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**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.

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*Contributors should be aware that as a rule their articles will in due course be posted on the FIBIS website.*

*Where personal opinions are expressed, the opinion reflects that of the author and not those of the Trustees of FIBIS or of the organisation.*

# Editorial

The volunteer regiments in India are a frequently overlooked element of the armed forces in that country under British rule and they saw many men take on a military role alongside their usual livelihood. The first volunteer regiments grew out of responses to the Indian Mutiny and Tim Bender's article on one of the earliest of these, the Meerut District Volunteers (p45), details the origins of the volunteer movement. The volunteer battalions went through a number of structural changes and Peter Bailey's new FIBIS Guide *Researching Ancestors in the Indian Army, 1858-1947*, provides some information on this as well as a wealth of detail on sources for ancestors in the other parts of the Indian Army during this time. Details on this new book can be found on p52.

The volunteers did serve during the First World War, some even being sent abroad. The North Western Railway Volunteer Rifles were sent to East Africa and Noel Clark has put together a list of those involved and their fate where known (p30). My 2x great uncle, Henry James Inwood, was from a North Western Railways family and would work for the company after the war. A Royal Artillery trumpeter, his harrowing time in the Mesopotamian theatre of WWI is detailed from p18. The volunteers were also present in this theatre, with the Bombay Volunteer Artillery one of the units besieged at Kut, where they suffered great losses.

If you are researching an India-based ancestor in WWI and would like to write up his or her story for the Journal, do get in touch. Likewise, if you have a particular research area that pertains to WWI, such as Allan Stanistreet's interest in medals, and can share with society members the useful results of your research, then FIBIS is always pleased to hear from you. Allan has detailed the men of the Indian Medical Department who received gallantry awards during WWI (p34), thus recording that service's considerable contribution to the war effort.

Although family historians' minds may focus more on the early decades of the 20th century during the WWI centenary, our British India period stretches some 350 years. The Melvill family served the British India cause for much of that time. David Williams has produced a study of them for the EIC at Home project and part 1 of their story takes us through their first two generations (p3). The service of John Holliday's most famous family member was of a different kind - not primarily to the Empire, but to God. The story of the meeting in India of this future successful missionary and the woman who would soon be his wife and companion is given from p38.

Finally, it has been rather a busy year for FIBIS so far, with a new FIBIS Guide and a successful conference under our belts (report p47). Another exciting development is our competition, launched in this Journal, for three people to win a genealogical DNA test (p37). Do have a look and consider sending in an entry.

Sarah Bilton

# The Melvill Family – Three Generations of Commitment to India (Part 1)

*David Williams*

*This article is an edited version of a case study that David Williams has produced for the East India Company at Home project, run by University College, London. The full version, including more information on the family's pedigree and details of family members for which there is sadly no space here, can be found on the EIC at Home website at http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah*

On 3 July 1748, in the Scottish town of Dunbar, Baillie John Melvill and Jean Fall,[1] children of two of the prominent families of the town, were married.[2] Dunbar lies approximately 30 miles due east of Edinburgh and about the same distance north of Berwick-upon-Tweed. John and Jean Melvill are my wife's 5x great grandparents.

John and Jean had seven children, four boys and three girls, who are referred to in this case study as 'The First Generation'. The Act of Union between England and Scotland in 1707 had opened up opportunities for Scots, especially the younger sons of the landed and middle classes, in the now British armies and overseas in the expanding empire.[3] Two of the Melvill boys, John, the second oldest (c.1751-1818), and Philip, the youngest (1760-1811), followed this path. Both went to India as young men, but their experiences there could not have been more different. John spent the whole of his working life as a civil servant and judge in India before retiring back to England. Philip came back to Britain still a young man, married and had nine children. Two of his six boys died before fully reaching adulthood, but the other four all had long and varied careers in the service of the East India Company (EIC), three in London and one in India.

## The Melvills and the Falls

This case study explores how the lives of these six men were shaped by their connections to the EIC and India. By concentrating on Philip Melvill's children and, in part II of this article, his grandchildren, it illustrates how some British families made a multi-generational commitment to the EIC and India.[4]

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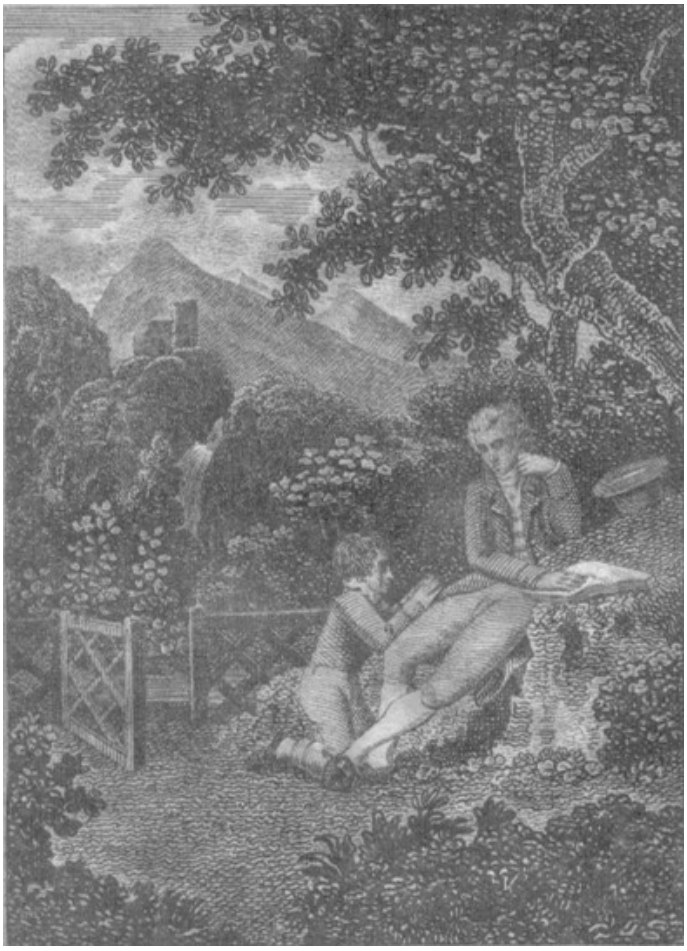
[1] In some references she appears as Joan or Jane.

[2] Dunbar parish records, 706/00 0050 0019

[3] Alan Tritton, *When the Tiger Fought the Thistle, The Tragedy of Colonel William Baillie of the Madras Army* (London, 2013), pp. 7-8.

[4] In this the history of the Melvills over several generations complements the family biography of the Stracheys. See for example Barbara Caine, *Bombay to Bloomsbury: A Biography of the Strachey Family* (Oxford, 2005) pp. 17-22.

Soon after Philip's death, a memoir of him was written anonymously by an evangelical friend (although it could well have been a relation) which has been the source for much of the information about his life.[5] The author had access to Philip's journals and diaries which (s)he quotes from extensively. Shortly after the First World War, a great granddaughter of Philip, EJ Joubert de la Ferté, wrote a book on the Melvill family which gives some of the history of their life in Dunbar, brief biographies of approximately 120 descendants and includes portraits of the some of the more notable members of the family.[6] In 1970 a 3x great grandson of Philip M.E. Melvill (b. 1910), deposited a collection of documents dating from the early nineteenth century to the 1920s with the British Library (BL). Along with the memoir and book, these have been used as the source of much of the information in this case study.[7] Also in the BL are letters written by Philip to his wife in the years 1804-5.[8]



*Philip Melvill and his father John at Pressmennan in East Lothian. (image from frontpiece of Memoirs).*

The Dunbar Melvills were a junior branch of a family which had settled in Scotland in the eleventh or twelfth century. The spelling of their name varies from document to document. On many of the Dunbar parish records it is spelt Melvil with one 'l' while other branches of the family had settled on an 'e' at the end. As one later correspondent put it 'Spelling seems of no account, it varies all through the old books sometimes one 'l', two 'll's or with

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[5] Anonymous, *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill, Esq. Lieut. Gov. of Pendennis Castle, Cornwall : With an Appendix Containing Extracts From His Diaries and Letters Selected by a Friend...together with Two Letters and a Sermon, Occasioned by His Death* (London, 1812). An abridged version of this was published in Edinburgh in 1825.

[6] EJ Joubert de la Ferté, *The Melvill Family, A Roll of Honour of the descendants of Philip Melvill and their immediate connections by marriage in the years of the World War 1914-18* (London, 1920)

[7] British Library, Mss Eur Photo Eur 071, referred to as the 'BL Melvill papers'. They have been copied and bound in two volumes, with consecutive page numbers.

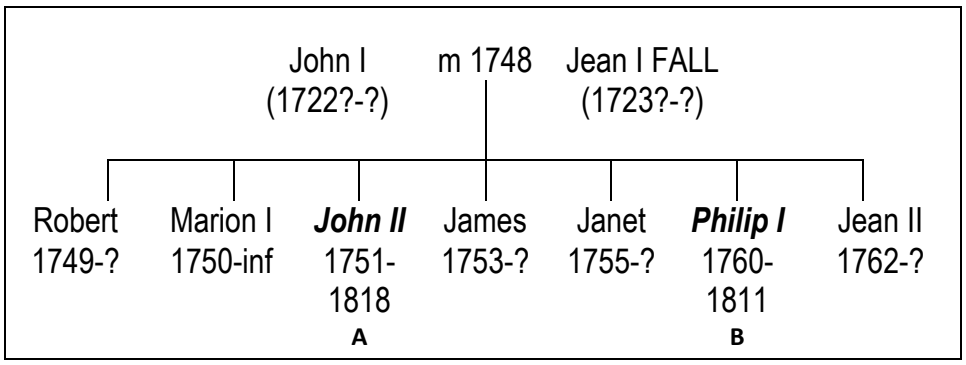
[8] BL, Add MS 58438.

an 'e'.'[9] The branch of the family with which we are concerned settled on Melvill but an 'e' was often added by census enumerators, parish clerks and others.

On the 1748 marriage entry in the Dunbar parish records, John's title was Baillie, a civic official in local government in Scotland, specifically in burghs such as Dunbar, where baillies held a post similar to that of an alderman or magistrate in England and he was at one time Collector of HM Customs for the burgh. John and Jean lived in Dunbar and had a country house at Pressmennan, about five miles from Dunbar.[10]

The Fall (pronounced Faw) family was a major presence in Dunbar in the eighteenth century and were the driving force behind the town's prosperity, with interests in rope making, canvas and sail making, shipbuilding and fisheries. Jean Fall's father, James (c.1685-1743) was the MP for Dunbar from 1734-42 and a baillie from 1735 to the time of his death. He built Dunbar House (later rebuilt and renamed Lauderdale House), one of the most prestigious buildings in the town. Another daughter, Janet (c.1725-1802), described as a coquette and a beauty, married Sir John Anstruther of Elie but rumours of the Falls being descended from gypsies, led to her being ostracised by society.[11]

**The First Generation**




**Names in bold** - connected to the EIC; *names in italics* - India connections through career or marriage
A and B are links to the second generation table on page 10

## John Melvill

John Melvill ('John II'), born in Dunbar in 1751, the second son of John I and Jean I, was baptised in Dunbar church on 29 December of that year. Having gone out to India in 1777, the Bengal civil service records for 1780 show him as a writer at Burdwan, a town about 60 miles north of Calcutta. He gradually rose through the ranks in the civil service, being recorded as a factor in 1782 and a junior merchant in 1785. By 1787 he was paymaster at Cawnpore, 300 miles south-east of Delhi in what is now Uttar Pradesh, returning to West Bengal in 1792 and becoming a judge in Dacca by 1803 with the status of senior merchant.

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[9] BL Melvill papers, pp170-76: Letter from Gwendoline Margaret Brodie Hoare to Michael Ernest Melvill

[10] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p1

[11] A Francis Steuart, 'The Falls of Dunbar and their Descent from the Gypsies', *The Scottish Antiquary, or, Northern Notes and Queries*, vol. 16, No 63 (January 1902)

On 4 February 1794 John married Dorothea Carrington (d 1799), the daughter of an estate owner in Barbados and sister of Sir Codrington Carrington (1769-1849), a lawyer in Calcutta at the time of the marriage and later Chief Judge of Ceylon.[12] John and Dorothea had two children in India; John III was born on 5 August 1796 and Edmund on 4 December 1797. Less than two years after the birth of her second son Dorothea died.[13]

In 1803 the British conquered Orissa, defeating the Marathas and driving them back to their heartlands where they were defeated by an army under Sir Arthur Wellesley at Assaye in September 1803. Wellesley named John Melvill the 'Commissioner for the affairs of Cuttack' and he and Lieutenant Colonel Harcourt were appointed to execute a series of treaties with a group of independent rulers who dominated small tracts of territories between the coast (where the British were) and the hills.[14] John's final post, before returning to England in 1813, was as a senior judge at the Court of Appeal in Calcutta.[15]

On his return, John II settled in London. On 15 June 1813 he bought Furnace Farm in Surrey at an auction at the Bank of England, paying £10,000 plus £998 for the timber.[16] In December 1817 John II married Elizabeth Sneade (dates unknown) in Ludlow, Shropshire. He drowned shortly afterwards at Barmouth on 9 August 1818, leaving his 'estate in Sussex'[17] to his son John III who had been educated at Eton and lived the life of a gentleman. He sold Furnace Farm in August 1819 for £9,000, the drop in value presumably being a result of the post-war agricultural depression, and died in Lincoln, unmarried and intestate on 5 March 1828 at the young age of 31. His younger brother, Edmund, also went to Eton before going to Trinity College, Cambridge in July 1817 where he graduated with an MA in 1821 before being ordained at St Mary Marylebone in April 1822.[18] He was Chancellor of St David's Cathedral in Pembrokeshire where he died, unmarried, on 27 September 1857, leaving just under £30,000 (c.£1.5m in today's money).[19]

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[12] ODNB entry for Sir Codrington Edmund Carrington, T. F. Henderson, rev. Roger T. Stearn

[13] *Gentleman's Magazine*, April (1800), p395

[14] John Beames, *Memoirs of a Bengal Civilian* (London, 1961), p260 and John Joseph Stockdale, *History of all the Events and Transactions which have taken place in India* (1805), p222-33.

[15] Bengal Civil Service lists in British Library

[16] Furnace Farm covered about 385 acres, situated between what were then the villages of Crawley and Worth in West Sussex and about a mile from each. It had been part of the Cuckfield Place Estate, which had a total acreage of over 8,200 acres, belonging to Warden Sergison who had died in July 1811. On the Furnace Farm map is written in pencil 'Sold to Mr Melvill Esq'. In the 1960s, the expansion of Crawley meant that the farm and its lands became housing and light industrial buildings; its name is preserved as the district is called Furnace Green. Source: William Budgen, *Plans of the Cuckfield Place Estate. Situated in The Several under mentioned Parishes, viz, Cuckfield, Hurstpierpoint, Keymer, Slaugham, Balcomb, and Worth belonging to Warden Sergison, Esquire* (1809), West Sussex Record Office, Sergison MSS 1/526 p27.

