

Registered Charity 273422

ISSN 0141-6588



CHOWKIDAR

Volume 10 Number 2 Autumn 2003

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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 1,900 (2002) 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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AN AMERICAN MYSTERY

'I am hoping that *Chowkidar* readers can help me out in solving a most puzzling mystery that has stumped American historians for some years' writes BACSA member Lt Col Ian Macpherson McCulloch from Canada, in an irresistible challenge. 'The facts as they are known at this time are these.' On a family memorial at St John's Church in Aberdare, Wales, an inscription relates that 'Edward Edwards, late Major General in the Honourable East India Company's service...lost his life at San Antonio de Bexar in Texas, North America, on 6th March 1836 in his 57th year.' Now keen historians will recognise that the General's death took place during the siege of the Alamo, a heavily walled Spanish mission station which had been converted into a fort. This was at a time when Texas was endeavouring to free itself from the Spanish colonial empire, then administered from Mexico, which had itself become independent in 1821. A group of some two hundred Americans, including the legendary Davy Crockett, were besieged in the fort from 23th February to 6th March 1836 by the Mexican army. Although Texan independence was declared on 2nd March, the defenders were ultimately forced out and slaughtered, their bodies being burnt on a funeral pyre. Retribution against the Mexicans was swift, and their Army was defeated the following month. The battle of the Alamo was hugely significant because it paved the way for Texas to join the United States of America nine years later and become one of the wealthiest (and largest) states in the Union.

It was the part that General Edwards played, or didn't play, in the battle that has intrigued military historians ever since. Edwards was born in Ystradyfodwg in Wales on 4th January 1779. 'He does not appear to have come from a particularly well-connected family, and the fact that he rose to the rank of major general was no small achievement. His promotions must have been based at least as much on ability as on patronage.' According to the invaluable Hodson's Index at the National Army Museum in London, Edwards was appointed Ensign in the Company's Army in August 1797 and rose steadily to the rank of Colonel by 1829. 'Since his retirement from India' adds the Index, 'he has pursued a wandering, unsettled life, travelling in different countries, which precluded the possibility of hearing from him for many years. His pay had never been drawn for several years past, nor any intimation given at the India House or to his friends whether he was alive or not. His last object appears to have been to hunt and shoot in the wilds of America. His body is said to have been found at a place called [San] Antonio, and identified by a particular ring.'

Research by historians has shown that Edwards was known to have been in New Orleans while on furlough in 1834, and had relatives in Texas. While there is no direct evidence placing him at the Alamo in 1836, circumstantial evidence is strong. His memorial states that he 'lost his life' and his nephew, in filing a claim for land owned by his late uncle at Austin, roughly eighty miles north of San

Antonio, states that the General was 'murdered'. The East India Company, usually so parsimonious in paying out money unnecessarily, were singularly ill-informed about Edwards. It promoted him to the rank of major-general on 28th June 1838, two years after his supposed death, and did not strike him from its rolls until 28th April 1841, after an article appeared in the *New York Evening Post*, which was reprinted in the London *Times* on 8th September 1840. The article stated that a gold ring belonging to Edwards had been found on a corpse along the road between Gonzales and Goliad, just after the siege of the Alamo, but it was not clear whether the corpse was that of the General or not. The ring could have been looted, or even given as a gift. Another complication is that 'someone withdrew sixty pounds at a Brazoria bank from an account Edwards had established with Baring's North American Ledger on 30th July 1836. The details of the transaction are illegible, so it is impossible to determine exactly who made the withdrawal. (Brazoria is a town about twenty miles inland from the Gulf of Mexico.)

So the question is, did Major General Edwards die at the Alamo, and if so, whose side was he on? Was he with the Texan desperadoes fighting for independence, or an observer with the Mexican army, since Britain was then on friendly terms with Mexico? Had he retired from the Company's Army, and if so, why was the Company not only unaware of it, but actually granted him the highest rank after his presumed death? And if he was killed at the Alamo, then it is surprising that the death of a senior military man should not have been recorded. There are indeed many puzzles here and perhaps the way forward lies in establishing more about his service in India, which may give a clue to his mysterious death in America. Ideas and information would be welcomed by Lt Col Macpherson McCulloch at <imccu@sympatico.ca> or through the BACSA Secretary. (Additional material for this article from Alamo Sourcebook by Tim and Terry Todish.)

MAIL BOX

The grave of Julia Margaret Cameron, the celebrated Victorian photographer, was the subject of an article in the Spring 2003 *Chowkidar*. She was buried in 1879 at St Mary's Church, Bogawantalawa, Ceylon, and her husband, Charles Hay Cameron joined her two years later. We asked if any recent photographs of the tombs had been taken and sure enough, two turned up, showing that the cemetery is in remarkably good condition. The photograph on page 36 shows Julia Emsden, BACSA member and great-great-grand-daughter of the Camerons, at the grave side. 'I was named Julia Margaret after her', she adds. The unusual double tombstone records only the couple's dates of birth, death and marriage, unlike the usual earnest Victorian inscriptions. At Holy Trinity Church in Nuwara Eliya, Julia Emsden was able to fill in some more of the family background, when she found, purely by chance, the grave of one of Julia's daughters-in-law. Katherine Macleod had married Harding Hay Cameron, of the Ceylon Civil Service, but the marriage

could not have lasted long, for Katherine was dead by the age of twenty-one, dying two days after Christmas in 1880. Another of Julia's daughters-in-law, Annie Eisdell Cameron, seems to have lost three children in infancy, and then her husband, Ewen Wrottesley Hay Cameron, in 1889. Peter Stansky of Stanford University, writing in the *Virginia Woolf Miscellany* this Spring, also visited the Cameron graves, and found 'a sense of both the domesticity and the grandeur of the "far flung" empire there'. He also adds the fascinating detail that when the Camerons retired to Ceylon in 1875, 'they took their coffins with them'.

A glimpse into very different lives was provided recently by an article in the *Asian Wall Street Journal* about lost Jewish tombs in Shanghai. This may seem a very esoteric subject, but in fact the Jewish community was prominent in the Chinese city before the Communist party took over in 1949, and what has happened to their graves since then should concern us all. The first Jewish immigrants were Sephardic traders who came enterprisingly from Baghdad, and built fortunes from tea and opium. The Peace Hotel, built in 1929 on the Shanghai Bund by the Sassoons, symbolises the wealth of the community, and of course their links with India too, for there were members of the Sassoon family in Bombay. Shanghai was a haven for Jewish people fleeing from the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, and even in the late 1930s, under Japanese occupation, the city offered sanctuary for those escaping the Nazis. Now the resurrection of Shanghai's Jewish heritage has been initiated by an Israeli tour guide and journalist, Mr Dvir Bar-Gal. Specialising in tours of the city's Jewish ghetto, he was surprised to find Hebrew characters on a headstone in a local antique market, after being told that no Jewish graves could be found. This started him off both on a hunt for more stones, and a desire to find out what happened to the cemeteries of his own people. Although many dispersed to Israel and other places after 1949, Mr Bar-Gal estimates that there were around 3,700 Jewish burials in Shanghai and he has found seventy headstones so far, as well as many Christian stones. The stones are found mostly in poor villages along the canals that surround Shanghai, and which attract migrants from all over China. Headstones have been put to use as washboards, floors, tables, steps, bridges and house foundations, in fact anything that a good flat stone can be used for. Most villagers are happy to take the \$10 offered to them by Mr Bar-Gal for a tombstone. He has even found a marble headstone in a drainage system. Many of the slabs are topped by the Star of David, which makes identification easy.

