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**Contents**

Editorial

From the Land of Dracula to an English Rectory - <i>Peter Hubert</i>	2
A Lucas Family: From Ireland to India - <i>David Atkinson</i>	11
William Garnett, the Volunteering Major - <i>Michael Garnett</i>	26
Boy Soldier to Lancer: John Arnfield in the Anglo-Sikh Wars - <i>Ainslie Sharpe</i>	31
James Minty: Tracing the Life of a Soldier - <i>Cathy Day</i>	41
Dean Mahomed and Captain Godfrey Evan Baker of the HEIC Bengal Army - <i>Emma Jolly</i>	44
Reviews	52

**Contributions:**

The Editor is happy to consider material, articles, letters and information for inclusion in the Journal. Receipt of such material does not necessarily indicate that the material will be published.

Material should be sent to: The Editor, 80 Brighton Road, Watford, Herts, WD24 5HW  
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*Contributors should be aware that as a rule their articles will in due course be posted on the FIBIS website.*

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## Editorial

Three authors of articles in this issue remarked how it struck them that their ancestors were fighting in locations in which British forces were still engaged some century or two later. Many of us with military ancestors in India will have at some time thought much the same thing. The failure to heed past experience in these regions has been discussed at length by many commentators and doubtless, FIBIS members will also have a wide range of opinions on such matters. I am mindful that some of you will be personally affected by more recent wars, but perhaps you will still permit me a brief reflection from a family historian's perspective.

When studying the long-passed lives of young men who marched off to the medal or the grave, it is deeply saddening to know generations have swept past and yet the same happens in much the same places. It seems tragic that future genealogists will research men in today's wars as we do our Georgian, Victorian and World War soldiers. I can only hope they will think of them with the same respect with which we remember our ancestors.

*Sarah Bilton*

### **Peter Denzil Rogers (1932 – 2011)**

It was with particular sadness that we learned of the recent passing of Peter Rogers from the rapid onset of motor neurone disease. As FIBIS member no. 91, he was a long-standing and truly loyal colleague.

Peter was born on 7 August 1932 as the first baby to be born in a brand new nursing home in Oldbury. He delighted in explaining that the Staffordshire/Warwickshire county border passed through the middle of the building and that it took time for his father to determine where he was to be registered! Although his father had been born in England, his mother had been born in India and so Peter's connections with, and deep interest in that country had been established to cover several generations. He had seen service as a soldier in the early 1950s, fighting against the Communist guerrillas in the Malayan Emergency.

Few can claim to have contributed more to FIBIS than Peter. His first article for our Journal was published in Journal No. 2. He lectured to us on the subject of Indian Navy Pensions and the work that he had done in transcribing them, plus the 'special case' Soldiers' Pensions records (L/MIL/14/214 & 215). His final work, completed only in the Spring of this year, was the list of India-related persons in the 1892 *Kelly's Handbook to the Titled, Landed & Official Classes*. His expertise in matters of British India was matched by that in steam traction engines (he organized annual rallies in Suffolk).

Peter was a great believer in the 'Good-fairy serendipity' and often quoted examples. On one occasion, he came across a photo album left mistakenly in a photographer's shop in Suffolk where he lived. Nosily examining this, he discovered a glittering array of India-related photos. Having obtained the permission of their owner, he scanned and presented these to FIBIS and they can now be seen in our Database!

Our sincere condolences go to Peter's widow, Elona and her family. His great sense of humour, his cheery and sympathetic character plus his special form of wit, will be sincerely missed by all who had contact with him. In particular, I shall always recall the way that we both used to sign ourselves off on emails to each other as 'The Other Peter'.

Requiescat in Pace!

*Peter Bailey, June 2011*

# **From the Land of Dracula to an English Rectory, via the Sikh Court and India's Forests**

*By Peter Hubert*

My research began with some notes written by my mother, Kathleen Pocock, who was born at Devonport in 1910. She was providing some clues for family members interested in our forebears and their origins:

There was an Austrian doctor who married an Indian Princess...The doctor, I think, came from Transylvania...My grandfather worked for the Indian forestry department and gave his son his own names, Frank Irwin (Pocock)...I believe there were two members of the family who were generals in the Indian Army...The family originated in Ireland; they were Irwin Pococks...

My cousin produced a copy of a painting of a European wearing Indian headdress; the picture was titled 'Dr Honeybeyer' (maybe this was the doctor?); he also sent me nearly a dozen photos of people taken in India in the late 19th century and early 20th. None was dated or had the full name or names of the people; most had labels saying 'Uncle Leopold', 'Cousin Rose', 'Uncle Reynolds' and so on; none told me whose uncle or cousin, nor did we know who had given the photos the titles. One had the additional detail of 'Simla' and another 'Calcutta'. Family legend had it that my grandfather, Frank Irwin Pocock, had returned to Vienna with his newly widowed mother and his two sisters on the death of their father, Frank Irwin, in the mid 1880s. My grandfather was aged nine at the time of the move. With these stories in mind, I set about establishing some basic facts.

An early search of the internet led me to the FIBIS website and I joined up, knowing that as I lived in the South of France research might have to be done mainly through the internet. I searched through the FIBIS database and through every other database that I had open access to. I noted every reference to a Pocock who lived or worked in India. I managed to find about 250 references, some of which were obvious duplicates. With these I pieced together some possible family trees for families with connections to India. Two details were of interest: first, I found no reference to a Frank Irwin Pocock; secondly, I found duplicate references to the marriage in 1866 in Lahore of an Arthur Pocock and Maria Honigberger. I wondered if it was possible that during the First World War when anti-German hysteria was at a height, some family member had changed the German name from Honigberger to 'Honeybeyer'. A check on Google for 'Honigberger' produced a mass of information on Dr Johann Martin Honigberger. His story really is the stuff of drama.<sup>1, 2</sup>

## **Dr Honeybeyer**

Dr Johann Martin Honigberger, whose family was of Saxon origin, was born on 10 March 1795 in Kronstadt, now Braşov in the Transylvania region of what is now Romania. He trained to be a doctor and in 1815 he left his homeland and travelled by boat to Constantinople, almost ship-wrecked en route. In Constantinople he established a hospital

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<sup>1</sup> [www.thesikhencyclopedia.com](http://www.thesikhencyclopedia.com), 'Honigberger, Doctor John Martin'

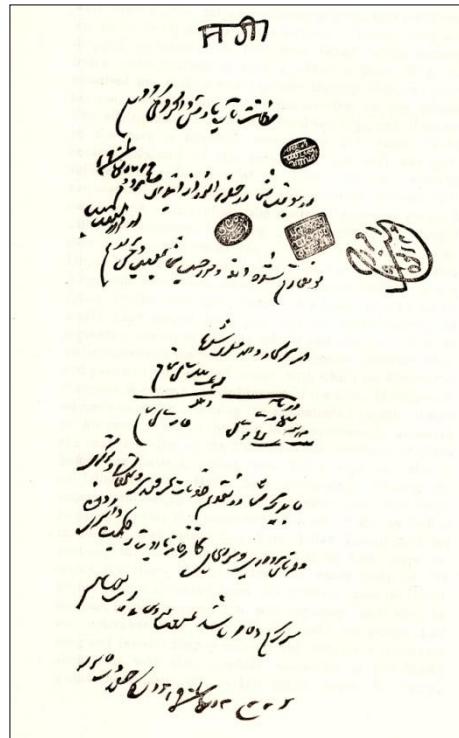
<sup>2</sup> The Honigberger Family website [www.honigberger.net](http://www.honigberger.net)

before setting out for Syria in 1822 as he was interested in an outbreak of plague there. A few years later he moved to Baghdad where he was appointed physician to the Pasha; he also opened and ran a hospital there. He left behind a wife in Kronstadt, Lisette Sutoris, who was from nearby Siebenbürgen and with whom he had a son, Constantin Honigberger; he was to become a magistrate in Iasi, in North-east Romania.

The doctor travelled to the Punjab over a four month period in 1829 and was appointed physician to the Sikh Maharaja, Ranjit Singh, at the court in Lahore. He seems to have become home-sick, for in 1831 he decided to set off for his homeland despite being offered the governorship of a province and a small fortune by the Maharaja. He went by a remarkably indirect route, going via Moscow and St Petersburg before finally reaching home in Romania in time for Christmas 1834. How he travelled is a mystery; he had started out with horses but they were soon after maimed as an act of terror by local tribesmen. After leaving Bokhara, Uzbekistan, he was taken prisoner and was fortunate to have negotiated his own release. His decision to go on to St Petersburg was a last minute one made on arrival in Moscow; distance, language and finance do not seem to have been problems to him – and this was before Visa or Mastercard provided cash and settled bills. Finally he went home; but he did not remain in Kronstadt long; he appears to have had an extraordinarily restless nature. He left home after only a few months and crossed Europe to meet a French officer, General Allard, in Bordeaux whom he had known in the Punjab and whose son he had cured of a fistula on the spine; the General had been serving in the Sikh Army at the time.

In 1835, whilst in Paris on his way to Vienna from Bordeaux, he trained in homeopathy which he was to use in all his further medical practice. He stayed in Vienna only long enough to pick up cholera from which he cured himself. From 1836 to 1838 he worked as a physician in Constantinople. He returned to Lahore in 1839 at the request of the Sikh Maharaja who was very ill and whose horse was also reported to be seriously ill. Dr Honigberger was reappointed Court Physician and Director of the Gunpowder Mill! A copy of the authority for the appointments is shown on the right. He also controlled the local prison and the lunatic asylum, which he had founded. Clearly he was a man of many parts! He was unable to cure the Maharaja, who died; whether the horse was cured is not reported.

The Maharaja's death in 1839 was to be followed by a turbulent and violent time that saw palace revolts and a lot of blood-letting. Honigberger and the few other Europeans at court were in peril of their lives more than once. Between 1846 and 1849 the British intervened



*Dr Honigberger's appointment to the Sikh Court, from Thirty Five Years in the East (see footnote 4) p181.*

increasingly and finally took over the kingdom, incorporating it into the Empire. Honigberger remained in the Punjab for a short period after the Sikh rule had been terminated; but he and the new British Resident did not see eye to eye; so, after travelling in Kashmir, he moved to Calcutta where he worked as a doctor until 1852; The *Bengal Directory* gave me his home address.<sup>3</sup> He had another spell in the Punjab from 1853 to 1855 to check on his two daughters before retiring to Romania with a British pension. He wrote a widely acclaimed book *Thirty Five Years in the East* in which he recounted his life and experiences in understated but gory detail; sadly, it contains no references to his wives or children. It was published in 1852 in London in two volumes.<sup>4</sup> The first volume is still available; the second volume is concerned with homeopathy and is no longer published.

Honigberger was to make two further trips to India before finally returning to Kronstadt in 1868. During his service in Lahore (probably in 1841) he married a Kashmiri lady from the court known only as Goolabi; what her status was at court is not known; there is no evidence to suggest that



*Dr JM Honigberger, plate from his book Thirty Five Years in the East.*

she was the Indian Princess that my Mother had referred to. She had two daughters by him, Maria (born in 1841) and Josephine Adelaide (born 1843). They were brought up by an English governess, Jeanette Robinson, and they were educated at Mussoorie at a school run by French ladies. It is probable that Dr Honigberger married Jeanette also; Jeanette died in 1868 in Nainee Tal in the Lower Himalayas, where she was living with the doctor. The younger daughter, Josephine, returned to Romania with her father in 1868; there she married twice but had no children. She died on 20 April 1885 in Kronstadt. Dr Honigberger died in 18 December 1869, also in Kronstadt.

The area of Transylvania is known as Burzenland and was settled by German-speaking peoples as early as 1192 and their descendants were to remain until 1982 and the fall of Communism. The Lutheran Church at Kronstadt has good records of births, deaths and marriages. I was able to access these records with the help of a German called Wolfgang Honigberger, who has developed a large family tree for the Honigbergers of Transylvania.<sup>5</sup> They were a close-knit group with many living in a village near Kronstadt until their emigration to Germany in 1982. Using these records it was possible to trace Dr Honigberger's family back a further three generations to 17 September 1738 when his

<sup>3</sup> *Bengal Directory and Annual Register* (1856) gives '27 Dhurumtollah Street, Calcutta'.

<sup>4</sup> Dr JM Honigberger, *Thirty five years in the East* (London: H.Bailliere, 1852); reprinted by Asian Educational Services, New Delhi in 1995.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfgang Honigberger's research can be viewed at [www.honigberger.net](http://www.honigberger.net)

grandfather was born; we know the names of the grandfather's parents but have no dates for them. The records also gave details of the two consecutive weddings in Kronstadt for the Doctor's daughter who had returned with him to Europe in 1855 – Josephine Adelaide.<sup>6</sup> I had hoped that this daughter had, like her sister Maria, married a Pocock, namely Frank Irwin, but that avenue was now closed.

### The Pocock Family

At about the time that I had found the full story of the doctor, I made contact with Graham Blakesley, another FIBIS member, who was also researching Pococks; he had been born Graham Charles Lovell Pocock and provided me with a lot of detail of members of his family. Many had worked in the Indian forestry department<sup>7</sup> from the 1880s but had been in India from the early years of the 19th century. The Indian forestry department was established from 1864 to bring some order to the hitherto uncontrolled cutting of the forests across the country; much of the destruction was carried out to provide sleepers and fuel for the rapidly expanding railways. With no controls, it was done in a manner that made no provision for the future. By the early 1860s sleepers were being imported from Norway and the provision of wood for fuel for the engines remained a problem until coal met the need. It was not until 1870 that the foundations of the department were well and truly laid with legislation in place to support the management of the forest resources. The forests were an extremely valuable resource, providing not only timber but materials for many other activities from dyeing to medicinal uses.<sup>8 9</sup>

The staff of the Indian forestry department were 'Uncovenanted Civil Servants'; they were, in the late 19th century, locally recruited from Europeans living in India. There were several grades of 'Conservator of Forests'. By the end of the 19th century these numbered about 240 men. In the early decades many were trained at schools in France and Germany. Employed on a provincial basis across India, they were responsible for managing the forests on a scientific basis. The Conservators of Forests were supported by a small team of Forest Rangers, Deputy Rangers and Forest Guards; across the whole country these totalled about 13,000. These were usually locally enlisted and were often Eurasians. They were, in general, poorly educated and trained. It was a lonely and often dangerous life. The Indian inhabitants resented the restrictions placed on the use of forests they had previously accessed without limit, especially for domestic firewood, and they were prepared to use violence to thwart the regulations.<sup>8 9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Josephine's marriages were to Captain Josef Hugo Safft (m.1873) and Karl Binder (m.1883). There were no children and Josephine died and was buried at Kronstadt in April 1885.

<sup>7</sup> The name of the forestry department varied over time and location, hence the generic term used in this article.

<sup>8</sup> Hugh Nisbet, *Experiences of a jungle-wallah* (Southeast Asia Visions, 1910)

<sup>9</sup> Details of the forestry department are from VS Rao, *100 years of Indian Forestry – 1861–1961* (New Delhi: Government of India Press, 1961)

A detailed examination of Graham's research results showed me several things. There was no Frank Irwin amongst the many names that formed his family tree and so there appeared to be no obvious link between our families. There were several names that were common to both his family tree and the one that I was developing – names such as Reynolds, Lovell, Reginald and Jeremiah. Amongst the other names, one brought to mind the marriage I had seen of an Arthur Pocock to Maria Honigberger; an Arthur Basil Trotter Pocock was born on 4 September 1845 at Haupper Stud<sup>10</sup> and christened a day later; such haste seems to have been normal and reflected the risk of children born in India dying young. Graham had not provided any further details of Arthur's life. There did not appear to be any relationship between blood lines for my mother and that of Graham's line of Pococks, but the commonality of the names and the fact that several were employed in forestry indicated that a link was probable. So, I was still looking for Frank Irwin and I had no firm link to the Doctor beyond family legend and a fine picture of him.

In November 2010 I made a rare visit to Britain and was able to spend most of three days at the British Library. I had read through two FIBIS booklets and Baxters before the visit and so had a fairly clear idea as to what I needed to look at and where to find it. The index of death certificates for members of the Uncovenanted Civil Service<sup>11</sup> gave me three Pococks: Arthur Pocock, Lovell Jeremiah Pocock and Irwin S Pocock. The last two I knew featured amongst those on Graham's tree; so I began with Arthur. Whilst waiting for the relevant file to be found in the bowels of the earth, I began the slow task of going through all the directories to search out the references to Pococks. Amongst 40 or so tomes of *Thacker's Directory*, *Bengal Directory & Annual Register*, *Bengal Almanac & Directory* and those from Calcutta I found several hundred brief but useful references. Many of these I was able to piece together to create the pattern of the career of nearly a dozen individuals. As previously stated, I was also able to confirm Dr Honigberger's presence in the Calcutta area, including his home address there in 1855. I similarly trawled through the military records in these directories and was able to add a further 25 or so references to a Pocock.

The death certificate for Arthur provided the following information: Arthur Pocock had died on 8 January 1886 in Lahore. He was at the time Superintendent of Forests, Punjab. He was aged 'about 40' and so was born in 1845 or 1846. The death certificate showed that Arthur lived at Babughar, Meerut. Arthur left no property. He was survived by a wife and three children who were all under the age of ten; no names were given in the certificate.

This was the 'Eureka' moment. Arthur had three children; my grandfather was the youngest of three children. Graham had produced details of the baptisms of Arthur's two girls in Lahore in 1874 and 1875, but we had not found one for a third child. I was now convinced that my grandfather, Frank Irwin Pocock, was Arthur's third child, as he was born in 1876, according to my mother, in Lahore.

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<sup>10</sup> Haupper is now called Hapur and is situated about 20 miles south of Meerut in Uttar Pradesh. One of the Bengal Army horse breeding facilities was located there.

<sup>11</sup> India Office Records: L/AG/34/14A Deaths in the Uncovenanted Service in India 1870-1949

With no financial support to bring up three young children, Arthur's widow, Maria, had little choice but to go to her 'family' in Europe to seek help. Her sister Josephine was already there, having returned with their father, Dr Honigberger. Maria would not previously have met any of the family other than her sister; she may not have spoken their language. Family legend records that she returned to 'Uncle Leopold' in Vienna; I have not been able to track him down, although we have a photo of him. So, that death certificate with its stark statements was able to convince me that Frank Irwin (senior) never existed; my great grandfather was Arthur. With a birth date of 1845 confirmed it was almost certain that he was the Arthur Basil Trotter Pocock in the family tree developed by Graham Blakesley.<sup>12</sup>

The two family lines had become one; in the process I had been able to add a lot of supplementary information about the lives of our shared family members. Furthermore, from the FIBIS database I was able to find that Arthur Pocock and his wife Maria Honigberger had married in 1866 and that they had an earlier son, Jeremiah, born in May 1873 who was to die aged nine months of whooping cough. This particular set of entries provided Graham and me with several moments of concern because the entry for Jeremiah's baptism described him as 'Jeremiah Honigberber (sic) Pocock' and his parents were cited as 'Arthur Basil Trotter and Johanna Pocock of Lahore'. For a moment there seemed to be a possibility that Arthur had married a Johanna and then Maria. However, it seemed too improbable that Arthur should have named his son 'Honigberger', the family name of Maria, even if Johanna had died in childbirth. Johanna was clearly an error. Jeremiah's burial register entry does not mention the mother and describes him as 'Jeremiah Honigbergen (sic)', so another minor error. The burial register also shows Jeremiah's date of death as 20 Jan 1873 and his burial taking place on the same date and therefore five months before his birth. Either the date of birth is in error or the dates of death and burial are wrong. A death notice in the *Times of India* reported Jeremiah's death as being on 20 January 1874 at Lahore.<sup>13</sup>

Thacker's *Indian Directory* had two references for Arthur Pocock; they confirmed that he was Superintendent of Forests for Punjab in 1884 to his death. My German contact, Wolfgang, had already found that Arthur and Maria had a son, Jeremiah who died young. But he had been unaware of the subsequent three children or what became of them.

