



# CHOWKIDAR

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Editor: Dr. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

## British Association For Cemeteries In South Asia (BACSA)

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## Notes on BACSA

The Association was formed in October 1976 to bring together people with a concern for the many hundreds of European cemeteries, isolated graves and monuments in South Asia.

There is a steadily growing membership of over 1,700 (1997) drawn from a wide circle of interest- Government; Churches; Services; Business; Museums; Historical & Genealogical Societies. More members are needed to support the rapidly expanding activities of the Association - the setting up of local committees in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaysia etc., and the building up of a Records archive in the Oriental and India Office Collections in the British Library; and many other projects for the upkeep of historical and architectural monuments.

The enrolment fee and subscription rates are obtainable from the Secretary.



The Association has its own newsletter, *Chowkidar*, which is distributed free to all members twice a year and contains a section for 'Queries' on any matter relating to family history or condition of a relative's grave etc. There are also many other publications both on cemetery surveys and aspects of European social history out East.

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## The Lost Graves Of Whampoa

With the reversion of Hong Kong to China this year another chapter of Imperial history has closed, but at the same time, new and exciting discoveries have been made which demonstrate that the Chinese are reacting sensitively to their colonial past. The port of Canton (now Guangzhou) formed the innermost part of a huge natural delta, with Hong Kong and a scatter of islands on the sea coast. Ships coming to Canton for trade had to anchor at Whampoa, where customs duties were levied, and goods transferred to small cargo boats and shipped upstream. In time Whampoa itself became a busy port with dock facilities and various trades which catered for foreign merchants. Cemeteries were needed too and land was got on lease from local people. A great number of graves existed on French Island and Dane's Island, the earliest of which were dated to 1748.

Although it had been thought that the majority of foreign graves were deliberately destroyed during China's Cultural Revolution in the 1970s, in fact a number did survive, and are gradually coming to light. Tombstones have been recovered from villages in the vicinity, including that of Alexander Everett, the First Resident Minister of the United States to China, who died on 28 June 1847. A touching letter from his doctor, Peter Parker, dated 10 July from Canton, related how 'the funeral obsequies took place the following day, the extreme heat of the season and climate admitting of no delay'. The remains were conveyed to Whampoa by the Steamer *Corsair*. Martyn Gregory, who recently returned from a visit to China, has reported that Dr Joseph Ting of the Canton Museum of History has been instrumental in getting Everett's tombstone re-erected, as the dramatic picture on p36 shows.

Also come to light, in excellent condition, is a stone with the following inscription 'Here Lies interr'd the remains of Captain Abel Vyvyan late Commmander of the Canton Indiaman who departed this life the 12th of October 1797 aged 34 Years' and added interest is given by a painting of the East Indiaman *Canton*, which completed eight voyages between London and China from 1790 to 1809.

A Parsi cemetery was rediscovered too, in 1983, by staff members of the Guangzhou Antiquities Bureau, when an extensive survey of historic sites and buildings was conducted. The hill on which it was found is still known to local people as 'Parsee Hill', and a total of ten adult graves and three of children were identified, the earliest of 1847 and the latest, 1852. These tombstones are of granite, with English and Gujarati inscriptions, for the custom of exposing the Parsi dead in 'Towers of Silence' could not be followed here.

The problems faced by the Chinese restorers are well illustrated in Martyn Gregory's photographs, and indeed will be very familiar to BACSA. Rampant greenery, particularly bamboo, broken tombs, and lack of resources are evident. Some

of the graves were already in a bad condition in the 1930s, when they were noted by HS Smith in his 'Diary of Events and the Progress on Shameen'. Luckily a nearly comprehensive list survives, illustrating the very cosmopolitan nature of late 18th and early 19th century Canton, with Spanish, Dutch, Swiss, German, Danish, American, Parsi, and Australian names all noted. Some were killed by pirates, like Edward Auguste of Switzerland, on 8 August 1847. Others included Mrs Lydia Hale Devan of New York 'the first Lady Missionary to the people of Canton' who died in October 1846, aged only 28. Many sea captains, officers and sailors, are listed too, and perhaps in time, more surviving tombs will be identified. BACSA member Alan Harfield is hoping to compile a small book covering cemeteries in China, and the news from Whampoa will be particularly welcome, together with the first attempts at restoration.

## Mail Box

So great has been the interest of BACSA members in the Bombay Docks explosion that we are returning (for the last time) to the subject. The *SS Fort Stikine*, loaded with a cargo of ammunition, cotton bales and gold bars, blew up on 14 April 1944, taking with her twenty one other ships and flattening 300 acres. Peter Freeborn was a Junior Officer in the late 1950s on the Gulf Mail ship *Dares Salaam*, which turned around at Bombay, and he remembers a bucket dredger bringing up a solid gold bar. Mark Sellar from Singapore (and a frequent visitor to the Bombay Docks) writes 'Until well into the 1980s contractors involved in dredging work would, in certain areas of the antiquated port, wishfully sift out each bucket of silt removed from the depths, looking for unrecovered gold bars.' (Out of 124 bars now known to have been on board over 100 are still missing today.) Mr Sellar adds that he owns the British Empire Medal (Military) awarded to Sergeant Jones, RIE 'for his heroic services aboard vessels engulfed in the inferno that swept the docks'. Several bravery medals were awarded after the incident including at least two George Medals - to William Greene, Sub-Inspector Bombay City Police and John Dale, Captain, Corps of Royal Engineers. Both men, with their staff, battled in desperate conditions, with continuing explosions from shells and fires caused by burning cotton bales, oil and debris.

