

Registered Charity 273422

ISSN 0141-6588



CHOWKIDAR

Volume 13 Number 2 Autumn 2012
Editor: Dr. Rosie Llewellyn-Jones

British Association For Cemeteries In South Asia (BACSA)

President

Alan Tritton, CBE, DL

Vice-President

Mr David Mahoney, FRICS

Council

Mr Charles Allen
Sir Nicholas Barrington, KCMG, CVO
Sir William Benyon
The Rt. Hon. The Viscount Slim, OBE
Lady Wade-Gery

Honorary Secretary & Editor

Dr Rosie Llewellyn-Jones
135 Burntwood Lane
London SW17 0AJ
tel: 020 8947 9131
email:rosieljai@clara.co.uk

Honorary Treasurer

His Honour Anthony Bradbury
79 Stradbroke Grove
Buckhurst Hill
Essex IG9 5PE

Chairman

Sir Michael Davies, KCB

Executive Committee

Dr R. J. Bingle (Records Archive)
Mr David Blake OBE (Records, FIBIS)
Mr Peter Boon (Publicity)
Mr H.C.Q. Brownrigg
Mr D.H. Doble
Mrs M. Hywel-Jones (Guide Book Project)
Mrs Rosemary Lee (Projects Officer)
Brigadier Ian Rees
Mrs V.W. Robinson (Events Officer)
Miss C. M. Whitehead (MIs & Family History)
Mr M.K.A. Wooller

Honorary Membership Secretary

Mr Christopher Carnaghan
42 Rectory Lane
Kings Langley
Herts WD4 8EY
email: cscarnaghan@aol.com

NOTES ON BACSA

The Association was formed in 1976 and launched in Spring 1977 to bring together people with a concern for the many hundreds of European cemeteries, isolated graves and monuments in South Asia.

There is a steady membership of over 1,400 (2012) 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 building up the Records Archive in the India Office Collections at the British Library; and many other projects for the upkeep of historical and architectural monuments. 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 the condition of a relative's grave etc. BACSA also publishes Cemetery Records books and has published books on different aspects of European social history out East. Full details on our website: www.bacsa.org.uk The enrolment fee and subscription rates are obtainable from the Membership Secretary.

Founded by the late Theon Wilkinson, MBE

© British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia

THE HANCOCK BENCH, KOTA

Few things are more frustrating than identifying a cemetery only to find that the expected grave within it longer exists. Here Mrs Victoria Singh, the local area representative for Kota, in Rajasthan, explains how one man got around the problem.

Charles Hancock was born in Bombay in 1837 and was part of a force of Bombay Engineers sent to the relief of Kotah during the Indian Mutiny. The Political Agent there, Major Charles Burton and his two sons had been surrounded in the Residency on 15 October 1857 and had died fighting. The Maharao, Ram Singh II had been kept prisoner in his Fateh Garh Palace two kilometres away by his mutinous troops and a motley collection of disgruntled rebels. Major General H.G. Roberts of the Bombay Army reached Kotah four months later and in his report written on 28 May 1858, described how Lieutenant Charles Hancock had been ordered to dismount the guns in Fateh Garh with the party of Royal Engineers. 'While so employed the magazine in the battery blew up and I regret the death of Lieutenant Hancock and four other Engineers who died', he wrote.

Charles Hancock was accepted in Kota (the modern spelling), as part of the story but was unknown to his own family until a fifth generation Hancock, Frank Hancock, working in India, commissioned a researcher to find out about the family's Indian background. In 2010 Frank discovered his great x 3 uncle Charles and wondered if we had his grave in the British cemetery. Enquiries revealed that Lady Olive Crofton had recorded a text for a grave in her book published in the 1930s but that no grave currently bears that inscription. It did seem safe to assume, however, that Charles was laid to rest with his compatriots, Captain Bazalgette and Captain Bainbrigge in the Kota cemetery. Frank Hancock paid a flying visit to Kota in March 2011 where he met officers of the Kota Heritage Society. He was shown around the Palace by the curator, Rao Baljeet Singh. It has a commanding position overlooking the river Chambal and the fortified walls and turrets are still extant. Frank was able to look out over the battle site and imagine the British crossing, under cover of darkness, on rafts made from arrack barrels lashed together, and the subsequent assault and capture of the rebel-held city.

Frank felt that he would like to honour the memory of his newly discovered ancestor and all those who died in the same troubled period of Kota's history. After some discussion as to what form the memorial

would take, he decided to commission two stone benches that would be low maintenance, thief-proof and long-lasting and to pay for the flagging of a large central area of the cemetery. A design evolved for the benches to be made from three pieces of rainbow-coloured Dholpur pink softstone that could be inscribed by hand. The owner of Punav Stones in Kota understood the concept but had great difficulty getting the mason in Sikandarabad to keep to the design and to produce the desired quality. As the flagstone work was overrunning its budget, the commission for two benches was reduced to one. Finally, having been promised the bench in July it was ready in December and was transported to Kota. Carefully laying the stones on sacks of chaff we took them to the engraver and worked on the design so that there was an inscription on both of the tombstone-like shaped ends. The year 2011 had slipped to 2012 so that was to be engraved on the front and back faces and 'Erected by the Hancock Family' was engraved along the seat. We just got the bench assembled and installed in time for the Annual General Meeting in April 2012 and Frank was able and happy to inaugurate it. The first inscription reads: 'In honour of Lt Charles Hancock, Bombay Engineers, Died 14th April 1858, Of wounds received at the assault of Kotah, Aged 21 years' and the second: 'Also to commemorate All who died at Kotah July 1857-April 1858' (see page 36)