[17] West Sussex Record Office, Add Mss 28474, John Melvill's will, 7 October 1818

[18] Cambridge Alumni database entry, http://venn.lib.cam.ac.uk/Documents/acad/search.html

[19] *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 14 November 1857

## Philip Melvill

Philip Melvill ('Philip I') was born on 7 April and baptised on 13 April 1760 in Dunbar.[20] At the age of sixteen his father purchased a commission for him in the 73rd Regiment (Lord Macleod's) Highlanders. He was required to go to the far north of Scotland, where Melvill relatives still lived, to raise a number of men for the regiment before he took up his commission.[21] In 1779 the regiment sailed for India, although there was a brief mutiny by some of the troops following rumours that the regiment had been sold to the EIC.[22] They arrived in the Madras Roads on 8 January 1780 after a ten-month voyage.[23] At that time Madras had no harbour and everything had to be transferred to smaller, local boats before the passengers were finally taken through the surf on the backs of local coolies.[24]

The second Mysore War had broken out soon after the arrival of Macleod's Highlanders between the British and the forces of Hyder Ali, the Sultan of Mysore, who was allied with the French.[25] In July 1780, 800 Highlanders joined an army of over 4,000 men, mostly Indian troops, under the command of Major General Sir Hector Munro at St Thomas' Mount cantonment near Madras, before marching to Conjeveram (present-day Kanchipura, about 45 miles west of Chennai) where Hyder Ali's forces were camped.[26] There they were meant to meet up with an EIC army under the command of Lieutenant Colonel William Baillie who had command of some 3,000 (mostly Indian) men. Baillie had been on campaign, under canvas, in what is now Andhra Pradesh for nearly eight months before being sent to join Munro in a forced march of over 300 miles in less than eight weeks.[27]

Hyder Ali sent 10,000 men and 18 guns under the command of his son Tipu Sultan to intercept Baillie. The first battle, on 6 September just outside Perambancum, some fifteen miles to the north east of Conjeveram, was a victory for the British; Baillie asked for reinforcements to be sent by Munro to enable him to advance further. Historically there had been conflicts between the EIC and British armies over the chain of command. EIC officers tended to be older and more experienced and had gained promotions over a long period, while British army officers usually obtained commissions and promotions by purchase. The

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[20] Dunbar parish registers, 706/0020/0222

[21] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, pp9-11

[22] Ibid, p28

[23] Ibid, p32

[24] V. Sriram, oral information, February 2014.

[25] The Second Anglo–Mysore War (1780–1784) was a conflict between the Kingdom of Mysore under its sultan, Hyder Ali, and the EIC/British government. Mysore was a key French ally in India, and the Franco–British conflict raging on account of the American Revolutionary War helped spark Anglo–Mysorean hostilities in India. The EIC's forces were augmented by the King's troops sent from Britain and Hanover, which was also ruled by King George III.

[26] http://diksoochi.blogspot.com/2008/01/colonel-baillies-dungeon.html, accessed 15 February 2011, which quotes from James Browne, *A History of the Highlands, and of The Highland Clans; with an extensive selection from the hitherto unedited Stuart Papers* (Edinburgh, 1850).

[27] Tritton, *When the Tiger Fought the Thistle*, pp230-1

mutual antipathy between the officers of the armies often led to disputes, orders being ignored and delays.[28] This was evident in this conflict. After an unexplained delay of three days, Munro sent a force to Baillie's aid, which consisted of the 73rd Highlanders, including Philip I, and companies of European grenadiers and sepoys under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Fletcher. They linked up with Baillie on 9 September and advanced towards Hyder Ali's forces. The next morning, near the village of Pollilur, they found themselves surrounded by the superior Mysorean forces and, although the British were initially successful, the sheer weight of numbers and casualties forced the final 400 or so men to retreat into a square and, eventually to raise a white flag. Although quarter was promised, in his papers Philip Melvill described how some of Hyder Ali's forces went berserk, killing the captured and wounded and it was only the intervention of the French officers under Colonel Lally that prevented all the British forces being killed.[29] The Battle of Pollilur was the worst defeat suffered to that date by the British in India. It is depicted in a massive and very detailed mural on the outside west wall of Tipu Sultan's summer palace in Seringapatam (now Srirangapatna), some fifteen miles north of Mysore. Colonels Baillie and Fletcher can be identified along with the Frenchman, Lally.[30]

Philip had suffered terribly during the battle. A musket ball had shattered his left arm and a sabre severed the tendons on his right wrist. He received over twenty wounds and his memoir recounts that he was left naked on the battlefield for two days.[31]

> ...wounded and maimed I was left on the field of battle…At this dreadful period of pain and destitution, I was lying naked on a bank of scorching sand, fainting from time to time with loss of blood, and, from the severity of my wounds, unable to move.[32]

In all, the Highlanders suffered almost 100 dead, and 100 wounded. The latter, with just 23 unwounded, were rounded up and imprisoned first in Bangalore and then some (but not Philip[33]) were transferred to the fort at Seringapatam. Philip described his arrival at Bangalore thus:

> ...great was our disappointment, or rather our horror, on entering a wretched shed, pervious to wind and weather, the destined place of our captivity, and on beholding the miserable objects by whom it was already tenanted, our brother-officers in chains, whose meagre countenances and squalid forms revealed at once the secrets of the prison-house, and disclosed the welcome provided for its new inhabitants.[34]

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[28] Tritton, *When the Tiger Fought the Thistle*, pp149-55

[29] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, pp. 44-45

[30] For a full description of the mural see Dr Veena Shekar, *Historical Paintings of Srirangapatna* (New Delhi, 2010), Ch 3.

[31] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p46

[32] Ibid p48-9

[33] An undated letter from Philip in the BL Melvill papers, p118, says he was imprisoned for four years in Bangalore.

[34] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p52

Held for four years, until the end of the war, only about 30 of the soldiers survived. Colonel Baillie himself died in November 1782, having been denied any medical aid and in terrible conditions.[35] Very few of the survivors were able to continue in active service. Philip went to Bengal to stay with his brother John and recuperate, and it was not until 1786 that he was well enough to attempt the journey home.[36] His wounds and treatment in captivity meant that, for a long time, he was unable to cut his own food and needed help dressing and undressing.[37] According to a letter written by his widow, he never regained the full use of his arms.[38]

On his return he was offered a promotion to Captain and the command of an invalid garrison in Guernsey. There he met his future wife, Elizabeth Dobree (1770-1844). He married Elizabeth in 1788 and they had their first three children on the island. After five years in Guernsey, the threat of war with France led the Melvills to leave the island in 1793; the family moved first to Southampton then, after a severe illness, Philip applied to be put on the retired list and moved to Topsham in Devon. However, after a summer of recuperation in 1796, he was offered the command of an invalid garrison at Pendennis Castle in Cornwall. He took over a run down, ill-disciplined company.[39] Within a year he was promoted to Lieutenant Governor, a post he held until his death in 1811. Soon after his promotion, Philip established the Pendennis Volunteer Artillery; in 1802 he helped found a Church girls' school and a boys' school in 1805.[40] In 1807 he established the Falmouth Misericordia Society 'for the relief of distressed persons'.[41] The anonymous author of Philip's memoirs emphasised his Christian convictions, and this was echoed by other writers. An early history of Cornwall says of Philip that 'he was respected and loved by all who were favoured with his acquaintance. By his death the affluent lost an amiable companion; and the poor, a benefactor who sympathised with them in their distress'.[42]

Philip moved his family to London where the children would have better prospects.[43] In August 1811 he returned to Cornwall to put his affairs in order where he fell ill again.[44] This

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[35] Tritton, *When the Tiger Fought the Thistle*, pp. 281-82. Baillie's nephew erected a monument to him at Gumbaz, about a mile from Srirangapatna. The dungeon in the fort at Srirangapatna is named 'Col Baillie's Dungeon' and is open to visitors. For the broader context of this captivity, see Linda Colley, *Captives: Britain, Empire and the World, 1600-1850* (London, 2002)

[36] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p62.

[37] Ibid, p66

[38] BL Melvill papers, p122

[39] Ibid, p34

[40] Bob Dunstan, *The Book of Falmouth & Penryn* (Chesham, 1975), pp34-35

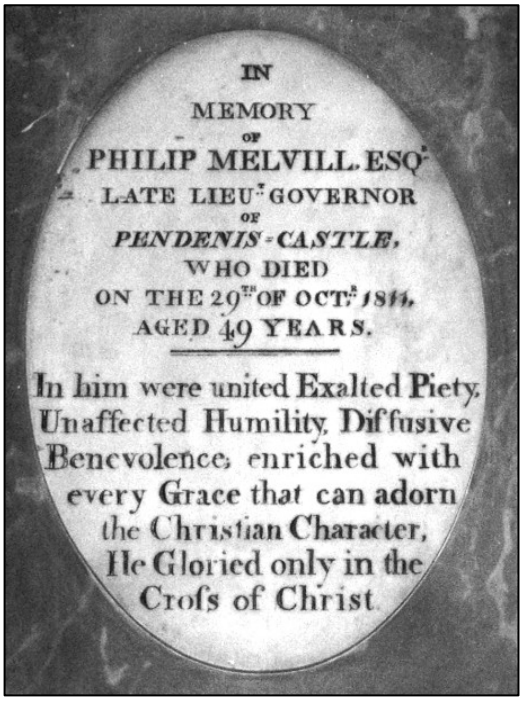
[41] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p122

[42] S. Pasfield Oliver, *Pendennis and St Mawes: An Historical Sketch of Two Cornish Castles* (London, 1875), pp. 77-8, quoting from Fortescue Hitchens, *The History of Cornwall*, Samuel Drew (ed) (London, 1824), Vol 2, pp257-58

[43] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p129

[44] Ibid, p133

time he did not recover and died at Pendennis on 27 October 1811 at the comparatively young age of 51. His contributions to the town of Falmouth were recognised by the road between the town and the castle (now the A39) being named 'Melvill Road'.




*Left: The memorial to Philip Melvill in Falmouth Church (with the wrong age). Right: Pendennis Castle today. (Both photos David Williams)*

## The Second Generation

A ***John II***, m 1: 1794 **Dorothea CARRINGTON**; 2: Elizabeth SNEADE
1751-1818 ?-1799 ?-?

John III 1796-1828 Unmarried

Edmund 1797-1857 Unmarried

B **Philip I** m 1788 Elizabeth Carey DOBREE
1760-1811 1770-1844

| John F | Peter B | **James C (JCM I)** | Jean B | ***Philip (Philip II)*** | **Henry (Henry I)** | Rachel | ***Peter M*** | Elizab. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1789-1808 | 1790-1803 | 1792-1861 | 1794-1862 | 1796-1882 | 1798-1871 | 1800-85 | 1803-95 | 1807-53 |
| Unmarr. | Died inf. | C | Unmarr. | D | E | Chdless. | F | Unmarr. |

*Section A shows the descendants of John Melvill;*
*Section B shows the descendants of Philip Melvill*

## James Cosmo Melvill (1792-1861)

*Sir James Cosmo Melvill (1792-1861)*

James Cosmo Melvill (JCM I) was born in Guernsey, the third son of Philip I and Elizabeth, but the first to survive to adulthood. In 1811, through family connection with the Anstruthers (Philip's cousin Sir John Anstruther [1753-1811] had been Chief Justice of Bengal from 1797-1808[45]) his father secured him a position at the EIC office in London.[46] He rose steadily through the organisation, becoming auditor of the Indian accounts in 1824, Financial Secretary in 1834 and Chief Secretary in 1836, a post he held until his retirement on 3 September 1858 at the time of the EIC's closure.[47]

JCM I spent the whole of his working life at East India House in Leadenhall Street, the London headquarters of the EIC since 1648. Towards the end of the eighteenth century, however, the existing buildings were inadequate.[48] Between 1794 and 1797 the EIC purchased parcels of land around its existing site and, based on a design by its surveyor, Richard Jupp, a new 200 foot long and 60 foot high classical-style façade was built and the existing building extended. It included a residence for the Secretary at the west end of the façade and, later, a library and a museum. One of the highlights of the museum was the mechanical tiger which had belonged to Tipu Sultan (now in the V&A). In 1858 the property was used briefly by the India Office but the new department wanted to be near the Foreign Office so in 1860 moved to Westminster. In 1861 the building was demolished and replaced by new, multi-purpose offices.[49] It is now occupied by the Lloyd's Building, built in 1986.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, East India House was the location for one of the largest non-government or non-military organisations in London. Large numbers of clerks serviced the continuous correspondence between London and the Indies. It was a

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[45] ODNB entry for Sir John Anstruther, fourth baronet, J. S. Cotton, rev. T. H. Bowyer.

[46] *Memoirs of the Late Philip Melvill*, p. 123; however, according to his entry in the ODNB he started with the EIC in 1808.

[47] de la Ferté, *The Melvill Family*, p9

[48] William Foster, *The East India House: its history and associations* (London, 1924), p137-44

[49] Ibid, pp153-54

prestigious place to work and clerkships were sought after. They were filled by the nomination of directors, to provide for a relative, a friend or a political supporter but there was no evidence of nominations being sold (an 1809 investigation by a Committee of the House of Commons found no ill-practice).[50] Working hours were not onerous, starting with breakfast at 10:00am, time for lunch, and finishing by 4:00pm. John Stuart Mill, of whom more later, found time for his philosophical writings during office hours and often used EIC headed stationery for his non-business correspondence.[51] Pensions for retired employees were generous.

As Chief Secretary, JCM's post was the most important home servant, because of the relationship with the Court of Directors and the way in which he could determine and control the agenda of court meetings. While in office, JCM I appeared before several Parliamentary committees and was regarded as 'one of the shrewdest and most sagacious men whom I have ever met' by a biographer of Indian officers.[52] In 1830, he appeared before a Select Committee when William Huskisson MP was attacking the perceived privileges of the EIC and accusing them of violating their charter.[53] Huskisson's plan 'at a stroke was defeated by the clear and convincing statements' of JCM.[54] In another appearance in 1832 he was described as 'an able advocate'.[55]

JCM I was a traditionalist, believing that economies such as the cutting back of military expenditure were short-sighted (this despite his financial background) and opposing the EIC's territorial acquisitions of the 1840s and 1850s.[56] He was keen to preserve the independence and prestige of India's remaining princes and also observed the simmering resentment among the EIC's Indian troops because of expenditure cut-backs. He corresponded with EIC employees in India and with critics and supporters at home. He was often required to deflect opposition to some of the EIC's difficult decisions.

In the period up to the closure of the EIC, JCM and John Stuart Mill, who had risen to be the Examiner of Indian Correspondence - a role which was almost equal in influence to that of the Chief Secretary and possibly had greater responsibilities - were pivotal in the defence of the EIC against Palmerston's attack on its privileges. While their efforts were ultimately in vain, Earl Grey pronounced Mill's petition to parliament as one of the ablest

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[50] Much of the information about the workings of East India House comes from Foster, *The East India House* (1924).

[51] John M Robson, Martin Moir and Zawahir Moir (eds), John Stuart Mill, Writings on India, vol 33 (London, 1990) p. xx

[52] John William Kaye, *Lives of Indian Officers* (London, 1867) vol i, p434

[53] http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/huskisson-william-1770-1830, accessed 30 March 2014.

[54] Edward Thornton, *The History of the British Empire in India,* vol. V (London, 1843), p285-86

[55] Ibid, p304

[56] These and the following observations are in JMC I's entry in the ODNB, E. I. Carlyle, rev. Katherine Prior.

state papers he had read. In his autobiography, Mill spoke of 'the folly and mischief of this ill-considered change'.[57]

JCM I had become a member of The Royal Society in 1841, and Commissioner of Lieutenancy of the City of London in 1847. He was awarded a KCB in September 1853.[58] Some of the letters in the Melvill papers in the BL are correspondence between JCM, the College of Arms and various relations of JCM which appear to be an attempt to obtain a grant of arms for the Melvill family.[59] On the cessation of the EIC, JCM I was appointed Government General of the Indian Railways but turned down the offer of high office in the new Indian administration because of his advancing years and failing health.[60] His abilities were obviously known at the highest level because when the appointments to the new Indian Office, which took over responsibility for the administration of India from the EIC, were put before Queen Victoria in 1858 she asked how it was that JCM's name was not included.[61]

In 1815 JCM I had married Hester Jean Frances Sellon (1789-1854) at St Andrews, Holborn. She was the daughter of William Marmaduke Sellon (1757-1824), who owned a number of properties including several public houses in and around Clerkenwell and was 'for many years a hardworking and exemplary magistrate'.[62] [63] The Sellon family had another link to India. Hester's nephew Edward Sellon (1818-66) joined the Madras Infantry of the EIC army in 1834 and served in India for ten years. He subsequently had a turbulent personal life and was most notorious for being a writer of erotic fiction, based upon his early experiences in India, although he did write some more scholarly works on India as well as a novel based there.[64] Described by a cousin as 'a hot headed, uncontrollable man',[65] Sellon eventually he shot himself at the age of 48.[66]

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[57] Robson, Moir and Moir (eds), John Stuart Mill, p. xxvi

[58] ODNB entry.