Foy Nissen remembers, as a boy of thirteen and living less than a mile from the docks, that 'a few seconds before the first explosion the wooden window-shutters rattled and the house shuddered: my mother hustled me under the dining table with the cook's children'. A memorial was erected in the Docks on 14 April 1971, twenty-five years later, to commemorate the 233 lives officially known to have been lost, although Kevin Patience, who devoted a 12 page illustrated article to the tragedy, says at least 1,400 died and that the true figure will never be known. Another memorial, a granite pillar, stands at Byculla Fire Station, headquarters of the Bombay Fire Brigade, and this lists the names of the 66

firefighters killed. Also at the station, in honourable retirement, is a 1936 Leyland fire engine, the sole survivor of the vehicles used in the disaster.

'Maquis' is a kind of dense shrub or bush, that seems peculiar to the island of Corsica and it is here, on private property at Portigliolo, that a French correspondent, Phillippe Clerc from Lyons has located the tomb of Major William George Murray of the 68th Regiment NI. The box-like tomb lies half buried although the inscription is still clear, as photographs show. William Murray was born in 1835 in Chunar, India. His father was Captain Murray of Dumfries and his mother, Sophia, a grand-daughter of the Bishop of Carlisle. By the age of thirty-four, William had become Assistant Surveyor-General, Calcutta but retired thirteen years later, possibly due to ill health. He seems to have chosen Corsica to settle in, with his wife Florence, about whom nothing else is known. At least one son was born to the couple, also called William. Major Murray died on 18 May 1894, and Phillippe Clerc wonders what became of his descendants. Did they make a home for themselves on the island, or return to Scotland? If they can be traced, more than a century later, he would like to inform them of the isolated grave.

More distant island graves, again with an Indian connection are reported by Dr Peter Stanley, Senior Historian of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra. The British cemetery at Labuan, now within the federal territory of Malaysia, has already been mentioned in the Autumn 1994 issue of *Chowkidar* and Dr Stanley has further information about it. When the island was liberated by Australian forces in 1945, the colonial graves were photographed in situ, in the original cemetery near Victoria Harbour. However, during a visit three years ago, he found that the headstones had been relocated to a plot in the Botanic Gardens, near the site of former Government House. He believes they were moved after the Second World War, possibly when the Malaysian naval base was developed in the harbour. Refreshingly, the present site is well-defined, fenced and cared for and the headstones are in 'a pleasant park, safe from encroachment'. They include memorials to 'John Barry, ship's cook of HMS Algerine, who died on 31 August 1870, aged 31' 'James Gordon, Commander of HMS Wolf, died 6 January 1817, aged 28' and 'John Wilson, colonial surgeon, died 23 June 1850, aged 37'. Dr Stanley led a party on the Australian War Memorial Borneo Battlefield tour earlier year which included another visit to Labuan and he has volunteered to report back on this out of the way cemetery.

*Chowkidar's* recent article on the tomb of Raja Ram Mohun Roy in the Arnos Vale Cemetery, Bristol prompted a response from Mr Laurie Bingle, a conservation architect with the City Council. He tells us that the Raja's handsome tomb is a Grade 11\* Listed Building, together with a number of other buildings and monuments in the cemetery, which is now privately owned by the Bristol General Cemetery Company. The Council has been concerned for some time about

the condition of the tomb, and a lottery bid is being considered under the Urban Parks programme, which specifically targets historic cemeteries. The agreement of the cemetery's owners is necessary for this to go ahead and the City Council is anxious to proceed in the matter. They share the concerns of the Indian High Commission over the monument and Professor Indra Nath Choudhuri, the newly appointed Director of the Nehru Centre, has pledged that the Indian Government is ready to assist in the repair and renovation of the tomb. On the Raja's death in 1842 he was initially buried in the grounds of Heath House, Stapleton, where a memorial now stands. There is a bust of him in the Council House, installed two years ago, and there are proposals to put up a statue on the newly restored College Green in central Bristol, between the Council House and the Cathedral. With the city's fulsome acknowledgment of this remarkable man, it would be ironic if his last resting place was allowed to fall into disrepair.

Good news came from Rangamati, Jalpaiguri District recently, with photographs showing that the cemetery there is in better condition than we had thought. The Senior Manager of the Rangamati Tea Garden is taking a personal interest in its maintenance and has employed a *mali*. There has been a problem with elephants, who damaged the boundary wall last year and knocked over some of the headstones, but repairs to the wall are now in hand. The cemetery has a delightful and unusual lychgate, with gothic arches and mughal cusps. (see p35)

Christopher Hurst has tracked down another interesting cemetery, this time at Seringapatam, southern India. He found it with some difficulty, behind an 'oil factory', about a mile from Tipu Sultan's palace. He noted, among the many fine 18th century tombs, that of a surgeon who died in an epidemic, and sarcophagi for a whole family, including children. A local resident, Mme Yvette Zerfas, described as 'a youthful 73 or so' is keeping a watching brief over the area, single-handed it seems.

A tragic event at Machilipatnam, (formerly Masulipatam) north of Madras, and adjacent to Bandar Fort, is commemorated on a pillar in the Christian cemetery there, and described by author Paul Hyland in his book *Indian Balm*, published in 1994. 'This monument commemorates the melancholy fate of Anthony and Maria Fruvall, their sons Joseph Michael, Peter Manuel and Daniel and their daughter Mary Ann Homey and her children Joseph and Georgina and about 30,000 souls who were all unexpectedly swept into eternity by the ocean wave which desolated this town on the night of the cyclone of 1st November 1864.' Our thanks to Sqn Ldr and Mrs Gee for sending this in.

Our Bombay correspondent KRN Swamy found a moving poem some time ago, while researching on Kashmir and major hill stations. Because cemeteries in the sub-continent seldom inspire poetry (we have published only two other efforts), it is printed here in full.

#### *A Grave in the Himalayas*

I laid him down in the cold, cold earth,  
And fashioned his humble grave.  
Far, far from his friends, and the place of his birth,  
Far, far o'er the distant wave.

