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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the latest edition of the Journal!

During this period of self-isolation, I am sure a welcome distraction can be found in the following pages.

In this edition we will celebrate the life of a treasured volunteer. In addition to this we will explore how British India shaped the lives of individuals and the generations after them. Since previous edition I have explored part of my own family's journey through British India, in memory of my Great Grandmother, who passed away in 2018. We celebrated what would have been her 94th birthday with my Mother and Cousin at the Marble Rocks near Jabalpur, as this was a place that she visited and picnicked at when she was a child. Joined by my cousin Pat and his wife Penny we explored Jhansi visiting St Martin's Church in which my Great Grandmother married my Great Grandfather on the 17th June 1943. It was the same church that my Grandmother was later baptised. Our journey concluded in Calcutta, where Noel Gunther a good friend and a member of the FIBIS Research Team showed us the sights, smells and tastes of Calcutta, from his first-hand experience of growing up there.

While Coronavirus may have us all distancing from others, in some ways it is bringing us closer together. At FIBIS we will be utilising technology to have a virtual AGM this year. This, we hope, will allow our members across the world to attend, from the comfort and safety of their own home. Details will be posted on the website shortly. Further to this, the past 20 years' Journals can now be found online, in the Members' Area.

I look forward to seeing many of you, virtually, on the 20th June.

MARK A YOUNG

WHY VOLUNTEER? WHO VOLUNTEERS?

A BREIF RESUMÉ OF THE LIFE OF BILL HALL, A FIBIS VOLUNTEER, AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO FIBIS

Penny Tipper and Carrie Watson

When I became transcriptions coordinator for FIBIS in 2007 I had some family background in India and some knowledge, but both very limited. I “inherited” a group of volunteers who all outranked me in terms of experience in India and transcription. I learned facts from the material we were transcribing but also a great deal from the volunteers about aspects of life and work in India and in using and developing with modern technology.

Among these volunteers was Bill Hall. The account that follows outlines a life, a social commitment and a level of energy, enthusiasm, and sheer resourcefulness, that are typical of many of our members and their willingness to contribute their knowledge and time to help others. The “spirit that built the empire” kept building. Bill, like other volunteers, also supplied journal articles, sharing personal and family experiences or using information gleaned from transcription texts and investigated further. All approached the task with a sense of humour and proportion that were essential when breaking in the new coordinator.

Bill’s daughter Carrie relates something of his connections with India and his later activities:

The family trees show that two of his great grandfathers went out to India in the mid-1880s and married ladies who had been born in India. Children of the marriages survived and the family lines were continued.

Bill was born in 1923 in Camberley where his father was stationed at the Staff College, Sandhurst. As soon as his father had qualified in 1924 the family went back to India for two years. After that, they went to Ireland to stay with his Irish grandmother and his brother was born. The family returned to India.

In 1929 Bill was taken back to Kinsale, Ireland where he lived with his Grandmother and attended the local school. In 1931 he was sent to preparatory boarding school and then Senior school in Devon. He talked more about the journeys on the trains and boats than he did about school and we know where his interests lay as he achieved the highest mark in England for his Geography exam when he matriculated at 18.

By now his parents had retired from India but his father worked for the RAF during WW2, stationed at Leuchars in Scotland. Bill attended St. Andrews University. He passed his Certificate in the Officer Training Corps, was called up at the age of 19 and sent straight to Sandhurst (following family footsteps). He had no particular preference of what area he would like to serve so he ticked all the boxes!

In 1943 he was sent out to India and saw active service in India, Persia and Iraq. He admits to everyone that he “had a kind war” which involved being stationed at Deolali (It ain't Half Hot Mum) as the mosquito warden. He was involved with Paiforce at one time and had the unenviable task of having to travel several hundred miles to Calcutta and back as his Colonel had learned of an arrival of kippers and sent Bill off to fetch some for the officers' mess. When on leave he trekked up in the Himalayas just as his parents had on their leaves, complete with Sherpas and staying in ‘bungalows’ here and there.

On the ship going to India Bill had met Monica. After the war and Independence, he came back from India but did not like working 9-5 in an office in London and at the first opportunity persuaded P&O to send him to Aden on a three-year tour. When that ended, he took up a job in East Africa for the British Steamline Navigation Co. Ltd and after an eight-year courtship of writing letters he and Monica married in Mombasa Cathedral.

Bill loved his life in East Africa as a shipping agent as the work was varied, involved lots of problem solving and caused him to make many friends. He was able to indulge his childhood hobby of ‘messing around in boats’ and he was able to buy a sailing boat and participate in many races, often winning. He has the cups to prove it! He left Zanzibar after the Revolution in 1964 and worked in Mombasa for nine years, discovering the addictive hobby of bird watching. This hobby involved the whole family in many trips to the game park, mangrove swamps, foothills of Mt. Kenya and the local beaches searching for a new bird we had not noted before. But everything comes to an end and so did Dad's life in East Africa when the Kenya Government revoked his permit to work. Naturally he took part in the UK RSPB Bird Count every year.

When the family returned to the UK, Bill worked for another shipping company in Southampton, this time in the Invoice department where he was put to good use finding discrepancies in invoices from foreign shipping agents. He devised dictionaries for invoice terms in Italian, Dutch and French which continued to be used by colleagues when he retired some years later. He saved the company well over £100,000 in the mid 1970s until the foreign agents realised, they could not pull the wool over Bill's eyes.

In retirement, Bill and Monica continued the work his mother had begun to trace family ancestors and he wrote a book about our family called *‘Gentlemen Unafraid’*. This interest encouraged him to work for a Genealogy Society visiting churches, recording their documents, typing them up and sending them to London.

He was a volunteer driver in Leominster until he had to retire. Then he started work at the Citizens Advice Bureau in the admin section but was involved in a Government project investigating why Farmers commit suicide and setting up a helpline for them. That was the 1990s. For relaxation he built go-carts, puppet theatres and dens for his grandchildren.

Monica's death left a big gap and no one to do things with. That did not deter him. He joined the WEA, attending courses on clouds and stars. He cared for

the cemetery garden for five years in his mid-eighties. He was a member of the local church and would take newspaper articles to the Men Only Club as discussion topics. None of that compared, though, to when he found FIBIS, involving the whole family with proof reading and stories. His technology knowledge grew and he could teach his grandchildren, who adored the fact that their grandfather was so knowledgeable and had an unquenchable desire to learn even in his 90s.

While I was coordinator, Bill contributed to several projects, always questioning, investigating backgrounds, googling to fill gaps, suggesting improvements and always aiming for the best possible result. I visited his house and admired his large collection of books on East African history, flora and fauna, with background tales from a varied life delivered with gentle good humour over a glass of sherry! I feel very privileged to have worked with him.

We heard with sadness the news that Bill had died on 23 November last year.

Carrie tells us, "He has given us all so much and is sorely missed."

At FIBIS we can echo that sincerely.



Bill Hall 1923 - 2019

SINCLAIR FAMILY: FROM PAISLEY WEAVER TO DARJEELING TEA PLANTER

Vivien Brown

Paisley, Scotland in 1820 was experiencing a lot of upheaval. Not many years before, the weaving cottage industry had seen a drastic cut in earnings. Now the Jacquard Loom was being introduced and the Radical War.¹ was in full swing. This unrest, coupled with the difficult financial circumstances, may have been what prompted 17-year-old John Sinclair, a weaver, to leave his home there and enlist in the East India Company Army. John embarked on the ship *George IV* on 6th June 1820, and after a six-month journey, reached India on 4th December 1820.

Coyle

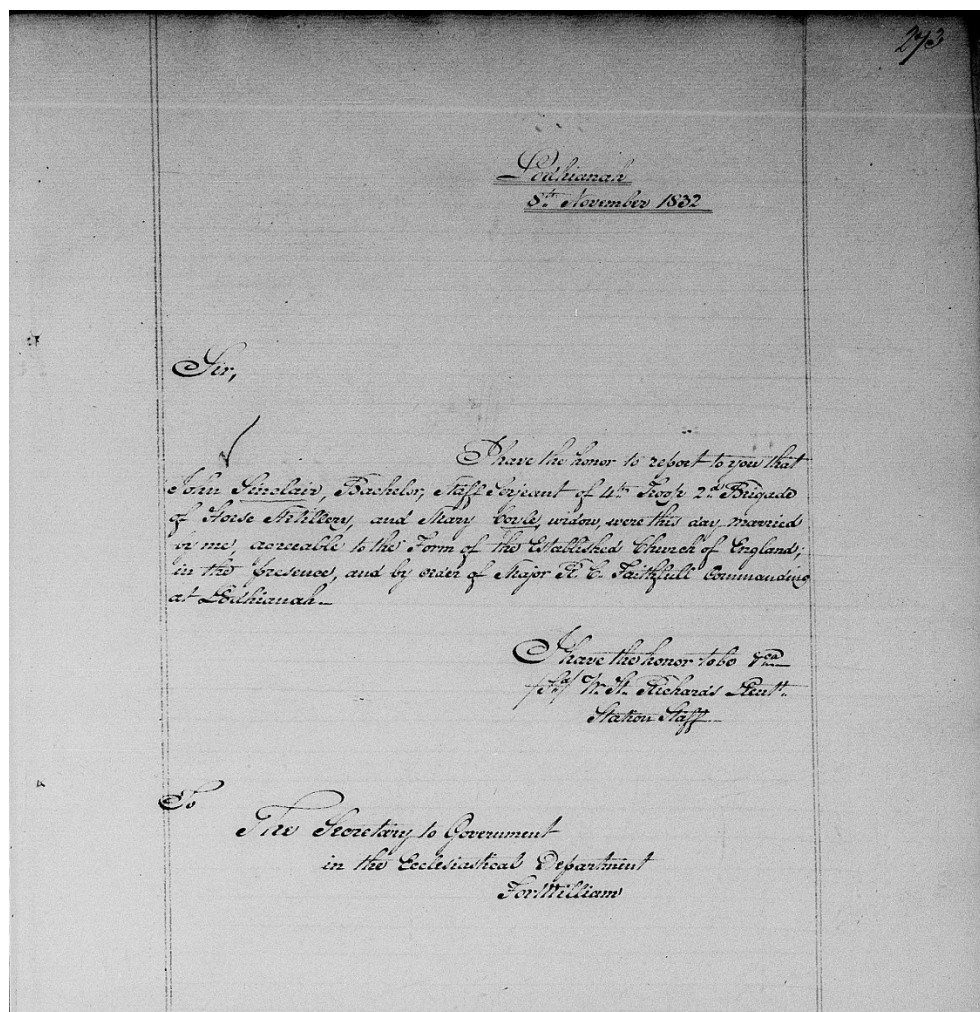
During the 12 years between 1820 and 1832, the Muster Rolls are the only details of John's life. They show a steady increase in John's rank, which indicates a confidence in his character and abilities. In 1832, John's troop was in Ludhiana. It was here he married Mary Coyle on 8th November 1832.² On the marriage record, John Sinclair was listed as a bachelor, Staff Sergeant and Mary was listed as a widow; Coyle was her married name. Research was done to find her first husband. His name was Michael Coyle from Dublin, Ireland, and it turns out he was in the same regiment and troop as John Sinclair. No marriage was found for Michael and Mary, but three girls were found born to them:

- Margaret Matilda born in Meerut in 1827
- Frances born in Meerut in 1829 (died as an infant in 1830)
- Matilda born in Ludhiana in 1830

In the muster roles for Michael Coyle it states: "14th September 1831 struck off; time expired". To that very day, he had put in 21 years of service in the Bengal Army. Recent research found Michael back in Dublin drawing his HEIC pension. According to the EIC Pensioner's list, he died in 1856. So, Mary was not a "widow" when she married John Sinclair. Michael Coyle left her in India. This also begs the question, was she even married to Michael Coyle in the first place?

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radical_War

² Parish register transcripts from the Presidency of Bengal, 1713-1948: India. Office of the Registrar General (Main Author) GS Film 498,967 volume 33 folio 273



Marriage record of John Sinclair to Mary Coyle. Ludhiana, Bengal India, 1832

After John and Mary's marriage, they had at least 4 children.

- John Sinclair - about 1833 (no baptism found)
- Duncan Sinclair - probably about 1835 (no baptism found)
- William Sinclair - 1838 in Meerut
- Janet Sinclair - 1840 in Meerut

It is entirely possible that other children were born to John and Mary but to date, after extensive research, no other children have been found.

John did quite well in the Bengal Artillery, 4th Troop, 2nd Brigade. He rose through the ranks finally reaching the highest rank for a non-commissioned officer, that of Conductor of Ordnance, his assignment was the magazine at Cawnpore. This is evidenced by the Bengal Army muster rolls and casualty returns, 1716-1860.³

- 1830/31 he was a Farrier Sergeant
- 1832-1835 he was a Staff Sergeant.

³ Bengal Muster Rolls and Casualty Return 1830 - 1845 GS Films 1885345, 1885346, 1885377

- 1 December 1843 was appointed Sub Conductor, Ordnance Commisariat Dept., Sukkon

- 5 December 1845 was promoted to Conductor, Ordnance Commisariat Dept., Cawnpore

John was not to hold his position as the Conductor of the Cawnpore Magazine for very long.⁴ In August of 1848 he died. Mary, his wife, followed him to the grave 2 weeks later. This left 4 orphaned children.

Edward Fraser, the first husband of his stepdaughter, Matilda Coyle, erected a monument to his step father-in-law in the Kacheri Cemetery in Cawnpore (Kanpur), but Edward died one year later as did John's oldest son, John. John, the son, is buried next to his father.