It was, according to Mr Bar-Gal, the Communist party who ordered foreign graves to be 'relocated' to an international cemetery, where Jewish graves were mixed indiscriminately with Muslim ones. During the so-called 'cultural revolution', the stones were removed from the graves and dumped in the wetlands surrounding Shanghai, from where he is now recovering them. You might think that when he has been able to trace the descendants of those named on the stones, that the families would be happy to receive the memorials, but this is not always so. One recovered

tombstone was that of Charlesworth Percival Rakusen, an eye specialist, who died in 1958. It was easy to trace his family, because of his famous name (Rakusen's matzos), but although they remembered him as driving a Rolls Royce and being visited by Einstein, his memorial remains in a Shanghai warehouse. Surprisingly there is still a small Jewish community in the city, and it may be possible to set up a small museum as a memorial to an unusual episode in China's history.

Last year saw an interesting little anniversary which seems to have gone almost completely unremarked, apart from an article in *The Times*. 1852 saw the introduction of the first 'adhesive' postage stamps in Asia, following the initiative of Sir Bartle Frere, Commissioner of Sind from 1850 to 1858. (Before philatelists rush to object, 'adhesive' here means that stamps could be stuck on an envelope with glue, not that they had adhesive ready applied to the back.) From the beginning of July that year three categories of stamp were on sale, the ½anna white, ½anna blue and ½anna scarlet seal stamp. A ½anna scarlet, in perfect condition, is valued at £65,000 today. The stamps are embossed with the East India Company's merchant's mark, within a circular border, inscribed Scinde District Dawk (Post), and are known to collectors as 'Scinde Dawk'. Frere was an extraordinary polymath who did much to transform his dusty province during his term of office. He concentrated on opening up communications by cutting canals, building roads and railways, constructing the harbour at Karachi and of course setting up a postal service. To those who argued that a system where the sender had to prepay the postage on a letter 'might work well enough in Europe, but would not do in India', Frere countered that this fallacy had 'proved to be no more true of stamps than it has been of railways and other innovations'.

Postal arrangements had been rudimentary before his arrival, and when he asked for better post offices, he was told by the East India Company that it had other things to spend its money on. Frere argued strongly that post offices were not 'mere luxuries', and with his postmaster, Mr Coffey, got the stamps designed from the Company's seal, manufactured and issued to stamp vendors and government officials. 'Thus every government office in Scinde became a district post office for stamped letters. The system worked well and of course very cheaply, for we got a complete network of post offices and postal lines all over the country without expense.' Frere believed that it was the obvious success of his scheme that led shortly afterwards to a general introduction of postage stamps throughout India.

Frere's period as Commissioner was brought to an abrupt end by the revolt of 1857, when he managed to maintain order among his two and a half million subjects with a force of only 139 British soldiers. He was subsequently appointed Governor of Bombay, where he is said to have transformed the city to a place where the death rate was even lower than London, according to Florence Nightingale. In later life

he was to persuade the Sultan of Zanzibar to abandon the slave trade with Africa, and the end of his career saw him appointed Governor of the Cape of Good Hope and High Commissioner for British South Africa. Not surprisingly, his old school Haileybury, the East India College, where he studied from 1832 to 33, named a house after him, which survived from 1863 to 1993, when it was incorporated into Trevelyan House, named after Charles Trevelyan, Governor of Madras.

It seems difficult to get away from mention of the 1857 revolt sometimes, so great an impact did it have on the lives of our Victorian ancestors, both at home and in India. BACSA member Bryan Markwell found a poignant reminder at Liston Church, Foxearth in Essex recently. A tablet above a little stoup records the deaths of the tragic Thornhills, seven of whom were killed in the uprising. Robert Bensly Thornhill was the Magistrate of Fatehgarh in what is now Uttar Pradesh, when trouble broke out. He managed to escape with his wife Mary White, their two infant children Charles Cudbert and Mary Catherine and 'their faithful nurse Mary Long'. But as the inscription on the wall of the Essex church tells us, all were 'cruelly massacred on the 15th June 1857 at Cawnpore', where they had gone expecting help. Robert Thornhill was one of a small number of senior men who were shot near the town's Assembly rooms, while his wife and children perished that night in the infamous Bibighar slaughter.

Henry Bensly Thornhill, of the second family noted on the inscription, was brother to Robert. He had been caught at Sitapur, some fifty miles north of Lucknow and was 'ruthlessly murdered' on 3rd June 1857 together with Emily Heathfield his wife and their infant child Catherine, together with their faithful nurse Eliza Jennings. The Thornhills were a prominent local family and, according to the parson at Foxearth, were landowners. Certainly the father of the two murdered brothers was a Director of the East India Company, and he may have had this sad reminder erected in his local church. Our thanks to Mr Markwell for bringing this to our attention.

Another sad letter, this time about the destruction of an historic memorial, comes from BACSA member Carla Contractor in Bristol. Over the years she has been visiting a garden in the centre of Mahabaleshwar in Satara District, Maharashtra. The garden contained the graves of Colin Campbell and his wife Matilda (no dates of death given), and the commemorative slabs were set in an unusual triangular stone monument with a square red surround about 3 feet high that could be seen from the road and was quite a landmark. This Spring our correspondent met a friend, John Malcolm, in the the Mahabaleshwar Club, and he informed her that sadly the graves and monument had gone. The house and garden where they stood had recently been sold, and the old owner, apparently fearing that the grave would deter purchasers, simply demolished the whole thing, graves, memorial and retaining wall. The commemoration slabs (pictured on page 37, with John Malcolm examining them), have disappeared.

Sold? speculates Mrs Contractor, broken up, buried, reused, who knows? The irony is that the purchaser was horrified when informed of this act of vandalism. He had bought the house as a holiday home from near-by Poona, and respects its history. It is particularly sad that after more than twenty-five years work by BACSA an awareness of history as told through the tombstones cannot prevent this sort of destruction. Incidentally, John Malcolm is a collateral descendant of Major General Sir John Malcolm (1769-1833), the subject of one of BACSA's first books, published twenty years ago.

After so much gloomy news, there is a more light hearted story. BACSA member David Mahoney visited the Meerut cemetery in February this year, where BACSA is involved in a major restoration project and was pleasantly surprised by what he found. It had been four years since my last visit. There has been an amazing transition with, seemingly, the whole cemetery cleared of undergrowth, bushes and small trees, including much of the growth from tombs and graves. The clearance, some done with the help of the Army in Meerut, has opened up many areas which were inaccessible and has revealed many 'lost' memorials. Work is going on to increase the height of the boundary walls and the Army may be able to provide a barbed wire fence. Renovations to tombs are being carried out after a long period of neglect by the former chowkidars. In a highly imaginative move, Mr Mahoney marked the Queen's Golden Jubilee last year with a personal donation of two goats, to help keep the undergrowth down. They have been named, appropriately, Elizabeth and Philip and according to their donor are slowly eating their way through the Cemetery. A third goat, Ann, broke her leg and was savaged by dogs, but is now hopefully on the road to recovery. See page 36 for a photograph of these stalwarts, possibly the most practical present to give to a favourite cemetery.

