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Contents

Contributions:

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

Material should be sent via email to editor@fibis.org

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

Like most FIBIS members, I am a keen family historian and have been working on my own family's history for as long as I can remember, certainly over forty years. Yet, it was only three years ago, after I had seen Alastair McGowan's history being traced on TV's "Who Do You Think You Are?" series, that I began to wonder whether the Indian branch of our family, hitherto ignored, might not be as impossible to track down as I had always assumed. That's how I found FIBIS and, ever since, I have received support and encouragement from fellow members. The records at the British Library truly were a revelation to me, answering some questions which had long puzzled me and posing even more which are slowly being answered.

But nothing can compare with first-hand experience. The recent tours of India, undertaken between September and November 2015, by FIBIS members, have given the fortunate participants a renewed appreciation of the treasure trove still awaiting discovery in India and of the urgency of conservation and restoration work needing to be done, if we are to save the records, churches and graveyards for future generations to appreciate. Elaine MacGregor's report on the major undertaking of organising three complex tours, provides some wonderful insights into the cultural adventure which India offers. Clive Williams' article, a reminder of the invaluable work being carried out by BACSA, could not have come at a better time and it is heartening to note that interest from within India is also growing, as the appeal from St. Mary's Church in Chennai (page 52) shows. Hopefully, by sorting through our old boxes and biscuit tins, we shall be able to provide material to support the making of the film they are planning. Time is short, though, so please don't delay.

The previous editor of the Journal, Sarah Bilton, will be greatly missed- and a hard act to follow- for she set extremely high standards, and was skilled and creative to boot. We are searching for someone to take Sarah's place. Meanwhile, I am holding the fort. I am very grateful for all Sarah's help and encouragement and also to you, the readers, who continue to send a steady trickle of interesting articles and photographs to be shared. Please keep them coming! They are the life-blood of FIBIS and help us to maintain the vibrancy and relevance of our well-respected organisation. Articles do not need to be lengthy, 2-3000 words is the average (a word count is always useful), but shorter pieces are welcomed, too. In order to tailor the Journal to your interests, I would welcome feedback. Let me know what you would like to see in the future – more of this, less of that…I look forward to hearing from you.

Margaret Murray

An English Bride in Edwardian India

Christine Kendell

Recently, we were given a copy of my husband's aunt's memoirs. Aunt Betty, like her three younger sisters, was born in India. Reginald Gadsby was a civil engineer in India. He had first met Gwendolyn Prideaux in 1906, on one of his home leaves at the Hydro Hotel in Eastbourne, where a long courtship began. Gwendolyn's mother was against the marriage, and tried to dissuade her by telling her tales of the unpleasant insects she would meet in India. But Gwendolyn had a mind of her own, and after a two-year engagement, she sailed in 1909 to join Reggie. The couple married in Bombay Cathedral, making their first home in Nasirabad.

Gwendolyn and her dog, Pleasantry.

The nature of Reggie's work meant that they were moved around the country; they lived at various times in Sitapur, Ajmer, and Mount Abu, Rajputana, where Betty was born in 1915. In the hot season, the women and children went up to the hills, while every autumn the

family would go to Mukstar, for about a month, and to Ranikhet every spring. During the monsoon, at any time there was a lull in the drenching rain, the girls would be bundled into wet-weather clothes and taken out for some exercise. Betty recalls seeing "slugs the size of cigars," and the girls used to come back home with leeches hanging off their socks.

Gwendolyn came from a background which employed servants, but she now found herself in charge of a large staff, which, as the children arrived, grew bigger. Betty lists Reggie's bearer, the Chuprassi (messenger), the Cook, the Syce (groom), the Syce Chokra (groom's boy), the Pani Wallah (water boy) and the Mali (gardener). There were also the Nursery Ayah, the Nanny, and Gwendolyn's Ayah, who were later joined by a nursery-governess. There were three who were not of the regular staff: the Dood Wallah, who brought the milk, the Dirzey, who did the mending and made clothes, and the Dhobi Wallah, who did the washing. It was drilled into the children that they had to treat the servants with politeness and must always say *please* and *thank you* to them.

It was very important for all these people, so far from home, to create a sense of community. The Club and the Boat Club were at the centre of social life, but there was also a Pony Club. Reggie was "horse-mad," to quote his wife, and was secretary of the Maharajah of Alwar's Polo Club. Gwendolyn also rode a lot, but it was Reggie who had the passion for horses. It was through polo that he became friends with Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, who gave him a silver hip flask as a present.

The British people regularly organised events such as dances and entertainments (Gilbert and Sullivan was a favourite), and in 1911 there was a very special event, the Delhi Durbar, which went on for two weeks. Tents and marquees were set up in an enormous arena, with a green lawn around each tent. As grass would not grow there, the lawns were made of cress. King George and Queen Mary had to make sure that everyone could see them, and so they appeared in open carriages and on platforms in their heavy crowns and ermine-edged robes. Betty was told that they looked quite ill with the heat; also that the Queen's long white kid gloves soon got very dirty. "*It must,*" she remarks, *"have been awful for them."*

While it sounds in part an idyllic life, it had a dark side. When Betty was four she got typhoid and was expected to die. But she was nursed at home by her mother and a professional nurse, and eventually recovered. There was sometimes a sense of danger; when her husband was away, Gwendolyn used to sleep with a revolver under her pillow, and Betty casually refers once to glimpsing "civil disobedience" in Sitapur.

During the war, it distressed Reggie that he was unable to take part in it. But he taught himself to knit so that he could send balaclava helmets and socks to the front. In this way he could make some contribution, even though in a more indirect way than the one he would have chosen. When the family came home to England for good they eventually settled in Eastbourne. One day in 1937, Reggie went out hunting, and returned feeling very tired. He died of a heart attack that evening. Gwendolyn spent her last years in an Eastbourne hotel where she died in 1965. The photographs that exist – in later life she hated being photographed - show her as a strong-minded, though somewhat stern, elderly lady.

Surgeon, Silk Merchant and Banker: The Balfour Brothers in India

Francesca Radcliffe

While researching the maternal side of my late husband, Martin's, family, the Balfours of Pilrig, I realized that the family had more connections with India that I had previously known.

Martin's grandfather, Arthur Balfour, was born in February 1862 and baptised in St. Paul's Cathedral in Calcutta[1]. His father, Lewis, was the third of the Rev. Lewis Balfour's thirteen children, and was born in 1817 at Sorn, Ayrshire. At the age of 23, Lewis went to India. The first record I have found is in the 1840 Bengal Directory and Register, where he is listed as one of the proprietors of the Union Bank and as a merchant in the firms of Smith Adam & Co and Adam Freer & Charles Uffnagle Partners [2]. In Calcutta in 1842[3], Lewis married Louise Emilia Boyle (née Barton). She was 19, the widow of John Boyle[4]. They were still in Calcutta when the first of their two daughters Lewis - known as Noona - was born in October 1842[5]. In 1847, they went home to Scotland, at Colinton, where the Rev Lewis Balfour and his family had moved to, and there their second daughter, Emilia, arrived in1848. They went back to India in the early 1850s, but sadly, in 1858 Louise Emilia died of fever[6].

On 23 January 1861, Lewis, described as a merchant in his marriage certificate, and now a 44 years old widower, married his second wife, Caroline Louise Sissmore[7], in St. Andrew's Church, Calcutta. Caroline, born in Berhampur, West Bengal, was the daughter of Amelia (née Wilkinson) and Edward Sissmore, a Lieutenant in the 69th Regiment N.I., later a Colonel in the Bengal Army. [8] Caroline and Lewis returned to England at the end of 1862 or

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[1] IOR/N/1/1-1 f.7

[2] Bengal Directory & Register 1840, 322

[3] Bengal Directory & Register 2nd quarter 1842, 327

[4] IOR/N/1/59 f.334

[5] IOR /N/1/59 f.319

[6] IOR/N/1/94 f.294

[7] IOR/N/1/99 f.67

[8] IOR/N/1/63 f.9

early 1863. They lived for a while in Isleworth[9] where their second son, Claud Hamilton Melville, was born in 1864, but were in Edinburgh by the time the next child, Alfred Stevenson, was born in1870. Lewis died in London on 13th February 1870, aged 53.

We will meet Caroline again later on, but it is time now to meet the second of the Rev. Lewis Balfour's sons who went to India; Mackintosh, born in 1825 in Colinton Midlothian. In the 1841 Scottish Census he was still living at home, at the Colinton Manse, with his parents and siblings, so he must have travelled to India in the late 1840s. On 9th March 1850, in Calcutta, he married Elisabeth Cecilia De Verinne, in the Church of St. Andrew's. Mackintosh, described as a banker, was living at 9 Elysium Row and Elisabeth at 42 Park Street,[10] but they had moved to Middleton Row by the time their first son, Lewis Charles, was born in January 1851.[11] They lived for a while in Agra, where Cecilia Henrietta was born, on 19th November 1852, but she was baptised in St Andrew's Church in Calcutta a few months later.[12] They were back in Calcutta by 1854 and in September of that year, Mackintosh James was born and baptised on 19th October[13]. Another son, De Verinne Colinton, followed in October, 1857.[14] This is very close to the beginning of the Indian Mutiny and one wonders what happened to them during the following troubled and tragic times, but they were still in Calcutta in 1859 when their daughter, Elizabeth Jane, was baptised in St Andrew's Church.[15]

It is not known when they returned to Scotland, but their son, George Melville Macgregor, was born in Colinton, in July, 1860. Some time that same year, Elizabeth died. Mackintosh and his children were in England again in 1863, staying with Lewis and his family in Isleworth. Mackintosh's son, Lewis Charles, then aged 9, was a day boy at the Lodge

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[9] Robert Louis Stevenson letter to his mother, Margaret Isabella. She was Lewis' youngest sister, the Rev Lewis Balfour's youngest daughter. She married Thomas Stevenson in 1848. This letter is dated December 1963 and RLS was staying at his Uncle Lewis' in Rostrevor House.
The Letters of Robert Lewis Stevenson edited by Bradford A. Booth & Ernest Mehew, Vol. 1, Yale University Press, 1994, p 99

[10] IOR/N/1/77 f.415

[11] IOR/N/1/79 f.419. Lewis Charles Balfour (1851-1903) later became a bank manager in Calcutta, following in his father's footsteps.

[12] IOR/N/1/83/455

[13] IOR/N/1/86 f.508

[14] IOR/N/1/91 f.460

[15] IOR/N/1/95 f.143

Burlington Academy at Spring Grove Isleworth, where his cousin, Robert Louis Stevenson, was a student.[16]

In the Scottish Census of 1871, Caroline, widow of Lewis, is recorded as head of the family, living at 16 Livingstone Place in Edinburgh. However, a couple of years later Mackintosh and Caroline were married at Galle, in Ceylon on 5th September 1873. This caused a great stir in the Balfour and Stevenson families. The marriage to a deceased brother's wife was not only highly disapproved of, but forbidden by the Church and State. For this reason, these marriages tended to be celebrated abroad. The event was recorded in *The Scotsman* of 8th October 1873: '*Mackintosh Balfour to Caroline Louisa, daughter of the late Colonel Sissmore, Bengal Army, and widow of the late Lewis Balfour'*. According to RLS, in a letter to Frances Sitwell, this reduced his mother to '*hysterics at lunch – she had been bothered about some family troubles of which you have heard, and the advertisement of the marriage in today's Scotch papers finally knocked her up – so my father has taken her away with him to Ireland….'.* [17] The rift between the Stevenson and Balfour families caused by this marriage was only healed at Mackintosh's deathbed on 7th June 1884 in London. I believe that this estrangement between the families lasted even longer, this family event was never mentioned to later generations, at least on my husband's side of the family. Caroline and Mackintosh had two sons, born in Bombay while Mackintosh was Secretary of the New Bank of Bombay: Colin L. St Aubyn in 1875, [18] and Fredrick Douglas born on 10th October 1876, both baptised at the Girgaum Mission Church[19].

Mackintosh's career in banking started in Calcutta: in the Scott & Co, Bengal Directory and Register of 1852, he is listed as "*officiating agent at the Agra and United Services Bank, Calcutta Branch, 5 Wellesley Place*"[20].

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[16] *The Letters of Robert Lewis Stevenson* edited by Bradford A. Booth & Ernest Mehew, Vol. 1, Yale University Press, 1994, p 94

[17] id. P 334

[18] IOR/N/3/54 f.267

[19] IOR/N/3/54 f.274

[20] Scott & Co, Bengal Directory and Register 1852 p 198

In the same year, he was transferred to Agra and appointed Branch Agent there.[21] After the visit to England in 1860, he and his family were back in India, as the following notice appeared in *The London and China Telegraph* of 13 April 1861: "*Mr. Mackintosh Balfour, the manager of the Calcutta branch, has been appointed General-manager, in place of the late Mr. Francis Robert Neilson, deceased, but before he assumes his duties, it has been deemed expedient that he should visit each of the branches, for the purpose of a thorough inspection of their business*." When the Agra Bank crashed, Mackintosh, as the manager, with his brothers Lewis and John (whose story is told below) who were also involved, *"suffered heavy financial losses. Mackintosh holding that he had no moral right to save his own [money] or theirs, through his earlier information as to the state of the security*".[22]

In 1867, Mackintosh was appointed secretary of the new Bank of Bombay[23]. In the same year, in the newspaper *THE AGE*, on 12 February, the following announcement appeared, dated London 1st January: "*The Agra Bank recommenced business on 1st January. Mr. Macintosh* [sic] *Balfour started for India to organize branches in China".*[24] By 1881, Mackintosh was back in England, living in Tonbridge, Kent, his occupation still a banker.