What did become of those three children? Whilst in India they lived just south of Meerut and were reportedly educated at Simla. After returning to Europe, the son, Frank Irwin Pocock (my grandfather) went to a Lutheran theological college in Leipzig before moving to Britain in about 1903. In Britain he trained for the Anglican priesthood at the London College of Divinity and after ordination served in a number of parishes in the Midlands and

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<sup>12</sup> The website FamilySearch.org also confirmed Arthur's date of birth as 4 September 1845 at Haupper's Stud. But that site contained several errors of fact: it had Arthur dying in Sussex; it showed his grandfather to be Michael Pocock, when it was in fact Henry Pocock. Such errors no doubt result from enthusiastic attempts by genealogists trying to fit pieces of jigsaw together; in this case it was a correspondent in Australia who appeared to have no direct family connection.

<sup>13</sup> 'Domestic Occurrences', *Times of India*, 28 Jan 1874, as transcribed on the FIBIS database.



South of England. He married in August 1907 at Portsea and when I obtained a copy of his marriage certificate I was at last able to confirm that Frank Irwin's father was indeed 'Arthur, a forester', and not an earlier Frank Irwin. His sister Ella Josephine Pocock was born in Lahore on 22 Nov 1874; she went to the Leipzig Conservatoire before returning to Calcutta. She moved to the Hastings area before 1901 and she served in the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service from 1914-1920. She died in Sussex in 1957. Adelaide Pocock was born in Lahore on 6 Dec 1875; she returned to India after training at the Leipzig Conservatoire only to leave India finally sometime before 1901 when she moved to the West Country; she died in Sussex in 1952. Neither sister married. Their mother, Maria, also moved to Britain; the 1901 census shows her living in Hastings, near her daughter, Ella.



*The author's grandfather, Frank Irwin Pocock in Leipzig c.1900.*

Graham Blakesley's research had shown that Arthur was one of five sons and three daughters born to Jeremiah Pocock and his wife, Mary Ann Heritage. Graham has traced the family in India back to Henry Pocock who had a son John, born in 1794. But the Pocock connection may go back to an earlier date: diaries from the East India Company record that 'on the 10th March 1681 Mr Pocock was expelled from the service of the East India Company for misconduct'. Maybe we should not try to lay claim to him as a family member!

### **The Trotter Family**

Finally, I turned my attention to Jeremiah Pocock and his wife, Mary Ann Heritage. Graham had noted that they were married on 25 October 1839 in Mussoorie. Mary Ann was born in Chinsurah, India on 15 Jan 1820 and had been married before to a Henry Irvin Heritage. She and Henry married on 6 May 1834 when she was aged 15. He was a Sergeant in the 11th Light Dragoons. Poor girl! We have no records of children by that marriage. On FamilySearch.org I found details of her marriage to Jeremiah Pocock and of their children. The site also confirmed her earlier marriage. It was by no means uncommon for young widows to remarry in India. Mary Ann was still young and not encumbered with children. The site also provided details of her parents and therefore her maiden name. William Trotter was her father and he was born in Dublin in about 1795. At an unknown date he enlisted in the army and became, in time, a Regimental Sergeant Major in the 11th Dragoons.<sup>14</sup> He married Rosetta O'Toole, who was also born in about 1795 also in Dublin.

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<sup>14</sup> William Trotter had been promoted Corporal by Dec 1821, and Sergeant by Sept 1823. At the King's Depot, Chinsurah he was still with the 11th Light Dragoons but held the rank of Quarter-Master-Sergeant. Back in Meerut he was a Troop Sergeant Major by March 1833 and, in time, became a Regimental Sergeant Major. In 1838 he retired and took employment at Haupper Stud, holding the position of overseer in 1838. (Information derived from vital events.)

She sailed for India from Gravesend on 7 February 1819 on the *Atlas* along with her husband and other members of his Regiment.<sup>15 16</sup>

The Trotters had the following children: Mary Ann Trotter, born 15 Jan 1820 in Chinsurah (christened on 23 Jan 1820 at Cawnpore); William Trotter, born on 15 Nov 1821 in Meerut (christened in Dec 1821 at Meerut);<sup>17</sup> Lucy Trotter, born 12 Sept 1823 (christened on 12 Oct 1823 in Meerut); and Rosetta Trotter, born 22 Sept 1825 (christened on 7 Oct 1825 in Meerut). Their mother, Rosetta Trotter (née O'Toole), died at Chinsurah on 9 Oct 1826. William wasted no time in marrying again to Harriet by whom he had five more children: sons – Francis William, Albert Henry, Rigney and Henry Hauntz and daughter Rebecca. William Trotter died on 25 Aug 1839 at Haupper Stud. The record shows his burial as 25 Dec 1839 which seems improbable; he would have decomposed by then. William's daughter, Mary Ann Pocock (née Trotter) died aged 36 of 'diarrhoea (sic) with fever and ague.' She was buried on 26 Nov 1856 in the cantonment cemetery by Thomas Cartwright Smyth, the Senior Chaplain at St John's Church, Meerut.

In our search Graham and I uncovered events that related to about 150 people who had lived in India for part of their lives and who were members of various branches of what is more like a shrubbery than a family tree. Our quest was greatly helped by use of the 'FamilySearch' website. It was easy to use and provided lots of basic information on individuals – and it is free.

The path that I followed trying to unravel the family's origins confirms something that I read at the outset: namely that family legend is all too frequently just that. Yes, there was an Austrian doctor, but no Indian princess; my great grandfather was called Arthur and not Frank; there were no generals in the Indian Army called Pocock; the nearest I could get was a Regimental Sergeant Major and he was called Trotter and was Irish but not a Pocock; however we have some of his genes. I found an Admiral but he is not an ancestor. I found a highly decorated Lieutenant Colonel who was killed at Basra in 1917 (and still, nearly a century later, that place was to be the scene of British Army casualties), but he belonged in a distant branch of the family. Several of the photos that we possessed in the family were incorrectly labelled. That picture labelled 'Dr Honeybeyer' was not of a Honeybeyer, but of a Honigberger. Finally, I learnt that human error was a not infrequent feature in records of all sorts: I found Christian names transposed or altered and dates that were inconsistent; errors in website databases where dates were mis-copied and even

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<sup>15</sup> IOR: L/MAR/B/27J Ships' Journals, *Atlas*: Journal, 18 Dec 1813 - 3 Aug 1820

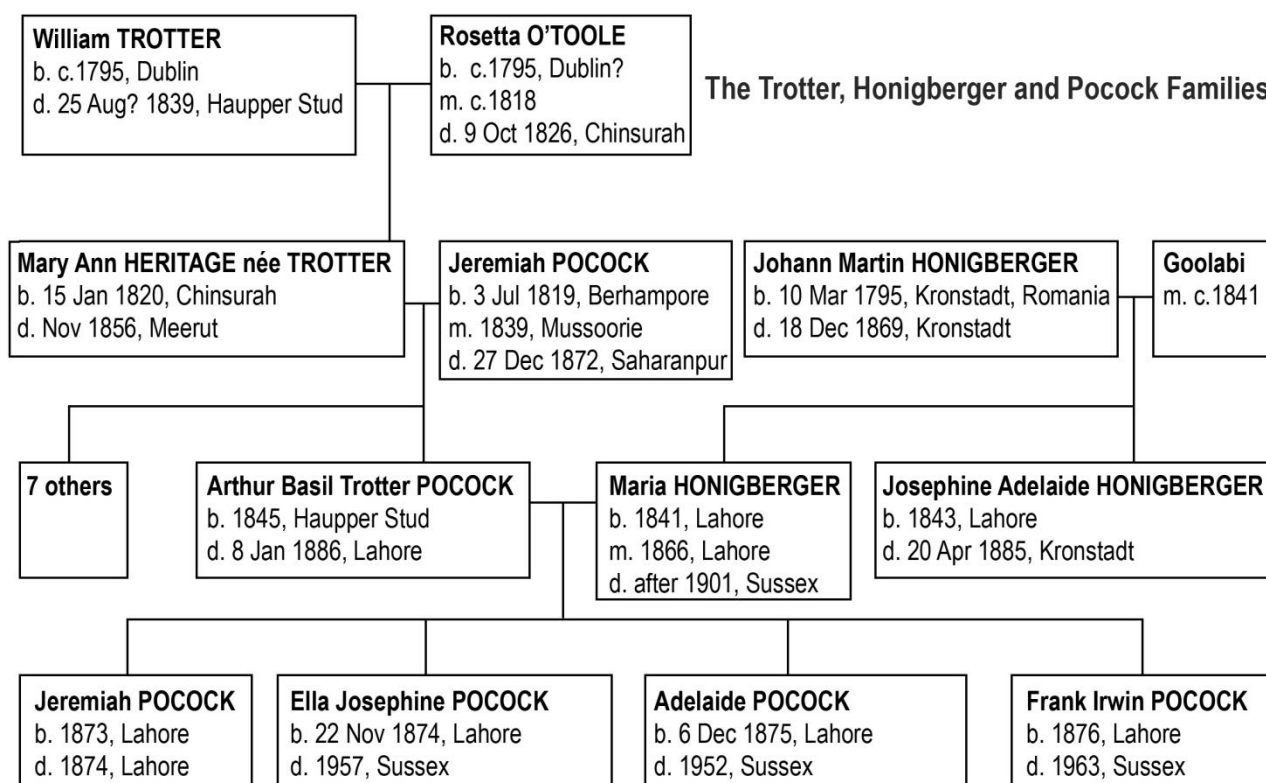
<sup>16</sup> The regiment arrived off Calcutta in July and, after a short stay at Fort William, made the long trip by boat up the Ganges to Cawnpore, where they arrived on 21 Oct 1819. From there they marched to Meerut to take up garrison duties, arriving on 6 Dec 1820. The regiment saw little fighting until the siege and capture of Bhurtpore in 1825/26. At the conclusion of the campaign the regiment returned to Cawnpore and thence to Chinsurah. The Regiment returned to Meerut in Feb 1832 for a further five years garrison duty. It finally left on 28 Jan 1837.

<sup>17</sup> William Trotter (b.1821) was to marry Ann Jane Carty with whom he had two sons: William Francis and Walter Francis.

places were confused. In most of these cases the mistakes were sufficiently obvious that I was not misled for long; no doubt I have added my own share of errors to the data! In my search I travelled down many byways and a few cul-de-sacs. The detailed research in the Indian records in the British Library and the records at Kew by Graham greatly eased my work; it was thanks to the FIBIS list of members' interests that this valuable collaboration came about.

*About the author:*

*Peter Hubert, on retiring from the army, developed three passions in life, apart from his family: Romanesque and pre Romanesque architecture and sculpture, birds (especially migration) and orchids; he lectures on all three, in English and French.*



## A Lucas Family: From Ireland to India

By David Atkinson

The following account anticipates the forthcoming 300th anniversary of the birth of one of Ireland's more colourful patriots and the 250th anniversary of the arrival in India of one of his sons.

The story begins with a young man of uncertain future, and a prominent father fleeing for his life: the landscape has suddenly changed - ambition has cast them in danger; prosperity has cut them adrift. A youthful Colly Lyon Lucas sits in the wings of history's stage...

'Preaching up Anarchy...this scribbler, this impostor, has fled from justice; is already declared an enemy to his country' railed a correspondent to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, of February 1750.<sup>1</sup> They were reacting to the seditious pamphleteering of apothecary Charles Lucas.<sup>2</sup> Lucas had shown up the officials of the Dublin Corporation as unworthy elected representatives of the citizenry, bearing in mind that the voters were a select few, and several members had been put forward by the various city guilds.

With orders for his capture, and imprisonment in Newgate, Dublin, Charles Lucas briefly contemplated surrender, but elected a swift boat to the Isle of Man and reached England, where he could evade the arms of the Irish judiciary. His family is known to have later joined him and one can assume this included the teenager Colly Lyon Lucas.

Colly (sometimes spelt Colley or Coly) appears to have been the eldest, although if he was born in 1731 as his tombstone at St Mary's, Madras suggests, then his father would have been only 18 years of age. Charles Lucas (who was to eventually marry three times), married firstly in 1734, Anne Blundell at Dublin. Hence it is likely Colly was illegitimate, yet he is remembered in his father's will, just as were his other siblings (or half-siblings).

Why such singular first names as Colly Lyon? There are no readily available explanations, although Mr Colly Lyons (d.1741), MP for King's Co., whose family motto was *Noli Irritare Leones* (do not pester the lions), was active at the time of our Colly's birth, and perhaps lionisation of this politician was in the thoughts of a young, politically aware Charles Lucas.<sup>3</sup> Or, perhaps the reason was more prosaic. No matter, and daring not to upset the Lyons (with, or sans 's') nor daring to affect their pride, the name of 'Colly' spanned at least five generations of Lucas descendants.

Once in England, Charles Lucas kept his head down, pursuing a medical profession. He travelled via Paris, to Rheims and Leyden where he took MD degrees in 1751 and 1752, respectively. On return to England in 1753 he went to London and Bath, cultivating a practice of good-paying clients and eventually becoming a licentiate of the Royal College of

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<sup>1</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol.20, Feb 1750, pp53-54 Letter extract

<sup>2</sup> Charles Lucas was a Protestant, whose English ancestors had arrived in Co. Clare in the 1600s.

<sup>3</sup> After all, one of Colly's younger brothers was named Lucius Hampden Lucas – more probably than not named after Sir Lucius O'Brien, MP.

Physicians in 1759.<sup>4</sup> It is not known if the Lucas family went with him to the Continent but Colly's future medical career was probably fed by his father's rich experience.

On reviewing Charles Lucas's *An Essay on Waters*, 1756, Samuel Johnson (the dictionary compiler) said of him 'The Irish Ministers drove him from his country by a Proclamation in which they charged him with crimes which they never intended to be called to prove, and oppressed him by methods equally irresistible by guilt and innocence. Let the man who is driven thus into exile for having been the friend of his country be received in every other place as a confessor of liberty, and let the tools of power be taught in turn that they may rob but cannot impoverish.'<sup>5</sup>

We have a momentary appearance of the Lucas family, listed as subscribers to *A Series of Genuine Letters Between Henry and Frances*, vol.1 (1757) a work of fiction by Robert and Elizabeth Griffith.<sup>6</sup> The list included our 'Mr Colley Lucas', his brother, Henry Lucas, of Trinity College, Dublin, Ensign Lucas (who may well be brother, Richard), and Charles Lucas, MD himself. The siblings we will visit later.

By this time Colly's medical training would have been in motion. His father's fortunes were changing and favour was smiling upon them. The accession of King George III in 1760 cleared the political atmosphere and Charles Lucas was pardoned and allowed to return to Dublin that year, opening the way for him to win a seat in Parliament, May 1761.

### Colly Lyon Lucas in the East Indies

A month later, 12 June 1761, Colly received his appointment as Staff Surgeon in the Army Medical Department of the British Army. On 5 March 1762, leaving from Spithead, near Portsmouth, a squadron in convoy under Sir George Pocock was sent on a secret mission destined for what was thought to be the West Indies. Aboard one of the vessels, the *Grosvenor*, was Colly Lyon Lucas. They arrived at Madras in August and according to the orders of Robert Adair, Surgeon-General and Superintendent of His Majesty's Armies,<sup>7</sup> Colly was to become Surgeon of the King's Hospital. The only problems were that the East India Company's Madras Council knew nothing about it, and no hospital for His Majesty's troops had been established.<sup>8</sup>

Brigadier-General Sir William Draper led the expedition in what later was to be known as the Battle of Manila. The attack on the Philippines, needless to say a Spanish possession, was undertaken by HM's Forces, which included troops who had awaited a new assignment in Madras, following success against Spanish allies, the French at Pondicherry.

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<sup>4</sup> William Munk, *The Roll of the Royal College of Physicians of London*, vol.II, pp223-227

<sup>5</sup> Reproduced in *A Forgotten Patriot: Charles Lucas 1713-1771*, by Sean J Murphy, <http://homepage.eircom.net/~seanjmurphy/epubs/lucas.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Elizabeth Griffith was the daughter of a Dublin theatre manager and also a subscriber to the aforementioned *A Series of Genuine Letters Between Henry and Frances*.

<sup>7</sup> Robert Adair (1711-1790) was an Irish-born, Dublin trained Surgeon, son of Robin Adair.

<sup>8</sup> Henry Dodwell ed., *Calendar of the Madras Despatches, 1744 -1765*, pp299-309 (for 1762-3)

The siege, which commenced 25 September 1762, lasted only 10 days and won a handsome ransom of 4 million Mexican silver dollars from the irresolute Manilans.

Much prior action had occurred in North America during the ongoing Seven Years' War (1756-1763), and through a quirk of the current mission and the regiment to which he belonged, Colly later appears in the North-American section of the half-pay lists.

On 9 January 1764, Colly was admitted into the Hon'ble East India Company's service at Madras, serving as surgeon in the field. Up until this time he was attached to the 96th Regiment which was due to return home. He was eligible to half-pay from His Majesty and this being understood by the Company, was advanced money ultimately repayable through the Paymaster of the 84th Regiment in Bengal, which quickly accrued to a bill of £250.<sup>9</sup> A month later he was recorded as a Senior Surgeon 'at camp, superintending the medical arrangements of the whole army and of the general hospital'.<sup>10</sup>

Order of appointment was extremely important in the HEIC's medical service, and was later open to vigorous debate as levels of seniority increased. Colly was to rank next to Mr Gray, who stood next below Surgeon Gilbert Pasley (d.1781). The timeworn distinction of surgeon versus physician surfaced when Colly Lucas challenged Dr James Anderson (a Scotsman) to the position of Surgeon General in 1786, when the Madras Medical Board was instituted.<sup>11</sup>

Anderson wrote: '...the whole Duty of the Manilla (sic) Department fell on me, **a twelve month before Mr Lucas even by his own account** ever thought of entering into the Service of the Hon'ble Company.'

But Colly asserted that '...he did not consider himself superseded by Anderson's appointment to Madras before him, because a Physician was then required, and he, as a Surgeon, made no claim to fill the post of Physician'.<sup>12</sup> We will return to his promotions shortly, suffice to say he lost this particular round of arguments.

Reports do not signify the activities and progress of Colly's work through the latter part of the 1760s and early 1770s, but given the rise of Hyder Ali at this time, and the First Anglo-Mysore War, one can be sure there was plenty of call for his skills.

### Fortunes of the Lucas Family in Ireland

Back in Ireland his father, crippled and deformed by hereditary gout, was becoming frail. He would still sit in the House of Commons, but needed to be carried in and out. He was thoroughly rehabilitated as a politician but it had been no path to riches. At his funeral on 4 November 1771, one of the largest processions Dublin had known wound its way through

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p358, & *Records of Fort St George*, p8 (for 1764)

<sup>10</sup> DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*, vol.1 (1914), pp300-1

<sup>11</sup> DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*, vol.2 (1914), p2: At the order of the Court of Directors, which formalised governance of the medical departments for each of the three Presidencies, in 'Regulations respecting Military Hospitals in India', 21 Sept 1785.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., pp14-16

the city to St Michan's Church where the burial took place. The only son mentioned among the mourners was Henry. We can assume Colly was still at Madras, and his brother, Richard, an army officer who had joined the HEIC in 1768, was in Bengal.