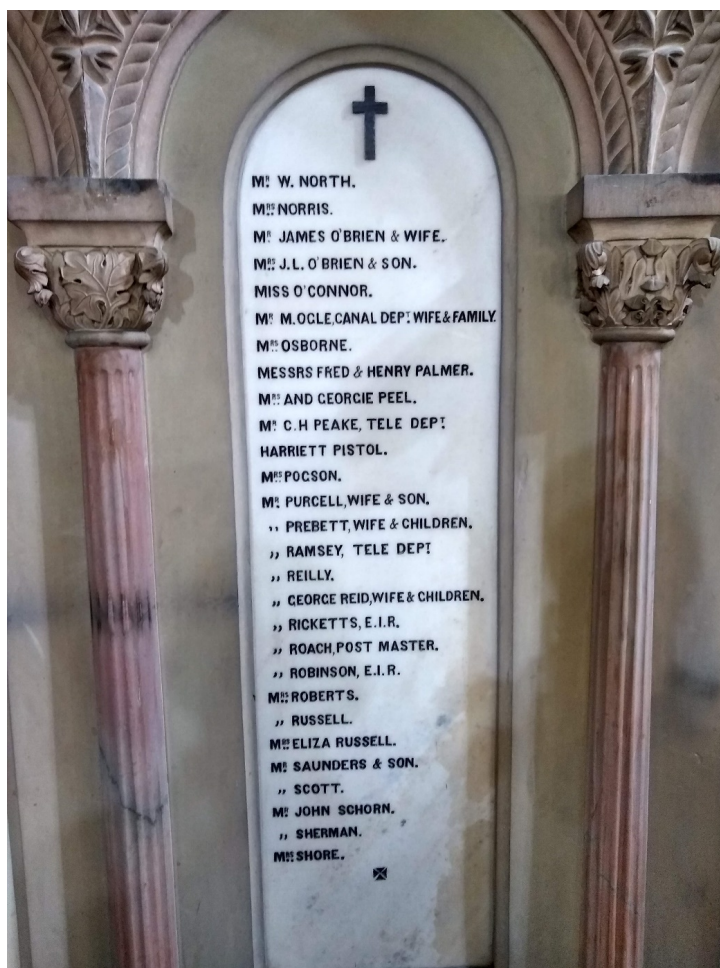
Graves of Conductor John Sinclair (left) and his eldest son John (right)

Ogle

It is known that my great grandfather William Sinclair and his sister Janet were in Cawnpore during the Indian Mutiny. It is very likely that when their parents died the children were split up. It appears that these two youngest children were looked after by their older stepsister Matilda, who married a widower, Sergeant Matthew Ogle after the death of her husband Edward Fraser. Matthew and Matilda Ogle and their entire family were killed at Cawnpore as well as William's younger sister, Janet, who is listed among the dead women and children who were thrown down the well.⁵ Family legend has it that William survived by disguising himself as a native.

⁴ <https://wiki.fibis.org/w/Conductors>

⁵ Cawnpore massacre, 1857: Shepherd, W. J. (Main Author) 954.2/K1 H2



Epitaph showing Matthew Ogle, wife and family,
Cawnpore Memorial, All Soul's church.

Thompson

Duncan also survived Cawnpore because most likely he was cared for by the older of his two stepsisters, Margaret Matilda Coyle who married William Thompson and was living in Meerut or possibly Fort William during the time of the Mutiny. This was deduced not only because he survived and had a numerous posterity, but also because the only beneficiary of his will was Melvina Thompson, wife of the oldest son of William and Margaret Thompson (who by this time was deceased) and who would have been like a younger brother to Duncan. Whether Duncan and William ever saw each other again is hard to know. There was no family knowledge of Duncan. It was only recently, through a DNA test, coupled with additional genealogical research, that Duncan was found as an unknown child of John Sinclair and Mary Coyle.

Stoelke/Wernicke

The next time we see any documented evidence of William Sinclair is in the records in Darjeeling in 1865 when he married my great grandmother, 15-year-old, Dorothea Elizabeth Stoelke. Not much is known about William

Sinclair after he escaped the atrocities at Cawnpore and appeared in Darjeeling, other than the fact that he had become a revenue surveyor. His new wife, Dorothea was the daughter of a German missionary, Joachim Stoelke and his wife Dorothea Sophia Wernicke, who had come to India as missionaries to convert the native people to Christianity. When support for their missionary efforts was withdrawn, Joachim returned to his previous occupation of farming and started to grow tea. He was one of the first, if not the first person to grow tea in the Darjeeling hills. Joachim and Dorothea Stoelke did not go to India alone. They were part of a group of missionaries amongst whom was Johann Andreas Wernicke (Dorothea's older brother) and Sophie Elizabeth Stoelke (a younger sister of Joachim) who were married to each other. They too turned to tea when their financial support failed, and their descendants owned many tea plantations in Darjeeling and surrounding areas, Lingua, Tukvar, Bannockburn, Glenburn, and Marybong to name a few.

It is hard to imagine the tribulations experienced by these early ancestors as they left their homes in Great Britain and Europe to battle the heat, disease and unfamiliar lifestyle in India.

In an interview in 1904, Sophie Elizabeth Stoelke Wernicke (my 2nd great, great aunt) gave a glimpse of her early life in India as she recounted the following story of one of their experiences in the Darjeeling area:

We arrived at Darjeeling on the 11th of December 1841, but stayed only two days here, and then climbed down towards Tukvar, some 6 miles away from Darjeeling, where absolutely nothing had been prepared for our arrival. Moreover, here we had to live in a simple Lepcha hut. We were unable to have any servants, so we had to set to manually and undertake every kind of work ourselves; we were only allowed to engage a cowherd. Without highway or byway in those days, Darjeeling was a thick primeval forest, a habitat for many wild animals. There was naturally no trace to be seen of a village, let alone a colony of villas with splendid made-up roads, established promenades and electric lighting as we now have. Many a night we were woken up in fear by the roars of leopards and bears and by the cries of the monkeys, which used to plunder the fields of Indian corn (maize) which we had planted with so much effort. The lightly constructed huts with only a thin screen for the door, behind which we and our children were sleeping, offered no adequate protection. One evening the whole forest around was swarming with wolves and all night long we were hardly able to close an eye for the frightening and uncanny howls of these beasts. When we stepped out hesitantly the next morning, instead of our five fine cows we merely discovered their skeletons. They had been completely gobbled up by the wolves. Only the largest bones and the horns were left over. It must have been a pack of over a hundred wolves slinking around and about us in circles baring their fangs. Only the

unfamiliar sound of shots from our only musket drove away these eager marauders.

Despite similar harrowing experiences, Darjeeling, was the place the Sinclairs, Stoelkes, and Wernickes decided to remain. My great grandparents, William Sinclair and Dorothea Elizabeth Stoelke inherited two tea plantations from Joachim Stoelke, Steinthal and Risheehat. My grandfather, Stanley Donald Stoelke Sinclair, was the 5th of eight children born to William and Dorothea Sinclair. He became the proprietor of Steinthal after the death of William and was the last of my ancestors to end his days as a tea planter. Stanley died in Tung, Darjeeling in 1938. My father, Tracey George Clifford Sinclair, didn't continue in the tea business, although this photo of him at Steinthal Tea Estate, shows he was involved for at least a time. He is the man on the right, sporting a fedora.

Hardship was no stranger to my progenitors whether it was the financial struggles in Paisley, the arduous 6-month sea voyage, the weather, culture and rigors of life in India, or the tragedy and loss of family members. I am inspired by their courage, determination, and endurance. Discovering information about them endears me to then and learning of their struggles and the way they adapted to many hard situations helps me do the same.



Tea planter and tea pickers - Steinthal Tea Estate, Darjeeling

SON OF A PERMANENT WAY INSPECTOR

Linda Evans

My Grandfather, Hubert St Clair Waters, was born in 1896 in Rawalpindi, where his father was headmaster at the Rawalpindi Station School.

When he left school, he went straight to Walton's Railway School in Lahore, then onto Shibpur Civil Engineering College, where he qualified as a Permanent Way Inspector in about 1915, aged 19.

My father, also named Hubert, often speaks about the story his father would tell, about the time he was working between Ahmedwal and Zahidan, where he was employed to "oversee a group of sappers and miners", and Indian labourers, during the building of the Nushki Extension Railway to the border of Persia. Being fluent in Urdu must have been an advantage. He had joined the volunteer defence force, and in 1918, he was awarded an Afghan Star Medal.

In 1920 he married Olive Lee in Delhi. Olive, my grandmother, was descended from army families of Irish and Romany Gypsy origin who had arrived in India in the mid 1800s. During their life together they were often posted to remote locations, as told in my father's memoirs.

Memoirs of Hubert I. Waters

I was born in Lahore in 1927 at the Albert Victoria Hospital.

My earliest memories are from when we lived in Bostan and Chaman between 1930-33. In both places we had a large comfortable house with fences all around to keep me and my sister, Doreen in, and the wild animals out. In the servants' quarters lived our cook and our cleaner, and the Trolleymen who were the motor power for the trolley that was necessary for my father to carry out his rail inspections.

Dad was responsible for quite a few miles of the railway. Usually four men ran the trolley, two would run behind, pushing for quite a long way, while the other two rested, until it was their turn. And then when a train was expected, all four of them would lift it off the rails. We often went along for a ride with Dad and I remember quite a good speed on the tracks, being reached.

In Chaman we lived about four or five hundred yards from the station where the trains refuelled and re-watered. Chaman was the terminal for the fruit trade from Kabul, for distribution into India. Fruit was plentiful and we had

delicious grapes in our garden. We kept cows for milk, along with chickens and goats who were destined for the dining table! And we had pets galore.

Sometimes Dad would take us on camel back, to a river quite a distance away and we would come back with a few ducks for the cooks to prepare for a meal.

In winter we were snowed in and we froze. Trains ran only once a week, so my parents would plan the occasional trip to Quetta to stock up on essentials. My parents told me I gave them grave concern on two occasions. When I was very small, I fell backwards into the fire, and another time I got a two inch cut across my jaw, from running fast into the chook house. A real worry when the doctor could be days away! In spring our garden would burst into flower, poppies and lots of tulips.

We must have moved to Quetta about 1933.

Life in Quetta was very enjoyable. I remember it being quite a small town. We lived in comfortable railway quarters as always. We had really good friends there, the Braganza family. They owned the only music shop in town, which was called Handels'. This was where my father bought a piano for his new wife, my mother, in 1920, as a wedding present, a steel framed piano made in Stuttgart, Germany and it travelled in the goods wagon, to wherever the family was stationed, and then on to New Zealand in 1948.

The Braganzas had a large property with a beautiful orchard with quality fruit. They also had a large swimming pool and unfortunately someone threw me in giving me an ongoing fear of the water!

Dad was again transferred, this time to Pathankot, a small town in the foothills of the Himalayas.

By March 1934, it was time for me and my sister Doreen to go to boarding school in Dalhousie which was 7802 feet above sea level. Kids from all over the Punjab and Baluchistan gathered in Pathankot to be transported up to the Sacred Heart Convent, in old Bedford buses. All our luggage was loaded onto the roof racks for the four-hour drive round and round the treacherous bends of the road, which along with the fumes, proved a bit much for seven-year-old me and a few others. Being early March when we arrived, there was still snow on the ground and roofs. It was a most beautiful site.



Bedford Buses.

The school was quite large, with four distinct buildings. The main building was two storeys and contained the classrooms and the dining rooms, with the girls sleeping quarters on the top floor. Then there was a magnificent large church, and on another level was a playing field and the living quarters for about sixty 6 to 7-year olds boys. The top level was called Strawberry Bank and that was for the older girls, and a teacher training area.

It was in 1935 that we were all called to assembly to be informed that Quetta had been hit by an earthquake and that a number of the pupils' families had been affected. The death toll was over 30,000. Our parents were not involved, but some of our friends were not so lucky.

We were at boarding school for nine months of the year, so we had only three months to enjoy our home. Again, we had a big house surrounded by heaps of potted plants. We had cats and dogs, canaries, ducks, geese, chooks and rabbits, and now and again a snake would visit and make a meal of one of them.

Sometimes Doreen and I, accompanied by one of the servants, would go fishing in one of the tributaries of the Beas river. We could stand on the bank and watch every fish, as if they were in a glass bowl.



Fishing in the Beas River, Pathankot.

Pathankot was in the rich Kulu Valley area where fruit and vegetables were abundant and cheap. My mother used to buy large quantities of oranges, bananas and apples, lots of which she would give to the servants.

I also remember the outdoor movies in Pathankot. Once a month in a large field, there were free movies, mostly the likes of Charlie Chaplin etc. Everyone from the surrounding area would turn up to enjoy them.

At the end of 1935, Dad was transferred to Beas, where we stayed until 1938. Being eight years old I was now too old to go back to Dalhousie Convent. I was given the option of three schools, Mussoorie, Simla or Darjeeling, all in the Himalayas. The decision was made to send me to St Edwards', and my sister to the Loretto Convent, both in Simla.



Hubert I. Waters - St. Edward's School, Shimla (2005).

Going to school in March 1936 was hard for me I had only been in Beas for a couple of months and I did not want to leave it. Dad used to take me fishing and shooting on the river which I would miss. However, we had a surprise visit, mid-year, by our parents, to introduce us to our new baby sister, Betty.

When I was ten, I was let loose with my own 22 rifle. I managed to provide for several meals, even though it was only pigeon. It was great fun. Dad let me try out his 12-bore shotgun, to shoot ducks but it just about blew me off my feet!

Sadly, I never had the chance to use it again as Dad's next transfer was closer to civilisation, to Simla. But the good side was that it was the first time since I was six that I was going to stay with the family for two whole years. During 1939-40 I went to school as a day pupil and Simla became my home town. The population was moderate in the summer and negligible in the winter. I made two good friends who lived in Simla all year. We went to school together, climbed all there was to climb together, and swum in the valley streams. All three of us collected butterflies using catapults, which I am not proud to say, we also used on birds. In winter we would go tobogganing down Jacko Hill, and off the Mall.



The Waters' Family Home.

In 1939, things changed dramatically. I remember sitting in the lounge with Mum and Dad, listening to them discuss the effect that the declaration of war was going to have on us.

As soon as spring 1940 came, the population exploded. All of the army headquarters from Delhi shifted in to avoid the heat. The population just about tripled, that is until autumn, when they all headed south again to avoid the cold. This became the trend from then on.