John, the eldest of the Rev. Lewis Balfour's children, was born in July 1809 in Sorn, Ayrshire. After graduating as a Licentiate in Medicine at the Royal College of Surgeons in Edinburgh in 1829, he applied for a post as assistant surgeon with the East India Company. (All the papers regarding his nomination, application, certificates and 'Entrance Interview' are to be found in the Index of Surgeons from 1804 to 1914 at the British Library[25].) Assistant surgeons had to be over 22 years of age. John's Service Record[26] shows he was accepted and was admitted to the Service on 17th May 1837, attached to the Presidency

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[21] 1852, June 30. "Directors fix [sic] 28th September to consider the question of the transfer of the Head Office to Calcutta. The Secretary, Mr. Neilson, inspected the branches at Bombay and Madras prior to his removal to Calcutta. Mr. Mackintosh Balfour, the Calcutta Agent, appointed to be Branch Agent at Agra. P 216 the India Banks http://www.forgottenbooks.com/readbook_text/The_Rise_Progress_and_Present_Condition_of_Banking_in_India_1000105675/225

[22] *The Balfours of Pilrig, A history of the Family,* by Barbara Balfour-Melville, T. & A. Constable, Edinburgh 1907, 238-9

[23] *Mr Mackintosh Balfour, of the Agra Bank, has been appointed Secretary of the new Bank of Bombay*

http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/31979015

[24] https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1300&dat=18670212&id=EJsQAAAAIBAJ&sjid=6ZADAAAAIBAJ&pg=2314,1708640&hl=en

[25] L/MIL/9/384, pages 215-219

[26] L/MIL/10/73

General Hospital. As a field surgeon, he participated in the 1841 Afghanistan war and, in 1852, in the second Burmese war.[27] John qualified as a Surgeon in May 1863[28] and his name appears in the India Register & India Army & Civil Service List, Bengal from 1858 to 1863.

Barbara Gordon-Balfour-Melville, in her book *The Balfours of Pilrig,* mentions the Rev. Lewis's three sons "who went to India, and there, with varying fortunes, proved themselves able and competent men." She deals more with John's life and particularly his time during the Mutiny. John was in Delhi and was doing his hospital round with his sister-in-law when the Mutiny broke out and he realised that "peril was abroad"[29], by the shouting of the mutineers in the streets[30]. With some difficulty, they reached Flagstaff Tower where they took shelter for a while. I quote Dr. Balfour's report in the Annals of the India Rebellion[31]:

"After a retreat was determined on, I was offered the use of a dog cart by Mr. Le Bas. I put up my sister (Miss Smith). I then picked up Lieut. Thomason (Engineers) and Mrs.Tronson with the child of Capt. Fraser in her arms. We started along the Kurnaul road. After starting, Lieut. Thomason recommended that we should strike the canal bank, intercept his camp which was coming in, and then decide on our future movements. We did so, making Chota Thanna; next morning while consulting as to our future movements, the heads of the village of Rohud (Jats) came in, said they had heard of the massacre of Delhi and offered us asylum. I advised acceptance of the offer and at night we accompanied them to the village. There they left us for four or five days, showing us the most extreme kindness, and at last when we could hear nothing of a force advancing towards Delhi, they recommended our marching along the canal bank to Kurnaul. They guarded us, felt the way and made arrangements with villages of bad repute and showed us such extreme kindness and attention as I never expected to receive, and which, I fear, it will be impossible to repay. We arrived safe at Kurnaul on the night of the 20th. The Lieut. Governor will be glad to hear that the great mass of the country through which we passed was distinctly in our favour, even at the worst time, and that the insurrection had been almost confined to the Goojur villages along the Grand Trunk Road".

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[27] L/MIL/10/73, 38-39

[28] Short biographical notes in Crawford, L/MIL/9/384 f.217

[29] Id.

[30] *The Balfours of Pilrig, A history of the Family,* by Barbara Balfour-Melville, T. & A. Constable, Edinburgh 1907, 238-9

[31] Chick N.A. *Annals of the Indian rebellion, containing narratives of the outbreaks and eventful occurrences and stories of personal adventures, during the mutiny of 1857-58, with an appendix comprising miscellaneous facts, anecdotes*. Calcutta 1858, 176

On May 22nd from Kurnaul, Dr Balfour was "*placed at the disposal of the Sup Surgeon Suhard Aide, & directed to proceed to Umballah, forthwith".*[32] He was back working in Delhi in 1859 and became Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals in 1861. He was also much involved in establishing the lunatic asylum in Bareilly.

On leave in 1849 in England, John had married Josephine Marianne Smith, his first cousin, at All Souls Church, Marylebone, London. They had five children. In 1863, John retired, went back to Scotland and settled in Leven, Fife. There was an outbreak of cholera there in 1866 and his skill and experience greatly helped the community to overcome it. He was still practising as a doctor, since all his property had been lost during the failure of the Agra Bank. John died on 13 December 1886, aged seventy seven, still living in Leven.

My research on the Balfour brothers is not yet finished (and will be supported by a Family Tree). The lack of family letters has been a handicap, but I wonder if help may come from readers' suggestions? Thanks go to Margaret Makepeace of the British Library, Dr Rosie Llewellyn-Jones and Noel Gunther of FIBIS.

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'Some hot water quickly': Sister Sallie's Kaisar-i-Hind

Kimberley John Lindsay

The story begins with the acquisition of an interesting medal by Kimberley John Lindsay, a medal collector living in Germany, who carefully researches each addition to his collection.

Happily, the Gazette of India of 13 June 1946, identified the recipient of this decoration as 'Miss Sarah Maria Round, Matron-in-Charge of Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar, North West Frontier'. This, in turn, allowed Kim to research the path taken by the intrepid Sarah (Sallie) Round's Great War medals.

"Sarah "Sallie" Maria Round was born at "The Fair Acres", Iffley Road, Oxford, on 13 November 1880, of Church of England denomination. She was the daughter of William Henry Round, a coal merchant. Her mother, from Stafford, was also confusingly called Sarah Maria Round ('late Pope, formerly Timmins'), and was thirty-eight when Sallie (the

[32] L/MIL/10/73, 38-39

fourth of seven children) arrived. By 1891, Mr Round had apparently departed the scene, the last child having been born in 1886. The family had moved to 285 St. Paul's Road, Smethwick (Staffordshire), and Mrs Round, 48, described herself as 'living on her own income'. She managed to house two of her married children and their spouses, as well as five smaller children (including Sarah, 10).

When war began in August 1914, the thirty-three year old Sallie Round immediately volunteered, and – hearing nothing from the War Office – joined the Serbian Relief Fund. Sallie served as a Sister in Serbia from 22 February 1915 and remained on the rolls of the Serbian Relief Fund until 1919. After her repatriation from the war zone, Nursing Sister Round was obviously deeply impressed with her experiences in Serbia. Indeed, she may well have already met the Serbian officer who was to play a role in her life, two years later. Sallie had obviously fallen in love with one particular Serbian officer.

On 19 March 1918, the Surgeon-General and Director of Medical Services, British Salonika Force (Holt), reported to the War Office from G.H.Q., Salonika:-

'Herewith resignation of Staff Nurse S. M. Rounds (sic), Q.A.I.M.N.S. (R.), on termination of her contract. This lady is marrying a Serbian officer and the General Officer commanding-in-Chief has sanctioned her remaining in this country to work for the Serbian Relief Fund.' The British Red Cross Society also reported to the War Office, that Sarah had 'Transferred to the Serbian Relief Fund, with effect from 1 April 1918'. Even at that late stage, the war was by no means over. But, in the intervening time, until 7 January 1919, something catastrophic put paid to the thirty-eight year old Sarah's matrimonial hopes. For reasons unknown, and no doubt saddened, she left Serbia and returned to England.

Sarah was awarded the British War Medal 1914-1918 (S. ROUND.) and Victory Medal 1914-1919 (S. ROUND.), notwithstanding her 1915 service: nursing non-British Serbs did not count! The Medal Index Card for 'Sister Sallie (sic) Round, Serbian R. Fund' gave the Theatre of War as 'Serbia'. The Medal Roll clearly states her dates with the Serbian Relief Fund as 27/2/15 to 30/3/20; and her being in 'other theatres of war' from 20/12/16 to 1/4/18.

In 1921, no doubt wanting to give her life a completely new direction, Sarah Round decided to continue nursing overseas, and was granted a passage to India. There, as shown in a letter written on 20 April 1922, she obviously found a degree of happiness:-

'All Saints Dispensary, Panvel, District of Kolaba, Bombay Presidency.

'To The Overseas Settlement Committee.

Dear Ladies of the Committee,

Am sending you this letter to fulfil my promise of letting you know from time to time how I am getting on.

My life here is a very happy and also a very busy one. I am in charge of the above Dispensary which is 43 miles from Bombay. It is a large village town if we can express it so, and with the surrounding villages has a population of about 30,000. My work is chiefly amongst women and children.

The nearest railway station is about 17 miles, and the nearest hospital, 20 miles away. There is a motor service between Panvel and Numha, the railway station. Also, one can travel by boat to a village called Ulwa and then a tonga (a light, 2-wheeled Indian vehicle) ride of seven miles. There are only two doctors here so there is plenty for all to do. The work is most interesting and so far I've not found the heat upset me and except for a slight cold have been wonderfully well. By the time this reaches you I shall have been in the country 8 months. I've yet to experience the Monsoon. I'm learning Marathi and find it a pleasant language: I can read, write and make myself fairly understood now.

Trusting this letter will give satisfaction and repay the Committee for the great kindness I received at their hands and the substantial help towards my passage out.

Yours truly,

S. M. Round.'

In another letter, written after returning from leave in England, Sallie gave an account of the voyage and her welcome back to India, which was published in January 1929 ("The British Journal of Nursing").-

'Miss Sarah M. Round, S.R.N., F.B.C.N., Panvel, Kolaba, India, who recently paid a visit to the British College of Nurses when in England, writes:

"Will you kindly accept my Christmas and New Year greetings? Christmas time gives one just the opportunity of sending a kindly greeting.

I had a rough voyage back and can no longer call myself a good sailor. We had a terrific thunderstorm in the Red Sea, and the lightning was the most vivid I think I have ever seen. We were all glad when Bombay was reached safely.

How anxious everyone is about the King. We had a special Service for him the other Sunday in our little Chapel. I have just read the latest news cabled from London. It is a trifle better, but very serious.

I had a queenly welcome back to Panvel, and all the patients say that they are glad because their mother has returned. The work is going on, on all sides, and once I get that motor car I shall, I trust, get more into touch with the distant villages.

Later on I hope to write some details of the work which may be of sufficient interest to publish in the Journal. I am having my Diploma framed. Not only I myself, but the All Saints Community, are very proud of it." '

Sallie added:-

'Every time I get the "British Journal of Nursing", the more pleased I am that I became a Fellow. The Journal inspires one so, and here in this vast country one feels the Fellowship of it all… I wish that some of the Indian nurses could join but, alas! that is not possible yet until this country is on the Register. My trained Indian nurse is a jewel, and is so clever…'

In May 1930, 'Miss S. A. Round, F.B.C.N.', wrote from Panvel, Bombay Residency, India:

'Panvel is a Taluka town 43 miles from Bombay. A Taluka town is the chief town of the district, and the place where all the business from the surrounding villages is done. The population of Panvel is about 12,000, but the district which is called Kolaba has a population of nearly 90,000. Some of the villages are very small, and tucked away in the jungle or by the side of the rivers. Only those who are prepared to go off the beaten track would ever suspect that villages were in such hidden away spots. It is in these villages that so many of India's millions live.

'The Dispensary has been in existence for nearly twenty years. When it was first started a fairly large house was rented, and then when the work began to grow the present Dispensary was built. I have been here nine years and this is to give you some idea of how the work has grown during that time. At first being new, and Indians are rather suspicious of new people, only three or four patients turned up the first few days, and these asked where the other Sister had gone? On being told that she was going to work in Bombay, they took themselves off: then one or two more venturesome came back and as I did not know one word of Marathi, which is the language spoken here, it all had to be done through an interpreter. Once or twice I found myself coming out with Serbian words; the language I had learnt while in the Balkans, during the war. Naturally, they looked at me in astonishment.

'I had only been here a few weeks when I was fetched to see a woman who, the husband said, had high fever; my interpreter was away at the time, but I had learnt about a dozen words, amongst which was the word for water. On arrival at the house, which was very

small, I found the poor Mother well on in labour, and with such a temperature. What was I to do? I found a small lad of twelve, who understood a little English, and told him to sit at the door, and I would tell him what to do. "Tell the husband to let me have some hot water quickly as the baby is coming now." The reply came back that it would not be born yet, as there were five more days, and then it would be the full moon. Needless to say, the baby arrived minus the water, even cold, but when it was a boy, the father was pleased, and gave me some hot water to bathe it in. The rest of the things I had to fetch from the Dispensary. Both mother and child did well. The work began to grow apace after this, and several mothers were persuaded to come to the Dispensary for their confinements. There was only one big room, so a nice space was curtained off, and made into a ward. This served very well, until one day there were four maternity cases in, and over thirty out-patients waiting, and it seemed as if the time had arrived when the place needed enlarging. Funds were collected, and a nice room was built for the out-patients, and this gives us a ward which will take ten beds if necessary. We rarely have quite an empty ward these days. Now the average attendance at the Dispensary is fifty.