CAN YOU HELP?

New BACSA member Paul Hellier from Devon recently purchased an interesting Victorian locket, which contained names of some of those killed at Hamirpur during the revolt of 1857/58. The town of Hamirpur lies on the river Jumna, some fifty miles south of Cawnpore. On the outbreak of trouble, the Collector, Thomas Kirkland Lloyd, acted decisively by seeking assistance from local chiefs who provided five hundred new recruits to guard the twenty-three Europeans there. Unfortunately for Lloyd, when the 53rd Bengal Native Infantry Regiment mutinied at Hamirpur on 13 July 1857, his would-be soldiers joined the mutineers. Only two Europeans managed to escape, a Miss Anderson, who though wounded, reached Cawnpore, and Lieutenant Browne who got to Fatehpur. The rest were all killed. Lloyd himself, with Donald Grant, hid for several days in the reed beds of the Jumna but they were eventually betrayed and executed in the town. A memorial exists for the two men at Haileybury School, but Mr Hellier wonders if there is a

memorial or grave in India for them. Preliminary searches have not found anything in the BACSA cemetery file on Hamirpur, neither is any memorial recorded in the numerous books on Cawnpore. Perhaps someone familiar with the area could help, for the incident seems little known, even to Mutiny historians. Ideas to the BACSA Secretary please.

The sculptor Baron Carlo Marochetti was an artist closely associated with India, being chosen to provide the beautiful Angel of the Resurrection at Cawnpore that marked the murders of so many women and children. He also sculpted the impressive monument to the Bengal Engineers who fell during the revolt of 1857/58, which stands in St Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta, as well as the equestrian statue of Sir Mark Cubbon, in Cubbon Park, Bangalore. So it came as a surprise to learn from Baron Marochetti's great-great-grandson, Carl Hedengren, that the sculptor never actually visited India. His commissions there undoubtedly came from his close connection with Queen Victoria, because he was her official sculptor for the last nineteen years of his life, from 1849 to 1867. Given the Queen's own intense interest in 'the Jewel in the Crown' it becomes less surprising that this cosmopolitan man should be chosen to portray the British Empire.

Mr Hedengren tells us that his distinguished, though controversial, ancestor retained a fine medieval chateau near Paris and became the Mayor of Vaux-sur-Seine, at the same time maintaining close contact with the artistic life of South Kensington, where he set up a large workshop and foundry. He fostered the cult of Napoleon, at the same time playing a part in the proliferation of monuments to the Duke of Wellington, and was an early railway enthusiast. Carl Hedengren is now the Curator of Marochetti's French chateau, and wonders if BACSA members may be able to add to the list of his works that were made during the 19th century and shipped to India. He adds that there are two busts of coloured marble in France that would seem to have been commissioned by Queen Victoria herself. One shows Duleep Singh, the deposed heir to Ranjit Singh, who settled in England in 1854 and who led a wandering, unfulfilled life, though taken under the Queen's wing. The other is something more of a mystery, a bust of Princess Gauramma, the favourite daughter of the deposed Raja of Coorg, who was brought by her father to England in 1852, to receive a Western education. She must have subsequently adopted Christianity, for Queen Victoria stood as a sponsor to her baptism. But the princess apparently made an unhappy marriage to a British officer, and suffered an early death after giving birth to a child. Both husband and child are said to have disappeared after her death. Any ideas or information would be welcome.

It is always nice to record a successful 'find' and this year Marion May of Surrey was lucky enough to get a question answered, with additional information too. Mrs May had approached BACSA to see if the grave of her ancestor George Thomas Jackson still survived in a Lucknow cemetery.

A photograph of the original grave showed a highly elaborate work with a canopy supported by four pillars over the engraved stone and tall cross. Elaborate iron work surrounded the grave, and there were even six carved finials on top of the canopy. George Jackson was born in London in 1840, and became a High Court Pleader (advocate) in Lucknow during the 1870s to 1900s. For some reason he was known as 'Tiger' Jackson, though it is not explained why. His two brothers, John and Edward owned the well-known ornamental composition manufactory of George Jackson & Sons Ltd in Rathbone Place, London, which may explain the highly decorated tomb.

Our contact in Lucknow, Mr Ian Shepherd, found the tomb without much difficulty in the Nishatganj Cemetery, and reported that 'the cross and the lower portion have been dismantled, lying around. The railings have disappeared with time. The tombstone was made by Llewelyn & Co Sculptors, Calcutta. To the left is the tombstone of his wife, Isabella Agnes Jackson, born 12 May 1845, died 4 November 1924. There are more Jackson tombs nearby, including one to the infant son of George and Isabella, who was born in August 1876 and died the following June. St George Jackson, died 31 July 1931, is here too, near Arthur Amiend Jackson, an infant son who died on 21 September 1907 and Mabel Eugene Jackson, devoted wife of R.S. Jackson (Indian Finance Department)'. The relationship between these Jacksons, who seem to have been buried in a family plot, is not clear, but our enquirer, Mrs May, does now have a photograph of George Thomas's tomb, still a handsome structure, even in its reduced state.

BACSA was also able to provide the answer to a query from Richard Miles in the Channel Islands. He has an undated watercolour which he inherited from his grandmother, whose family name was Blacker. The picture shows in sombre colours a tall obelisk tomb, surrounded by railings, with a solitary Indian mourner. (See back cover) In the background is what looks like a little Hindu temple, which caused some puzzlement, for if the obelisk was in a Christian cemetery, then what was the temple doing there? Mr Miles knew that one member of the Blacker family had been prominent in India, and that was Lt Col Valentine Blacker (1780? - 1826), who was a historian of the Mahratta War and Surveyor General of India. He was supposed to have died of cholera in Calcutta, so this gave us a clue as to where to look. South Park Street being the cemetery where BACSA first started work more than a quarter of a century ago, seemed the obvious place for the burial of a man of such standing. Over the years we have built up a photographic archive of every tomb in the cemetery, and we were quickly able to identify the watercolour obelisk as Blacker's tomb. The inscription, which was noted in the Bengal Obituary, reads: 'Beneath are deposited the remains of Lieut.-Colonel Valentine Blacker, Companion of the Bath; of the Light Cavalry on the establishment of Fort Saint George. During ten years, Quarter Master General of the Madras Army, and subsequently Surveyor General of India. Obt. iv February MDCCCXXVI. Aet. xl.

Lieutenant-Colonel Blacker was, an Officer distinguished alike for professional ability, for public zeal, for private worth, and for manliness of character. In testimony therof [sic] his friends and comrades have caused this Monument to be erected to his memory.' And the mystery of the 'Hindu temple' in the background of the painting was solved too - it was the memorial to 'Hindoo Stuart', or General Stuart to give the Irishman his proper name, who 'converted' to the Hindu faith in the 1780s and was commemorated by an appropriate temple-like building.