Before the population explosion occurred, we used to enjoy a simple life going to the pictures or to church, and our pet Foxie, Chip would just wander in as he pleased.

St Edwards' School was a good two-mile walk by the lower road, but we chose to go up to the Mall and walk the three-mile route, except of course during the rain of the monsoon season, July to September.

Towards the end of 1940 Dad was transferred back to Quetta. As a railway man, he was always provided with a goods wagon for his belongings, and another one for pets, if needed. I stayed with friends to finish the school year, returning to 59 Lytton Rd, Quetta for the holidays. I was thirteen, and it was quite a thrill to travel the three to four-day train journey, alone. After the holidays it was suggested that I could go to Quetta Grammar School, but I

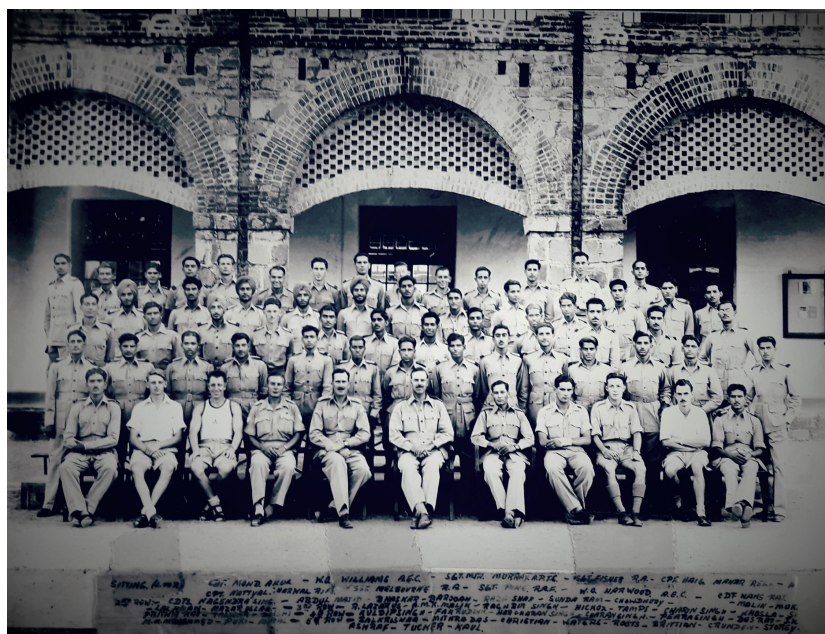
chose to take the long journey again and return to St Edwards' in Simla for 1941-43.

In 2005 while visiting Simla with family, I set out on foot to revisit my old school. I arrived, and was made to feel very welcome. They gave me a memorial plate from their 75th anniversary celebration, which was very special for me.

During late 1942 in Simla, aged fifteen, I joined the Auxiliary Force of India, Simla Rifles, an enjoyable experience. We weren't full army, but we were given a corps number, a uniform, and hobnail boots, and we fired .303 rifles at a range during the weekend. It amused us that we were made Air Raid Wardens, which meant we were on duty a couple of nights a week, and we were expected to make sure no one showed even a cigarette light in case a Japanese bomber passed overhead, which was most unlikely.

At last at age sixteen, I finished school. A certificate recorded my attendance as 9/3/36 to 10/12/43 attaining Junior Cambridge and Senior Cambridge School Certificates.

In January 1944 I applied for a commission in the Royal Indian Air Force and in April I received a rail ticket to travel to Dehra Dun for assessment. The following month I entered pre cadet school at Nowgong for a six month stay. We were the very first group at the school, and every two months another hundred cadets would arrive.



Cadets and staff at Nowgong 1944.
Hubert is in the back row, 4th from the left.

We were told we were going to be doing a fitness test in the form of a commando course. I had never run a mile, or jumped off a twelve-foot wall before. It was a piece of cake until we had to jump out of a tree &

unfortunately, I landed roughly and sprained my right ankle. I soldiered on through the night march, an unwise decision as it put an end to soccer and cricket, because I couldn't run.

After finishing Cadet School, the war was still raging, then I finally received a notification to report to the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay.

As soon as Hitler heard he committed suicide!

However, there was still the Japanese threat. My first six months was full on training. A month seamanship, three weeks on radar, a month on gunnery etc. The latter was on an island just out of Karachi and we enjoyed our spare time surfing.

Finally, I was posted to the east coast port of Vizagapatam where I joined Q121 flotilla H.D.M.L. 1109 as second officer. I thoroughly enjoyed this period. We did a lot of patrols down the East Coast as far as Madras and Colombo. By then the possibility of seeing or dealing with the Japanese was low, but we had to inspect any boats far from the coast. I had no idea what we were expected to find and the poor old seaman just had to accept us boarding their boats.

I remember when the Japanese finally surrendered. The US Navy just abandoned a lot of their landing craft, still loaded with all their gear, on deserted beaches along the coast, free for anyone to help themselves.

After just two years I was demobbed and given a free ticket to return home to my family, who were now in Karachi.

My father was secretary of the Railway Social Club which had a big club house, three tennis courts, badminton courts, a billiard room and a great dance floor, all at our disposal. It was there I met my future wife, Patricia Leahy, but with Partition unfolding, friends were gradually leaving for places like Canada and as a family we decided New Zealand would be our destination.

Pat and I married in Karachi in 1948. Passports were organised and my parents and my sisters left Karachi on a cruise liner, for NZ. Pat and I booked a passage on the Ridderkirk, a Dutch cargo ship, and on the last stage of the journey we crossed the Tasman Sea aboard a Sunderland flying boat, landing on the water in Mechanics Bay, Auckland, on Christmas Eve.

My father was only twenty-one when he left India in 1948, but India is still a place of fond memories for him.

In Fibis Journal no 23, Spring 2010, an article by my relative Neville Thomas was published detailing the earlier Waters family in India.

A SOLDIER'S WILL OUGHT TO BE SHORT

JOHN NEVILLE PARKER'S LIFE AND DEATH IN INDIA

Marian Press

John Nevill(e) Parker was the youngest of the three sons of Harding Parker and Catherine Neville of Passage West in County Cork, Ireland. The oldest Parker brother, Michael, stayed at home and became Surveyor of Customs in the town, but the younger two chose, or were forced by circumstances, to look beyond Ireland for an occupation. William, the middle brother, joined the EIC naval service and John Neville the EIC army.

John Neville's birthdate, as given in Hodson's *List of the Officers of the Bengal Army*, was 1740/41. He began his military career in the regular British Army, signing up as an Ensign in 1756 in the 2nd Battalion of the 12th Regiment of Foot. The following year, on 29 September, he was promoted to Lieutenant, this time in the 65th Foot, which his original Battalion had become. John described himself as having served with this regiment in the Seven Years' War in the West Indies, acting as Paymaster and Quartermaster.

At the end of the war in 1764, the EIC appeared to offer him more advantages than did life in the regular British army and he decided to enter its services. In his own words:

...[H]e was induced by the many advantages represented to him to be then enjoy'd by the officers in the military service of the Honble East India Company to resign his said commission and go out upon Lieutenant's half pay without receiving any consideration either for his full pay or his other appointment aforesaid in order to enter into the service of the Honble East India Company...

That your petitioner was sent to Norwich on that duty in which he exerted himself with such success that he raised 190 recruits in the space of three weeks. That your petitioner having been appointed by the Honble East India Company to the command of 300 recruits bound to India was on account of a mutiny on board the ship Lord Anson suddenly and unexpectedly ordered down to Gravesend where the said ship lay to reduce the mutineers to obedience which he affected at the imminent hazard of his life. That in order to prevent any further attempt of the kind your petitioner was obliged to continue on board till the ship sailed.

That your petitioner sailed from Deal on the 25th May 1764 and landed in Bengal after a ... passage of nine months on the 2[4]th of February following.⁶

⁶ John Nevill Parker's various petitions quoted are from British Library: IOR/E/1/52-53

Hodson credits him with recruiting 100 men, rather than the 190 John Neville records himself, but otherwise corroborates the details of this account. By July 1764, he had been appointed a Captain and on 5 August 1765 was posted to the 2nd Bengal European Regiment.

The first part of John's career with the EIC came to an abrupt halt with his participation in what is known as the Batta Mutiny. Batta was the term for the extra money paid to Company officers as compensation for the expenses and hardships of service in India. It had begun as a privilege but was soon something that was considered a right. The immediate cause of dissension in the Bengal Army was the withdrawal of "double batta," a temporary extra payment that had been awarded to officers by Mir Jaffar. Lord Robert Clive, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of India, as part of his efforts to reform the EIC administration and stop corruption, decreed that this double batta allowance would cease. In response, all the officers below the rank of major in the three brigades of the Bengal Army chose to resign in protest—the day fixed for these resignations being 1 July 1766. Clive soon heard of their intention and refusing to give in to their demands, accepted their resignations, but ordered the arrest and court martial of the ringleaders. Clive's action had severe consequences for many, including John, who was one of those court martialled.

He endured a long period of imprisonment first—as he states in one petition: "for one hundred & thirty-five days, in that hot country." Charles Caraccioli outlines John's tribulations after the mutiny, describing his being captured on 5 June 1766 in Benares "where he was ignominiously dragged through the streets and then close confined."⁷ John Neville argued, in a protest delivered to the court on the 17 September 1766, that "I never entered into any contract or agreement to serve the honourable company; and I did for many obvious reasons resign their employ in the beginning of May last; neither was I mustered for months before that time; nor have I received pay, or any other allowance, since the preceding month of April..." He was subsequently exonerated by the court, but despite this, was dismissed from the service and immediately sent back to England.

John Neville did not take his imprisonment and dismissal quietly, instead choosing to sue Clive for illegal detention. The case did not come before the court until 1769 and was decided against him, principally because he was unable to prove that Clive had been aware of his detention.

Upon the trial, Mr. Parker's chief difficulty was to prove that Lord Clive had ever known he had been under arrest during the five months he had been dragged about, although when in his sickly situation by his long confinement, he had been visited by Mr. Ingham, Lord Clive's body physician... and although the constant practice of the army is to make a daily report in writing by the officer who leaves the guard, of the number of prisoners; and that it was proved that Lord Clive, the

⁷ Caraccioli, Charles. *The Life of Robert Lord Clive, Baron Plassey...* 2d ed. London: T. Bell, 1786, p. 256.

commander in chief, had resided seven weeks in the place where Mr. Parker was a prisoner.⁸

At the end of the court case against Clive, John Neville began to petition the EIC to be reinstated.

It is not to be denied that I was one of those officers who believed I had a right, upon the reduction of my military allowances in January 1766, to quit the service of the East India Company, and to sue for relief from the Directors in England...

But it is also true I was among the most moderate of those who prosecuted that measure and that I used my utmost endeavours to check any undue excess that might affect those national advantages which had been obtained by the good behaviour of the troops...

This petition was unsuccessful, as were subsequent ones, including one written on his behalf by Samuel Martin, until 1768 M.P. for Camelford and the half-brother of John Neville's brother-in-law, Sir Henry Martin. His tone becomes increasingly frantic:

And that as the favour of the Honble [sic] Court hath been lately shewn in one instance to a worthy officer (Captain Dow) who had given the same cause of offence with your petitioner he your said petitioner shall have the same reason to acknowledge with constant gratitude the condescension [sic] and goodness of the Honble [sic] Court in restoring him to their Service and thereby giving him an opportunity of retrieving the heavy loss he has sustained by quitting his Rank & Emoluments in his Majesty's Service and also his private fortune and many years of his youth in which provision should have been making [sic] against the infirmities of age.

Late in 1769 the HEIC did agree to reinstate him, but he continued to have to petition the Company as he was clearly having trouble gaining permission to actually travel back to India and had, indeed, run out of money to pay his own passage there. In April 1771, he wrote: "As my circumstances will not conveniently admit of my defraying the expence [sic] of my passage to Bengal... I humbly request you will be pleased to grant me the same indulgence [as another officer whose fare to India had been paid by the Company]."

In 1771 John Neville sailed once again for India in the *Britannia* with the rank of Captain, the EIC arguing that he could not be restored to his rank of Lieutenant-Colonel until the "number of lieutenant colonels be reduced to that ordered by our

⁸ Bolts, William. *Considerations of Indian Affairs...* London: J. Almon, P. Elmsly and Brotherton and Sewell, 1772.

General Letter of the 10th April 1771.”⁹ On 23 December 1774 he was able to resume his former rank.¹⁰

His military activities during this period can be gleaned from EIC correspondence published in various sources and published histories of the Company. In 1776, for example, he led the march on Korah to gain possession of 19 guns in the hands of a disaffected officer in the service of the “Nawab-Wazir.” The action was successful, but British losses were considerable.¹¹

We also catch a glimpse of some of the money-making activities EIC officers were able to take part in, as in 1775 and 1778 the Fort William Correspondence discussed his contract and an offer of renewal for the repair of the cantonments at Burrampore and Dinapore. He received a percentage of the sum provided—apparently 15% (although for the renewal he requested 25%).¹²

A few years after his return to India, John Neville had a son, William Neville, born 4 March 1774.¹³ There is no clear evidence as to the identity of William’s mother. Many in the Parker family subsequently believed that the mother was Indian—more specifically a begum, a Muslim woman of high rank—and this “fact” appears in a number of sources. If William’s mother was indeed an Indian woman, this would not have been at all unusual for an EIC officer at the time.

Towards the end of the 18th Century, there were only 250 European women in Calcutta, while there were 4,000 men... The civilians and soldiers were, therefore, encouraged and even subsidized by the Company to take native wives and mistresses. It was a common practice for the sahibs to set up Zenanas or keep Indian bibis [mistresses].¹⁴

At the age of about four, young William was sent to England by ship to be raised by his uncle, William Parker. John Neville, in his will, acknowledges William by saying: “I leave and bequeath one fourth part of my fortune... to William Parker a minor now under the Care and Patronage of my Brother William Parker.” In a letter to his sister and brother-in-law, Elizabeth and Sir Henry Martin, dated 1780, he remarks cryptically: “I find the live Package I sent home has got safe to hand.”¹⁵ John Neville was to die in action during the First War against the Mahratta Empire. He had been appointed second in command of the company’s forces in Bombay in 1779 under Colonel Thomas Goddard.