[59] BL Melvill papers, pp. 60-61. This was later followed up in the 1920s by Lt Col P.J. Melvill in correspondence with E.J. Joubert de la Ferté. BL Melvill papers, pp62-65

[60] de la Ferté, *The Melvill Family*, p9

[61]Arthur Christopher Benson and Viscount Reginald Baliol Brett Esher (eds), *The Letters of Queen Victoria, Vol III 1854-61* (London, 1908), p229

[62] *Gentleman's Magazine* (1824), p572

[63] The family were wealthy and could trace their lineage back to the Plantagenets. The marriage settlement is an extremely long and complicated document which was written to ensure that Frances retained her own fortune and it did not pass to JCM. (London Metropolitan Archives ACC/1709/001, 1815).

[64] Phil Hine, Lecture Notes: On Edward Sellon, http://enfolding.org/lecture-notes-on-edward-sellon-i/, accessed 3 December 2013. *Annotation to the Sacred Writings of the Hindus* (1865) was his most recognised scholarly work. The novel was *Herbert Breakspear* (1848) about the Mahratta War.

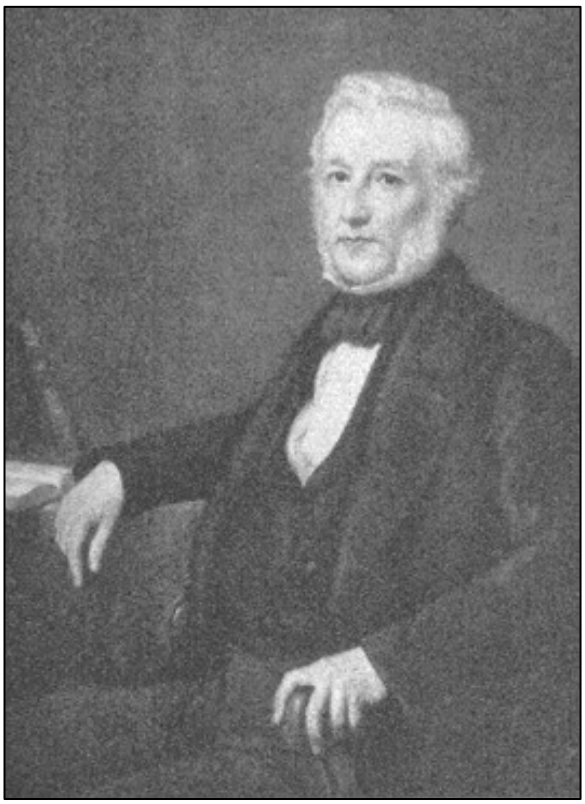
[65] Marmaduke Hornidge, at Sellon's inquest.

[66] http://www.brightonsarchitecture.com/profilewilds.html, accessed 4 December 2013.

By the time of the 1841 census return JCM I was living at Cannon Hall in Hampstead with his wife, six daughters, two sons and four servants. The house took its name from the cannons used as bollards outside the house which are said to have been put there by JCM.[67] The Melvills lived at Cannon Hall until they moved to Tandridge Court near Godstone in Surrey in the 1850s where JCM died in July 1861.[68] The church at Tandridge has a pew with JCM's name carved into it and he, his wife and three daughters are commemorated in one of the larger graves in the churchyard which has a prominent stone cross.[69] At All Saints church in Hutton, Essex, there is a window dedicated to James Cosmo Melvill and his wife.[70]

### Philip Melvill (1796-1882)

The second of Philip I and Elizabeth's sons to reach adulthood, Philip II, followed a similar career path to his elder brother, JCM I. He joined the EIC in London in June 1815 on the military side and rose to be Military Secretary by 1837. He retired in 1857, as the EIC was being wound up. In 1826 he had married Eliza Sandys in St Keverne Cornwall. They had two sons and nine daughters; two of the daughters died in infancy.[71] Their eldest son, Philip Sandys joined the Bengal Civil Service (see part II, *FIBIS Journal* 33) and their other son, Teignmouth, having gone to Harrow, Cheltenham College and Trinity College, Cambridge, joined the army and was killed at Isandhlwana, South Africa, during the Zulu War of 1879. He was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross 'on account of the gallant effort made by him to save the Queen's Colour of his regiment after the disaster of Isandhlwana'.[72]



*Philip Melvill (1796-1882)*

[67] http://www.hampsteadheath.net/cannon-hall.html, accessed 26 March 2014

[68] Gerald Walkden, *Tandridge Parish News*, February 2010.

[69] Ibid.

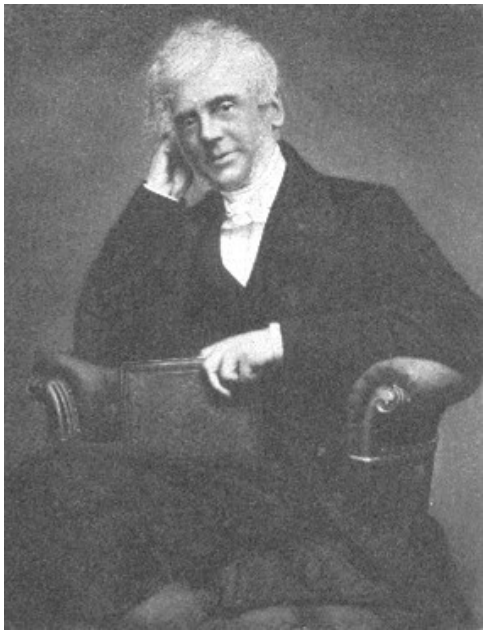
[70] Mary Kenyon, *A History of All Saints Church Hutton* (Essex County Council, 1999), pages not numbered. The window was put there by their daughter, Fanny, who had married the then rector who was instrumental in a major rebuilding of the church in 1873.

[71] Unlike their brothers only one of their daughters, Mary Augusta (1833-1917), made an Indian connection, marrying the future Major-General Sweedland Mainwaring (1819-1883) of the Indian Army in 1856.

[72] Cambridge Alumni, ibid; *London Gazette*, 15 March 1879

Philip and Eliza retired to her old county of Cornwall and lived at Ethy House, St Winnow, with as many as eleven servants (on the 1871 census return). It is alleged to be where Kenneth Graham wrote *The Wind in the Willows* and that Toad Hall is based on Ethy. Philip and Eliza spent 25 years in retirement in Cornwall and he died there in 1892, when his estate was valued at almost £44,000 (well over £2m today).[73]

## Henry Melvill (1798-1871)



*Henry Melvill (1798-1871)*

Henry Melvill ('Henry I') was the third of Philip I and Elizabeth's sons to reach adulthood. He had an impressive academic record and moved in the highest of social circles. He went up to St John's, Cambridge, in 1817 and graduated in 1821 with some distinction.[74] He was awarded an MA in 1824 and from 1822 to 1829 worked as a fellow and tutor at Peterhouse College, Cambridge. In 1836 he became a Doctor of Divinity. He then held various clerical posts before being appointed as principal of the EIC College, Haileybury, in 1843, a post he held until the college was closed down on 31 January 1858.[75] He was appointed chaplain of the Tower of London by the Duke of Wellington in 1840, and was Golden Lecturer at St Margaret's, Lothbury, from 1850 to 1856. From 1853 he was chaplain to Queen Victoria; from 1856 Canon Residentiary of St Paul's; and from 1863 rector of Barnes in Surrey. He was still holding these three posts when he died in 1871.

Henry had the reputation of being the most popular preacher in London and one of the greatest rhetoricians of his time.[76] First at Camden Chapel, then at St. Margaret's, and later on at St. Paul's, large crowds of people attended his ministrations. He had many distinguished admirers. John Ruskin described him thus:

> Henry Melvill, afterwards Principal of Haileybury, was the only preacher I ever knew whose sermons were at once sincere, orthodox and oratorical on Ciceronian principles. He wrote them from end to end with polished art, and read them admirably, in his own manner; by which, though the congregation affectionately expected it, they were always deeply impressed...I owe to him all sorts of good help in close analysis, but especially my habit of always looking, in every quotation from the Bible, what goes before it and after.[77]

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[73] England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills & Administrations) for 1882, p184

[74] Cambridge Alumni, ibid; 1st Smith's prize and 2nd Wrangler.

[75] Imogen Thomas, *Haileybury 1805-1987* (Hertford, 1987) p24

[76] Much of the information about Henry Melvill comes from his entry in the ODNB, G. C. Boase, rev. H. C. G. Matthew.

[77] ET Cook and Alexander Wedderburn (eds), *Works of John Ruskin*, vol 35 (London, 1908), p386

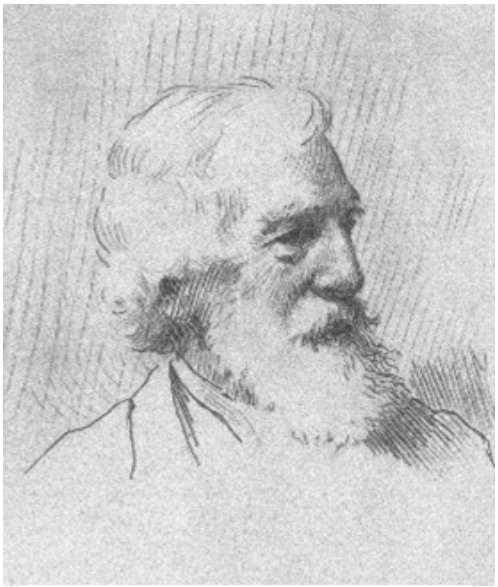
Similarly C.E. Buckland's *Dictionary of Indian Biography* records that 'His tenure of the Principalship of Haileybury is estimated to have been successful: of his success as a preacher there can be no doubt: he was noted for his eloquence, earnestness and skilful management of his voice: published numerous sermons and lectures'.[78]

In 1830 he married Margaret Jennings (1805-1878) whose own family may have benefitted from her husband's EIC connections. Margaret Jennings' brother, Midgley John Jennings (1806-1857), was a Cambridge graduate who was ordained in 1830. He was an EIC chaplain in India from 1832. On 11 May 1857 he and his family were massacred at Delhi, with other members of the Mission, at the outbreak of the Mutiny. A memorial was erected at Cawnpore, on which Jennings is described as 'Priest, Chaplain, and Founder of the S.P.G. Mission to Delhi'.[79]

Henry I and Margaret had nine children, four boys and five girls. The four boys all had careers with the EIC in India and later participated in the British governance of India (see part II, *FIBIS Journal* 33). Of their daughters, the eldest, Clara (1831-1900) married Stewart St John Gordon (1829-1866) of the Bengal Civil Service. Henry I died in 1871 and Margaret in 1878. She left the considerable sum of between £60-70,000 (over £3m today).[80]

**Peter Melvill Melvill (1803-95)**

The youngest son of Philip I and Elizabeth, Peter entered the EIC military service in Bombay in 1819 and rose through the administration side, being Adjutant of Bombay and ADC to Governor and working in Cutch and Sind before becoming Secretary to the Government of Bombay from 1840-59. In 1860 he was knighted for his services, retiring with the rank of Major-General. He was still active in retirement after the demise of the EIC, sitting on Lord Hobhouse's committee on the amalgamation of the Indian and British armies in 1860 and on the Royal Commission to report on memorials of the Indian officers in 1863.[81]



*Peter Melvill (1803-95)*

He married Mary Robinson (1814-1881) in Bombay in 1836 and they had three daughters in India. Two of them married Bombay-based civil servants, Elizabeth (1836-89) marrying Charles Gonne (1832-95) and Catherine (1840-72), Arthur de Hochepied-Larpent, the eighth Baron, (1832-87) in 1859. The youngest Rosina died in infancy.

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78 C.E. Buckland, *Dictionary of Indian Biography* (London, 1906), p285

79 Cambridge Alumni, ibid.

80 Probate Calendar, 1878, p183

81 Buckland, *Indian Biography*, p285

Mary died in early 1881, by which time she and Peter had returned to England. In the 1881 and 1891 census returns, Peter was living at 27 Palmeira Square, Hove in Sussex, one of the most prestigious addresses in the town; in both returns a number of grandchildren, governesses and several servants are registered presumably because the parents were still in India. When he died at the age of 92 in 1895 he left an estate of nearly £60,000 (about £3m today).

*In Part II of this article (in FIBIS Journal 33) we will learn about the third generation of the Melvill family and their service in India.*

## About the East India Company at Home, 1757-1857 Project

*Dr Kate Smith, Research Fellow, University College London*

Beginning at the University of Warwick in September 2011, the Leverhulme Trust-funded project *The East India Company at Home, 1757-1857* drew to a close this summer, with an international conference held at UCL in July 2014. Based in the Department of History at University College London since July 2012, the project used the country house as a lens through which to examine the influence of East India Company (EIC) trade upon British material culture and domestic environments. It particularly tracked EIC families as they returned from India and explored the country houses they built, bought and rented. At the same time it studied the objects they returned with and examined the meanings such things held and facilitated. While the project examined country houses and objects across the United Kingdom, of particular interest to FIBIS members will be the research featuring EIC families.

A central UCL project team worked to tackle these broad research questions. Professor Margot Finn (Principal Investigator) led Dr Helen Clifford (Senior Research Fellow), Dr Kate Smith (Research Fellow) and Ellen Filor (PhD Student) in the Department of History. Margot, Helen, Kate and Ellen also worked collaboratively with a much broader team of project associates who joined the project over the last 36 months. These participants came from many different backgrounds including archivists, curators, family and local historians, academics and students. Project associates were encouraged to contribute research to the project, through writing case studies, which have been made publically available on the project website (http://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/eicah). Some 40 case studies can be read online.

Project associate David Williams contributed a case study to the project, which explores the intergenerational commitment that members of the Melvill family made to the East India Company in the subcontinent and the UK in the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Melvill family were a good example of those Scots who after the Act of Union took their opportunities within the British Army and in the overseas empire to make their careers. By virtue of their EIC service, this Scottish family became increasingly English by marrying into established English families and settling in England. David's case study underlines the different ways in which connections to the East India Company shaped what families were and did in modern Britain.

# Trumpeter Inwood, an Anglo-Indian hero of the Kut Garrison

*Rosemary Reardon*

In October 1917 an emaciated man, with long hair and beard, took himself into the British Lines at Ramadi in what is now Iraq. The guards at first mistook him for another of the 44 Armenian refugees that had accompanied him in. It took some time for them to be convinced that he was in fact Trumpeter HJ Inwood, an Anglo-Indian soldier of the Royal Field Artillery. Inwood had been attached to 1/5 Hants Howitzer battery during the siege of Kut-al-Amara some 17 months earlier and had been taken prisoner along with the rest of the garrison. What had happened to him since and how he had managed to return to the British at Ramadi is recorded in an Intelligence Summary lodged at The National Archives[1] and it is from this testimony that his story emerges. But first some background on this 'Anglo-Indian hero', as he would later be called.

*Henry James Inwood, India c1907.*

## Early life in India

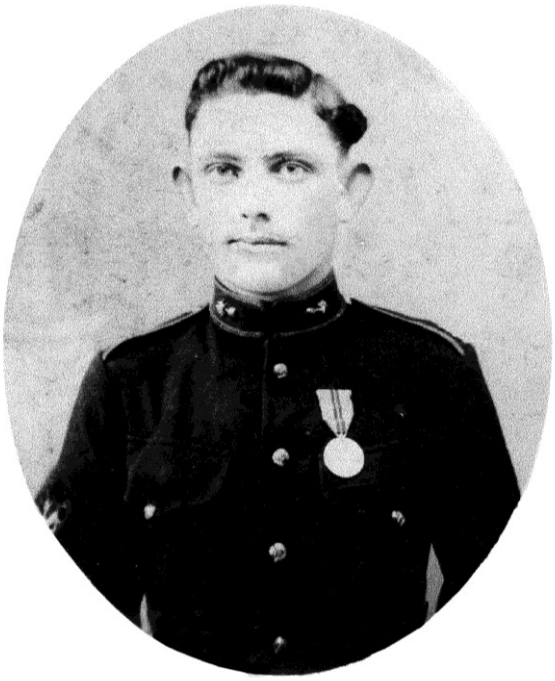
On 4 July 1892 my great-uncle Henry James Inwood was born in Rawalpindi to an Anglo-Indian mother and British father.[2] A happy childhood was spent in the railway colony there at West Ridge and along with his brothers and sisters Henry attended the European Station School.[3] Whilst his elder brothers joined the Rifle Brigade and Somerset Light Infantry, Henry chose to follow in his father's footsteps and in 1907, at age fourteen, joined the Royal Field Artillery (RFA). Posted to the Boys

[1] TNA WO 157/1059 Intelligence Summary, 15th (Indian Division) Part 1 and appendices

[2] IOR N/1/223/241, baptism at Christ Church, Rawalpindi. The story of Henry's parents can be found in *FIBIS Journal* 28, 'The Mysterious Murder at Agra' by Rosemary Reardon.