Now here is a request for help that will not go unanswered. The British in India Museum, in Colne, Lancashire, which opened in 1972, discovered some years ago that there was no definitive collection of ties worn by regiments of the the pre-World War Two Indian Army, or even of regiments raised during the war. The well-known suppliers of ties were approached, but they only had books with a small cutting of cloth to illustrate the pattern. As they had exhausted their supplies of ties they had not replaced them, realising that there would be little demand. So in 1996 the British in India Museum agreed to start a collection and all regiments were asked to contribute one tie. So far fifty-two ties have been received, but the collection is by no means complete. Only four cavalry regiments donated ties - Skinner's, Probyn's, Royal Deccan Horse and 19th King George Vth's Lancers. The Infantry did better, but a few are still missing, including 15th Punjab, 17th Dogras and 19th Hyderabad. Anyone wanting to donate a regimental tie should contact Mr Henry Nelson (a BACSA life member) at the Museum on 01282 613129. Mr Nelson adds, in his letter, that there are also ties relating to British Clubs in Calcutta and other major cities, cricket teams and other sporting activities, as well as regiments which have ceased to exist. Also, he suspects, Indian school ties, which could open up a whole new field. There must be a word for someone who collects ties, too!

FORGOTTEN GRAVES IN IRAQ

The recent invasion of Iraq, unlike that of Afghanistan a couple of years ago, does not seem to have prompted so much delving into the past. Whereas the history of the three Afghan Wars that took place in the 19th and early 20th century have been subject to much detailed examination and have even inspired fiction and poetry, Britain's involvement in Mesopotamia (now Iraq), has not received the same attention. Yet the casualties that ensued after 1914 when Britain declared war on the Turkish Ottoman Empire far exceeded the total numbers killed during the three Afghan wars. And once again, Indian troops supported Britain, fighting in a foreign country, just as they had done in Afghanistan. The port of Basra, lately in the news, was seized in November 1914 by the British Expeditionary Force who started moving north towards Baghdad. (The campaign in Mesopotamia was being conducted directly from Army Headquarters in India, moving between Simla

and Delhi, the winter and summer capitals.) Within twenty-five miles of Baghdad, they were forced to retreat to Kut el Amara, a village on the banks of the river Tigris. Here, besieged by the Turks and their Arab allies, 8,600 British and Indian soldiers fell, before surrendering in April 1916. Three times as many troops died trying to rescue the trapped men, and after the siege was lifted, 7,000 of the survivors were press-ganged into working on the Turkish railway line.

In an article published in *The New Yorker* (and kindly sent in by Richard Cochrane and Mrs Alan Wolfe), the writer Jon Lee Anderson describes what he found when he visited the Commonwealth War Graves cemetery at Kut el Amara earlier this year. It lay in a sunken square of land, surrounded by buildings on three sides, strewn with rubbish and weeds, for the British had been unable to remit money for its upkeep after United Nations sanctions were imposed. 'The men who used to look after it, and who received salaries from the British, have gone', Anderson was told. An unmarked obelisk in the centre of the cemetery was daubed with paint, and broken tombstones lay everywhere. 'Those still standing and legible showed that most of the men who were buried here, English privates with surnames like Martin, Nicholls, Newton, and Rogers, had been killed at the height of the siege of Kut, between January and April of 1916'.

The situation in the North Gate War Cemetery at Bab al Mouatham, in Baghdad, was slightly better, though again there were broken tombstones, and graffiti. The graveyard here is fifteen acres, with rows of regimental tombstones, 'dotted with the odd plinth and funereal obelisk, and bisected by a row of forlorn-looking date palms'. The most frequently visited tomb, according to a local labourer, is that of the British General Stanley Maude, who captured Baghdad from the Ottomans in 1917 and who died while trying to impose order on the various tribes and factions he found there. General Maude lies under an imposing domed stone mausoleum in the centre of the cemetery. His casket bears the inscription 'He fought a good fight and kept the faith'. An obelisk nearby is inscribed 'In memory of the brave Hindus and Sikhs who sacrificed their lives in the Great War for their King and their Country.' Headstones that remained standing 'were etched with Christian crosses and regimental insignias; an elephant and palm for the Ceylon Sanitary Corps, a castle standard for the Essex regiments, and a stag's head for the Seaforth Highlanders. Many of the graves were anonymous and were inscribed with the same message 'Four Soldiers of the Great War - Known Unto God'. Also here is the grave of Colonel Leachman, a contemporary of T.E. Lawrence, and a man who also adopted Arab dress and customs, riding camels across the desert, living among the Arabs and reporting back on intrigues among the tribal chieftains. He was assassinated in August 1920 outside Baghdad near the town of Al Fallujah by disgruntled leaders of the Al-Dhari tribe, and his death was the signal for further Arab revolts. Leachman was originally interred at Al Fallujah, still in the news, but his body was brought to the Baghdad cemetery in 1921. With the cessation of hostilities these important cemeteries are now in the progress of being rehabilitated.

A NEW MUSEUM

The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum which opened in September 2002 in Bristol, presents the history of the Empire and its transition into today's Commonwealth. The Museum is housed in the former station designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, a Grade 1 listed building. The story of Empire begins with the discovery of Newfoundland by John Cabot in 1497, and ends with the handing back to China of Hong Kong in 1997. There are sixteen permanent galleries and a number of temporary exhibitions, offering an eclectic blend of objects, artefacts and items. The galleries are arranged to take the visitor on a chronological journey through time and space and illustrate three main themes - 'Trading Fortunes: Britain Builds an Empire' (1480-1800), 'Encircling the Globe: The Rise of Victoria's Empire' (1800-1900), and 'From Colonialism to Commonwealth: End of Empire (1900-1997)'. Displays cover topics like trade, slavery, colonial administration, problems of industrial development and environmental damage. The final gallery 'The Commonwealth Comes to Britain' deals with the consequences of Empire and subsequent immigration into Britain.

Of particular interest to BACSA members will be the sections on India and the Far East. Items on display include a nineteenth century opium ball from Bihar, sold in Calcutta for export to China; a set of cast bronze Burmese weights from the eighteenth century; a replica spice cabinet containing fenugreek, cloves, nutmeg and cardamom, and one of the Museum's most magnificent treasures - Roderick McKenzie's oil painting of the 1903 Delhi Durbar. The section on 'Conflict and Control' examines some of the problems associated with the rule of law. There are images of rug-making at a reform school for 'criminal tribes' in central India in 1863, and of a British judge trying a Hindu priest for a murder in Calcutta in 1875, by a Kalighat artist. In Burma, where teak logging was a prime activity, conflicts for land and its resources occurred, and the Museum shows original film footage of the Steel Brothers' logging activities there. There is a small photographic display from which the illustration on page 37 is taken of Lakshman Sen, the Raja of Suket with his Political Advisor Lt. Col. Philip Burton.