A few short texts o'er the grave I said,  
A few brief words of anguish,  
Words such as come, when all hope is fled  
And the heart's affections languish.

Slowly - alone - o'er the mountain-steep  
My weary way I hurried:  
But left my affections, warm and deep  
In the grave where my friend lies buried.

Robert N Cust

### **Memorials To Generals Nicholson And Havelock**

Souvenir *Chowkidar* carried an article by Mary Ann Steggles on British statues in India and this prompted the Editor to investigate what had become of General Nicholson's statue which was taken down from the Kashmir Gate, Delhi in 1956 (see *Chowkidar Vol 1 No 1*). A chance conversation in the 1980s indicated that it might have been taken to the General's birthplace in Lisburn, Northern Ireland but correspondence with Elaine Flanagan, Keeper of Collections at Lisburn Museum revealed that this was not the case. It did, however, uncover another statue of the General which had been erected in the Market Square there, in 1922, to mark the centenary of his birth. Further Lisburn memorials to the man who was killed at the recapture of Delhi in 1857 came to light too, including a 'spacious and beautiful schoolhouse' built by his grieving mother in 1864 and a handsome memorial in the Cathedral 'to keep alive his memory and example among his countrymen'.

Sixty years or so later a Mr Henry Musgrave, who had attended the same school as Nicholson, commissioned a statue from the 'well-known sculptor Mr Pomeroy'. This altruistic gesture was prompted by the fact that 'the Government had neglected to erect a suitable monument' and that he, Henry Musgrave 'would like to place before his fellow townsmen a permanent and visible memorial to their great countryman'. The bronze statue is 9' 6" high, standing on a grey granite block of 10' 6". There are two bas relief panels depicting incidents from the siege, and the General brandishes a sword in one hand and pistol in the other, urging on his men to the final assault. (see p34) It is a grandiose, even bombastic statue, quite different from the dignified Nicholson who stood at the Kashmir Gate on a simple plinth. Unfortunately we are still no nearer to finding out where

that one has gone, but with a new Indian interest in colonial statuary it may well turn up one day.

Mark Havelock-Allan QC, great great grandson of General Sir Henry Havelock visited Lucknow earlier this year after concern was voiced about the General's grave and obelisk at the Alambagh cemetery (see *Chowkidar Vol.7 No.6*) 'The Times of India' and 'The Pioneer' gave his mission good coverage, with photographs illustrating the encroachment that has taken place even up to the foot of the grave. Mark Havelock-Allan and Arun Saksena were pleasantly surprised to find that a few days after their first, well publicised visit, the Archaeological Survey of India had tidied up the area and most importantly, demolished the illegal structures abutting the tomb. The ASI's blue signboard declaring the area a protected monument had been erected a few months earlier in response to a concerted campaign. There the matter rests for the moment but continued vigilance is necessary and BACSA members and friends can help by visiting the cemetery and reporting back on its condition.

On a happier note, visitors to the better known Residency cemetery in Lucknow where the remains of General Havelock's contemporaries rest, will find the handsome tombs there well maintained by the ASI, in a delightful garden, as the recent photograph by BACSA member Richard Cochrane on p36 shows.

### Can You Help?

Just as the Indian sub-continent was seen to be a land of fabulous wealth by early European adventurers, so it continues today to provide limitless treasure trove for researchers. It seems that no aspect, no matter how small, especially of British life there escapes the historian's eye. In part this is because everything was so minutely documented by the East India Company's clerks, scribbling and copying away, who produced the most comprehensive record of Imperial rule anywhere in the world. In past *Chowkidars* queries on everything from sola topees to pillar boxes have passed through our pages, and this present issue is no exception.

Peter Heseltine, for example, is researching the manufacturers of Victorian and Edwardian brass memorial plates, normally found inside churches. These were both exported from Britain to the sub-continent, and also produced by local engravers. The manufacturer's name usually appears in the bottom right hand corner, and details, together with the name of the deceased, and date of death would be appreciated. Letters to 3, Earning Street, Godmanchester, Cambs PE18 8JD, please.

Robin Jones of Southampton Institute is looking at the production and use of carved ebony furniture in 19th century Ceylon. He would be particularly interested

in descriptions of home life there, from diaries, letters and old photographs, which may refer to such items. He would also like to know if there are examples of this furniture in Britain, where the provenance can be traced back to Ceylon, perhaps in family histories. Letters please to the Southampton Institute, East Park Terrace, Southampton SO14 OYN.

BACSA member and author Roger Perkins writes 'Military Silver - do you have any information, anecdotes, or recollections connected with regimental silver?' He is collecting information about unit silver, military trophies, presentation pieces, etc for a forthcoming book and would particularly like to contact former Indian Army officers, the Indian Police, the Burma units and any of the old Far East colonial units. He is interested in learning what happened to the Mess silver of those units which went into captivity in 1941. He will be happy to send a briefing note to anyone who can help. Please write to Torwood Cottage, Haytor, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ13 9XR.

Brian Robson is preparing for the Army Records Society a volume of unpublished documents on Sir Hugh Rose and the Central India campaign of 1858. He is very anxious to trace the letters of Captain (later Lt-Col) JG Lightfoot, of the Bombay Horse Artillery. The Captain's letters were used by Lord Anglesey in his History of the British Cavalry, and were, at the time in the possession of Miss Lightfoot, an elderly lady. These same letters were also used by Christopher Hibbert in his book on 'The Great Mutiny'. Unfortunately the two authors cannot now locate either the transcripts or the source of these letters. Perhaps someone knows if Miss Lightfoot bequeathed the papers to a local library or museum? Suggestions please to 17 Woodlands, Hove, East Sussex BN3 6TJ.