[3] Four school photos in which Henry appears are in the FIBIS Gallery (http://www.gallery.fibis.org/) in the personal collection of Neville Thomas. Neville's wife is the descendant of the headmaster Harry Waters. See *FIBIS Journal* 23, 'Waters from Ireland - to Bengal - to New Zealand' by Neville Thomas.

Depot at Meerut, a photo in uniform at that time shows a proud if rather young-looking fourteen year old - his attestation papers show he was only 4 foot 11. It is no surprise either that his distinguishing feature is recorded as 'ears very prominent'.[4] Four months after attesting, Henry's father died of cholera. Henry continued with his army career and after two years was mustered to the 58th Battery at Neemuch as a driver and then appointed Trumpeter.[5]



*HJ Inwood, c1911, wearing Delhi Durbar medal*

The 1911 England and Wales census records Trumpeter Inwood with the 58th at Ferozepore.[6] A few weeks earlier he would have been in Delhi and family-held photographs show him wearing his Delhi Durbar medal.[7] His final posting before the outbreak of war saw him transferred to the 38th Battery back home in Rawalpindi in 1913. During these early years Henry suffered several bouts of malaria, but his time in the army had been peaceful. That was all about to change dramatically.

## To Mesopotamia and the Siege of Kut-al-Amara

Problems for Britain had been fermenting for some time in Mesopotamia, with Germany advising Turkish officials on military matters whilst keeping watchful for any opportunity to push towards an Eastern Empire. At the outbreak of war in 1914, Turkish forces occupied Basra and promptly closed the Shatt-al-Arab (the river formed by the confluence of the Euphrates and the Tigris) to the British Navy. Britain was keen to protect its oil fields and pipeline in and around Basra and the Government of India mobilized an Indian Expeditionary Force (D) under the command of General Charles Vere Ferrers Townshend, initially consisting of the 6th (Poona) Division who sailed from Bombay on 16 October 1914.

In less than a month, the 6th Division had occupied Basra, capturing 1,000 Turkish prisoners and with a loss of only 65 of their own men. The capture of Qurna followed and after a climatically difficult but quiet winter, the Turkish forces tried to re-capture Basra in April 1915. Their failure allowed British forces to press on towards Baghdad but

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[4] TNA WO 364/1870 via Ancestry.com 'British Army WWI Pension Records 1914-1920' [database on-line]. Inwood's service number was 47160.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ancestry.com, 1911 England Census [database on-line], Source Citation: RG14 - 34978; p1

[7] Delhi Durbar 1911 Medal Roll: Ancestry.com. UK, Military Campaign Medal and Award Rolls, 1793-1949 [database on-line]. Source Citation: WO 100; Piece: 400.

manoeuvres to progress up the Tigris were hampered by difficult conditions. It was to this situation that Trumpeter Inwood was posted and attached to the 1/5 Hants Howitzer Battery.[8] The battle for Ctesiphon, beginning on 22 November 1915, was a disaster for the 6th Division and resulted in their retreat to Kut-Al-Amara (which they had taken a month earlier), on 3 December. General Townsend decided to hold the position and Turkish forces surrounded them and cut them off. Thus began a siege that would last for 147 days and devastate the men of the garrison.

In his report on the siege, Lieutenant HSD McNeal of the RFA noted that the 1/5 Hants Howitzer Battery, to which Inwood was attached, was positioned at the area known as the Brick Kilns.[9] On 8 December McNeal directed the Howitzer's fire to blow up the bridge of boats that connected Kut, set in a loop in the river, to the far bank of the Tigris. The attempt was unsuccessful and sappers had to swim out in the freezing waters and blow it up with gun cotton.

For several months British forces from further down the river tried to relieve the British and Indian troops at Kut, but their enemy blocked attempts. Under siege for nearly five months, the troops were slowly dying of starvation.[10] As the months passed rations were reduced until on 28 January 1916 British soldiers were forced to start eating their horses, mules and camels.[11] Indian troops were reportedly nervous as to how such news would be received back home and refused to do the same. British authorities, in what is said to have been extremely sensitive negotiations, sought and received permission from spiritual leaders in India for normal religious customs to be suspended, but it was still not until the second week in April, with the prospect of death becoming a reality, that many Indian troops partook in eating what few

*Ruined streets in Kut, pictured after recapture by British troops under General Sir FS Maude in February 1917.*
*© IWM (Q 25254)*

[8] TNA WO 364/1870, as before. Inwood left Rawalpindi on the 29 Sept 1915.

[9] IOR L/MIL/7/18286 'Report on the Siege of Kut-al-amara' by Lieut HSD McNeal RFA, p2

[10] HCW Bishop, *A Kut Prisoner* (1920). Bishop was a subaltern in the Indian Army Reserve of Officers who was captured at Kut.

[11] L/MIL/7/18286, McNeal op. cit., p12

animals were left.[12] McNeal sadly reported that his own horse, Esmeralda, was eaten on 18 April.[13]

After failed attempts to relieve Kut, a Turkish envoy would promptly arrive with a white flag and request the garrison's surrender.[14] He would always be courteously refused but on 29 April 1916, after yet another aborted endeavour by British forces to free those trapped, General Townshend surrendered. By the end of the war he was blamed for the siege and the events that led up to it, but not by the ranks who were besieged there with him. They stayed loyal throughout and in most cases after as well.[15] Under his command 3290 soldiers had died of starvation, disease or injury during the months at Kut-al-Amara.[16]

## Prisoners of War

Trumpeter Inwood was one of the survivors and quotes from the statement he gave to Captain Scott of the 15th Division in October 1917 guide the story as to what happened to the men next.[17]

> *Inwood: 29 April 16 - After the fall of Kut prisoners were concentrated at Shumran for eight days before commencing their march to Bagcha*.[18]

Lord Justice Younger's Commitee[19] reported that 10,486 of those captured were Indian ranking soldiers and 2680 from British ranks. Of the officers, 472 were British and 231 Indian. Whilst 1100 of the most ill were sent down the Tigris for repatriation, the rest indeed were all concentrated at Shumran just to the west of Kut. Younger's report described how, in a terribly weakened state from the siege, they lay about on unsheltered ground in the hot sun and rain for two days. No rations were issued and many died of gastro-enteritis or dysentery after eating stony dry biscuits bought from passing Arabs that were lethal to starving men. Three hundred more men died in that first week at Shumran.

> *Inwood: 7 May 1916 – from Kut to Baghdad 3 or 4 days march, with Cavalry Brigade as escort. Many men fell out on the way and were left to die or were killed by the Turks at night. Sick men unlikely to be able to march next day were taken out and hit on the head.*

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[12] Bishop p28; McNeal (IOR L/MIL/7/18286) p16

[13] McNeal (IOR L/MIL/7/18286) p16

[14] Bishop p28; Charles H Barber IMS, *Besieged in Kut and After* (1918) p183

[15] Russell Braddon, *The Siege*, (Jonathan Cape, 1969) foreword

[16] IOR/MIL/7/1837 *Report on the treatment of British Prisoners of War in Turkey* (HMSO 1918)

[17] TNA WO 157/1059, as before. Italicised quotes are from this interview/statement. The dates are those given by Inwood. Quotes are partial. See map, back cover, for principal locations.

[18] Bahçe, the site of one of the two main passes through the Amanus mountains in Turkey. See map on back page for locations mentioned in this article.

[19] IOR/MIL/7/1837 *Report on the treatment of British Prisoners of War in Turkey* (HMSO 1918). The Committee reported to Parliament in November 1918 and recorded much shocking detail on those that were herded off from Kut to camps in Anatolia.

*<u>Inwood: 11 May 1916</u> –Stayed in Baghdad 2 days. While here were paraded around the town.*

As the distance to Baghdad was a 100 miles, the captured British and Indian officers urged the Turkish Commander not to allow any more than eight miles a day marching and that the most sick should go by boat. This was agreed but not adhered to after the first day. The British and Indian officers were separated from the ranks and taken by boat while the column of men from Kut was herded like sheep, with stragglers whipped and flogged. With neither proper rations, water bottles or boots, 800 fell out through illness on the first day. The fourth day had to be completely given over to rest, but when the march continued 350 sick and dying British and Indian soldiers were left behind in a filthy cow shed.

*<u>Inwood: 14 May 1916 onwards</u> – Entrained at Baghdad and went to Samarrah, from whence started their long march to Bagcha, via Mosul, Ras al Ain and Aleppo.*

*The journey across country to Bagcha took 3 months. During that time prisoners were fed on boiled wheat in the morning and a handful of coarse flour in the evening, which they mixed with water and cooked to make a kind of porridge. They were sometimes given 4 hard biscuits and were told these were for 3 days rations.*

With the Turkish anxious to send the men up country as soon as possible, the mass of soldiers deemed fit were to be sent across the Syrian desert to camps in Anatolia. During June and July groups of twenty or so men were crowded into railway trucks at Baghdad


*May 1917 - The Bishop of Nagpur, Eyre Chatterton, consecrating the graves of prisoners of war captured by the Turks at Kut in April 1916 and who died in Baghdad. © IWM (Q 25264)*

and sent 80 miles north to Samarrah (where the railhead was at the time).

From there the episode that was to be known as the The Long March commenced. Under a fierce sun and with a state of health and equipment that would never withstand, the 500 mile, three month march got under way. Hundreds fell out during the first stages, left lying on the roadside where they dropped. A small batch of officers delayed in Baghdad by illness caught up with this devastating scene and sent a message to the Turkish commander pressing for a hospital establishment to be sent to Samarrah. But the main body of the column had already passed through and the track these same officers followed found parties of men in tens and twenties lying exhausted and dying of dysentery and starvation, or dead, half-clothed, having sold what was left of their uniforms and boots to buy a little milk. The dead lay naked and unburied. At Aleppo there was found a group of twelve Indian soldiers and six British who for three months had lain on the bare ground of a mud-walled enclosure being thrown scraps by passing Arabs or caravans. It was no wonder Younger said that by 1918 so many of the prisoners from Kut remained unaccounted for.

> *Inwood: 15 August 1916 – Prisoners were kept at Bagcha for 3 months and worked on the railway. …some of the prisoners who were working on the tunnel were seen by a German officer who came to inspect. This German must have given orders that no prisoners were to do this kind of work, for after his visit they did nothing but carry stones and earth.*

For those that did make it to the Amanus mountains, three months working on the railway awaited them. Most of the Indian troops were deployed at Ras-Al-Ain. After a couple of days rest those deemed fit were set straight to work for the German owners of the Railway Construction company. But it soon became apparent that the Kut prisoners (unlike those already there from the Dardanelles) were not fit to work and so they were handed back to the Turkish authorities who loaded them firstly into railway trucks and then made them march over the Taurus mountains, again with no rations or shelter provision. Although it seems hardly possible, this was an even worse experience than before. Beaten and driven across the mountain range by Gendarmes, those that survived were put in camps such as Afion Kara Hissar and Konar.

> *Inwood: November 1916 - POW Camp Kala Hissar*
>
> *From Bagcha all the prisoners were sent to Kala Hissar[20] where they were put in to a prisoners of war camp. British ranks lived in an Armenian church and the Indians had a place called "Madrassi" [probably madrassa], about 300 yards away.*
>
> *Prisoners were quite well off whilst here. They were only made to work once a week…carrying stones for buildings. They were taken out for a walk which lasted for an hour every day. Their food consisted of wheat and atta, and meat (mutton) twice a week. Prisoners had 2 or 3 footballs, got up occasional concerts and were fairly contented.*

[20] [Afion] Kara Hissar. Inwood's statement renders this as Kala Hissar, but it is likely this is an error by those that took the statement.

*The American ambassador in Constantinople sent British POW's clothes and money, but the Turkish commander generally took half away. They received postcards, letter and parcels from various Organizations. [Inwood] himself received 23 postcards from a Major Foster, Secretary of the Artillery Prisoners of War Fund. 6 of these postcards were information that parcels and money had been sent…but during the whole of his 10 months stay at Kala Hissar he only got 3 parcels and only about half of the money.*

*They used to answer to the names of their comrades who had died so that when a lot of parcels arrived they should receive those addressed to their dead comrades.*

*Turks treated the Indian musselman prisoners of war a great deal better than they treated the British. Sikhs however were treated very harshly. Their hair was close cropped and their beards are not allowed to grow.*

*There were no Turkish troops at Kala Hissar. The guard over the prisoners is composed of old men.*

*Nobody tried to escape from here. All are heartily sick of the war.*

Afion Kara Hissar in particular had a hideous record for floggings which eventually resulted in the removal of the camp commander. Inwood's report indicates that in Afion they were treated quite well, but this view has to be considered in the light of the journey the men had suffered before. An Austrian officer, having observed some of its worst vestiges, described the march as being like Dante's Inferno.[21] Inwood's account of his time as a prisoner only hints at the dreadful detail of the fate of the Kut garrison that would eventually emerge and become the subject of much military and political debate.[22]

## To the railway

*Inwood: July 1917 Railway Construction*

*After prisoners had been at Kala Hissar for about 10 months the Turks selected 200 Britishers and 300 Indians from amongst the fittest to be sent to work on the railway at Ras Al Ain. They alternately walked and went by train, the journey taking about 3 weeks.*

*3000 Armenians plus the prisoners were working on the railway…making a railway embankment. Railway was about 30 miles east of Nisibin…at a place called Derbishiyah.*[23]

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[21] IOR/MIL/7/1837, op. cit.

[22] Of course the intelligence summary at the National Archives is not a personal testimony of all that Henry experienced but instead reflects how a captain in the 15th Indian Division Staff HQ wrote up an interview of which the prime motivation was to receive intelligence regarding the whereabouts and capability of the enemy. A number of published accounts by other internees, some given in this article as sources, provide much fuller detail of the men's suffering in captivity.

[23] Nisibin is now rendered Nusaybin. Derbishyah is likely Darbasiyah, which is 30 miles *west* of Nusaybin.

> *Rails were brought…in bullock wagons two to three times a week and then only 2 or 3 carts at a time. Railway construction is progressing very slowly, [not] as much as a mile a day [due to] a lack of rails.*
>
> *Germans are supervising the work and there are about 30 of them at Ras al Ain and 10-15 at railhead on construction work. No Germans at Derbishiyah, where there is no town but a few arab shelters and water.*

Younger's report confirms that as prisoners at camps such as Afion Kara Hissar became fitter they were sent back to railway work again. PW Long, another prisoner from the Kut Garrison, was sent from Afion to the railway at Nisibin. On the possibility of escape in this environment, he noted that 'the country itself was a natural prison. To the north ran range after range of bandit-infested mountains – the Kurdish Alps. To the south was the desert land of Northern Mesopotamia.'[24] But as Long told a Turkish doctor, it was the duty of a soldier to try to escape.[25] Indeed, it must have been the dream of every internee. However, only one POW ranker ever did successfully escape back to the British from the camps in Anatolia and that was Trumpeter Inwood.[26]

## Escape

Henry Inwood's statement continues by detailing the events of September 1917. The POW's had been warned they could try to escape if they wished but would be sure to be captured and brought back. After two months of the gruelling daily routine at Derbishyah and with no apparent hope of any end to capture, Inwood and four other men planned an escape. Three were Indian soldiers, of whom one was named as Akhbar, the 'servant' of an assistant surgeon. The fifth man was named by Inwood as 'Searle of the Bombay Artillery'.[27]

Waiting until nightfall the five escapees set off with plenty of food and full water bottles. They marched on until the middle of the next day in the general direction of south east and then laid low in a valley until evening. Akbhar had already made three escape attempts and told the others that he knew the country well and there would be plenty of water en route. Consequently on the third morning they washed themselves with all the contents of their water bottles. It then became apparent that Akbhar had lost his way. The countryside was dry and harsh and for two and a half days they had no water at all. Finally coming across a camel and its calf they slaughtered the latter and drank its blood to quench their thirst. Shortly afterwards Inwood went on ahead of his comrades and found a stream where they

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[24] PW Long, *Other ranks of Kut* (1938) p306

[25] Ibid p353. Long did escape several times, only to be recaptured. His book recounts the horrors of the treatment the other ranks received but also details his escapades in the Turkish countryside.