'Last year we had 5,661 in the out-patients, 88 were attended in their own homes, and the attendance amounted to 13,249. We had 27 maternity cases and 20 medical cases in the ward. The staff consists of two trained nurses and two junior nurses.

'We are sometimes fetched to villages twenty miles away, and if off the main road, and they nearly always are, we go by bullock cart, and this takes such a long time, besides the cramped position one sits in, and the bumps. These cases are truly pitiable, for, as a rule, the very worst has been done to the poor mother before proper help is sought. They are often transverse presentations, and the patient has been so badly torn that one knows that if she recovers she is injured for life. Last year, I am thankful to say, out of the 69 cases we had, not one mother died. The maternal death-rate at one time was nearly 20 per cent. I think last year the Municipality said it had fallen to 2 per cent and 15 per cent respectively. When we attend a maternity case, we have to take everything with us: basins, bowls, towels, things for the bed, mother and baby; we keep a bundle always ready, for we never know when a call will come. These bundles contain four towels, two basins, three small bowls, three kidney trays, clean rag, a pad for the mother, binder, and safety pins, baby's nappy and a little frock, and something for the bed. This is in addition to a well-stocked maternity bag, but one simply cannot go without a good supply.

'Besides all this, we do a lot of ante-natal work, and post-natal visiting and vaccinating. I took my training in this branch of work in Bombay, and by this means I am a recognised vaccinator.

'This work is carried out by the help of friends at home. The All Saints Sisters are responsible for the finance, and like so many other places it is sadly handicapped for want of funds. I hardly think that there will be found anywhere such a place run on more economical lines. It costs roughly £300 per annum. This includes everything: a cook, handyman, laundry, food, drugs, repairs to building, unless extensive, all the salaries, and other expenses attached to a home. We make use of everything: old envelopes, which are used to put cotton wool in, or some mag. sulph., perhaps a dressing. Empty boot polish tins, which we boil and make quite clean, and use them to put ointment in. All sorts of odd bits of white rags, empty matchboxes, and so on. It is an interesting work, full of possibilities, but I must add that if I did many of the things in England that I do here, I should often be hauled over the coals, but please remember that India as yet has not half enough doctors, nurses or midwives. My nearest hospital is 45 miles away. No major operation can be done in these small towns, and often a man would rather his wife died than a male doctor should touch her, so one carries on, and the very fact that the maternal and infant mortality has decreased so much is a proof that all has not been in vain.'

A letter from 'Miss Sallie Round, of All Saints Dispensary, Panvel, Bombay, India, asking for a grant of £10 for two reasons' was published in the December 1931 *"British Journal of Nursing". This* gave some idea of the financial difficulties which confronted the courageous Sallie:-

'(Firstly) To attend as a Delegate the All India Women's Conference to be held at Madras the last week of this year, to represent Panvel and speak on the medical work in the Konkan villages. It is a great event and I am longing to go. I'm to plead for more doctors, nurses and midwives for these villages. Just think, amongst a population of 90,000, I'm the only fully qualified nurse; there are several trained midwives, seven in all, but only two, I think, holding the Bombay Diploma, the rest are trained in their own surroundings. There are only three Maternity Homes, one at Alibay, entailing a boat journey across the Creek, this is 40 miles from here, one in Panvel town, and the All Saints' Dispensary on the outskirts. I'm only asking for help for my railway fare of about £4.'

'The second object is that I very much want to go to the Leper Asylum to learn something of this dread disease. The "Indian Medical Journal" advises all those who are doing medical work to get at least a fortnight's training. I get quite a number of patients suffering from leprosy at the dispensary, and I wish to be able to advise the right type to go to an asylum for treatment, and to relieve the advanced cases and thus prevent the spread of the disease. I have a friend at Diehpoli, one of the best asylums in India, and she has promised to show me and teach me all she can. I shall just have my travelling expenses and board to

find, about £6. The All Saints Community is very poor, and as I only have pocket-money I can only save a little towards this, so I shall do both things in my holiday which falls at the end of the year. I have been here 10 years, and can speak the Marathi language fairly well, so I feel that any fresh knowledge and progress I can make will further the work here. I should like my College Badge in the event of my going to Madras, as I shall be in uniform.'

The President of the British College of Nursing reported that as soon as she received this appeal from Miss Round, and pending the meeting of the Council, she invited the Treasurer to consider it, and she was pleased to report that £15 was sent to Miss Round at once – as she felt sure that the Council would greatly appreciate the spirit of this appeal, and wish to further any good work in India. (The Council thoroughly approved the grant.)

Sally Round's Indian Medal:

The reverse of the sparsely-awarded Kaisar-i-Hind is appropriately embossed*, 'FOR PUBLIC SERVICE IN INDIA'*. This, the lowest class of this decoration (but of course she was a Missionary Nurse, much looked-down-upon by the Establishment), was given by the Viceroy. Only the highest class, in gold, was awarded by the King, these appearing in the *London Gazette* and the *Gazette of India*; the lower classes being listed in *The Gazette of India* only. Gazetted in 1946, it not only rewarded war service but was also very much an "End of Raj" award. It recognised her considerable services of over twenty-five years, primarily in the Bombay Presidency, but latterly at Peshawar. The named sticker on the case of the K-i-H indicates that the decoration was almost certainly formally presented at an award ceremony, which probably took place during the same year, 1946…

After having spent decades of productive and interesting service in India, and by that stage quite possibly ill, she returned to England in 1948. She was not to enjoy her retirement for long.

On 15 November 1950, at St. Luke's Home, Cliff Road, Eastbourne, Sarah Maria Round, 'Spinster, Hospital Nurse (retired)', died of Uraemia and cancer of the kidney, at the age of 70."

Abbreviations:

QAIMNS(R) Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service (Reserve); renamed QARANC Queen Alexandra's Royal Army Nursing Corps in1949. SRN State registered Nurse; BJN British Journal of Nursing; BCN British College of Nursing; FBCN Fellow of British College of Nursing

WANTED

Robert William Cox aka. Charles Edward Custance

Five feet eleven inches tall, weight 151lbs, chest 38 inches, fresh complexion, brown hair, hazel eyes. Tattoo of a castle on his right forearm.

What made a soldier leave the army and then eight years later re-enlist under an assumed name? What was he trying to hide? What then prompted him to declare his true identity, officially, five years later? Where did he go after deserting his wife and seven children in 1898? Who was Charles Edward Custance? Did he ever exist or was he the figment of my great grandfather's wily imagination?

Robert William Cox was born in Dum Dum, Bengal, on 5th August 1858, to Captain William Frederick Cox of the Bengal Artillery, 2nd Brigade C Battery, and Anna Maria Daniel whom

he married on the Isle of Man when she was fifteen. They were later divorced, following her affair with Richard Vigors Doyne, a prosperous lawyer who became her second husband.

We know next to nothing about Robert's early life, excluding his army records which surfaced thanks to Lawrie Butler. Having grown up in India, he subsequently joined his father's regiment and was then discharged by purchase, under less than auspicious circumstances, we believe. In 1877, he married Frances Matilda Stuart Piercy, daughter of Major Henry Piercy, and went on to father seven children.

His second army career began on 12th June 1884 in Portsmouth, where Robert enlisted in the Royal Irish Fusiliers using the alias Charles Edward Custance, a name he retained for the next five years. We have no idea what prompted this subterfuge or whether the alias itself had any particular significance. Robert's army record may or may not have been typical. Within a year he had made sergeant, but this rank was quickly lost through spells of desertion and 'losing necessaries'. In India he was stationed in at least six different locations where he spent time in hospital with alcoholism, dyspepsia and touches of the ague and also in Darjeeling in 1892, having sprained his ankle playing football.

On August thirteenth, 1889, he signed Attestation papers before a magistrate giving his rightful name. In July 1895, he was permitted to extend his period of Army service to complete twelve years with the colours and then, in October that same year, transferred to 1st Battalion Cameronians. He attained the rank of Quarter Master Sergeant then passed the Hythe certificate of sergeant instruction and the preliminary examination to Sandhurst College, with a first class score.

Discharged from the army in December 1898, Robert sailed for home with the family and, very soon after arriving - on the quayside some say - left for parts unknown. It is rumored he went to the USA and that a landlady sent the family a newspaper cutting telling of the death of an English tenant named Cox, all unsubstantiated. When his daughter married in 1910 she stated her father was deceased, but that could just have been resentment. The truth is, Robert William Cox disappeared and remains a mystery, as he always has done.

We have one photograph of the man, standing to attention in the uniform of the Cameronians. The picture is brown and slightly blurred and he has a faint smirk on his face. Perhaps he knows he is still wanted, but under which name?
Michael Whitehead (Great-grandson of Robert William Cox)

Under Duress: The Tiger of Mysore and his Infidel Artisans

David Atkinson

PART ONE

One of the stories that has exercised my interest over the last few years is that of the French artisans who laboured in the workshops of Tipu Sultan's fort at Seringapatam during the 1790's.

These craftsmen were employed under contract following a diplomatic mission to Louis XVI's court by Tipu's envoys in the latter half of 1788.[1] In the years after the French Revolution, they became no longer willing employees but captive workers of a besieged Tipu Sultan.

The following piece, exploring the intertwined stories of Pierre François Mouyset, Charles Philibert Debay, Auguste Menaud, François Fidèle Ripaud and French soldiers stationed at Seringapatam, provides a glimpse into the extraordinary circumstances of their adventure.

Mouyset

From Chaillot district, Paris, in March 1789, François Toussaint Mouyset, sent a letter of heartfelt gratitude to M. Guillemain de Vaivre, Intendent General of the Colonies, for his kindness in arranging for his son a passport to travel to the port of Lorient and for him to embark for Pondicherry and thence to the kingdom of Tipu Sultan.[2,3] The letter was co-signed by the young man "Mouyset, fils".[4]

Mouyset, père, a carpenter, was employed on the fire pump in the ateliers of the Chaillot brass foundry which was owned by the famous engineers, the Périer brothers. The elder Mouyset had worked there for the previous 9 years and was considered to be a very honest and reliable man. Two months before this letter, the Périers had vouched for him

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[1] The ambassadors embarked at Pondicherry 22 July 1787 aboard the *Roi l'Aurore* and landed at Toulon 9 June 1788, reaching Paris 16 July. They were Mohamed Darvesh Khan, Akbar Ali Khan & Osman Khan

[2] The surname was variously spelled in different documents as Mouysset, Mouiset, Moyset & Moysset

[3] Residing at "L'Enseigne des Trois Poissons" (The Sign of the Three Fishes), Rue de Chaillot, the house of M Fleury, wine merchant; François Toussaint Mouyset died in the 10th Arrondissement, Paris, 28 Sept 1810

[4] de Vaivre then forwarded the letter to Louis XVI's naval minister the Comte de la Luzerne

and in turn, he stood surety for his son while he remained at large, having evaded an earlier departure.[5]

The son, Pierre François Mouyset, aged about 24, was identified as a carpenter and, until 1788, was employed as a founder at the royal forges on the island of Indret, near Nantes. The director of the foundries there, M. Lamotte, had assured the ambassadors of his high level of skill and suitability to be chief of a foundry at Mysore.[6] This led to Mouyset being contracted to organise a complement of skilled workmen to make the voyage to India with Tipu Sultan's representatives. But when he could not be located, his lathes and cutting tools already shipboard at Brest, and other possessions abandoned at his erstwhile lodgings, the naval frigate *La Thétis,* with winds becoming favourable, could wait no longer and sailed without him on 14 November, 1788.[7] This was at the beginning of the usual sailing season to India.

His disappearance on 7 November had created great embarrassment, not in the least for Pierre Ruffin, interpreter to the French Government, who had been dealing, with difficulty, in the Persian language with the ambassadors. And a diplomatic problem was unfolding for M. Redon de Beaupréau, Intendent of Marine at Brest, who was obliged to investigate events. On his engagement by the ambassadors, Mouyset had been advanced a total of 6250 livres so that craftsmen could be procured and it was immediately concluded that he had designed to make off with the money, even though he had left behind possessions valued at 1200 livres. To maintain good faith with the envoys, Beaupréau quickly recruited two other founders to replace the absconder. Nonetheless, the ambassadors were determined not to embark until they were reimbursed the advances which Mouyset had taken. After conferring with Comte d'Hector, Commandant of Marine at Brest, Beaupréau wrote that "if we do not yield to the obstinacy of the ambassadors, the daily expenses which they occasion would double this sum night by day, and that, if in this interval, the winds changed, it would perhaps be even ten-fold."

Meanwhile, Beaupréau, hoping to intercept the fugitive, had sent Mouyset's description to the *marechaussées* (constabulary) of the towns of Lower Brittany, and then to Roscoff, St Malo, Rochefort, Bordeaux, Le Havre, Dunkerque, and even to the Lieutenant-General of

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[5] http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Mouysset fondeur aux forges d'Indret, qui a rompu l'engagement pris de passer en Indoustan, à la suite des ambassadeurs de Tipou-Sultan 1788

[6] Lamotte took over the role from William Wilkinson, brother of John Wilkinson & son of Isaac Wilkinson, the famous English industrialists. William Wilkinson had established the Indret cannon foundry in 1776

[7] http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Mouysset fondeur aux forges d'Indret, etc ; op.cit.