Within six months Charles Lucas' entire estate was dissolved. His library was dispersed and his town house at Henry Street, Dublin sold, as well as his country house in Penneville, Ballybough Bridge. All household furniture was auctioned.<sup>13</sup>

The circumstances of his wife and children were much reduced. For decades after, Lucas descendants submitted regular pleas for charity which were read by the Dublin Corporation and paid out.<sup>14</sup>

Much later on, Stephen Cullen Carpenter, a former HEIC officer of Irish birth, who became a reporter in Philadelphia, wrote about Charles Lucas' misfortune:

Thus it often happens in life that the fruits of one man's virtues, genius, and industry are devoured by a successor (The writer of this remembers to have had a curious illustration of this several years ago from Dr. Colley Lucas, then surgeon general for the East India Company's establishment at Madras. Lucas was the son of the celebrated Irish patriot, Doctor Charles Lucas. When the parliament voted Mr. Grattan £50,000 for doing what had been done before to his hand by Lucas and Flood, **Colley speaking of it said, with some bitterness, 'Ay, my father laid the egg – Flood hatched it, but Grattan has run away with the chicken.'**<sup>15</sup>

## Marriage and Life in Madras

At St Mary's Madras, on 12 May 1776, Colly's long bachelorhood came to an end with marriage to Martha Lee (daughter of the late John Lee, haberdasher of Red Lion St, Whitechapel and Elizabeth, née Temple), who was aged not quite 20 and more than 25 years his junior.<sup>16</sup> How London-born Martha should have come to be in Madras remains unclear, although her brother, John Lee, was appointed a cadet in the Madras Army this same year.<sup>17</sup> The union seems to have been unblessed by children and was full of long absences, although she was still Colly's beloved at the end. It was also patently one where he felt unencumbered by any conventions of fidelity to the marriage bed. One of his descendants is evidence to that!

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<sup>13</sup> Máire Kennedy, 'The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin', in 'Book Mad', *Dublin Historical Record*, Vol. 54, No.1 (Spring, 2001), pp48-71

<sup>14</sup> Multiple volumes of *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin: in the possession of the municipal corporation of that city*

<sup>15</sup> *The Mirror of Taste, and Dramatic Censor*, 1810, pp433-434

<sup>16</sup> Some time after her father's death in 1768, Martha went to live with her great-aunt, Sarah Ridgway. Between 1773 and 1776 Martha is said to have left for India, per Prerogative Court of Canterbury Litigations: *Newham & Raithby v. Savage*, PROB 37/133, The National Archives

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., John Lee was born the beginning of 1756; Dodwell & Miles, *Alphabetical List of the Officers of the Madras Army*: John Lee – Cadet 1776; Ensign 11 Feb 1777; Lieut. 21 Mar 1781; Capt. 14 Nov 1793; died May 1794

In 1783, as Martha was on her way to Madras (from England), a letter by Mrs Augusta Barclay, dated 20 November, Madras, to Charlotte Hickey, de facto wife of the memorialist William Hickey, (then in Calcutta), states quaintly 'Your little admirer, Doctor Lucas, is quite happy, for his fair rib will shortly be here'.<sup>18</sup> This is the nearest one gets to Colly's stature – 'little', in the estimation of these two ladies is an especially helpful clue.

He was also afflicted by deformity in later life, which became the source of a joke that was retold in English and French for more than 80 years after his death. Perhaps his only inheritances were to be tophaceous gout and a quick wit:

COLY LUCAS, a doctor of Madras, who was misshapen, having been laughed at one day in a large assembly, on account of the deformity of his right leg, which he in vain attempted to conceal under a long surtout, bet ten guineas that there was a still more crooked leg present.

When the bet had been accepted, he showed his left one.<sup>19</sup>

### Later Military Medical Career

In early 1779 Surgeon Gilbert Pasley wrote to a Madras Select Committee pressing the case for Colly's advancement, which was accepted:

As troops are at this time embodying for an expedition to Mahé, and reflecting on the inconveniences the Surgical department, as well as the Service, sustained at the Siege of Pondichery [1778] in charges [i.e. bills of account] exhibited by every Surgeon there and even by Assistant Surgeons, I think it incumbent on me on this Occasion to represent to your Honor, & c., the Necessity there seems to be for an Appointment of a Surgeon Major, that a regular and a single Channel might be furnished thro' which all field charges should come. Mr Lucas, from his Seniority in the List of field Surgeons, from his abilities as a field Surgeon, and from the length of his Services here, is the proper Person for this Appointment, if your Honor, & c., approve of it, with the Allowance of a Major annexed to the Appointment. Gilbert Pasley.<sup>20</sup>

In 1782 it was anticipated that Sir Eyre Coote would appoint Dr Colley Lucas 'Surgeon General of His Majesty's Forces', but Dr James Anderson would have none of this, instead urging the Government to title him 'Senior Surgeon in Camp' which compromise was agreed to. Whatever differences there were between Lucas and Anderson, they were able to serve together on an informal medical committee which had managed the Medical

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<sup>18</sup> *Memoirs of William Hickey*, Vol.3, p178. William Hickey (1749-1830) was the London-born son of Irish solicitor Joseph Hickey.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Orchard Beeton, *Beeton's Book of Jokes and Jests; or, Good things said and sung* (1880), p51; and Marin J George de La Voye, *Nouvelles Récréations Françaises, petit cours d'études*, (1844), p91; and *New Joe Miller; or, the Tickler. Containing upwards of five hundred good things, many of which are original, and the others selected from the best authors*, Second edition, with additions (London, 1800)

<sup>20</sup> From Madras Consultations, vol. LXVI, 14th Jan 1779, reproduced in Henry Davidson Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, vol.3, p176



Department from 1770.<sup>21</sup> To be fair, their extracted correspondence in *History of the IMS* is quite respectful and polite.

As already noted, Anderson was made Surgeon-General in 1786, but Crawford states 'a letter from the Court of Directors to Madras, dated 16 Feb 1787, ordered the abolition of the ranks and titles of Surgeon-General and Surgeon-Major, after the establishment of the Medical Board.'<sup>22</sup>

A reversal occurred at the build up of the 3rd Anglo-Mysore War in 1790 when Colly finally gained the coveted post of Surgeon General of the Madras Army. He was certainly at the siege of Seringapatam in February 1792, at the war's culmination,<sup>23</sup> which saw Tipu Sultan sue for a brief peace, before Lord Cornwallis's merciless onslaught in 1799.<sup>24</sup> A threat of arrest for contravening orders on 9 May<sup>25</sup> came to nothing, and by 6 June 1792 Colly was back in Madras, again sitting on the Medical Board.

### Other Activities at Madras

One of the people Colly became intrigued with was Stephen Popham (1745-1795), simultaneously an absentee MP for Castlebar, Co. Mayo, 1776-1783, attorney of Madras and private secretary to Governor of Madras John Whitehill.<sup>26</sup> He was not universally popular among men, because he had persuaded quite a few to part with their money in the cause of various entrepreneurial projects which he vigorously promoted. Among the victims was Mr William Cane, who was completely ruined prior to 1780; the south of France his only haven from debtors' prison, according to William Hickey's memoir.<sup>27</sup>

Mrs Eliza Fay in *Original Letters from India* calls him 'one of the most eccentric beings I have ever met...a perpetual projector'. When Hickey met Popham at Madras, 1783, he was undertaking the construction of 60 houses in the new development of Black Town.<sup>28</sup> Colly Lyon Lucas was asked to design a considerable part of the area and the following news item was reprinted in the *Calcutta Chronicle*, 6 Feb 1789:

From the Madras Courier,

On the 27th ulto, the new bazars raised in the Black Town by Stephen Popham, Esq. were honoured by the presence of Sir Archibald Campbell, Lady Campbell, the Comte de Byland,

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. p331; & DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*, vol.2 (1914), p1

<sup>22</sup> DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*, vol.1 (1914), pp302-304

<sup>23</sup> DG Crawford, *A History of the Indian Medical Service, 1600-1913*, vol.2 (1914), p194

<sup>24</sup> See: Praxy Fernandes, *The Tigers of Mysore* (revised 1991)

<sup>25</sup> Robert Southey, *The Life of the Rev. Andrew Bell*, vol.1, (1844), pp418-419

<sup>26</sup> *Hicky's Bengal Gazette or Calcutta General Advertiser*, 29 Jul-5 Aug 1780: 'By Letters from the Coast. We hear that Stephen Popham Esq, a Member in the Irish Parliament and a sworn Attorney of the Hon'ble Mayor's Court at Madras, is appointed private Secretary &c. to Governor Whitehill'

<sup>27</sup> *Memoirs of William Hickey*, vol.2 (1775-1782), p248 (William Hickey was not related to James Augustus Hicky, owner of *Hicky's Bengal Gazette*).

<sup>28</sup> Eliza Fay, *Original Letters from India*, (1817), pp163-164 & 278

Mr. and Mrs. Casamaijor, Sir Paul Jodrell, and a numerous company of ladies and gentlemen. The governor and his family were received at the south entrance of the great bazar, by Mr. Popham, Mr. Webb, the Mayor, &c. &c. &c. and were conducted through the several streets, &c. the expanded arrangement of which, and ingenious building of the several rooms and divisions, does much credit to the liberal perseverance of Mr. Popham, **and the architectural skill of Colley Lyon Lucas Esq; under whose superintendence and plan the work has been executed.** The tea and syllabub of the bazar fete were accompanied by the christening cake of the evening:- Mr. Popham's son was named after the Governor, who with Lady Campbell and Mr. Casamaijor, was sponsor.<sup>29</sup>

Colly's social networks were also likely to have been enhanced by the fact he was a Freemason. He is named as 'Colly Lyons Lucas, Esq., Master' at the inauguration of 'The Lodge of Perfect Unanimity', Saturday 7 October 1787.<sup>30</sup> The Lodge building later became the headquarters of the Madras Police.

He had a broad range of interests and it is amusing to read a letter written on 19 May 1789 from his appropriately-named residence, Lucan, to Dr Andrew Bell, the founder of the Madras system of education.<sup>31</sup> He claims to have discovered a perpetual motion machine...ridiculous of course...and maybe proof he had been too long in the company of Popham! Or perhaps he was simply animated by his 'natural daughter' and only child, Julia, who had been born just 6 days before:<sup>32</sup>

I have long wished the pleasure of showing you some pieces of mechanism, more particularly now before the *Swallow* sails,<sup>33</sup> by which I mean to send one to Lord Cornwallis, with some proofs, which I shall cheerfully communicate to you, that my assertions of having discovered the Perpetuum mobile, *durante materia*, are not without foundation. Your name will render it the best reception from the world, and which I doubt not you will give it in the most public manner on my laying undeniable proofs before you, wanting which I shall submit to the merited censure of a pretender.

'Medicis Julia Lucas, natural daughter of Colley Lyon Lucas, Esq,' was christened 30 November 1790, at St Mary's, Fort St George, Madras.<sup>34</sup> Sadly her mother is not identified, but is assumed by this writer to be Indian.

### On Putting on Noses

His greatest renown occurs in another controversy of which he was not the author, but rather, the posthumous subject. *The Gentleman's Magazine*, October 1794, described the case of a bullock driver named Cowasjee, who had suffered the indignity of having his nose

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<sup>29</sup> *Calcutta Chronicle; and General Advertiser*, Volume 4, Issue 162, Thursday, 6 Feb 1789

<sup>30</sup> William Preston, *Illustrations of Masonry*, (1796), pp317-319

<sup>31</sup> Southey, *ibid.*, p343

<sup>32</sup> Private Papers: Pedigree of the Rodgers Family, compiled by her granddaughter, Julia Haleman

<sup>33</sup> *Calcutta Gazette; or, Oriental Advertiser*, Vol.11, Issue 277, 18 Jun 1789: The Swallow Packet arrived at Calcutta, 12 June 1789, after a delayed sailing from Madras.

<sup>34</sup> India Office Records, Madras Ecclesiastical Register: 1790, Baptism. The first name Medicis comes from one of Colly's sisters, Mrs Medicis Oakes of Dublin, who was widowed before 1775.

amputated, as well as the removal of one of his hands, while a prisoner of Tipu Sultan in 1792. Subsequently, Cowasjee had his nose reconstructed, using a star-shaped skin flap raised from his forehead, by a member of the Brickmaker caste famed for their dexterity in such cases.<sup>35</sup> A wax sheet was moulded to form the shape of the nasal defect, and then flattened out again to be used as a template for the skin flap. The operation was followed by expert wound care techniques. Nose amputation had long been carried out as punishment, particularly for adultery, and skill in surgical repair had been acquired by these people.<sup>36</sup>

The letter writer signed himself 'B.L.', and wrote that he had come by this information through another letter sent by a friend in the East Indies. It contained a surgical description by Thomas Cruso (d.1802) and James Findlay (d.1801), both long-serving surgeons on the Bombay establishment who had observed the procedure. It also included a picture of an engraving made by the soon-to-be-late James Wales (1747-1795).<sup>37</sup> Prints of the engraving were earlier advertised for sale in *The Hircarrah*, Tues, 5 August 1794.

It had been suspected by a number of writers that 'B.L.' was Colly Lyon Lucas, but latterly the initials have been independently identified as those belonging to the reputable London engraver, Barak Longmate, junior.<sup>38</sup>

There is more to this however. Colly may well have been the first European to learn the Indian method, *and to perform it*. One Major Heitland is quoted as saying 'in the time of Hyder Ali, Mr Lucas, an English surgeon, was, in several instances, successful in the operation which he copied from the Hindoo practitioners.'<sup>39</sup> This would have been prior to 1783.

Another controversial point is that a far more detailed, yet curiously similar letter (un-illustrated however) is quoted in the *Bombay Courier*, Saturday, 4 April 1795, six months after the BL letter. The article states:

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<sup>35</sup> This native surgeon had been brought to Poona by the Resident, Sir Charles Warre Malet. See: TJS Patterson, 'The Transmission of Indian Surgical Techniques to Europe at the End of the Eighteenth Century', in *UK Proceedings of the XXII International Congress of the History of Medicine*, (Oxford, 1974), p695-6

<sup>36</sup> It was a brutality that Europeans engaged in too. For example, in 1852, JE Mathwin a British subject residing at Benares, was sentenced to transportation to Tasmania for 10 years, for cutting off his wife's nose. (*The Friend of India*, 14 Oct 1852 and *Allen's Indian Mail*, Vol.X, No.209, 3 Dec 1852, p673)

<sup>37</sup> Patterson, *ibid*. Wales's daughter married Sir Charles Warre Malet, Acting Governor of Bombay.

<sup>38</sup> PJ Sykes, IS Whitaker, K Shokrallahi, 'Another Barak From Earlier Times: Elucidating the Origins of Rhinoplasty and Solving the "B.L." Mystery,' in *Annals of Plastic Surgery*, Vol.63, No.1, (Jul 2009), pp2-5 and RC van de Graaf, 'How Do We Know for Sure That Barak Longmate (1768–1836) Wrote the "B.L. Letter?"', in *Annals of Plastic Surgery*, Vol.64, No.2, (Feb. 2010), p258

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, quoting JC Carpue's *An Account of Two Successful Operations for restoring a Lost Nose*, London, (1816), p40

We think it much to be lamented, that the Europeans whose talents have been devoted to the literature of India, have applied themselves rather to the Speculative, than to the practical parts of knowledge, and that their discoveries, however meritorious, have been more curious than useful.

...we think that in two operations we may still receive instruction, the first of these is the depression of the Chrystalline lens when it becomes opaque (sic); and the second the formation of Noses. We may also remark that with Instruments far more imperfect than ours, they perform the operation of Lithotomy in the very place which by the consent of modern Surgeons is esteemed the best.

We have seen a Letter from Mr. Lucas, an ingenious Surgeon of Madras, describing very particularly the operation of putting on Noses, which one case he himself performed with success. This differs but little from the Indian method practised by the Koomas, a cast of Hindoos: with which, as it has been ably described by a Gentleman who witnessed the process, we shall conclude these observations.

What follows is a detailed outline of the procedure with full medical terminology, which convincingly appears to be the template for Cruso's and Findlay's summarised account. By inference, this author (David Atkinson) suggests they had scooped the work of Colly Lyon Lucas and in bringing this knowledge to Europe, had beaten him ...by a nose!

### The Passing of Colly Lyon Lucas

*The Bombay Courier*, 10 December 1796, announced the arrival of Martha Lucas at the Madras roads, on the ship *Asia*, Capt. Foulkes, Wednesday, 16 November 1796. One can assume she was by Colly's side in his final days and on 15 March 1797 he wrote his will<sup>40</sup> naming her Executrix, along with his friend Richard Chase,<sup>41</sup> Executor. A week later he was dead, finding his final resting place at St Mary's burial ground:

Here Lieth the Body of Colly Lyon Lucas Esq're Chief Surgeon in the Hon'ble East India Company's Service and a Member of the Medical Board who died on the 23rd. of March 1797 Aged 66 Years <sup>42</sup>

He left his worldly property to Martha, but only on the absolute condition that within six months of his passing she should discharge the bequest of 1000 Star Pagodas in favour of his 'Natural Daughter commonly called Julian or Julia Lucas.' To his 'beloved Sister Mrs



Robin Cary Askew.

<sup>40</sup> Will of Colly Lyon Lucas, Surgeon Major in the HEIC, Madras, PROB 11/1312, proved 14 Sep 1798

<sup>41</sup> Richard Chase was Mayor of Madraspatnam in 1799/1800. On 15 May 1798 he married Elizabeth Neale, aunt of one Frederick Arthur Neale, who wrote a number of Asian travel accounts in the 1840s-1860s.

<sup>42</sup> Transcription by Robin Cary Askew, Rootsweb INDIA-L online archive, 6 Jan 2007

Juliana Fforster', at this time a widow in Dublin, he left the same amount.<sup>43</sup> He remembered all his servants with the lieu of two months' wages and to his faithful servant, Andy, an additional 25 Star Pagodas.

Colly's house was sold almost immediately, for the purposes of a Naval Hospital.

Admiral Rainier announced in April [1797] that, after personal communication with Lord Hobart, he had 'purchased the Mansion late **Doctor Lucas's** to separate the Naval from the Military Hospital..., the patients being too numerous for accommodation in the General Hospital'<sup>44</sup>

*Vestiges of Old Madras* tells us that the Naval Hospital was on the same site which was later occupied by the Gun Carriage Factory in Poonamallee Road. The road which skirted its eastern side is still known as Naval Hospital Road.<sup>45</sup> The book by the Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Committee adds 'in 1808 a new naval hospital was built, on the site chosen in 1784, and ...was used up to 1831.'<sup>46</sup>

### Mrs Martha Lucas

DG Crawford, author of *History of the Indian Medical Service* made several comments about the special approval for Martha to be awarded her husband's pension. It was granted at ¼ the subsistence of a Colonel. A thorough search, by a kind FIBIS volunteer, of the available records of Lord Clive's Poplar Fund threw up a series of blanks. The reason becomes clear in the following.

On 21 February 1798, Martha departed Madras aboard the ship *Friendship*.<sup>47</sup> And out of this *Friendship* vessel a marriage cup was made for Widow Lucas.

The ship was a 3-decked, 407-ton boat, measuring 118ft length and 28 feet breadth. It was roughly the size of most Indiamen plying the oceans. She was captained by John Newham, who left Falmouth 11 May 1797, reaching Calcutta 28 Oct, and eventually Madras 4 February 1798. Just 17 days later he was ready for the return journey via the Cape of Good Hope and St Helena, carrying Mrs Lucas - with her husband's will in hand. They passed Portsmouth 31 July 1798.<sup>48</sup>

The *Friendship* was classed as an 'extra ship' and was one of 39 Indiamen expected from the East Indies that annual sailing season. It had carried 125 boxes of indigo and 121 bales of cotton.<sup>49</sup> The ship's log, deposited in the India Office Records, ends 10 September 1798.

Colly Lyon Lucas's will was read at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC), 14 September 1798, when probate was given to Martha. That out of the way she was ready to

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<sup>43</sup> Mrs Juliana Fforster (or Foster), was the widow of Edward Foster (c.1739-1779), MD (Edin), who ran the Lying-In (Obstetric) Hospital, Dublin, after he left Derry in 1771.