MAIL BOX

BACSA Executive members (and others of course), often take a hands-on approach to cemeteries in South Asia, and a good example came recently when Peter Boon re-visited Azamgarh in Uttar Pradesh. Here two of his relatives are buried, James Lascelles Forbes, his maternal great-grandfather, died 1899 and Michael Patrick Dunne, a great, great uncle, died 1879. Mr Boon had found the cemetery generally overgrown and uncared for on his first visit in 2006 and decided to employ a Delhi-based stone-mason, Peter Lunn, to restore the two family tombs. To Peter Boon's surprise and gratification when he arrived in March he found the stone-mason and his team had cleared the ground around the two graves and this had seemingly galvanised the priest, the Revd. Praveen Soans and his church committee into action too. Two thirds of the cemetery was clear of undergrowth, unwanted trees and bushes, and the visible pre-1947 graves were tidied and whitewashed. 'The condition of the cemetery astonished and delighted me...an example of what local communities can do if they set their minds to it.' The Burial Register from 1872 to date has been photographed, and can be transcribed. BACSA hopes to offer help to

increase the height of the cemetery wall, and the lych-gate could be renovated too. The stone-mason, who has worked for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has also done a splendid job and is a useful contact for members who may wish to get family graves in India properly restored. (see page 36)

The Malayan Emergency that began in 1948 and lasted until independence from Britain in 1957 has become an almost forgotten conflict. Strictly speaking, casualties from the Emergency fall outside BACSA's scope, because our cut-off date is 1947. But if BACSA doesn't keep an eye on the graves of Britons killed during this event, then who will? Mr Leslie James is the BACSA representative in Penang, Malaysia and he recently wrote an article about police graves in the Western Road cemetery there. This included information from the BACSA Cemetery Records book by Justin Corfield, published in 1999. Mr James's article in the *Penang Heritage Trust Newsletter* was read by Mr Mark Hambling in Australia and he was amazed to see in it a photograph of a relative's grave. Douglas Stork was killed by bandits on 11 April 1951 at Karandan, in Kedah State. His brother, William, who is still alive, is Mark Hambling's father-in-law. 'All these years the family never knew where he was buried...I quickly got William in front of the computer to show him where his brother is resting, we now have some closure of what happened to Doug's body. It looks like the cemetery is well maintained and we thank the Malaysian people for protecting and preserving the past. The last time William saw his brother was in Egypt when he was going home after the war.' At the time of his death Douglas Stork was an Inspector in the Federation of Malaya Police, although he was described as a planter in the *Straits Times*. Leslie James thinks the explanation might be that he was a volunteer police inspector, one of a number of planters who were appointed as such so they could carry arms and command the special constables assigned to their plantations. He had joined the Dublin Estate of the Malayan-American Plantations just seven months before his death and was ambushed along with a special constable and an estate labourer by about 30 bandits. He lies surrounded by other police comrades who were killed on duty and in action against the terrorists during this troubled period.

During the recent BACSA visit to Scotland a delightful story was uncovered, that of Ong-Tong Burnett, born about 1747, probably in Sumatra, and possibly, from his name, of Chinese origin. Ong-Tong was brought to Scotland by his employer, James Burnett, who had travelled to Java and Bencoolen to seek his fortune. Clearly in this he

was successful for James built a mansion house at Countesswells, having purchased the estates from an Aberdeen merchant. Ong-Tong would have been in his early twenties on his arrival in Scotland, and seems to have acted as a valet to James. On 11 September 1774 Ong-Tong was baptised at Peterculter church taking his master's surname, and four years later his own daughter, Henrietta, was baptised in the same church. Because parish registers for this period are missing, we do not know who Ong-Tong's first wife was, but he was soon left a widower with a little girl to support. He was married again in April 1788 to Margaret Ritchie, and a son was born later that year, named William Burnett. Sadly his new wife was dead by the end of the year. Now, with two children to bring up, Ong-Tong met Elspet Hay while he was working on Sir William Gordon's estate in Fordyce, Banffshire. Little William died before the age of three, but Henrietta survived, married, and went on to have nine children, all of whom lived into adulthood, not a common event in those days. Mr David Peters, who kindly sent us Ong-Tong's story, is descended from him through Henrietta. He tells us that having researched his ancestor and found photographs of the great grandchildren 'there is a strong Asian look with high cheekbones and slightly slanting eyes' in the family. Curiously Ong-Tong was described as a 'negroe servant' on his baptismal record, but this is probably from ignorance in a remote Scottish area about what exotic foreigners looked like, 'negro' being a general term for anyone out of the ordinary. Ong-Tong died on 11 March 1811 at the age of sixty-four and is named on a headstone in Ellon churchyard which commemorates members of his son-in-law's Hardie family.

Another story of voluntary exile from the country of one's birth is that of the Rani of Kapurthala who is buried in All Saints churchyard at Doddinghurst, Essex. The rani, Henrietta Melvina, was born in India in 1841 and baptised at Karnaul, north of Delhi. Henrietta was Anglo-Indian, her father being Robert Theodore Hodges, described as head writer at Ludhiana while her mother, Katherine, was the daughter of Rai Bahadur, Pandit Budh Singh of Delhi. Robert Hodges had become tutor to the heir apparent, prince Randhir Singh of Kapurthala, a princely state in the Punjab. During the Indian Mutiny, Randhir Singh, now the raja, supported the British and as a result was given substantial areas of land seized from rebellious neighbours. By 1859 he already had two Indian wives, but he chose to marry the eighteen-year old Henrietta in a Christian ceremony. Unfortunately the marriage did not last and within a decade the couple were divorced, with two daughters. Henrietta, also known as Lady Randhir Singh, brought the two girls to

England, a foreign country to them of course, and they were educated in London. Both little princesses had the royal family name of Ahluwalia. Their mother, Henrietta, married again, this time to John Hamer Oliver, staff assistant surgeon, but was widowed in 1873 after only three years of marriage. More sadness came when her youngest daughter, princess Helen Marion Kaur Sahiba, died on 15 October 1887 at the age of twenty-three and was buried at Doddinghurst. Later Henrietta moved to Kelvedon Hatch in Essex, into the oddly named Kurma, or perhaps Kumla Lodge, where she lived with her elder daughter, princess Melvina Kaur Sahiba, who had married an army officer. Henrietta died in 1893 at the age of forty-nine and was buried next to her daughter, Helen. A poignant note in the margin of the Burial Register against her name reads 'Late (Ranee) of Kupparrhalla'.

