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# CHOWKIDAR

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Editor: Dr. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

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



## 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 1,800 (1999) 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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## DEATH IN SIMLA

An unusual and tragic story unfolded last year after BACSA member Hugh Ashley Rayner had asked for information about Nellie Hooper, whose tombstone included the words 'She preferred death to dishonour.' (See *Chowkidar,* Autumn 1999) A photograph of her grave at Jutogh, the cantonment area of Simla, erected by officers, NCOs and men of the garrison, was published. We learnt that a relative of Nellie, Colin Gooch, was also researching the story and Mr Gooch, whose grandmother was Nellie's sister, has now kindly given us permission to publish his findings.

Nellie Hooper was the eleventh of the thirteen children of Thomas and Fanny Hooper, an old-established family in Mere, Wiltshire. Her father was a carrier, and other relatives worked in the silk industry. How Nellie became a nursemaid to Captain and Mrs Thatcher in 1906 is not known, but she was clearly a well-liked and trusted servant, for she was in sole charge of the Thatcher's four-year old son. On the night of 30 July 1908, the Thatchers had left their inspection bungalow to dine with a friend. According to a contemporary newspaper report, Nellie retired to bed about 9.00 pm with her young charge, who was sleeping in the same room. 'About an hour later Captain Thatcher's bearer Karim Khan entered the room and attempted to outrage the nurse. Failing in his objective he went into the next room, loaded his master's gun with a No. 2 cartridge, returned and fired at the nurse,' fatally wounding her. Nellie's screams aroused the other servants in their quarters, who were initially hampered in their rescue attempts because their doors had been chained from the outside. Eventually breaking free, they ran for the Thatchers, who hurried home. There they were met by their terrified child calling out 'Mummy, Karim Khan shot nurse with a great big gun.' Nellie, still conscious, is reported as saying 'Mrs Thatcher, Karim Khan has shot my arm off.' The station doctor, Captain Hull, hastened to Nellie's bedside, but was unable to save her.

The bearer was found by police early the next day. In a vain attempt at escape, he threw himself down the *khud,* breaking his arm and seriously injuring his head. He was caught and taken to Ripon Hospital, where he was treated by Captain Hull, and photographed shortly afterwards, his arm in a sling, and his head bandaged. Karim Khan told the doctor that on the night of the shooting he had drunk a great deal and was intoxicated. He claimed that Nellie had abused him earlier in the day for drying her shoes too much so the leather became hard. The last thing he remembered was going to her room, and asking for her forgiveness. 'I do not know if I killed the nurse or not,' he stated. 'I was more drunk than usual.' The trial took place in Simla on 24 August, before Mr Rose, the Divisional Judge, and five assessors, four of them Hindus and one a Muslim. Karim Khan was sentenced to death, and though no record of the sentence being carried out has yet come to light, there is no reason to think he did not hang for his crime.

But Nellie Hooper was not the only victim in Jutogh that week. The day after her murder, and shortly before her funeral, Corporal Cullen 'who was in charge of No. 1 Mountain Battery Quarter Guard, took a carbine out of the arms rack, loaded it with a round of buckshot, and fired at the first native he saw. This was Lachman Das, one of the Battery's mule drivers, and he was so badly wounded that he died.' Corporal Cullen was charged with murder too. At his committal hearing on 6 August, Cullen also claimed not to remember the act of shooting. He stated that after going on guard at 12.00 noon 'I sent for the usual issue of beer for the guard and had a pint myself. I knew nothing more until I found myself in the veranda with a crowd round me. The murder of the girl affected my head all day. I knew the girl and in addition I saw her murderer being brought in a rickshaw...' Corporal Cullen was tried on 15 October at the Lahore Chief Court before Mr Justice Rattigan. A plea of temporary insanity was rejected and the jury found Cullen guilty of murder, but considered he should be acquitted under 'Section 84' of the Indian Penal Code. He was remanded in custody, and his subsequent fate is unknown.

In the churchyard at Mere stands a memorial, in the shape of a tombstone, to Nellie Hooper. The wording is almost identical to that on her grave at Jutogh. The last two lines read 'Not gone from memory, not gone from love/But gone to our Father's home above.' The original photograph of the Indian tomb that sparked off Hugh Ashley Rayner's enquiry, together with the photograph of the newly identified Karim Khan, has now been passed to Colin Gooch. But information on the present condition of the grave at Jutogh would be welcomed, as a conclusion to this sorry story of drink, death and revenge in a hill station, ninety years ago.

**MAIL BOX**

Anyone who visits the old European cemeteries in Asia will invariably remark on the age of the deceased, recorded on the tombstones. So many children died in infancy, so many mothers in childbirth, so many struck down in their Twenties and Thirties by disease, that it was only by constant replenishment from home that Britain was able to maintain its administration of the Indian subcontinent, and beyond. 'Two monsoons' was the allotted period in the eighteenth century - if a newly arrived European survived beyond the first couple of years, then he might have a chance, though a slender one, of retiring to his native land. Not until the end of the 19th century, when the causes of endemic diseases like malaria, typhoid and cholera became known, did the European death rate begin to fall. Even in the 1930s and 1940s there were plenty of early deaths recorded, though the numbers lost to illness declined. The social, political and military implications of such high mortality among the British in India does not seem to have been examined in any detail, apart from anecdotal evidence.



But it might explain a lot. Men in their early twenties, still with the impetuousness of youth, found themselves running huge areas of land, and not uncommonly having to make life or death decisions. At the same time, it was noted that few elderly (and possibly wiser) Britons remained, because they had either died, or gone home. Wouldn't the recent history of India have been different if it had been run by a group of old men, rather than young?

The handful of Britons who not only remained in India, but survived into their eighties always excited notice. 'Begum' Johnson, who outlived four husbands, is the best known - she died in 1812 aged eighty-seven, the oldest British resident in Bengal, and was given a State funeral. But an even older contender has come to light, as a letter from David Barnabas in Bangalore reveals. Part of the town, he tells us, is known as Cleveland Town, and there is a Cleveland Road too. They are named after General John Wheeler Cleveland of the Madras Army, who died in his 92nd year and is buried in the Kulpally Cemetery (also known as St John's Church Cemetery). The 'Senior General in Her Majesty's Government' was born in 1792, during the third Mysore War. 'After a service of 75 years during which he took part in the first Burmese War and afterwards held all the highest commands in the British Presidency' the old man died at Bangalore on 1 November 1883. Almost as remarkable is the inscription on his wife's neighbouring and identical tomb: 'Louisa Elizabeth Cleveland, born 6 September 1797, died 31 October 1874, for 59 years the devoted wife of General JW Cleveland'. (see page 12) The Kulpally Cemetery was recently surveyed by Admiral Dawson, another Bangalore resident, and Honorary BACSA member, who got the site cleared of undergrowth. Was the General the oldest Briton *ever* to die in India before Independence, or are there other contenders?