...And observing that Lieutenant Colonel Neville Parker is the Officer next in Command of the Bengal Detachment under Col. Thomas Goddard, and having a favourable opinion of the ability and experience of Lieutenant

⁹ Patwardhan, R.P., ed. *Fort-William–India House Correspondence*, volume 7, 1773–1776. Delhi: National Archives of India, 1971, p. 887.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 86–89.

¹¹ Cardew, F.G. *A Sketch of the Services of the Bengal Native Army to the Year 1895*. Calcutta: Govt. Printing Office, 1903, p. 39–40.

¹² Patwardhan, ibid, pp. 377 and Gupta Hira Lal, ed. *Fort William–India House Correspondence*, volume 8, 1777–1781. Delhi: National Archives of India, 1981.

¹³ Hodson, V.C.P. *List of the Officers of the Bengal Army 1758-1834*. Part III. London: Phillimore, 1946, p. 460.

¹⁴ Nile, Pran. *Beyond the Veil: Indian Women in the Raj*. New Delhi: Neville Books, 2000, p. 65.

¹⁵ John Nevill Parker, Letter to Henry and Elizabeth Martin, 2 April 1780. Typescript. Original in private hands in Ireland.

*Colonel Parker, it is the opinion of your Committee, that he be appointed second in Command of Company's Forces at Bombay, with the rank of full Colonel, and that a Colonel's Commission be granted him accordingly...*¹⁶

Goddard had been charged with leading a detachment overland from Bengal to Bombay to confront the Mahrattas. The detachment left Cawnpore in May 1778, along the way taking part in a number of actions. But in April 1781 Goddard's troops were forced to retreat down the Bhor Ghaut, a steep mountain pass, where they were attacked from the rear and on 23 April 1781 John Neville received the wound that would end his life a few days later, on the 27 April—possibly at Panwell, towards which the army was retreating.

*The attack on the rear was at one time very determined, and the 6th Bengal and 13th Bombay battalions particularly distinguished themselves under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Parker, of the Bengal establishment, an excellent officer, who fell whilst bravely exerting himself at the head of the rear-guard...*¹⁷

Days earlier, on 22 April 1781, as he was in Camp at Chouk, John Neville had written his will.¹⁸ All his effects were to be sold at public auction, except his wearing apparel, which he left to his nephew, Heyward St. Leger Gillman. His horses, tents and equipage were left to Gillman and a fellow officer. His estate was to be split into four and distributed amongst relatives and his servants were to be paid their wages in full and all his slaves, bar one, were to be set free. He concludes: "A Soldier's will ought to be Short therefore my intimates will impute my not leaving them keep sakes more for the want of time than my Sincere esteem for them."¹⁹

John Neville had successfully remade his career after his downfall following the Batta Mutiny and as Hodson notes at the end of his summing up of his military career with the EIC, he was "[r]enowned as an extremely gallant officer."

Both an inventory of John Neville's estate and an account of the settling of this estate still exist. The inventory of his effects to be sold is typical of those for officers of the period and includes the usual furniture, cutlery, crockery, mirrors, candlesticks, wine, etc., that one would expect. More unusual is the presence of an organ, a rose water bottle and a perfume box with six silver bottles and tops. But it is the list of his books, mostly histories and collections of letters, that is particularly interesting. One book listed as being in his possession is "Bolts Indian Affairs." This is William Bolts' *Considerations of Indian Affairs*, published in 1772, which was extremely sympathetic to John Neville's court case against Clive.²⁰

¹⁶ First Maratha War. BL: IOR/H/240.

¹⁷ Duff, James Grant. *History of the Mahrattas*. Edited by J.P. Guha. Vol. II. New Delhi: Associated Publishing House, 1971, p. 107.

¹⁸ Will of John Nevill Parker, 1781, op. cit.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ John Neville Parker Inventory, 1783. Inventories & Accounts of Deceased Estates. BL: L/AG/34/27/3.

In February of the following year, his sister, Elizabeth Martin, was still receiving letters from John Neville as they made their slow way to England from India. As she wrote in a letter to her son, Samuel, on board his ship in the West Indies, "how melancholy an indulgence to receive Letters from so Dear a friend when he is no more."

A Coda to the Story:

Ten years after John Neville's death, an advertisement appeared in the *Calcutta Gazette*.

[A servant] absconded, and plundered his master of 25 Dollars and a mourning ring, it is requested, the latter, if offered for sale, may be stopped, and information given to the Printer.

The ring is set with brilliants, the device, a monument adorned with military trophies, &c. On one side a blooming laurel, on the other a weeping willow; motto "La main de Dieu l'a fait."

To the pedestal are the initials J. N. P.

N. N. D

And around the black and white circle, Colonel John Nevill Parker, killed 23rd April, 81, AE. 40.

Lieutenant Norcott Nevil D'Esterse [sic], ob. at Bedzegur, November 1781, AE. 40.

Barrackpore

December 6th, 1791.

Norcott Neville D'Esterre was John Neville's nephew and mentioned in his will. Who placed the ad and whether the ring was ever recovered is not known.

John Neville's son, grandson and great grandsons followed him into the army in India, a tradition that was to continue well into the twentieth century.

THE EAST INDIA LANGUAGE POLICE IN THE EARLY 19th CENTURY

Prof. Marjorie Lorch

I have been investigating the life of Thomas Prendergast, Esq. (1807-1886) for several years due to my interest in his innovative contributions to foreign language learning and teaching in the 1860s and 1870s.²¹ Unlike most European authors of foreign language textbooks at this time, Prendergast had spent his life working as a Civil Servant in the East India Company (EIC) in Madras. I was interested to understand his own language learning experiences in this role, in order to determine how he came to develop his extremely popular series of “Mastery Method” books when he retired to Cheltenham in 1859.²²

As there was little biographical information already available, and no personal papers to draw on, I needed to take a different approach to investigating Prendergast’s life story. I soon learned of FIBIS, and its members provided many invaluable starting points for this journey of discovery. In the process, I had to acquaint myself with the type of language training a young gentleman would receive in preparation for EIC work in India in the early 19th century. In this article, I will describe some of the personal challenges Prendergast faced, and paint a picture of the wider context of the EIC Civil Service in Madras from the 1820s to 1850s.

By the early 19th century, the EIC ruled large portions of India, employing both an army and an imposing civil administration. This included the collection of taxes, operation of law courts and administration of public works. Although Prendergast had come from a family of EIC military men, he submitted a petition to become a Writer instead.²³ This led to his admission in the relatively new EIC training institution to prepare him for his life in Madras. The East India College founded in 1806 in Hertford Heath (later renamed Haileybury College) educated those headed for the elite corps of the Indian Civil Service.²⁴

At the time Prendergast was beginning his training in 1825, there were both internal and broader public questions being asked about how well-equipped

²¹ I have to add the disclaimer that Prendergast is not a personal relation and my curiosity is an entirely academic one. For more details on Prendergast’s life and work see my publications ‘Investigating the Biographical Sources of Thomas Prendergast’s (1807-1886) Innovation in Language Learning’, in *The History of Language Learning and Teaching in 19th and 20th Century Europe*, ed. by Nicola McClelland and Richard C. Smith (Oxford: Legenda, 2017), and ‘A Late 19th-Century British Perspective on Modern Foreign Language Learning, Teaching, and Reform’, *Historiographia Linguistica*, 43 (2016), 175-208.

²² Thomas Prendergast, *The Mastery of Languages; or, the Art of Speaking Foreign Tongues Idiomatically* (London: Richard Bentley, 1864). This was followed by a Handbook and five foreign language manuals on French, German, Spanish, Hebrew and Latin.

²³ His father was General Sir Jeffrey Prendergast (1769-1856) who was knighted for his action in the Mysore war.

²⁴ Those headed for a military career, like Prendergast’s brothers and cousins would attend The East India Company Military Seminary at Addiscombe, Surrey.

candidates actually were for their roles in the EIC Civil Service.²⁵ Public debates and concern expressed in Parliament resulted in calls for a more robust system of examinations, particularly with regard to foreign languages. In response, the EIC changed its approach to the use of Indian Classical and Vernacular languages which had an effect on the students' education. It also affected the expectations of Civil Servants' ability to communicate with non-English speaking individuals in the course of their work in India. These practices can be traced through Prendergast's experience. In this article I outline the changes to EIC language policy in the first half of the 19th century with respect to professional practices.

When Prendergast entered the East India College, one of their many illustrious teachers was the Reverend Thomas R. Malthus, FRS (1766-1834). He was the author of *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798) who taught Political Economy at the College from 1806 to 1835. Malthus was partly responsible for the examination of admissions applicants. Although Malthus defended the College's curriculum and examination system, there were external demands for successive changes to these requirements.²⁶ In order to be admitted up to the 1820s, students had to sit exams in Greek, Latin and Arithmetic.²⁷ By 1826, the year Prendergast graduated, entrance requirements were strengthened to include the knowledge of at least two Latin classical texts, the parts of the Greek testament, Greek grammar and common rules of Arithmetic.

Students would typically stay at the training College for two years. The curriculum was modelled on the "liberal education" at Cambridge University. Required subjects included Classics, Mathematics, Law, Political Economy and History. There were other compulsory subjects intended to prepare students for their future jobs working in government roles in India. These included Hindu Literature, the History of Asia, and the languages Sanskrit, Persian and Hindustani. At the end of their studies, students would sit another set of exams to determine whether they would gain a place in the EIC. These exams were on Greek, Latin, Mathematics, English, History, Geography, Paley's "Evidences"²⁸ and Moral Philosophy.²⁹

The East India College employed a number of language professors who taught Arabic, Bengali, Telugu, and Marathi. One prominent teacher at this time was Sir Graves Chamney Haughton FRS (1788-1849), the Bengali scholar who helped found the Royal Asiatic Society. Another was Francis Johnson (1796-1876), the author of the *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Persian, Arabic, and English*, 1852. Even with these expert teachers, students typically only gained rudimentary knowledge of Indian languages at the beginning of the century. This was thought to be due to

²⁵ Danvers, Frederick Charles. 1894. *Memoirs of old Haileybury College*. London: A. Constable & Co.

²⁶ Malthus, Thomas. 1817. *Statements respecting the East India College*. London: John Murray.

²⁷ James, Patricia. 1979. *Population Malthus: his life and times* (Routledge: London).

²⁸ William Paley's (1743-1805) books: *A View of the Evidences of Christianity* (London, 1794) and *Natural History: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature* (1802) were leading textbooks on Christian thought of the day and were the subject of examinations at Cambridge in the first half of the 19th century.

²⁹ Lowell, A. Lawrence. 1900. *Colonial Civil Service*. London: Macmillan & Co.

the lack of final language exams to provide incentive.³⁰ To address this, external examiners were brought in to test students in the languages they would need for their work in India. One noted examiner was Sir Charles Wilkins FRS (1749 – 1836). He was the first English translator of *Bhagavad Gita* and invented the first printing typeface for Bengali. Even with this added provision, language learning at the East India College was only expected to provide beginner level proficiency.³¹

³² It was assumed that new Civil Servants would develop more knowledge of particular languages as needed once they began their posting in India.

Upon successfully completing their studies at the College, those newly posted to India, such as Prendergast, were expected to pass exams in one or more Indian languages. These were held at Fort St. George, Madras. The exam requirements for demonstrating proficiency in Indian languages also became successively harder. By the 1820s, candidates were asked to translate official documents from Hindustani into English, and were tested on their conversational fluency on business and legal matters. Interestingly, the details of individuals' EIC language examination performances were regularly published in the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*.³³ Even with these rigorous tests in place, it is not clear how much functional language ability these newly arrived appointees actually had. There was the option of continuing language studies at Fort St George. Some may also have gained additional proficiency in the local vernacular(s) through on the job experiences working with interpreters.

In this context, it is important to remember that many new British Civil Servants would have actually been born in India, as Prendergast was.³⁴ Since descendants of a family would work for the EIC for generation on generation, many of their children would have been born and grown up where their parents were posted. When older, they would have been sent back to England to attend school and perhaps training to enter the EIC themselves. This meant that many at the beginning of their EIC careers, like Prendergast, were actually returning to India where they had spent their childhood.³⁵ Growing up in Anglo-Indian households would have provided these children with the opportunity to learn the local vernacular(s). Exposure to these languages would have come through the company they kept with the multilingual house staff and their own children. In this context,

³⁰ Up to 1814 there were no exams in any Asian languages. Fisher, Michael H. 2001. 'Persian Professor in Britain: Mirza Muhammad Ibrahim at the East India College, 1826-44', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, 21: 24-32.

³¹ Stephens, H. Morse. 1900. An account of the East India College at Haileybury (1806-1857). In: *Colonial Civil Service*, ed. by A. Lawrence Lowell. London: Macmillan & Co.

³² There were many language prizes awarded to students at the EIC College but none were won by Prendergast. Danvers, Frederick Charles. 1894. *Memoirs of old Haileybury College* (Constable: Westminster).

³³ Prendergast's weak and limited performance and five other applicants' much more impressive attainments were reported the *Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register*, 1828, January to June, pp. 232-33.

³⁴ Prendergast was baptized at Fort St. George, Madras. "Thomas Prendergast." In *India, Births and Baptisms, 1786-1947, India Office Records*. British Library.

³⁵ Prendergast lived in Madras for most of his childhood. He was sent back to England to attend Harrow School when he was 12 years old.

many English children picked up the “chi-chi” Indian-English dialect.³⁶ Nevertheless, the language of childhood would not serve the adult EIC Civil Servant in mastering the formal and technical aspects of the written Indian languages.