[26] Braddon, p327-8

[27] The 'Bombay Artillery' is of course the Bombay Volunteer Artillery. This unit was present at Kut. Searle was not an officer so was likely Anglo-Indian. Although there are several Searles baptised in Bombay in a likely timeframe, it is not possible to determine if one is this fifth man Searle. I have been unable to find out anything further about the other escapees or their fate.

eventually rested. Two of the party were extremely exhausted and it was difficult to get them along at all. This made the going extremely slow.

The following day the escape party was captured by mounted Gendarmes.[28] Told that the next morning they would be taken back to the railway, the Gendarmes then made what seems a rather unfathomable decision. They tasked the prisoners with keeping watch over the horses overnight whilst the guards slept. Inwood asked his comrades if they were willing to try and escape again, but his four companions refused, saying they were too exhausted and would return to captivity. So during the night Inwood took one of the horses and made off alone for the Jahal Singar Hills, which he had observed in the distance about 40 miles away.

Inwood continued on his own for two days until he reached a village. The Sheikh, Mushe Pasha, received him with hospitality and they were able to converse as Inwood had learnt a little Turkish. The Sheikh recommended he should stay until the British had taken Mosul and promised that he would then see him safely to British Lines. But after three days Inwood heard that a party of 44 Armenian refugees (men, women and children) were also sheltering in the village and had made plans to head to Baghdad. He decided to join them. Before they left Singar, the Sheikh provided the group with camels, food and five armed Arab guides and escorts. Their journey took about sixteen days and was relatively peaceful. The group was attacked once by a small party of marauders but the escorts beat them off. They didn't follow any defined track and the country was flat and devoid of cover. Water was obtained from wells in wadis and was very brackish. When food ran out they called at Arab villages for supplies where they were always received hospitably.

The party stopped at a village ten miles outside Ramadi. A Turkish sympathiser the group had met had indicated that Ottoman forces held the town and so one of the Arab escorts went on to investigate. When he returned to declare that this was not so, Inwood and the Armenian refugees proceeded immediately to British outpost lines. Inwood was interviewed over two days and medically examined. It was declared by the British Army that apart from having lost the sight in one eye, Trumpeter HJ Inwood seemed cheery and fit. His story had departed from those of the rest of the Kut prisoners. For many, their suffering would continue until the end of the war and their liberation. Over 5000 others died or remained missing after their term of captivity and forced labour.[29]

## Back to India, 'cheery and fit'?

After giving his report, Inwood was admitted to hospital at Fallujah for a month, where his blindness was treated and found to be temporary.[30] Six weeks later he was discharged to duty and sent back to India at the end of 1917. After some months at Nowshera, Inwood's unit was mobilized for the North West Frontier and the ensuing Third Anglo-Afghan War in

[28] The Turkish Gendarmerie is a branch of the armed forces charged with police duties.

[29] IOR/MIL/7/1837, op. cit., p5

[30] TNA WO 364/1870, op. cit.

*Released Indian Prisoners of War from Kut-al-Amara, embarking for home. Constantinople, November 1918.*
*© IWM (Q 13951)*

mid-1919. He was awarded the medal for this conflict[31] and finally discharged from active service, ending his military career on 31 March 1920.[32] His pension records show that the army deemed his character throughout his career as having been 'exemplary' and for his escape from captivity he was awarded the Military Medal.[33]

Inwood joined family working for the railways and became a Luggage Inspector on the Kalka-Simla Railway. Family anecdote hints that his war-time experience had not been without effect. Due to that time of starvation he was unable to manage meals so would hide his plate of food on a shelf. Some nights, having returned with his brothers from the Institute, Inwood would refuse to go in the house but would sleep 'on guard' in the compound. On one occasion one of his mother's friends was passing and (much to the embarrassment of his mother) he ran out and dragged her in to the house saying it was 'dangerous out there'.

Inwood's employment on the railways barely lasted a year. Physically weakened from the war, he died of pneumonia at his brother's house in Kalka on 9 July 1921.[34] In the months before his death, Trumpeter Inwood would still blow his bugle every day and it was said that it drove all the station dogs mad. Both he and they could now rest.

## Epilogue

And there Henry's story would end if it were not for the emergence of a rather enhanced version of his service in Mesopotamia. In 1932, eleven years after his death, the Christmas

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[31] Ancestry.com. UK, Military Campaign Medal and Award Rolls, 1793-1949 [database on-line]. Original data: War Office: Campaign Medal and Award Rolls 1793-1949 (General Series): TNA WO 100/468 (India General Service Medals, Royal Field Artillery 1920-1935)

[32] He had been posted to Class Z Army reserve from 29 Nov 1919.

[33] Recorded in *The Gazette* (*London Gazette*), issue 10167, 20 October 1920

[34] IOR N/1/455/180; *Times of India*, 22 July 1921, p3: 'Deaths. Inwood - July 9th, at his brother's residence, Kalka, Henry James Inwood MM, Luggage Inspector KS Railway, late 58th and 38th Battery RFA, age 29 years.'

edition of the *Anglo-Indian Review* published an article titled 'Henry James Inwood - Anglo-Indian Hero'.

After an introduction to his early life, the reader is told that Henry's 'conspicuous gallantry in the field and thrilling escapades earned him the sobriquet of "The Second Col. Lawrence of Arabia".' The article, in recalling his time under siege at Kut-al-Amara, claims that Henry 'distinguished himself by swimming the Tigris in flood under heavy Turkish Artillery fire carrying despatches to the British Lines out of the besieged town of Kut.' Moving on then to his escape, a very colourful picture is painted as follows:

> …his gallant spirit never faltered and he speedily laid plans to make his escape and he who had held up his head when the waters of the Tigris threatened to submerge him held up his courage in that evil day. In spite of the strict surveillance kept over the imprisonment camp he managed to break away, and once at liberty he raised bands of followers in order to cut off the Turkish retirement. His brave deeds at the head of his mercenaries, Kurds. Arabs etc. are testified to by Lt Col EV Whittall… His terrible condition when he at last rejoined the British Forces bore witness to the awful privations he had undergone. Fatigue, suffering and want had reduced him to a living skeleton.

The 1932 article states that Sir Henry Gidney (Anglo-Indian leader and representative) had received a letter from the War Office dated 3 December 1931 seeking the whereabouts of Trumpeter HJ Inwood. Lt Col. Whittall had introduced Inwood's name at a recent Reunion Dinner and there had been talk of a tribute in the shape of a memorial to him.[35] A photograph for the publication was furnished by Inwood's mother and the article ends by stating that Henry was 'an example of outstanding courage to all Anglo-Indian lads.'

This theme was still being advocated in 1941 when a correspondent to *The Strait Times* letter page recalled 'Eurasian' heroism from WWI and appealed for more of the same in the current conflict.[36] Henry is used as an example of Anglo-Indian boys of courage and parts of the 1932 article are quoted. In 1980 the Anglo-Indian hero's exploits received yet another airing when *The Review* (previously the *Anglo-Indian Review*) reprinted the 1932 article in its 'Down Memory Lane' section.[37]

Well what is one to make of all this? Certainly nothing in official records that I have found so far substantiates this augmented version of events. Henry's siblings did pass down a belief that he did indeed swim the Tigris and that once in doing so a bullet lodged in his scalp. Military records do not provide any corroboration, though it has been claimed that the manner of the siege meant that there may have been gaps and errors in the narrative.[38] As

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[35] There does not seem to be a Lt Col EV Whittall. The likeliest identity for this officer is Major GE Whittall of the Ox & Bucks LI who was DAAG at Rawalpindi District HQ in 1929. The Ox & Bucks were one of the Kut regiments.

[36] *The Strait Times* 13 May 1941. Letter from 'RVC'.

[37] *The Review* (Anglo-Indian Association), September 1980

[38] IOR/MIL/17/15/105 Lieut – General Sir P.H.N. Lake KCB KCMG Commanding I.E.F.D, confidential report of the defence of Kut-al-Amarah under British General Townshend 3 Dec 1915 – 29 April 1916

for the rather astonishing adaptation of Henry being the Second Col. Lawrence of Arabia and cutting off Turkish retirement with bands of mercenaries etc. I can only note that Inwood's own statement is mute on any such assertions. Nevertheless it has, again, been handed down through the family that the War Office did look for Inwood some time after his death and it was thought this was with the view to a further award. Henry's mother is alleged to have turned military enquirers away saying that the army did nothing for him when he first came back from war so why bother now that he was dead.

*Henry James Inwood in his Kalka-Simla Railway uniform, c1921.*

To conclude, it is hardly surprising that Henry's First World War service in Mesopotamia, along with his remarkable escape as a POW, had some affect on both his physical and mental state of health. This may therefore have unwittingly allowed for a little myth and legend to be created around what was in reality too harrowing to speak of plainly. More likely though is that a lack of recognition for the part that all Anglo-Indians played in defending the British Empire is what drives the hyperbole in these writings after his death. As a family historian, the certainty that I can draw from Henry's story is his undeniable courage and fortitude. In contrast I can cast no such certainty to the justification of a campaign of such disastrous failings that was to cause so much death and untold misery to so many.

# The North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles in East Africa in the First World War

*Noel Clark*

The North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles was a volunteer regiment first formed as the 3rd or Sind, Punjab and Indus Valley Railways Volunteer Rifle Corps on 5th March 1886. The regiment was renamed five times:

- 1888 became the 3rd (Punjab) (North-Western Railway) Volunteer Rifle Corps;
- 27th July 1892 became the North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles;
- 1st April 1917 became the 24th North-Western Railway Battalion;
- 1st October 1920 became the North-Western Railway Regiment;
- 1st April 1933 renamed the North-Western Railway Battalion.[1]

Volunteer regiments began to be set up after the Indian Mutiny.[2] They were civilian volunteer units (except for their adjutants and others such as sergeant instructors, who were officers of the regular army), open to Europeans and Eurasians. It was virtually compulsory for railway employees to enlist in their company's infantry corps.

There was no expectation that these volunteer regiments would be required to serve outside India, but on the outbreak of war in August 1914 a number of members of such regiments wished to serve overseas. Accordingly, three volunteer units were assembled for service in the East African theatre of war. The North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles provided a 12-pounder, 12-cwt gun[3] and a number of men for an armoured train, and this small unit formed part of Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' that left Bombay on 16th October 1914 and arrived off Tanga in German East Africa on 1st/2nd November 1914. The Calcutta Artillery Volunteers provided an artillery unit known as the Calcutta Volunteer Battery, and this unit formed part of Indian Expeditionary Force 'C', which had begun arriving in British East Africa in September 1914. The third unit was the Indian Volunteer Maxim Gun Company, which was formed in September 1914 and arrived in British East Africa in early October 1914, again as part of Indian Expeditionary Force 'C'.[4]

A post to the Rootsweb *India List* in November 2012 suggested that the North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles might have also been involved in the First World War Mesopotamian theatre. My natural curiosity took over, fuelled by my interest in First World War medals and their associated Medal Index Cards, and I decided to investigate further. My location prevents me from visiting British archives, and so my investigations have been internet-based, using various pay-to-view and free-to-view websites, but principally

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[1] *India's Army*, Maj. Donovan Jackson, Sampson Low, Marston and Co., 1940, p516.

[2] See Tim Bender's article on p43 for more on the origins of the volunteer regiments.

[3] Cwt = centumweight, ie hundredweight, equal to 8 stone in the imperial system.

[4] http://www.westernfrontassociation.com/great-war-on-land/75-other-war-theatres/1072-indian-volunteers-in-the-great-war-east-african-campaign.html

www.ancestry.co.uk and http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/medal-index-cards-ww1.htm.

I was fortunate to have two good starting points for the research. The Western Front Association website carries an excellent article by Harry Fecitt entitled 'Indian Volunteers in the Great War East African Campaign', and the same author has posted additional information about the graves of the Indian Volunteer Maxim Company in Kenya on the *Great War Forum*.[5] [6]

I have not been able to find wholesale involvement of the North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles in the Mesopotamian theatre of war. One man employed as an engineer by the North Western Railway at Lahore served with the Bushire Field Force at some stage between 12 November 1918 and 22 June 1919, and was thus awarded the General Service Medal (1918) with South Persia Clasp. South Persia was deemed a First World War theatre of war up to and including 11 November 1918, but not thereafter. I could find no evidence that this man was awarded the British War and Victory Medals, which would have been awarded had he served before the cut-off date. Technically, therefore, he did not serve in a theatre of war during the First World War.

I then continued on to see what information I could find about those who served with the North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles and their armoured train, using the databases mentioned above. As is so often the case I immediately ran into a number of problems.

The Ancestry website has an excellent search engine; it is possible to search on keywords (which can include abbreviations) and at least it produces results as a concise list in alphabetical order on surname. Of course, Ancestry is well-known for its transcription errors, which include classics such as a certain Thomas Mantell serving with the '*Vot Maxim Gan Coy, Bayotool Wag & Machine Gun Corpsore Battalion.*' The Army Medal Office was not consistent with its abbreviations, and, for example, 'North Western Railway' might be written in full, as 'N.W. Rly', 'N.W. Ry' etc. An obvious problem is that 'M.G.C.' can stand for 'Machine Gun Company', Machine Gun Corps', Maxim Gun Company' and 'Maxim Gun Corps.' Similarly it is easy to confuse certain abbreviations for the 'Bengal and North Western Railway Battalion' and the 'North-Western Railway Battalion.' The 23rd (North Western) Battalion of the Rifle Brigade was posted for garrison duties in India in 1916, adding a further meaning to 'NW.' However, the main problem with the ancestry database is that it does not contain the 20,000 or so medal index cards of British soldiers who served in the Indian Army in the First World War and are in files WO 372/25-29 at The National Archives, London. For a number of soldiers there are two medal index cards, one in the Ancestry database, and one in The National Archives' database, and it is necessary to look at both.

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[5] http://www.westernfrontassociation.com/great-war-on-land/75-other-war-theatres/1072-indian-volunteers-in-the-great-war-east-african-campaign.html

[6] http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums/index.php?showtopic=92267

It should also be noted that the British Army Medal Office also used the medal index cards to record post-war correspondence from medal claimants, their next-of-kin and other interested parties. In such cases the actual medals are not necessarily listed. The absence of a British Army medal index card is generally an indication that a man was not awarded any First World War medals, although there are some exceptions to that rule. For British soldiers serving in the Indian Army the existence of medal index cards seems a very hit-and-miss affair. Note that in all cases, the award of a 1914-15 Star and/or a gallantry medal such as the Distinguished Conduct Medal was always accompanied by the award of the British War and Victory Medals, even if there are no records to show such awards.

Researching the medal cards using The National Archives database is inhibited not only by the awkward '*Discovery*' search engine but primarily by the cost of looking at the detail of the results. It costs £3.30 to look at a single medal card from the files WO 372/25-29 (and the back of the card has not been digitised). Browsing the database is therefore impossibly expensive unless the researcher is able to visit The National Archives in person. I did download a few cards for the purposes of this project, but my research was limited by cost rather than time and interest. I noted that the TNA cards I downloaded that were transcribed as 'Volunteer Maxim Gun Corps' actually carried the notation 'Vol. M.G.C.'

