. 1987 £16.00

Spring Imperial Evelyn Hart

This book is an absolute delight. It is a novel, a love-story, which relates the fifty-year long romance between English born Carissa Thornton and Lance Gardner, a charismatic Anglo-Indian. The couple first meet in September 1938 when Lance was on leave from Calcutta. Though they fall deeply in love, family pressures lead to Carissa marrying a kind, but unsuitable British officer, Derek, from Christchurch Barracks. Sent to Quetta, Carissa meets Lance again, but events in war-time India mean the couple spend only a short time in the old Gardner palace of Chashma Shahi (Spring Imperial), near the Nepalese border. This is not the end of the story, however, which is revealed by Carissa's daughter from a series of letters and diaries. At times there are agonising lacunae when it seems Lance and Carissa will never meet again, but the story does have a happy conclusion. Even those who normally scorn 'romantic' novels will be struck by the meticulous attention to detail here. The author is

a BACSA member (who as Desirée Battye wrote The Fighting Ten) and who lived in Quetta during the war. She draws on her own experiences of the dreadful Bengal famine of 1943 and the humdrum life in cantonments, where the inhabitants had to devise their own entertainments. Highly recommended. (RLJ)

Century 1988 pp 380 £12.95

Goodbye India Carol Pickering

The author, whose parents were American Methodist missionaries in north India, spent the first eighteen years of her life there. Thereafter graduating in the USA, she returned to India in 1946 to marry Donald Hardy, a member of the Indian Civil Service, posted in the then United Provinces. Her reminiscences encompass those as a child born and brought up in India, including schooling at Woodstock, the American missionary school located at Landour, Mussoorie and subsequently as the wife of an ICS officer from February 1946. There are descriptions of walks and treks in the Himalayas, as also vignettes of the final period of British rule in India, including the traumatic communal disturbances. The few months together with her husband in India were overshadowed by the certainty of having to leave when Independence was granted. Though inevitably not in the ambit of this book, in 1948 the Hardys moved to the Gold Coast (now Ghana) where Donald held various posts in the administrative service, before being appointed in 1955 as Admissions Tutor at Selwyn College, Cambridge. While there he was ordained in the Church of England, and became a country parson. He died in 1977, and the author later married a university lecturer. A sentimental, and often evocative, account from an individual point of view, of an era that has now passed. (SLM)

Peter Skelton 1987 £4.95 pp 86

Tigers of the Raj - the Shikar Diaries of Colonel Burton 1894-1949

ed. Jacqueline Toovey

This book introduces a remarkable man. Burton went to India to serve in the Army in 1894, left for good in 1949, and died in England at the age of ninety-five, having passed few of his active years at home. Throughout a long career in the East he recorded faithfully his shooting and fishing, and all the wild life he met, but very little of a personal nature. He broke his right hip in a fall and for years had one leg four inches shorter than the other until he fell again from a collapsing machan and broke his left leg. The first accident ended his active service, and he became a Cantonment Magistrate until retiring after fifty-five. After this he had time to travel more widely for shooting and fishing - he was an excellent shot from either shoulder - until he came to realise that the fauna of India was dwindling at an alarming extent. Then he took to a camera, though the photographs shown here are indifferent, and only killed in case of necessity. He collected specimens and wrote for the Bombay Natural History Society, sometimes killing a buck to feed his shikari and coolies. Because he was far from rich he had modest expeditions

and was much in contact with country people, and was fluent with most, though in the south he regretted not speaking Tamil. Burton travelled endlessly, from Kashmir to Ceylon, visiting Burma, fishing off the west coast of India and in the Laccadive Islands, returning as often as he might to rivers with mahseer. Though he ended a determined conservationist, Burton was induced to sit up for and kill his last tiger, a man-eater, at the age of seventy-nine in a Nilgiri tea plantation. It was the end of a very long line of big-game successes, usually skinned by himself - tiger, panther, bison, bear, sambhur, not to mention the smaller creatures. It was a life of tents or dak bungalows, modest comforts, often solitary, of difficult paths and long waits for game. Sometimes his younger daughter was with him, sometimes his long-suffering wife. Hilda Burton did not much care for camp life - she is seldom mentioned - and was happiest in company, at a hill station or Bangalore, or staying with her daughters.