There appears to have been a great deal of variation in whether those in the EIC had mastered the local Indian languages, or relied on interpreters and translators in their work. The EIC policy on what language should be chosen for public instruction in India was also changing. In 1835, Thomas B. Macaulay FRS FRSE PC, 1st Baron Macaulay (1800-1859), who served on the Council of India, instituted a dramatic change in Indian language policy.³⁷ He initiated the creation of a dedicated corps of local interpreters for indigenous languages to support the English-speaking government officials and public institutions. This meant that there was less expectation that British Civil Servants would communicate directly with the Indian people they ruled in their own language. As part of a larger shift, Macaulay called for the abolition of schools that taught Indian scholars the classical languages of Sanskrit and Arabic-- the medium of their own ancient cultural texts in religion, law and science. This was to be replaced with public institutions that delivered instruction in English. Prendergast himself was instrumental in founding just such a school, following the proposals set out in Macaulay's *Minute on Education*. The Pithapur Rajah's College was founded in 1852 in Cocanada (currently known as Kakinada) where Prendergast was then posted. It represents one of the earliest institutions to provide English education to Indian boys in south India, and still exists today.³⁸

It appears that while Prendergast was exposed to many languages in the course of his childhood and schooling, there is little evidence to indicate that he excelled at them. Although it is likely that many of his peers and colleagues did become proficient in the local Indian languages, the expectation that EIC Civil Servants would need to speak in them was waning in this period. The institutionalization of English over the Indian languages was a Victorian intervention.

³⁶ Buettner, Elizabeth. 2004. *Empire Families: Britons and Late Imperial India* (Oxford University Press: Oxford).

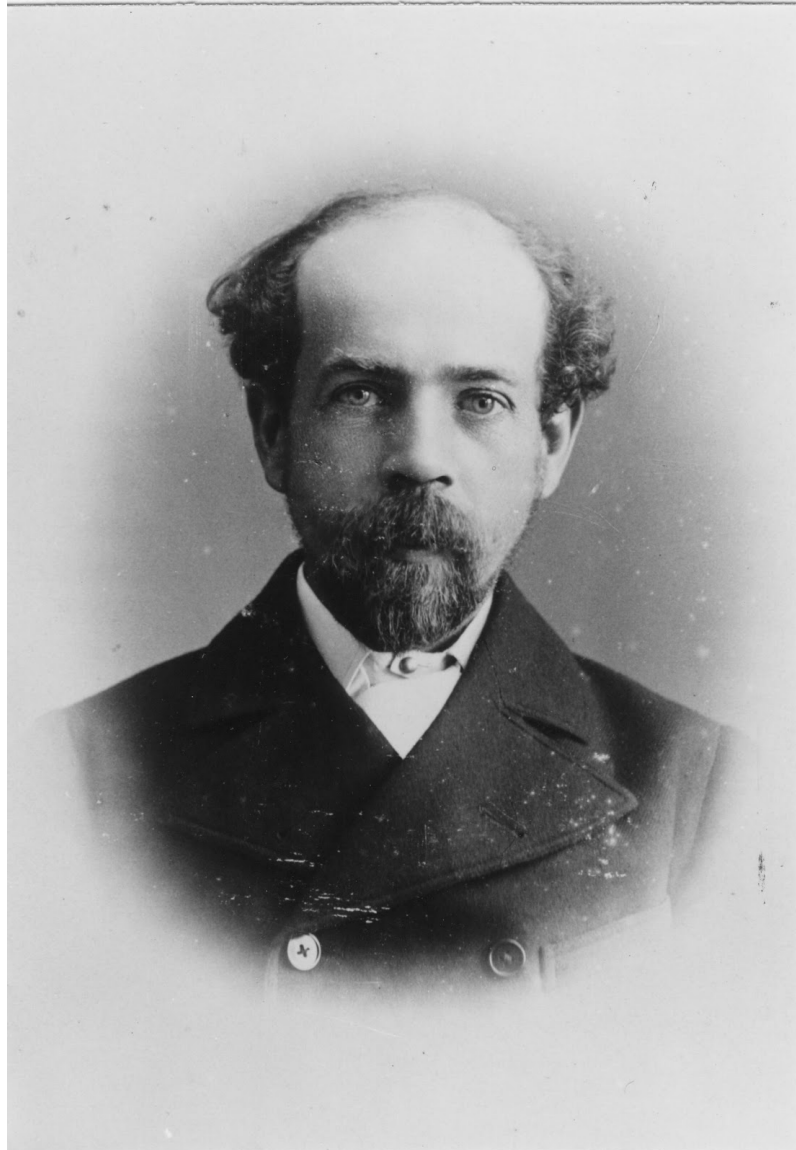
³⁷ Macaulay, Thomas Babington. [1835] 1965. Minute by the Hon'ble T. B. Macaulay, dated the 2nd February 1835. In: *Selections from Educational Records, Part I (1781-1839)*, ed. by Henry Sharp. National Archives of India: Delhi. pp. 107-117.

³⁸ Hemingway, F.R. 1915. *Madras District Gazetteers: Godavari* (The Superintendent, Government Press: Madras), p. 157.

THE TALE OF MATHEW KELLY AND HIS SON JAMES

Alan Rowe

The story begins with this man:



This image is in an old family album, full of mostly unnamed and undated relatives.

This man had been identified, by two different relatives, both now deceased. As both James ‘Surgeon’ Kelly, whose parents were Joanna and Mathew Kelly; and as Robert Murray, my first cousin three times removed, an architect in Edinburgh in the 1880s. This was a mystery. Which one was he, really?

In addition to the people, the album also contained another potential clue. The below photograph, soon identified as the memorial to the 1857 Mutiny at Cawnpore.



Memorial to the 1857 Mutiny at Cawnpore

Cousin Robert was definitely a relative, easily identified; that was simple Ancestry searching.

Did my family have an Indian connection? I didn't know of any. (Although there was that unexplained kukri in the attic...). Was there really some doctor called James Kelly, maybe in the Mutiny?

Background

My three-times great grandfather, Robert Murray, b. 1777 in Stobo, near Peebles in the Scottish Borders, was a miller. His wife, Elizabeth, came from a line of millers, who had also been burgesses for a few generations in Peebles. The family, then, was reasonably well-to-do.

Robert had five children: Elizabeth (1818), James (also 1818) and father of the architect Robert, Janet (1821), Joanna (1823), and David, my two-times great-grandfather (1825).

There are no birth certificates in Scotland's People for any of these Murrays. Nor was there a plausible marriage certificate for Joanna; all the others were easily accounted for.

James

There is no relevant Scottish birth certificate for a James Kelly.

However, there are Indian birth certificates, found in LDS, for a marriage and a set of children of a James Kelly and Mary Ann Buckman, all over Bengal: marriage (1872, Seetapore), Gertrude Kelly (1873, Lucknow), Alice Murray Kelly (1874, Seetapore), Percy James Kelly (1876, back in England), Clarence John Kelly (1877, Seetapore), Hector Rupert Kelly (1878, Seetapore), Vincent Edwin Kelly (1879, Naini Tal), Vivian Francis Kelly (1882, Ferozepore), Irene Joanna Kelly (1884, Ferozepore), and Lionel Matthew Kelly (1884, Murree). [Place names are spelled as in the original certificates]

These Indian birth certificates also showed that James was a 'surgeon'; actually, an Assistant Apothecary in 1870 in the Royal Artillery. [An apothecary was a kind of junior doctor – a status applied to those not fortunate enough to have a degree from a British university].

The 'Murray' part of his daughter Alice's name was strong evidence that this James Kelly was related to the Murrays, and the 'Joanna' part of daughter Irene's name strongly suggested that Joanna could be James's mother. This was confirmed when FindaGrave photographed the Peebles cemetery; Joanna's brother James's gravestone contains this inscription:



Joanna Murray died Peshawar 6 Aug 1882 age 39.

This matched an Indian death certificate for Joanna Kelly, who died on the same date.

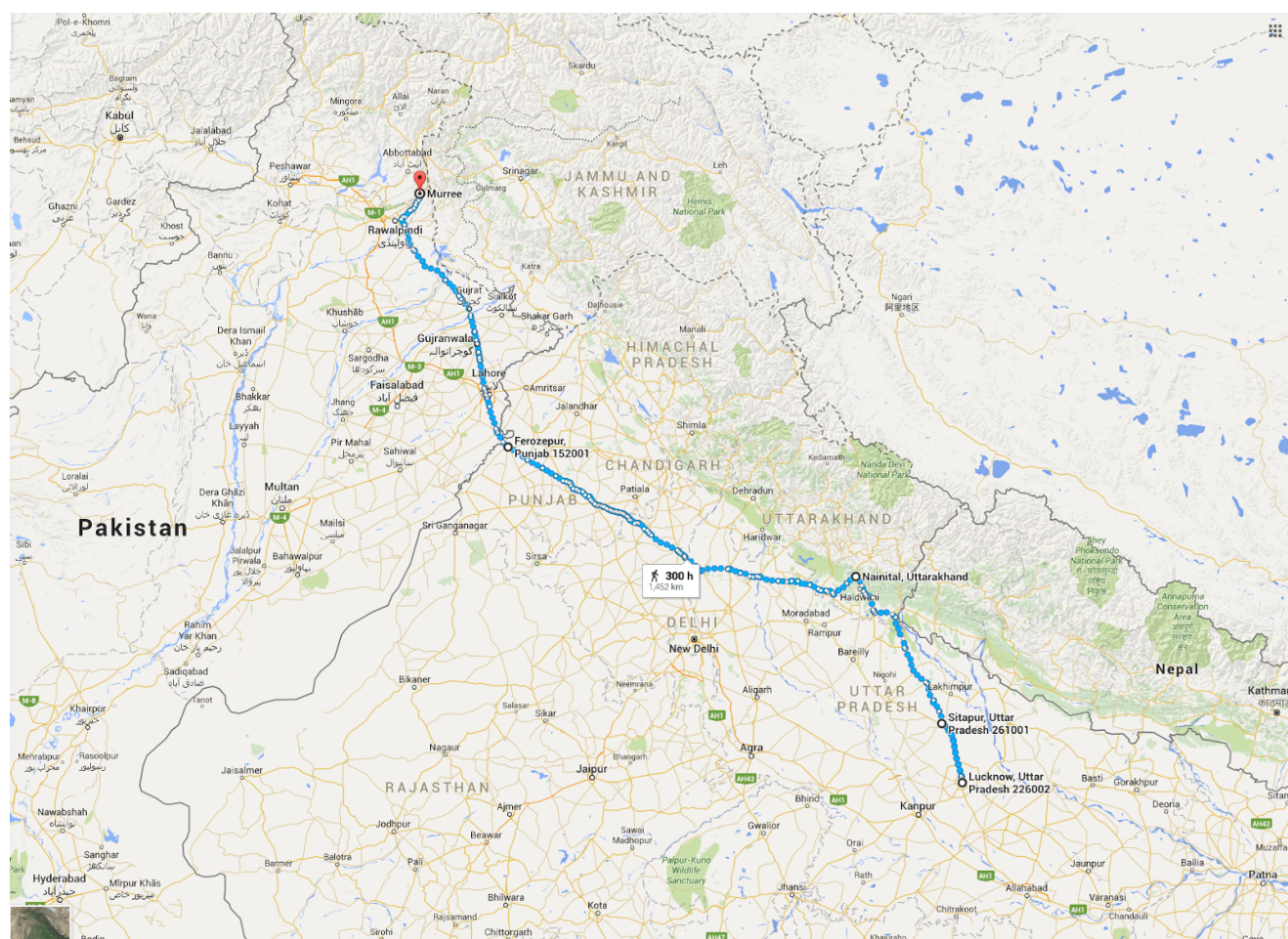
James Kelly, then, was indeed ‘Surgeon Kelly’, and the daughter of Joanna.

James retired back to England in 1901. He married again in 1907 after the death of Mary Ann in Bhagalpur, Bihar in 1891 at age 39, of dysentery. He died in 1931, aged about 84. His death certificate shows him to have been born in Peebles, around 1845.

Not much is known about James prior to his marriage in India. He left Peebles around 1846 (age 1); his siblings were all born in India. He was brought up in India, presumably at one of the schools which produced apothecaries, perhaps the Lower Orphan School in Calcutta. Further research is required.

He joined the Royal Horse Artillery in 1861 at age 14, married in 1872, was an Apothecary First Grade in 1886, Surgeon Lieutenant in 1895 and honorary Captain in 1901 at his retirement. The Army duly reported that he had one furlough in 1875 for precisely 1 year 4 months and 14 days (during which Percy was born, so he might have gone back to Britain), and another of 90 days in 1894 (not enough time to go back to Britain).

From the birth certificates of his children, we can plot his Army travels (or, more accurately, wife Mary Ann’s) in the military on Google Earth, from Lucknow in 1873 to Murree in 1884:



Travels of James

James entered the Military in 1861. This nearly matches, the start of the Raj. The Mutiny was over in 1858; the Crown – meaning Queen Victoria - had wrested control away from the East India Company (EIC). Instead of warfare, the British Government was intent on education, industry, and transport (railways, shipping, and canals), the telegraph – all the necessities of a modern country in the Empire. When the Suez Canal opened in 1870, India became considerably closer to London.

Ports Distance by Cape	Distance by Canal	Miles Saved by Canal	Percent of Voyage Saved by Canal
10,667	6,274	4,393	41.2

Presumably James's 1894 trip home was via Suez.

James's medical job in the RHA would have been less about war injuries and more about disease. Cholera was still a serious disease in India, killing millions (including his parents and siblings). The link between cholera and bacteria in drinking water had been found in 1854 in London, but was not generally believed until the 1880s. There was also measles, dysentery, smallpox, chicken pox, and plague, all of which could be fatal and which were carefully tracked by the bureaucracy.

The Raj brought relative peace and prosperity. Queen Victoria, after pressuring Disraeli for years to allow it, became the Empress of India in 1876 when James was in Seetapore station with his ever-growing family. Her title *Her Majesty Victoria, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, Empress of India* shows how important India was in the Empire. IND IMP (India Imperator/Imperatrix) was on Empire coins until Independence.