My research led me to compile a list of men who, from the details shown on their medal index cards, might have served with the North-Western Railway Volunteer Rifles in East Africa. Four other names have been added from the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The list has been added to the FIBIS database.

From this list I have concluded the following.

## Group 1

The following North-Western Railway men were with Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' in November 1914 for the East African Campaign:

| | |
|---|---|
| Lieut. W. T. Biscoe* | Cpl. 34 W. Mellor* |
| Sgt. 25 E. French* | Pte. 33 R. H. Mott* |
| Pte. 31 S. Davis* | Pte. 3 D. D. Smith* |
| L/Cpl. 27 L. Esler/Ealer* | Pte. 6 Leonard Stephens |
| Pte. 32 J. Lake* | Pte. 36 H. Thorpe* |
| Pte. 8 William Herbert Martin | Pte. 37 N. Walmsley* |

The ten men marked * have, apart from their personal details, almost identical notations on their Medal Index Card. In particular, on the reverse of each card is the legend '*Sec. Mil. Dept. India Office forwards rolls of British Officers, W.O.'s and N.C.O.'s of the Indian Army eligible for 1914-15 Star and issued by Govern'nt of India. 12-11-19*.'[7] All twelve men

[7] The roll EF/9/2975 was also shared in part by Indian Expeditionary Force 'C.' The prefix 'EF" is believed to stand for 'Expeditionary Force.' I have no explanation for men's numbering or why the men did not use their regimental numbers given to them by the North-Western Railway Volunteer

above are shown as having served with the 'M.G.C.' or 'M.G. section', which I take to be the armoured train unit. It would appear that this unit was under the charge of Lieutenant Biscoe, assisted by Sergeant French. In this context, it should be noted that the aforementioned article by Harry Fecitt entitled 'Indian Volunteers in the Great War East African Campaign' gives the strength of this unit as four men plus five followers.

### Group 2

The following North-Western Railway men joined Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' at some other date but prior to 31 December 1915:

| | |
|---|---|
| Sub-Conductor Alfred Alphonzo Bird | *Probably did not serve with the M.G.C.* |
| Pte. 98 C. Boardman | |
| Pte. 4 H. O. Brown | |
| Pte. 42 L. Davis | *25 April 1915* |
| Pte. 41 Cyril Frerro Guthrie | *20 May 1915* |
| Cpl. 2 J. W. (or I. W.) Hawkings | |
| Sgt. 94 A. E. McNevin | *Attached Bharatpur Imperial Service Infantry* |
| Vol. 12 C. E. Ross | |
| Pte. 23 James Shaw | *Entry date shown as 10 October 1914.* |
| L/Cpl. 24 R. Yates | |

### Group 3

The following North-Western Railway men joined Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' at some later date and probably after 31 December 1915:

| | |
|---|---|
| Pte. 7656 L. Hockley | *Killed in action 19 September 1916* |
| Cpl. 63 Godfrey Rupert Williams | *Killed in action 25 September 1917* |
| Pte. 122 H. H. Webb | *Killed in action 17 October 1917* |
| Pte. 109 J. Joseph | *Killed in action 27 October 1917* |

All the above were killed in action. The only reason we know of them is because they are commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It stands to reason that other North-Western Railway men joined Indian Expeditionary Force 'B' after 31 December 1915, but we have no way of finding out who they were.

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Rifles. Other frequently-occurring file prefixes on medal index cards are 'WS" and 'NW.' 'WS' is believed to stand for 'War Service', and these rolls are believed to have been embarkation or disembarkation rolls. 'NW' files appear to have been correspondence files. However, none of these files and rolls have survived and there is no absolute certainty about any of the notations used for them.

# Gallantry Awards to the Indian Medical Department during the Great War of 1914 -1918

*Allan Stanistreet*

The Indian Army played a not insignificant part in the Great War in several theatres, including France and Flanders and Mesopotamia. Many Indian soldiers were decorated for gallantry and the first Victoria Cross (VC) to an Indian soldier was awarded to Sepoy (later Subedar) Khudadad Khan of 129th Duke of Connaught's Own Baluchis for valour at Hollebeke, Belgium on 31 October 1914.

Naturally, the Indian Medical Department was in the thick of the fighting and throughout the war 42 members of the Department received awards for their gallantry and devotion to duty. A summary of these awards is as follows:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Order of the British Empire, Class Five (MBE) | - | 2 |
| Indian Order of Merit, Class 2 (IOM)* | - | 13 |
| Military Cross (MC) | - | 12 |
| Royal Red Cross, Class 2 (ARRC) | - | 2 |
| Indian Distinguished Service Medal (IDSM) | - | 13 |

*The IOM, Class 1 was abolished when Indian soldiers became eligible for the VC on 21 October 1911.

Of these 42 men, 15 were Anglo-Indians, the rest being native Indians. All were Assistant Surgeons of various grades, save for the two MBEs, who were both Senior Assistant Surgeons. These two, both Majors, received the MBE for services as prisoners of war and like the majority of the gallantry awards, there were no citations for their appointments. However, it appears that one, Major Richard Coridon, rendered valuable services in France and Flanders and the other, Major Charles William Kerr, services in Mesopotamia. Both appeared in the *London Gazette* (*LG*) dated 20 October 1920 at page 10166.

The only Anglo-Indian to receive the IOM was Assistant Surgeon 3rd Grade G.K.R. Kane, whose name appears in the *London Gazette* of 4 May 1915, at page 4265. There is no citation but it is stated that he was attached to 21 Company Sappers and Miners.

Anglo-Indians are best represented by the number of Military Crosses they received – no fewer than nine. Of these, only two have citations and they are given below and the roll of names is as follows:

- Asst Surgeon Grade 2 Ernest Hugh Boilard (*LG* 14 Jan 16 p590)
- Asst Surgeon Grade 3 F.B.A. Braganza (*LG* not known but for France & Flanders)
- Asst Surgeon Grade 4 Arthur Norman De Monte (*LG* 26 Aug 18 p9966)

- Asst Surgeon Grade 4 James Garnett Goodman (*LG* 18 Feb 18 p 2160)
- Asst Surgeon John Dugald Malcolm Lamond (*LG* 22 Dec 16 p12556)
- Asst Surgeon Grade 1 William John Samuel Maine (*LG* 14 Jan 16 p590)
- Asst Surgeon (no grade given) Edwin Bunkall Messinier (*LG* 3 Jul 15 p6539)
- Asst Surgeon Grade 2 James Michael Rodrigues (*LG* 22 Dec 16 p12556)
- Asst Surgeon (no grade given) John Wilson Woodsell (*LG* 16 Aug 1917 p8387

Mr Messinier's citation reads:

> For consistent good work, gallant conduct and devotion to duty when 'X' Battery, Royal Horse Artillery, was in action on 9th and 10th May 1915. He went under shell fire to assist the wounded and, although twice wounded, continued to perform his duties after having his wounds dressed.

Mr Woodsell's citation reads:

> For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty. He displayed great courage and determination under very heavy fire. His devotion to duty saved many lives.

Of the 39,157 MCs awarded during the First World War, only 819 went to Indian soldiers, so this is a most creditable performance by the Indian Medical Department.

Only two members of the Indian nursing services received the Royal Red Cross of either class, so these are rare awards indeed. Both were for services rendered in Mesopotamia and appeared in the *LG* dated 3 March 1919, at page 2997. The recipients were:

- Temporary Nurse Alice Maud George
- Temporary Nurse Florence Margaret Mendes

Again there are no citations.

One Anglo-Indian Assistant Surgeon was awarded the IDSM. This was Assistant Surgeon Grade 1 George Julian Ferris and his award was announced in the *LG* of 1 January 1918, at page 77, once again there being no citation.

It may be helpful if the qualifications for the various awards mentioned above are given.

Instituted on 1 May 1837, the Indian Order of Merit is the oldest decoration for gallantry, pre-dating the VC by almost twenty years. In three classes, it was intended to reward personal bravery without reference to length of service or good conduct. Soldiers would be awarded the third class initially, being advanced to second and then first for subsequent acts of gallantry. It could be awarded to native officers and soldiers. There was also a civil division. Post-nominal initials were permitted in 1911. When the First Class IOM was abolished (see above), the remaining classes were renumbered (all the classes were of a different design). The Order became obsolete in 1947.

The Military Cross was instituted on 28 December 1914 as a reward for "distinguished and meritorious services" performed by officers of the rank of Captain and below and

Warrant Officers. It was later extended to Majors and confined solely to acts of bravery in action. Over 37,000 were awarded during WWI with just over 3,000 bars for subsequent acts. It is fairly rare to Warrant Officers, with only 781 receiving it during the war, of whom our nine Assistant Surgeons are included.

The Royal Red Cross was originally instituted on 23 April 1883 in one class only and was awarded 'for special devotion and competency…in nursing duties with Our Army in the Field, or in Our Naval and Military Hospitals.' WWI obliged the authorities to consider extending the scope of the award and consequently, a Second Class, entitled Associate of the Royal Red Cross with a slightly different design of badge, was instituted on 10 November 1915. Like the MBE awarded to the two Senior Assistant Surgeons, the RRC or ARRC were not normally awarded for bravery but for devoted and distinguished services to those to whom they ministered.

The Indian Distinguished Service Medal was instituted on 25 June 1907 to increase the rather small number of awards for bravery available to Indian officers, non-commissioned officers and men. Presumably, it was designed as a lesser award to the Indian Order of Merit. Just over 3,000 were awarded in WWI. During its currency, over 5,000 IDSMs were awarded, plus 49 bars for subsequent acts. 646 of these were for service in France. The medal was abolished in 1947 upon the grant of Independence.

It is hoped the above may be of interest to readers and that if anyone has knowledge of any of the persons mentioned above, they will tell us more about these gallant members of the Indian forces.

**Sources:**


- P.E. Abbott & J.M.A. Tamplin *British Gallantry Awards* (Nimrod Dix, 1981)
- *The London Gazette* (HMSO) various dates (www.thegazette.co.uk)

# Competition - Win one of three Genealogical DNA tests

Often in British India family research we hit a brick wall and suspect the cause is that an ancestor could be Indian. This can be hard to prove due to lack of documentary evidence and FIBIS started a DNA project a few years ago to help people in these situations. FIBIS would like to help a few more of our members by giving away **three** Family Finder Tests from Family Tree DNA.

### What is a Family Finder Test?

A Family Finder Test can identify living genetic relatives who share an ancestor with you up to 5 generations back. The test can be taken by men or women. Family Finder uses autosomal DNA (Chromosomes 1-22) and the X chromosome to identify regions of your DNA that are 'identical by descent' (IBD) with other members of the Family Tree DNA database. The amount of IBD DNA shared between two individuals is used to determine a relationship range and a suggested relationship.

The test also provides percentages of your ancestral make-up. For example it might say you are 90% European and 10% Central/South Asian. It might then break it down European further into 50% British Isles, 20% Central and Western Europe, 15% Scandinavian and 5% Southern European and Central/South Asian into 5% Eurasian Heartland and 5% Indian Tectonic. There are currently 22 population clusters in seven geographic groups used to evaluate your biogeographic ethnicity or ancestry.

Due to the nature of autosomal DNA, the test does not specify from which branch of your family tree your matches or the percentages of your geographic heritage derive.

If you have hit a brick wall in your family history in India and think a DNA test might help then why not enter the competition?

### How to enter

The competition is open to **all** FIBIS members. To enter please submit 400-600 words on why you feel a DNA test would be useful in helping you with your British India research and include brief details of your family and your brick wall. If you feel a Y-DNA or mtDNA test will be more beneficial to your research please explain why and we may consider providing a discount off the relevant test in place of the Family Finder test. Send your entries to fibis-webmaster@fibis.org

### Terms & Conditions

- All entrants must be FIBIS members.
- FIBIS trustees and their immediate family may not enter.
- The FIBIS Committee will pick the winning entrants and the judges' decision will be final with no correspondence being entered into regarding judging.
- The judges reserve the right not to award any free tests if the quality of entries justifies that action.
- The competition closes on 31 Dec 2014 and winners will be notified by 1 March 2015.
- Winners agree to having their stories publicised by FIBIS. Full test results will not be released to the public.

# Elizabeth Martin of Madras and Walter Medhurst, Missionary

*John Holliday*

I am an Australian working on a biography of my 2x great grandfather, the English missionary, Dr Walter Henry Medhurst. My research required me to make a visit to India last year to gain some background about how Walter Medhurst met and married his wife while delayed in Madras (Chennai), waiting for a ship to take him on to Malacca. I was particularly interested in his wife, Elizabeth and her early years growing up in South India, because she was to become an important partner in the missionary life of the Medhursts.

Elizabeth Martin was born in Tanjore (Thanjavur) in 1794, the daughter of George Martin, a Lieutenant in the 2nd Battalion of Native Infantry.[1] Although family tradition records her mother as George's wife, Elizabeth Taylor of Stapleton, Gloucestershire, Elizabeth's baptism in the India Office Records lists her mother as unknown and her as illegitimate, indicating perhaps an Indian mother.[2] During the course of her early life the family would move to various garrisons throughout the Madras Presidency. In 1796, George Martin was promoted to Captain and on 12 October 1798 he was given his first command of a battalion, the 2nd Extra Battalion, raised at Vellore.[3] Captain Martin, with the aid of one British Lieutenant, would command a native force of 660 privates and 118 NCOs. The family and all their servants moved with the new commander to Vellore, which is located approximately 140km west of Madras. Shortly after the move, a sister for Elizabeth was born and named Sophia. In April of 1803, Captain Martin was placed in command of the 1st Extra battalion at Trichinopoly[4] and by March of 1805 he had been promoted to Lieutenant Colonel[5] and the family had moved up to Chitaldrug (Chitradurga).

In 1807, the newly appointed Governor, Sir George Barlow, sparked a crisis in Madras when he decided, against previous practice, that General Hay Macdowall, the Commander in Chief of the Army, would no longer have a seat on the Governor's Council.[6] Macdowall took this as a personal affront. The Governor also made a number of other changes to allowances for senior officers which he believed were being abused. At the Government's request, a report was drawn up by Lt-Colonel Munro, which drew attention to these abuses and when the report became public knowledge, this initiated an atmosphere of revolt within the Madras Army. Senior officers, pronouncing that their honour had been impugned, drew up a petition accusing Munro of 'cruel and wanton

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[1] George Martin baptised 2 Jan 1761, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

[2] IOR N/2/11/99-100; N/2/C3/35; N/2/C5/1252 – born 23 Oct 1794, bapt. 12 Oct 1795

[3] Lieutenant Colonel W.J. Wilson, *History of the Madras Army*, Volume 2, (1882) p350

[4] Ibid. p100

[5] Dodwell and Miles, *Alphabetical list of the Officers of the Madras Army 1760-1834*, p112-113

[6] The events of this crisis are described more fully in *Power and Conquest* by Stephen Taylor and *The White Mutiny* by Sir Alexander Cardew.

insult' and demanded that he be court-martialled. It was signed by 28 officers in command of regiments and sent to Macdowall under cover of a letter dated 25 September 1808, signed by three officers including Lt-Colonel George Martin. The letter, which Martin had helped to draft, was a highly seditious document since it effectively demanded the removal of the Governor and implied a threat of mutiny if the demands were rejected. Court martial proceedings against Munro were initiated, with Lt-Colonel Martin being appointed to conduct the prosecution. The matter dragged on for some months and came to a head when General Macdowall declined a request to release Munro, following which Governor Barlow overruled the Commander-in-Chief and ordered Munro's release. General Macdowall's response was to return to England, sailing from Madras in the *Lady Jane Dundas* on January 30th, 1809, sending his resignation to the Governor some days later from a port down the coast. The *Lady Jane Dundas* was one of seven ships that were lost in hurricanes which swept the Indian Ocean that year and Macdowall went down with the ship.