David Rose first contacted BACSA in May 2011 to say that with the help of Sue Farrington's Rawalpindi Cemetery book (1996), he had been able to locate the site of his uncle's grave in the Harley Street cemetery there. Muhammad Afzal, an old family friend living in Lahore, offered to visit the cemetery and photograph the tomb. His description of finding it is vivid: 'the adjoining areas consisting of graves of the British is mostly having thick plantations, in fact it gives the appearance of jungle. The caretaker who came with me left because of mosquitoes there. After a little more looking around and setting aside bushes, I found a grave which was a flat grave with a tombstone which had fallen and was broken. It was covered with mud and leaves. Somehow I could make out the age and year of death. The caretaker returned to wash away the mud and remove the surrounding bushes, we did try to find the rest of the pieces of cement which had the name engraved but we couldn't find all of them. But I was able to make out the details. On the slab the words '2nd ACC' were visible and the date of death.' The tombstone was completely overturned and lying face down. Mr Rose then had the ambitious idea of replacing it with a new headstone, and Mr Afzal, working with the cemetery caretaker, Justin, got a new memorial erected. (*see page 37*) A mistake on the original inscription, where the Army authorities had used 'Charles' instead of Charlie, was corrected and it now reads 'Sacred to the memory of No. 4104148 Private Charlie Barton 2nd ACC Royal Tank Corps. Born 23rd August 1909 Died 19th September 1932' This tomb falls outside the remit of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, who have strict criteria on inter-war graves, so without his nephew's thoughtful gesture, Charlie Barton's memorial would have been lost. It is another encouraging story of what can be done, either in person, or through local contacts, to commemorate our dead.

CAN YOU HELP?

A photograph reproduced in the Spring 2012 *Chowkidar* of the tomb of Carr Stephen has resulted in a wealth of unexpected information about an enterprising Armenian family whose history reaches from Iran to Scotland, via the Indian sub-continent. BACSA member Mr Waqar Khan is a keen historian of old Dacca and when he got in touch with Henrietta Simpson (née Stephen) of Edinburgh, the two were able to trace a journey that began in Isfahan in the early 1800s (and find some interesting tombs *en route*). Johannes Stepannosean left the Armenian quarter of New Julfa for Calcutta, attracted there no doubt by its flourishing trade. But he soon moved north to Dacca, where he prospered and married his second wife, Sultana Athanes at the Greek church there in 1838. We do not know what happened to his first wife, but Johannes fathered seven sons in all and he is buried in the Armenian cemetery, Dacca. The inscription on his grave reads in part 'Dedicated to the memory of Mister Hovhannes Stepannosean who passed away from this life on 11 February 1843 at the age of 53 years. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be renewed.' (The quotation is from the Armenian version of the Bible.) After his death the family name was anglicised to Stephen, and it was John Stephen Esquire of Dacca who was Henrietta Simpson's great-great grandfather. His tomb is in the Narinda cemetery (see the article on page 34), and there is a splendid family photograph of the bearded patriarch who died in 1876. One of his three sons was Carr Stephen (the generations were slightly elided in our original article), and he settled in Calcutta, where it seems he was buried too, because strenuous efforts by Mr Khan including searching burial registers, have not found his tomb anywhere in Dacca. It was Carr Stephen's son, Christopher who moved to England, where he had been educated, after serving in the Royal Fusiliers during the First World War. Further 19th century photographs of two officers in the Royal Artillery, Lieutenant Stephen and Colonel Stephen, remind us that Armenians were classed as part of the British or European population for census purposes. The Stephens' story is a fascinating one, and perhaps the grave which sparked off the original query may yet be found in a Calcutta cemetery.

Mr Craig Murray is currently researching for a biography of Sir Alexander Burnes, that archetypal Victorian hero. Known both as Sikander Burnes and Bokhara Burnes, he was born at Montrose in Scotland in 1805 and joined the East India Company at the age of sixteen. He soon learnt Hindustani and Persian and was appointed assistant Political Agent at Kutch in 1826. Subsequent travels as an explorer and spy took him into Afghanistan, and the wild region beyond, known as Tartary.

His book *Travels into Bokhara...an account of a Journey from India to Cabool, Tartary and Persia* published in 1834 by John Murray was an instant success. Burnes was made a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and the Royal Asiatic Society. In 1836 he was posted to Afghanistan and three years later was the assistant Political Agent in Kabul. Joined by his younger brother Charley, Burnes advised the British government on political events, adopting Afghan dress when it suited him, and apparently Afghan customs too where the local women were involved. The end came unexpectedly during the third week of Ramadan. Burnes had little warning that his behaviour had caused grave offence and as he and Charley tried to flee their house, they were cut down by a mob of Afghans in the street on 2 November 1841. The most authentic account of the killing comes not from historians, but from the novelist George Macdonald Fraser, who based his first *Flashman* novel on the events leading up to the First Afghan War.

Alexander Burnes's head was lopped off and paraded through the streets of Kabul, as was to happen with that of Sir William Hay Macnaghten, the Political Agent, seven weeks later (see *Chowkidar* Spring 2009). Mr Murray wonders where Burnes' mutilated body was buried – in the courtyard of his house, or thrown down a well in the Armenian cemetery of Kabul? He has learnt that members of the Burnes family joined Alexander and Charley at Bhuj, in the Kutch district of Gujarat. A brother James, working as a doctor, and two, or probably three sisters, were here in the 1820s and early 1830s. It is possible that one or two members of the family may be recorded here, so Mr Murray visited the Bhuj cemetery which dates from at least the 1820s, and was luckily undamaged in the devastating earthquake of 2001. 'It was rather difficult to get access and I learnt from a local historian that recent British visitors have had to climb the substantial wall. Through perseverance I eventually got the key from an extraordinarily rude young Catholic priest. Apparently the problem is a dispute over the graveyard between local Catholic and Protestant congregations. The church burial registers go back only to 1858 but the burials go back some forty years earlier. I could not spend as much time as I wished because of the very large pack of wild dogs that inhabit the cemetery.' Does BACSA have any knowledge of this cemetery, asks Mr Murray, who has sent us a photograph of the very handsome tombs here?