<sup>44</sup> Henry Davidson Love, *Vestiges of Old Madras*, vol.3, p514

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, pp514 & 569

<sup>46</sup> *The Madras Tercentenary Commemoration Volume*, (August 4, 1939) , p57

<sup>47</sup> per the 'Madras Courier', in *Bombay Courier*, 11 Mar 1798

<sup>48</sup> *The Times*, Thurs, 2 Aug 1798

<sup>49</sup> *Observer*, Sun, 5 Aug 1798; Issue 346

marry again. Doing so cancelled any rights to a widow's pension. Thus on 24 October 1798, at St Andrew's Holborn, Martha became Mrs Newham.<sup>50</sup>

The witnesses were John and Kezia Raithby, the sister and brother-in-law of Martha. John Raithby was a lawyer who was called to the bar and practised in the Chancery courts. He wrote volumes on statutes and legal practice which were well regarded. Formerly he had been a stationer at St Michael's Alley, Cornhill.<sup>51</sup>

The Newhams had at least two children, John Richard Newham, b.25 February 1800 and Daniel Raithby Newham, b.25 April 1802.

Martha's oldest sister, Sarah was the fourth wife of Rev Richard Clarke (1723-1802), a prolific writer of arcane religious material who had spent several years in Charleston, South Carolina. He held universalist and millennialist beliefs, preaching a doctrine of universal redemption and expecting Christ's return in 1813, based on a complicated numerology.<sup>52</sup> <sup>53</sup> Despite these controversial ideas he remained in the Anglican fold. One of his most frequently quoted works was a long satirical poem written in 1773, entitled 'The Nabob: or, Asiatic Plunderers', which condemned the rapacity of the East India Company and upbraided the House of Commons' excusal of Robert Clive for pocketing a fortune during his administration. Clarke fizzes with irony: 'Monsters there may be ...Who rob the Indian, and not call it theft...How different they from generous Sykes or Clive!'

### More Lucases in India

As mentioned earlier, Colly Lyon Lucas had a brother, Richard who also came out to India. After 35 years military service in the Bengal Army he was made Major General<sup>54</sup> on 3 November 1803 and died 26 March 1804, at Sultanpore, Oudh.<sup>55</sup> It is stated in *Bengal Past and Present* that he died as the result of a fall from a horse, but on closer examination this appears to be a misreading of the death announcement, which runs into the very next one. His estate was worth a substantial three lakh Rupees.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, Thurs, 25 Oct 1798; Issue 6374 and Marriage Register, St Andrew's Holborn

<sup>51</sup> Biographical entry for John Raithby in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online*

<sup>52</sup> Several of his works in the mid-1790s were sold by John Raithby, who was a stationer of St Michael's-alley, Cornhill prior to becoming a lawyer.

<sup>53</sup> RC Cole, 'Richard Clarke and the Royal Literary Fund', *Notes and Queries*, March 1998, pp82-86; David Atkinson, 'More on Richard Clark', *Notes and Queries*, Sept 2011.

<sup>54</sup> *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol.94, Nov 1803, p1082

<sup>55</sup> Dodwell & Miles, *Alphabetical List of the Officers of the Bengal Army*

<sup>56</sup> 'The Indian Journal of William Daniell' in *Bengal: Past and Present*, Vol.48, Part 2, 1934, pp89-90 and *The Asiatic Annual Register*, 1804, p179, Deaths. In contrast Claude Martin (d.1800), of Lucknow, had a net wealth of 40 lakh Rupees (see Dr Maya Jasanoff, *Edge of Empire: Conquest and Collecting in the East 1750-1850*, (2005), p73.

In his will written six days before his death<sup>57</sup> Richard Lucas stated that he was born in Dublin and that he was 'in some bodily pain from frequent Gouty attacks,' which seems to be as good a mark of his lineage as any family coat of arms.

He had five children to at least three women, including servants Ffyzan and Serina. The oldest son, Charles Lucas, was an officer in the Madras Army.<sup>58</sup> Colley, who was next, had the same mother as Charles and was given 2,000 Sicca Rupees and a house and premises at Burrangang, Oudh.

Ffyzan, 'my favourite female servant' was the mother of John Edward Lucas 'my reputed illegitimate son.' She was awarded 20 Sicca Rupees per month, for life, and John Edward was provided for an education. Serina was the mother of two deceased daughters. She was bequeathed 1,000 Sicca Rupees and Richard's estate at Secroa Bahraich, Awadh.

A charming codicil was written in favour of young Colley:

I further bequeath to my reputed natural Son Colley Lucas my favourite Elephant Mootie with her Howda and trappings complete.

The distinctions of 'illegitimate' and 'natural' children are interesting findings here. Might it be that Richard had gone through at least one marriage ceremony?

It was not until 1812 that his will was filed at the PCC, London, by Robert Downie, Esquire, of agents Messrs Downie & Maitland, Calcutta.

## **A Second Sprouting of Collys**

One of Dr Colly Lucas's nephews, Colley Lyons Lucas Foster (1778-1843), son of Juliana and Dr Edward Foster, was granted 'a sum of £100, for fitting out and sending him to the East Indies' by the Dublin Corporation<sup>59</sup> in 1797, in the form of a 6% bond. However, he ended up as an Ensign in the South Gloucestershire Militia and in 1801 entered the second battalion of the 52nd Regiment of Foot as Lieutenant. This became the 96th Foot in 1803. He served in England and Ireland until 1804. He was then sent to Jamaica and acted as aide-de-camp and military secretary to Lieutenant Governor Sir Eyre Coote,<sup>60</sup> and the Governor, Duke of Manchester, until 1811.

In 1814 Colley Foster was appointed Military Secretary and Adjutant-General of the Upper Canadian Militia. He remained in Canada the rest of his life and in 1838 was briefly Commander of Forces in Upper Canada.<sup>61</sup> Colley married twice and almost predictably, at

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<sup>57</sup> Will of Colonel Richard Lucas, of the Honorable Company's Service, of Dublin, PROB 11/1534, proved 8 Jun 1812

<sup>58</sup> *The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Miscellany*, Vol.4, Aug 1817, p.208: 'Deaths. Oct 25 (1816) at Vizagapatam, Major C Lucas, Carn. Europ. Vet. Batt.' [Carnatic European Veteran Battalion]

<sup>59</sup> *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin: in the possession of the municipal corporation of that city*, vol.15, (1911) pviii, p35 & p206

<sup>60</sup> Nephew of Irishman General Sir Eyre Coote, who was Colly Lyon Lucas's champion (p16).

<sup>61</sup> *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*

least two of his sons gained the appellation of 'Colley', which was passed to successive generations of the Canadian Fosters.

### Julia Lucas and her Family

It is not known who cared for Julia Lucas in India after her father's death. The Newhams had gone for good and Richard Chase had returned to London with his family in 1800.<sup>62</sup>

On 20 May 1808, Julia married Joseph Rodgers, natural son of the late Major James Rodgers (c.1758-1800), of the Madras Army and Military Auditor General of Ceylon. They were of Madras but settled at Cochin where Joseph carried out business as a merchant for many years.

They had a large family and their tale is beyond the scope of this essay, but it is important to point out that their eldest son was named Colly Lyon Rodgers, born on Whit-Sunday, 16 June 1811.<sup>63</sup> Like four of his brothers he took to the sea, becoming a ship's captain. This Colly died at Calcutta, 4 June 1844,<sup>64</sup> leaving a widow, two sons and a daughter. While the children were still young the wife too died. Her name was Frances, daughter of Francis Kelly (c.1784-1846), Deputy Superintendent of Police and Police Magistrate at Madras.

A generation passed, then the name Colly had its reprise, by which time its significance had been lost, the only memory being that there once had been an Irish grandmother of Cochin who had brought up some orphans.

We reach the coda by way of an odd congruity. Julia Lucas lived out the rest of her life at Cochin and died there at the age of 73, on 6 Jan 1863.<sup>65</sup> The cause of death was given as elephantiasis. To those unfamiliar with this condition, filarial protozoa invade the lymphatic system and cause swelling of the lower limbs. A common name for the condition was 'Cochin Leg', due its prevalence in these parts. The Sanskrit word is 'Gaja-pada', or literally 'Elephant's Foot'.<sup>66</sup> Thus how strangely Julia's end mirrored her father's famous deformities.

#### *About the author:*

*David Atkinson is a New Zealand doctor whose dabblings in family history have drawn him into biographical research as a hobby. His mother is of Anglo-Indian birth, hailing from Dehra Dun. She left India as a child at the time of Partition. Regaled, when young, with many tales of India from his*

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<sup>62</sup> Leaving the Madras roads, 15 Apr 1800, aboard the HEIC ship *Charlton* per 'Madras Courier', 16 Apr 1800, reproduced in *Bombay Courier*, Vol.9, Issue 398, 10 May 1800

<sup>63</sup> Private Papers: Pedigree of the Rodgers Family, compiled by his daughter, Julia Rose Haleman

<sup>64</sup> *Bombay Times and Journal of Commerce*, 19 Jun 1844 (Transcribed by FIBIS volunteers):

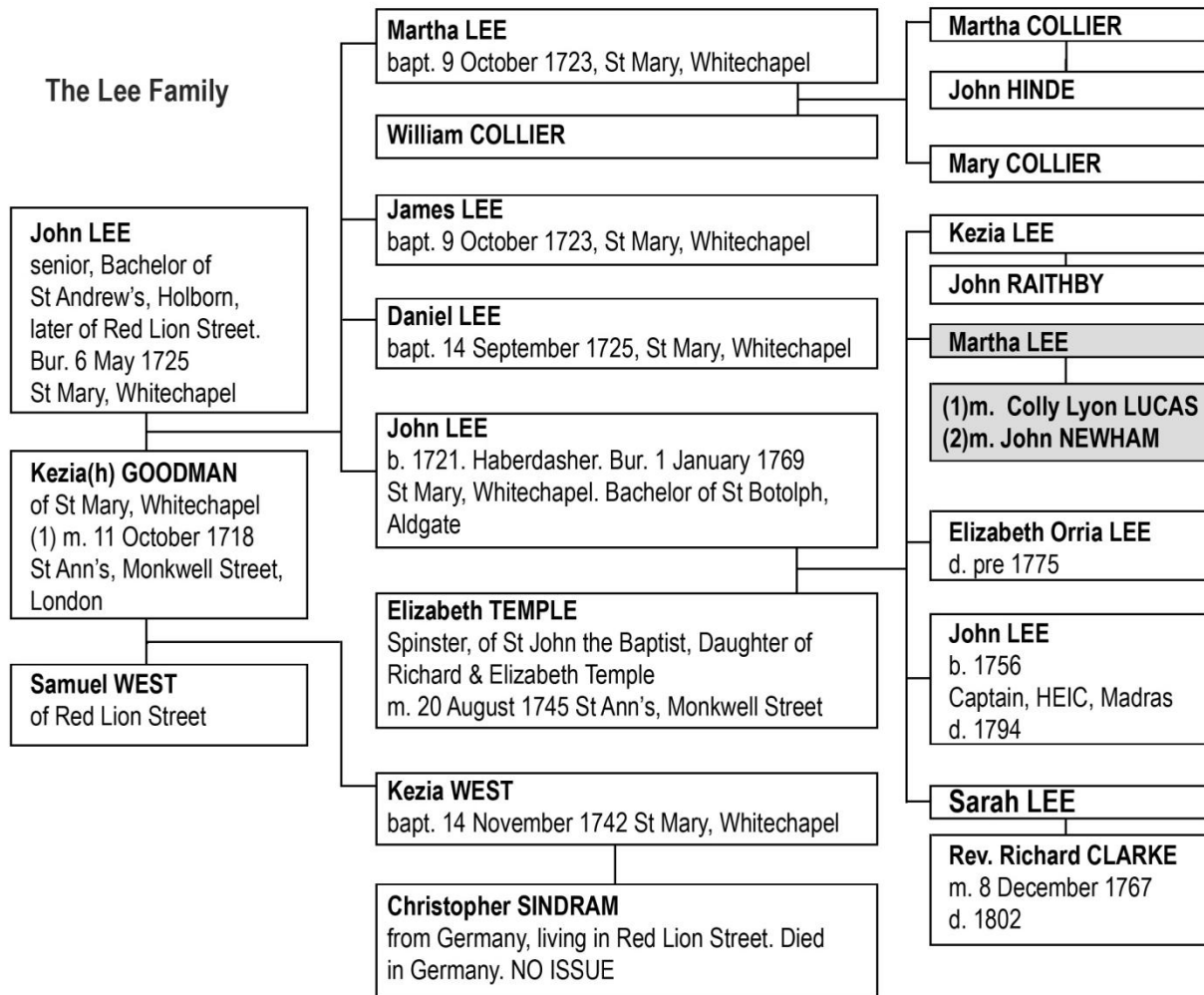
'At Calcutta, on the 4th June at 11-30 pm, Captain Colley Lyon Rodgers, son of Joseph Rodgers, Esq of Pondicherry, aged 33 years 11 months and 19 days, much regretted by his relatives and friends'.

<sup>65</sup> India Office Records, Madras Ecclesiastical Register: 1863, N/2/44/29 (Burial)

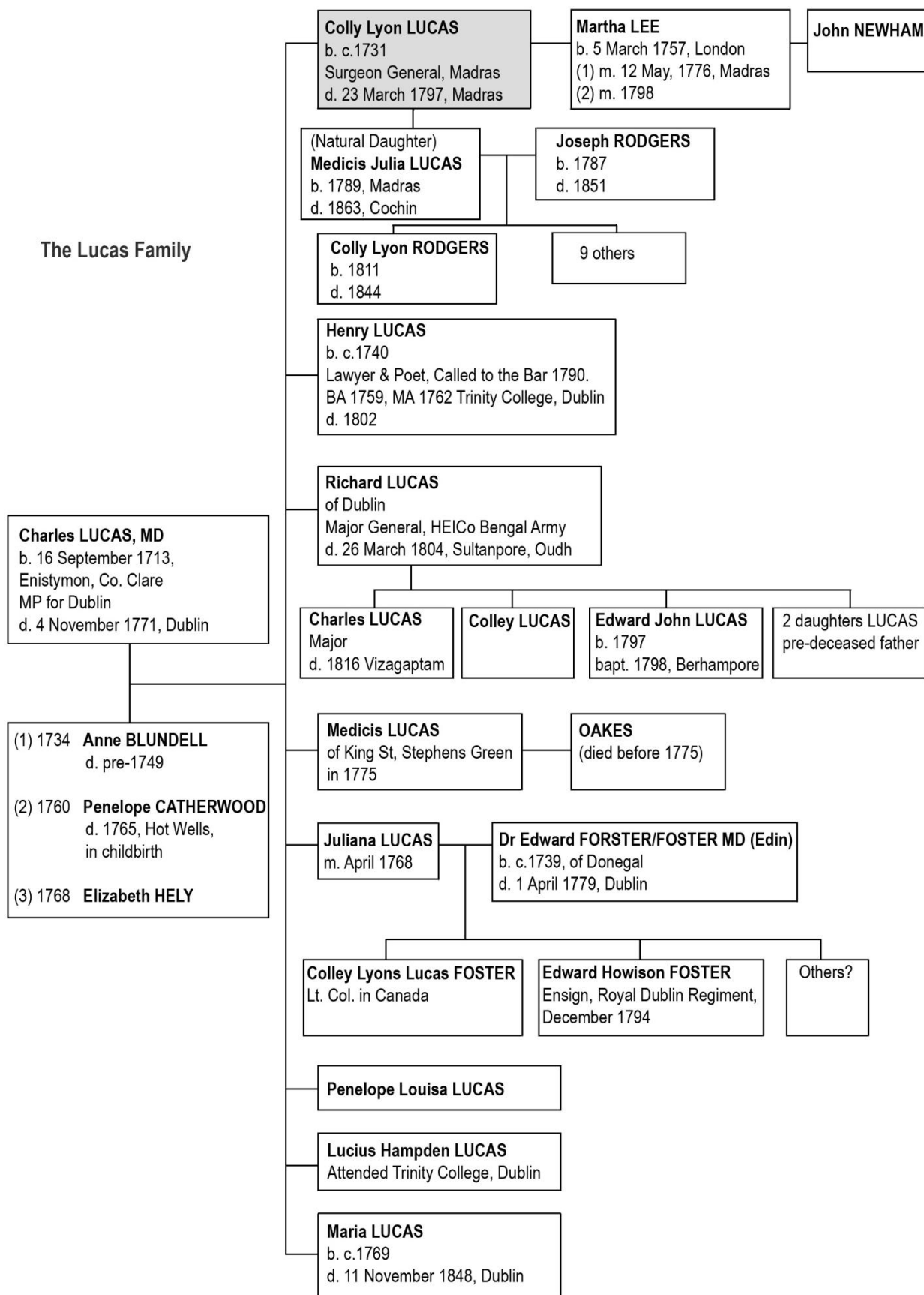
<sup>66</sup> *Hobson-Jobson: A Glossary of Colloquial Anglo-Indian Words and Phrases*: Entry for 'Cochin Leg'



grandmother, he now derives great pleasure in re-discovering the stories of a rich and complex heritage, which go many generations deep. He is a direct descendant of Colly Lyon Lucas.



# The Lucas Family



## William Garnett, the Volunteering Major

*By Michael Garnett*

This is the story of my grandfather who came from a poor country family in Northamptonshire and ended his career as a well respected soldier in India. In circumstances unique to colonial India he ended his days on the establishment of two different military units, and holding three different ranks.

William Garnett was born in the village of Cold Ashby in 1856 the year prior to the Indian Mutiny. He left the land to try his hand as a shoemaker in Northampton Town where, in 1877 he was enticed to join the British Army for better pay. After training with the 6th Dragoon Guards at the Cavalry Depot in Canterbury, he boarded the troopship *Malabar* to join his regiment in India, arriving at Umballa Depot on 10 January 1880. The following month Private William Garnett left to join the service companies participating in the unsuccessful 2nd Afghan War.

The 6th Dragoon Guards (Carabiniers) had arrived in India just prior to the 1857 Mutiny and were based at Meerut, where the initial rebellion broke out. Along with the other British regiments based there, it is apparent that they did not cover themselves in glory, as various sources attest. This was due to the inept commanding officer General William Hewitt who refused to fight.<sup>1</sup>

When William Garnett joined them in Afghanistan, the 6th Dragoons were operating in a supporting role. They were part of the Field Force led by General Roberts and, together with the 8th Hussars, the 6th Dragoons patrolled the road and protected the reinforcements and the constant stream of supplies. They also had to pursue gangs of tribesmen who tried to cut the telegraph lines and ambush supply columns. So, the regiment were not on the front line, which is probably the reason William did not have any clasps to his Afghan Medal.

William's postings during the war included Jellalabad, Camp Safed Sang and Gandamak returning afterwards to Nowshera and Sialkot where he remained until March 1883. During this period he was promoted to lance corporal and then to corporal.

In 1883 whilst at Dalhousie, William applied for transfer to the Bengal Unattached List (UAL) which had a reputation for providing better career prospects for those serving in the ranks. His application was successful and he was posted to Cawnpore, a large military establishment on the River Ganges where he would remain for the rest of his military career. Whilst William was henceforth listed as belonging to the 6th Dragoon Guards, he was never in fact with the regiment again after 1883; he was in effect 'Unattached from the 6th Dragoon Guards'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sources include a number of books on the Indian Mutiny, including John Harris, *The Indian Mutiny*, (1973), pp33-59.

<sup>2</sup> In the event of 'misbehaving' or not coming up to par, an unattached soldier was always liable to be returned to his regiment.

There were many appointments with good potential rewards connected with the military departments in India which were filled exclusively from the ranks of the army, mostly by non-commissioned and warrant officers. These departments were chiefly the Commissariat, the Barrack, the Ordnance, the Clothing and the Stud and Remount. All such men were borne on the army's effective strength, and all were placed on the 'unattached list', to which about 150 men were admitted each year. Those who proved satisfactory at their jobs could climb considerable heights, starting with such grades as sub-conductor and ending up as commissaries. This last carried the rank of honorary major whilst the deputy and assistant commissaries were honorary lieutenants.<sup>3</sup>



*William Garnett c.1905, taken by SH Dagg, Mussoorie & Allahabad.*

In January 1887, Sergeant William Garnett had married Bessie Jane Pearson (b. 23 Nov 1868, Cawnpore) the daughter of John and Margaret Pearson. John Pearson had a similar military background to William. He had been born in Armagh, Ireland in the early 1840s and enlisted at Manchester into the Royal Artillery, arriving in India via the *Holmesdale* in 1863. With the rank of sergeant Pearson transferred to the Unattached List in 1867 and was subsequently promoted to sub-conductor and then to conductor in 1876 within the Ordnance Department at Cawnpore.