Mrs. Toovey has done a considerable work on her grandfather's notes. It cannot have been simple to sort and edit this mass of pencil writing in a cramped hand, written in many different settings. Nor do I think one now enjoys so much animal slaughter. It is ironic to reflect that Jim Corbett, another who became a conservationist, and whose book on the man-eaters of Kumaon Colonel Burton reviewed for the Bombay Natural History Journal with very qualified approval, has a Nature Reserve named after him in the region where he made his name. I know of no Burton Nature Reserve; where should it be? He went observing everything that moved, and when he could no longer travel easily with war time restrictions, tight finances, and his own increasing handicaps, he sat in Bangalore writing for the Government of India a far-sighted memorandum on the need to look after the country's wild life, its greatest asset. (NC)

Alan Sutton, Gloucester 1987 £12.95

#### Sister Sahibs Marian Robertson

It is interesting to notice how many serving men and women got away with breaking the rule about not keeping diaries in war time, but how lucky for us that they did. All these years later we can read accounts of forgotten actions on distant fronts which come across with the freshness and immediacy of the morning paper. Marian Robertson was a very young volunteer Red Cross Nurse when she was sent out to India in 1944. From a London of buzz-bombs (crouched behind a lion in Trafalgar Square she looked down Whitehall and saw the stones, rubble and flames shooting high in the air when St. Thomas's Hospital was hit) she made the hazardous sea voyage to Bombay with a group of young fellow volunteers. From thence by train right across India, via Poona and Calcutta, to Panitola, a remote tea plantation in northern Assam whose little hospital had been taken over by the Army as it was close to the front. Imphal, Kohima, Myitkyina, the Ledo Road - all those names from the past come alive again on these pages. The girls were in the thick of it, bravely and cheerfully nursing all races and ranks. They sometimes worked alongside the Queen

Alexandra career-nurses but often alone, and the difference between these two cadres is illustrated by the revelation that Nurse Robertson had to be told, when on night duty, to keep an eye open for men slipping into each other's beds; she had never heard of homosexuals. In between the shot and shell there were picnics, dances, parties, an occasional ENSA concert and a few romances including her own with the Pioneer Corps captain she married who was a peacetime tea planter in Ceylon. All this is described with vivacity. Later, as the forces of SEAC advanced into Burma the VADs followed by ship. News of Hiroshima reached them on board, and the Armistice when they were in Rangoon. At the Victory Ball that night: 'There were hundreds and hundreds of uproariously happy officers charging around the floor in rugger scrums. At one time some officers from a Tank regiment tried to drive a Sherman tank up the steps and into Government House. The MPs had to make a cordon across to stop them charging through the doors at the top. Everyone was mad with excitement and cheering wildly - at last the war was over'.

Not the need for nursing though; their greatest skill and reserves of human compassion were called forth with the return of the POWs from the hell of the Japanese camps. The official reports on the VADs in India from 1944 - 1946 were written by their Commandant Miss G.J.S. Corsar for the Red Cross Headquarters in London. They form a valuable Appendix to this book, but it is the day-to-day personal account which gives the book its lively readability. (CLD)

The Book Guild Ltd. 25 High Street, Lewes, Sussex. 1987 £10.50

#### Mary Carpenter in India Norman C. Sargant

Mary Carpenter (1807 - 1877) was a notable Victorian philanthropist, her principal fields of endeavour being female education and prison reform. In her Encyclopedia Britannica biographical note, two-thirds are devoted to her work in the United Kingdom and only one-third to her work in India - which was concentrated into the last decade of her life. This book, by the late Bishop Sargant - Bishop of Mysore from 1950 to 1972 - concentrates on her Indian travels and labours, and devotes only one chapter to her reforming work in this country. She was the daughter of a prominent Unitarian Minister in Bristol, which was her home for virtually her whole life. She was herself an earnest Unitarian. Her interest in India was initially stimulated by the visit to England in 1833 of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Hindu scholar-reformer and founder of the Brahma Samaj; but it was not until 1866 that she first visited the sub-continent. Her physical stamina in her sixties as she visited not only the three Presidency cities but also many less accessible towns was as remarkable as her organizing ability. The particular objects of her zeal were the lamentable condition of Indian jails especially for child prisoners, and the virtual absence of female education. It is a pity that this biography of a remarkable woman is produced in a rather unprofessional format, with frequent misprints. (BSS) Obtainable from A.J. Sargant, 25 Beaufort Road, Clifton, Bristol BS8 2JX. 1987 £5.00 & 50 pence postage and packing. pp 138