Stuart Elliot has a small collection of Indian General Service medals awarded to members of the Indian Postal Department, and was surprised to find that no medal rolls appear to exist for this Department at the India Office Library. The medals were awarded, Mr Elliot surmises, for having got the mail through during difficult times, for they coincide with frontier uprisings during the late 19th century. The details are as follows:

- i) IGS medal 1854 clasps Burma 1885-87 and Chin Lushai 1889-90 awarded to Gustavus Barton-Groves, subsequently Deputy Postmaster General Bombay, and later, Madras.
- ii) IGS medal 1895 clasp Punjab Frontier 1895-97 awarded to CL Fox, Postal Department who later got another medal 1908 clasp Afghanistan NWF 1919.
- iii) IGS medal 1895 clasp Punjab Frontier 1897-98 awarded to Superintendent Mr F O'Byrne, Postal Department.

No wonder Kipling eulogised the Indian Postal Service and its dak runners, carrying their vital letters through near impossible conditions, on foot. Any information on the three men listed above or indeed on the Indian Postal Service before 1947 would be appreciated. Letters via the BACSA Secretary please.

Susan Lynn's mother, Mrs Maher, remembers the Dohnavur Mission in Tinivelly (Tirunelveli) District, Madras and wonders if it still flourishes. It had been founded by Amy Carmichael, a former missionary to China, who required those joining it 'to abandon their former lives and bring all they had, particularly money. Most were public school educated, upper middle class English men and women. The women wore saris and on Sundays the men exchanged their khaki shorts for dhotis'. The mission's aim was 'to rescue the female babies of temple women' who had presumably been abandoned. The girls were to be educated by Montessori methods and to become missionaries, nurses and teachers. The mission was a place of great beauty, laid out like an English garden city, and services in the chapel were 'particularly moving'. Mrs Maher's late husband, an ICS officer, revisited the mission in 1947, after the death of Miss Carmichael, when some of the helpers had drifted away, and difficulties had arisen over placing the girls back into Indian society.

Michael Pringle wonders if BACSA members have been successful in finding British relatives who lived in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia), earlier this century. He is trying to learn more about Charles Pilliet, who was born in New Zealand in 1869, one of five children of Walter Pilliet, himself born in Lyons in 1840. Charles led an adventurous life. He was in Timor Kupang by 1904, as a geologist and also served as British Consul until the 1920s. He then moved to Lawang in East Java where he ran a plantation and a pearl fishery. He survived the Japanese occupation, though with some mistreatment, it seems, and he died at Lawang in 1959. It is not known whether he married. Michael Pringle is the great grandson of Charles's sister Hannah Pringle, and he is tracing the family history for a book. In particular he wants to know what Charles Pilliet did at Lawang, what happened to him during the war, and where he is buried. Suggestions to PO Box 12-174, Wellington 6001, New Zealand.

Still in Indonesia Mr Simon Bloss is seeking details of the Townsend family at Padang, Sumatra, and in particular Edward James Townsend who arrived in Calcutta in 1807 as a ship's captain. From there he became a merchant, and moved to Padang, where he married a Dutch woman called Cornelia Johanna Deteringts. Information on the family via the BACSA Secretary please.

Mention of Alexander Jacob (the character on whom Kipling based Lurgan Sahib), in the Spring *Chowkidar*, prompted David Evans to ask if any more is known about this fascinating magician-cum-shopkeeper. Was he a spy in the

Great Game? What happened to the diaries he kept, and how did he meet the Nizam of Hyderabad? It is indeed curious that although 19th century Simla was so frequently described, the mysterious Mr Jacob seems to have eluded its chroniclers so successfully.