William Garnett's parent regiment the 6th Dragoon Guards, having served 32 years in India, completed its tour of duty in 1888. William remained in Cawnpore on the UAL and achieved a status that would not have come his way had he remained with the regiment. His particular department was the Army Clothing Dept. Whilst on the Bengal Unattached List he worked for the Army Boot Factory and later with Cooper Allens and North West Tannery Co. Ltd. – civilian companies that were contracted by the army to make military leather equipment.

About the year 1884, William Garnett played a major role in the establishment of the Cawnpore Volunteer Light Horse. The Cawnpore Volunteer Rifles had been founded in 1877 and it was felt a mounted unit would be useful. The corps was made up predominantly of European civilians with little or no military training. It was Sergeant Garnett to whom the founders turned for the training of these new recruits. The *Cawnpore*

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<sup>3</sup> See Lawrie Butler, 'The Army Rank of Conductor, and the History of an HEIC Conductor VC' *FIBIS Journal* 18 (Autumn 2007) for more on conductors in the armies in India and their ranks.

*Volunteer Magazine* has extensive references to Garnett's involvement with the corps and their review of the beginnings of the mounted troop is of particular interest:

About the year 1884, as a result of much indefinite talk and a very general desire to have a mounted body of Volunteers in Cawnpore, a meeting was held, and the present corps came into existence as Mounted Infantry; its designation being subsequently changed to what it has since remained – Light Horse.<sup>4</sup> The first parade took place on the present Green Park, and it was about the largest parade of this corps on record. All Cawnpore seemed to turn out to witness it, and by invitation, Captain Porter, the Volunteer Adjutant from Allahabad, was present. The men literally formed up in 'lumps' and required words of command, so he sent his A.D.C. [aide-de-camp] – old John Finnigan, who was a Lieutenant in the Rifles – to ask our old friend Garnett what was necessary; but John's memory was not good, and in spite of repeating the words to himself he invariably gave wrong versions to the Adjutant, the result being that Sergt-Major Garnett – then pretty fresh from his regiment was asked to come forward and drill the men. Never was known such enthusiasm. Every man got excited, and movement after movement was gone through until horses were white with foam and the riders were sore, for rising in the saddle was not allowed in those days. The parade, like other things, came to an end and was noted a huge success.

The next parade fell in, in sections, which were marched to the Station Theatre to elect Officers and N.C. Officers. Mr. Sterndale, of the Bank of Bengal, was elected Commandant; Mr. G.B. Allen Adjutant; and Sergt-Major Garnett was asked to become paid instructor in addition to his other duties, but as he foretold, Government would not allow this. He was then elected Troop Sergt.-Major, but shortly had to give up the position because Government forbade the Unattached List from becoming Volunteers – a resolution which was afterwards rescinded.<sup>5</sup>

The confusion about Garnett's status is obvious from the above quote – initially they did not know whether to give him a volunteer rank or keep the 'unattached' rank. Following special government permission, William Garnett was allowed to join the volunteers, and he spent many productive years with them (in addition to his primary duties with the Bengal UAL).

In British India, every settlement no matter how small or isolated formed a volunteer corps made up of the European and Anglo-Indian settlers, and it was the Mutiny which gave impetus to form these units. Cawnpore had suffered some of the worst atrocities of the Indian Mutiny, and the motto of these new volunteer units '*Forewarned, Forearmed*' reflected the determination that such acts should never be allowed to happen again.

To a great degree, the volunteer units were a law unto themselves – they elected their own officers who probably held important civilian positions in the community (such as the bank manager). If someone applied but was considered 'dodgy', he would not be elected as a member! They devised their own uniforms, and in the case of the Cawnpore Volunteers a group met in the bank manager's office in 1884 to select a blue uniform with white facings,

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<sup>4</sup> In 1904 the Cawnpore Light Horse amalgamated with four other horse troops to become the United Provinces Light Horse.

<sup>5</sup> *Cawnpore Volunteer Magazine*, December 1900. Copies of this were given to me many years ago by the late Zoe Yalland, who as a child had lived in Cawnpore in Civil Lines (Nawabganj) next door to the Garnett family whose house was called Glenview.

and some years later selected a khaki alternative uniform.<sup>6</sup> Curiously, the volunteers took precedence over the Indian Army regiments, and on military parades and durbars they led in front with the British Army, Sikhs and Gurkhas bringing up the rear.<sup>7</sup>

It was a social group as well as military – everyone looked forward to the annual gymkhana based around a club in the hills in some distant state, which involved military exercises, rifle shooting, mounted tournaments, bivouacs and sports – and plenty of beer and cavorting to follow. The Cawnpore Volunteers competed on many occasions against other volunteer units, and had a special desire to challenge their Lucknow colleagues (Lucknow being located on the other side of the Ganges River.) Every volunteer unit around the country had their own club – many formed their own military bands. William Garnett was a fine horseman and won many sporting events, including a handsome trophy for the cavalry sport of Tent Pegging, the aim of which was to ride a horse at gallop and remove pegs from the ground with a long lance.

William was carrying the rank of Squadron Sergeant Major when, in 1904 he was promoted to Deputy Assistant Commissary and granted Honorary Lieutenant status within the Bengal Unattached List – he was promoted to Assistant Commissary and made Honorary Captain in 1906 and to Commissary and Honorary Major in 1912. William Garnett was eligible for retirement in January 1913, but it is my understanding that he volunteered to continue at Cawnpore for the duration of the war. In 1919, at the conclusion of the Great War, he and his family (including my nine year old father Leslie) finally returned to England. The following year an announcement appeared in the *London Gazette* confirming William Garnett with the military MBE for valuable work rendered during his service in India.<sup>8</sup> The citation indicates that he held two ranks upon retirement: Commissary and Major:

To be dated 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1919: - to be Members of the Military Division of the said Most Excellent Order: - Commy & Major William Garnett, Ret. Ind. Army.<sup>9</sup>

So, on retirement, William Garnett held the rank of Company Sergeant Major with the Cawnpore Volunteer Light Horse and was Commissary and Honorary Major on the Bengal

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<sup>6</sup> *Cawnpore Volunteer Magazine*

<sup>7</sup> Lt Col. Tony Mains wrote an article in the *Journal for Army Historical Research* (date unknown, but relatively recent) in which he had this to say about the extraordinary status of the volunteers:

No race but the British could have evolved such an untidy military set-up – British part-time soldiers, owing no allegiance to the War Office and taking precedence before the regular Indian Army – Units which were Clubs, in so far that no one could enlist unless he was accepted by the remainder of the unit, and who elected their own Officers – Cavalry units where all ranks provided their own horses – Units which never paraded at above platoon strength. During the next two decades (after the Mutiny) Volunteer Rifle Corps sprang up all over India, often very small, wherever there were any number of Europeans.

<sup>8</sup> For all official purposes Garnett was referred to as Major, as this was the senior of his three ranks. If his award had been for his volunteer rank he would have received the British Empire Medal (as this was for other ranks), instead he received the MBE (for officers) for his contribution to the Bengal UAL.

<sup>9</sup> *London Gazette*, 20 October 1920

Unattached List – a situation that could only arise within the complex organisational structure of the British Army.

From humble beginnings he achieved a lot during his life in India. Although many of his ten children died young, those who survived followed their father by providing valuable service to Britain and the Empire.

When war broke out in 1914 Albert Garnett (b.1899, Cawnpore) was aged 14½ or 15 and at school in England. He joined the Derbyshire Yeomanry with whom he completed his basic training in England and on transfer to the Western Front at a date unknown, he was posted to the North Irish Horse and served with V Corps as a dispatch rider. Unfortunately his military records have, like so many others, not survived. After the war Albert returned to Cawnpore and worked for the British India Corporation which had purchased Cooper Allens, for whom his father had worked. He married Myrtle Elkins who had probably been born there; her father was an army doctor, Major Elkins.



*Albert Garnett c. 1916*

The youngest of William's children was my father Captain Leslie Pearson Garnett. Born in 1909 in Cawnpore, his early education was at the hill-station Naini Tal. Leslie served in the Second World War with military intelligence in the Middle East, at Bizerta, Ismailia, Tunis and elsewhere. He was commissioned at Haifa in the Intelligence Corps and on discharge Captain Leslie Garnett's final posting was at Bletchley Park.



*Leslie Garnett c.1944*

The daughters of William Garnett married into India-based families who all contributed with distinction in one form or another during the war – these are the Campbell, Ridsdale, Jenkin and Millage families. Leslie's elder sister by sixteen years, Mabel Ridsdale (née Garnett, b.1893, Cawnpore) remained in India and was awarded the prestigious Kaiser-i-Hind (Emperor of India) medal for management of hospital services for the well-being of the British soldier during the war.

Major William Garnett MBE died in Westcliff, Essex in 1932.

#### *About the author:*

*Mike Garnett was born in Essex and served with the RAF in Singapore and Malaya during the emergency of the 1950s for which he received the General Service Medal 'Malaya' and, some 50 years later, the Malaysian Honour Medal. He spent seven years as a tea planter in Assam during the 1960s, and later managed a coconut plantation in Papua New Guinea before heading for Australia. In 2001, Mike was awarded the Australian Sports Medal for outstanding service to the sport of Royal Tennis.*

## Boy Soldier to Lancer: John Arnfield in the Anglo-Sikh Wars

*By Ainslie Sharpe*

My husband's 2x great grandfather, John Arnfield, could almost be a character of fiction. Like Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, his childhood was that of an army child following the regiment in India, and his adult life was spent similar to that of Richard Sharpe from Bernard Cornwell's 'Sharpe' novels - in proud British regiments with magnificent, colourful uniforms, filled with the excitement and danger of battles and ever present disease in India, the 'Jewel in the Crown' of Queen Victoria's reign.

John's life from the very start was far from ordinary, as he was born at sea on the 30 September 1819 aboard the *Atlas*,<sup>1</sup> a convict ship en route to New South Wales under the command of Captain Josh Short. On board was a contingent of 30 troops from His Majesty's 59th Regiment of Foot, employed as guards. John Arnfield's father Private Hugh Arnfield was one of these and he was accompanied by his wife Catherine. The ship's surgeon, Mr John Duke, kept a medical journal and for Arnfield's birth this reads:

28-30 September 1819; Weather continuing poor, very few prisoners on deck. 10 on sick list, 2 in hospital.

1 October 1819; Morning fine and gale subsided so all prisoners on deck and prisons cleaned, dried and ventilated. Still very cold. At 6pm on 30 September, the wife of Hugh Arnfield of the 59th Foot gave birth to a fine boy, both are doing well.

Carrying 156 convicts, the journey lasted 131 days and called into the Cape of Good Hope on the way to collect more convicts. The ship then proceeded to Port Jackson, where it arrived on the 19 October 1819. Subsequently, Captain Short negotiated to transport the troops back to Ceylon and India. Hugh Arnfield's service in India dates from 10 February 1820,<sup>2</sup> which was no doubt the day they finally arrived in Calcutta.

Once with the regiment, his parents moved around Bengal, being based in the cantonments of Berhampore, Dinapore, Agra, Cawnpore and Calcutta. John's father, Hugh was gaining promotion through the ranks—to Corporal in May 1822, Sergeant in August 1824 and then following the 59th's involvement in the Siege of Bhurtpore (Dec 1825 - Jan 1826) he was promoted to Armourer Sergeant.<sup>2</sup>

When the 59th Regiment returned to England in January 1829, Hugh, Catherine and their children John, Patrick<sup>3</sup> and Margaret<sup>3</sup> remained in India as Hugh had transferred to the 3rd Regiment of Foot (The Buffs).<sup>2</sup> Over the next few years three more daughters were born, but unfortunately one little girl died.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> TNA: ADM 101/6/2 'Diary of occurrences on board the *Atlas* convict ship between 12 May and 7 November 1819, during which time the said ship was employed in transporting convicts from England to New South Wales by John Duke, Surgeon. (Sea victualling between 22 May and 30 October 1819).'

<sup>2</sup> TNA: WO 97/248/21 Record of Hugh Arnfield, Royal Hosp. Chelsea Soldiers Service Documents

<sup>3</sup> Baptisms, Marriages & Burials Records of Bengal accessed through the IGI and LDS films.



On the 16 November 1833, John enlisted in his father's regiment as a 'Boy', at the age of 14 years, 1 month and 16 days. According to his military record,<sup>4</sup> he was 4 foot 11 inches tall, with fair complexion, hazel eyes, and sandy hair. Both the British Army and the HEIC Army supported children of their soldiers until they reached the age of 14 years. Boys were then expected to join the army or become apprentices; girls were expected to marry! On his 18th birthday, the 1 October 1837, John became a Private. Four months later, in February 1838 he was appointed Drummer—a position which obviously wasn't to his liking, as he resigned the position on the 31 August 1838. He once more became a Private.<sup>4</sup>

On the 23 August 1838 at Meerut, John's sister Margaret married John Davis, a Sergeant with the 16th Lancers ('the Scarlet Lancers').<sup>3</sup> The 16th Lancers were an illustrious cavalry regiment formed as the 16th Light Dragoons in 1759. They were re-equipped with lances and renamed Lancers in 1816. Their dashing uniforms consisted of scarlet tunics with gold braid, a tschapka hat (a helmet with a square top similar to a mortar board, with a horse hair plume worn on parade, secured with gilt chinscales, based on the helmets of the Polish cavalry). They carried carbines, swords and lances, and were the first British regiment to 'blood' their lances at the Siege of Bhurtpore.

In August 1839, after more than 20 years in India, Hugh Arnfield elected to retire from the 3rd Buffs. He arrived back home in England at Gravesend on the 4 June 1840, and was discharged on the 14 July 1840.<sup>5</sup>

### **Life with the 16<sup>th</sup> Lancers**

The 16th Lancers were part of the battle force at the Battle of Ghuznee (23 July 1839), in which the British, Bengal and Madras armies suffered 200 killed and wounded—thereby creating vacancies within the regiments involved.<sup>6</sup>

Whether it was due to Hugh Arnfield's retirement from the 3rd Buffs and a desire to leave his 21 year old son John under the care of a more experienced soldier, or whether it was the lure of the more romantic and exotic 16th Lancers, with their magnificent horses and dashing uniform, John transferred to the 16th on the 1 April 1840.<sup>7</sup>

Following John Arnfield's entry into the 16th Lancers, they were involved in the Gwalior Campaign, in which the Governor-General of India ordered the invasion of the Maharatta territory after various insulting acts undertaken by the Maharatta Government against the British, with no resulting apology. The Battle of Maharajpore took place on the 29 December 1843, during which the British Forces of about 14,000 men with 40 pieces of artillery faced the army of the Maharattas consisting of approximately 18,000 men including 3,000 cavalry and with 100 guns. There were heavy losses on both sides.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Record of John Arnfield, Documents of Soldiers Awarded Deferred Pensions

<sup>5</sup> TNA: WO 97/248/21 Military record of Hugh Arnfield

<sup>6</sup> British Battles website: <http://www.britishbattles.com/index.htm>

<sup>7</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>8</sup> British Battles website: <http://www.britishbattles.com>

John's military record states: 'He served in the Action at Maharajpore in December 1843'. An insight into the conditions during this battle is given in the book *Ten years in India in the 16th Lancers: etc*, by WJD Gould, a Sergeant with the regiment. He writes about the night of Christmas Eve 1843:

Wet as we were from our recent fording the Chumla, I had to go on in charge of the advance guard and remain all night. Our baggage, or tents, not having come up — what was worse the Commissariat had not arrived, and we felt hungry. The enemy's cavalry were reconnoitering on our front, and during the night a very strict watch was kept up. Morning at last dawned, beautiful as weather could make it — Christmas morning and all — and a pretty plight it found us in, hungry, wet clothes, and if we wanted to drink we had plenty muddy water. About four o'clock, p. m., I was ordered to mount again, take twenty men, and strengthen the outlying pickets. We had not taken off boots or clothes for four days nor had the saddles been off the horses during the same time...About twelve at night a rocket went up from a village within our lines, and was answered immediately by a light from the enemy's camp. The village was at once surrounded, and every man in it made prisoners. I suffered fearfully that night, being so long in the saddle with wet trousers; my legs were as raw as a piece of beef. Give me fighting — fair open fighting, at once — in preference to such torture.<sup>9</sup>

This was a very different side to life with the magnificent horses and the dashing uniforms! Following the successful defeat of the enemy and with their unconditional surrender, the British forces took possession of the ancient and formidable Fort at Gwalior. John's regiment eventually returned, via Agra and Delhi, to Meerut on the 4 March 1844, after five months on the campaign and having lost 50 men.<sup>9 10</sup>

According to Gould, it was a time to wind down following their strenuous campaign. The 40th Regiment of Foot, after four years in Afghanistan, also returned to Meerut. They had fought alongside the 16th Lancers in the Peninsular Wars and at Waterloo, so the two regiments took advantage of the peaceful period, relishing the regimental comradeship and enjoying the dinners and parties, until the 40th Foot returned to England in mid-1845. However, the 9th Lancers then joined the 16th at Meerut, and so the fraternization, parties and dances continued. For John, life would have been good.

But not for long—on Sunday 13 November 1845, the Meerut Division were advised that war had broken out in the Punjab. They were to undertake a forced march of 470km to join with other regiments from Cawnpore and Delhi, under Generals Sir Hugh Gough and Sir Henry Hardinge on the North West Frontier of British India to tackle the Sikh army of Lal Singh and Tej Singh.<sup>11 12</sup>

It was the First Sikh War, during which four major battles took place. The first, the Battle of Moodkee took place on the 18 December 1845. The Sikh army withdrew to Ferozeshah,

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<sup>9</sup> WJD Gould, *Ten Years in India, in the 16th Queen's Lancers* (Toronto: 1880) p66. Reprinted by Leonaur in 2010 as *Three Cheers for the Queen—Lancers Charge!* (see FIBIS online shop).

<sup>10</sup> Gould *ibid*.

<sup>11</sup> British Battles website: <http://www.britishbattles.com>

<sup>12</sup> Gould, *ibid*.

some 13km to the north west of the Moodkee battlefield [see map p37]. There, on the 21 December, the two armies again engaged in a ferocious battle during which there were heavy losses on both sides. The British were left battered and exhausted and with virtually no ammunition, when the Sikh army withdrew to Sobraon [sometimes Sabraon], about 175 km to the north east.<sup>13</sup> The Meerut Division, which included John and his 16th Lancers, knew nothing of what had transpired until they arrived at Moodkee on New Year's Day 1846. Gould describes the scene:

At first we came across dead camels, then, on approaching the village, several of our native regiment soldiers came out to greet us. A sad sight indeed—some bandaged almost from head to foot; arms and legs off. All left behind in the hurry to keep up with the enemy. On laying out our picket guard with the Quarter-Master General, as I was in the advanced guard, we came upon a heap of sand, out of which part of a man's hand projected; also, a little further on, part of a hand and wrist, with so much of the cuff of a coat as showed a 50th button. We, of course, performed the duty of burying all such, as the pursuing army had no time. Making a reconnaissance with my captain, we entered a kind of park-like enclosure, and here we found traces of the fearful work of Gough's engagement. Men, horses, and camels lay in heaps unburied, vultures in hundreds feasting on them; none had been touched, all lay as they fell. The Sikhs lay in heaps under their guns, the Light Dragoons as they fell from their horses, the tents of the [50th Foot] still standing, knapsacks around in all directions. The guns we secured and fatigue parties performed the sickening duty of burying the dead.<sup>13</sup>

According to his military record,<sup>14</sup> it was on this day, New Year's Day 1846, that John Arnfield received his first Good Conduct Badge. This badge was awarded after five years good conduct (that is, never having received punishment) which entitled him to the grand sum of an additional one penny per day. It was represented by an inverted chevron worn on the lower sleeve of the left arm.