Police in Paris. Despite these efforts he was not caught, instead making it all the way to his parents in Chaillot.

On 18 December 1788, François Toussaint Mouyset signed a letter sent to Ruffin at Versailles, who forwarded it with a covering letter to M. de Vaivre, on 5 January 1789, which attempted to explain the younger Mouyset's movements and to redeem his honour.[8] In it, he asserted that his son was not guilty of desertion and that a letter left on the mantelpiece at his lodgings at Brest would demonstrate what his intentions had been.

The elder Mouyset's letter had the necessary effect and the response was remarkably lenient towards a young man who had impulsively run away. On 30 March 1789, at the very end of the sailing season, M. Poulletier, Commissary General of Lorient, wrote to M. de Vaivre that Mouyset had arrived at the port and that he had "immediately assigned him to the Compagnie des Indes vessel, the *Royale Elizabeth*, ready to set sail for Pondicherry, after having given him back the effects which he left at Brest and which M. Beaupréau has passed on to me."[9]

On its journey, the ship took shelter for 7 days at the Island of Sainte Marie, Madagascar, and after crossing the Indian Ocean, arrived safely at Pondicherry, anchoring on the night of 17 September, 1789.[10]

It had been a long voyage and in that passage of time, Revolution had overtaken France, but word of this would only reach the French colony in February, 1790.[11]

Return of the Ambassadors

An even longer sailing had been made by *La Thétis* with its returning diplomats and select band of artisans. The *Gazette de France* of 3 April, 1789, reported that the ship had arrived at Bahia de Praya, Cape Verde Islands, on 26 November, 1788, after a voyage of only 12 days, under the command of Comte de Macnémara, with no illness aboard. Being very aware of the lengthiness of the voyage and the extra costs, Comte de la Luzerne, the naval minister in Paris, had instructed Macnémara to sail directly for Ile de France (Mauritius)

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[8] This letter was not in Mouyset's script, nor in the handwriting of his son or the Périer brothers

[9] http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Mouysset fondeur aux forges d'Indret, etc. ; op.cit.

[10] *Correspondance des agents à Pondichéry de la nouvelle Compagnie des Indes avec les administrateurs à Paris, ,1788-1803*, published 1931, pp.86,118, http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb34136943x

[11] *Catalogue des manuscrits des anciennes archives de l'Inde française. Tome II, Pondichéry 1789-1815* (publ.1924), p.vi, http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb341369448

without stopping. The ship arrived there 17 February, 1789, after being at sea for 83 days.[12] It appears that the onward passage was delayed through bad weather and *La Thétis* only reached Pondicherry on 11 May, 1789.

On the outgoing journey to France aboard the *Roi l'Aurore,* the entourage, including butlers, footmen, bodyguards and cooks amounted to 45 people.[13] On the ambassadors' arrival at Brest on 28 October, 1788, preparing for their return to India, the grand party consisted of 36. What had not been planned for by the French officials at Brest was that in Paris the ambassadors had engaged 17 French workers.[14] They had also brought with them a huge number of curios and expensive gifts such as Sèvres porcelain, as well as sheep and fowl. Other items included boxes of natural history objects from the *Jardin du Roi.* The ship was overladen, exceeding its stowage by 80 tonnes.

Details are available for 12 contracted French artisans (or *ouvriers*) who will be named shortly. This number was far short of what Tipu had hoped for. He wanted ten of each, as well as other skilled workers and machinery. But the main reason for the diplomatic mission was to develop an offensive and defensive alliance with France. His desire most of all was to have 10,000 French troops at his disposal, to counter the British. Louis XVI's government had been evasive over the ambassadors' requests and cited the Treaty of Versailles of 1783 with Great Britain as the reason that troops could not be sent.

Tipu's ambassadors met him encamped at Coimbatore, but he was not pleased by the news he received. Even though the French had funded the mission to and from India, to the tune of nearly 1 million livres, the diplomats had not only spent the entire allowance of 250,000 livres (100,000 rupees) which Tipu had given them, but had accumulated further debts of 50,000 livres from purchases.[15] Furthermore, they returned in "a state of feud" over the spoils of their visit. Osman Khan, the most junior of the diplomats, alleged that the other two had been "indecorously captivated by the beauty of infidel females" and had accepted "forbidden liquors" as gifts.[16] It is stated, in a rather inflated way by Michaud, that they were badly received and could only report the empty protestations of friendship of the French, along with high praises for the splendour of the kingdom and the magnificence of

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[12] Verne, José Paul. Un voyage de trois ambassadeurs indiens sur une corvette française (1787-88). *Neptunia* (Association des Amis du Musée de la Marine) 1993 (no.189), p.31

[13] Pared back from a contingent of 80 which was considered too many by the captain of the *Roi l'Aurore*

[14] Les Ambassadeurs de Tippou-Saheb à Brest, en 1788. *Bulletin de la Societé Académique de Brest, Tome II, (1861-1862),* pp.237-246

[15] 1 Franc was worth 1 Livre, 3 Deniers (1.0125 Livres); 1 Pondicherry Roupie was worth 2 Livres, 10 Sols (2.5 Livres); 1 Franc was approximately the value of 1 Pound

[16] Wilks, Mark. *History of Mysore, vol.2,* publ.1810, by pp.361-2

the court of Versailles. The King of Mysore listened only with indignation and accused his ambassadors of being traitors and had them put to death. [17] One later historian, using the foregoing sources, simply says that they "remained in disgrace for some time" (…quite probably, *permanently*!).[18] What effect this may have had on the *ouvriers* one can only guess at.

The Contract

The *ouvriers* were certainly not in any position to renegotiate. One contract document to appoint cannon founders, dated 4 November, 1788, and signed by Mouyset and the ambassadors, referred to a general convention laid out on 28 September.[19] This had 7 major points which are not available to examine. However, the most important one can be inferred from a letter written in February, 1798: the agreed appointment was to be for only 4 years.[20]

Mouyset was to provide 4 other workers and he was to be their head. They and their effects were to be transported, free of charge, to wherever Tipu Sultan was pleased to fix their residence. Wages were to be paid regularly at the end of each lunar month, according to Tipu's newly introduced calendar.[21] During the voyage, they would be treated and fed as officers in the ambassadors' retinue. Before their departure from Nantes, these five men would also be granted money to purchase clothes and linen for the voyage, and essential tools and instruments, as well as a retainer for time lost during the crossing.

The *ouvriers* identified in the contracts and supplementary agreements were: Mouyset, head foundryman; Jean Solassier & Médard Balandreau, both master blacksmiths; François Le Dal, carpenter; Auguste Menaud, turner; Pégos (Gioani Francesco Pegosso), master caster and founder; Monnot (previously in the Royal Marine), optician & mechanic; Antoine & Descrivan, both glassmakers; and Guillaume Le Brun (from the Marine

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[17] Michaud, Joseph. *Histoire des progres et de la chute de l'empire de Mysore, sous les regnes d'Hyder Aly et Tippoo-Saib*, publ.1801, pp.140-142

[18] Khan, Mohibbul Hasan. *History of Tippu Sultan*, publ.1971, p.124, footnote 1

[19] L'Ambassade de Tippou Sultan en France en 1788. Les ouvriers engagés pour le compte de Tippou. *Revue de l'Histoire des Colonies Françaises*, 1928, vol.16, pp.603-6

[20] http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Debay, horloger, Pombart, teinturier, Le Dal, menuisier, et Menaud, coutelier, artistes et ouvriers passés avec les ambassadeurs de Tipou-Sultan, aux Indes, en 1788: demandent à être rapatriés an VI.

[21] Using Tipu's Mauludi soli-lunar calendar, which was instituted in the year 1215 (1787AD). Since Tipu calculated that the Prophet was born in 572AD, he subtracted 572 years from 1787 to arrive at its starting year.

Academy) & Jean François le Melloc, both gunsmiths. Their annual pay rates ranged from 1,000 to 1,600 rupees, except for Mouyset who was to be paid 4,800 rupees.[22]

One of the surgeons was M. Barrout, who was granted by M. Simon Charles Boutin, treasurer in the Department of Marine (on instructions from Versailles) 260 livres for his travel from Paris to Brest and a further 600 livres to purchase books suitable to his calling and forthcoming assignment.[23]

Based on the aforementioned letter of February, 1798, we have the names of two other craftsmen who claim to have made the voyage with the ambassadors: Pombart (a dyer) and Debay (a watchmaker). The number of workers is at odds with what has been written by Mohibbul Hasan Khan in his book *History of Tippu Sultan,* which quotes records in the *Archives Nationales,* indicating many more agreed to enter his pay.
By the time of the *ouvriers'* arrival, Tipu Sultan already had a number of Europeans in his service. He wrote to Comte de Conway, Governor of Pondicherry, on 8 November, 1789, saying that all the English prisoners who were detained in his states had been set free and a receipt had been requested of the government of their nation. He then stated, "I have approximately 50 or 60 men, French, English, Portuguese and others who have been in my service for 15 years. If your Excellency desires it, I will dismiss them."[24]

This magnanimity was prior to another phase of conflict with the English, however, marked by fluctuating fortunes for Tipu Sahib. The Third Mysore War (May 1790 – Feb 1792) represented a major turning point, culminating in his ceding half his territory, paying a hefty indemnity, and worst of all, handing over two of his sons to Marquis Cornwallis, as hostages. He was also required to release all prisoners of war, but these men did not include the French artisans.

An early Escape

At the end of July, 1792, Chevalier de Fresne, the next Governor of Pondicherry, wrote to the Ministry of Marine to say that he had received a request from Tipu to arrest as deserters and to send back to him, a glass worker and founder. De Fresne explained that they had fled because of the bad treatment which they had suffered and he propounded that they could not be dealt with as deserting soldiers. Next, he made clear his resentment towards Tipu and the situation they had been drawn into: "I have infinitely blamed this

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[22] L'Ambassade de Tippou Sultan en France en 1788. Les ouvriers engagés pour le compte de Tippou. *Revue de l'Histoire des Colonies Françaises*, 1928, vol.16, pp.603-6

[23] http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Barrout, chirurgien passant dans les états de Tippo-Sultan, dans l'Inde 1788

[24] *Catalogue des manuscrits des anciennes archives de l'Inde française … 1789-1815*, publ. 1924, op.cit., p.16

operation [Tipu's diplomatic mission] in 1787. Nothing, it seems to me, must be more embarrassing in Europe and more injurious in India."[25]

When Cornwallis' advanced party had entered the site, back in February, 1792, they had found "27 half-starved Europeans, loaded with irons and confined in a dungeon… Some of these unhappy men … were deserters."[26] Evidence enough to understand de Fresne's misgivings.

The escaped founder in question is likely to have been Mouyset himself, because in October, 1792, one finds him marrying on the island of Ile de France (Mauritius), well beyond the arms of Tipu.[27]

The *ouvriers'* contract was nearing its termination, but there was no end in sight. Moreover, given Tipu's losses, he had even greater need of military hardware and, in such circumstances, it could hardly be expected that he would willingly discharge these essential workers.

Tipu's Tiger

In Tipu Sultan's music room was kept a device which many people know of today: a musical automaton in the form of a tiger devouring a European. The victim in question is presumed to be an effigy of Hugh Munro, the son of General Sir Hector Munro, who was a commanding officer during the war with Tipu's father, Haider Ali, in 1781. The young Munro, a civilian, was mauled to death by a tiger on a hunting visit to Saugor Island, Bay of Bengal, in December, 1792. The automaton has a wooden body and its workings include an organ with 18 semitones and a hand-cranked mechanism to drive the bellows. In the throes of death, the soldier emits groaning tones and his left arm rises and falls, the tiger making its own roaring sounds. As a symbol, it is iconic of Tipu Sultan, who assumed the tiger for his own motif, which embellished his throne as well as swords, guns, cannons and battle standards. After it was installed at East India House, Leadenhall St., London, in 1808 it became a ready public attraction.[28]

It is often said that the internal mechanisms are of French design and local manufacture. The work of a French clock or watch-maker is apparent. Among the descendants of

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[25] Ibid., pp.296-297

[26] *Encyclopaedia Britannica, vol.11* (publ.1823), p.229

[27] http://www.cgmrgenealogie.org/actes : Pierre François Mouyset, mechanical engineer, of St Nicolas de Champs, Paris, son of François Toussaint Mouyset & Françoise Laury m.2 Oct 1792, Flacq, to Suzanne Françoise Gaultier, widow of Jean Michel Dumont, of St Louis, Lorient, dau. of Jean Gaultier & Marie Leger .

[28] Archer, Mildred. *Tippoo's Tiger*, publ.1959, p.1

Auguste Menaud, a turner & cannon founder, it is believed that he was involved in its construction.