A sad request from Mrs Pam Rushton in the West Midlands was received last September. Her uncle, Private W. Hunt, nicknamed Joey, died in Delhi on 17 July 1934 from acute appendicitis, and the family have wondered all these years 'if he had a decent grave'. Mrs Rushton had promised her late mother that she would try to trace the grave, but had been unsuccessful through official channels. Her letter to the British Library, which was forwarded to BACSA, was her last attempt to find the burial place. Because Private Hunt had died between the two World Wars, his grave was not listed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Unusually, it was not listed among the Burial Records of the Oriental & India Office Collections of the British Library either. So help had to be sought in Delhi, from BACSA member General Menezes, who is also Honorary War Graves representative. Deducing that Private Hunt had probably died in the army hospital in the Delhi cantonment, he was likely to have been buried in its military cemetery, adjoining today's War Graves cemetery. Local Burial Records were not immediately available, so the area containing burials from the 1930s was searched and the grave was soon found, in good condition.

The insignia of the King's Shropshire Light Infantry picked out in black on the headstone was still clear, together with the inscription 'Erected by his Comrades/ R.I.P.' Photographs of the tomb were kindly taken for BACSA (see page 12) by another retired General, Sir Harold Walker, a former member of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, and head of CARE, the relief and development agency, who was recently in Delhi. Mrs Rushton was surprised and delighted to have such a speedy response to her query, when she had almost given up hope, and BACSA is grateful to the two Generals who had time to record a Private's grave.

During a recent visit to the British Cemetery at Karwar, just south of Goa, BACSA Executive member John Payne recalled the untimely death of the young historian Dennis Kincaid. Kincaid's book *British Social Life in India 1608-1937* (published 1938) was a hugely ambitious work that was both scholarly and lively, a rare combination. It put the British at play into context, without poking fun at them, as earlier anthologists had done. Kincaid was able, in 1937, to contemplate Indian Independence calmly as 'a practical possibility rather than the extremists' dream'. That the book is still relevant today, and widely quoted, is a tribute to its author, who did not see its publication. 'The inscription on his tombstone reads: In the loving memory of Dennis, beloved son of Charles and Kate Kincaid, who was drowned bathing from Karwar Beach on June 10th, 1937, aged 31 years.'

'Born to Success He Seemed/ With Grace to Win With Heart to Hold/With Shining Gifts That Took all Eyes.' (Emerson) 'He whom God loves, dies young'. Another memorial was the 'Kincaid Seat', erected by members of the Karwar Bar Association, which is said to overlook the cemetery. John Payne did not see the seat, but he assumes that it is just south of Karwar (a naval station) on National Highway 17, and probably overlooking Anjidiv Island. Perhaps someone could provide a photograph of the seat and the tomb for our records?

A previously unknown grave of a baby girl was shown to BACSA member Peter Leggatt during his recent visit to the Castleton tea garden at Darjeeling. Located on a small outcrop overlooking the fertile valley, the tiny grave is in excellent condition, surrounded by railings, and approached by a brick path. (see page 13) The site has been carefully tended by the garden staff for almost a century. The inscription reads simply: 'Baby daughter of Alfred & Mary Wathen 10th June 1900'. BACSA member Julian Wathen was contacted and he confirmed that the little girl's parents were relatives of his. Alfred was his great-uncle, being brother to his grandfather, William Hulbert Wathen. Several members of this family have Indian connections. One of Alfred Wathen's brothers, Frederick, of the Church Missionary Society, worked at Dalhousie. Julian Wathen's own father, Gerald Anstruther, was principal of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, and his own brother, Roger, of the Royal Norfolk Regiment, is buried at Jhansi.



Another family with strong Army connections is that of SAK Plumley from Hertfordshire. 'Three of us brothers were in the Indian Army', he writes, the elder 17/5th Mahratta Light Infantry, killed in action in April 1944 on the Arakan Front. 'A younger brother in the 43rd Cavalry lost a leg in a motor-cycle accident, thus ending a promising Army career' and Mr Plumley himself was in the re-raised Mahar Regiment. The Indian links go further back too. 'My great-great-grandfather, John Keess, a Hanoverian, was caught by the Press Gang and forced to leave England in 1782 for Madras, to join the East India Company's army in the Carnatic. After serving his time there, he was posted to the European Veterans Battalion and eventually to the Pensioners Establishment at Masulipatam.' At the ripe age of sixty he married an 'under-age' girl and produced three sons. Two of them, David and James, were Poor Scholars at the Madras Medical College. Both boys did well, the eldest, David, becoming a Colonel and Medical Officer for Hyderabad, while the younger, James, became a Brigadier and Principal of Madras Medical College. In 1939 three of John Keess' male descendants were officers in the Indian Army, a fourth was a sergeant in the Bombay Police, and two others were serving in the British and the Australian armies. A seventh descendant was 6' 11" tall, and Mr Plumley notes that only one of these seven men was under six feet in height.

In the early 1970s Roderick MacLean, a BACSA member, was working for the Hong Kong Government, and one Sunday he wandered around the European cemetery in Happy Valley. He was particularly struck by a tombstone of imported Scottish marble inscribed: 'Hector Coll Maclean, erected by Ho Tung his friend. 14 March 1894'. Ho Tung was almost certainly Sir Robert Ho Tung, but who was Hector Coll MacLean, his namesake wondered? From his forenames he was obviously a loyal member of the Clan MacLean and probably from the Isle of Coll, but what was the connection with Ho Tung? Alan Harfield, the indefatigable recorder of certain Far Eastern and Indian cemeteries, has provided some answers. There were two MacLeans, father and son, both involved in foreign trading houses in the 19th century. Alexander MacLean arrived in Hong Kong in 1849, with his daughter, and joined Jardines as a partner. His son, Hector Coll MacLean, may have travelled out with his father and sister. Certainly he was working as an agent for Jardines in Tientsin by the 1860s. Here Hector married a Chinese girl, and the couple had a daughter, Margaret, born in 1865. A few years later Hector and his family moved to Hong Kong, where he worked as Clerk to Jardine Matheson at East Point, in the company's offices and factories. Margaret MacLean grew up here and in 1881 she married Robert Ho Tung, who thus became Hector Coll MacLean's son-in-law. According to Alan Harfield, the wording on his tomb reads 'Sacred to the Memory of Hector Coll McLean/Died 24th March 1894/ aged 57 years/Erected by Ho Tung' and this has now been confirmed as correct. The grave is constructed of very handsome polished red granite. More information on the MacLeans in Hong Kong would be welcomed.

The picturesque medieval city of Bhuj is rather off the beaten track, lying as it does below the Rann of Kutch. It was seized by the British in 1819, the same year that the great Gujarat earthquake struck, destroying thousands of buildings. An article in *The Times of India* reports on a number of graves in the city, belonging to Muslims, Christians, Jews, and unusually, Hindus and Parsees. The Muslim cemetery has a special enclosure for the ornate graves of the eunuchs, the Kanchukis, guards of the royal harem. The Christian cemetery contains the graves of 18 and 19-year old soldiers, who were drowned in the floods of 1820, that followed the earthquake. Also here is the Englishman JH Smith, known as Din Bandhu, 'the Friend of the Poor', who was tutor to the Bhuj princes. He had arrived from England in 1906 and spent nearly forty years here, dying in 1942. A Jewish grave carries a tri-lingual inscription, in Hebrew, Marathi and English, commemorating Silman, who died in 1836. His Indian wife Sarabhai predeceased him eight years earlier, and her inscription is in Marathi only. In the neighbouring Varnu cemetery is a canopy and grave of Captain McMurdo, the first British political agent, who died from cholera. According to local legend this was because he had had the temerity to sleep on a cot higher than the grave of a nearby saint. It would be interesting to have some photographs of the cemeteries, which are under threat from would-be encroachers. (Our thanks to Ruskin Bond for sending in this cutting.)