His record also states that 'he served in the action...at Aliwal and Sabraon in 1846'. On the 28 January 1846 during the Battle of Aliwal, the 16th Lancers, with a force of some 300 officers and men, suffered losses of 76 officers and men killed, 77 wounded and 160 horses killed. The regiment took to crimping their lance pennons in commemoration of Aliwal, as it is said that their pennons were stiffened with blood following the battle. The combined British and Bengal Armies suffered the loss of 589 men, while the Sikhs admitted to 3,000 men killed and lost all their 67 guns, camp and baggage.<sup>11</sup>

Somehow, John managed to survive the carnage and went on to fight at the Battle of Sobraon on the 10 February. Fortunately, the casualties for the 16th Lancers on this occasion were not so devastating, as they had been involved in a diversionary role a few miles upstream from the main battle on the Sutlej River.<sup>16 15</sup>

Following their defeat at Sobraon, the Sikh forces surrendered and so ended the First Sikh War. Peace was proclaimed on the 4 March 1846, and on the following day it was

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<sup>13</sup> Gould, *ibid.* p88

<sup>14</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>15</sup> Gould, *ibid.*

announced that their Commander in Chief was sending the 16th Lancers home, after being in India since 1822. As Gould relates:

...volunteering [to stay in India with another regiment] would be [between] two regiments, the 3rd Light Dragoons and the 9th Lancers. Any of who chose might remain however. Under the influence of arrick [arrack], a mad drink, the **9th Lancers got one**, and 3rd got ninety.<sup>16</sup>

The regiments arrived back in Meerut on the 2 May, seven weeks after leaving Lahore.<sup>18</sup> According to John's military record his service with the 16th Lancers had finished on the 31 March 1846, six years exactly since he transferred from the 3rd Buffs. It appears that John was the 'one' referred to by Gould, as on the 1 April 1846 he was taken on to the military strength of the 9th Lancers.<sup>17</sup> However, it may not necessarily have been down to the influence of the mad drink!



*Memorial in Canterbury Cathedral to the the officers and men of the 16th Lancers who died at Aliwal.*

## Next stop the 9th Lancers

John, now 25 years old, did have a very good reason for wanting to remain in India, as on the 13 May 1846 at Meerut, he married a very young widow, Mary Ann Jones, aged 14 years.<sup>18</sup> She was the daughter of Malachi Mannion, a Private in the 3rd Buffs (who were stationed at Calcutta at this time), and his wife Elizabeth.<sup>20</sup> Mary Ann's first husband was William Jones, a sergeant in the 50th Foot, whom she had married at Chinsurah (on the Hoogly River, 35 km north of Calcutta) on the 1 September 1845.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, William died less than a month later and was buried at Chinsurah on the 29 September 1845.<sup>20</sup> As John Arnfield's father, Hugh, had been serving in the 3rd Buffs from 1829, and John himself served with them from 1833-1840, Mary Ann and the Mannion family would have been well known to John.

For just over two years, life in this new regiment appears to have been uneventful. The 9th Lancers continued at Meerut where John and Mary Anne's first child, Frederick William

<sup>16</sup> Gould, *ibid.* p108

<sup>17</sup> WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>18</sup> Baptisms, Marriages & Burials Records of Bengal accessed through the IGI and LDS films.

Arnfield was born on the 10 September 1848.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately, tensions were once again rising in the Punjab between the Sikh Empire and the East India Company.

Leaving behind his young wife and newborn child, John Arnfield, with the 9th Lancers, was again in the midst of the fighting as in October 1848, the armies of the British and the East India Company began to assemble at Ferozepore in the Punjab. This 'Army of the Punjab', under the command of Sir Hugh Gough, crossed the Ravi River, north of Lahore, on the morning of the 16 November.<sup>19</sup> In John's military record it shows that on the 17 November 1848, he forfeited his Good Conduct Badge<sup>20</sup> and his one penny per day additional pay. No reason is given, but perhaps he may have imbibed a little too freely of the arrack as Dutch courage! It would be quite understandable since the commander of the Sikhs, Shere Singh, had at his disposal 15,000 men camped on both sides of the Chenab River at Ramnagar to the north.

History reports that Gough precipitated the attack on the 22 November, but his heavy guns, his pontoon, and his engineer establishment were far to the rear. The best military minds of the time were of the opinion that he should have confined his movements to reconnaissance.<sup>21</sup> Eventually, after cavalry charges and melees in the river bed, during which the Bengal Horse Artillery lost one of their guns in the quicksands, the Sikhs were forced to the northern banks of the Chenab. As John Clark Marshman noted, 'the dry sandy bed of a large stream swept by the fire of 28 guns was not the field for a cavalry action'<sup>22</sup> and the cost to the British and Bengal armies was great, with 150 casualties including Brigadier General Cureton, a cavalry commander of great distinction, and Colonel William Havelock of the 14th Light Dragoons.<sup>23</sup> The Sikhs were said to have suffered about 200 casualties.

Following this engagement, Sir Hugh Gough, wisely withdrew his forces beyond the reach of the Sikh guns, and waited for a week for the arrival of his pontoon and heavy guns. Sir Joseph Thackwell, who had fought with distinction in the Peninsular Wars replaced Cureton as commander of the cavalry division. Since it was deemed to be 'the wildest folly' to attempt to attack the Sikh forces front on, Sir Joseph led a force of cavalry, infantry and

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<sup>19</sup> British Battles website: <http://www.britishbattles.com>

<sup>20</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>21</sup> John Clark Marshman, *The History of India from the Earliest Period to the close of Lord Dalhousie's Administration*, Volume III (Longmans: London, 1869)

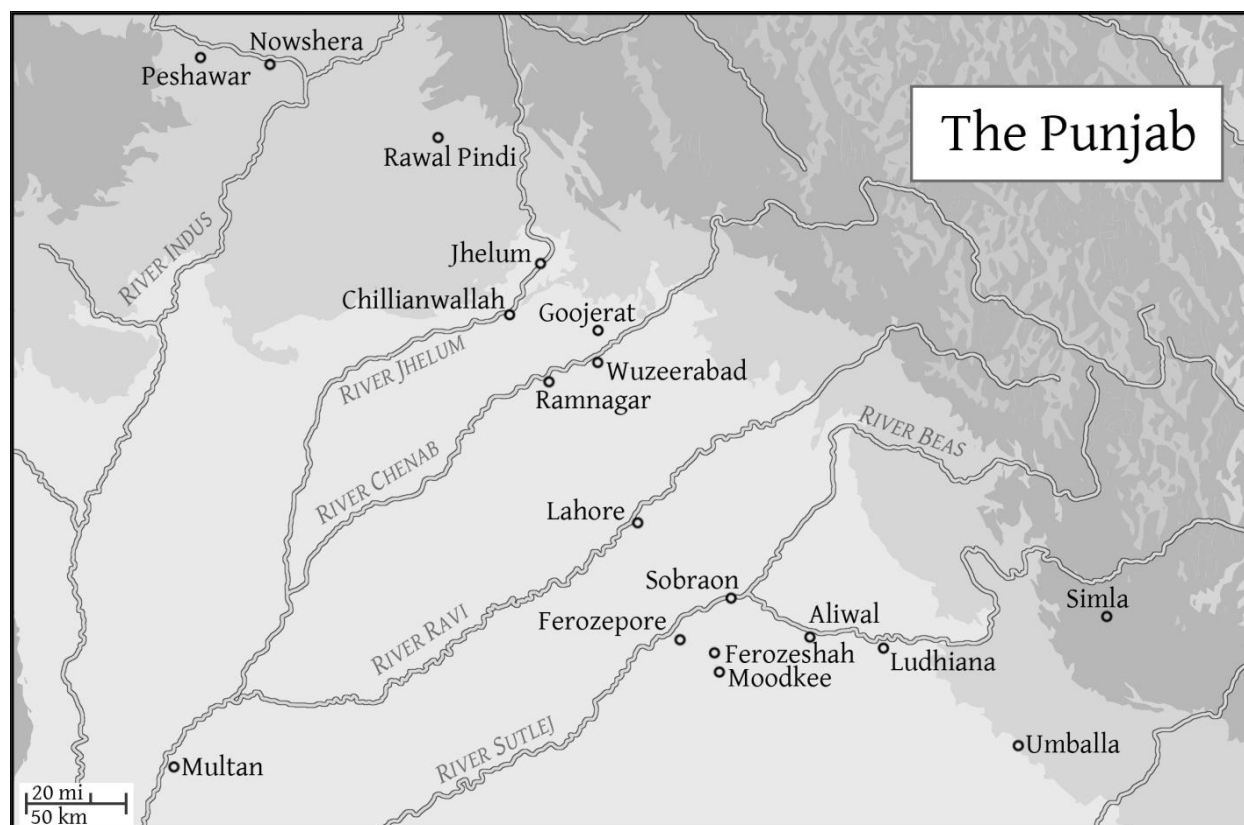
<sup>22</sup> Marshman, *ibid.* p327

<sup>23</sup> Marshman (*ibid.* p327) wrote: 'Colonel Havelock was surrounded by the enemy and killed, but not before he felled three or four of his assailants. In this attack the gallant and experienced Colonel Cureton, who had raised himself to distinction from the ranks in which he enlisted as a runaway lad, was lost to the army. The death of two such men would have been sufficient to mar congratulations on a victory, but that their lives should have been sacrificed in this idle and bootless skirmish, served to deepen the regrets of the army.'

guns 24 miles up the river where an hour after midnight on the 1 December 1848 they reached Wuzerabad. They crossed to the northern side by midday the next day, thereby taking control of the river from the Sikhs. The weary troops, after a hasty meal, then marched another twelve miles to the enemy encampment. Despite orders from Gough to attack the Sikhs without waiting for reinforcements, Sir Joseph Thackwell, deemed it imprudent to undertake such a venture with only one short hour of daylight and only two brigades of brave but weary, broken-down men, against a force estimated at 30,000 men and 40 pieces of cannon.<sup>24</sup> During the night Shere Singh withdrew his troops and guns leaving 'not a goat behind'. To quote John Clark Marshman:

The community in India spoiled by marvellously good fortune, impugned the military strategy which enabled the Sikh general to escape with all his cannon and his army unscathed; men of sanguine temperament denounced his overcaution, but this crude condemnation has been rectified by the cool judgement and professional criticism, and Sir Joseph's merits have been fully appreciated, not less for saving his troops on the night of the 3rd of December from unprofitable loss, and the British arms from the hazard of serious disaster, than for his successful passage of the river.<sup>26</sup>

Shere Singh had retreated to a position of strength on the Jhelum, while the Army of the Punjab remained between the Chenab River and Jhelum, as the Governor General Lord Dalhousie, a young civilian with no military experience, had unfortunately interfered with the military command. It was not until the 11 January 1849 that Sir Hugh Gough moved his troops towards the Sikh stronghold. Military historians and authorities alike have condemned the campaign plan. The Sikhs were the boldest and most resolute of foes



<sup>24</sup> Marshman, *ibid.* p329

encountered by the British Army, and on this occasion two weak infantry divisions were about to attack a force of 30,000 Sikhs with 60 guns in a position of great strength, in thick jungle, where the powerful British cavalry had no room to manoeuvre.<sup>25</sup>

On the 13 January 1849, Gough, took his force to within 12 miles of the Sikh Army, to the village of Chillianwallah. He was galvanised into action earlier than planned because of his irritation caused by Sikh artillery firing upon him and his staff! The dense scrub and the dust clouds caused by the troops, horses and the artillery and infantry weapons, made movement and observation almost impossible. Hampered, the British forces suffered heavy casualties, overwhelmed by the power of the Sikh artillery and infantry.<sup>27</sup>

It was into this that Brigadier Pope led his cavalry brigade (which consisted of two squadrons of the Bengal Light Cavalry, two squadrons of the 9th Lancers and the 14th Light Dragoons) at a trot—without the benefit of forward scouts. When the dust and broken scrub revealed a large body of Sikh cavalry, the Bengal cavalry stopped, and in so doing, forced the Lancers and the Light Dragoons to do likewise. When charged by the Sikh cavalry, the Bengal cavalry turned and retreated, and the 14th Light Dragoons, due to miscommunication, did likewise, despite the efforts of their officers to stop them. In the chaos of the retreating British/Bengal cavalry and advancing Sikh cavalry, the 9th Lancers also retreated. Two squadrons of the 9th Lancers had been sent off to the hills and did not take part in the battle. It is likely that John Arnfield was amongst those who took part in the inglorious retreat on that day, as the battle is listed in his military record.<sup>26</sup> The cause of this debacle with Brigadier Pope's cavalry unit was attributed to his advanced age, his ill health and lack of experience. He was mortally wounded during the chaos of the battle.<sup>27</sup>

The battle eventually ended with nightfall. The Sikhs withdrew to the hills beyond the Jhelum River, while Gough withdrew to the village of Chillianwallah. The total British casualties were 2,357. Of these 602 were killed (including 22 British officers), 1,651 wounded and 104 missing (who in reality were killed).<sup>28</sup> Despite attempts by the Sikh leader to entice Gough to engage once more in battle, it was to no avail. He was awaiting the arrival of General Whish and his division after their successful siege and capture of Multan, some 300 miles (475 km) to the south west.

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<sup>25</sup> Marshman, *ibid.* pp332-336

<sup>26</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>27</sup> Captain Nolan, who relayed that fateful message to Lord Lucan before the Charge of the Light Brigade (where Nolan was killed) in the Crimean War, was serving in India with the 15th Hussars at the time of the battle at Chillianwallah. He had served with a Hungarian hussar regiment, spent five years as a regimental riding master and had written a book on cavalry tactics. It was said that he was appalled at Pope's inept handling of the cavalry, and the resultant slur on the courage and competence of the British Light Cavalry, whose reputation continued to suffer as a result of this battle. Nolan, a fierce exponent of aggressive cavalry tactics, was equally frustrated by, and contemptuous of, the cavalry commanders during the Crimean campaign for their perceived indecisive use of the cavalry.

<sup>28</sup> AH Amin, 'Chillianwala -The forgotten British reverse in India', [www.info-sikh.com/PageChilli.html](http://www.info-sikh.com/PageChilli.html)

Soon after dawn, on the 21 February 1849, with the dramatic backdrop of the Himalayas, General Gough and his Army of Bengal, which consisted of 24,000 men and 96 guns, engaged with the Sikh Army (augmented by Afghans) of 60,000 and 59 guns in Goojerat on the banks of the Chenab River. Following fierce attack and counter attack between the two opposing artilleries, the infantry pushed through the Sikh lines and cleared the fortified villages around the battle area. The cavalry, consisting of the 3rd Light Dragoons, 14th Light Dragoons, 9th Lancers, in addition to the Bengal Light Cavalry, elements of the Bengal Irregular Cavalry, and the Scinde Irregular Horse, pursued the Sikhs in many directions stopping only when their horses were exhausted. The Scinde Irregular Horse chased the Afghans to the Khyber Pass. Aspects of the Scinde Horsemen's equipment were greatly admired by the British and Bengal cavalry units. The shoulder chains designed to deflect sword cuts were embraced and are still part of full cavalry dress.<sup>29</sup>

On the 14 March 1849, Shere Singh surrendered. The British and Bengal Armies had lost a further 96 men (including 5 officers), 706 wounded and 5 were missing. Sikh casualties have been estimated at 2,000. They lost 56 guns. The war was over, the Battle of Goojerat was the last battle of the Second Sikh War, the Punjab became part of British India and Sikh soldiers began to join the East India Company armies.<sup>31</sup>

### **Arnfield's action ends**

According to John Arnfield's military record, Goojerat was also his last big battle. His Good Conduct Badge was reinstated on the 17 November 1849.<sup>30</sup> During 1850 and 1851, the 9th Lancers were based at Wuzeerabad, on the south side of the Chenab River approximately 10 miles from Goojerat.<sup>31</sup> It was here on the 2 December 1850 that John's son John Thomas Arnfield was born.<sup>32</sup> He was christened in the army barracks at Wuzeerabad by the Roman Catholic Priest two days later on the 4 December 1850, presumably because he was sickly and no Anglican minister was available. Whether he was celebrating the birth of his son or the festive season, or whether it was for some other misdemeanour, John once again forfeited his Good Conduct Badge on the 23 December 1850. According to his military records, this was restored to him on the 23 December 1851.<sup>30</sup>

In 1852 the 9th Lancers were transferred approximately 250 miles (400 km) south east, to Umballa<sup>32</sup> where a large military cantonment had been established in 1843 on the legendary Grand Trunk Road. It was about 4 miles south east of the native village, and contained a church, a club house, and several hotels and English shops. It was the headquarters for the cavalry brigade of the Northern Army. Typical of the cantonments throughout British India, Umballa consisted of colonial bungalows and wide shady streets.

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<sup>29</sup> British Battles website, <http://www.britishbattles.com> and AH Amin, *ibid*.

<sup>30</sup> TNA: WO 131/1 Military record of John Arnfield

<sup>31</sup> Index to the Indian Portion of John M. Kitzmiller's *In search of the Forlorn Hope* (1988) via <http://isp.ans.com.au/~rampais/genelogy/india/indexes/kitz1.htm>

<sup>32</sup> Baptisms, Marriages & Burials Records of Bengal accessed through the IGI and LDS films.



On the 8 August 1852, John's wife Mary Ann gave birth to their daughter Ann Eliza Arnfield. She was christened in the cantonment church at Umballa on 25 August 1852.<sup>32</sup>

On the 12 October 1852, John Arnfield's record states:

that his DISCHARGE is proposed 'Free at his own request with right of registry for deferred pension of 4d per day

He had served with the 3rd Regiment of Foot (The Buffs) for four years 'underage' from the 16 November 1833 to 20 September 1837, which did not count for years of service in regard to his pension. He served a further 2 years 6 months from the 1 October 1837 to 31 March 1840 with the Buffs before transferring to the 16th Lancers for 6 years to the 31 March 1846. From 1 April 1846 to 31 October 1852 he served with the 9th Lancers. During his military career and three campaigns, he had earned the following medals:

- The Maharajpore Star (1843)
- Sutlej Campaign Medal (1845-1846) with clasps 'Aliwal' and 'Sobraon'
- Punjab Campaign Medal (1848-1849) with clasps 'Chilianwala' and 'Goojerat' (sic)

He was finally discharged from the British Army on the 11 February 1853, at which time he relinquished the right to his pension, unless he rejoined within six months.<sup>30</sup>

No further information has yet been found relating to John, except for an entry in the burial register of the Old Church at Calcutta which reads:

John Arnfield, aged 35 years, 'out of employment', died 22nd March 1856. Buried at the General Episcopal Cemetery or Burial Ground, Chowringhee, Calcutta, 22nd March 1856; George Loveley, Jnr Chaplain, Old Church.<sup>33</sup>

John Arnfield's life could be compared to a meteor. He started life with a flourish; began his military career as a Drummer Boy with his father's regiment (the 3rd Buffs); radiated energy, courage and bravado during his service with the renowned British cavalry regiment, HM 16th Lancers during the Gwalior Campaign and the First Sikh War. His skills, dedication and courage were impressive enough to gain him the only transfer to the celebrated cavalry regiment, HM 9th Lancers in 1846, where these attributes enabled him to survive more savage battles of the Second Sikh War. Finally, burnt out at a young age, he left his impact upon the earth by virtue of his descendants—and their eager interest his exploits have sparked, over 150 years later.