James' children

James had 9 children. Two died in infancy, but seven not only survived but led sometimes remarkable lives.

1. Daughter Gertrude married a bright young Scotsman, Hugh McPherson (later Sir Hugh and Lady Gertrude); Hugh became Governor of Bihar in 1925. His story deserves a separate article.
2. Son Percy became Chief Medical Office of Guyana.
3. Son Clarence was mauled by a leopard in Jaipalguri in Bhutan, and died of the resulting infection.
4. Son Hector became a farmer in Rhodesia.
5. Daughter Irene married a Frank Wheeler. Frank's brother (Sir) Henry Wheeler was also Governor of Bihar, before and after Hugh. Wheeler Hall in Patna University is named after him. (After some research, I am convinced

that these Wheelers are unrelated to General Hugh Wheeler, the man blamed for the loss of Cawnpore).

6. Son Vivian served in the London Regiment in WWI, and then moved to South Africa.
7. Son Lionel briefly captained a destroyer, HMS Sylvia, in WWI.

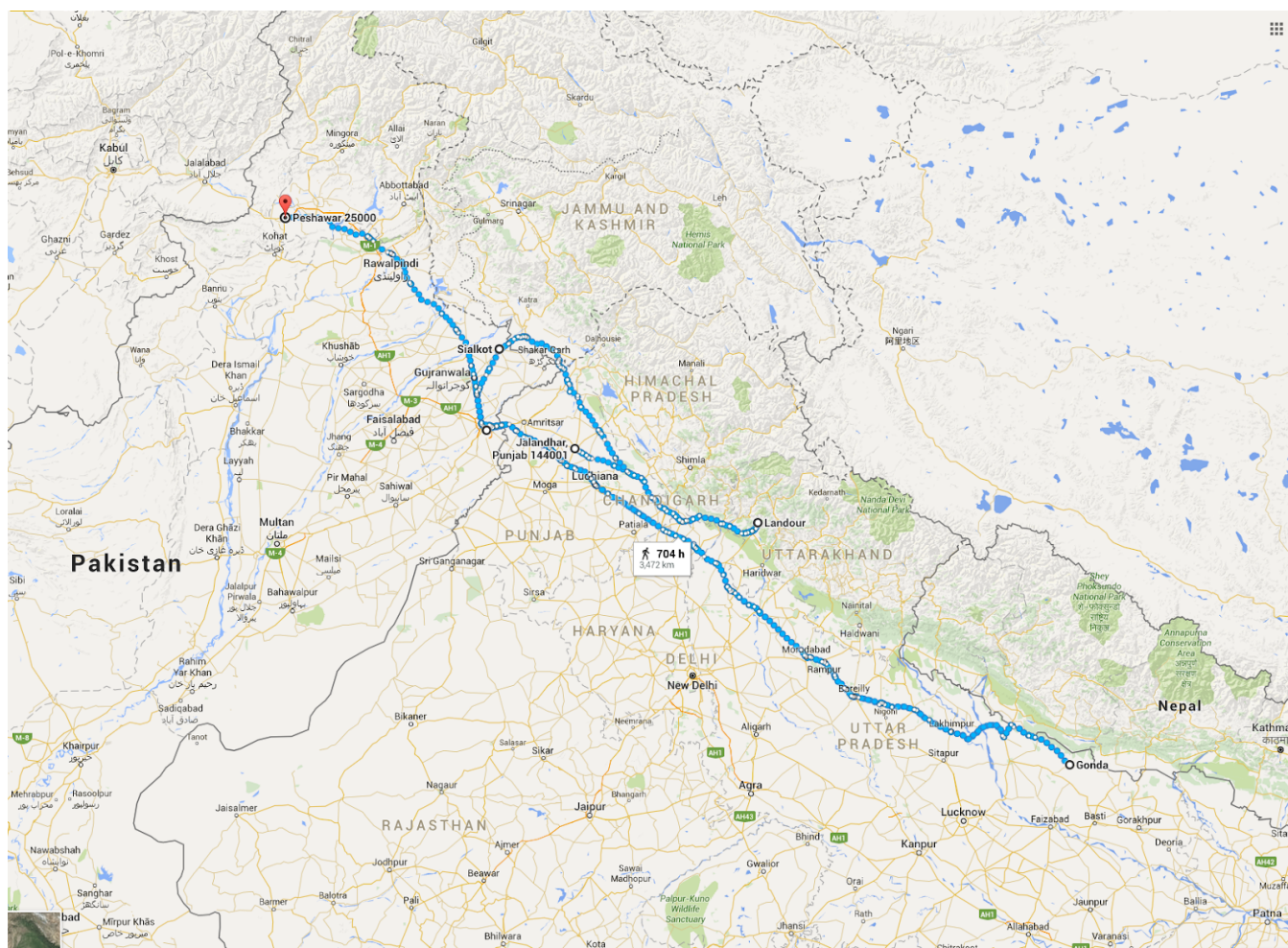
Joanna and Mathew, James's parents

James was the only child of Joanna and Mathew born in Scotland. But he had plenty of siblings born in India (also found in LDS): Elizabeth Kelly (1847, Jullunder), Mathew Henry Kelly (1850, Landour), Alice Jane Kelly (1854, Sealkote), Joanna Kelly (1857, Meean Meer), and William (1860, Gondah).

Of those, Alice's records are lost. Elizabeth, poor girl, married a sergeant in the Horse Artillery, a Henry Case, at age 14 in Peshawar and died a year later of cholera. The others all died in infancy. James was the only one to survive into adulthood - perhaps being left at the Apothecary school was a plus.

The children's birth and death certificates show Mathew was in the East India Company Bengal Horse Artillery - a private in 1847, corporal 1850, sergeant 1857 Horse Artillery, and in 1860 he was a Sergeant Quartermaster in the Royal Horse Artillery.

Again, we can see his travels, from Jullunder to Gondah.



Travels of Mathew.

Mathew had the (mis) fortune of being in India, as the Chinese saying warns about, in interesting times.

The British Library had found a record of a Sergeant Mathew Kelly in the Bengal Muster Roll 1858, showing he was a shoemaker, born in Limerick about 1825, red hair, 5'10", regimental number 4807. This is our man.

Mathew Kelly being Irish was hardly a surprise. There was a constant stream of immigration from Ireland to Scotland (and primarily Glasgow) in the early 19th century, with regular steamships between Belfast and Greenock or the Broomielaw in Glasgow. 18% of the Glasgow population was Irish in the 1841 census.

He enlisted with the EIC Bengal Horse Artillery in 1846 in Glasgow and arrived in India later that year. Why he enlisted is unknown –presumably he saw no future in being a shoemaker or labourer in Scotland, and why he picked the Bengal Artillery is unknown. However, he would certainly have known about the regiment, because the man in charge of it, a General Hugh Massy Wheeler, was from Tipperary, only a few miles from Limerick.

Mathew, Joanna, and James must have arrived in Jullunder in early 1847. 1847 is between the First (1845-1846) and Second (1848-1849) Sikh wars, and Jullunder, where Elizabeth was born in late 1847, was right in the middle of it all. Was he involved? We don't know – but the BHA certainly was. Welcome to India – now go and fight some locals!

After the Second Sikh war, the EIC annexed Punjab in 1849 and set to pacifying it. (This was also the period when they claimed the Kohinoor diamond as spoils of war, and sent it off to Queen Victoria. It is now the biggest jewel in the Queen Mother's Crown, which can be seen in the Tower of London.)

A garrison was established at Landour in the foothills of the Himalayas; now-Corporal Mathew's second child, Mathew Jr., was born there in 1850. There was a school at nearby Mussoorie. Perhaps Elizabeth went there. Perhaps she met there the sons and daughter of a military man called Sir Hugh Massy Wheeler, who had earlier commanded the troops in the Sikh wars, and later commanded a garrison at Cawnpore. (This is likely wishful thinking. Sir Hugh was then a Major General, known to Queen Victoria, mentioned on the floors of the Commons and House of Lords, and a Knight of the Realm. Mathew was a mere Corporal.)

By 1854, Mathew was in Sealkote, in modern-day Pakistan, where daughter Alice was born and died a month later. Sealkote had a convalescent hospital; maybe this was why Joanna was there.

After the Sikh wars, garrisons had been built in Jullunder, Sealkote, and Meean Meer. around Sikh holy city of Amritsar. Mathew was at the fort in Meean Meer (Lahore) in July 1857, when Joanna was born.

On 10 May 1857, sepoys mutinied in Meerut. The trigger was that rifle cartridges contained pork or beef fat, which angered the Muslims and Hindus respectively. (This was what, in modern terms, we'd call Fake News). The mutiny quickly spread to Sitapur, Jullunder, Meean Meer, Cawnpore, and many other

places in June 1857. In Meean Meer, the Indians in the garrison were disarmed on 15 May 1857, for safety; if the Sikhs had joined the mutineers, things would have got even worse.

In Cawnpore, the city was attacked by the forces of Nan Sahib. Gen Wheeler (controversially) surrendered on 27 Jun 1857. The surrender did not go well, and the British forces were largely captured and killed at the Satichaura Ghat massacre; the women and children were later all killed on 15 July 1857 at the Bibighar massacre. This of course enraged the British. Retribution was brutal. General Colin Campbell eventually took complete control back on December 6th 1857.

The Mutiny ended on 8 July 1858. The war and its aftermath resulted in the deaths of at least 800,000 to 10 million people with both combatant sides committing huge number of atrocities against civilians.

The Cawnpore Memorial was built in 1865. The inhabitants of Cawnpore were forced to pay a staggering £30,000 for the creation of the memorial; this was partially punishment for not coming to the aid of the women and children in Bibighar. ¹This when a soldier's pay was one shilling a day!

By Sept 1858, according to the muster rolls, Mathew was in Meerut, where the Mutiny all began. He was still there in 1859.

In 1860, the EIC's Bengal Artillery had become the Crown's Royal Horse Artillery, and he was now in Gondah as a Quartermaster Sergeant.

It looked like he'd been in the middle of the wars, and survived the wars.

But no, not really.

Joanna died of cholera in 1862; he died of cholera in either 1863 or 1865 in Peshawar (the death certificate is hard to read). Assuming James really had been in apothecary school for years (and who had signed up for the RA in 1861), it's not clear if they ever met again.

Another relative has family information that Mathew was awarded a medal. This was stolen years ago, and there is little information to be had. Presumably it was the Indian Mutiny medal – the last to be issued by the EIC. The clasp would indicate Lucknow, Delhi, or Central India. Records of the medals are available... except for the Bengal Artillery.

Enter FIBIS

An Ancestry friend told me about FIBIS. Using FIBIS data, I confirmed the story of all the various births and deaths, and learned about apothecaries and the rest. I am a long way from the British Library and cannot do more research in person, so I asked for a FIBIS volunteer to help. The delightful Xandra duly went off to the BL and discovered more fascinating facts about Mathew and James:

- Mathew, Joanna, and James age 5 months left on the Cressy, 1 Jun 1846 and arrived in India 5 Dec 1846. There was no Cressy in the Royal Navy at the time, so this must have been Cressy the emigrant ship; she made trips to

Australia and was one of the first four ships to carry emigrants to New Zealand in 1850.

- Best of all, Mathew Kelly the red-haired Irish shoemaker was not just Mathew Kelly. He was originally known as Mathew Cunneen! Born St Mary's Parish, Limerick.
- And sure enough, there is a marriage record of Joanna Murray and Mathew Cannan [sic] in Edinburgh in 1845. Joanna is correctly from Peebles, but other information is slightly wrong – she noted her father James as a farmer rather than a miller. It appears she was enticed by the young Irish shoemaker, and you have to guess that her parents did not approve (or even know) of this marriage.
- Why he changed his name is unknown (but you have to suspect something nefarious). Sadly, Mathew Cunneen's Irish records are no easier to find than Mathew Kelly's.

These Photographs:

The Cawnpore Photograph

Was Mathew in Cawnpore at the massacre? No – the survivor names are well-known and none was called Kelly. At the relief? Maybe. Certainly, the Bengal Artillery was involved. But it is not clear whether the 3rd Troop 1st Battalion was there.

Was the picture Mathew's? Certainly not. The Memorial was not completed until after Mathew died. My hypothesis is that James got it, knowing that Mathew had been involved, or maybe just because Cawnpore was so (in-)famous. Then he took it back to Scotland on his furlough, or maybe after he retired, and gave it to his cousin, my great grandmother to put in the album.

The James Kelly or Robert Murray photograph

I still don't know who it is! But if James gave great-grannie a picture of Cawnpore, maybe he also gave her one of himself.

In conclusion

In two generations, a (presumably) impoverished (and perhaps even slightly criminal) Irishman, Mathew Kelly, and his wife Joanna, had a family which survived the Mutiny and still produced a couple of Governors of an Indian state.

Life in the Jewel of the Crown was really quite remarkable.

MADAM BOWCHER OF BOMBAY AND HER DISREPUTABLE SALONS

Sue Paul

In December 1683, Richard Keigwin was excluded from the East India Company council at Bombay. Trouble had been bubbling up on the island for some time and Keigwin's exclusion resulted in him leading a revolt against the Company, taking the fort by force and, for nearly a year, ruling Bombay allegedly in the name of the King. Much of this earlier unrest involved George Bowcher and John Pettit but stirring that cauldron of discontent had been the notorious Madam Bowcher.³⁹

Her husband, George Bowcher first appears in the records of the Company in 1677 when, as chief of the factory at Calicut, he refused to pay the ransom demanded for the safe return of the commander of a European country trader captured by Malabar pirates. The consequence of this refusal was the brutal murder of the hostage. By January 1682, Bowcher was a member of the Company's council at Surat examining the case against John Pettit, the Deputy Governor of Bombay. Pettit was in dispute with his superior, Sir John Child President of Surat. Bowcher, Pettit's friend, ensured that he was allowed to retain his position for the time being against Child's wishes but, seven months later, dispatches were received from London supporting Child and dismissing both men who were ordered home for trading in opposition to the Company. As *interlopers* they were guilty of operating without a licence.