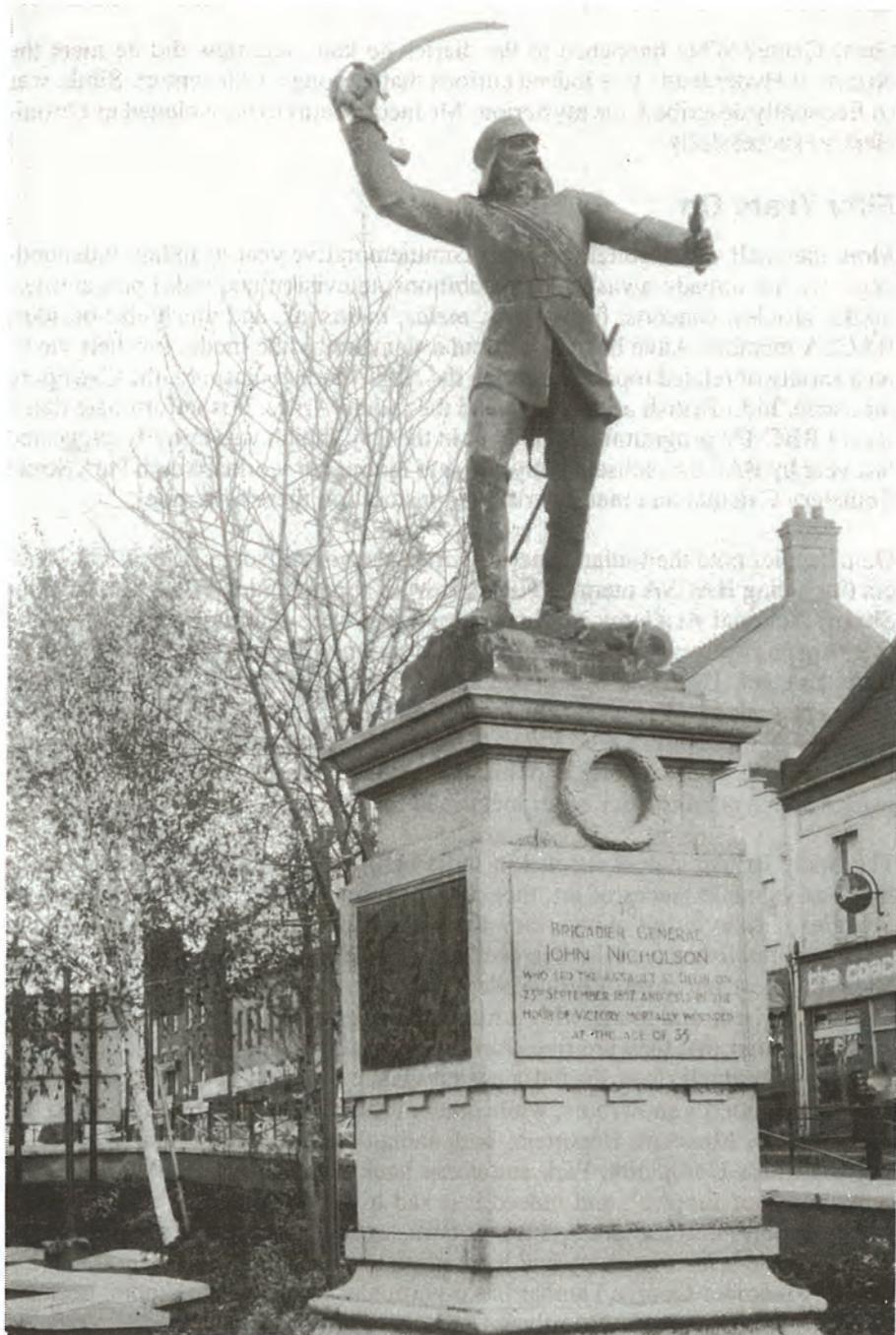
## Fifty Years On

More than half way through Britain's commemorative year of Indian Independence, we are already awash with exhibitions, television and radio programmes, books, articles, concerts, film-shows, *melas*, *tamashas*, and much else besides. BACSA members have been in particular demand by the media for their views on a variety of related topics, including the Anglo-Indian diaspora, the Cawnpore massacre, Indo-British architecture and the Indian Army. It is unfortunate that a recent BBC TV programme 'One Foot in the Raj' which was initially suggested last year by BACSA, subsequently chose to ignore our work at South Park Street Cemetery Calcutta and merely criticised restoration there as 'crude'.

On a happier note the Indian papers reported the visit of some British ICS officers (including BACSA member Nick Lines), at the invitation of the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy in Mussoorie. Some were returning to India for the first time in fifty years, looking back on the enormous burden that rested on their shoulders then. Each ICS officer had an average of 300,000 'subjects' for whom he was responsible. Philip Mason, himself an ICS officer summed up this unique relationship in *The Men Who Ruled India* thus: 'And if today the Indian peasant looks to the new district officer of his own race with the expectation of receiving justice and sympathy, that is our memorial.'

The many British statues erected in India before 1947 are finally being recognised as valuable pieces of art, though not in time to save some, as Mary Ann Steggle's article in our anniversary *Chowkidar* showed. The Bombay 'Sunday Observer' published a well-researched article by Sunil Nair which stated 'Queen Victoria's lost her nose. Lord Wellesley's lost his head! Our colonial past is being exorcised, and along with it marble statues of British statesmen and rulers... no matter that they are fine works of art and part of our national heritage.' The canopy which once shaded a seated Queen Victoria has ended up on the roof of Raymond's showroom, while other mutilated figures languish behind the Bhaudaji Lal Museum. Reporters, both Indian and British, regularly head towards Delhi's Coronation Park and come back with dramatic headlines about 'graveyards of Empire', and indeed it is sad to see how the mighty are fallen, some literally, into the grass, but any British proposals to 'rescue' the statues must be done with sensitivity and local initiatives.

BACSA member George Dunbar has a particular interest in the topic, because his father was a partner in Priestly & Co, stonemasons of Cawnpore, who erected two statues of Queen Victoria there. The bronze statue put up in Victoria Park in



*Brigadier General John Nicholson's statue at Lisburn, Northern Ireland (see p29)*



*The delightful Rangamati lychgate, Jalpaiguri District (see p28)*



*Entrance to Seringapatam Cemetery, with a wealth of fine tombs inside (see p28)*



*Repairs in progress at the Whampoa Cemetery, Canton, China (see p25)*



*A peaceful scene in the landscaped Residency Cemetery, Lucknow (see p30)*

1904 on a Priestly plinth is thought to have been the first of the recently deceased Queen erected in India. (She now stands behind the Lucknow Museum, her face firmly turned to the wall.) The second statue, modelled by Albert Priestly, was moulded and cast (bizarrely) in aluminium. It was erected by Mr Dunbar's father at Sursyia Ghat in 1907, and he fears it may have been melted down. There is a rumour that having been made in shining white metal, it may be in a temple somewhere as a white goddess of some kind', he writes. Priestly & Co's tombstones are found throughout northern India, all dated before 1912 when the business was wound up. Mr Dunbar would appreciate help in tracing them, and the missing statue too.

Although much has changed in both India and Britain since 1947 some things stay the same. Calcutta has finally given up the struggle to impose new names on old streets and has brought back Curzon Park, Harrington Street, Dalhousie Square and several others, which will now be displayed together with the existing, but unused, names. The official explanation says 'West Bengal is wooing foreign investors, and colonial associations would make the sales pitch more credible', though personally I think the taxi-drivers are behind it.

And Mr SK Pande, Chief Commercial Manager of the Western Railway, Bombay has written to tell us that the codes of railway stations date back to the 19th century. These are used in 'labels of wagons, parcels, Railway Receipts, telegrams and passenger tickets. For instance, in addition to DBRT (Dibrugarh Town), the alphabetical list of stations also show DBMK (Dibrumukh) which was the old Steamer Trans-shipment Station on the Brahmaputra and was swept away in the 1950 earthquake/flood. The codes follow the older spellings of the towns. Thus all station codes in Kanpur Area begin with C for Cawnpore. Each railway official gets a code too, from the humblest 'PP/BCT' (Parcel Porter/Bombay Central) to 'CRB/NDRB' (Chairman/New Delhi, Railway Board), which enables information to flow freely through the railway circuits.' Now that is something we could bring back to Britain!