Mrs Patrica Ellis is descended from Lieutenant Leonard Whitesmith, who lost his life in 1811 during the East India Company's expedition to Java, then part of the Dutch East Indies. Although mainly administered

and defended by the Dutch, the island had become a titular French colony, which made it attractive to Britain following its capture of Mauritius earlier that year. Lieutenant Whitesmith had joined the Company's Army in 1800, as a cadet of sixteen, and he arrived in India a year later to join the 2/7th Bengal Native Infantry. He and a fellow officer, Charles Parker, were posted to Orissa and Leonard subsequently transferred to the 1st Bengal Volunteers Battalion, which arrived at Penang (then called Prince of Wales Island) in May 1806. Five years later it was from Penang that the Company's frigates sailed to Java, patrolling the island and launching opportunist raids. Troops landed at the beginning of August and the Dutch/French stronghold, Fort Cornelis, fell to the British on 26 August 1811, the date of Leonard Whitesmith's death. British losses were considerable, over 140 from the army alone, with a number of soldiers missing. Some of the casualties were buried at Batavia, but the Whitesmith name is not listed in the comprehensive survey by Justin Corfield published by BACSA in 1999. Leonard Whitesmith had fathered a daughter, Sarah, born in Barrackpore about 1811, who later married the son of Charles Parker, his old comrade, and it is through this union that Mrs Ellis is descended. Any hope of establishing the location of the Whitesmith grave, if it still exists, is probably impossible now, but ideas would be welcomed.

The battle of Fort Saragarhi on 12 September 1897 took place during the Tirah campaign, one of a series of late nineteenth century attempts by the British to control the turbulent Afghan frontier. Seven thousand tribesmen stormed the substantial brick-built picquet, near Fort Lockhart, at Kohat, which was being held by a platoon of twenty-one men from the 36th Sikh battalion. It was an epic struggle, and well documented because Sardar Gurmukh Singh was able to communicate the progress of the battle by heliograph to Colonel Houghton at Fort Lockhart, who had too few men at his disposal to assist. All twenty-one men died, including Gurmukh Singh, as well as a non-combatant sweeper, trapped in the fort. The men's sacrifice was not in vain though, and the tribesmen's impetus was lost when British reinforcements arrived two days later. Both Queen Victoria and the British Parliament commended the gallantry of the Sikhs, and not surprisingly Saragarhi Day is still commemorated annually. The event was memorialised initially by a pyramid-shaped cairn at the fort itself, and later by the building of three gurdwaras, at Saragarhi, Ferozpur and Amritsar where a plaque lists the names of the dead. But BACSA member Mr Martin Smith says there is also an obelisk memorial too, the Tirah Campaign memorial at Kapurthala, about ten miles northwest

of Jalandhar, in the Punjab. However, he cannot find anyone to photograph it, and says he has 'exhausted the local neighbourhood in writing to individuals, schools, colleges and even the police' asking for help. Surely there must be someone, perhaps a BACSA visitor, who could oblige? Please contact him at: martinsmith1001@yahoo.com if you can help, or write to the Secretary.

Eric Feinstein is a volunteer member of JewishGen, an online website for Jewish genealogical research (www.jewishgen.org) The site has nearly two million burial records from sixty-four countries and work in India has identified a number of relevant cemeteries and burials. Not surprisingly, Bombay, home to the Bene Israel, has five cemeteries and over a thousand identified graves, while Cochin boasts India's oldest synagogue, completed in 1568 and an equal number of graves. So far nearly 3,000 records have been collected from forty-eight different locations in India. Places inland, away from the trading ports, mark the passage of enterprising Jewish people too, like Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh, a large cantonment town in British days. Here is the Rani Tal Jewish cemetery on Agha Chowk, fenced and gated, with its chowkidar Mr Daniel Abraham and two additional burials outside.

Interestingly the East India Company's army did not discriminate against Jewish soldiers, or Armenian soldiers either (as we have seen in the Stephen's family history on page 30), although it would not accept Anglo-Indians. More information on Jewish graves in India is sought and visitors can help by asking if any 'yehudi' (the Hindi word for Jewish) graves are known. Of course the website is also useful when looking for Jewish forebears, and it has a searchable database. Please contact: ericfeinstein@yahoo.com if you can help or need more information.

When BACSA put out a plea for a volunteer to edit a manuscript on the Salem old cemetery in Tamil Nadu, we were lucky enough to get Miss Denise Love to come forward and offer to take on the (enjoyable) task. It is hoped the book will be ready for publication next year. Now we need another volunteer, this time to take on the cantonment cemetery of Jhansi in Madhya Pradesh. Material was gathered some years ago, when a British engineering firm was working on a project here, but because the Indian transcribers were unfamiliar with British names, military and medical terminology, editing and checking needs to be carried out. The volunteer would need to work in the British Library with the BACSA records and to be computer literate. Please contact the Secretary if you can help.

THE NARINDA CEMETERY, DHAKA

The recent exhibition of paintings by Johann Zoffany in London included one of a mysterious early 18th century tomb, which was only identified earlier this year. Here BACSA member Charles Greig, who made the discovery, puts the story into context.

The cemetery at Narinda, Dhaka, is the oldest Christian burial ground in Bangladesh and dates back to at least the latter part of the 17th century. The engraved inscription on a stone at the entrance claims that it was founded in the 16th century but firm evidence for this is illusive. The burial ground originally occupied a narrow strip of land just beyond the northern perimeter of the old Mughal city of Dacca. It was bounded on its eastern side by a narrow tributary of the BariGanga River and on its western side by gardens and jungle. From early times it seems to have been used by Christians of a wide variety of denominations – Catholics, Armenians and various Protestants. Only a few of the early tombs survive – a complete lack of stone in Dacca and its immediate vicinity obliged the early builder to construct the tombs from small bricks and lime rendering making them easily susceptible to the ravages of the climate and rampant creepers. Much the finest tomb that survives closely resembles a Muslim mausoleum. It was, according to Bishop Heber, built for a certain Colombo Sahib and his family. Nothing is known of him but his name, which seemingly is a corruption of Columbus, suggests that he was a Portuguese trader. It was built in the early 18th century. The entrance to the original cemetery is similarly built to resemble an Islamic gateway. Other tombs built in the same century, mostly for English merchants and soldiers, are in the more common neo-classical style and are similar to those in South Park Street in Calcutta and elsewhere in Eastern India.