Traders and Nabobs - the British in Cawnpore 1765 - 1857

Zoë Yalland

There can be few people better qualified to write the history of the British in Cawnpore than Zoë Yalland. Born there while her father was Director of Elgin Mills, she has steeped herself in its past and produced A Guide to the Kacheri Cemetery. Now this handsomely produced volume has resurrected those (and others) who lie buried there and has drawn a definitive picture of the origins of the town. In the beginning it was merely a convenient cantonment for the East India Company troops who needed a base from which to pursue the troublesome Mahrattas. From a cluster of native huts and a straggle of scarcely less respectable bungalows, the town grew and flourished during the nineteenth century. Before 1857 it must have been a splendid place with its Assembly Rooms, Clubs and Free School. The darker side of army life is not neglected however, with its drunkenness (in the chapter entitled 'Liquor! This Baneful Traffick') and its boredom and licentiousness. The mercantile aspect is closely examined, in parallel with redoubtable traders like the Maxwell family, whose origins Yalland has traced to Scotland. The up-rising of 1857 was a dreadful check to Cawnpore. It took years to recover - and because the author finishes her story here, we do not know the measures taken to re-establish it as one of India's leading industrial cities. Perhaps this could be another book? The illustrations alone would make this book worth buying - they have been culled from the widest sources, and the footnotes are a special delight, forming practically a chapter in their own right. Highly recommended. (RLJ)

Michael Russell 1987 £17.95 pp 376

Yadgari or Memories of the Raj Henry Cubitt-Smith

The author is as old as the century, being born in Tanjore in June 1900. He was commissioned into the Indian Army in 1919, and posted to Jullundur in the Punjab to serve with the 51st Sikh Frontier Force. The day after his arrival there came news of the firing at Jallianwalabagh, Amritsar and he was then immediately plunged into the third Afghan War and sent to Dera Ismail Khan with the Waziristan Field Force. Inter-war years saw him with the 51st Sikhs, stationed mainly in Kohat. There are vivid descriptions of off-duty activities including golf, which would sometimes involve unexpected players in the shape of crows who would swoop down, pick up the ball, and 'quite often astonishingly drop it nearer the green'. The story of Molly Ellis's abduction in 1923 is re-told, and the part that brave Mrs. Starr played in releasing Molly from her Afridi captors. During the second World War Cubitt-Smith commanded a Battalion in the Middle East and Italy, gaining a DSO at Cassino in 1944. He was posted back to India as GSO 1, Peshawar and was promoted Brigadier. He retired prematurely to England in 1947. But he did not remain idle, becoming Commander of the North Norfolk Home Guard, and later Deputy Lieutenant of Norfolk. Though written primarily for private circulation amongst the author's relations and friends, as he admits, this

book is nevertheless of interest to others, covering as it does, so much of India's history this century. Its style is informal and anecdotal and the author does not hesitate to voice opinions which some will disagree with! (RLJ)