The pair refused to leave and made plans to discredit the Company locally by announcing to the Mogul Emperor, Aurungzebe, and the Dutch and French factories that the East India Company was finished and a new company, for which they were agents, was being set up in London. This new company would replace the old. Their claim may not have been an exaggeration. Back home a breakaway group had been expelled from the Company and were attempting to obtain a charter for a rival one. However, it would be many years before this came to a conclusion. Child retaliated by confiscating the renegades' goods and using the proceeds of their sale to fund action against them. When the two men refused to follow the orders to return home, Child began intercepting their mail, and uncovered the letter Bowcher wrote to his replacement at Calicut claiming that Child was *the maddest President that ever was in Surat*.

All this took place in the run-up to Keigwin's Rebellion but it is unclear from the records whether Bowcher and Pettit took part in its instigation. The Company had no hesitation in claiming that the whole insurrection was due to them but this ignored the separate and overwhelming dissatisfaction of the Bombay garrison

³⁹ Unless otherwise stated, this story has been taken from *Keigwin's Rebellion (1683-1684): An Episode in the History of Bombay*, Ray & Oliver Strachey, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1916

commanded by Keigwin. There is no surviving evidence of their being parties in the plot before it commenced but, once it had, they fully embraced the mutineers. Pettit was appointed their commercial representative and the treatment received by the two men was one of the main grievances against the Company listed by the rebels.

Part of the reprisals instigated by Child was to seize the slaves belonging to Madam Bowcher and ban anyone connecting to the factory from having anything to do with her and her husband. Although little else is known about her, Bowcher's wife appears to have played an important part in the Rebellion. During the summer of 1683, her tea-parties were a hotbed of agitation against local officials of the Company. From her salon came *periodical whispers of the most audacious and unprincipled conversations*. Her friends were threatened with being banished. Despite his failure in repatriating Bowcher and Pettit, Child did succeed in sending another troublemaker, Henry Smith, home but Smith's equally difficult pregnant wife was not fit to travel with him. Susanna Smith was taken in by Madam Bowcher and the two women were described as *a couple of fit companions*.

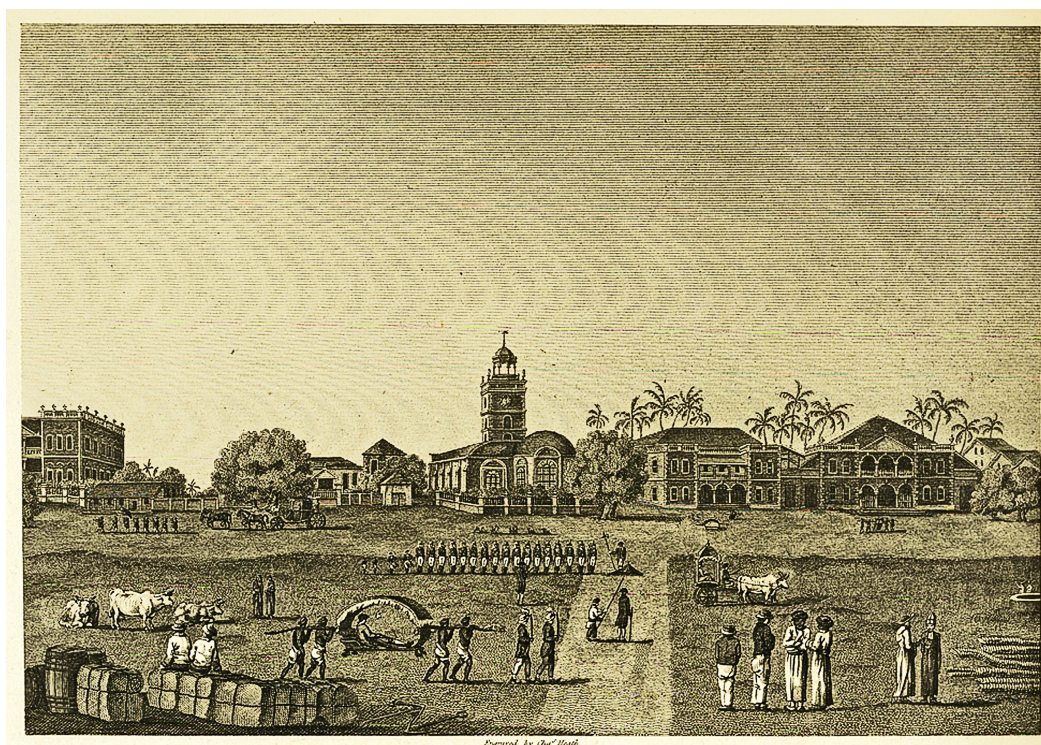


Bombay Harbour: Fishing Boats in the Monsoon

Concerned that Child would eventually succeed in expelling them, Pettit and Bowcher conspired to gain the protection of Aurungzebe. Debtors were strictly forbidden to leave the Mogul Empire so Pettit set about running up debts with local traders. When he refused to pay, he was arrested at Surat and, thus, became impossible to repatriate. Bowcher then slipped away to Aurungzebe's court in an

attempt to secure a trade deal with the Empire.⁴⁰ In their absence, Child spread false rumours about the two men claiming they were *very naughty men* who *will turn Mahomitans*. Madam Bowcher kept up a campaign countering the rumours and retaliated by initiating her own. At Madam Bowcher's tea-parties there was great celebration at the news of Keigwin's mutiny. She was described as *coming out in a transport of joy* to publically share her elation in front of witnesses to demonstrate to Child her contempt of him.

Meanwhile, Bowcher's negotiations with Aurungzebe were going nowhere until his interpreter, *who often took a large dose of arrack*, seized the opportunity of the emperor riding out one day to break through the guards. Holding Bowcher's petition over his head, he called out loudly in Persian. Catching the Emperor in a good mood, the order was given for a firmaund to be drawn up immediately giving Bowcher and Pettit trading rights better than those of the Company. Bowcher returned in triumph. Later, having read the petition, Aurungzebe released Pettit. Child, in desperation to rid himself of the interlopers, bribed Bowcher's cook to poison him. The cook took the money and promptly told his master about the plot.⁴¹



St Thomas's Church from Bombay Green

Inevitably, Keigwin's Rebellion came to an end when the King sent Admiralty Judge John St John to Bombay as his envoy. As part of the clear-up, St John began a campaign against the two interlopers and set about collecting depositions against

⁴⁰ *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot*, Sudip Bhattacharya, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2013, pages 43-44

⁴¹ *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot*, Sudip Bhattacharya, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2013, pages 44, 48

those attending Madam Bowcher's salon. Child embarked on hostilities against Aurungzebe in retaliation for his agreement with Bowcher. In counter-retaliation, the Mogul Governor of Surat marched the English living there through the streets with their necks in irons. In recognition of his favoured status, the one exception was Bowcher and his servants. The stress had been too much for Child who became paranoid, believing St John and Bowcher were conspiring together against him.

Nothing was further from the truth. As a result of St John's investigations, a writ was issued by the King demanding that Bowcher and Pettit return to England. It reached Surat in June 1685. There then began a farcical process of serving it on the men. At the first attempt, the writ was returned unopened with the explanation that Madam Bowcher flew *into her usual scurilous language*. For days, the writ went back and forth until, in despair, Child declared that it had been *sufficiently served, though not exactly according to the rule*. Despite this, it was to be years before it had any effect when the New East India Company eventually came into being and started doing business in the city. It was impossible to officially employ anyone against whom a King's writ was outstanding. Although its business was largely in Bowcher's hands he is not to be found on any list of council members.

Many years later when all the other characters in this story were either long dead or had moved on, George Bowcher was still living and prospering in Surat. Permitted by the Emperor to trade in his own right, he was listed as one of the contributors to the funds to build St Thomas' church in Bombay.⁴² He was also a benefactor of the Bodleian Library at Oxford where the manuscript copy v of the *Vendidad* he gifted is still one of its treasures. However, following her rare appearance as a woman in the records what subsequently happened to Madam Bowcher is not recorded.

⁴² *The Strange Case of Lord Pigot*, Sudip Bhattacharya, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2013, page 52

THE PARTRIDGES & PYMMS

James Sinclair

My Gt. Grandfather, Thomas William Partridge, was born in 1851 in Wazaribad, India, to Thomas George Partridge and his wife Mary Ann Fee. All their four sons, who had 'George' in their first names, died in infancy, and Thomas William was the only one to survive. So 'George' was an unlucky name in the family. When he was only six years of age, his father died, and though his mother survived and remarried, he was brought up by his elder sister, Jane and her husband Matthew (Bertie) Leslie. He was in boarding school from the age of six when the Indian Mutiny broke out in 1857, and the whole school had to be evacuated to a place of safety, which entailed a march of several miles, Thomas struggling to keep up with the rest of the party.

After his schooling he trained as a pharmacist in Calcutta, and then set up his own business in Darjeeling, the chemist shop being located in a house (Elfin Hall) on Commercial Row, the business being called 'Partridge & Co.' There was a quip in a local amateur performance, when an injured player shouted, 'Take me to Mr Partridge. I feel like an exploded cartridge!' Thomas was the pillar of the Darjeeling community and a High Mason. He was one of the co-founders of the Everest Masonic Lodge in Darjeeling.

He married my Gt. Grandmother, Charlotte Pymm in Kurseong and Hope Town in 1833, and they raised a family in Darjeeling of one son, Thomas George, (despite the unlucky name), and three daughters, Nora, Violet and Elsie. Nora (my Grandmother) was the first to marry. Her future husband, Mohiuddin Meerza (Mohi for short) used to pass the family on their way back from church while riding his thoroughbred chestnut mare round The Mall, at which point he used to doff his hat and wish them the time of day, whilst Nora smiled at him shyly from beneath her parasol. Mohi was determined to find out who this beauty was, and when he inquired, was told 'Partridge's daughter. Teaches the mandolin,' so he quickly applied for lessons! Well, Mohi never learned how to play the mandolin, and instead he and Nora used to sit on the settee holding hands. They had fallen in love – virtually at first sight, and when he asked Thomas for his daughter's hand in marriage, it was quickly accepted. He was such a nice little fellow, the family agreed, and the difference in the colour of their skins didn't matter one bit (Mohi was quite dark skinned whilst his wife had a peaches-and-cream complexion).

Mohi was of noble birth, being a Grandson of the Nawab Nazim of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, so they led an active social life whilst they lived in their flat in Calcutta, being invited to such important events as the Governor's Garden Party, and other social occasions, such as balls and dances. Their only daughter,

Zena (my mother), was born in 1907 in Calcutta. From the time of her birth, she was doted on by her Grandmother, Charlotte, and became a favourite of the family, and she was often left to be cared for by her Grandmother.

Charlotte herself came from a large family – the Pimms (changed to Pymm in later years). Her father, James Joseph Pimm was born in Derbyshire in 1829, married a Hannah Radford and had two daughters from her – Mary Ann and Ellen. After Hannah's death 1854 (probably in childbirth), he married an Emma Thomas later that same year. Then, for some unknown reason, he left his wife and two daughters back in England when he travelled to Canada, where he lived alone for about six years, before sending for his wife and daughters, because his first son, James Edward was born in Vancouver in 1860, followed by his brother Russell Austin a year later. So, he had not had time to start a family with Emma previously, and a gap of 6 years without birth control would seem inconceivable (pardon the pun) in those days. Then James joined a ship sailing from Canada to the Far East, and took his wife, who was pregnant with my Gt. Grandmother, with him on the voyage. However, since the birth of Charlotte was imminent, he left her in a port in China while he sailed to India, with the promise to collect her on his return journey. However, Emma followed him on the next boat to India and my Gt. Grandmother, Charlotte, was born in Calcutta in 1863. James and Emma had apparently left their family (their two sons and the two daughters from his first marriage) back in Canada, but he obviously sent for them to join them in India, for the whole family then travelled to Australia in 1865. Emma was again pregnant on the journey, and they were accompanied by Mary Ann (aged 15), Ellen (aged 13), James Edward (aged 5), Russell Austin (aged 4) and Charlotte (aged 2) according to a Shipping List, and their daughter, Louisa Maria, was born in Castlemaine, Australia in June 1865. They stayed in Australia for about 2 years, because there is a shipping record of James travelling back to India in 1867 and he and Emma had another son, Robert William being born in India in the winter of that year. Emma died 4 years later in 1871, and James then married his third wife, Charlotte Rachael Neill, the same year. They had five children, but four of them all died in childhood and infancy, and only one son, John Harold, survived.

James worked in Howrah as a Hotel Keeper, then later as a Jailor in Jessore Jail. Having a large family to cope with – James' 6 children from his former marriages, and the children from Charlotte Rachel, must have made her ill-tempered, because she was cruel to her stepchildren, holding their heads in a bucket of water if they misbehaved, so as soon as they were old enough, James Edward and Russell Austin left home, and this is probably when they changed their surname from Pimm to Pymm, as they did not wish to be associated with Charlotte Rachel and her family. However, James Pimm died at Hazaribagh while serving as Jailor of The Central Jail in 1885, aged only 55 years.

Of the surviving children, James Edward and his brother Russell Austin led successful lives. James married an Indo-Portuguese lady, Levia Yettie and raised 5 children – 3 girls and 2 boys, whilst Russell married a Jane McDonnell and they had two pretty little daughters, Zoe and Winnie Pymm. Russell became a personal friend of Rudyard Kipling (although he was not so well-known at the time), and also Alexander Malcolm Jacob, owner of the fabulous Jacob Diamond, and he made him Zoe's Godfather. One day cheeky Zoe, revealed to him the nickname that her Uncle Jimmy and her father had privately given him, and then the fat was in the fire, and Jacob flew into a terrible rage, and broke off all connections with the family.

My mother, Zena, married her European tea-planter husband Tracey Sinclair, and she recounts her life story in her autobiography 'Petals in the Dust.' It was not a successful marriage, but that's another story...

When I look back and contemplate the colourful lives three generations and more of my family who lived in the vibrant and exotic years of the British Raj in India, I think to myself 'What a wonderful world.'