## **Notice Board**

### **The Auchinleck Appeal**

We do not normally carry appeals, because we know our members contribute generously towards BACSA's aims. However, the Auchinleck Appeal is a particularly worthwhile cause, helping as it does veterans of the pre-1947 Indian Army. Named after Field-Marshal Auchinleck, the last Commander-in-Chief, India, money raised through the appeal will be used solely for the welfare of old soldiers and their dependants. Donations should be sent to The Auchinleck Memorial Appeal, The British Commonwealth Ex-Services League, 48 Pall Mall, London SW1Y 5JG.

### The Chin Hills Collection

The India Office Library (now part of the British Library) has established a Chin Hill Collection as part of the European Manuscripts section. Situated on Burma's western frontier with India, the hills are home to a group of tribes known as the Chins. During the Burma campaign they fought alongside British and Indian colleagues against the Japanese. People who served with them, either in war or peace, and who have papers/photographs relating to them are asked to contact David Blake, Head of European Manuscripts Section, Oriental & India Office Collections, 197 Blackfriars Road, London SE1 8NG

### BACSA's Anniversary Auction and Exhibition

The auction took place on 19 March 1997 at the Commonwealth Institute and together with the Bring and Buy stalls, raised over £5,000 for BACSA projects. The highest price paid was £1,100 for a framed coloured aquatint by Thomas & William Daniell, while a modest £20 bought a 'large sealed bottle of Indian snuff manufactured about 1917. The photographic exhibition entitled '*Goodness, how sad!*' *British Burials in India* was opened, and subsequently shown at Earlsfield Public Library, London SW18 and the Nehru Centre, Mayfair. It will be seen again at the British Family History Conference in York, from 3rd - 7th September.

### August 1947

As promised, reminiscences of BACSA members and friends from fifty years ago have been collected and printed in a supplementary volume, issued free to members. (Extra copies, available from the Secretary will cost £1.00 each.) As a result, this *Chowkidar* is four pages shorter than usual in order to keep with our postal limits. This means there are fewer book reviews. We shall be back to our normal 24 page issue in the spring.



### Errata

Page 7 of anniversary *Chowkidar* printed the wrong date of death for Lord Brabourne, Governor of Bengal. It should of course be 1939. Our apologies to the Brabourne family for this unfortunate mistake.

### Books by BACSA Members

[These can be ordered via BACSA, at no extra cost to the purchaser]

#### Remembering India David Goodall

Fifty-one of Sir David Goodall's watercolours of India have been brought together to mark the 50th Anniversary of Indian Independence, one for each year since Independence and one for the future. The artist was British High Commissioner to India from 1987 to 1991 and has followed in the worthy amateur tradition of earlier British watercolourists, who became entranced with the beauty of the countryside and its ancient and colonial buildings. While in India Sir David visited almost every State, always carrying his paints and sketchbook with him. The subsequent paintings have been exhibited in India and England, and this elegantly produced, pocket-sized book will clearly solve the problem of what to take Indian friends as a gift this year. Profits from the book's sale will support the work of Cheshire Homes, India. (RLJ)

1997 Scorpion Cavendish Ltd, 31 Museum Street, London WC1A 1LH £14.99 including postage pp120

#### Boxwalla RB Magor

In July this Year, a very special autobiography was launched at the Oriental Club, London. The book, written by an old 'Boxwalla', who is also a long-serving member of BACSA's Council, captures in its brief 62 pages an exuberant and unapologetic account of what it was like to be a young man in a man's world at the top end of the social scale in India.

The account moves fast, in nuggets of memory, vividly told, often hilarious to his contemporaries, while providing the younger generation with a picture of those far-off days, 'warts-and-all'. From Cambridge to Calcutta, to the North-West Frontier and Burma, the common denominator is riding, hunting and shooting in whatever spare time is available. Whether pig-sticking, snipe-shooting, paper-chasing, out with the Calcutta Light Horse or playing polo, the excitement of these activities is conveyed with zest in sharp and sparing paragraphs, accompanied by a number of evocative photographs.

There are references to work in the family tea business, and some fascinating facts emerge - 'We all took our dogs to the office and the *durwan* used to trap rats which provided splendid chases in the garden before work started.' And, surprisingly, the office did not open until 10.00 am - 'because our clerical staff, or babus as they were known, had to do their household shopping in their local bazaar before commuting into Calcutta'. These are some of the gems of everyday life which come shining through.

And there are references to political events, 50 years ago, with some significant first-hand evidence of the horrific 'Calcutta killings' when 'no-one molested the Europeans' and shouts of 'sahib hai' were enough to cleave a safe passage for a car through the maddened crowds.