In the middle of this crisis, during which time George Martin had been in Madras, family information records that word came that his wife Elizabeth was gravely ill with a fever back in Chitaldrug and he should return home as fast as possible. Unfortunately by the time he arrived, she had already passed away. He had lost the love of his life and he had not been with her when she finally needed him. Adding to the utter despair he felt was the sense of desertion created by his Commander-in-Chief who had resigned and sailed back to England, leaving him and his fellow officers to sort out matters with the government. How was he going to support his daughters, especially if the army crisis turned against him and he was brought before a court martial and imprisoned or even executed? He knew that the risk was real and who would look after his daughters if they were left as orphans? Distraught from the loss and under the threat of a court martial from the potential revolt, George Martin arranged for young Elizabeth, now just 14 years old, to marry a fellow army officer, 27 year old Lieutenant George Henry Braune. The couple were married at Chitaldrug on 14th October 1808.[7] George Martin entrusted Elizabeth's younger sister Sophia to their care and he returned to Madras for further orders regarding the developing crisis. The Army decided that someone should be sent back to London to explain to the Directors of the East India Company the Army's side of the dispute and who better to send than the Prosecutor in the Munro case, Lt-Colonel George Martin. He sailed on the *Sir Stephen Lushington* on 2 March 1809 and since Governor Barlow's representative, George Buchan was also on board the *Lushington*, the ship was nicknamed Pandora's Box.

Back in Madras the antagonism between the Army and the Governor intensified and developed into the rebellion which became known as the White Mutiny. George Martin was spared any further involvement in the mutiny and was able to lay low in England until the crisis ultimately died down. He married Mary Thring in Warminster on 9 January

[7] IOR N/2/3/482

1813 and returned to India on the *Metcalfe* as Lt-Colonel with the 13th Madras Native Infantry.[8]

Meanwhile Elizabeth and Sophia had returned to life with the army, this time with Elizabeth as an officer's wife. By the time that George Martin returned to India, George Braune had been promoted to Captain and they had moved 300 miles north of Madras to Masulipatam so Elizabeth was unable to meet with her father when he returned through Madras. This was not a happy time for Elizabeth, but her stoic nature gave her the strength to make the most of it. She devoted herself to being a wife and she took on the role of mother to her young sister, Sophia. Elizabeth dutifully bore her husband two sons. George Martin Braune was born on 10 May, 1810[9] and Henry Pullman Braune was born in 1813.[10] Tragedy struck again in 1815 when young Henry died on the day that Elizabeth was to celebrate her 21st birthday.[11] As if that was not bad enough, her husband was away at the time on a campaign at Kurnool. Whether Captain George Braune died of wounds sustained during the action or from some other cause was not recorded. We do know that he died on 26 November at nearby Gooty. Elizabeth would not learn of the death of her husband[12] until several weeks later, meaning she would likely receive that news as a dreadful Christmas present. By this time her father had returned to India and word came that he had also died, at Bellary in June of that year.[13]

*Elizabeth Medhurst, née Martin, from a photograph taken in her old age.*

So in the year that Elizabeth turned 21 she became an orphan and a widow, plus she lost one of her children. All of this in a land where she now had no family other than her son and her younger sister. She moved to Madras, placed her sister in an orphanage and went to live with missionaries at what is now the

[8] Madras Almanac 1814 (FIBIS database)
[9] N/2/4/50, Madras Fort St George
[10] N/2/23/151, Cannanore
[11] *East India Register* 1817 – 23 Oct 1815, 'The infant son of Capt. Braune.'
[12] *East India Register* 1816-2
[13] *Gentleman's Magazine* 1815 Suppl. Part II p634, 15 Jun 1815 (FIBIS database)

William Charles Memorial Church in Georgetown. There she taught and looked after the children, receiving board for herself and her son for her services. Then known as the Missionary Chapel, it was founded in 1806, by William Charles Loveless of the London Missionary Society and was the first church to be built outside Fort St George. Elizabeth's young son George was able to attend the school which the missionaries operated just next door to the church.

*William Charles Loveless by Richard Woodman stipple engraving, 1824 or after NPG D37458 © National Portrait Gallery*

William Loveless had been sent out by the London Missionary Society in 1804, travelling on an American ship, the *Alleghany*, due to the reluctance of the East India Company to carry missionaries. On board that ship was Miss Sarah Farquhar, an American lady travelling to Calcutta and during the voyage an attachment was formed between her and William Loveless, resulting in their marriage in 1806. As a result, Sarah Loveless became the first American to be engaged in foreign missions.[14] Initially William Loveless took over the running of the Madras Orphan Asylum, since the EIC opposed his setting up a mission in Madras, but by 1806 he had overcome this problem and he established the LMS Mission Chapel in Davidson Street, Georgetown. William and Sarah Loveless continued to run the LMS mission in Madras until 1824 when they returned to England to retire in Canterbury. The chapel continues today as the William Charles Memorial Church in Chennai.

In 1817 a young Walter Medhurst arrived in Madras from London on the *General Graham*,[15] en route to Malacca where he was to set up a printing works for the London Missionary Society. Due to the reluctance of the East India Company to take missionaries on their ships,[16] Walter was delayed for three months in Madras and during this time he lodged with Mr and Mrs Loveless, the missionaries in Georgetown. He wrote back to London that he had procured a Chinese grammar and began to teach himself Chinese. Of greater interest to Walter however, was the fact that he met Elizabeth, fell in love with her and convinced her to marry him and join him on his journey to Malacca. They married in the Missionary Chapel on 19 May 1817 and sailed next day with young

[14] Richard Knill, *The Missionary's Wife or, A brief account of Mrs. Loveless, of Madras, the first American missionary to foreign lands* (1839)

[15] *Madras Almanac* 1818

[16] The Company had long been opposed to attempts to Christianise the Indian population. Dr Robert Morrison, the LMS's first missionary to China, travelled to Canton via New York due to the EIC policies.

George on the *Fair Trail* for Malacca. Walter wrote back to London to inform them of his changed circumstances:

> Yesterday I entered into the Holy State of Matrimony with Mrs Elizabeth Braune, widow of the late Captain Braune of the 15th Madras Native Infantry, who has resided in the house of our brother Loveless for these nine months. She speaks Tamil fluently and can also talk in Telugu. Born in India and having travelled over the greater parts of the peninsula living in tents under a scorching sun, she is more likely to endure the terrors of an eastern climate than one of our English ladies.[17]

Thus commenced a partnership which embraced missionary work in Malacca, Penang, Indonesia and China and involved the establishment of churches, schools, orphanages and hospitals, some of which are still operating today. Young George Braune remained with his parents until the age of eleven when he was sent to school in England, gaining a BA at Cambridge and ordination in the Church of England. He died in Brussels in 1874, whilst Vicar of Wistow, Yorkshire. Sophia Martin joined the Medhursts in Batavia and became involved in the mission, showing herself to be a gifted linguist, learning Chinese and assisting in the Chinese schools. In 1829, Sophia left Batavia for Singapore due to ill health and there she married Thomas Whittle, a surveyor and she established one of the first schools for girls in Singapore.

The Medhursts spent 21 years in Batavia, leaving behind a legacy which survives today in the form of the oldest English speaking institution in Indonesia, All Saints Jakarta and the Parapattan Orphanage, still going strong after 182 year. , In 1843, when the Treaty of Nanking resulted in the opening up of the trading ports in China, the Medhursts set up the LMS Mission in Shanghai, where together they reached some of their greatest achievements. In 1856, when Walter's ill-health forced a return to England, they arrived back to London on January 22nd, 1857 where Walter died two days later. He is buried in Abney Park Cemetery, London. His wife Elizabeth retired to Newton Abbot in Devon where she lived to the grand old age of 79.

Walter and Elizabeth Medhurst had eight children together, four of which lived into adulthood. Their son, also named Walter Henry Medhurst went on to become the British Consul in Shanghai and was knighted by Queen Victoria. I am descended from their youngest daughter Augusta.

Medhurst published numerous reference works and he played a key role in translating the bible into Chinese. He was awarded a Doctor of Divinity by New York University in 1843.

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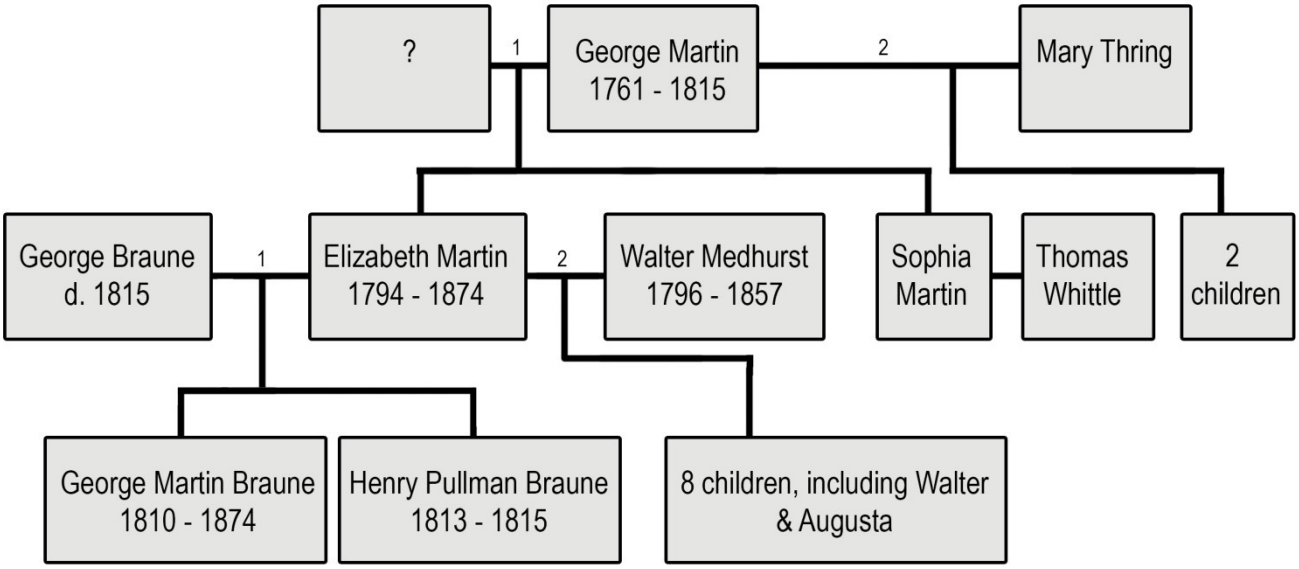
[17] CWM/LMS/South India.Tamil/Incoming correspondence/Box 1 - Letter held at SOAS, University College London, in the CWM collection (Records, 1764-1977, of Council for World Mission predecessor bodies, including records of the London Missionary Society, 1764-1966)




In visiting Chennai, I wanted to find out if the Church in which Walter and Elizabeth met and married still existed and after a few internet searches I was delighted to find out that the William Charles Memorial Church was very much alive and well and I was invited to attend a service while I was in Chennai. The invitation turned out to mean a lot more than just to attend a service. The welcome I received and the hospitality shown by the Presbyter and her congregation was astonishing. They were so appreciative of having someone visit who was connected with their history and I could assure them that I shared those same feelings. After all, I was standing in the rooms where Elizabeth and young George lived during that time of tragedy and opportunity. It was really gratifying to see that this Church is as vibrant today as it must have been in 1817.

*John Holliday with Mr & Mrs Selvaraj and family, taken inside the Vicarage of William Charles Memorial Church.*

During my visit I became aware that the Church did not have a picture of their founder to display among the other historical information about the Church. As a result of some previous research I was aware that the National Portrait Gallery in London had a picture of William Charles Loveless on display and I thought I might be able to source a copy from them. I am happy to report that I was able to obtain a copy of the portrait and give it to the

*William Charles Memorial Church, Madras, established 1806 - the church interior today.*

Church as a small token of my appreciation. Hopefully this will add to the history which is portrayed so well on the walls of this wonderfully restored Church.

## Postscript

George and Mary Martin had a son, Francis Pitney Martin, who was born in Bellary on 10 April 1814, a year before George Martin's death. Mary must have been pregnant at the time of George's death, for she returned to Madras and gave birth to a daughter, Georgina Mary Elizabeth Martin on 28 February of 1816.[18] With the European community being so small at that time, this would mean that Elizabeth would have met her step-mother and her step siblings at that time. It is not known exactly when the family returned to England but both Francis and Georgina lived long and successful lives.

**Other sources:**

- Records of the London Missionary Society at SOAS in the CWM collection, 1764-1977, (Records of Council for World Mission predecessor bodies) including numerous letters and papers.
- *Memoir of the late Rev Medhurst*, a reprint of articles in the *Evangelical Magazine*

[18] IOR N/2/23/30. Baptised as Mary Elizabeth, St George's Church Madras.

# The Development of the Meerut District Volunteers, aka, the Meerut Volunteer Horse

*Tim Bender*

Following the outbreak of the Indian Mutiny at the military cantonment at Meerut on 10 May 1857, and the subsequent mutiny of virtually all of the Bengal cavalry regiments and most of the Bengal infantry regiments, Major George W. Williams of the 29th N.I., on civil employ as the Commissioner of Military Police and Assistant General Superintendent and Joint Magistrate, and Robert H.W. Dunlop, Deputy Commissioner of the Punjab and Magistrate and Collector, met in June of that year at Meerut, to discuss the raising of:

> … an efficient force to act under the civil authorities for the restoration of order in the district for the realization of revenue; the latter being positively necessary for the supply of commissariat stores to our gallant troops before Delhi.[1]

The proposed force came to be known officially as the Meerut District Volunteers, and later referred to as the Meerut Volunteer Horse. The officer corps was raised by Major Williams being appointed Commandant and Captain C. D'Oyly of the Stud Department as Second in Command. Captain E. Trywhitt of the 14th Irregular Cavalry was appointed Adjutant, and along with Captain D'Oyly, is credited with sourcing arms and equipment to outfit the unit, primarily from the recently disarmed 4th Light Cavalry. Horses, which were in short supply due to the needs of the military, were obtained through the exertions of Deputy Commissioner Dunlop.

Military officers from regiments that had recently mutinied found themselves without troops to command and 'eagerly enrolled their names with the Military Officers, and pressed forward to serve in the ranks as Volunteers.'[2] These officers served as ordinary cavalry troopers and included Captains HC Craigie, CC Jervoise, CH Fairlie, AG Webster, and RM Clarke of the 3rd Bengal Light Cavalry, and Lieutenant GC Gregory, an officer on leave from the 58th B.N.I. when the Mutiny erupted. The cavalry arm of the Meerut District Volunteers in which these officers served as troopers was given the nickname the *Khakee Ressalal*, due to their uniforms being made of the same dust coloured cloth first worn by the Guides, a famous regiment that was a part of the Punjab Frontier Force.

Civil authorities likewise eagerly enrolled to serve as troopers, including notably Deputy Commissioner Dunlop, Fleetwood Williams, the Commissioner and Collector of the Meerut District, and G.D. Turnbull, a civil and Sessions Judge at Meerut. Uncovenanted civil servants likewise signed up to serve as rankers, such as William Marcone, a member of the Public Works Department and an Assistant Supervisor on the Ganges Canal.

A truly egalitarian unit, five Eurasian trumpeters from the 3rd B.L.C. and 4th Lancers, where enrolled in the force, as well as ten sowars from the late Oude Irregular Cavalry and four

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[1] *Narrative of Events Connected with the Outbreak in 1857, Which Fell Under the Observation of Major Williams, In The Meerut Division* p11

[2] Ibid.

Sirdhana Christians from the recently mutinied 8th Irregular Cavalry. Civilians were also recruited such as Mr Huncless, a school master and Mr Parsons, a Church of England Missionary.

Although generally believed to only be a unit of cavalry, the District Volunteers did field an infantry arm and in raising the unit, the chief difficulty lay in procuring an efficient body of infantry. Enrolling a Sergeant Major, a Quartermaster Sergeant, and 25 Christian Eurasian drummers from mutinied Bengal regiments and a Sikh Havildar and fifteen Sikh sepoys from the Sikh Infantry soon solved this difficulty.