## CAN YOU HELP?

In Kensal Green Cemetery, north London, stands a dilapidated tombstone, its marble cross broken and lying on the ground. Unkempt ivy and young saplings form the background to this grave which commemorates two members of the Boisragon family. Father and son lie buried here and Air Commodore Geoffrey Bumstead, President of the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles Regimental Association has found a little information about the family. The father, Major General Henry FM Boisragon (1828-1890) raised the 5th Gurkha Regiment (later the 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles, Frontier Force) in May 1858, immediately after the Indian uprising. His eldest son, Guy Hudleston Boisragon VC (1864-1931), commanded the Regiment's 1st Battalion until 1920. He was awarded the Hunza 1891 clasp to the India General Service Medal for his part in the Hunza-Nagar campaign. A memorial tablet to him is held in the Punjab Frontier Force Memorial Chapel & Sanctum at St Luke's Church, Chelsea. Attempts to trace any relatives of the family, who might be able to assist in repairing the grave, have been unsuccessful. It is known that Guy died a bachelor in Biarritz, but were there any younger brothers or sisters? The cemetery authorities are unable to help, though clearly the establishment of the grave had been financed by someone. Air Commodore Bumstead has searched numerous telephone directories in Britain but has not found the unusual, French-sounding name of Boisragon.



Mrs June Elliott of Nottingham is a neighbour of BACSA member Mrs Oliver, and would welcome information on the Wood family. Not surprisingly, perhaps, Lieutenant General Sir Ernest Wood was nicknamed 'Lakri'. He served with Queen Victoria's Own Rajput Light Infantry, and this is commemorated on a carved wooden box brought to England before the First World War. It is believed that an identical box is on display in Belvoir Castle, Lincolnshire. Sir Ernest was married to Grace Goodliffe, whose own nickname, less understandably, was 'Alu'. During Sir Ernest's army career the family was stationed in Delhi, spending the hot season in Simla. There were two daughters of the marriage, Audrey, born about 1921, and Vivian, born about 1929, and they were cousins to Mrs Elliott, who remembers them coming to stay with her during the summer holidays. It would be nice to put the two families in touch again after all these years.

During the celebrations that marked the 50th anniversary of Indian Independence, many stories about Partition came to light, that had perhaps been too painful to reveal for half a century. Similarly, the memories of those who endured the Great Trek from Burma during the Second World War have taken a long time to relate. On the evacuation of Rangoon in March 1942, communities were broken up for ever. Not only those of the British, but the Anglo-Indian, Anglo-Burmese and Indian families who had settled there too. Soldiers and civilians trekked north through Burma, through jungle and mountains, many falling ill with dysentery and malaria. Families were separated by illness and death, and children were left orphaned. As the survivors crossed the Indo-Burma border, and struggled to the railhead at Dimapur, the scale of the tragedy became apparent. First hand accounts today can only come from the children who took part in the trek, many of whom resumed their interrupted schooling in India. It is from these people that BACSA member Cary Thomas of Suffolk wants to hear. 'I am looking for stories and experiences of any of the participants. My intention is to put together recollections of the survivors...written accounts, old photographs and memorabilia laced into the background of the military campaign. Much has been written about the campaign, but precious little on the civilian aspect.' Letters to Mr Thomas will be forwarded by the BACSA Secretary, or e-mail him on cary.thomas@btinternet.com

Queries for this column usually come from people seeking information about their relatives' lives and deaths in India, but here is one 'the other way round', so to speak. Anita Smaller from Bangalore is looking for information about her grandfather, George Byford, who served in the North Lancashire Regiment. He married Jane Higgins on 13 December 1915 at St Francis Xavier Cathedral in Bangalore. Four sons and five daughters were born to the couple, who stayed for some time at 'St Andrew's Church quarters', inside the Baird Barracks. While Jane was pregnant with her last daughter, her husband left to visit his ailing mother in Lancashire, and did not return to India.

Sometime in the 1940s Jane Byford died of rabies and the children were distributed to various orphanages in the city. Our Bangalore correspondent, David Barnabas, who sent us this information, has established that Jane Byford was definitely not buried in the Kulpally Cemetery there. He believes that the bodies of rabies victims, and other epidemic diseases, were burnt. (It would be interesting if someone could confirm this.) William Byford, the couple's eldest son worked as a Forest Officer in Shimoga, and the eldest daughter, Doris, was in the Women's Auxiliary Corps, India. Another daughter emigrated to Australia. Any information about George Byford would be appreciated, details of his army life, what he did on his return to England, whether he married again, and the date of his death. Information via the Secretary or to David Barnabas, e-mail iushab@bgl.vsnl.net.in

Another enquiry about a grandfather, this time Alfred Ernest Saville, who was married in Karachi on 22 October 1902, when he was thirty-four years old. Although he claimed to be French, or from France, his two sisters had the English-sounding names of Lilly and Susannah, and family opinion seems divided on where he actually came from. The fact that he landed in India at Pondicherry, the French enclave, may be significant. Alfred was a piano-tuner and he moved to Bombay around the 1900s because of better employment prospects. It is hard today to realise how popular the piano was in India early in the last century, before the introduction of wind-up gramophones. Extreme conditions of humidity and heat meant that pianos needed frequent tuning. Alfred settled in Karachi after his marriage, and his grandson, Christopher Saville from Canada, would like to know how he fared, but would be even more interested in finding a birth or baptism certificate which could solve the mystery of Alfred Saville's nationality, one way or the other. Letters via the Secretary or e-mail christopher@netcom.ca

Virgil Miedema, a BACSA member in New Delhi, with an office in Lahore, is working (in his spare time) on the history of Murree, the hill station now in Pakistan. He has become intrigued by Lieutenant Colonel John Powell, CIE, OBE, who was for many years, the Chairman of the Murree Municipal Committee. Powell died in 1938 at the age of 82, and Mr Miedema has visited his grave. 'However', he writes, 'I really know very little of the man, except that he led the Committee and was quite a property owner (Viewforth, The Grange, Waverley, etc). It seems that Powell came to India to serve in the Army, and then decided, like many people, to retire to a pleasant hill station. Are there descendants in India or England that could provide more information, or indeed about old Murree in general? Letters please or e-mail asaasc@del2.vsnl.net.in

BACSA member Mrs Jean Ames has been trying, unsuccessfully so far, to trace the place of birth of her great-grandfather, Adolphus Lee Hurley. She now believes that this information may be found through his son, James Martin Hurley,



Mrs Ames' great-uncle. James was born in Quetta on 3 March 1890, and baptised five weeks later in the Holy Rosary Church. As an adult he was commissioned in the Indian Army Reserve as a 2nd Lieutenant on 2 August 1917, and promoted to Lieutenant a year later. He was demobilised after the First World War, and is believed to have come to England, but that is where the trail goes cold. Did he ever marry? Any leads would be greatly appreciated.