The tiger itself stands as a curio, albeit one that gave Tipu hours of amusement. More important to the Sultan was arming his forces with modern weapons. These included cannons and ordnance received through trade agreements with France and those produced locally. Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington, observed in 1801 that Seringapatam "possessed means for equipping an army which no other place in the Company's territories had, except Madras". It had many advantages, such as "its proximity to the Mysore forests, the abundance of old iron, the numerous and extensive buildings and the security of such a fortress."[29]

It is clear that the foundry was very well established. Six iron cannons and 202 brass cannons cast, bored and assembled there, were captured after the siege of 1799. One piece of mechanism which had been engineered by the Frenchmen was a "water driven engine for boring cannon."[30]

Ripaud

For a duration more than double that laid down in the agreement, the men were still being kept in the workshops when one of the strangest follies in the story of French relations with Tipu Sultan occurred: the appearance of François Ripaud de Montaudevert.[31] In early 1797, this French privateer, who had once spent time in the French marine but who was now based at Réunion (Ile Bourbon), reached Mangalore in a damaged vessel. In actual fact, it was a small English ship he had commandeered in an act of piracy off the Malabar Coast. Short of provisions, he sought refuge at the port.

He declared that he was second in command at Ile de France and announced that 10,000 soldiers were massed on the island, ready to join forces with Tipu to defeat the British. Unsurprisingly, he was looked upon with suspicion by Tipu's advisors: "God knows what ass it is," wrote two supervisors of the Mysore Commercial Department; but nevertheless, he was taken to Seringapatam.[32] The intricacies of this intrigue can only be touched upon briefly here. Many able commentaries have been written on Ripaud's cameo performance.

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[29] Young, Henry Alfred. *The East India Company's Arsenals & Manufactories*, publ.1937, p.187

[30] Archer, op. cit., p.11

[31] François Fidèle Ripaud, born 24 May 1755, at Saffré, Loire-Inférieur, son of Jacques Louis Ripaud sieur de Montaudevert, notary of the town.

[32] *Official Documents, Relative to the Negotiations Carried on by Tippoo Sultaun, with the French Nation, and Other Foreign States, for Purposes Hostile to the British Nation: To which is Added, Proceedings of a Jacobin Club, Formed at Seringapatam, by the French Soldiers in the Corps Commanded by M. Dompart: with a Translation*, publ.1799, p.18

His mad theatre escalated, playing on the hopes of the Prince of Mysore. Tipu took up his ministers' recommendations to repair the vessel and to send a representation to Ile de France, setting in train another sub-plot which we will return to shortly.

In the army camp attached to the fort at this moment, was a pre-revolutionary remnant of "Swiss-French" troops which had been under the command of Chevalier Jean d'Anière de Veuillet de Vigié, who had replaced his cousin, Monsieur Lally, at his death in October 1790.[33] When Tipu capitulated in February, 1792, a portion of Vigié's soldiers deserted and joined their compatriot, General Raymond, who commanded a brigade in the pay of the Nizam of Hyderabad. Raymond was critical of Vigié's ability and believed this had contributed to Tipu's defeat.[34] Vigié and no more than 150-200 men out of 360 returned to Seringapatam in March, 1792.[35,36] Four years on, it was these men, alongside the *ouvriers*, now under the leadership of M. Dompard, whom Ripaud encountered.
Ripaud also brought a revolutionary mood into the fort. Conventional histories suggest that he inspired a Jacobin Club at Seringapatam, although one thoughtful review points out that it never named itself thus, and that many subtle complexities were at work.[37] Instead, as French citizens, it was a vehicle to support the French Republican Constitution and to establish a republican military code, including a disciplinary council (admittedly fearsome for its many threats of death, in case of transgressions). Key documents of these proceedings, along with sensitive correspondence in Tipu's library, were retrieved following the Siege of Seringapatam in May, 1799, and quickly published in English translation. These played perfectly into the hands of the Earl of Mornington, Richard Wellesley (brother of Arthur), as propaganda, retrospectively providing suitable evidence that justified the military attack and annihilation of the Tiger of Mysore.

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[33] This Lally was nephew to General Comte de Lally, commander in chief of French forces in India

[34] *Catalogue des manuscrits des anciennes archives de l'Inde française. Tome II, Pondichéry 1789-1815*, publ.1924, op. cit., pp.131-132

[35] Boutier, Jean. Les "lettres de créances" du corsaire Ripaud. Un "club jacobin" à Srirangapatnam (Inde), mai-juin 1797, *Les Indes Savantes*, 2005. <halshs-00007971>

[36] His son, Antoine Henry Vigié was born at Seringapatam in 1791 and became an indigo merchant. He died at Pondicherry 31 July 1848. Vigié (or Veigy) had a younger brother Antoine Balthazard d'Asnières de Veuillet, born at Hauteville sur Rumilly, Savoy, 8 Aug 1748, who was second in command of the 1st Battalion of Sepoys in the service of Tipu Sultan until May 1785. At this time, two Battalions were suppressed following an ordinance on Indian troops by Comte de la Luzerne, dated 17 March 1785. He appears to have returned to France and tried to get a further appointment in Mysore, but this was not forthcoming. http://anom.archivesnationales.culture.gouv.fr/ : Asnière de Veuillet, Antoine Balthazar d', capitaine aux Indes 1748/1785

[37] Boutier, Jean. *Les "lettres de créances" etc*, op. cit. p.19

During May and June 1797, a series of meetings was held in the parish church; for at least Tipu Sultan had been tolerant of these infidels practising their faith, allowing them to attend Mass. The white fleur-de-lys flag was burned on 7th May and, at 6am on Quintidi, the 3rd decade of the month of Floréal, in the 5th year of the French Republic (Sunday, 14th May), a tricolor flag was hoisted, accompanied by the firing of artillery and musketry in the soldiers' camp. It was then paraded through the fort and Tipu gave his approval, ordering a salute of hundreds of cannon. Afterwards, the Tree of Liberty was planted, surmounted by the "Cap of Equality" – or Phrygian bonnet. Then a meeting took place and Citizen François Ripaud gave a long address, building to the crescendo, "Do you swear hatred to all kings except Tipu Sultan the Victorious…War against all tyrants – and Love towards your country, and that of *Citoyen* Tipu?" To which the unanimous cry was: "Yes! We swear to live free or die!" echoing the Jacobin motto. An account of the proceedings was then concluded with 28 signatures, including Ripaud, and the artisans Pombart, Debay and Menaud.[38] At least 130 men, a few of them using *noms de guerre*, such as La République, signed minutes of the various meetings.

But to call Tipu "*citoyen"* or "citizen" showed a presumption of *égalité* that could never exist in the Sultan's fort. And as far as the oath "to live free or die" was concerned, only daring and luck would make freedom possible for these reluctant detainees.

Expedition to Ile de France

While all this had been taking place, Tipu Sultan initiated plans to send two diplomats to Ile de France to meet with Governor Anne Joseph Hippolyte Malartic and another two diplomats, to the *Directoire Exécutif* in Paris, to deliver proposals for an alliance to oust the British. Ripaud acted as scribe to several documents, but Tipu bemoaned that he was no writer and later, the British translator CG Keble, probably referring more to Ripaud than Debay, stated that the French orthography was "extremely incorrect".[39]

In the name of the *Khudadad Sirkar* (God-given state) Tipu had worked out how he would divide the spoils, but for the purpose of war he would require that magic number of 10,000 French troops as well as 30,000 trained Negroes. In order for his ambassadors to fulfil their duties, perhaps remembering the debacle of last time, his admonishments to them were to not covet four things starting with the letter Z: *Zun* (woman), *Zeest* (life), *Zur* (money) and *Zemeen* (land); otherwise they would become reduced to three things starting with K: *Kaufer* (infidels), *Kerauz* (swine) and *Kulb* (dogs). He instructed them to work secretly and

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[38] *Official Documents, Relative to the Negotiations Carried on by Tippoo Sultaun …* , op. cit., pp.186-187, 192

[39] Ibid., pp.77 & 87

to seem ignorant of the French language and he issued them false travel papers to make it appear they were on a trade mission.[40]

Ambassadors Hasan Ali Khan and Mohamed Ibrahim (for Ile de France), and Mir Ghulam Ali Khan and Mirza Bakir (for Paris), who were ultimately recalled prior to departure, proceeded to Mangalore with Ripaud and Debay, who was appointed as interpreter.
It was not until 4 December, 1797, that they embarked for Ile de France. About 15km out to sea, Captain Ripaud and several other men briefly confiscated the two ambassadors' leather satchels, containing silk bags with the official documents and secret instructions. They protested and, with second thoughts, these were returned to them. Their discomfiture increased when they were made to eat and reside with the lascars. During the course of the voyage, Ripaud returned to his piratical ways capturing two ships, unloading their goods and then releasing them.[41] They arrived at Port Nord-Ouest, Ile de France, 19 January 1798, and the captain was met by authorities who recorded:

"30 Nivôse (year 6) 5.30pm. Francois Ripaud Montaudevert, commander of the ship *'Le Petit Volcan'* of about 80 tons burden, under the flag of an English prize; left Mangalore 12 Frimaire last [2 Dec 1797]; cargo some bales and a small amount of gold & money; passengers - 2 ambassadors of Tipou, namely Assin Alikan & Mamad Ibrahim, Citizen Debé, French interpreter to the ambassadors & Diego Talamas, Turk[42]; 5 servants & an Indian female passenger; Crew - 40 men. Finally, he believes that Tipou has declared war on the English; this is all he says he has to declare & he has signed. F Ripaud."[43]

Ripaud immediately went off to General Malartic and, the following day, the ambassadors were introduced. They were encouraged by the reception, but subsequently Malartic told them that Ripaud had made an "erroneous representation" about a French fighting force. Nevertheless, he arranged for several letters to be sent by warship to Paris, requesting the supply of troops. On 30 January 1798, the general also posted a notice, later known as the *Malartic Proclamation,* calling for recruits from among the local populace. Of interest, when we consider the employment conditions in Tipu Sultan's court, the proclamation terminated in the following statement:

> "We can assure all citizens who shall enrol, that Tipoo will allow them an advantageous rate of pay, the terms of which will be fixed with his ambassadors, who will further pledge

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[40] Ibid., p.28

[41] Ibid., p.40

[42] For more about the colossal, thickly bearded Talamas, son of a Constantinople dragoman, see: d'Epinay, Adrien. *Renseignements pour servir à l'histoire de l'Île de France jusqu'à l'année 1810*, publ.1890, pp.411-412

[43] National Archives of Mauritius, Gargantua database: Ref.A-FF4, p.131

> in the name of their Sovereign that all Frenchmen who shall enter into his armies *shall never be detained after they have expressed a wish to return to their own country*."[44]

The final number raised was 99, comprising 11 marines under General Pierre Paul Dubuc, and a motley bunch of foot soldiers commanded by General Chappuis de Saint-Romain. Debay took the total to 100. Ripaud did not figure among them. The ambassadors were informed by M. Descombes, president of the Colonial Assembly at Ile de France, that he was "in the practice of holding very improper and disrespectful discourse, saying that they had kept him in confinement; that having obtained his release by stratagem, he had proceeded hither [to the Ambassadors' residence, Ile de France]; that in consequence of this very improper discourse, they had disgraced turned him out of the city."[45] On their departure, Malartic promised to put him in custody and to send him back to Tipu, but this appears not to have been the outcome.

Meanwhile, Debay was preparing to accomplish his own secret task on behalf of three fellow artisans and himself.

Part Two will provide the answer to what unfolded.

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[44] *Official Documents, Relative to the Negotiations Carried on by Tippoo Sultaun,* op. cit., p. 2 (italics are this author's emphasis)

[45] *Official Documents, Relative to the Negotiations Carried on by Tippoo Sultaun*, op. cit, p. 49

Walter Williams – A Private Soldier in India

1878 – 1888

As told by himself and Sylvia Murphy

PART ONE

Walter John Williams was unmarried when he attested to the 37th Brigade on 7 March 1876,[1] for 12 years' service and he was still single when discharged 12 years later on 2 May 1888. Approximately ten of those years were spent overseas, with most spent in India and Afghanistan. After his return, Walter sent to his sister, Julia Williams, an account which he had written of his time in the Queen's service. This document of 92 handwritten pages and almost 20,000 words, eventually passed to Walter's descendants who live in South Australia.[2]

Although Walter mentions some dates, it is not a diary, but partly a travelogue with descriptions of the towns and cities in which he spent time; it also contains descriptions and commentary on wildlife and cultural practices. He was clearly literate[3], observant and thoughtful, but also opinionated and his commentary is often acerbic and politically incorrect. Of importance to researchers with ancestors in the army's other ranks, Walter's account answers the frequently asked question: "What was it like?"

Walter Williams was born in Hereford in 1856, the third of four children of Walter George Williams and his wife Sarah Croake. When he attested for the Army at Bristol in 1876, he gave his birth place as St Woollos, Newport, Monmouthshire, though he had probably only been living there for a few years.[4] He was aged 19 years 4 months, 5' 5 ¼"tall, with fresh complexion, brown hair and eyes. During his service he grew a further 3 inches in height.

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[1] WO97/4179/99, per www.findmypast.co.uk . The service record does not show when the change from 37th Brigade to 61st Regiment was made, but it was probably part of the HM Army reorganisation of 1881.

[2] The original document is held by Mrs Helen Barclay who is a descendent of Walter Williams. Her husband, Peter, scanned it in its entirety and provided a bound copy to me. Peter and Helen have given me permission to share the contents with FIBIS

[3] Walter's spelling was sometimes curious and his use of punctuation excessive. The original spelling has been retained in the excerpts quoted, but many of the commas have been removed.

[4] WO97/4179/99 op cit and 1871 census RG10/5342, fol.80 p.19 Walter is a 14 year old born in Hereford, working as a nail maker and lodging with Thomas & Mary Taylor who are not known to be related. His father, who had been a grocer and tea dealer, committed suicide in 1866 in London, and the rest of his family have not been identified on the 1861 or 1871 census. His mother is in the workhouse in 1881.