Johann Zoffany is arguably the most eminent artist to visit the Indian sub-continent from Europe. He came to Dacca in 1787 almost certainly at the request of the recently installed young Nawab Nazim - Syed Ali Khan Bahadur Nusrat Jung, who was known as a keen patron of European artists. Only two paintings of Dacca by Zoffany have so far come to light and one of these is a mysterious moonlit scene. It shows the tomb of Colombo Sahib close to the bank of the river. (*see back cover*) The view looks south towards a Muslim tomb and Hindu temples. Beside the tomb Nagas surround a Hindu funeral pyre suggesting that this early Christian burial ground was sited adjacent to an ancient Hindu burning ground and the tomb itself is being used for the performance of the festival of Naga Panchami with an image of Siva erected on one side.

A hundred years later an unknown European photographer made numerous images of the city of Dacca and among these are three of the cemetery and Colombo Sahib's tomb. By then the river had substantially changed course although there was still a long narrow tank of water on the cemetery's eastern side. Today the cemetery falls under the jurisdiction of St Mary's Cathedral in Dhaka and, covering about three acres, occupies a much larger area than the original burial ground. The course of the narrow river has long since been filled in. The cemetery is surrounded by a high wall on all sides and the entrance is through a narrow gateway on the western side. It is still in use for burials and much of the area is occupied by recent arrivals. The early tombs have long been neglected and are in an extremely poor state of repair. A significant number of the tombstones have been removed from their original sites and erected on the interior walls of Colombo Sahib's tomb. The latter is also in a parlous state being slowly strangled and pulled apart by creepers. I visited the cemetery in January 2012 accompanied by Waqar Khan, the BACSA representative in Dhaka and he is making representations to the Bishop regarding the restoration of the ancient tombs and particularly Colombo Sahib's tomb – possibly the finest Christian tomb in the eastern part of the sub-continent.

OBITUARY

Members will be saddened to learn of the death in May 2012 of Lieutenant General Stanley Menezes, who had been BACSA's Indian representative since 1980, an Honorary member, and a member of the Council. Before the system of Area representatives for South Asia was established in the 1980s, General Menezes covered the whole of the sub-continent, answering queries about graves, badgering Bishops to get restoration work done, and liaising with the Archaeological Survey of India and the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage. With his Army connections he was able to research in restricted military areas, including Fort William and his last project was the successful restoration of the tomb of Major Gonville Bromhead, of Rorke's Drift fame, in the Allahabad cantonment. A fuller obituary appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* on 11 July this year.

BACSA VISIT TO SCOTLAND

BACSA's first residential visit took place in late May this year. Eleven members stayed at Douneside, in Aberdeenshire, a lovely old house once owned by Sir Alexander MacRobert, who made his fortune in Cawnpore in the nineteenth century. Scottish members with Indian connections, including Lady Forbes and Geordie Burnett-Stuart



Above: Frank Hancock on the Hancock bench at Kota (see page 25)

Below: beautifully restored tombs at Azamgarh (see page 26)



above: Charlie Barton's new memorial at Rawalpindi, photograph by Muhammad Afzal (see page 29)

below: the happy BACSA group in Scotland, photograph by Mike Rimmer, (see page 35)



entertained the group and showed us their treasures and splendid hospitality (tea, home-made cakes, and sherry!) Anne Buddle arranged a visit to the Library at Duff House, Lt. Colonel Alistair Rose talked about his time in the Gurkha Rifles and Ian Stein updated us on the work of the Kolkata/Scotland Heritage Trust. One thing brought forcibly home to the group was the close links between Scotland and India, through the men and women who left the Highlands to serve overseas. Forbes & Co. for example, set up trading in Bombay in 1767 and is the oldest registered Company in India. The Burnett-Stuart family connections with India go back to the 1740s. It was a memorable few days, impeccably organised by our Events Officer, Valerie Robinson. (*see page 37*)

NOTICES

The Happy Valley (Protestant) Cemetery, Hong Kong. Christine Thomas will talk about her research in the cemetery on Saturday 3 November at 2.30pm at the Royal Asiatic Society, 14 Stephenson Way, London NW1 to the Friends of the Royal Asiatic Society (Hong Kong Branch). The Friends meet for a Chinese lunch before in a restaurant nearby in Charlton Street. If anyone would like to join us perhaps they could contact Mrs Rosemary Lee either by phone 01491 873276 or email: rosemarylee143@btinternet.com

Lucknow to Lahore: A Scot's Raj is the title of an exhibition opening at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh on 14 October 2012. It features the work of the Scottish commercial photographer, Fred Bremner, who spent forty years working in the Indian sub-continent. His subjects ranged widely from rural and ethnographic life to architecture, traditional crafts, and British innovations.

The British Empire & Commonwealth Museum was established in Bristol in 2002, finding a suitable home in the Brunel-designed buildings at Temple Meads station. It was the first major institution in the United Kingdom to present the history and legacy of Britain's overseas empire. Regrettably - and despite its laudable aims, including a strong emphasis on education - the Museum was always underfunded, primarily because its subject matter was deemed politically incorrect by those who could have provided grants. In 2008 its trustees decided to close the Museum temporarily, pending its removal to London. This project proved too difficult and expensive, so in 2011 the Museum closed for good, a sad end to a promising venture. During its short life the Museum had amassed some 55,000 items, over 11,000 of which

were donated by the Commonwealth Institute in London (where BACSA held its meetings for many years) after it closed in 2002; most of these items were never displayed for want of space and funds. Apart from a few items that were sold prior to closure, the BECM's collections of artefacts and archives (including photographs, books, films and audio recordings) have now been transferred by Deed of Gift to the City of Bristol. Those people, including BACSA members, who donated items to the Museum can be reassured that Bristol has a well-established Museums, Galleries and Archives Service, capable of caring for and displaying items from the collections in a sympathetic way. More information can be obtained from the MG & A Service, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1RL. Tel: (0117) 922 3571. Email: general.museum@bristol.gov.uk

BOOKS BY BACSA MEMBERS

The Nabobs of Berkshire

Clive Williams

Local histories can often be more interesting if they have a national or indeed international connection. Clive Williams has taken his opportunity to make such connections in his well-chosen study of Berkshire nabobs. The term 'nabob' was generally understood as a pejorative term for men who had made a fortune in India, often by questionable means, in the last half of the eighteenth century and who returned from India to buy large properties and parliamentary seats in England. Berkshire of course was not the only county favoured by returning nabobs in the mid-late eighteenth century. They were to be found scattered widely across the country and of course in London itself, where the densest aggregation could be found in Mayfair, Marylebone and Westminster. However, Berkshire certainly had a significant number, and Williams rightly notes that it was there that the fictional Nabob, Sir Mathew Mite bought his estate. Williams has been able to track down many of them, and notes that he may not have found them all. Two he might have included are John Willes of Hungerford Park and Sir John Coxe Hippisley of Wargrave Grove.