Still on the theme of travel from India, Mrs Margaret Astbury is planning a book on children who were sent 'home' to school in England. Often these separations lasted for years, and could be traumatic for children who had been born into the 'heat and dust' of India, surrounded by doting servants and fond ayahs. Even where the child was going to loving relatives at home, the sense of loss still seemed acute. Mrs Astbury plans to include the memories of young children before they were sent away, the jobs that took the fathers to India, and the children's experiences at English schools. 'What was the effect that their disruptive childhoods had?' she asked. An initial letter to Mrs Astbury at Three Ways, Boneashe Lane, St Mary's Platt, Kent TN15 8NW, would be welcomed.

Sir George Everest (1790-1866), after whom the world's highest mountain was named, is the subject of a new biography by Jim Smith. Everest worked for the East India Company from 1806 to 1843, and rose to become Superintendent of the Trigonometrical Survey and Surveyor General of India. His professional career in India is well-documented, notes Mr Smith, but material on his private life, both in India and England, after retirement is almost non-existent. 'In fact his niece wrote around 1900 that "for reasons into which I will not now go almost all written memorials to my uncle were destroyed..." How, why, when or where this happened we still do not know.' If readers can supply any clues, however small, that might shed light on either this destruction or other aspects of his private life, Mr Smith would be glad to hear from you. Please contact him at 24 Woodbury Avenue, Petersfield, Hants GU32 2EE or by e-mail 101765.332@compuserve.com

Robin Stanes from Honiton in Devon is attempting to write a short biography of his grandfather, Sir Robert Stanes (1840-1936). 'He was once described as a "missionary business man". He went to India in 1859 to plant coffee in the Nilgiris. He founded two schools, specifically for Anglo-Indian children, at Coimbatore and Coonoor, both of which still flourish. The school in Coimbatore is still called the Stanes School. He also founded T. Stanes & Co, which was in the business of coffee growing and curing originally, but diversified into cotton, cars, tractors and lorries, and is now part of the Simpson Group, but retains its name. He also helped to build the Union Church in Coonoor. He lived all his life in India and died and was buried in Coonoor.' Robin Stanes would be delighted to hear from anyone who knew his grandfather, or of him and his business, school or church.

## JOHN VANBRUGH IN INDIA

A fascinating article by the art historian Robert Williams was published last year in *The Times Literary Supplement*, following research at the British Library. No previous biographer had been able to explain the 'missing years' of the architect and playwright's life between 1682 and 1685. It was suggested he had been in France, but the true story is revealed from the Minutes of the East India Company. In 1681 John Vanbrugh, aged seventeen, was working for his cousin in London, in the wine and brandy trade, when the cousin went bankrupt. The following year his father and uncle put up the bond of £1,000 required by the Company to admit Vanbrugh as a factor at Surat. He sailed on the East Indiaman *Scipio Africanus* on 4 May 1683, and by the end of that year he was buying silks and cottons at the Surat factory for the English market. But factory life clearly didn't suit the young man, and on 16 February 1685 he was homeward bound on the *Nathaniel*, reaching London in August. A letter to the Company's headquarters stated that Vanbrugh and his companion Robert had become 'quite aweary of these parts and in big expectation of much sooner raising their fortunes in England...'

Despite his brief Indian sojourn of just over a year, Vanbrugh must have carried home with him impressions of the exotic surroundings in which he had worked. Twenty-six years later he sketched his memories of the English cemetery at Surat, in a document now in the Bodleian Library. The sketch was to illustrate the argument that burials in England should be made away from urban churches. He imagined woodland cemeteries where 'noble mausoleums' could be built, and argued that 'This manner of interment has been practised by the English at Surat...' Vanbrugh would certainly have seen the enormously grand tombs of the Oxenden brothers, Christopher and George, who were buried in the Surat cemetery. At that time, the idea of free-standing mausolea was almost unknown in England. A famous example, the temple at Castle Howard, by Nicholas Hawksmoor, was not begun until 1729, three years after Vanbrugh's death. But the seed of the idea had been planted by Vanbrugh, based on what he had seen in India. His grandiose country houses must owe something as well to the Mughal palaces and temples he had seen, set in beautiful formal gardens. Although Robert Williams does not mention it, one of Vanbrugh's houses, Seaton Delaval, was copied by Sir Gore Ouseley for the Nawab of Awadh about 1800. The Indian house was the Dilkusha in Lucknow, now in ruins. There were minor 'oriental' changes from the English model, like the pottery tiles on the turrets, and the relocation of the stairwells, but it is clearly a 'country-house', to satisfy the Nawab's taste for something English. And yet, in view of Vanbrugh's youthful expedition, might there not have been something in Seaton Delaval that seemed strangely appropriate to an Indian setting? Incidentally, our Secretary Theon Wilkinson had recorded the Surat connection in 1978, and the author James Stevens Curl refers to it in his book *Mausolea in Ulster*. (Our thanks to John Fraser for sending us this article.)



## NOTICE BOARD

**The Worlds of the East India Company 1600 - 1834** is the title of a conference to be held at the National Maritime Museum, London from 13 to 15 July this year. The conference will discuss four main topics: 'The Western World: the Company in Britain and Europe', 'The Eastern World: the Company in Asia', 'The Maritime World of the Company' and 'The Cultural World of the Company'. There is a wide range of speakers from India, Germany, France, America and Britain and topics include 'Indian textiles in Britain', 'India, wine and the emerging Atlantic economy', and 'The Bombay dockyard and the Indian Navy.' BACSA members Tony Farrington and Peter Marshall are among the speakers. Appropriately the social highlight of the conference is a dinner and cruise on the Thames on Friday evening. The conference fee is £90.00 (students £40.00) with dinner and cruise tickets at £30.00. Contact Helen Jones, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London SE10 9NF tel: 0208 312 6716 e-mail research@nmm.ac.uk

**The Victorian Military Fair** is always a jolly occasion, with numerous specialist stalls, little exhibitions, knowledgeable people who are happy to answer abstruse questions, and members in period costume. This year the theme is the Boxer Rebellion. The Fair will be held on Sunday 7th May at the Victory Services Club, Seymour Street, London W2. Entry is £4.00, and the doors are open between 10.00am and 4.00pm.

**The Families in British India Society (FIBIS)** have now begun publication of their journal and two issues came out last year, in September and December. Primarily for British people tracing their ancestry in India, it contains much information on genealogical research and current projects. BACSA and FIBIS are collaborating in the transcription onto computer of almost 250 manuscript pages of family trees that were donated to BACSA some years ago. The results will be available in book form later this year, through the two organisations. There are also plenty of articles on individual topics, including 'Looking for Armenians', 'The East India Company Site in Poplar', 'The Quit India Movement', 'Catholics in Mangalore' and others. Membership details from Peter Bailey, 'Sentosa', Godolphin Road, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 OPT, e-mail peter@sentosa.swinternet.co.uk

And a little 'footstone' (the opposite to a headstone): from the Madras Almanac of May 1822: 'Great inconvenience having arisen at many stations from the general practice which prevails among all classes of erecting Tombs of unreasonable dimensions over the remains of Relatives and Friends, the Rt. Hon. the Governor-in-Council has been pleased to resolve that the size of monuments hereafter to be erected in the burial ground of any Outstation shall be limited to 7ft x 3ft 6ins.' Luckily for us these strict instructions were not always obeyed.