Anchor Press, Reading. 1987 £6.50 plus £1 postage. pp 180

Treasures from India - the Clive Collection at Powis Castle

Mildred Archer and others

Powis Castle in Powys, Wales, the home of Clive of India and his son Lord Clive, Governor of Madras, was opened to the public last year. Both father and son were avid but discriminating collectors, and the recipients of many gifts, thanks to their elevated positions in eighteenth century India. For the first time their collection has been brought together and catalogued and the new Clive Museum was made possible by the National Trust of Great Britain and a public appeal, launched in 1985. To mark the opening, a splendid catalogue has been compiled, with a long introduction by Mildred Archer, examining the British fascination with Indian miniatures, paintings, furniture, manuscripts and textiles that found their way to Britain as the East India Company expanded. The range of items at Powis is extraordinarily wide, comprising the artifacts that furnished princely Courts, like gilded day beds, woven hangings, hookahs, pan-dans, chess sets, jewellery, clothing and of course weapons, beautifully inscribed and decorated. The book's coloured illustrations do full justice to their subjects - a woven silk and silver girdle dated 1764 glows as brightly as the day it was created. There are many treasures from Tipu Sultan's palace of Seringapatam, seized on its capture in 1799, together with later ivories from Burma, and many other lovely things. The catalogue is a 'must' for anyone interested in Indian treasures and will be invaluable for members going on the proposed BACSA outing to Powis this September. (Details of the trip will be announced shortly.) (RLJ)

National Trust 1987 £9.95 pp 144

British Civilians and the Japanese War in Malaya and Singapore 1941 - 1945 Joseph Kennedy

This is the story of the civilians who were caught up in the turmoil following the Japanese landings in north Malaya. A number of books have been written giving the military side of the story but this tells graphically of the problems encountered by the European population who worked in the area. Such people did not have a military organisation to deal with their problems and so had to face this crisis virtually on their own. The fall of Malaya and Singapore was unexpected and many of the civilians were taken by surprise as, with the build-up of Commonwealth forces, it did not seem possible that Singapore would ever surrender. Mr. Kennedy has used accounts from diaries and letters to bring the full impact of the dangers and stress that many of the British expatriates had to suffer, to the reader. For those interested in the Far East this book certainly



fills a gap and is recommended both for its factual accounts and as a reference book dealing with the fall of Singapore and Malaya. It also gives details of the fate of some of those members of families who died through shelling, shipwreck, and during the long period of internment in extremely unhealthy camps. (AGH)

MacMillan Press 1987 £27.50 but available to BACSA members who identify themselves for £22.50 plus £1.50 postage and packing. pp 167

BOOKS BY NON-MEMBERS (that will interest readers)

Household Gods Jon Thurley

A new generation of writers on India has recently emerged. The Baba Lok of the last two decades of British rule have grown up. Alan Ross's Blindfold Games led the way and now Jon Thurley, whose father was a school master in the Punjab, has contributed a masterly account of a family experiencing the uncertainties of those years and the horrors of Partition. Though based on childhood memories, Household Gods is a novel and a mystery story too. Mark Hodder, a middle-aged barrister living in the Home Counties today, with his family, becomes increasingly pre-occupied with his father's sudden disappearance in Pakistan during 1947. He returns there in an attempt to confront the past and to piece together his father's relationship with Roger Henshaw, an unusual ICS officer. Henshaw is one of the best drawn characters among many. Grammar school educated, from a working class background, he dreamt as a boy that India offered an escape from the class ridden Britain of the 1930s. He found instead, that the hierarchy and snobbishness of the Raj excluded him as surely as if he had been an Untouchable among Brahmins. His revenge provides one of the book's main themes. But there are many others. The acceptance by more far-sighted Britons that the end of a three-hundred year old relationship between the rulers and the ruled, was approaching with the inevitability of a runaway train. (The Trains of Death that arrived after Partition with their passengers slaughtered, are horrifyingly depicted.) The disbelief among many that Independence would really happen and that if it did, India would sink into a morass, led by Gandhi and Jinnah - a view held by some Indians, as well as British. At the same time there was a breaking down of racial barriers, which led to Mark Hodder's aunt falling in love with her Indian neighbour's son Raju, who was later to participate in the assassination of Gandhi in 1948. This is a deep and complex book which attracted little attention when published last year but will undoubtedly come to be seen as a seminal work on the last years of British rule. It is also a very good read! (RLJ)

Hamish Hamilton 1987 £10.95 pp 278

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Above: Indigo plantation, Bihar in the nineteenth century, later converted to sugar. It was in this district that Betsy Macdonald and her husband Tommy spent several happy years working. See BACSA's new book India - Sunshine and Shadows by Betsy Macdonald.

£7.50 plus 75 pence postage, obtainable from the Secretary.

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