Full use has been made of the Museum's oral history archives and there are two 'sound stations', one located in 'Britain's White Colonies' gallery and the other in the 'Colonial Families' gallery. The interviews that can be heard here include many from people who lived and served in India, and they enable children and young people to gain a sense of what life in the colonies was like. For older visitors these oral histories bring back to life their own experiences and can stimulate much reminiscing. Items on display, such as a 1960s rickshaw, 'Koh-i-Noor' brand Ceylon tea and the insignia of the Companion of the Order of the Indian Empire, all serve to support these oral histories, and create a lasting impression of a vanished era. The Museum can be found at Clock Tower Yard, Temple Meads, Bristol, BS1 6QH, tel 0117 925 4980.



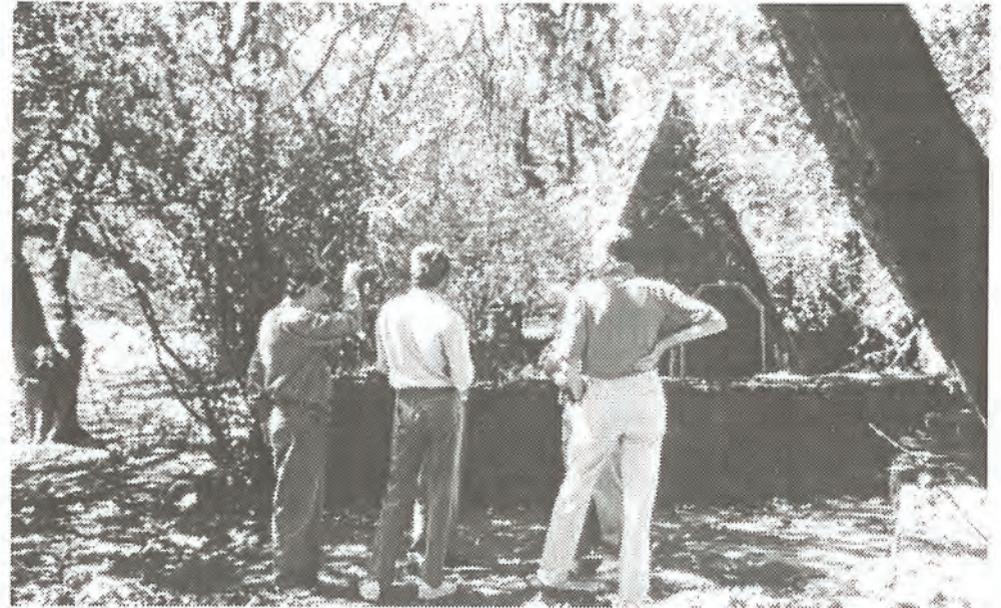
left: Julia Emsden at the Cameron graves in Bogawantalawa (see page 26)

below: Elizabeth and Philip eating in the Meerut cemetery (see page 30)



above: Lakshman Sen, Raja of Suket with his British Advisor Lt. Col. Philip Burton, (central figures) see article on page 35

below: John Malcolm (right) with the Campbell graves at Mahabaleshwar before their recent demolition (see page 29)



BACSA BOOKS [Books by BACSA members. These can be ordered via BACSA, at no extra cost to the purchaser and will be sent with an invoice.]

A Man of the Enlightenment in Eighteenth Century India: The Letters of Claude Martin 1766-1800 Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

The author is well known to everyone who belongs to BACSA and reads *Chowkidar*. She is also a biographer of Major General Claude Martin (1735-1800) and a chronicler of 18th and 19th century Lucknow. If you haven't read any of her works, you will find this current book easier if you first read *A Very Ingenious Man: Claude Martin in Early Colonial India* published in 1992. For here she offers us a monster sandwich with an enormous amount of meat which needs to be chewed and digested slowly. It is not an easy read, but do not let that deter you - and if 18th century Indian history interests you, then it is a must.

The letters are presented in chronological sequence, but each sequence has a common theme. They show a man who has amassed a fortune by his own efforts. A man who is almost repulsively obsequious to his superiors (which will come as no surprise to those versed in Indian customs), a man obsessed with making money, a man obsessed with his own status, a despot who has discovered that a certain amount of benevolence is very much in his own interest, a man who shared in the excitement of the scientific discoveries of his day - in fact as the title proclaims 'a man of the Enlightenment'. But an enlightened man he was not. His opinion of those among whom he lived and on whom he depended for his living was unflattering. Of Sir Eyre Coote, he remarks 'The fundamental kindness and good opinions that he has of the Blacks allows him to overlook everything and the smallest courtesies received from them flatters him so much that he overlooks things that would be insults to an assistant.'

This gives some indication of his style in English, for Martin came to India to serve the French, switched his allegiance and tried to be as English as he could, even if he had difficulty in expressing himself. He sought status. Although employed, and paid, by the Nawab of Awadh as superintendent of the nawabi Arsenal, he persuaded the East India Company to give him rank, without paying fully for it. By judiciously claiming useful service to the Company (which claims seem to have been accompanied by sweeteners), he managed to climb to the rank of Major General. He did offer his services for a number of campaigns, but seems to have had a happy knack of turning up when all was over, though claiming to have made a major contribution to the event. His letters concerning the management of his affairs are illuminating. They make easier reading if the words 'my estate' are substituted for 'Government'. I believe this is the consequence of translating the Persian word 'sirkar' into later Urdu usage. It is not likely that Martin, who was prepared to exact his dues down to the last penny, would be

interested in increasing the revenue of the Nawab. Martin wanted individual contracts direct with each peasant and he wanted to get rid of the zamindars, or intermediary landlords, two of whom he flung into his own prison. Reversion of land to his estate gave him greater control as well as return, while also giving greater prosperity to the peasant. In this he was of one mind with the Begam Sombre, whose benevolent autocracy made her rich. It is strange that no correspondence between the two has yet been found.

Martin died of bladder-stone, or possibly prostate, which he endeavoured to treat himself. He describes the process in the most graphic and painful detail. His knowledge of anatomy was so intimate that, although such a possibility is not even hinted at, one wonders if he had learnt it by dissecting cadavers himself? Why should he have inflicted so much misery on himself. I believe the answer lies in the fact that he contracted venereal disease as a young man. The treatment of this is equally graphically and painfully portrayed in the reviewer's book *From Nawab to Nabob: The diary of David Ochterlony Dyce Sombre* published in 2000. This was the best that money could buy, which would not have been the case for a youthful Martin some sixty years earlier. Maybe he thought he could avoid such dreadful torture better by operating on himself? But this is conjecture. This book is not. It is an account from the horse's mouth. It is a totally absorbing account of the life of a money grubbing dilettante and how he managed his affairs. It deserves a place on the shelves of every Indophile and is recommended. (NGS)

2003 Permanent Black, New Delhi ISBN 81-7824-042-4 *Rs696. Distributed in Britain by Sangam Books 57 London Fruit Exchange, Brushfield Street, London E1 6EP tel: 0207 377 6377 £29.95 plus postage pp412

The Last Man - the life and times of Surgeon Major William Brydon CB John Cunningham