He was a member of the Roman Catholic Church. Apart from one brief period as a Lance Corporal, Walter never rose above the rank of Private. From time to time, he both achieved and lost Good Conduct Pay.

His service record shows the following postings:

Home	6 March 1876	to 8 February 1878
Malta	9 February 1878	to 31 August 1880
East Indies	1 October 1880	to 27 October 1880
Afghanistan	28 October 1880	to 28 February 1883
India	1 March 1883	to 26 April 1888
Home	28 April 1888	to 2 May 1888

Walter's story starts with embarkation at Portsmouth on 8th February 1878, to the ship *Jumna,* bound for Malta. He says very little about this, except for noting that *"as usual, the Ladies from the Soldiers Home came to wish us goodbye and were very kind".*

His description of the journey from Malta is interesting for descriptions of travelling through Suez to Bombay in the hot weather. It took three weeks between the announcement on 10 August, 1880, that troops in Malta were to join the Afghan war effort until Walter's regiment again boarded the *HMS Jumna* on 1 September. The journey to Port Said took five days and there they took on coal for the remainder of the voyage. He notes there were nearly 2000 soldiers and sailors on board this large ship of 6700 tons. Walter didn't seem very impressed by Suez, he says:

> *I cannot say much for the Suez, for it is only a canal or small river, cut through a sandy desert; it is 96 miles long and just wide enough for two ships to pass.*

What really concerned him was the temperature as they moved into the Red Sea:

> *At this time of the year, it is very hot – too hot, I may say for any white man, and after three days sail we found it almost unbearable; the drinking water was about blood heat, and the sea but a few degrees colder, and to get a wash was next to impossible, we were so crowded, and not a breath of wind blowing.*
>
> *In the morning you would see a long string of soldiers, armed with towel and soap; waiting their turn for a dip in a basin of fresh water that had been brought out of some officers cabin. Here they would wash (if you like to call it so); until the water became so thick, that the soap would not sink through it.*

By 10th September, the heat had become intolerable and the ship was moving at half speed, as the stokers weren't able to work. Walter describes the inevitable outcome:

> *Next day was worse; so something had to be done, or how would we get out of that latitude; so some soldiers volunteered to go down in the stokehole, where the heat was then 147F. Three men went down, and in less than an hour they were brought up; two were taken with heat apoplexy, and the other was dead; but before morning, all three were dead.*
>
> *At 12 noon the engines were stopped, and the funeral party were assembled on the main-deck; the burial service was read, a slight splash was heard in the water; the heavy thud of the great engine again commenced and away we went; leaving our comrades to the mercy of the sharks.*

They arrived in Bombay harbour on 19 September; disembarked the following day and marched two miles to Colaba barracks, where they were kitted out in appropriate uniform for the location:

> *…… and next day received part of our Indian clothes, which consists of six suits of fine white duck, for it is too hot to wear the red coat and black trousers; this white clothing all comes out of the soldiers unfortunate 1/- per day, so we had to be content with a couple of shillings pay for the next two months, and since the last Afghan war, they have given us a new pattern uniform: it is of the same material as the white, only the colour is brown, and a great deal more expensive; and now they have altered the pattern again, and the consequence is, I have been forced to buy a lot of clothes which I am not allowed to wear.*

Walter adds criticism of these policy changes and says it is hardly surprising that, despite a twelve pounds' bounty being offered to men to stay in India for a further 4 years, most preferred to go home. If he expressed his opinion, he no doubt did not endear himself to the military authorities! His level of disgust can be imagined when, on 19th October, the Regiment was ordered to Afghanistan and all the white uniforms then needed to be dyed brown.

The ship which took the Regiment to Kurrachee left Bombay on 23rd October and arrived on 1st November, when they stopped for a few days while necessary supplies were acquired – tents, shovels, ammunition etc. The troops were then entrained for the end of the train line at Sibi[5], some 530 miles away, not far from the Bolan Pass; again, here are Walter's words:

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[5] Sibi – Cons 1893 map 24 Bc, British Baluchistan

> *After riding all night 50 crammed in a carriage, we stopped at a place called Laki6 6a.m., for some bread and coffee, and pushed on, arriving at a station about 6 p.m. same day: here we got out for the night and camped under some trees. This place is called Lakhana7. T'was here we met the 66th Regiment returning from the battle of Maiwand8; there were only 180 men, 2 officers and one bandsman, out of 800, they were apparently in good health, but they had not a lag except what they stood in. Next morning, (Sunday) we had Divine Service under the trees; the Colonel officiating as parson, and an Officer "Captain O'Connell" read the morning prayers to the Catholics; this is their duty in the absence of a minister. That evening we took train again, and arrived at Sibi about 12 noon next day.*

On 12 November, they embarked on a march to the Bolan Pass, which was described thus:

> *The Bolan Pass[9] is a track through a range of mountains, through which a narrow path and river run. The river crosses the path about 17 times during the 60 miles, and is a hundred yards wide in many places; through this you have to wade, with the water up to your waist, and the mules would often treat themselves to a roll in the stream, and give us a job to lift them up, besides drenching the bit of dry clothes we thought to put on when we got to the next camp. The road too, is very rough and hard to march on, and I have often felt dead beat after a sixteen mile march, for we have to carry about 30lbs ourselves; rifle, belts, ammunition etc.*

After this, the march continued to Quetta[10]. Despite being only 120 miles apart, the temperature difference between Sibi – one of the hottest places in India, and Quetta, where it freezes, was remarked, as was the elevation, over 7,000 feet difference in height. It is really not surprising that there needed to be several changes of uniform -weight and colour to meet different conditions on the sub-continent. Walter's comments on the first weeks in Quetta:

> *On the 21st we marched into Quetta, and lay in tents untill some mud huts could be built for us, for it was bitter cold, and we felt it worse after coming from a hot station.*

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6 Laki is in Bannu, Punjab, Constable 1893 Map 24 Da, but there is also another place Lakhi, both are in Sind, on map 26 Ab, and Bb

7 Location of Lakhana not identified from map index but en route to Sibi – probably Larkana on Imperial Gazetteer of India map, Const map 26, Bb

8 Principal battle of Afghan War on 27 July 1880. For more info see: http://www.britishbattles.com/second-afghan-war/maiwand.htm

9 Bolan Pass, see Const map 24 Bc in Brit Baluchistan

10 Quetta- Const 1893 map 24 Bb

> *The army was up at Khandahar[11] and all the sick and wounded were sent down to us, and they were dying by sixes and sevens; it was sickening to hear the dead march from morn till night; many of these poor fellows died for want of proper nourishment, for things could not be obtained. There were a few merchants ventured to follow us up and they did not forget to put a price on their goods: 1/3 for half a glass of brandy, about the size of a tailors thimble; 2/9 per pint bottle of ale, cheese and butter 5/- per lb; and a man who smoked could not afford to keep himself in matches.*

In December, Walter was picked to be part of a detachment to go to Kuchali,[12] where some murderous hill tribes had broken out. This detachment comprised 400 infantry, 80 artillery with two guns; 40 cavalry and 19 officers led by General Murray. Walter didn't have a very happy Christmas Day in 1880, on which he eventually reached Abagum:[13]

> *It was a long heavy march that day, and we started at 5 O.C. in the morning, and our Christmas feast was a few hard ships biscuits and something they called tea. It took the column, that is; the whole force, till 5 that evening to reach the camp. I did not get in till 7 O.C., as I was in charge of a bullock cart, and the poor beast were hungry and tired, and their load was a heavy one; so I had to push behind for the greater part of the distance, and carry my own load too. As soon as I got into camp, I saw seven poor wretches tied to the wheels of carts, waiting their turns to receive 24 lashes with the cat-o-ninetails; I thought it was a rather sharp Xmas-box after such a days march. These men were natives who engage to carry the sick, and it happened that we had one man fall sick on the march that day, and instead of bringing him in, they left him on the roadside to die, or else have his throat cut by some of the Afghans; so I think they got their due; though it was a bitter cold evening to be stripped and flogged.*

On New Year's Day 1881, the men were paid the grand sum of one rupee each, which Walter equated to about two shillings; and that despite not having received anything for at least a month. The march continued, and after camping just a few miles from Kuchali and experiencing a night disturbance, the soldiers were faced with the evidence and sad consequences of the enemy behaviour:

> *Next morning we started off, and all the road was strewn with broken boxes, clothes, bodies, bones, and here and there a letter, or gloves, and collars and many things*

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[11] Kandahar see Const 1893 map, 24 Ab, Afghanistan,

[12] Kuchali – location not found in the Constable 1893 map index

[13] Abagum –this is probably Ab-i-gum per Const map index – Brit Baluchistan, 24 Bc - is in the Bolan Pass

> *that were of no value to those who wrought destruction on the people and their property. About two miles from camp, I came across what I took to be a cart with the remains of someone lying under it; and, on close examination, found that it was the remains of a man, woman, and child, who had been tied to the cart, set fire to and left there to perish. On our arrival in camp we found that everything had been destroyed, and the enemy had fled to the mountains. On the site of the post office I picked up a few little packets, and among them some letters which had not been delivered. The postmaster who had his wife and five children with him, had, a day or two before, sent his wife to Sibi, on private affairs: she was about to return when she heard the awful tidings of her husband and family, and she dare not venture to return, at least till it was safe to travel. They were all buried in one grave, the Father and five: the eldest, a girl of 11 years and we placed a board on the grave, with a short inscription on a piece of tin attached to it.*

The description of camp food for these hungry soldiers also needs sharing:

> *When we came to this place, we brought no provisions with us, so we were served out with a pound of black flour each, and cook it how you could; and you should see us hungry soldiers making bread; some rol'd it into little balls, and threw them on a heap of burning rubbish to bake; and others beat it out in cakes and fried in on a shovel, or a piece of an old slate; no odds about it being raw in the center, and more than one did I see, who could not get at the fire; beat his flour up in a pot, or tin can, and eat it with a spoon like porrage. I suppose you'd like to know what I did with mine. Well I had a shovel-cake, and glad to get it. Next day we got a months provisions up, and a good stock of live sheep, so we set to work clearing the camp up.*

Walter was then part of a group of signallers sent 50 miles distant to restore communication, where the telegraph wires had been cut by the enemy. This they did, using a heliograph to send the sun's rays some 80 miles. "Our little army[14]" then proceeded to Hurnai[15], and Walter's observations on disease and death are worthy:

> *We lost several men during the two months we were here, our food was very bad, and that with hard lying, caused much disease, and I regret to say that we did not get our due, and the poor fellows that died were treated with much irreverence; of course we had not the ways or means of giving them a proper funeral, but the full amount of funeral expenses was charged; and every man who died there was buried in his own blanket, no more, and his grave was dug by his comrades, so*

[14] It's not clear to me whether "our little army" is the group of 50 or the detachment of 400 to which the signallers would have first returned.

[15] Hurnai – This is Harnai in the Sibi district of Baluchistan, Const 1893 map 24 Cb

> *there were no expenses whatever, but the money was stopped out of what had to be sent to their relatives.*

Almost the only person mentioned by name in Walter's account is Harry (no surname), who we must assume was a friend and fellow signaller in the ranks. While at Hurnai, the two men had some leisure and took the opportunity to do a bit of fishing in a small but clear river. As they had no hooks, they blocked up little pools, then used forks tied to long sticks and stabbed away at the fish until they got enough for supper.

Eventually, the long march back to Quetta occurs, which they reached on 19 April. Walter remarks on some of the many changes which had taken place during the past four months, including the erection of new buildings, and the arrival of merchants and European families since the evacuation of Kandahar. Lady Sandiman, wife of the Political Agent, Sir Robert Sandiman, then organises a ball, and arranges for a dozen or so ladies to be present, having travelled 200 miles of mountain road to get there. What a success!

From Quetta, instead of fishing, Walter and pals went trekking, after which he compares the fitness levels of British Soldiers and local tribesmen:

> *I recollect three of us going out one day on a sort of Alpine tour. We considered it possible to reach the summit of a certain lofty peak in eight hours, starting from camp which was only one mile from the foot of the mountain, accordingly we started at four a.m. taking nothing but our guns, a snack in our pockets and a pint of water each in a sling bottle. So we toiled and scrambled till 12 noon….*

At which time they gave up, realising that they may not reach their objective before dark. However, Walter then shares his amazement and admiration:

> *Now what surprised me most was to see those Afghan Mountaineers coming over this same hill each carrying a load of wood on his back in a sort of sling, I am sure neither of them had less than 120lbs weight, and they would take that down to camp, sell it for the value of 4d, and return that night, bare footed too.*

Ministers of religion were also in evidence, and Walter has contrasting opinions on two of them, around about this time. In particular, he was not impressed by *a certain missionary who came up here with a cargo of books and tracts and was to be seen on all occasions dashing at the head of a Polo match.* Apparently, he became known as 'The Flying Parson.' However, *he always visited our hospital and was kind to others.*

On the other hand, there was Father Jackson, a Priest (presumably RC like Walter Williams) who had been with the army in Afghanistan, and it is good to know that:

> *He did great work in the field, not exactly with his bell and book, but by keeping up to the fighting line with a skin bag of water slung on his back; he lay in the trenches*

> *with the men, and was ever ready to offer a drink to the wounded or words of comfort to those in need.*

For those men with a religious conviction, the needs of their souls were not neglected:

> *He used to visit our hospital and on Sunday would say mass in the open. His mule carried all the necessaries for office, and his altar was generally a large stone or the corner of an old mud wall, we would all stand around to hear mass.*16

The 61st Regiment seems to have been forgotten about for a time, as there were no Gazette mentions until the start of 1883, when part of the regiment was sent down to India, together with another 200 men, including Harry, who had long completed their service.