Back Row: Grandfather Mohi Meerza, Elsie Partridge, My Grandfather's brother, Moin. Middle Sitting: Grandmother Nora Partridge (Meerza), Charlotte Partridge, Mable Partridge (Ross) with Baby Rowena, George Partridge. Children Squatting: Centre, Zena Meerza, with her cousins. Mussoorie 1916.

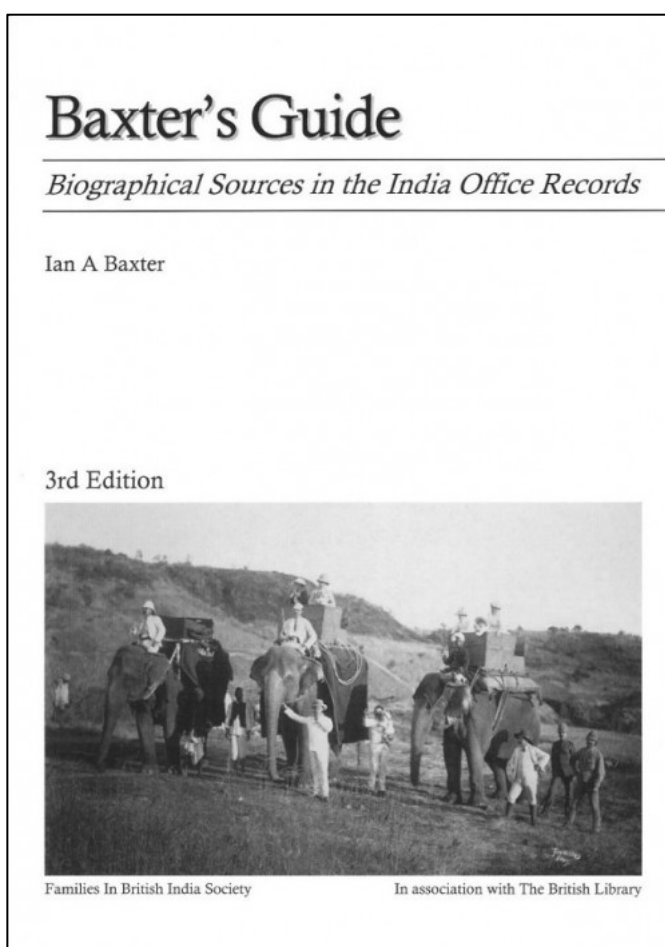
IN MEMORIAM – IAN BAXTER

1943 - 2020

David Blake

Ian Alastair Baxter who died on 20 January this year was the son of a shopkeeper (we think an iron monger) in a small town south west of Glasgow where he grew up and indeed, he never lost his Scottish accent despite living in London for almost all his adult life. He was born in April 1943, the younger of identical twins: in fact, a 'clone' as he sometimes liked to point out. He attended Glasgow University obtaining an M.A. degree in classics before moving to University College London to take a course in archive administration to become a qualified archivist. He joined the India Office Library and Records in 1966 and remained there for his entire career. His initial appointment was as curator of the Maps Collection, but in due course he took over responsibility for biographical enquiries and began work on his *Brief Guide to Biographical Sources* in the India Office Library and Records first published in 1979, and reprinted many times since. That booklet, as Fibis members need no telling, has been an absolutely invaluable aide to researchers delving into their past family connections in India. It is modest and unpretentious (words which could equally be used of its author) but based on detailed research into the India Office's voluminous biographical sources. It has made finding the right sources for a biographical enquiry incalculably easier than it was hitherto, and indeed one trembles to think how many researchers in the past have met brick walls which it would have enabled them to surmount. The one person who needed his Guide the least was Ian himself since he had an elephantine memory and could almost always answer a biographical question without having to consult it. Following its publication, Ian continued to head the Biographical Enquiries section and produced several short unpublished aids providing practical advice for both readers and staff on research in the India Office Records. He was also asked to catalogue a series of records known as 'The Board's Collections' (ref IOR F4), and this became his chief responsibility for the remainder of his career. The Board of Control was established in 1794 to oversee the activities of the East India Company, and the Board's Collections comprise briefing papers assembled by East India Company officials when submitting draft despatches to India for the Board's approval. It is an enormous series and a very rich source documenting the Company's administration of its Indian possessions. Why Ian was asked to undertake its cataloguing is unknown, but it is tempting to think that his superiors perceived that his particular qualities of patience and stamina meant that he was well fitted for such a mammoth task and would be undaunted by it. Needless to say, the result is a meticulous work of high quality with the description of each collection achieving both scrupulous accuracy and succinctness: not a word is wasted (again the same could equally be said of its author).

Ian lived at the Barbican in accommodation shared with his brother (who predeceased him). He was an intensely private person, it was difficult to draw him out of his shell, and probably no one can claim to have really known him. Despite being (apparently) so self-contained, or perhaps because of it he was, one suspects, rather lonely. Though reticent to a fault, if you did engage him in conversation, he was ready to talk and always had something pertinent to say. Following retirement in 2003 he would usually attend FIBIS meetings until his worsening arthritis made that difficult, and even when forced to use a rollator walking aid would always come to occasional reunion lunches with a few 'old India hands' from the IOLR. Ultimately Ian remains an enigma, not quite a recluse but with marked reclusive tendencies. Nevertheless, he found fulfilment in his work as a professional archivist and with 'Baxter's Guide' he will have a lasting memorial.



BOOK REVIEWS:

The British in India: Three Centuries of Ambition and Experience by David Gilmour, Allen Lane, ISBN 978-0241004524, hardback, pp617, £30

This is a fascinating and engaging, if hefty, read. It is neither a tub-thumping exercise on how Britain's contribution to India was completely positive, nor a breast-beating one on how dreadful it was, but a social history. Who were these people, how and why did they get there and back, and what were their lives like? The Anglo-Indian community is mentioned but is not the book's primary concern.

Citing the Billy Connolly episode of *Who Do You Think You Are?* Gilmour concludes that most people did not go to India to conquer it, govern it or amass a fortune, but were soldiers who were sent there. Furthermore, compared to emigrations of over 5 million to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and America in the second half of the 19th century, the British population of what then constituted British India was no more than 155,000.

Although the military accounted for most of the British population, until 1857 British troops were outnumbered by Indians fighting on their side in a ratio of 1 to 6. Many of the non-native troops were in the British Army and had served elsewhere, while others had been recruited into the Indian Army, which paid better. By no means were all of them English: half of the British troops in India in the 19th century were Irish, and Scots were also well represented.

The journey out was perilous and long, particularly before the Suez Canal was opened and, pre-railways, travel on arrival was equally arduous, taking, for example, 3 months to travel from Calcutta to Delhi by river. Railways made a huge difference, employing British engineers before latterly becoming associated with the Anglo-Indian community.

Pre 1857, The Honourable East India Company accounted for the presence of many young men, and in the early days before examinations began there was a degree of nepotism with recruitment of sons, nephews and cousins. Some returned to England when their time expired, some did expire, while others stayed on and had families, sometimes with Indian or Anglo-Indian wives.

The working lives of District Officers and Collectors was hard and lonely with numerous responsibilities and they were often moved from place to place, working outdoors, whereas men who worked for the Political Service tended to stay in one place where they could build a rapport with local rulers.

There were medical men: the Indian Medical Service, recruited in Britain, who would learn about local conditions and diseases before joining a regiment, and the Indian Subordinate Medical Department, generally born in India.

The planters were never numerous and led isolated lives in their plantations: growing indigo at first, but jute, coffee and tea soon followed.

Missionaries became more numerous as time went on but initially were not welcome as the EIC had no wish to convert Hindus and Muslims. In later years Muslims were

generally tolerated but Hinduism with its plethora of gods was disapproved of, which only succeeded in causing bad feeling.

Until the last decades of the EIC most British men in India spent at least part of their lives living with an Indian lady, or bibi. It was fairly common for a British man to have a family with their bibi and later to marry an English girl, resulting in two sets of children. After the accession of Queen Victoria and the consequent Victorian values that came into play, the era of the bibi went into sharp decline and within decades bibis were not even spoken of and effectively written out of history. Despite Victorian disapproval however, mixed marriages did still happen.

Generally, young British officers and civil servants were discouraged from marrying and when marriages did occur it was usually within the regiment. Most British men either met future wives on board ship or travelled back to England to find one.

The first British inhabitants were EIC men who lived within their forts, but by the late 18th century they were building and furnishing houses, generally bungalows with the servants' quarters and kitchens situated away from the house. All had servants with outdoor tasks generally performed by Hindus, while cooks were usually Muslim. British women usually relied on servants to do not only household tasks but also the shopping.

Children born in the last days of the Raj are almost unanimous in memories of a golden childhood, doted on by servants, the ayah in particular, and those who were sent "home" to England were generally miserable. Most British children born in India were educated in India in establishments based on the English public-school model.

Traditionally the memsahib has had a bad press – back in England they would have been fairly ordinary middle class, but in India they were a part of the ruling elite, and they were often isolated both geographically and because much of their husbands' social life revolved around "the club" which was generally a men-only establishment. Even looking after the children was done by other people. A minority filled their time by learning an Indian language, studying local flora and fauna or sketching the landscape.

British society in India is accused of being philistine and it usually was, although there were some actors, musicians and writers. Amateur dramatic societies were popular, but for the men, sport played a big part in life with shooting, equine sports and cricket being the most prevalent. It was of course difficult to find 22 Englishmen in remote areas, but fortunately the Indians readily took to the sport.

Returning to England, or, for the many who had never been, going for the first time, was often longed for but always difficult. Many of the Partition generation found life very hard initially. The country had changed, its customs seemed unfamiliar, domestic help was both scarce and expensive and it was cold. Some opted for other Commonwealth countries and some stayed on, although as time went on most specialist jobs were taken by Indians.

Gilmour concludes with a quotation from the Indian Prime Minister in 2005. "Today, with the balance and perspective offered by the passage of time and the benefit of hindsight, it is possible for an Indian Prime Minister to assert that India's experience with Britain had its beneficial consequences too".

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

ALAN ROWE – Alan is a retired programmer, born in Glasgow. He now lives in California.

JAMES SINCLAIR – James Sinclair was born in Darjeeling in 1939, in the last decade of the British Raj, and spent most of his childhood and teenage years in the town. He went to Mount Hermon School (where the famous playwright Sir Tom Stoppard also went as a boy). His ancestors lived, worked and died in Darjeeling for over 100 years. He was the last of the generation to leave in 1957. After that, he worked in Calcutta before migrating to England in 1969 and worked in the PYE group of industries in Cambridge, then worked in the Civil Service in Chessington Surrey until he retired.

MARIAN PRESS - Marian Press is a retired academic librarian living in Toronto. She has a particular interest in researching her Parker and Skottowe families, many of whose members served the HEIC in St. Helena and India.

MARJORIE LORCH - Marjorie Lorch, PhD is Professor of Neurolinguistics in the Department of Applied Linguistics and Communication in the School of Social Sciences, History and Philosophy at Birkbeck, University of London. Her interdisciplinary research addresses questions regarding the mental construction of language from a variety of theoretical and methodological perspectives. A major strand of her recent work focuses on 19th century approaches to understanding language acquisition and learning, function, and disorder. Her programme of research involves numerous international cross-disciplinary collaborations and has resulted in over 100 papers in peer-reviewed publications.

SUE PAUL - Sue Paul has retired after many years as a senior Project Manager in the IT industry. She has had a number of articles published in a wide variety of specialist magazines and journals over many years. An experienced family historian, her research for her biography of Captain Thomas Bowrey, a late seventeenth century/early eighteenth-century East Indies mariner and merchant, “Jeopardy of Every Wind” (to be published in April 2020), engendered her interest in other actors in the region.

VIVIEN BROWN - Vivien Sinclair Brown was born and brought up in Cambridge, England where she has concentrated much of her family history research this past 45 years. A passionate genealogist, she has also researched her family in India, Scotland and Germany. In 2015, Vivien retired from 23 years of teaching Family and Consumer Science in high school. Currently she enjoys working as a Family History Consultant at a local university library, expanding her own family history, going to the theatre, and travelling. Vivien lives in the USA with her husband, Gordon. They have 4 married children and 10 grandchildren.

NOTICES

THANK YOU:

The Trustees would like to extend their gratitude to those who continue to support the Society. To date we have received:

- Donations from members, as thanks for the help and support they have received from the Trustees and members in their genealogical journey;
- A legacy donation from a long-standing member as thanks for the help and support during years of membership;
- Thanks go to all those who have helped and who continue to support and encourage members and attendees at events such as fairs and exhibitions, by giving of their time and expertise.

We are delighted to have received all such donations as they enable us to continue the much-valued and widely-appreciated work of FIBIS. On behalf of all those interested in family history in British India, we extend our sincere gratitude.

ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS:

Members are reminded that the editor is happy to consider articles, letters and information for inclusion in the Journal. Material should be sent to editor@fibis.org. Please quote the sources of information by including references wherever possible. Guidelines for formatting material can be found on the inside front cover of this journal.

EVENTS AND MEETINGS – SAVE THE DATE!

AN UP-TO-DATE LIST OF EVENTS AND MEETINGS CAN ALWAYS BE FOUND AT WWW.FIBIS.ORG/EVENTS2020

FIBIS Meetings 2020 and 2021

20 June 2020, FIBIS Open Meeting with AGM

Unfortunately, this meeting cannot be held at the Union Jack Club due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

In its place we are planning a virtual, online AGM this year and hope that you will all join us. Details will be posted on the FIBIS website shortly.

October's open meeting is still on track and we hope to see you there:

17 October 2020 at The Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, London SE1 8UJ

FIBIS CONFERENCE 2021

Following the success of the 2018 FIBIS conference, another of our bespoke residential conferences is in the pipeline.

It will run from Friday to Sunday, 24 to 26 September 2021, at the Hawkwell House Hotel, Oxford OX4 4DZ

Please contact Penny Tipper events@fibis.org for more information and to register an interest.