The title of the book and the Foreword and Introduction suggest that the subject will be those East India Company employees who returned from India in the last fifty years of the eighteenth century and lived on into the next century. Williams however has chosen to spread his net well before and beyond that time, to any man who had served in India, and includes soldiers who lived into the twentieth century. He makes the point that his nabobs chose to buy their properties in the Royal

County for its proximity to the Court and to London and for the sense of solidarity with other old India hands, and that few of them were originally from Berkshire. Given the broad definition, and extended time scale he allows himself as to who was a Berkshire nabob, he could perhaps have chosen to mention a dozen or so of the most celebrated names in India's history who had received their education at Berkshire's most celebrated school. Old Etonians who served in India included Commander-in-Chief Sir Eyre Coote and Governors General Earl Cornwallis, Marquess Wellesley and the Earl of Auckland. The scene-setting in India is important, but many readers may find it overlong, extending as it does from 1600 to 1858. The first time his Nabobs make their appearance in their adopted county is on page 141. It is at that point that Williams engages with his principal theme, which is the history of their Berkshire houses and of their owners' careers.

Williams now writes with a light touch and has assembled much fascinating and disparate information. His book is not written in an academic style, overloaded with footnotes and references, and is none the worse for that. He has also felt able to let his own personality show itself. However if his 'Bibliography and Research Material' on pages 385 to 387 is complete then some questions arise. He has evidently read widely in the published literature, but perhaps has not undertaken some of what rugby fan Williams will understand as 'the hard yards'. There is no mention of the manuscript Wills in the Public Record Office, nor of contemporary newspaper reports, nor of the detailed evidence of individual fortunes to be found in the East India Company ledgers and manuscript sources. The *D.N.B.* has transformed and extended itself as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* with much new information on individual nabobs. The magisterial *History of Parliament* might also have been examined as the Parliamentary careers of the Berkshire nabobs have not attracted much of the author's interest. Less significant of course is that Madame Grand who married Prince Talleyrand was French, not Danish. Once in England the nabobs are pictured in what might be termed their traditional image. There were certainly those who bought fine houses and Parliamentary seats. Recent research however also shows that many were investors in new businesses and took an interest in the latest agricultural improvements. Most were generous charitable donors and some were men of enlightenment. Not all of those who had worked in India made a fortune. Some indeed were bankrupt and broken men. The book has been particularly well-designed and presented and there are many well-reproduced illustrations. The price is very reasonable and the book deserves to attract the attention of readers with an interest in Berkshire

houses and/or in the personalities in the East India Company. Mr Williams playfully signs off as another 'Clive of India', and most readers will enjoy his literary style, his enthusiasm, sense of fun and the fund of stories he has unearthed in what is an interesting and agreeable, if over-long introduction to a neglected subject. (JF)

2010 Goosecraft Publications ISBN 978 0 9566341 15. £25 including postage from the author: Honeycroft House, Pangbourne Road, Upper Basildon, Reading Berks RG8 8LP.
clive@clivewilliams.orangehome.co.uk pp400

General Sir William Stephen Alexander Lockhart: Soldier of the Queen Empress
Martin Smith

The name of General Sir William Lockhart will be familiar to any student of Indian military history covering the latter half of the nineteenth century. It comes as a surprise, therefore, to learn that no other biography has been written of the man who served in the Indian Army from 1858 until his death, while serving as Commander-in-Chief, in March 1900. This is a brave and worthwhile effort by Martin Smith to rectify that shortcoming, especially in the absence of any written records from Lockhart himself, or from surviving members of his family. Even the most experienced biographer might have been daunted by such a dearth of material, and so it is gratifying that Martin Smith, while acknowledging his own limited experience of historical research, persevered. In May 1858, at the age of 16, Lockhart was nominated as an East India Company cadet and sailed for India in October of that same year. He was commissioned into the 44th Bengal Native Infantry, though never actually served with them since the regiment had been disarmed and dispersed at Agra in 1857. As with so many officers of that era, however, his name remained associated with that regiment in Indian Army Lists until at least 1875, though he actually went on to serve with a number of Bengal Infantry and Cavalry regiments, including as Adjutant of 14th Bengal Cavalry (Murray's Jat Lancers). Other appointment included service as ADC to Brigadier General Merewether in Abyssinia (1867-68); as DAQMG with the Hazara Field Force in 1868; AQMG Kabul Field Force (1879-80); Deputy Quarter Master General (Intelligence) 1880-85; commanded a Brigade in Burma 1886-87; commanded the Punjab Frontier Force 1890-95 during which time he participated in the Miranzai, Isazai and Waziristan expeditions; commanded the Tirah Expedition of 1897-98 and was finally Commander-in-Chief India 1898 until his untimely death in 1900. Unusually he had also served on special duty in Acheen,

Sumatra (1875-77) and had been awarded the Dutch War medal with clasp 'Atjeh 1873-76' which he wore at the end of his impressive group of medals. His India General Service Medal 1854 carried six clasps for actions ranging from Bhootan (1864-66) to Waziristan 1894-95, a spread of thirty years of active operations. Had he survived his time in India he would have undoubtedly have received further honours, may well have written his memoirs and become more widely known and admired. As it is, and this will strike a sad chord with many BACSA members, we do not even know his final resting place except that it is somewhere within the old Fort William Military Cemetery (Bhowanipore), Calcutta, though a memorial obelisk stands in Rawalpindi and there is a memorial in St Giles Cathedral, Edinburgh.