For the rest, the move came on 17 March (St Patrick's Day) – normally a morning of diversion rather than devotion for the men and, on this occasion, made more difficult for the officers by *torrents of rain and a foot of mud*. The Regiment set off mid-afternoon, but the going was difficult in the wet conditions:

> *The mud became so deep that we found great difficulty in getting along at all, indeed there were boggy places where one would sink to the waist, and it was laughable to see two go to rescue one, and then all three stuck fast. We were 6 ½ hours going 6 miles, so that will give you some idea of the march. About 10 that night we found ourselves in a place called Siriab*[17]*, and not a tent or baggage wagon had arrived, they were all stuck fast in the mud miles back on the road, and the night as black as coals. It now began to look rather serious, for once we were halted and allowed to fall out of the ranks, there was no getting together again.*

Walter and some of his mates made use of a small mud hut, where they made a fire and prepared a makeshift meal.[18]

Fortunately, the following day was sunny and they were able to make it to Rindly[19] from where they took train to Karachi.

Read more of Walter's adventures in the next journal…

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16 There is more about Father Jackson to be found on page 8 of the full transcript.

[17] See Sir-i-ab, in Const 1893 map index 24 Bb, Baluchistan

[18] The food and consequences are on p.9 of the transcript.

[19] Rindly - Rindli in Const 1893 mapindex. Baluchistan 24 B c

Maintaining British Links with the Past in South Asia: The Work of BACSA

Clive Williams, OBE

The East has always held a fascination for the West. The Roman Empire traded extensively with India and India's spices, precious stones, silks and costly fabrics were highly prized and sought after in the West.

The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles record that King Alfred the Great of Wessex (871-899AD) sent ambassadors to India, who returned three years later with spices and costly pearls. Several hoards of buried Saxon treasures have been discovered by metal detectorists in recent years and some have contained sapphires which originated in Sri Lanka.

The Arabs were the first to begin trading in the East, followed by the Portuguese in the C16th, whose better-built and armed ships were far superior to the Arab dhows. The English and Dutch followed a hundred years later. The East India Company was given its charter in 1600 by Queen Elizabeth I. The Dutch East India Company (Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie) or VOC, was formed two years later, in 1602.

As their names suggest, their interest was in the East Indies rather than India but it was the better-organized and financed Dutch who won the struggle and became the paramount European power in the East Indies. Thwarted by the Dutch in the East Indies, the English East India Company, known popularly as 'John Company', turned its attentions towards India, though it never changed its name. Its first trading post, known as a factory, was established in Surat, Gujerat, in 1614. In 1640, it was given permission to open a factory at a small settlement called Madraspulitam, which grew into Madras. In 1660, King Charles II married the Portuguese Princess, Catherine of Braganza, and as part of her dowry, the King of Portugal threw in the small island of Bombay (Bom Bahia or Beautiful Bay in Portuguese), now Mumbai. As there were several islands and only the end island was being transferred, and as no-one had told the Portuguese Governor of Bombay what was happening, it took years to sort out the confusion. But eventually John Company took a lease of Bombay Island from the Crown (rent of £10 a year!) and gained a toehold on the western Malabar Coast. Finally, in 1690 a Company trader called Job Charnock obtained permission to open a trading post in Bengal on the Hugli River, which grew into Calcutta.

Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, which absorbed Surat, were each run by an elected President and Council of 12, reporting back to Company HQ in London. But as the only means of communication was through letters carried on ships, which could take between 6 months and a year to travel from London to India, they were forced to act as independent bodies. They were also forced to provide for their own security and protection, eventually, by 1800, ending up with sizeable forces of around 50,000 for each Presidency. Interestingly, these were mainly Indian soldiers with European officers.

The Company's trading employees were known as writers, from the Dutch word for clerk. They were not well paid – only £5 a year initially, but the positions were eagerly sought-after, as the company allowed its writers to trade on their own account. The writer would therefore find an Indian trading partner or *banian* and generally, both would prosper. The origins of the industrial giant Tata can be traced back to such links.

A few merchants or soldiers of John Company made fortunes and returned to England, where they were nicknamed *nabobs*, an anglicization of the Urdu word '*nawab'* – nob and snob are the diminutives. They were the '*nouveau riche'* of the day, not much liked, but attracting a great deal of attention. However, for every successful *nabob,* there were a thousand or so British who went to an early grave in the East. The death toll was truly horrifying. In Bombay, the length of life in the C17th and C18th was measured as two monsoons. Moreover, death could come with terrifying swiftness. William Hickey, the lawyer turned writer, recounts breakfasting with a friend who was perfectly healthy in the morning and attending his funeral in the evening.

After the eruption of 1857, John Company was shown to be no longer fit for purpose. It was wound up and India became subject to direct rule from London. The age of the Raj had started, although British fascination with the country remained, and India became regarded as 'the jewel in the crown'. The John Company merchants metamorphosed into trading houses and were joined by colonial administrators and often their wives. Sanitation gradually improved and with it longevity of life, but even so, many British continued to die in India, and in accordance with the prevailing custom of the time, were buried in cemeteries rather than cremated. These cemeteries are to be found all around India and also the rest of South Asia. BACSA (the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia) was formed in 1957 to aid their retention and also to educate the population at large on their existence and the story of British involvement in the sub-continent.

In the past 20 years there has been a surge of interest in Britain in our genealogical roots, made possible by the internet, genealogical magazines, TV programmes and exhibitions.

The BBC programme 'Who do you think you are?' is very popular. Each programme focuses on a celebrity and traces his or her ancestral roots. Often, the celebrity finds it hard to cope with what the researchers discover. Jeremy Paxman, the well -known BBC presenter and compere of 'University Challenge', was reduced to tears on being told that his great-grandmother had died in a work-house. Sir Lenny Henry, the popular black comedian and actor was shocked to learn that his great, great-great grandfather was a white slave owner in the West Indies. Alastair MacGowan, another comedian and impersonator, was dimly aware that his family had some connections with India and was then taken there to be re-united with a whole clan of Anglo-Indian MacGowans living north of Delhi. This new-found interest has resulted in some Britons wanting to visit India, to trace their family roots. Tour companies are developing this market and BACSA is seeking to develop links also.

The most famous British cemetery in India is the one in South Park Street, Kolkata. This was opened in 1770, when the area was jungle and tigers roamed around. The British great and good of Calcutta were buried there and the cemetery was closed in 1830. Well maintained and with an informative guide, it is a fascinating place to visit. Apart from its historical interest, it also provides a cool and tranquil space in the heart of one of the most bustling cities in the world. If cemeteries were to receive world ratings, it must find a place in the top dozen, along with Pere Lachaise cemetery in Paris, where all France's literary and musical greats are buried (as well as Oscar Wilde), and Kensal Green cemetery in London, where William Makepeace Thackeray, who was born in Calcutta and wrote about *nabobs* in some of his novels, is buried.

Other highly rated and recommended cemeteries are the Nicholson or Kashmere Gate cemetery in Delhi; the Cantonment Cemetery in Meerut; Jhansi Cantonment cemetery; Salem Old cemetery in Tamil Nadu; St Matthias Cemetery Chennai, Tamil Nadu; Kacheri Cemetery, Kanpur; Garrison Cemetery, Seringapatam; the cemetery below the fort at Chunar. All these are of historical interest and are easily accessible.

BACSA now has 1400 members and always welcomes new members. It has a web-site: www.bacsa.org.uk, holds records on about 1000 cemeteries in South Asia and publishes a comprehensive list of cemeteries. BACSA can provide maps on how to find a cemetery and give advice on what to wear – some cemeteries are very overgrown and can harbour poisonous insects and snakes. Visitors are asked to record what they see and to send a report to BACSA. The Association is not flush with money, but it does make grants in deserving cases.

A Visit to India in the Autumn of 2015

Names, Graves and Letters of Introduction from the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and the British High Commission in Delhi

Elaine MacGregor

Why go as a group to India?

In February 2007, 31 FIBIS members and friends visited India to follow the route of the Indian Mutiny (First War of Independence) and subsequently the FIBIS Committee was regularly asked by its members to organise another trip to India. At the FIBIS Conference in May 2014, I instigated a questionnaire asking if members did wish to go on another trip, and if so to where, and what did they wish to see. This resulted in over 50 completed forms handed in by the end of that weekend.

How to get there as a group

The positive response then led to a challenge to work out how to arrange these proposed trips.

India is an immense country and with members wishing to visit areas in the North, South and East, so I had to find a tour company that could deal with the logistics. I approached 6 travel companies including Thomas Cook and Saga - only one (Indus Experiences) actually listened to what we wanted, and responded with realistic prices. Indus Experiences is a British-based company based in London; is a fully bonded and insured company with ATOL protection and is a member of ABTA. They have also won awards for the Best Specialist Operator and the Best Small Holiday Company to Southern Asia.

It became evident when working out times, dates, costs, that we needed more than one trip to cover all the requests and so the concept of three ‘back to back’ tours to India in 2015 was conceived and in due course I led three consecutive tours over a period of almost two months – many were worried that I would not be able to cope with the heat, the food, and having to deal with over 50 tour members (split into groups of 16, 22 and 15) – but I did!

When to go

As by now it was mid 2014, it was not feasible to organise the tours for the following February which, in hindsight, is one of the best months to visit India if one wants to visit cemeteries, for by then the monsoon undergrowth has died back. So we organised the tours to start at the end of September when the autumn months are relatively cool, but paid the price of finding parts of the graveyards covered with verdant, almost impenetrable undergrowth! Although in most cases, we were advised that this was just that season's growth, it was quite clear that some of the plants in question had been there a lot longer than 3 months!

Where to go

The tours were divided into three areas:

1. " *An Odyssey of North India*" - 26th September to 18th October – visiting Delhi, Meerut, Amritsar, Dharamshala, Shimla, Lucknow, Kanpur (Cawnpore), Agra and Jaipur
2. "*Splendours of South India*" – 17th October to 5th November – visiting Bangalore, Mysore, Ooty, Coimbatore, Trichinopoly, Pondicherry, Vellore and Chennai (Madras)
3. "*East India Heritage*" – 4th-17th November – visiting Kolkata (Calcutta), Chandernagore, Serampore, Barrackpore, and the foothills of the Himalayas, to spend time at the Sourenee Tea Estate, as well as Darjeeling.

What to see whilst there

It was clear that most members of the tour were going to India to find more information about their ancestors – they wished to visit the churches in which their g-g-grandparents had been baptised or married; they wanted to find the cemeteries and memorials to their long dead family members; schools they may have attended; railways they worked on; cantonments they may have been stationed at; tea plantations, jute mills, anywhere where they may have worked and, most of all, to sample, if possible, the type of life their ancestors had lived in British India in the 19th and 20th Centuries. They had seen the photographs, read the diaries and letters, and now wanted to experience it themselves. Added to which, they wanted to visit the normal tourist attractions that India has to offer, experience the noise, the smells, the food, the colour – that make up that incredible country familiar to our ancestors.

Getting access to the archives

We had been advised that in order to access the parish registers, especially those of the Roman Catholic Church, we would need to get permission from the Bishops of the Diocese we intended the visit. Many will know that it is an almost impossible task. For months we tried, only to be advised that we needed some 'official' letters. All I got from the various departments I phoned, wrote to, emailed and texted, was complete silence! However, by coincidence, I know the wife of the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex, and at one of the Sussex Records Office functions I explained to her husband the problems I was having. Peter Fields, the Lord Lieutenant commented that if I could show that ancestors from Sussex had been in India, he would write me a letter of introduction. From the files at The Keep (Sussex Records Office), the FIBIS database and anywhere else I could think of, I produced a spreadsheet of over 5000 Sussex people who had been in India – so I got my first Letter of Introduction.

That was sent to numerous institutions in India. I was then informed that I would need a letter from the British High Commission in Delhi. Silence from that front as well, although I was later told by a member of their staff that one of the problems of dealing with the Indian hierarchy was if they were not sure of how to answer, they just ignored the question, rather than give the wrong answer!

From Lieutenant Colonel Simon de Labilière RAC

Military Adviser
British High Commission
Shantipath
Chanakyapuri
NEW DELHI - 110 021

British
High Commission
New Delhi

15 September 2015

To Whom It May Concern

This is a letter of introduction certifying that Mrs Elaine MacGregor will be travelling to India from 28 September 2015 to the end of November to lead a research team on behalf of Families in British India Society (FIBIS) and The Society of Genealogists and British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia (BACSA).

We request that they are afforded access to State National Archives and records, ecclesiastical records and, where possible, cemeteries in support of their work. Your support in granting them access to records and sites is greatly appreciated.

With the help of my son, who is a British Army Officer, I obtained a further contact in Delhi and eventually I was put in touch with the Military Attaché at the British High Commission there - as the old adage says – it's not what you know, but whom you know!