The Meerut District Volunteers did good service in the actions at Seekree, Barout, (the stronghold of Shah Mull), and numerous small engagements now mostly lost to history. Thereafter, it lost its individuality, as it ceased to operate as an independent group of volunteers intent on restoring order to their District and began to be used by the military authorities as one component of a larger military force. Such was the case with the action at Goloutee where the Meerut District Volunteers served with a force that included two horse artillery guns, a troop of H.M. 6th Dragoon Guards and 150 men of H.M. 60th Rifles.

After the fall of Delhi to the British in September of 1857, the District Volunteers were disbanded and the Civil and Military Officers returned to their official duties. Many of the native enlisted men went on to serve with the Meerut Police Battalion.

Unlike for military regiments that served during the Indian Mutiny, there is not an extant medal roll for the Indian Mutiny medal for those men who served with the Meerut District Volunteers. As the Meerut District Volunteers was organized under civil authority and not military, the entitlement for the Indian Mutiny medal for each individual who served with the Meerut District Volunteers, even serving military officers, is recorded in the *List of Europeans Who Rendered Good Service to Government During the Mutiny.* Several of the men who served with the Meerut District Volunteer were mentioned in despatches and some received letters of thanks from the Government for their services during the Mutiny. For those military officers who served with the Meerut District Volunteers, an individual officer's entries in the *War Services* section of the relevant *Army Lists* generally includes their service with the Meerut District Volunteers.

As noted above, the Meerut District Volunteers were also known as the Meerut Volunteer Horse. The Meerut Light Horse is often stated to be another name for the Meerut District Volunteers. However, from an analysis of the civil medal roll for the Indian Mutiny medal entitled *List of Europeans Who Rendered Good Service to Government During the Mutiny* and the actual naming on known Indian Mutiny medals, it appears they were different regiments.

**Sources:**


- *List of Europeans Who Rendered Good Service to Government During the Mutiny,* British Lib.
- *Narrative of Events Connected with the Outbreak in 1857, Which Fell Under the Observation of Major Williams, In The Meerut Division,* British Library

- *Service and Adventure with The Khakee Ressalah; or, Meerut Volunteer Horse, During the Mutinies of 1857-58,* Robert Henry Wallace Dunlop, reprint Potsdam Flags & Pub., 1997
- *Roll of Men of the Meerut Light Horse who have been employed in the suppression of the mutiny in India,* Extract- Fort William Military Proceedings for October 1862, No. 50, British Lib
- *Meerut: A Gazetteer, Being Volume IV of the District Gazetteers of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.,* H.R. Nevill, I.C.S., Compiler and Editor, Govt. Press, United Provinces, Allahabad, 1904, p163-185.

## The FIBIS Conference 2014

The 3-day FIBIS Conference took place from the 16 to 18 May 2014 at the Manor Hotel in Meriden, outside Birmingham. It was the first time FIBIS had hosted an event of this size and months of hard work behind the scenes by trustees created what was hopefully a very enjoyable event for everyone who attended.

The theme of the event was 'Researching Ancestors in British India' and this allowed for a varied programme across the weekend. With eleven main speakers and numerous workshops and seminars there was something to interest every delegate.

Friday's proceedings began after lunch and ran into the evening. After chairman Peter Bailey opened the conference, author John Keay delivered the keynote speech on the Indo-British relationship. The Fishing Fleet was the topic of journalist Anne de Courcy's talk and Debra Chatfield from sponsor Findmypast gave an interesting talk about the company's digitisation of the India Office Records. The evening was rounded out with a screening of Philip Geddes' *The Devil's Wind*, his documentary on the Indian Mutiny and his search for his ancestor's grave, introduced by the film-maker.

Saturday saw a full day of events, beginning with a lecture on Kipling by writer Charles Allen. Peter Bailey introduced his new FIBIS Guide and spoke about ancestors in the Indian Army. This was followed by photo-expert Jayne Shrimpton's talk on how fashion and costume can help to date family photographs. Gill Blanchard inspired the audience with tips and advice on writing up family history research before the British Library's Hedley Sutton provided his expert guidance on researching ancestors in the Indian Public Services. A gala dinner, with lively after-dinner speaker Michael Gandy and a prize draw and photo competition, provided a fun, if more formal, end to the day.

Long-time FIBIS friend and former FIBIS Australia liaison Sylvia Murphy had flown over to give Sunday morning's first talk, a look at ways to locate ancestors who held 'non-official' roles. Our final talk saw railway expert Professor Ian Kerr detail the building of the Bhor Ghat railway and its great human cost.

The highlight of the conference for many of us was the chance to meet other delegates and share genealogical stories and research ideas. The social moments of the weekend showed the vibrancy of our society and was the aspect many of us will take away and treasure. Thank you to everyone who attended and made the weekend a success.

Nb. Most talks were filmed and can be viewed by FIBIS members on the FIBIS Social Network.

## Reviews

The Boydell Press series 'Worlds of the East India Company'. The following have been submitted for review:

***The Twilight of the East India Company: The Evolution of Anglo-Asian Commerce and Politics 1790-1860*** **by Anthony Webster (2009), hardback, £50.00, ISBN 978-1-84383-475-5 or paperback, £19.99, ISBN 978-1-85383-822-7 pp205**

***The East India Company and Religion 1698-1858*** **by Penelope Carson (2012), hardback, £70.00, ISBN 978-1-84383-732-9 pp277**

***British Naval Power in the East 1794-1805: The Command of Admiral Peter Rainer*** **by Peter A Ward (2013) hardback, £65.00, ISBN 978-1-84383-848-7 pp285**

***The East India Company's London Workers: Management of the Warehouse Labourers, 1800-1858*** **by Margaret Makepeace (2010) hardback, £65.00, pp242**

The Boydell Press is publishing a series of important works on India in their 'Worlds of the East India Company' Series. One such is Rosie Llewellyn-Jones' *The Great Uprising in India 1857-58*, which I had the pleasure of reviewing in the Spring 2008 *FIBIS Journal* (no 19).

Anthony Webster's ***Twilight of the East India Company*** is by far the most useful of the present batch. It traces with admirable clarity the background to the Company's trade, and the various Charter Acts, especially those of 1793 (allowing 3,000 tons of non-company shipping), 1813 (the Company retaining the China trade monopoly but losing the Indian monopoly), and 1833 (end of all Company trade) by which an envious Parliament gradually dismantled the Company as a commercial organisation. On the way he explores such issues as the financial collapse of 1830-34 when first Palmer & Co and then all the other Indian Agency Houses went bust (covered in more detail by the same author in *The Richest East India Merchant: The Life and Business of John Palmer of Calcutta 1767-1836,* published in the same series). Another well-developed theme is the growth of Chambers of Commerce, both in Britain and the far East, and the lobbying of Parliament by business interests. Anyone with ancestry in the Company's Maritime Service or among the Free Mariners operating Country Ships should get this book.

A serious blemish on an otherwise excellent book is the index, apparently produced by automation with no human intervention. Peers are all listed under L for Lord. Robert Hobart 4th Earl of Buckinghamshire appears under E for Earl.

In Penelope Carson's ***The East India Company and Religion 1698-1858*** the dates are misleading. It does not really deal with the Company's Chaplains (see my review of Daniel O'Connor's *The Chaplains of the East India Company 1601-1858* in the Spring 2012 *Journal* (no 27)), and the date is a red herring. In 1698, the Revd Humphrey Prideaux castigated the Society for not converting the Indians. This was the year of the rival New Company, and with only a tiny toehold in India and a ruthless Islamic supremacist (Aurangzeb) on the Mughal throne, the Company would have been mad not

to ignore Prideaux. The 18th century is treated cursorily. The first Protestant missionaries (Danish or German) in India were more concerned with converting from Catholicism ("Received from Popery into the Protestant Church" is the Trichinopoly registers' rubric), than from Hinduism or Islam. An analysis of Catholicism in the Deccan and its struggle with the Lutherans would have been useful.

The book only gets going in the 1790s. It is about the lobbying by Wilberforce and others to get the Company to accept missionaries in India – something that old India hands were mostly strongly opposed to. 'We retain our political power so long as we abstain … from doing violence to the religious feelings of the vast population under our rule' wrote John Elphinstone in 1839. This lobbying gives a different slant on the Charter Acts which Anthony Webster dealt with. The 'Pious Clause' in the 1813 Act more or less committed the Company to allow in missionaries. The author has trawled through the Missionary (mostly at the School of Oriental and African Studies), Parliamentary and IOR archives, but (as my reference to Trichinopoly suggests) there may be other sources that could usefully have been searched.

Peter Ward's ***British Naval Power in the East 1794-1805*** explores a different theme. Admiral Rainier was sent to India in 1794 to oversee the naval aspects of the Napoleonic Wars in the far east and to provide protection for British trade and settlements there. He comes across as a cautious and indeed dull man with an obsessive attention to detail and the ability to subdue his own personality so as to enable him to work well with others – even the Governor-General, the Marquess Wellesley, a man famous for his egomania. Caught between the bureaucracies of the East India Company and of the Admiralty and the Navy Office, Rainier always had fewer resources than he would have liked, and in consequence avoided outright confrontation with the French fleet, while still providing escorts to East Indiamen going to and from India and China. Under his wise administration, the Company's trade and that of Country Ships continued to flourish despite a period of almost continuous warfare.

I believe there are two types of books which should be reviewed in these pages: those on some aspect of British-Indian genealogy; and those providing historical or social background to the study of the British in India. It is no criticism of this book to say it scores low on genealogy – a few pages on Rainier's Huguenot ancestry (pp11-15) and an inadequate family pedigree (p237). The book should do better as background history, but unfortunately this dull if able man has fallen into the hands of a dull biographer. We are told the book began as an MA dissertation and I can believe it. It consists of a series of discreet essays about Rainier's relationship with his masters Indian and Naval, naval communications and intelligence, how geography and climatology affected the job, the defence and expansion of British territory in the Far East, and logistics (maintenance, ordnance, victualling, etc). By starting each chapter on a different topic the overall narrative is lost and we get a tedious repetition of facts that were also relevant in an earlier chapter. A more coherent sequential narrative would have produced a substantially shorter and more readable book. C Northcote Parkinson

(originator of *Parkinson's Law*) was also a naval historian, and his *War in the Eastern Seas 1794-1815* published in 1954 provides a far more readable book on Rainier.

It is a relief to turn to Margaret Makepeace's ***The East India Company's London Workers***. It deals only with the warehouse staff (called just Labourers, though their foremen were rather grandly called Commodores). It is a surprise to learn that just as all army officers and civil servants in the Company had to be nominated by the patronage of a Director of the Company, so too all the warehouse staff also needed this initial entrée. Patronage is not something we approve of today, but the other side of the coin was that the Company felt obliged to look after its staff, and provided free health care and comfortable pensions long before any other employer felt the need to do this. I have written elsewhere of the Company's generosity to its Maritime Service officers who were made redundant as a result of the ending of the Company's trade in 1834. Similar generosity was shown to the warehouse staff.

This book really has nothing to do with India. Nevertheless it is full of insights and the author has made good use of genealogical sources – not only the IOR, but also the Census, Old Bailey proceedings, etc. We tend to think that labourers of whatever kind leave few records for their descendants, but the book contains numerous illuminating biographies: in 1830 Samuel Clough hid in his warehouse roof overnight, abstracted silk to the value of £608, and threw the bales over the warehouse wall. He then discovered he could not himself scale the wall, so had to remain in the yard awaiting inevitable arrest. He was lucky to be transported since the high value of the goods made him liable for the death penalty. Anyone with such ancestors will be amazed at the riches to be discovered.

*Richard Morgan*

***Indigo & Opium: Two Remarkable Families and Fortunes Won and Lost* by Miles Macnair, (Brewin 2013), ISBN 978-1858585178 , hardback, pp200, £24.95**

*Indigo and Opium* is, in fact, two books in one, one devoted to each of the two commodities which dominated the economy of British India. The author is in the special position of being descended from both of the two families who played a major part in the development of each of these commodities and with good research, plus access to private correspondence, has produced this most interesting book.

Book One, *Indigo,* describes how, with a certain amount of good and bad fortune, plus judicious planning, James Hills (1801-1872) married into the family of Savi, the premium traders in indigo in the late eighteenth - early nineteenth century. Following his appointment as a writer in the East India Company and his survival of a disastrous shipwreck, Hills had no clear idea of how he wanted to progress his career in India. By chance he was approached by John Angelo Savi, a doctor of Italian descent who had both initiated and greatly expanded India's production of indigo and who was seeking the services of a manager for his operation. Needless to say, Hill's new employment brought him into contact with Savi's family, including his 'ravishing' youngest daughter,

Charlotte Marie, with the evident result of their falling for each other, marrying and producing several children to continue the business.

With a short but informative description of the history and production methods of indigo, the author proceeds to provide a most interesting dynastic biography of the Hills family and of their remote and extensive estate in Neechindapur, not far from Kishnagar in Bengal. It explains, with justifiable pride, how two members of the family were heavily involved in the Indian Mutiny, gaining the family two VCs, and how it gained a further VC on the Western Front in the Great War over half a century later.

Book Two opens with a discussion of tea and relations between the Company and China. Significant exports from English sources were needed to pay for the very important quantities of tea purchased from that country and the export from India of opium was used to pay for it. Macnair provides a truly interesting and valuable history of the development and practice of the generally illegal trade in opium and how English and Chinese traders managed to circumvent both the regulations of the East India Company and the edicts of the Chinese Emperor to develop a hugely profitable business.

Heavily involved in this business was the enterprising family of Dent. The family's links with India commence with William Dent's (1740-1823) involvement as a principal managing owner of a number of East Indiamen (ships) in the late eighteenth century. His nephew, Thomas Wilkinson (1759-1840) joined the Company's Civil Service, rising to become a provisional member of the Council of Bombay. These connections provided useful introductions to India to their close relatives, six Dent brothers. The Dents became involved in a variety of ways with India and China and the trade between them. Lancelot Dent (1799-1853) was the brother most heavily involved in the opium trade. The book traces the elements of Sino-British relations during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the two 'Opium Wars', the intervention of the well-known 'Jardine Matheson Company' and the origins of the 'Hong Kong & Shanghai Banking Corporation'.

The Dents had expanded their interests to cover other activities but they were sadly less fortunate in some of these, with over-extension and slack management causing bankruptcy in 1867. Although their earlier involvement in HSBC remains a tribute to their enterprise, the Dents, under their nephew Alfred Dent (1844-1927) applied himself to different commercial and political activities. The opium business had passed to others.

It is most fitting that the author, Miles Macnair, is a descendant of these two families. His father is the 2x great-grandson of James Hills, the Indigo planter, and through his mother, formerly Ruth Dent, he is also 2x great-grandson of one of the six Dent brothers who played such a great part in the opium trade. Macnair's book is most useful as a background to the history and development of both of these commodities as well as a most interesting and well-researched genealogy of both of these families. I can thoroughly recommend this book to all those interested in both Indigo and Opium and their relevance to the economic development of British India.

*Peter Bailey*

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**by Peter A Bailey, FIBIS Chairman**

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- men on the Unattached List
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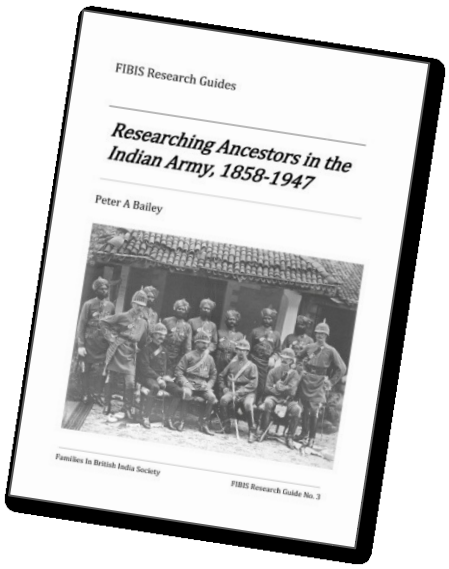


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