William Brydon, the subject of this excellent biography, had the misfortune to be caught up in two major defeats of the British in India and Afghanistan, that were to signal the end of the East India Company. In 1842 he was the only surviving European officer to reach Jalalabad after the disastrous winter retreat from Kabul. Fifteen years later he was among those besieged in the Lucknow Residency for five months during the mutiny. He survived this too, though with a wound that was to plague him for the rest of his life. An unfortunate man then, but also a survivor. He is perhaps most widely known through the painting by Lady Elizabeth Butler entitled 'The Remnants of an Army' painted in 1879, which quickly became a Victorian favourite, appearing as it did during the second Afghan War. The painting shows Brydon close to collapse, on a pony close to death, approaching the fort at Jalalabad after the eight day nightmare journey

from Kabul. British soldiers are riding out to meet him, but Brydon is too exhausted to notice. It is this seminal image that gives the book its title, for Brydon did indeed seem to be the last and only token of an army and its followers that had numbered 16,500 when it left Kabul on 6th January 1842. Later, in some cases, years later, survivors trickled into India, among them the sepoys who had been part of the 5th Bengal Native Infantry stationed in Afghanistan. Instead of being hailed as heroes, they were, in some cases, grudgingly readmitted to their regiment, and certainly not recompensed in any way. For the first time, the Army of the East India Company was now seen *not* to be invincible, and those who had seen it fall apart on the retreat, through poor leadership and disastrous planning, went back to their villages, and spread the word. Most of the regiments that mutinied in 1857 had been witness to the British defeat in Afghanistan.

There were the inevitable courts of inquiry and recriminations after the debacle of the first Afghan War. But the main feeling seemed to be one of embarrassment. William Brydon got two medals, but no special reward, for his endeavours which went far beyond his escape, and covered the awful weeks he had spent before, holed up in Kabul, trying to treat malnourished and wounded men with minimal resources. (The commissariat stores at Kabul, together with all the medical supplies, had been stored outside the Bala Hissar Fort, in a decision of quite amazing stupidity and they were lost when the Company army retreated inside the Fort.)

How Brydon got to this unenviable position, is related in the first half of this enthralling and lucid book. His own father had been a ship's surgeon, travelling to China and the East, before starting a chemist and druggist's shop in London. William Brydon senior was an enterprising importer of medicines and their raw materials from India and through his contacts was able to obtain medical appointments aboard ship for young men recently qualified. This was how his son, after studying anatomy at the newly-opened University College London and Edinburgh University found himself in Calcutta in 1835 as an assistant surgeon.

After he had recovered from the Kabul retreat, Brydon took up his medical career and social life again. In 1844 he married the redoubtable Colina Maxwell Macintyre, whom he had known as a child in London, and whom he met again while stationed at Bareilly. After service in Bhopal and Burma and an extended leave in his native Scotland to restore his health, the Brydons returned to India, leaving their four eldest children in the care of relatives, but with their two-year old daughter, Mary Ann. Colina gave birth to their sixth child on arrival in Calcutta. William Brydon was posted to the Cawnpore Division to serve with one of the regiments newly posted to Lucknow, after its annexation by the East India Company. The family arrived in the Spring of 1857, and within months were among those besieged in the British Residency during the mutiny.

How the whole family survived, when so many died, is told through contemporary records and Colina's unpublished diary. Accommodated in relative comfort in the house of the Financial Commissioner, Martin Gubbins, Colina had, at one point, to surrender her precious harp case to strengthen the barricades around the parapet of the Gubbins' house. (That she managed to bring the harp, and its battered case, out of the Residency when it was relieved in November of that year, says a lot about her character.) Brydon worked tirelessly during the siege, until he was wounded, and there is useful medical information here too, about the survival rate for amputees for example, which was higher than critics have admitted.

This is an absorbing first book, that cannot be praised too highly. The author has done a huge amount of research, and weaves it effortlessly into a model biography, that tells not only Brydon's extraordinary story, but sets it in the context of British policy, and British disasters in 19th century India. It is shameful that no commercial publisher was prepared to take this book. Not only has the author published it himself, but he has made a most generous gesture to BACSA. Most warmly recommended. (RLJ)

2003 New Cherwell Press ISBN 1 900312 01 8 £25.00 plus £3 postage. Limited number of copies available through BACSA pp347 All proceeds to BACSA

Luxury Goods from India: the Art of the Indian Cabinet-Maker Amin Jaffer

The fifty items illustrated and described in this handsome book have two things in common - all were manufactured in India and all are now in the Victoria & Albert Museum's collection. These are the only things in common though, for the objects themselves come from a wide variety of sources, inspired by many diverse elements, both Indian and European. As the title makes clear, these are luxury goods, many of them crafted specifically as gifts from one ruler to another, like the set of solid ivory armchairs and table presented by Mani Begam, the widow of Nawab Mir Jafar to Warren Hastings, the first Governor General of India. Because such goods were fashioned as status symbols in the highly important eastern ritual of present giving, they are not only beautiful things in themselves, but have been excellently preserved in stately homes and palaces before finding their way to the Museum. Their pristine condition, even after several centuries, lends an immediacy to the well-chosen selection of pictures accompanying the text. The sandalwood and engraved ivory toilet glass (what we would call a dressing table today), shown on page 90 of this book, is still poised, waiting for an 18th century Englishwoman to admire herself in the glass. What will surprise many readers is how early some of the European inspired, Indian-made, pieces are. The earliest is the Robinson Casket, made in Ceylon about 1557 and acquired by Sir Charles Robinson in Lisbon before 1888.

Its provenance is well established and the small ivory casket with a gold and sapphire lock is one of a group of nine caskets presented by the King of Kotte to Portugal as diplomatic gifts. By the mid 16th century princes from Kandy had converted to Christianity (partly in the hope of military support from the Portuguese). The Robinson Casket, with its depiction of Christian motifs, including the Tree of Jesse, copied from a Book of Hours of 1499, was likely to have been brought to Portugal by Franciscan monks, to celebrate this event. The copying of European themes and prototypes was certainly established by the 16th century, as the Portuguese, the first European power in India, commissioned local carpenters to fashion cupboards, chairs, tables, cabinets and beds. Indeed, that good old Indian indispensable, the *almirah*, is in fact a Portuguese word, and its use shows that the habit of keeping clothes hanging in a wooden cupboard was not an indigenous one. Pre-European India kept its seamless clothes folded in chests, and sat on carpets, leaning against bolsters. As the author points out, the very idea of the circular throne on a pedestal, was to raise the ruler above his subjects.

Interestingly some of the items pictured here have only fairly recently been identified as coming from India. Heavily carved ebony chairs, with their barley-twist legs are recorded in English collections from the mid-18th century but writers like Horace Walpole identified them as examples of Tudor or Elizabethan furniture, from their dark, antique look. Chairs at Walpole's Gothic house, Strawberry Hill, placed in the 'Holbein Chamber', are now clearly seen to be from the Coromandel Coast, made between 1660-80. Another recent re-attribution is a pair of ivory and gilt candlesticks, thought to have been late 18th century English, until a similar ivory wall bracket from Murshidabad was discovered, celebrating the British victory over Tipu Sultan in 1799. There is much of interest in this well produced book that will stimulate further research in the subject. (RLJ)

V&A Publications, London ISBN 1 85177 381 9. £30.00 plus postage pp128

Books by non-members that will interest readers. [These should be ordered direct and not through BACSA]

Dancing round the Maypole: Growing out of British India Rani Sircar

The author was born in Madras (Chennai today), and now lives in Calcutta (Kolkata today). She went to school in Colombo, Madras and Lahore. Various cultures and sub-cultures are portrayed in this mosaic, images of school, home and social life being depicted, till after 1947 when in Calcutta a breed of 'brown sahibs' emerges, a new sort of cultural mixture. It can be said the author grew up in British India, and then, by circumstance, outgrew it.