*left: the grave of Private Hunt, Delhi Cantonment cemetery (see page 4)*

*below: tombs of General John Wheeler Cleveland and his wife Louisa, in the Kulpally cemetery, Bangalore (see page 3)*



*right: Baby Wathen's little grave at Darjeeling (see page 4)*

*below: wild pig in the Nishatganj cemetery Lucknow, snapped by the Editor, October 1999*

**BACSA BOOKS [Books by BACSA members. These can be ordered via BACSA, at no extra cost to the purchaser and will be sent with an invoice.]**

**Engaging Scoundrels: True Tales of Old Lucknow** Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

In the middle of the Indian Mutiny of 1857, William Russell of *The Times* stood outside Lucknow and described the city the British were in the process of destroying: 'Not Rome, not Athens, not Constantinople, not any city I have ever seen appears to me so striking and beautiful as this', he wrote. 'The sun playing on the gilt domes and spires, the exceeding richness of the vegetation...but for the thunder of the guns and the noise of the balls cleaving the air, how peaceful the scene would be!'

During the eighteenth century Lucknow, the capital of the Kingdom of Awadh, was indisputably the richest, most cultured and most sybaritic city in India. According to one authority, the city resembled an Indian 'Monte Carlo and Las Vegas, with just a touch of Glyndebourne thrown in for good measure'. It was a place where the Nawabs would not think twice about taking a retinue of 20,000 to go hunting; where a night out from the palace might take the shape of a visit to (what the British Resident at the Court described as) 'a vile tribe of dancing eunuchs', and where Nasir-ud-din Haider, the most dissolute of all the kings, when rebuked by the Governor General for some new folly, replied 'Come what may, he would drink Hip! Hip! Hoora!' And he did.

Even at the height of their extravagance, the Nawabs were living on borrowed time, as the East India Company ate like a cancer into their territories. But despite this, the Nawabs remained surprisingly well-disposed towards Europeans, and delighted in the amusements they could provide for their court: European jugglers, portrait painters, watch-menders, piano-tuners and even fashionable London barbers were all welcomed to Lucknow and well paid for their services.

If the Nawab sometimes amazed visitors by appearing dressed as a British admiral or even as a clergyman of the Church of England, then the Europeans of Lucknow often returned the compliment. Miniatures show Europeans of the period dressed in long white Awadhi gowns, lying back on carpets, hubble-bubbles in their mouths, as they watched their nautch girls dance before them. These certainly seem to have been the preferred amusements of, for example, George III's godson, George Duncan Beechey, who set himself up in Lucknow as a portrait painter along with his Indian wife Houssiana Begum and two other Indian consorts. Nor was this sexual curiosity just one way: at least two Anglo-Indians were recruited to join the Awadhi harem, and a mosque survives which was built by the Nawab for one of them, a Miss Walters.



*Engaging Scoundrels* is the third part of Rosie Llewellyn-Jones's remarkable Lucknow trilogy. Cumulatively the books make up one of the most fascinating and detailed historical portraits ever produced of an Indian city, and in many ways *Engaging Scoundrels* is the most enthralling of the three; certainly it is a much more substantial work of historical research than its populist title would indicate. For while Llewellyn-Jones's previous books *A Fatal Friendship* and *A Most Ingenious Man*, both focussed on grandees - the Nawabs and their sinister nemesis, the French wheeler-dealer, Major General Claude Martin - *Engaging Scoundrels* deals with the small people of Nawabi Lucknow, the sort who normally escape the historian's net.

In this way we are introduced to figures such as Louis Bourquien, a French mercenary who made a fortune when he turned his talents to creating elaborate fireworks for the Nawab; or Jerry Gahagan, the Nawab's Irish bagpiper who used to pipe guests into dinner - until he 'accidentally shot his best friend, the illiterate Stephen Caldwell with whom he lived'; or most remarkably of all, the notorious 'Barber of Lucknow', George Derusett, whom the British blamed - with reason - for the moral decline of the Nawabs. One British Resident reported as his 'painful duty' that at palace dinners, guests 'have several times seen His Majesty dancing Country dances as the partner of Mr Derusett! the latter dressed after some grotesque masquerade fashion, and His Majesty attired in the dress of an European Lady.' There were, Low hinted darkly, 'still more gross, indeed most shocking indecencies.' Scholarly, humane, and extremely entertaining, *Engaging Scoundrels* is a wonderful book: and it seems unlikely that Llewellyn-Jones's work on Lucknow will be superseded for at least a generation. (WD)

2000 OUP Delhi ISBN 019 564 953 2 *Rs 395 in India, £20.00 UK pp196

**The Everest Hotel** I Allan Sealy

Next to the old hotel in Drummondganj, a little Himalayan town, lies the British cemetery, now a haven for gamblers. 'Above the gothic arch of the lych-gate is inscribed the word 'EVE-R-EST', with the R at the point of the arch making two words of one...Ever-rest the cemetery. An avenue of cypresses divides the cemetery into old and new. The gamblers prefer the newer, lower tombstones. Pillared mausoleums brood in the oldest quarters. Everywhere the tombs decay in drifts of grass, railings torn up, obelisks askew. A ribbed pumpkin has fattened beside a fallen urn'. And Jed, Honorary Secretary of the Cemetery Committee, one-time mountaineer and flower collector, now ninety years old, is writing the Drummondganj Book of the Dead. His hotel, the Everest Hotel, has become a nunnery of sorts, where he is cared for by Ritu, a newly arrived novice. A strange and rich cast of characters inhabit this novel. There is Thapa, a retired Gurkha,

who works as the *mali* for the nuns, Miss Sampson, who lived through the Quetta earthquake, Inspector Bisht and O.P. Dixit, the sculptor, not to mention Inge, the creepy neo-Nazi hippy. This is not a conventional novel about modern India, as one soon realises, but a vivid, sometimes surreal, story about old age, murder, an adopted child and many other things. Sealy is one of the pre-eminent Anglo-Indian writers of today, whose first book, *Trotternama* (1988), was widely praised, not least by *Chowkidar*. He writes luxuriously, savouring the words that describe the beginning of the monsoon: 'Always the same fat sound, warm with shipwrecks, fastings, ululations, granaries. Exhaling Arabian salts, breath of a stranded oyster, a rock orchid opening in Bhutan, mist off a cardamom hill.' The author acknowledges a great debt 'to the many beloved dead who lie in the Dehra Dun cemetery', but this is a book of great vitality too, that ends on an optimistic note. (RLJ)

1998 IndiaInk ISBN 81 86939 01 6 Rs395 pp333

**Enchanted Evening** MM Kaye

This book concludes the trilogy of the author's autobiography, *Share of Summer*, although the story finishes when she is still a young woman, on the brink of marriage, during the second World War. The 'slow, inexorable march towards the end of Empire and the tearing apart of the enchanted and enchanting land' [of India] was still in the future. Most ordinary people would probably find it difficult to fill one book with the chronicle of their early life, much less three fat volumes. But Mollie Kaye is no ordinary mortal, for as she admits, she has an amazing ability to recall events, sights, sounds, smells and feelings from the past, and to share them with her readers. The Kaye family were enthusiastic photographers from the start, as the book's illustrations show, but the author's visual memory relies more on a kind of 'internal and private video', conjuring up scenes that are hardly believable today.