#### *About the author:*

*Ainslie and her husband Roley Sharpe are regular transcribers for FIBIS and are members of the committee of the recently formed India and South East Asia Special Interest Group of the Western Australia Genealogical Society (WAGS). Frederick William Arnfield, the eldest son of John and Mary Ann, was Roley's Great Grandfather. Frederick became an Engineer and married Emily Lydia Tonkin in Rangoon in 1878, with whom he had five children, all born in Calcutta. He died in Calcutta on 26 March 1894, aged 45. No further information relating to John and Mary Ann's other two children, John Thomas and Ann Eliza Arnfield, has yet been found.*

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<sup>33</sup> Baptisms, Marriages & Burials Records of Bengal accessed through the IGI and LDS films.

## James Minty: Tracing the Life of a Soldier

*By Cathy Day*

*In this article I summarise the life of my 2x great-grandfather, and mention the documentary and other sources used to piece together details of his complicated life. The sources are underlined.*

James Minty had an inauspicious start to life. He was born in 1828 in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, England, the 15th and youngest child of Thomas and Elizabeth Minty (nee Wildey). Thomas was a clothworker of uncertain origins. Elizabeth had been born in Gloucester and grew up in Stroud. The above information was gleaned from Anglican church records and needs no special mention.

As far as can be ascertained, no-one in the family had any prior connections to India, or had served in the military. Exactly why James Minty chose this path is not obvious, but the 15th child of poor labourers would have had few options in life.

On 29 April 1843, when aged 15 years, James Minty enlisted in HM 44th Regiment of Foot. One of the advantages of having a military ancestor is that there are often quite good records of their lives, as opposed to their labouring relatives in the countryside. James was apparently 5 feet 2½ inches tall with fair complexion, black hair and hazel eyes. According to the 44th paylists,<sup>1</sup> he was paid a bounty of £2 2s on enlistment. The other recruits enlisted in that month all received £3 5s, and I assume that James received less due to his young age. Training must have been tough. In his first three months in the regiment, he spent three days in hospital.

James was posted to Dublin, along with the rest of his regiment. On 28 February 1846, the Army Deserters List<sup>2</sup> shows that James and two other teenagers deserted their regiment. James's father had died in Stonehouse just two weeks before the desertion, and I wonder if the teenager was simply trying to get home to his grieving mother. James was tried before a military court on 27 August 1846, so he was presumably re-captured (or surrendered) some time before that. According to the 1846 Registers of Courts-Martial,<sup>3</sup> he was sentenced to 56 days hard labour in a military prison, with stoppage of pay. His service papers<sup>4</sup> show that he deserted again in 1847, although further details are lacking.

He must have settled down as he grew older, and he remained in the military for almost 40 years. His military records show that he was in Malta from 1848, then from 1854 to 1856 he participated in the Crimean Campaign, including the Battle of the Alma, the Battle of Inkerman and the Siege and Fall of Sebastopol. Note that The National Archives (TNA) in Kew, London holds British Army records, whilst HEIC/Indian Army records are held at the

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<sup>1</sup> The National Archives (TNA) WO 12/5672

<sup>2</sup> TNA: WO 25/2926

<sup>3</sup> TNA: WO 86/5

<sup>4</sup> L/MIL/14/50299 (his Indian Army service records also referred to his British Army service)

British Library at St Pancras, London. Since James served in both armies, he has records in both places.

James and HM 44th Regiment of Foot returned to England for just one year, then embarked for Madras, India on 26 August 1857, arriving there on 12 January 1858. Any reader with a British Army ancestor is urged to obtain copies of the appropriate regimental histories of their ancestors, from which some of this information was taken. Regimental histories make fascinating reading, with lots of intimate detail about the lives and losses of the soldiers and officers. They also helpfully describe the locations of the regiments at many points in time, which can be very useful for locating ancestors. I obtained photocopies of each regimental history of my many soldier ancestors from the very helpful staff at The National Army Museum in Chelsea.

The regiment embarked for China in 1860 during the 2nd Opium War. The regimental history gives details about the battles that the 44th fought, and James Minty's military records show that he participated in the taking of the Taku Forts. I visited China some years ago and saw a large marble statue of Buddha with an arm chopped off. A plaque said that this had been done by soldiers of HM 44th Regiment of Foot in 1860. I wonder what part my ancestor played in the destruction of religious icons, and the plundering of Chinese palaces at this time. I have visited many parts of India and Burma as well as a little of China, in the search for information on my ancestors. I would thoroughly recommend that all who wish to understand their ancestors' lives travel to India at least once in their lives.

The regiment duly returned to Madras, but now James's life was different. Just before embarking for China, James Minty had married a 15-year-old Anglo-Indian girl named Maria Elizabeth Dring. The couple's first child, Thomas William, was born while his father was in China, and he was followed by James and then Simon. The family were then transferred to Rangoon, Burma, where Margaret Elizabeth was born in 1867, before moving back to Madras. My great-grandmother, Sarah Florence Minty, was born in Madras in 1870 and she was followed in 1872 by Samuel, who only lived seven hours. His cause of death was listed as 'premature birth'. All this information comes from ecclesiastical records, all of which are held at the British Library and many of which are available on the FIBIS website. Sadly, on 3 August 1876, James's wife Maria Elizabeth died aged just 32 years. Her cause of death was given as 'Decline'. Her death and burial are listed in the ecclesiastical records, and her death and that of her infant son Samuel are also listed in the Domestic Occurrences section of the Times of India. Many newspaper transcriptions are available on the FIBIS website, including these ones.

The India Office collection at the British Library has a wealth of information to assist family historians. These are well-covered in the *FIBIS Journal* so won't be dwelt on here. One interesting fact that I unearthed in James Minty's medical and furlough records<sup>5</sup> at the British Library was that James Minty had been 'granted leave on medical certificate' to return to England for two years, beginning in January 1875. The records show his pay and

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<sup>5</sup> IOR: L/AG/20/9/33

that he returned to duty on 29 October 1875, only ten months later. Did he ever go to England for his furlough? Was this cut short by his wife's illness, or was the purpose of the travel related to her illness?

Like many NCOs in the British Army, James transferred to the Commissariat Department of the Indian Army, where he held the rank of Sub-Conductor, and he then appeared on the Unattached List,<sup>6</sup> as he was not attached to any regiment. In the Indian Army Lists, which are available in many large libraries, those of the rank of Sub-Conductors and above are listed. James and his family moved to Thayetmo in Burma in 1878, when James was promoted to Conductor. He was eventually pensioned off on 1 July 1882 at Madras. After almost 40 years of active service he received an annual pension of £90, which was a reasonable sum to live on at that time.

Eventually, James's daughters married British soldiers and his sons all joined the Army. All of his children married in India, except Simon, who appears to have remained a bachelor throughout his life and moved to England. In 1894, according to James's pension records,<sup>7</sup> he returned to England, after an absence of 46 years. The pension records provide exact dates of birth and death, plus all of his addresses during the last years of his life.

In 1898, at the ripe old age of 70 years, James Minty re-married. His bride was Mary Elston, a spinster aged 43 years. The couple moved to their own home in Kingston-on-Thames, where they can be found on the 1901 and 1911 censuses.<sup>8</sup> Finally, on 23 December 1911, at the age of 83 years, James Minty died of 'Senile Decay, Carcinoma of Bladder and Exhaustion'. His marriage and death certificates, like all others in England, are held at the General Registrar's Office. A little detective work at nearby burial places yielded the location of his grave at the Kingston Crematorium (as it now is), although sadly, there is no grave marker.

The complex story of James Minty's life, of which this summary is only a fragment, was pieced together from a wide variety of sources. Not everything is available on the Internet!

*About the author:*

*The British side of Cathy Day's ancestry arrived in India in 1798 and remained there for many generations, serving in both the British and Indian Armies. Cathy is a former Australian Army officer and the 9th generation of her family to be a soldier. Her eldest daughter, Lyndal Day, is a 10th generation soldier and will be commissioned as an Australian Army officer in December 2011.*

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<sup>6</sup> L/MIL/11/199

<sup>7</sup> L/AG/21/13/38

<sup>8</sup> Now available online through several genealogical websites

# Dean Mahomed and Captain Godfrey Evan Baker of the HEIC Bengal Army

By Emma Jolly

## London's First Curry House

Sake [Sheikh] Dean Mahomed (born Deen Mahomet in 1759) is celebrated as the Indian who introduced the curry house to Britain. In 1809<sup>1</sup> Mahomed opened the Hindoostanee Coffee House at 34 George Street near Portman Square, London. He also innovated the use of therapeutic massage or 'shampoo' in Britain ('shampoo' originating from the Hindi word *campo* or *champo* referring to a type of massage<sup>2</sup>), first practising in a 'vapour bath' at 12 Portman Square owned by the nabob Sir Basil Cochrane, after his return home from Madras.

In the advertisement of the Coffee House's opening, the 'Indian dishes' served by Mahomed were described as being 'in the highest perfection, and allowed by the greatest epicures to be unequalled to any curries ever made in England'. *The Epicures Almanack* wrote later that, 'All the dishes were dressed with curry powder, rice, cayenne and the best spices of Arabia. A room was set apart for smoking from hookahs with oriental herbs. The rooms were neatly fitted up en suite and furnished with chairs and sofas made of bamboo canes, Chinese pictures and other Asiatic embellishments.'<sup>1</sup>

Nevertheless, expansion into the neighbouring 35 George Street and general lack of profit led to Mahomed becoming bankrupt in 1812 - the coffee shop's location being too elite for the average London coffee drinker. Although the establishment was intended 'for the Nobility and Gentry where they might enjoy the Hookah with real Chilm tobacco and Indian dishes of the highest perfection', it did not appeal to the rich nabobs who lived nearby in grand houses equipped with their own private kitchens.

Before Deen Mahomet arrived in London, and changed his name, he lived an exciting life as a camp follower in the East India Company (EIC)'s Bengal Army. Many of these adventures were chronicled by Mahomed in his book, *The Travels of Dean Mahomed*. It was in this book that Mahomed wrote of his close relationship with the man who became 'his best friend',<sup>3</sup> Captain Godfrey Evan Baker (4 July 1750-1786). When Baker resigned from the Army in 1782 and returned to Cork in Ireland, Mahomed went with him. It was from Ireland that Mahomed moved to London. Without Captain Baker, therefore, the people of London would have had a longer wait for their first dedicated curry house.

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<sup>1</sup> *Epicure's Almanack*, 1809, pp123-24

<sup>2</sup> See his books *Cases Cured* and *Shampooing Surgeon, Inventor of the Indian medicated Vapour and Sea Water Baths etc.*

<sup>3</sup> Dean Mahomed, *The Travels of Dean Mahomed, a Native of Patna in Bengal, Through Several Parts of India, While in the Service of The Honourable The East India Company* (Cork, 1794)

## Life in the Bengal Army

It was in 1769, only twelve years after the Battle of Plassey, that the nineteen year old Godfrey Evan Baker met the eleven year old Mahomed at a British tennis party in the army cantonment at Denapur [Dinapur], near Patna. Godfrey Evan Baker had enlisted as a Cadet in the 3rd European Regiment of the Bengal Army in 1769,<sup>4</sup> and was promoted Ensign 8 August 1769.

In the same year, the *Middlesex journal or Chronicle of Liberty*<sup>5</sup> reported that in 'Corke (sic), October 2: This day, Godfrey Baker, Esq. was sworn Mayor . . . of this city, for the ensuing year.' This Mayor of Cork was Godfrey's father - a rich merchant and, as Water Bailiff, responsible for shipping. According to *Burke's Irish Family Records*, Godfrey Evan was the son of Godfrey Baker of Cork and his wife, Elizabeth Cossart of Cork.<sup>6</sup> The marriage produced four sons and two daughters. Godfrey Evan was the eldest son, followed by Hugh,<sup>7</sup> Peter and William. Their daughters were Elizabeth and Katherine. Godfrey senior was the seventh son of William Baker of Lattinmore and Lismacue, county Tipperary. William's wife was Margaret, daughter of Hugh Massy of Duntryleague. The family histories of the Bakers and the Massys are closely entwined.

In contrast to Baker's Irish gentry background, Dean Mahomed was born in Patna, in the province of Bihar to - according to his own memoir - a distinguished Muslim family, related to the Nawabs of Bengal: 'the elite background of Dean Mahomed's father apparently led the Company to put him directly into one of the officer ranks in the Company's Bengal Army'<sup>8</sup> and he had reached the rank of *subadar* by his death in 1769. By this time, the Bengal Army was an increasingly significant employer of the local population. The notorious Robert Clive, then Governor of Bengal, had recently reorganized the Army into three Brigades of seven battalions of sepoys, plus one regiment of European troops, one company of European artillery, and one troop of cavalry. Thus, during the 1760s, thousands of Indians were recruited annually to fill these battalions: when Mahomed attached, there were 27,277 active Indian officers and men.

Although he was only eleven years old in 1769, Mahomed was able to become a camp follower to Baker in the European Regiment. In fact, Mahomed was old enough to be employed in a more official capacity in a Native (sepoy) regiment, but not in the *European* forces. As long as Baker remained with the 3rd European Regiment of the 3rd Brigade, and

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<sup>4</sup> VCP Hodson, *List of Officers of the Bengal Army, 1754-1834* Cadet, 1769 (p77); see FIBIS database

<sup>5</sup> *Middlesex journal or Chronicle of Liberty* (London, England) Oct 12-14, 1769, Issue 84

<sup>6</sup> Hugh Montgomery-Massingberd (ed.), *Burke's Irish Family Records* (Burke's Peerage, 1976)

<sup>7</sup> Hugh Baker married Dorcas Phipps and their son, Godfrey Phipps Baker, also served in the EIC's Army. He became a Colonel and can be found on the FIBIS database. Third son, Hugh Cossart Baker became an EIC Major.

<sup>8</sup> Michael H Fisher, *The First Indian Author in English. Dean Mahomed (1759-1851) in India, Ireland and England* (Delhi: OUP, 1996), p16

Mahomed chose to remain with him, there was no possibility of the Indian rising to a higher rank.

However, the bond between Mahomed and Baker was strong, and they seemed content to serve in the Army as officer and servant until Mahomed was 23 years old. As European regiments tended not to be given as dangerous work as the native regiments, there was little call to arms. In 1771, Mahomed left the Patna area for the first time when the Brigade was sent to the Karamnasa River at Buxar, to protect the Company's territories from the Marathas.<sup>9</sup> During the march, Mahomed was kidnapped. Once freed from his captors, Mahomed rejoined Baker, and together they marched with the Brigade to its new base at Fort William in Calcutta, where they remained between May and November 1772. Baker continued to rise in rank and was promoted to Lieutenant on the 2 December 1772,<sup>10</sup> just three years after having met Mahomed. Between 1773 and 1774, the Brigade was based at Baharampur [Berhampore]. In 1775, they moved on to Bilgram (about 60 miles NW of Lucknow).

Meanwhile, as Godfrey Evan Baker settled into life in Bilgram, his second youngest brother, Hugh, was involved in his own military adventures in America. On the Burney Newspaper database, which is free to access at the British Library, I found a reference to Godfrey Evan Baker in the *Public Advertiser* of Monday July 28 1777. The newspaper printed a letter from 'an Officer in New York' dated June 5 1777, stating that

Mr. Hugh Baker, has got a Commission on account of his late humane and spirited Behaviour: This young Gentleman came out a Volunteer to Halifax, under General Massey. He soon petitioned there for Leave to serve under General Howe, and joined the Army at Trent-town on the River Delaware. One of his Brother Soldiers left a Leg here by an 18 Pounder, when he was quite close to Major Dundass, who was bringing up the Retreat. On Mr. Baker's seeing the poor Fellow in Distress, he ran back above two hundred Yards, and brought him off on his Back, though a continual Fire of twenty-two 18 Pounders was kept up, and providentially missed them after furrowing the Ground on every Side. Major Dundass reported this Affair to the General, who immediately ordered his Commission to be made out. N.B. This brave and gallant young Man is the youngest brother of Mr. Godfrey Baker, a Lieutenant in the East-India Company's Service at Bengal.<sup>11</sup>

In India, after a spell in Calcutta from 1778, the 3rd Brigade returned to Baharampur in September 1779. Two months later, on 18 November 1779, Godfrey Evan Baker was promoted to Captain.

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<sup>9</sup> Fort William-India House Correspondence, vol vi (Delhi, National Archives of India, 1960), p197: letter dated 18 Mar 1770 from the Select Committee.

<sup>10</sup> A search of the India Office Family History Search (<http://indiafamily.bl.uk>) refers us to Hodson's *Officers of the Bengal Army 1758-1834; Who Was Who I*, p77: Captain 3rd Bengal ER 1769-83. The full entry reads:

BAKER, Godfrey Evan. Captain. 3rd Bengal European Regt. Cadet 1769, Ensign 8 Aug. 1769, Liet. 2 Dec. 1772, Capt. 18 Nov. 1779, Resigned 18 Dec. 1783. Services: NFP [No Further Particulars]

<sup>11</sup> *Public Advertiser*, Monday July 28 1777, Issue 13354 (London, England)

Neither Baker nor Mahomed had engaged in serious combat for the first twelve years of their service in the Company's Army. On the contrary, as the British continued to revel in the plundering opportunities opened up for them by Robert Clive, Baker appears to have become accustomed to a very comfortable lifestyle. Certainly, it was more comfortable than that the son of a merchant would have been likely to enjoy in late eighteenth century Ireland. As a Captain, Baker is likely to have had 35 to 40 servants and attendants at his disposal; at the time, a Lieutenant Colonel would have employed over a hundred.<sup>12</sup>

However, life was to become tougher. Baker took command of the two native battalions of Major William Roberts' 30th Infantry Regiment in the 2nd Brigade (and on the march to the station at Cawnpur, two companies of Europeans), meaning that he would almost certainly have to fight. His friend, Mahomed, was appointed an official provisioner (market master) by Baker, who later arranged for him to be appointed ensign *Jemadar* (subaltern officer) at Cawnpore - even though Dean was not senior enough to warrant this.

Within a year of Baker's promotion he was in trouble. Before taking on his appointment to Captain, Baker had a lucrative role as Quartermaster commanding regimental lascars and other official, uniformed camp servants. The post allowed the Quartermaster, whilst extracting provisions for the regiment from the countryside, to profit from these by trading on the side. After he was promoted, 'Baker induced the Commander-in-Chief of the Bengal Army to supersede the Colonel of the Third Brigade so as to transfer Baker's profitable appointment as Quartermaster to his [youngest] brother, Lieutenant William Massey Baker.'<sup>13</sup> On 11 November 1780 Brigadier-General Stibbert wrote from Fort William 'forwarding with his remarks an address from Col. Ironside, Commanding Officer of the 3rd Brigade, regarding the resignation of Lieut. G.E. Baker, Quartermaster to the 1st Battalion, and the succession of his brother to that post without his knowledge'.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, Baker did not handle the resignation in the correct manner and on 29 November 1780 a further letter was sent to Colonel Gilbert Ironside from Fort William 'acquainting him with the Board's opinion on the proceedings of the court-martial held on Lieut. Godfrey Evans Baker, Quartermaster to the 1st Battalion, who was charged with disobeying orders in sending his applications to resign the Company's service direct to the Commander-in-Chief.'<sup>15</sup>

Despite the court-martial, Baker continued as Captain and began to see some action. In 1781, Baker and Mahomed participated in the Siege of Bijaigarh after that fort was taken by the Raja of Benares, Chait Singh.

Chait Singh [*Cheyt Sing*], had been zamindar [landlord] of the Benares area since 1773. He became fed up with increasing demands from Governor General Warren Hastings for contributions to EIC native battalions. In an attempt to avoid the payments, he conspired

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<sup>12</sup> Fisher, *ibid.*, p18

<sup>13</sup> Fisher, *ibid.*, p187

<sup>14</sup> Press List of Ancient Documents preserved in the Imperial Record Room of the Government of India, vol 10, 1780-1784 (Calcutta, c.1908), p149: Official Consultation of 13 Nov 1780

<sup>15</sup> Press List, *ibid.*, p168: Official Consultation of 29 Nov 1780



with enemies of the Company. When Hastings' men discovered what Singh was doing, they placed him under house arrest in September 1781. However, Singh, furious at the Company's challenge to his power, killed his guards, and proceeded to gather a small force. Inevitably, this proved futile in the face of EIC troops, including Baker and Mahomed.