This short work is divided into 29 chapters, most of no more than four or five pages. From a family history perspective the pen pictures of some of his children, and his nephew Frank Maxwell VC, are of interest, though they add little to our knowledge of Sir William. As to his campaigns, the author acknowledges that 'Those expeditions I mention are described to give information about the kind of military engagements that Lockhart experienced and are not intended as a detailed account of the campaigns.' Secondary sources have been cited in the bibliography but, although there is an acknowledgement to the British Library, India Office Collection, no reference is made to primary sources consulted. Perhaps there is further scope for expansion on Lockhart's work by consulting his own despatches (and possibly other letters loitering in the archives), but for the moment Martin Smith's book is probably about as close as we are going to get to this '*unremembered Victorian hero*'. Worth reading. (TM)

2011 Witley Press Ltd, Hunstanton ISBN 978 0 9570154 0 1 pp231. £12.50, including UK postage, from the author, 133 Manor Lane, Sunbury on Thames, TW16 6JE. Email: martinsmith1001@yahoo.com

Ashoka: The Search for India's Lost Emperor Charles Allen

The figure of Ashoka, the Buddhist Emperor of India who ruled some 2,250 years ago has long fascinated the author, whose recent books include *The Buddha and the Sahibs* and *The Buddha and Dr Führer*. In a way he is almost more interested in how the story of Buddha, and subsequently that of Ashoka, was gradually revealed to the world by men working for the East India Company in the nineteenth century. Remains of the Buddhist monasteries which were built across India are still being discovered today, like that of the Thotlakonda complex near

Vizagapatam, overlooking the Bay of Bengal. Indeed historians think the town may have been named after the Buddhist monk Vaisakhi who preached in the area, so pervasive was the religion for nearly a millennium. When Buddhism first started to be identified by men like the Surveyor General Colonel Colin Mackenzie, the almost total eclipse of Buddhism in India was blamed on Muslim conquests. But in fact Allen points out it was in 'terminal decline' long before Mahmud of Ghazni entered India in 1008 AD. He gives the unpalatable fact that Brahman intolerance of Buddhism was also responsible for its ultimate failure in India, something which he admits few of today's Hindutva nationalists are prepared to accept. But just as fervent Muslims destroyed or reutilized Hindu temple material to build mosques, a number of these temples had themselves been built over Buddhist structures, incorporating Buddhist icons including lingams. In fact it was the Muslim Sultan Firoz Shah who became fascinated by the discovery of Ashokan stone pillars, floating two of them down to Delhi, but without understanding their significance, because no-one could read the Brahmi alphabet until James Prinsep began deciphering it in the 1830s. It is an irony that in a land so steeped in history, it was not Indian historians who recovered their own past, but the last foreigners to rule before Independence – the British.

A problem faced by these early British scholars examining India's ancient history was not only a lack of readable texts, but a lack of chronology too. Patiently Sir William Jones went back to his Greek texts, in particular the accounts of Alexander's invasions into India that began in 327 BC. Good historical research is a combination of deduction, intuition and luck and these led Jones to identify the warrior king Chandragupta, with Sandrokoptos, a dateable figure in Greek records. Chandragupta was Ashoka's grandfather, and once this was realized, then a tentative time-line could be established. A short review cannot do justice to a book like this. It is a fascinating mixture of detection, exploration, ancient history, archaeology, bitter personal feuds (among the 'furious orientalist') and much else. It is warmly recommended, with a minor proviso. The author uses the politically correct terms CE (common era) and BCE (before common era) instead of BC and AD, which he says have been superseded. (This is in case anyone is offended by the term 'before Christ' and *anno domini*, although strangely both CE and BCE mirror the Gregorian, or perhaps the Julian, calendar exactly.) It is hoped it was at the publisher's request that these annoying insertions were made, not the author's. (RLJ)

2012 Little, Brown 978 1 4087 0196 6 £25.00 pp460

British Sculpture in India: New Views and Old Memories

Mary Ann Steggles and Richard Barnes

In 2000 BACSA published *Statues of the Raj*, by Mary Ann Steggles, a co-author of this present handsome volume. While the BACSA volume was concerned only with figurative works, *British Sculpture* has a wider remit, looking at funerary monuments too and grandiose allegorical works. The 2000 book was published on a tight budget, with no opportunity for new photographs, and some of the images were of poor quality. Now we can see many familiar figures beautifully portrayed in colour, with biographies of the sculptors, their subjects and the locations of the statues. Some have gone abroad, including that of Brigadier John Nicolson, which BACSA tracked down a few years ago to Northern Ireland. Many of them have of course been moved from the public squares and gardens where they stood, but contrary to popular belief, the majority have been preserved, often hidden away in dusty corners. One such corner is in a storage shed near the rear entrance to the Appellate Courts, Mumbai. 'Staring through the hole in the asbestos sheet wall, one sees the surreal image of two old familiars, side by side and covered with spiders' webs and decades of dust'. It is King Edward VII and the Prince of Wales, Edward VIII, who of course was never crowned. The latter statue was commissioned by the Aga Khan, sculpted by Leonard Jennings and erected in 1927 close to Bombay's old Fort area. Within a decade, as the Abdication crisis unfolded, it was discreetly moved to the shed. There the Duke of Windsor still stands, wearing his sola topi.