As described, formerly the Indian middle-class could be divided, more or less, into three sections: those who were more British than the British; those who were utterly anti-colonial but whose attitudes were unwittingly inculcated by British training (it could be said using the master's tools to dismantle the master's house), and those who aped the rulers, variously out of expediency or necessity. Now, she iterates there is no tone-setting Indian middle class as such, capable of making unpopular value-judgements if necessary. Instead, there are the very rich, the rich and the poor, but some of the poor these days are outwardly smarter looking than the middle class used to be, all aping the West according to their means. She feels that if anything indigenous is developing, and progressing along indigenous lines, it is a well-kept secret. She postulates that only lip service is paid to traditional Indian values and attitudes.

To conclude, these are colourful vignettes from the viewpoint of an anglicised Indian family, proud to be both Indian and Christian, that took cultural hybridity for granted in undivided India, being influenced by and yet resisting British customs. She posits that something like the Great God Jingo prevails, whom she knew in colonial times, but with perhaps an uglier face now. An evocative cameo, from a personal point of view, of an era in undivided India that does not exist any more, this is a clever, funny, nostalgic and elegantly contoured account. (SLM)

2003 Rupa & Co, New Delhi *Rs 195 plus postage pp265

Anglo-Indians: Vanishing Remnants of a Bygone Era Blair Williams

As Independence for India and Pakistan drew near, the domiciled Anglo-Indian community was understandably apprehensive. The viability of the Anglo-Indian school system was at risk as British residents returned home. The future of the job reservation system on the railways, posts, telegraph, and customs, for long the financial mainstay of the community was in jeopardy. In the event, the incoming Congress government allowed a ten year transitional continuation of job reservations as well as an Anglo-Indian member in Parliament. Nevertheless, at Independence, a poorly skilled, under-educated, and traditionally British oriented, English-speaking minority community, perceived by Indians as racially arrogant, faced a vastly more competitive future. No surprise then that after Independence perhaps as many as one in two Anglo-Indians emigrated - first to Britain, and then in the 1960s and 1970s to Australia and New Zealand. A tiny minority went to Canada and the USA. More than fifty years on, Blair Williams, who himself emigrated to the USA in the 1960s, explores the degree to which the remaining Anglo-Indian community has integrated into India's mainstream, and similarly, into its host countries of Britain and North America. His study is based on fieldwork, examination of school records in Calcutta, and interviews in India,

Britain and North America. Williams concludes that in India many of the historic barriers to integration of Anglo-Indians into the mainstream have reduced and adverse stereotypes are diminishing. Assimilation is more pronounced amongst younger age groups. Nowadays most marry out of the community. Williams argues that the mainstream educated Indian middle class today has a greater acceptance of Western culture. But in claiming that the Indian middle class no longer has a negative attitude towards Anglo-Indians, it would have been helpful had he been able to rely more on substantial data than 'informal discussions'.

In his survey of Anglo-Indian schools, Williams points to the small proportion of Anglo-Indians (about 3% of all students), who are able to afford to attend, and argues for a greater effort on the part of the community in India and abroad to increase the inadequate scholarships presently available. He is encouraged that the stereotype of the Anglo-Indian High School 'drop out' is no longer valid, and that, despite the cost hurdle, more Anglo-Indians are succeeding at university. Anglo-Indian head teachers are well esteemed.

Two chapters summarise the integration of Anglo-Indians into the mainstream in Britain and North America. Many of those coming to Britain in the first wave of immigration in the 1950s found the reality of 'home' very different from their expectations, but the young make their friends, marry, and feel integrated into mainstream Britain, as seems also to be the case in North America. Whether in India, Britain or North America, a 'benign disinterest' by the younger generation in their Anglo-Indian heritage suggests that assimilation is well advanced. Most predict their community's demise as a distinct ethnic group. This is a detailed study, perhaps not so much for the general reader, as for those with a specialist sociologist interest in the Anglo-Indian community. (CH)

2002 CTR Publishers (no ISBN) Obtainable from the author at 3 B James Buchanan Drive, Monroe Township, New Jersey 08831, USA. (e-mail blairrw@att.net) £10.00 plus £1.00 postage pp236

A Princely Impostor? The Strange and Universal History of the Kumar of Bhawal Partha Chatterjee

The author tells an incredible story of courtroom drama, debauchery, family intrigue and squandered wealth, after a *sanyasi* (a travelling religious mendicant) appeared half naked and ash-smearing in eastern Bengal in 1921. The local residents identified him as the second Kumar of Bhawal, a man hitherto believed to have died in Darjeeling twelve years earlier, but with members of his immediate family, however, being divided on the issue of identification. It became one of the most extraordinary cases in Indian legal history of the period,

unwinding in courts from Dacca and Calcutta to London. The case affected the prominent landed Hindu family of Bhawal in what is now Bangladesh, and involved numerous doctors and bureaucrats, priests and prostitutes, peasants and professors, artists and soldiers, as well as the lawyers and judges. The case entangled in its web witnesses from Bengal, Nepal and the Punjab, including a large number of Europeans who then still dominated the governing institutions of Bengal. The crucial event, the supposed death of the defendant, Ramendra Narayan Roy, which formed the core of the court dispute had taken place in 1909, the corpse having allegedly not been definitely cremated. The judicial processes of the case and subsequent appeals were only completed in 1946, when the Law Lords delivered their final judgement in London, having faced the inevitable problem of deciding which of the conflicting accounts presented before them represented the truth.

Delving into history is one of the surest ways of understanding the past, this sensational legal case becoming a cause célèbre in the India of the 1930s. Its painstaking narration is fascinating, the author dedicating the book to the memory of his father, who loved to tell the story, as did most of the Indian media, when the reviewer was in his teens. To capture the mood of that period today would normally have been difficult, testing the historian just as making a spicy omelette tests the chef. But Chatterjee has achieved this admirably, the truth, in his opinion turning out to be undecidable, despite four years of research in Bangladesh, India and Britain. The complexities of this marathon case leave one feeling that the legal cases of our own times are comparatively dull. The absorbing narrative is appositely set against the larger history of undivided Bengal in the first half of the 20th century. (SLM)

2002 Princeton University ISBN 0-691 09030-0 £13.95 plus postage. Distributed through John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, Chichester tel: 01243 775878) pp429