Unlike the first and second parts, published as *The Sun in the Morning* and *Golden Afternoon*, this volume *Enchanted Evening*, has a more sombre feel. Both family and political events came together to present a series of painful endings, and a message that life would be different in the future. The death of the author's adored father, Sir Cecil Kaye, always known as 'Tacklow', at the early age of sixty-six, was a blow which haunts the latter half of the book. Although his career in India had ended with the important post of Director of Central Intelligence, for which he received a knighthood, a post-retirement job in the native state of Tonk had not worked out. Tacklow then decided, impractically, to retire with his family to China, where he had spent happy times at the beginning of the last century. By the 1930s war clouds were already on the horizon, though



the Japanese incursions and the siege of Jehol, north-east of Peking, were met with almost perfect indifference by the European communities in China. It was only twenty-five years since Tzu Hsi, Dowager Empress had died, and treasures from the old regime were still widely available, including the fabulous Tribute Silk, which was auctioned off monthly, to the delight of the Kaye women, Mollie, Bets and their mother.

Having eventually been warned that 1930s China was no place for the English, the Kaye family toured Japan, on their way home to India. Here too, a world was vanishing. It seems extraordinary, but there are photographs to prove it, that almost all Japanese women and girls wore the traditional dress of kimono and obi before the second World War. The sight of a woman in European dress 'was so rare that you turned round to stare'. Back in India the family roamed around quite happily, renting houses or staying with some of their numerous friends, in the Kashmir Residency at Srinagar, and other cool weather retreats. Sir Cecil's unexpected death devastated the family. His wife, not a typical memsahib, had never really had to fend for herself, and was almost helpless. Money was short, though the family was not penniless. Mollie Kaye came to England for two years, and discovered her talents for design, and later, writing. With the money earned from her first murder mystery book, she sensibly paid her passage back to India, where she was later to meet her future husband, Major General Goff Hamilton of the Corps of Guides. Anyone who wants to know what the life of a typical middle-class English family was like in colonial days, can do no better than read this book. Some may condemn it as a parasitic life-style, replete with servants and privileges. Others may mourn a way of life gone for ever. But no-one will fail to be gripped by the author's gift of telling a good story - with pictures. (RLJ)

1999 ISBN 0 670 88683 1 £20.00 pp365

**Military and Naval Silver: Treasures of the Mess and Wardroom**
Roger Perkins

This is another brilliant magnum opus by the author of *The Kashmir Gate* (1983), *The Amritsar Legacy* (1989), *Regiments of the Empire, a Bibliography* (1992), and *Regiments and Corps of the British Empire and Commonwealth, 1758 - 1993* (1994). The subject of the present work is deftly compartmentalised into evocative chapters on 'British Army Silver', 'Gunners and Sappers', 'Soldiers of India', 'Indian Army Silver', 'Silver Lost and Found', 'Silver at Sea', 'Collecting Military Silver', 'Some Vagaries of Fortune'. There are also informative appendices on Suggested Reading, the Care of Silver, Glossary of Terms and Titles, and Hallmarks, with instructive tables. An apposite author's introduction

commences 'Why climb the mountain? Because its there. Why write a book about military silver? Because nobody has ever done it before. Not in itself a compelling motivation of course, but it was enough to get me started.' The two chapters on Indian Army silver will be of particular interest to readers, combining both military history and the history of the silverware in question.

Partition was an emotive period for everyone, and not only for everything regimental, but also for regimental silver. Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck ordered that all Indian Army regimental silver should remain in its customary place, reasoning, as quoted, 'that silver had been donated by British officers, piece by piece, over the years ever since the regiments had been raised. ...if this heritage had been divided amongst British officers on their departure, it would have had the effect of destroying a large part of the traditions of each regiment. And for what? The silver would have been dissipated far and wide, a piece here and a piece there with some of it certainly ending up in a sale room or finding an ignominious resting place in the attic.... simply because the individual concerned couldn't be bothered to keep it polished.' He was right, of course. Even in the minuscule minority of cases where it was not handed over, subsequently it was restored.

The author succinctly encapsulates some two hundred contributions, averring 'it has been possible, while compiling this book, to recall the experiences of officers who served in the 1930s and who knew what it was like to be a soldier in a world - an Indian world - which has long gone and which will never return. One of them was the (late) Major Robert Henderson (a BACSA member). His family had sent its sons to serve in India over several generations...' With such sentimental family strands, the author poignantly weaves the woof and warp of the history of the Indian Army's silver over the centuries - encompassing not only the military facets like the pathos of the destruction of the bridge over the Sittang River, but also much of the Indian Army's social history like the Wedding Silver Fund. There was an unwritten convention, 'Lieutenants shall not marry, Captains may marry, Majors must marry....no engagement shall be announced without the prior approval of the commanding officer'. There are delightful vignettes of how silver wedding gifts, made by the Goldsmiths and Silversmiths Company, were chosen. There are not enough superlatives to describe the quality of this enchanting publication - both the fine paper used, and the brilliant photographs reproduced, like that of the then Captain CRDG Gray (a BACSA member) in the uniform of his regiment Skinner's Horse. The author validly states that 'ten or twenty years from now all personal memories of the pre-1947 Indian Army will have gone for ever....but the tangible record of individual valour, sacrifice and pride is best preserved in its collections of silver'. For its price, this book is a bargain. (SLM)

1999 Published by Roger Perkins, obtainable from PO Box 29, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 1XU ISBN 0 9506429 4 0 £39.50 pp232



**Maymyo - More Far: a Walk out of Burma 1942** Joan Robertson

Born in Hankow, China, one of the author's first memories is of her mother and servants waiting for a train at Chi-kon-san, a little hill station, where the family had spent the summer. In the 1920s warlords roamed the country, and it was touch and go whether the soldiers surrounding the family would become 'anti-foreign' and massacre them. By the end of the three day wait for the train, Joan Robertson's mother had the soldiers fetching and carrying food and milk for her hungry children. 'I have sometimes wondered what would have happened if she had decided to lead them into battle' ponders her daughter in this short, but dramatic book. After two years of schooling in England, the author returned to China, where she met her future husband. She was newly married, in England, to Christopher, a junior manager in the Shell Oil Company, when the second World War broke out, and he was ordered back to China.

The couple managed to get to Shanghai, and travelled by boat to their first home together, in Hankow. By the end of 1939, the Yangtze was virtually a Japanese river, and permission to travel had to come from the Japanese. When her husband was called up shortly afterwards and summoned to Calcutta, the author accompanied him, and across India too, to Belgaum, together with other 'China' wives, who were not prepared to be separated from their menfolk. Following Christopher around India, and, when he was posted in Burma, to Rangoon, the author gallantly drove a Ford convertible (missing some of its side panels), 500 miles or so up to Maymyo, accompanied only by her husband's bearer, who had met her from the ship.