Times changed dramatically and the family business expanded to tea-estates in Kenya. Now, with both East Africa and India in his 'parish', the author also changed, and in a passionate pursuit of conservation through the World Wildlife Fund and similar funds, became a leading conservationist. An attractively produced and most readable book, full of amusing and striking anecdotes. (TCW)

1997 Privately printed, copies available from the author, cheques to R.B. Magor at: George Williamson & Co Ltd, 221 Queens Quay, 58 Thames Street, London EC4V 3EJ £10.00 including postage pp62

### **The Complete Short Stories and Novels** Ruskin Bond

'It was 1986, and times were bad. Bad for Ruskin Bond, writer, who had been pounding his typewriter for over thirty years without achieving fame, money or even critical approval.' At a low point in the author's life, while he was in Landour's community hospital with a number of complaints, a request arrived from David Davidar who had recently started editing and publishing Penguin books in India. He wanted to reprint Bond's first novel *The Room on the Roof* published 30 years earlier, in England, which had won the John Llewellyn Rhys Memorial Prize. Discharging himself from hospital Bond hurried home to find his own precious copy, which subsequently appeared a few months later under the Penguin imprint. It marked a turn of fortune. A decade later, more than twelve of Bond's novels have been published, and the Indian Government gave him the Sahitya Akademi Award for English writing in India in 1992. It is a real pleasure to have everything he has written now presented in one hefty hardback volume. There are old favourites like 'A Flight of Pigeons' on which the successful film 'Junoon' was based, and 'Time Stops at Shamli', one of the best evocations of small town India. Bond does not go in for grandiose themes or Mahabharata-length novels, for he can catch a bittersweet mood of times past in a page or two. This is not a book to be hurried through, rather to be enjoyed during the year. (RLJ)

1996 Penguin Books India Rs 550 pp946

### **The Kashmir Residency: Memories of 1939 and 1940** Evelyn Désirée Battye

The latest BACSA book gives a vivid account of life in the Residency as seen through the eyes of a young woman, newly arrived in India, to work as a Personal Assistant to the Resident. The Residency and its beautiful gardens are minutely described, together with the busy social calendar that took place from

garden parties with the Maharaja of Kashmir to *shikar* on the higher hills and fishing in the valleys. Apart from the main Residency there was also a summer lodge at Gulmarg and the old winter bungalow in Sialkot (now in Pakistan). A love story is woven into the fabric of daily life in an enchanted setting, described fondly, but without nostalgia. The author is well-known through her earlier books, including *The Fighting Ten*, published as a BACSA book in 1984.

1997 BACSA £9.00 plus £1.00 postage pp150

### **Bangkok: the Protestant Cemetery** Justin Corfield

Although Thailand (formerly Siam) was never colonised, it attracted a large number of British traders and sailors. Those who died were originally buried in a section of the Catholic cemetery, but in 1853 a Royal Grant of land was made to establish a Protestant cemetery on the banks of the Chao Phaya river. The earlier graves were moved to this site, which is still in use. Several thousand Protestants, mainly British and Danish, but also German, Swiss and others, together with Jews, were buried here. The book contains inscriptions as well as a complete transcript in chronological order of the Burial Registers from 1861 to 1972. Ten other cemeteries are described too, with memorials in Bangkok and nearby Kanchanaburi. Illustrated. (RLJ)

1997 BACSA £15.00 plus £1.00 postage pp272

### **Books by Non-Members (that will interest readers)**

[These should be ordered direct and not via BACSA]

#### **Swettenham (A Biography of Sir Frank Swettenham, GCMG)** HS Barlow

Those who have travelled along the west coast of Malaysia will remember Port Swettenham (now Pelabuhan Klang) as being a typical untidy port facility with little of the beauty of the Malaysian peninsula. The port was opened in 1901 and named after the British Administrator who left his mark, Sir Frank Swettenham. The port was used frequently during the period ending with the outbreak of hostilities in 1939 and was a regular port of call by P & O vessels plying between England and the Far East.

Henry Barlow has written an extremely well-researched biography of Frank Athelstane Swettenham who was one of the most eminent British administrators in Malaya. He arrived in the Straits Settlements in 1871 having joined the Colonial Service as a cadet and had studied Malay. He was then one of only a few British officials who could read and write Malay and this ability enabled him to

act as translator and interpreter to successive Governors thus enabling him to secure advancement in the Service.

He retired in 1904 after over 30 years' service during which time, as Resident of Selangor (1882-1889) he was involved in the building of the Selangor Club, the Sultan Abdul Samad Secretariat building at Kuala Lumpur and also St Mary's Cathedral.

He was an efficient administrator who drove rather than led his subordinates and he expected them to work as hard as he did himself. Needless to say Swettenham was not popular but nonetheless he rose from a junior post to that of High Commissioner of the Federated Malay States and Governor of the Straits Settlements, the appointment he held at the time of his retirement. He held a variety of posts during his service, including that of Collector of Revenue at Penang and Province Wellesley; Magistrate and Commissioner of Court of Requests at Penang; Assistant Colonial Secretary for Native States in December 1876; Resident of Perak from 1889 to 1895 and in the following year was appointed Resident General of the Federated Malay States.

Author Barlow attempts to show the darker side of Swettenham and included in his biography details of his 'shabby treatment' of his mentally ill wife, Constance Stanley, who he had committed to an asylum. He eventually divorced her in 1938 after fifty years of marriage. He also brings to light his alleged affairs with other men's wives; the rumours of his relationship with a Malay lady and the reputed blackmail attempts which lasted for several years, although this is not proven by the evidence produced in this work.

The writer also casts doubts on the work published by his subject and goes on to cite as an example the verbal account given by Swettenham of his escape downriver following the assassination of Resident Birch (JWW Birch) in 1875, asserting that it was very much exaggerated.

It becomes clear, when reading the book, that Barlow does not like Swettenham and casts doubt on the image of his subject as the 'model' of the British colonial civil servant that is normally presented. In the hands of this author Swettenham is project as being a ruthless and a 'not very nice man'. These traits must be balanced against the fact that not all the allegations levelled have been proven. It does appear, to this reviewer, that the author's attempt to bring to light the very worst aspects of Swettenham's life and service became his overriding passion during the writing of this biography.

Despite this the book, although large - some 783 pages, is well worth reading as it does give an extremely good picture of life in the Malay States and Straits Settlements in the later part of the 19th century, and the eventual life of Sir Frank

who died on 11 June 1946 aged 96. Both his wives survived him with his first wife dying in 1947 and the second Lady Swettenham in 1970.