Afghanistan: The Three Wars 1838-1919 Patrick Crowley

This striking regimental publication is an encapsulation of the three Afghan wars in general, and the participation therein of particular battalions. In outline, the participation of regiments in the three wars was as follows: a) The 1st Afghan War (1838-42) started as a result of the perceived threat to India from the Russians. The Queen's (Second) Royal Regiment of Foot and the 31st (Huntingdonshire) Regiment (later the 1st Battalion The East Surrey Regiment) took part. b) The 2nd Afghan War (1878-80) also began for the same reason. The 67th (South Hampshire) Regiment (later the 2nd Battalion Hampshire) and the 70th Surrey Regiment (later the 2nd Battalion East Surrey Regiment) participated. c) The 3rd Afghan War (1919) resulted from an Afghan invasion of the North West Frontier

of India. The 1/4th Queen's Regiment, 1st and 2/6th Battalions of the Royal Sussex Regiment, 1/5th Hampshires and 1/4th Queen's Royal West Kent Regiment were all involved. This participation was mainly from Territorial, rather than Regular, battalions. The Colonel of the Regiment, Brigadier E.R. Holmes validly recounts in his pithy Foreword that the aftermath of 11th September 2001 focussed the world's attention on that perennially intractable land, Afghanistan. There was much comment on the British forces' previous military failure there. In his opinion, the average reader might easily have been persuaded that the British forces' record in these inhospitable plains and mountains was one of dismal disaster, this publication aptly quoting Kipling's invocation,

'When you're wounded and left on Afghanistan's plains,
And the women come out to cut up what remains,
Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains
An' go to your Gawd like a soldier.'

Field Marshal Sir Gerald Templer termed the retreat from Kabul in 1842 'a disgraceful and humiliating episode', thereafter the defeat at Maiwand in 1880 was also possibly so, but General Sir Frederick Roberts' marathon march from Kabul to Kandahar was one of the highlights of Victorian campaigning. To conclude, this absorbing read, the reviewer cannot do better than invoke Brigadier Holmes' succinct summation, 'The causes of British reverses in Afghanistan are clear enough: under-estimation of the enemy; poor intelligence, hesitant command and fuzzy political aims. When these defects were repaired, the British record in Afghanistan was one that the regiments which fought there, including our regimental forbears, can be justly proud.' The research is very thorough and the narrative well organised. A useful chronology of events in the three Afghan wars also covers relevant events thereafter, pertaining to Afghanistan up to 2002. A simplified regimental family tree, and illustrations of the concerned campaign medals have been included within the back cover of this unputdownable regimental publication. Highly recommended. (SLM)

2002 Published by the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment, Howe Barracks, Canterbury, Kent CT1 1JY (no ISBN) £7.00 including postage pp52

A Child in Burma Grace Rorke

This autobiography is a loving memorial to a 1930s childhood. The style is direct and simple, with a homeliness matching the tempo of that era, when kids grew up in a world of serenity and self-confidence, now alas long gone. 'Grown-ups were too complicated. Life seemed so simple really, so logical. All they had to do was enjoy life, as we did.

But that's childhood, and all children should be allowed to have good memories.' But without the complicated grown-ups, of course, life could not have been so free. Father was Motor Transport Officer for the Rangoon Corporation. The family bond was strong: parents, grandmothers and a devoted ayah were always there to pick up the pieces for Grace and her brothers.

Rangoon was their base, but there were occasional excursions up-country. The hill village of Thandoung was a particular favourite, where the Karens ran the vegetable gardens and the nights were full of noises, hyenas calling to each other, barking deer, the cry of strange birds and the roar of large animals; one uncomfortable night was spent listening to a tiger rubbing itself against the walls of the house, purring contentedly. For readers of the same vintage and background, there will be a lot that is pleasantly familiar, not least Burma's annual water festival Thingyan, unforgettable days of joyful delirium when the city streets are awash and everyone, from mayor to mali, gets drenched. And what eats! We are taken to the Indian quarter. 'Mogul Street was terrific! The Muslims and Hindus had their food stalls and restaurants there. All the fronts were open, and charcoal burners resided on the pavements, and kebabs spluttered on them and sent out delicious mouth-watering smells.'

Life turns sombre in the closing chapters as the decade ends and then the Japanese invade. Mother and children are lucky to be pushed onto a plane bound for India. Father survives the struggle overland, but a beloved uncle dies on the trek. The Burma she loved had gone for good but the memories have remained a great comfort to her. The book has a charming cover and the printer to is be congratulated in achieving an unusual clarity in the photos which run with the text. An hour or so in the British Library would have rectified some strange spellings of place names. There are two references to a body called 'The British Colonial Army'. But these are minor quibbles in an affectionate and touching memoir. (JW)

2002 Scotforth Books, Carnegie House, Chatsworth Road, Lancaster LA1 4SL
tel: 01524 840111 ISBN 1-904244-15-7 £9.95 plus £1 postage

Letters from Madras during the years 1836-1839 Julia Maitland

This book first appeared anonymously in 1843, and its interest lies in it being one of the earliest published accounts by an Englishwoman in India. Julia arrived in India with her husband, James Thomas, a civil servant, in 1836, and returned to England after his sudden death four years later. Not all the time was spent in Madras because Thomas was appointed as Judge at Rajahmundry for a year and a half, and Julia spent the hottest summer months on the coast at Samuldavee.

From her letters, it is clear that Julia was a lively and intelligent woman, who adapted well to her new surroundings, having no previous Indian background herself. 'I think I shall like Madras very much, and I am greatly amused with all I see and hear', she wrote on her arrival. She made a study of exotic insects, which she paid small boys to bring her, sending specimens home to the British Museum. She painted the views at Rajahmundry with a skilled hand. Much personal information was omitted from the first publication, which the editor, Alyson Price, has been able to reconstruct from original family letters, and she has added useful footnotes too. Julia's insistence on missionary teaching, and her unshakeable belief that Indians would one day be converted to Christianity jars on the modern reader, but is very much of its time. Recommended. (RLJ)

2003 Woodstock Books, Ilkley Road, Otley, West Yorkshire LS21 3JP tel: 01943 467958 ISBN 1 85477 267 8 £30.00 plus postage pp207

Short notices

A Chronicle of the Greeks in India 1750-1950 Dione Marcos-Dodis

The author, a BACSA member, who was born in Karachi, and brought up in Calcutta, has written a lively history of her community in the sub-continent. There is much of interest here, not only about the churches and cemeteries set up by these enterprising people, but about the industries they started, from D. Macropoulo's 'High Class Cigarettes and Tobaccos' to the Ralli Brothers business empire. The aptly named Tony Mango, who came out to work for Rallis in 1939, is still there, now completely assimilated in his salwar kameez and shawl. Well illustrated with unique photographs of the Greeks at work and play. The parallel text is in Greek and English.

2002 Dodoni Publications, Athens ISBN 960-385-160-4 £16.00 plus postage, from the BACSA Secretary. pp189

Three Wives for the Planter Pamela Roper-Caldbeck

This is an evocative recreation of British life in Malaya in the 1920s, where the author came to live as a child of ten. Her step-father managed an isolated rubber estate, and the young girl thrived here with horse-riding, cycling and tennis. At eighteen she met and fell in love with her future husband, and the couple settled in Singapore, until their evacuation to South Africa, and separation during the second World War. A well-observed and well-written personal story.

2002 Serendipity, Suite 530, 37 Store Street, London WC1E 7QF tel: 0845 130 2434 £5.95, plus £1.00 postage & pp170

Notes to Members

1. When writing to the Secretary 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 already recorded. This 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.



The tomb of Lt Col Valentine Blacker in South Park Street cemetery, Calcutta