Work as a cypher officer in Maymyo occupied her days, but within months Joan Robertson was advised to leave for Mandalay, as the British retreat began. But the Japanese were now very near, and as she boarded a boat for Bhamo, Mandalay was in flames behind her. The rest of the story is full of the dreadful confusion of war time, the lack of communications, shortage of food and water, with people falling sick and dying all around. The loss of a favourite dog adds to the misery. Eventually the Robertsons managed to reach Calcutta, where Joan went down with a serious attack of malaria. A postscript tells us that when she recovered she was put in charge of the Map Room at the Calcutta HQ of Force 136 for the rest of the war. Her indomitable mother, father and younger sister were released from an internment camp in Shanghai, and the family were reunited. Told in a simple and unpretentious manner, this book vividly conveys the upheavals of war, as well as the courage of those who walked out of Burma. (RLJ)

1999 Published by Norman Hudson & Co and available from Alderney Book Shop, 29 Victoria Street, Alderney, Channel Islands GY9 3TA. £8.50 including postage and packing pp86

**Books by non-members that will interest readers. [These should be ordered direct and not through BACSA.]**

**Three-Quarters of a Footprint: Travels in South India** Joe Roberts

The author was born in Bath, where he now lives with his wife and son. For seven years he lived in the USA, working as a bookseller in Manhattan, and then a baker in Texas. Returning to England in 1984 he cooked in restaurants, and then worked for Waterstones, the booksellers. In the Spring of 1990, he decided to write. He had inherited some money, so he cleared his debts, quit a job that had grown burdensome and was not leading anywhere. It seemed an appropriate moment to go abroad. He was drawn to South India, as he had seen a photograph of boats sailing in the Keralan backwaters, and another of chillies drying in the sun, a bright crimson field. Hindu mythology also tantalised him. Friends assumed that he was on a religious quest (as people often do when one mentions the East), but he had no spiritual intentions.

A person in Woking arranged for him to be a paying guest for five months with a family in Bangalore, a retired major and his wife, where he based himself, for his extensive travels. Apart from, inter alia, sightseeing in Bangalore and Madras, visiting the great temple at Madurai, the Jain shrines and the forests of Mysore, the Todas of Ootacamund, the holy town of Mahabalipuram, an ashram at Pondicherry, as well as meeting ancient communities in Kerala, he also travelled to the burning ghats of Varanasi, and met the Gond tribals near Jabalpur. Wherever he went he met extraordinary people. This is a remarkably felicitous book, well-written, with photographic acuity of eye and rare insight. It is untainted by prejudice, and always backed-up by detailed scholarship. It is a paperback reprint of his 1994 book. Earlier reviewers have described it as 'the best sort of travel book' (Eric Newby), and 'Endlessly entertaining' (Norman Lewis). Geoffrey Moorhouse aptly sums it up, 'As long as new writers like Joe Roberts are to be found, the travel book has distinctly not had its day'. While continuing to write, Roberts supports himself by making pasta! Highly readable. (SLM)

2000 Profile Books ISBN 1 86197 196 6 £8.99 pp347

**Abdul's Taxi to Kalighat: a celebration of Calcutta** Joe Roberts

This book recounts the author's second visit to India, now accompanied by his wife Emma, and baby son Llewelyn. The family stayed in Calcutta for five months, mostly at Fairlawn Hotel in Sudder Street, run by Captain & Mrs Smith, since the days of the British Raj. Roberts likes Calcutta, and believes that it has



suffered from a bad press for thirty years or so. He doesn't seek to belittle the extent of human and animal suffering which one sees daily on its streets, but to point out that there is another side to the city. Calcutta attracts few western tourists, which is a pity, because they are missing out on one of the most interesting and stimulating places in the Indian subcontinent. 'What impressed me most about Calcutta was the way that it buzzed with conversation' reports Roberts, as anyone who has spent a few days there will surely agree. Bengalis are great conversationalists, not just talkers. They are proud of their city, its culture and history, while making light of the difficulties they confront every day. The Roberts family took a pragmatic approach, exploring the streets around the hotel at first, then travelling further afield, sometimes by taxi. They visit South Park Street Cemetery, and were told that in the 1960s it was hopelessly run down, with dogs and tribes of beggars in the ruined mausoleums. Now it is 'all shipshape and tidy, the trees and flowers well tended' and potted plants near the entrance. BACSA is acknowledged for the transformation. Calcutta's history is introduced in small chunks, interlaced with everyday events, shopping, visiting temples, restaurants, gardens and museums. Subtly Roberts builds up a picture of the city and its inhabitants, leaving the readers to make up their own minds about it. But there are no doubts where the Fairlawn Hotel is concerned. Its eccentricities, and those of its proprietors, are lovingly detailed, the bizarre conversations at dinner, the 'Edwardian English recipes subtly transformed by generations of Indian chefs', and the Christmas party, which is such a popular event, that tickets are sold for it.
A literate and readable guide to Calcutta. (RLJ)

1999 Profile Books ISBN 1 86197 192 3 £15.99 pp301

**Mughals, Maharajas and the Mahatma** KRN Swamy

Mr Swamy has been collecting newspaper cuttings about India and the British for fifty years, and curious little news items have inspired some of the stories in this very readable book. (Sadly the original cuttings were destroyed during an exceptional monsoon in 1990, so this book is the only record of the author's freelance writing since 1954.) So much is written about India by outsiders, that it is valuable to get the Indian point of view on topics which to some extent have been appropriated by the West. And talking of appropriation, the first chapter, 'Treasures of the Indian Maharajas' discusses how much of the fabulous jewellery of the Princes has disappeared since 1947. For a change, the British were not to blame here. As the 565 princedoms were integrated into the Indian Union, the princely jewellery was divided into two categories - State Regalia like thrones and crowns, and items bought by the rulers themselves. But an investigation by the Director General of the National Museum of India, Delhi, in the late 1980s found that only very minor treasures had been listed under State Regalia, and that most

jewellery had been claimed as personal possessions. The Nizam of Hyderabad, and the Maharajas of Baroda, Mysore and Jaipur are particularly mentioned. Indeed the list of Jaipur's possessions at Independence, is staggering, and included two palaces, 200 historical mansions, ten temples, and an eclectic assortment of British and American cars, quite apart from furniture and jewels. A decision by the Government of India in the 1960s to allow the export of heirlooms on condition that the foreign exchange they earned was brought back to India, 'resulted in a veritable avalanche of various State Regalia leaving India' including the Gaekwar's silver howdah, the famous Rampur pearls, and the Indore diamonds, which were snatched up by a Middle Eastern buyer. Indeed, a lot of Indian treasures have been transferred to wealthy Arab buyers, via the auction houses of London.

There are less depressing chapters however. 'A British Viceroy's Tribute to Mughal Empress' is the story of Lord Curzon's wish to mark his love of the Taj Mahal at Agra. He had catalogued the items removed from the Agra tomb following the demise of the Mughal Empire, and the one he regretted most was a gold chandelier that had hung above the cenotaph of the Empress Mumtaz Mahal. Curzon decided on a hanging lamp of silver, the kind still to be found in 'Arab mosques' and during a visit to Cairo he chose a craftsman to produce a beautiful lamp of bronze, silver and gold. The inscription 'Presented to the Tomb of Mumtaz Mahal by Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India in 1906' was translated into Persian and engraved around the lamp, which still hangs above the grave today.