Bijaigarh was a hill fort in the area of Benares and Chunar. Company soldiers led by Major Popham, successfully took the fort, driving Chait Singh to flee to Awadh and then Gwalior, where he died in 1810.

Singh's nephew, Mahipat Narayan Singh, replaced his uncle as zamindar on 14 September 1781. Later, Hastings was accused of only delivering the zamindari to Chait Singh's nephew on return of double the payment to the Company's funds. The requested payment was £200,000 a year more - an estimated £12,570,000<sup>16</sup> in today's money. However, Hastings, later notorious for his collection of Indian arts and antiquities, would not have been Hastings if he had not ensured 'prizes' were taken by his men.

One of these men was Captain Godfrey Baker. Under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel William Blair, Baker and his troops captured various prizes following the success of the siege. We know that Baker, perhaps an aspirant nabob, was keen to have his share of these, as shown by the following entry in the Press List, 9 November 1781 from Chunar:

Letter from Capt. GE Baker and Lieut. Leonard Simpson to Lieut.-Col. Blair, asking for a share in the aforesaid prize-money.<sup>17</sup>

However, before long, Baker fell foul of authority again: this time, with the Governor-General, there would be no reprieve.

A letter sent by Warren Hastings to one Doorbijey Sing (July 15, 1782) tells us that Governor-General Hastings

ordered Baker to arrest three alleged murderers of a Brahmin named Dharma Dube, early in 1782. The Benares Regent complained to Governor-General Hastings that, instead, Baker had seized an entire village and held it for ransom. Hastings thus ordered Baker recalled from duty in disgrace in July 1782. Although the Company's Resident in Benares investigated and declared Baker not guilty of these accusations, Baker resigned from his command<sup>18</sup> of a battalion in the 30th Regiment in October 1782.<sup>19</sup>

Baker resigned officially on 18 December 1783,<sup>20</sup> a year's notice being required for resignation from the army. On 27 November 1783, from Fort William was sent a: 'Letter from Capt. GE Baker, 1st Regiment of Europeans, soliciting permission from the EIC [who

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<sup>16</sup> The National Archives Currency Converter: <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency>

<sup>17</sup> Press List, *ibid.*, p404, Public Proceedings 2038-39, Official Consultation of 17 Dec 1782, No 4

<sup>18</sup> An officer would continue to be known by the rank to which he had risen, even if he had retired, resigned his latest commission or was on the 'half-pay' list.

<sup>19</sup> Fisher, *ibid.*, p26

<sup>20</sup> There is a further entry in Dodwell & Miles' *Officers of the Indian Army* (1838): Baker, Godfrey E.; Cadet 1769 Cornet, Ensign, or Second Lieutenant Aug. 8, 1769; Lieutenant Dec. 2, 1772; Captain Nov. 18, 1779; Date of Resignation, Retirement, or Death Resigned Dec. 18, 1783

at this time controlled travel in and out of India] to proceed to Europe on private affairs, and asking for a certificate of approbation to facilitate his return to the service.'<sup>21</sup>

With Baker packing for a return to Ireland, Mahomed also resigned, even though, by this time, he had reached the rank of *subadar*. For Mahomed it appears there was no question that he would stay in the army as Baker sailed away. In an alleged<sup>22</sup> letter to Baker (reproduced in *Travels*), Mahomed wrote, 'that I should suffer much uneasiness of mind, in the absence of my best friend'.

The Siege of Bijaigarh and the disastrous mishandling of relations with Chait Singh came back to haunt Hastings at his impeachment in 1787. During his seven-year trial, Hastings was accused by Edmund Burke thus:

That he, the said Warren Hastings, among other insolent and contumacious charges and aspersions on the Court of Directors, did address them in the printed letter aforesaid as follows. "I deny that Rajah Cheyt Sing was a native prince of India. Cheyt Sing is the son of a collector of the revenue of that province, which his arts, and the misfortunes of his master, enabled him to convert to a permanent and hereditary possession. This man, whom you have thus ranked among the princes of India, will be astonished, when he hears it, at an elevation so unlooked for, nor less at the independent rights which your commands have assigned him,—rights which are so foreign to his conceptions, that I doubt whether he will know in what language to assert them, unless the example which you have thought it consistent with justice, however opposite to policy, to show, of becoming his advocates against your own interests, should inspire any of your own servants to be his advisers and instructors." And he did further, to bring into contempt the authority of the Company, and to excite a resistance to their lawful orders, frame a supposition that the Court of Directors had intended the restoration of the Rajah of Benares, and on that ground did presume in the said libel to calumniate, in disrespectful and contumelious terms, the policy of the Court of Directors, as well as the person whom he did conceive to be the object of their protection, as followeth. "Of the consequences of such a policy I forbear to speak. Most happily, the wretch whose hopes may be excited by the appearances in his favor is ill qualified to avail himself of them, and the force which is stationed in the province of Benares is sufficient to suppress any symptoms of internal sedition; but it cannot fail to create distrust and suspense in the minds both of the rulers and of the people, and such a state is always productive of disorder. But it is not in this partial consideration that I dread the effects of your commands; it is in your proclaimed indisposition against the first executive member of your first government in India. I almost shudder at the reflection of what might have happened, had these denunciations against your own minister, in favour of a man universally considered in this part of the world as justly attainted for his crimes, the murderer of your servants and soldiers, and the rebel to your authority, arrived two months earlier."<sup>23</sup>

## Ireland

Baker and Mahomed sailed on the Danish ship *Christiansborg* to Dartmouth and thenceforth to Cork, arriving in 1784 when Mahomed was still only 25. Within a short time

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<sup>21</sup> Press List, *ibid.*, p936 Public Proceedings 4587-88; Official Consultation of 18 Dec 1783; No 27

<sup>22</sup> Mahomed's *Travels* is composed of letters, however it is unclear if these are real.

<sup>23</sup> Edmund Burke, Impeachment of Warren Hastings in *Works*, Vol 2 (1841)

of their arrival, by 1785, Baker had married<sup>24</sup> his relative, the Hon Margaret Massey (1759-1838), second daughter of the Commander-in-Chief of Munster, Lt General Lord Baron Massey (1700-88). Their son, Godfrey Hugh Massy Baker, was born 4 May 1786.

Tragically, in 1786 Godfrey Evan Baker is believed to have died, aged 36.<sup>25</sup> <sup>26</sup> I have seen no burial record or death announcement, and do not know where he is buried. This lack of information in many sources seems an undistinguished end for Dean Mahomed's 'best friend'. Mahomed, as we have learned, was destined to be remembered in a number of ways.

In 1796 Captain William Massey Baker, the cause of his brother's court-martial, returned to Cork. It is unclear whether his Indian mistress and child, Eleanor (bapt. 2 December 1785 in Calcutta<sup>27</sup>), came with him. William eventually settled at Fort William, Glanmire in County Cork.<sup>28</sup>

In 1786, possibly just after the death of his 'best friend', Dean Mahomed eloped with a Protestant Irish girl, Jane Daly.<sup>29</sup> The travel writing of the Mughal, Mirza Abu Talib Khan, who met Mahomed at William Massey Baker's estate in 1799, tells us how he was being educated in English language and literature. Mahomed's proficiency in Georgian English usage, apparently learned during this period, is evident in his memoir. Khan also gave details of Mahomed's personal house, the elopement and his and Jane's subsequent children.

Although he spent nearly 25 years there, Mahomed failed to mention his time in Ireland in the brief autobiography that was included in his 1822 work on shampooing. It has been suggested by Michael Fisher that Mahomed may not have been accepted fully into Cork society by the middle and upper classes, and that he turned to England to fulfil his ambitions.

### Shampooing Surgeon

Whatever the reason for his departure, in around 1807, Mahomed left Cork for London, where he established the aforementioned curry house. After advertising his services as a

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<sup>24</sup> 'Index to Marriage Licence Bonds', Cashel and Emly Diocese, Godfrey Evan Baker and Margaret Massey, 1785, PRO Ireland. Rosemary Ffolliott, *Biographical Notices* (1980)

<sup>25</sup> Fisher and many other sources relating to Dean Mahomed give this date.

<sup>26</sup> *The Cork Directory* for 1787 showed an entry for Godfrey's father in a prosperous area of Cork: 'Aldermen and Justices' and 'Aldermen of the Ward' for Geoffrey Baker Esq., South-mall; and in 'City Officers' as 'Godfrey Baker, Esq., S. Mall, Water Bailiff'.

According to Montgomery-Massingberd, *ibid.*, 'Baker', p53, Godfrey Evan Baker's son, Godfrey Hugh Massy Baker, married Elizabeth Grace and produced one daughter, Eleanor Baker. Godfrey Hugh died on 1 Jan 1877 at Grove Hill, Chislehurst, Kent. His daughter, Eleanor, died on 6 Nov 1894.

<sup>27</sup> IOR: N/1/4/12

<sup>28</sup> Montgomery-Massingberd, *ibid.*, p53

<sup>29</sup> 'Index to Marriage Licence Bonds', Cork and Ross Diocese, Deane Mahomet and Jane Daly, 1786, PRO Ireland.

valet, Mahomed settled in Brighton with Jane in 1814. He became a successful 'shampooing surgeon' to, amongst others, George IV and his brother William IV, and became a bestselling author with *Shampooing or Benefits Resulting from the use of Indian Medical Vapour Bath* published in 1822.

The couple had at least seven children, William (b c.1797),<sup>30</sup> Amelia (b Aug 1808, bap. 11 June 1809, Marylebone),<sup>31</sup> Rosanna (bap. 26 Mar 1815, Brighton), Henry Edwin (bap. 6 Jan 1811, Marylebone), Horatio (bap. 17 Nov 1816, Brighton), Frederick (bap. 2 Aug 1818, Brighton), and Arthur Achbar (bap. 28 Dec 1819, Brighton). One branch of the family changed their surname to Dean. Many of their descendants continue to live in the UK.

Mahomed died on 24 February 1851, just two months after his wife, and his death was registered in Brighton in the March quarter 1851,<sup>32</sup> under the name Sake Dean Mahomed. His tombstone, which can still be seen in St Nicholas' Church, Brighton, reads:

Sake Dean Mahomed of Patna Hindoostan

Dean Mahomed is remembered by a Green Plaque on the front of the 'Site of Hindoostane Coffee House 1810 London's First Indian Restaurant' at the present 102 George Street, London W1 8NT.

#### *About the author:*

*Emma Jolly is a professional genealogist. She is the author of Family History for Kids (2008) and the forthcoming Tracing Your British Indian Ancestors (2011). For years, Emma has been searching for proof of the death of her 3x great-grandfather. James Jolly was a ship's engineer, last heard of in Montrose in Scotland in the 1840s. She is currently investigating the possibility that he may have sailed to India.*

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<sup>30</sup> Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain* (Pluto Press, 2002)

<sup>31</sup> Ancestry.com 'London, England, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1538-1812' [database on-line]. Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2010. Original data: *Church of England Parish Registers, 1538-1812*. London, England: London Metropolitan Archives.

<sup>32</sup> GRO Brighton 7/243

## Reviews

***A Soldier's Story* by John Archibald Hislop, edited by Penny Kocher, Newhaven Publishing ([www.newhavenpublishing.co.uk](http://www.newhavenpublishing.co.uk)) hardback ISBN 978-0-9565815-0-1 £25; paperback ISBN 978-0-9565815-1-8 £12.50, both plus UK postage £3.00**

The author joined the Indian Army (2nd Bn, 9th Jat Regiment) in 1933 and served till Independence in 1947. Towards the end of his life, he wrote out a memoir of his Indian career – not once but three times, and it is the final version that his daughter Penny Kocher has edited for publication.

The attention to detail, the honesty of the work (even to the author's own detriment) and the vivid writing make this an outstanding military memoir. The style is easy and conversational with the slang of the period. The vignettes are vivid. Things which the participants took for granted are explained: how Church Parade in India was (ever since the events of that May Sunday in 1857 at Meerut) with full weapons including rifles and bayonets, how to relieve oneself on the field of battle, how promotion worked (or didn't), arrangements for the partition of the Indian Army after Independence, etc.

Hislop's career included a period on the NW Frontier, a brief tour in Malaya at the beginning of World War II – luckily for him he was recalled just before the Japanese invasion and fall of Singapore. His next posting was back to the NW Frontier – Waziristan, followed by two tours in Arakan, Burma, as at long last the war started to turn against the Japanese. At the end of the war he was in Delhi preparing the Indian Army for Independence and partition.

Engagements are clearly explained with good maps. There are lively sketches of the characters he met. He is generous too: Freddie Buckley, his CO in Waziristan, comes across as humourless and sometimes difficult (his sepoy called him "Hitler Sahib"), but Hislop pays ungrudging tribute to his efficiency as an officer. Where he cannot be kind he suppresses names. His dreadful Burma CO remains anonymous.

The editing is discreet. The Introduction has a useful section on the Indian Army. At the end there is a summary of the Malaya campaign (with perhaps too much on Singapore which Hislop was not concerned in). I would have liked more on the other campaigns: Burma and the NW Frontier and Waziristan. An index would also have been useful. But these are minor points.

There is less material readily available on the Indian Army in the 1930s to '40s than on earlier periods, so it is good to have a lively, intelligent and informative account. Those whose ancestors were involved in these events will wish to have a copy of this excellent book.

*Richard Morgan*

***Heroes or Villains? The British in India.* by Geoff Palmer (Geoff Palmer, 2011) pp88, illustrated, ISBN 9780958035224 paperback.**

Although the title suggests a general analysis of the British rulers and their activities in India, this book is about one particular series of incidents. Geoff Palmer's ancestor was a Dr James Meikle (1788 - ?) appointed as Medical Officer in the residency at Hyderabad. During his time there he became a trustee of the firm of William Palmer & Co. who were 'an agency & financier' for trade in that 'Princely State', trading mostly in timber and cotton and established in 1814.

The Resident of the day to the State of Hyderabad was one Henry Russell. Sadly, he seems to have been involved in the corrupt practices current in Hyderabad, in which William Palmer had become involved and according to which, several of the East India Company officers had received significant 'presents' of money and 'pensions'. With the unwitting agreement of the Bengal authorities, and with a locally authorized exception to the orders of the East India Company, Russell arranged William Palmer & Co. to lend money to the Nizam (ruler) for the prosecution of his war against the Marathas. Particularly with the connivance of the Nizam's first minister very high rates of interest were applied leading to the near ruin of the Nizam. The blatancy of the dealings of William Palmer & Co. reached the East India Company's Court of Directors and even the House of Lords in England. They instituted an enquiry in 1825 resulting in the censure of the Governor-General of India (Lord Hastings), the sacking and demotion of a number of officers of the East India Company and the winding up of William Palmer & Co.

This is a fascinating story which Geoff Palmer has pieced together from a variety of sources and provides a most interesting read.

Peter Bailey

***'I Can Never Say Enough About The Men' – A History of the Jammu & Kashmir Rifles throughout their World War One East African Campaign* by Andrew Kerr. (PMC Management Consultants Limited, 2010) pp176, illustrated, Hardcover.**

Constraints on manpower of the British Empire were especially severe during the First World War (1914-1918) and the toll of shell and bullet was horribly severe. However, the spirit of Empire prevailed and, among the many who flocked to the colours were a number of the Indian 'princely states'. These were to contain a small contingent of two and a half battalions of the Rajah of Kashmir – today's Jammu & Kashmir. – led and advised by a handful of British officers. One of these officers was the author's grandfather, Captain – later, Lieut. Col. - Alexander (Alec) Kerr, M.C.

Bold and proud as they were, they had never ventured far from their homeland but, at Britain's request, they were sent to its colonies in East Africa to reverse the incursion by German forces from their own adjacent colonies. This attractively produced book explains their progress through this 'God-forsaken' part of the world and how their enemy was less the Germans than the dysentery, the malarial mosquito, the tsetse fly and even swarms of aggressive bees.

The maps and excellent photographs, taken by his grandfather, Alec Kerr, plus various letters and war diaries, have permitted Andrew Kerr to paint the particularly grim picture of this almost forgotten army as it forged its fatiguing passage through the jungle with minimum supplies and with losses of men comparing unfavourably with the parallel expedition to Gallipoli. One will grieve to read that their casualty rate was 98 percent!

Although the pedant may smart at a small number of spelling mistakes, this book offers an exciting, if often depressing, read. It represents a small star in the constellation of the history of British India. However it is a star which will shine brightly for those with a family connection with any of the British soldiers involved.

Peter Bailey

***Letters from Bencoolen 1823-28* by Thomas Day and William Day with an intro by James Trelawny Day (Cambridge Asia Series, Hardinge Simpole, 2008) pp150, illustrd, index, bibliography. Available from: [www.hardingesimpole.co.uk](http://www.hardingesimpole.co.uk) £16.95**

*Letters from Bencoolen* collects together 17 letters sent from Fort Marlborough in Bencoolen, by Thomas and William Day to their father Charles Day. From a line of East India Company servants, Charles was born in India and joined the Company in 1794 as a Writer. He was posted to Fort Marlborough where his sons Thomas and William were born to a Malay mother. Educated in England, the sons returned to run their father's spice plantation after Charles had moved to Southampton.

James T. Day is the 2x great grandson of Charles Day and as well as having prepared the original letters for publication, he provides a comprehensive introduction to his ancestor's correspondence. This gives full biographical details of the families featured and a brief history of the Company's involvement in the region, paying particular attention to the influence of Sir Stamford Raffles, frequently mentioned in the letters.

The letters themselves are a quite fascinating psychological portrait of William Day. They present what amounts to the sad story of a young man alone in a declining, disease-ridden outpost. The second letter sees William inform his father of his brother Thomas's death, a tragedy from which William never seems to recover. Subsequent letters are filled with news, gossip, business details and plans and throw light on the lifestyle and attitudes of the time. In one, William sheepishly announces he has a daughter, before providing a justification of why he felt it necessary to 'keep a woman'. Over what is only five years, Charles Day slowly withdraws support from his Bencoolen interests and contact with his illegitimate son who seems to so crave his father's respect. In 1828, William's final letter notes with sadness that Charles had not written for three years. Likely having received one last reply from his father, William died in 1831.

Various accounting sheets accompanied the letters and these are presented in the book's five appendices. Comprising thirteen different sets of information these give a glimpse of another side to life on the plantation. Appendix C3 was of particular interest, providing a record of the plantation slaves. It notes when each had small pox, details relationships between slaves and even records incidences of murder amongst the cohort.

Regrettably the quality of picture reproduction is not as good as it could have been, but this does not detract. A welcome inclusion is the colour portrait of Charles Day and his family. If you have a connection to Bencoolen in this era or indeed ancestors on plantations, then this melancholic, engaging collection of letters offers a personal insight that will surely be of interest.

*Sarah Bilton*

***Getting the best out of the FIBIS Website* by Valmay Young, (Fact File Series, FIBIS, 2011), pp20, illustrated, £2 (members £1.50) +p&p, available in the FIBIS online shop: [www.fibis.org](http://www.fibis.org).**

In this revised edition of FIBIS Fact File 5, the society's Webmaster, Valmay Young, provides a guide to the FIBIS website, including new areas such as the FIBIS Social Network (FSN). This Fact File explains each feature of the site and provides quick, simple instructions on their use.

The areas covered are the Google Library; the FSN; the FIBIS database (previously called FIBIS Search); the FIBIwiki; the online shop; the blog; and the various social media and networking links. The guide is illustrated for ease of use and also includes a number of quick tips alongside the main explanations.

The three main areas of the website are the database, wiki and FSN. Although these are straightforward to use, they have many features and so this guide is very useful for those who are unsure if they really know their way around them. The FSN is the new members' area, where members can contact each other, discuss their research and share interesting material. This guide aids successful navigation of this new feature.

*Sarah Bilton*