There are 94 illustrations, a very good bibliography and a useful index of thirty pages. (AH)

1995 Southdene Sdn Bhd, PO Box 10139, 50704 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia £40.00 pp783, xvii

### **Way to Glory: the Life of Havelock and Lucknow** John Pollock

The reason why so many English towns have a Havelock Street or Square is to be found in this 1996 reprint of a 1957 biography of an outstanding Victorian soldier. News of his death at Lucknow in 1857 drew tributes in Britain second only to the death of Nelson. Although both monarch and nation mourned the death, from dysentery, of Henry Havelock while at the peak of his military career, the manner of his passing exemplified that a soldier could also virtually be a saint. It is rare to read a military biography in which the subject emerges with so many virtues in his professional, domestic and spiritual duties as does Havelock.

Havelock had been brought round to devotion in his faith by a brother officer on the troopship to India. He thereafter served for much of his career in India, in addition to service in the campaigns in Burma, Afghanistan and Persia, and was a pioneer in the giving away of Bibles to British soldiers, and in organising temperance societies, as a result of his religious transformation. This form of service drew ostracism upon himself and his wife, the daughter of a Baptist missionary, Dr Marshman. Havelock's professional aim was 'to put down the vile calumny that a Christian cannot be a meritorious soldier'. In this regard, Havelock's success can be measured by Lord Hardinge's tribute, 'Every inch a soldier, and every inch a Christian'. The climax of this book focusses on the recapture of Cawnpore and the Relief of Lucknow, and encompasses Havelock's differences with Brigadier General James Neill, who was also to die at Lucknow.

When news of Havelock's death reached England, Queen Victoria felt she had lost a brother, although she had never met him. A grateful nation had first recognised him with a knighthood, and then a statue next to Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square, a public holiday being declared. In New York and Boston, flags flew at half-mast on Government buildings and shipping. His widow thereafter received the rank of a baronet's wife and an annual pension of £1,000. Havelock's skill as a soldier, his viewing his profession as a science, won him reluctant admiration even from those who were not in sympathy with his religious views, yet he is not extensively remembered today. This reprint should help remedy that gap in the British public's memory. (SLM)

1996 Christian Focus Publications, Geanies House, Fearn, Ross-shire, Scotland. IV20 1TW £7.99 pp297

### **Books also received (some of which may be reviewed later)**

**Fate Knows No Tears** Mary Talbot Cross. A fictionalised account of the life of Violet Nicolson, who found fame as the poet 'Laurence Hope'.  
1996 Obtainable from J. Carter c/o Cowie, 83 Don Street, Old Aberdeen, AB24 1UJ, Scotland pp277

**A Telegraphist's Tales from the Raj** Christie Coverdale  
1996 Obtainable from CompArt PO Box 303, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5FB £3.50 including postage pp30

**A Journey through Tea: a photographic journey** Elizabeth Handy  
1997 Obtainable from Mrs Jackie Shapland, Lawrie Plantation Services Ltd, Wrotham Place, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7AE £15.00 including postage (all proceeds go to 'The Sir Percival Griffiths' Tea Planters Trust' to whom cheques should be made payable) pp80

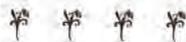
**Echoes of Old Christ Church 'The British Years'** Reginald Rodrick  
1997 Obtainable from the author at 8 Salmons Lane, Prestwood, Great Missenden, Bucks, HP16 0PY £12.50 including postage pp259

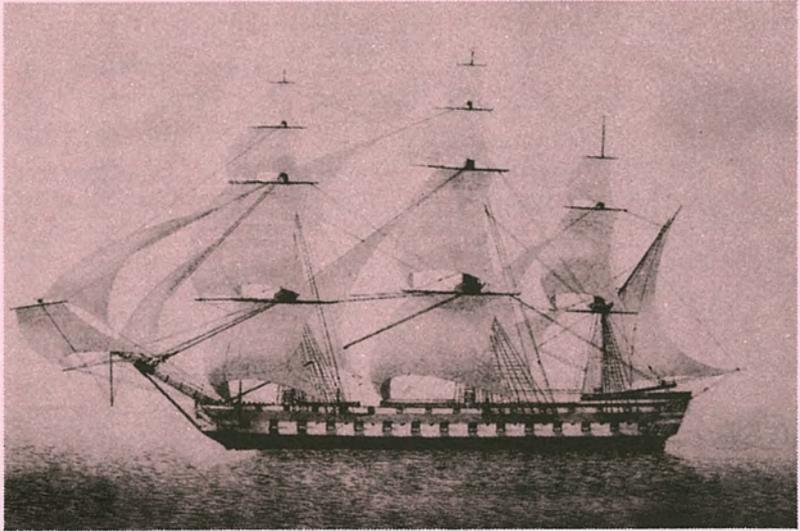
**The Last Days of the Raj** Trevor Royle  
1997 (first printed in 1989) John Murray £13.00 paperback pp291

**Some Far and Distant Place** Jonathan Addleton  
Muslim-Christian encounters viewed through the eyes of a child. 1997 University of Georgia Press. Obtainable from Eurospan Ltd, 3 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, London WC2E 8LU £26.95 including postage pp207

**The London Magazine - India 1997: with affection** Ed. Alan Ross  
August/September 1997 The London Magazine, W/W Sub. Services, Unit 4, Gibbs Reed Farm, Ticehurst, East Sussex TN5 7HE £7.95 pp224

**Soldiers of the Raj: The Indian Army 1600-1947** Ed. Alan Guy & Peter Boyden  
Catalogue of the new exhibition at the National Army Museum. 1997 published by the National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, SW3 4HT £29.95 postage extra pp367.





*The East Indiaman Canton, which completed eight voyages between London and the China coast in the years 1790-1809. One of her captains, Abel Vyvyan, lies buried at Whampoa.*