Another story is that of the burial place of the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar, banished to Rangoon by the British after 1857, for acting as figurehead to the sepoy mutineers. After a trial in his own royal chambers at the Red Fort, he was sentenced to transportation and exile. He died in Rangoon on 7 November 1862 and was buried in the prison compound. The grave and that of his wife, Zeenat Mahal, were later obliterated by a British official who used the area as a tennis court and stables. A tablet was subsequently raised by some patriotic Indians at the beginning of the 20th century, and Subhas Chandra Bose built a 'Martyrs Memorial' at the site about 1943. But this too was destroyed by the British, on the recapture of Rangoon in 1945. The Government of India erected yet another memorial, and funded the construction of the Bahadur Shah Zafar Hall in 1994. But now greedy Burmese property developers have their eyes on the prime site, and the only solution may be to repatriate the remains of the Emperor and his Queen to India. This little book is packed with similar anecdotes, including stories about Mahatma Gandhi, the Danes of Tranquebar, the first Indian MP in the British Parliament, and many more. At such a modest price, this book is something of a treasure in itself. (RLJ)

1997 Harper Collins, India ISBN 81 7223 280 2 *Rs195 pp265



**The East India Company: Trade and Conquest from 1600** Antony Wild

Exactly four hundred years ago this year, the first English East India Company was granted a Royal Charter by Queen Elizabeth 1. It was to grow into the largest multinational business of its time, easily outpacing other East India companies set up by the French, the Dutch, the Danes, and the Portuguese (who had preceded the English). The Honorable East India Company, the HEIC, as it was known, has also provided the richest source of modern records for the Indian historian. Nothing was too trivial to be written down, or written about, or petitioned for, or argued against, which is why the leather-bound Company records are reputed to take up nine miles of shelving in the British Library. It is clearly no easy task to summarise the history of the Company in one volume, nor to make a popular book out of what most perceive as a dry subject. Antony Wild is a businessman himself, with a background in tea, coffee and chocolate, and he has produced an easily digestible work, with well-chosen illustrations. He makes no claim to having used primary sources, but relies on published material (unfortunately not footnoted, and not always strictly accurate).

Some academics will be sniffy about this kind of book, for this reason, but the reviewer finds nothing wrong with giving readers a taster of the Company's story, and at the same time, the social, military and commercial history of the Indian subcontinent. Chronological in layout, the chapters are subdivided under headings like 'Gifts, Gratuities and Greed', 'Temptation and the Bibi', 'Indiamen and Steam Ships', and 'From Coffee House to Tea Garden'. There are short paragraphs on places and people, the latter including William Fullerton, William Fraser, Colonel James Skinner, and other notables. With less than 200 pages, admittedly large pages, some things are bound to go. 'Architecture' gets a brisk three quarters of a page, 'Clive and Plassey' get four paragraphs. But there are intriguing asides, like the bizarre practice of 'hook swinging', and a useful list of Company Factories with their dates, names, and modern locations.

Nearly every page is illustrated by photographs and paintings, some well-known, but others of interest for their novelty, like 'the oldest known photographs of India' taken by an Englishwoman in what is now Uttar Pradesh. Some of the ethnological photographs of the 19th century, including 'The Improbable Hairy Family from Mandalay' are seriously weird, and probably don't have that much relevance to the text, but never mind. Lecturers looking for visual material will find this a useful source book. The author notes, without comment, that East India House, the Company's headquarters, which started life as a half-timbered Elizabethan house, and became an impeccably Palladian mansion by the 18th century, occupied the site in Leadenhall Street, in the City of London, where the Lloyds building stands today. One feels that the Company ghosts could still teach the modern insurers a trick or two! Recommended. (RLJ)

1999 Harper Collins, London and Delhi ISBN 0 00 414054 0 £24.99 pp191

**BOOKS ALSO RECEIVED** (some of which will be reviewed in the next issue)

**Journal of a Horse-gunner: India to the Baltic via Alamein** RBT Daniell
Life in the Royal Horse Artillery, an elite corps of the British Army, starts with the author's first posting to India in 1922.
1998 Buckland Publications Ltd, Chaucer House, Chaucer Business Park, Kemsing, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 6PW ISBN 0 7212 0951 3 £16.00 including postage and packing pp153

**Tugs of War** Betty Donaldson
Returning home to India during wartime as a teenager, the author was quickly appointed an officer in the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India), working near the Indo-Burmese frontier.
nd Barny Books, PO Box 38, Oxford OX2 6FD ISBN 0 948204 99 0 £5.75 pp96

**Everest: the Man and the Mountain** JR Smith
A new biography of George Everest, the man who became Surveyor General of India, and who was a linguist, engineer, astronomer and religious philosopher.
1999 Whittles Publishing, obtainable from Scottish Book Source, 137 Dundee Street, Edinburgh EH11 1BG, tel: 0131 229 6800 ISBN 1 870325 72 9 £37.50 pp306

**Under the Old School Topee** Hazel Innes Craig
First published by BACSA in 1990, this popular book has been reprinted five times, and now appears in an revised edition, with 10 new schools, new appendices, and an updated list of useful contacts for old boys and girls.
1999 published by the author, 53 Hill Rise, Rickmansworth, Herts, WD3 2NY ISBN 0 9526997 0 2 £10.25 including postage and packing pp275

**Through the Jungle of Death: A Boy's Escape from Wartime Burma** Stephen Brookes
The Anglo-Burmese author, then an eleven year old boy, trekked to India with his family on a fearful jungle journey. He was ambushed by the Chinese, and interned, finally reaching safety at Jhansi, following his father's death.
2000 John Murray ISBN 0 7195 5445 4 £16.99 pp272

* Books from India: where prices are given in rupees, these books can be obtained from Mr Ram Advani, Bookseller, Mayfair Buildings, Hazratganj PO Box 154, Lucknow 226001, UP, India. Mr Advani will invoice BACSA members in sterling, adding £3.00 for registered airmail for a slim hardback, and £2.00 for a slim paperback. Sterling cheques should be made payable to Ram Advani. Catalogues and price lists will be sent on request.

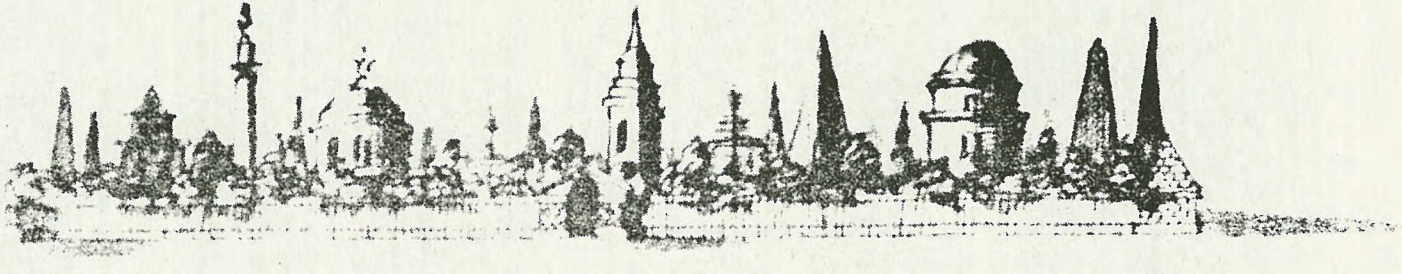


**Notes to Members**

1. When writing to the Secretary and expecting a reply, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

2. If wishing to contact a fellow-member whose address is not known to you, send the letter c/o Hon Secretary who will forward it unopened.

3. If planning any survey of cemetery MIs, either in this country or overseas, please check with the appropriate Area Representative or the Hon Secretary to find out if already recorded. This is not to discourage the reporting of the occasional MI noticed, which is always worth doing, but to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.



**Vanbrugh's sketch of the English cemetery at Surat, 1711**