Relevant letters were sent to the Bishop of Bangalore, followed up with more emails, phone calls, texts - and it was only the week before we got to Bangalore, that we got permission to see the records held there. A huge sigh of relief was breathed by both me and Peter Bailey, our Chairman – for that was the main reason he was booked on the South India trip – to photograph the Catholic BMD's.

This second Letter of Introduction, with all its headings, logos, stamps, etc. opened up many doors whilst we were in India.

As it happens, these two letters were our passport into many churches, and military establishments that we would not have had access to, so perseverance paid off in the end.

In India – In Print

Whilst in India, we were interviewed by several newspaper journalists (*Times of India*, *the Hindu* and various local papers), some written in English, and some in Tamil or Hindi.

British Nationals Visiting Country Stop Over in City

In Lucknow to trace roots, love for India

Noel represents a group of some 1.2 million non-Indians in love with India brought together by London-based

Churches, Cemeteries and Guides

Although Indus Experience had sent our requests to their local offices in India regarding the churches and cemeteries that we wished to visit, most of the Tour Guides had never met a group quite like ours before – they thought "*why would they want to spend an hour or so in the cemetery photographing gravestones, when they could be visiting the famous local Hindu temple??!* Some of the guides responded extremely well and would do their homework and find out where these establishments we wanted to visit actually were – others didn't bother and relied on us to tell them. One lesson I learnt from these tours, is to get all the information before setting out and to make sure that any member who wishes to visit a particular church or graveyard, provides all the details of how to find it, Google maps etc. rather than depending on the knowledge of a local guide – whose religion might be Hindi, Sikhism or Buddhism and so have no idea where Christian churches are located. Cemeteries are usually easier to find, as they are bigger, but on more than one occasion the sought-after cemetery was behind a high fence and down a little lane that the coach could not approach. Some churches and garrisons seemed to have vanished off the face of the map!

One of the members on the Eastern Tour had procured a copy of an old map of central Calcutta in the late 19th early 20th Century and this was invaluable when it came to planning a route to visit all the sites they wanted to see, for it could be co-ordinated with a current tourist map. Although street names might have changed, in most cases the roads, churches and cemeteries have not disappeared.

Although Christianity is increasing as a religion in India, this has had its repercussions, for many of the older, bigger churches that the British used to frequent, now do not have a viable congregation (some as low as 12 parishioners) and so cannot afford the upkeep of a large monolith. Many have been replaced by smaller, newer buildings. Parish Registers have been mislaid or lost, as it appears that most of the Church of India vicars are only in a posting for about five years, and the records disappear with each change of incumbent. In many such churches we were shown 20th century registers, but those for the 1700 and 1800's were not available, with no knowledge of where the older registers could be found.

Photo shows me and Vernon Wright photographing the St John's Register in Trichinopoly, with Margaret Murray (Journal Editor) in the foreground desperately looking for her ancestor's marriage!

Whenever and where-ever we could find an old register, the team would go into action and spend hours photographing – I had access to an early 1800's Register in St. John's Church in Trichinopoly that was in a very fragile and poor condition being eaten by silverfish and other insects, so with the help of another member of the tour, I photographed the whole register – going back to the church in the evening to continue for another couple of hours, in order to ensure that the data in this valuable document is saved for posterity.

So far, I have found no evidence of the information being available anywhere else – not on FamilySearch, Findmypast or Ancestry. It was disappointing that in some cases we were refused access to the records or charged inordinate amounts (or bribes) to see them.

I volunteered to collect all the photographs (and there will be thousands of them) that members of the tours had taken of the various churches, memorials, gravestones, sort them into date and place order, select the best photo of any particular tombstone etc. and put a file together ready for transcription by the FIBIS volunteers. These will eventually be published on the FIBIS database, but it will take some months before you see the results.

In addition, Peter Bailey is transcribing the registers that he photographed and, whilst waiting for all photographs to arrive on my desk, I have been working on the St. John's Baptismal Register that I photographed; about 800 photos with 3 records on each page, so will take time to transcribe it all – but the first tranche of spreadsheets and photographs should have appeared on the website by the time you read this article.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Starting in reverse order – T**he Ugly** – the amount of rubbish still being left in the streets, despite the many signs 'To clean up India"; graffiti on historical monuments; the stench and filth around some of the drains and lavatories; the amount of electrical 'spaghetti' that festoons the buildings; lack of maintenance to all styles of buildings, from the very poor to some of the grand old structures

The Bad –beggars - although there seems to be less than in 2007; the lack of help that seems to be apparent for those with loss of limbs; the traffic and constant noise of horns, not pressed in anger but to advise the other motorists of their whereabouts; the persistence of hawkers trying to sell a set of postcards, jewellery, souvenirs who will not take "No" for an answer; not being able to find sites that we wanted to visit due to the lack of local knowledge, therefore some of the places on the itinerary were not visited; Indian time-keeping – half an hour of Indian time translated into an hour British time! Similarly with distances – 100 yards was more likely to be half a mile! the need for more free time in order to do personal research, sight-seeing or shopping. Most frustrating was the lack of care for historical documents and monuments that not only reflect the British in India, but the history of the country itself.

The Good - one of the main things about the trip was that everyone seems to have enjoyed themselves and made new friends, met relatives that they hadn't seen for years and, in some cases, fulfilled a life-long dream to visit India.

Beautiful countryside; interesting and impressive views from the river plains to the majesty of the Himalayas; fantastic monuments to visit - to name just a few - the Red Fort, the Taj Mahal, the Golden Temple, the Residency in Lucknow, Tipu Sultan's Palace, the Rock Fort Temple in Trichinopoly with its fantastic view after climbing its 437 steps. The beautiful French city of Pondicherry; the lovely old railway buildings; to glimpse living history in the beautifully-proportioned buildings left by the British; the fun times we had with train rides on the historic narrow-gauge railways in Shimla, Ooty and Darjeeling.

Other plus points were the range of local people we met; the tour guides and coach drivers; those who gave us talks and insights into the Indian culture; bishops, priests, ministers and vicars of the churches we visited who went out of their way to accommodate our wishes to see and photograph the Registers. To be able to wander around the cemeteries, photographing all and sundry, necessitated a degree of support; the 'Chowkidars' and helpers who would seize a brush and a bucket of water to help clean a grave; the hotel staff who would assist in whatever way they could to make us comfortable; the chefs who gave us a taste of wonderful Indian food and, most of all, to the Lord Lieutenant of Sussex and the Military Attaché at the British High Commission in Delhi who gave us Letters of Introduction which enabled us to gain access to many a place we could not have entered otherwise.

So, in conclusion, I think that the good far outweighs the bad and the ugly!

Review

Beatson's Mutiny – The Turbulent Career of a Victorian Soldier **by Richard Stevenson.**
Published by I.B. Tauris, London & New York, 2015, ISBN 978 1 78453 110 2

This book describes the career of one of the most resilient officers of the Army of the Honourable East India Company. Resilient, because his service is active and successful against any enemy he fights, but sometimes less than successful when it comes to his several disputes with his own military authorities with which he comes into contact during the passage of his career. He opportunistically guides his unusual fighting career, in which he achieves a glowing reputation, and yet he fights equally hard against the "pipe-clay" soldiers of the British and British Indian Military authorities, often by a less than fully respectful attitude when making suggestions or demands, which they deemed inappropriate.

Although William Beatson leads an extended career (1820-1872) rising from Cadet to Major-General, this senior rank is eventually, but somehow reluctantly, conceded by his superiors. The details of his career included in this book are particularly impressive. It is bordering on the phenomenal and an example to all biographers aspiring to write a first class account of the career of any ancestor who served as an officer in the Company's army. Sources include the routine, for which details are readily available in FIBIS publications, but so very many more. To assemble them must have taken a very considerable amount of time to compile. Fortunately, these sources are quoted in detail and the book may therefore be considered a template and list of available sources for all those who wish to emulate the style and detail of the author. For those who wish to do so, I thoroughly recommend this book.

Beatson had spent the early part of his career following a more conventional path of a young officer, firstly as a Cadet, Ensign and then as a Lieutenant in the 54th Native Infantry. By chance, he fell sick in Rajputana in 1824 and was cheated out of the opportunity of going to Burma to fight in the First Burmese War.

He applied for and was granted furlough in 1834 to return 'home'. There, in response to his strong sense of justice and a desire for action, which he was missing in India at this relatively quiet time, he was granted an extension of leave to volunteer to fight for the British Auxiliary Legion against the Carlists in Spain. He saw his first action in Bilbao, after not having been involved in any action to date during his first fifteen years in the Bengal

Army! He was decorated in Spain for his service at Pasajes, but subsequently wounded, causing him to be invalided and returned to England.

In March 1837, he was classed fit enough again to return to India to rejoin his 54th N.I. regiment, which was under orders to transit to Afghanistan. However, these orders were countermanded and he was then charged with the formation of the "Bundlecund Legion", specifically to help bring law and order to this lawless region of central India. He achieved particular success there in the capture of a group of rebels in Jigni and Chirgong. Again seeking further action, Beatson, taking advantage of his fortunate and productive relationship with the new Governor General, Lord Ellenborough, persuaded the latter, before his departure from office, that he, with his Legion, should be allowed to support Sir Charles Napier's adventure in Sind. Having then successfully acquitted themselves in Sind, they were ordered back to Central India, to new cantonments in Nowgong.

Sadly then, in 1847, the Commander-in-Chief determined to disband the Legion and Beatson was ordered back to his former regiment. Happily, however, the Governor General, Lord Ellenborough, intervened and appointed Beatson to the position of Brigadier of the Irregular forces of the Nizam of Hyderabad. These were comprised significantly of Cavalry and so, Beatson, an Infantry officer by training, effectively transferred to become a Cavalry officer, a role in which he was to become famous. His great successes, particularly at Dharur, exhibited the weaknesses of the Hyderabad Contingent and so it was decided to integrate the various units into the Indian Army properly. This meant the change of title from Irregular to Regular, causing Beatson, by now quite used to the freedom associated with an Irregular unit, to resign and become determined to return to England on furlough.

Despite his considerable experience as a Brigade Commander, at this stage Beatson had only achieved the substantive rank of Major. Whilst on furlough in England, he found the country on the verge of the Crimean War. With some reluctance, the Authorities in England approved his application to offer his services to the Turkish Government in the organisation of irregular bands of "ruffians and desperadoes" for the Turkish Army. These were known as the Bashi- Bazouks, and Beatson spent the next few months training and disciplining them in eastern Bulgaria, preparatory for going to Sevastopol. In a glorious interval between a muddled story of political and military control of the Bashi-Bazouks at Balaklava, Beatson took part in the relatively unheard of "Charge of the Heavy Brigade", as part of Scarlett's Brigade, and coincidentally, the same day as the better-known "Charge of the Light Brigade".

The politicians once more agreed to Beatson's taking continuing control of the Bashi-Bazooks and he organized a number of British officers to recruit and train this band of unruly men, now referred to as "*Beatson's Horse"*. Yet, the political squabbles did not disappear and when the authorities finally decided to place Beatson under the control of Robert Vivian, whom he considered inexperienced, Beatson finally resigned. The squabbles led to recriminations on both sides, leading to a series of seemingly personally-motivated actions against Beatson involving a threatened Court Martial, an investigation by the House of Commons, and a "Court of Enquiry". Eventually, a judgement was reserved on grounds based on the nineteenth century equivalent of the Official Secrets Act.

William Beatson is best known today as Commandant of the famous Bengal Irregular Cavalry unit known as *Beatson's Horse*. This was formed in 1858, as the Mutiny was at its peak, and Beatson was recalled to India to command it. He was again asked to serve in the state of Hyderabad, in Central India, where his experience from 1839-1846 with the Bundlecund Legion had proved so useful and where the Nizam had offered his help in supporting the Company against the mutineers. Upon the successful conclusion of the mutiny, *Beatson's Horse* was subsumed into the newly-formed *Central India Horse* and Beatson retired to a staff position in the new Bengal Army, where he saw out the rest of his days.

Peter Bailey

St. Mary's Church, Fort St. George, Chennai

Andrew Cumine

Reverend J. Krubha Lily Elizabeth, Presbyter-in-Charge at St. Mary's, Fort St. George in Chennai, has issued an urgent, personal appeal to FIBIS Members for any anecdotes, pictures or references to this church, which rightfully claims to be the oldest Anglican Church "East of Suez". Rev. Krubha has commissioned a documentary on the church and is appealing for memorabilia which could feature in such a film. These may include pictures or paintings, more recent photographs, newspaper announcements of baptisms, marriages or burials at the church, or any other material that would illustrate the part this church has played in the history of so many families in India. Perhaps you have an ancestor who worshipped or is buried there, is honoured on a wall-plaque, or played a part in the way the church served its community or supported its work with other churches (people such as medical, military or admin staff)? She is particularly keen to hear from anyone whose family may have had an ongoing connection to the church and about those people who are remembered especially for their service to St. Mary's and its wider work within India.

First consecrated in 1680, the Church was established by the Hon. East India Company for the succour of its employees based in or near to Fort St. George and its spire appears in virtually all pictures of the Fort from that time, even to the present day. The Foundation Stone was laid under the Presidency of Streynsham Master in 1678, but the first wedding registered in the Church is thought to have been that of the future President, one Elihu Yale, no less, in 1680.

If anyone has material which may be of use, please communicate directly with Rev. Krubha **as soon as possible, please** (before the end of March), at: revkrubha@gmail.com