Not only British royalty, but Indian royalty too were memorialized, as in the statue of the Maharaja of Mysore, Sir Chamarajendra Wodeyar Bahadur, who died suddenly, aged only thirty-one years old in 1894. Edward Onslow Ford, who had sculpted other maharajas, had to work from a photograph, but the statue, now in Cubbon Park, Bangalore, is a lively representation of a well-regarded ruler with 'the bearing of an English gentleman'. Time has not been kind to some of the statues that the British left behind them. Stone weathers, marble discolours and an unfortunate bronze of Lord Auckland, a governor general, has assumed a nightmare countenance. Reputations deteriorate too, no less than statues and many a now forgotten face is pictured here. But this is surely the definitive book on statuary in India, and searching for those that still remain on public view will provide an interesting tourist diversion. Recommended. (RLJ)

2011 Frontier Publishing 978 1 872914 411 pp320 £50.00

Agra: Memorials of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Robin Volkers

This is the final volume of the trilogy of Agra cemetery record books, published by BACSA. The first recorded the large cantonment cemetery, still in use, and supported by BACSA grants. The second published burial registers of St Paul's Church, and just as well, because as Volkers ruefully notes, its graveyard was unlawfully cleared and is now home to a herd of water buffalo. This present book begins with inscriptions from 'Akbar's Church' including those of the two fascinating Jesuits, Father Joseph Tieffenthaler, missionary and explorer, who died in Lucknow in 1785, and his compatriot, Father Felix X. Wendel, also died in Lucknow, in 1803. The Cathedral of the title superceded the old church and was consecrated in 1848. Many of the inscriptions in and around the Cathedral are of nuns and priests who dedicated themselves to India, leaving their native lands for ever. Clearly laid out, with an index, the book is a fitting conclusion to the author's dedication to the churches and cemeteries of Agra. (RLJ)

BACSA 2012 ISBN 978 0 907799 91-7. £12.00 plus £1.00 postage UK pp55 (See our website: bacsa.org.uk for details of more cemetery record books and prices.)

Graves in British India

Richard Morgan

This is a FIBIS Fact File, a booklet written to enable people wishing to trace relatives buried in British India. It is packed full of useful and highly practical information and pays generous tribute to BACSA's own work. Recommended.

2011 FIBIS (Families in British India Society) Available on-line from: shop.fibis.org £1.50 plus postage, pp24

Anglican Burials 1909-19 Colombo General Cemetery Eileen Hewson

Compiled from a typed copy of the original records found at the cemetery this is a straightforward list of names, date of burial, and age of the deceased. It is one of a series of *Graveyards in Ceylon* booklets by the author. (A full list can be found on her website).

2011 Kabristan Archives, 19 Foxleigh Grove, Wem SY4 5BS. info@kabristan.org.uk ISBN 978 1 906276 37 9.£7 plus post £1.00 UK Europe £3.16 Airmail £4.50. pp46

BOOKS BY NON-MEMBERS THAT WILL INTEREST READERS

The Spell of the Flying Foxes

Sylvia Dyer

This is a book to take up on a cold winter's day in UK; it will transport you back to Bihar and comfort you with memories of India Past. The tale of the family is a vehicle for the nostalgia felt by the author for her golden childhood, spent on a large farm and house in North Bihar, the *kharayan* or homestead which lay close to the Nepalese border and the terai. There are loving but possibly overlong descriptions of the food, servants, scenery, the household pets and general way of life in Champaran beside the unpredictable Baghmati river. The flying foxes of the title relate to a myth widely held across northern India, that if these creatures choose to leave an area, its former prosperity will depart with them. The Bihar earthquake of 1934 felled the old family home, but it was rebuilt by Gladys, who married again to Terence nicknamed Tip, who thus became the stepfather of her two young children. The story is told through the eyes of Sylvia, Gladys' daughter. This well-known literary device is employed to slowly reveal the various characters living on the *kharayan*; family, servants and 'tribals' from nearby villages. The credibility of the local inhabitants concerning spirits and ghosts, is described as quaint but ominous. The social stratification and language are those of the early twentieth century, held in common by the British and Anglo Indians in the subcontinent, and may not be seen as Politically Correct today!

The farm had been started in 1848 by the splendidly named Alfred Augustus Tripe, who married a well-to-do Indian woman and set up an indigo plantation. His son, Joseph, married in his turn and had a daughter, the saintlike but ineffectual Gladys. She and her cousin Harry were constantly at odds, since Harry was acquisitive but lacked the birthright to inherit. None the less he wanted the land all for himself. He was clever, underhand and manipulative, but worst of all he lived near by with servants who came and went between the two houses and caused further troubles. The major chapters of the book describe the 'sugar-coated days' of prosperity, with 'seasons of good fortune, when cups overflowed with life's bounty'. It could not last of course, Harry was busy hatching yet more plans to ruin his cousin and acquire her land. An even bigger menace for long-established Anglo Indian families arrives in 1947, when they asked, along with Gladys, 'What can we do? Where can we go? This is our country, our home, the only home we've ever known.'

Gladys decides to stay on, so too does her daughter Sylvia, the author of the book who now lives in Pune. The story in short is an autobiography of her family, and illustrates the vast changes in India in the first half of last century. It is a requiem for a past way of life. It reveals the dilemma of Independence as felt by many families, and it carries in the cadence of its language and generous use of adjectives the authentic voice of Anglo India. (CC)

2011 Penguin India ISBN 9780143065340 pp254 *Rs 299

Exodus Burma The British Escape through the Jungles of Death 1942

Felicity Goodall

In her latest book *Exodus Burma* the writer paints the story of the evacuation of Burma in 1942 seen through the eyes of a wide selection of characters and families, both civilian and military, who ran the gauntlet of Burma's death valleys and mountain ranges to escape the Japanese or die trying. The source material is impeccable – diaries and first-hand memoirs which were written at the time, accompanied by rare original photographs and documents such as the letter written by the dying Lillian Mellalieu from deep in the Naga Hills. All of this is supported by official and personal records from the British Library, the Centre for South Asian Studies and the Imperial War Museum. Ms Goodall has not only carried out meticulous research in the UK, she has also interviewed witnesses and explored and photographed routes and locations in Burma, all of which combine to give a real sense of authenticity to the book. The effect as a whole of this variety of sources and viewpoints is probably the closest we will ever get to a true story of what happened in 1942, and the characters and desperation are really brought to life through her writing. The multi-layered background of confusion and hesitancy which ran through the governing powers is perfectly captured, and the consequences of the various actions and inactions are laid out in dreadful clarity. Extracts from contemporary letters give a gripping feel of impending doom and powerlessness. These are not the memories of a child, written down many years later, but those of mature adults writing their innermost thoughts in the midst of the storm.

Military buffs will probably be disappointed, as the book spends very little time on the battlefield itself or analysing the merits or otherwise of the various military plans or personalities. All is shown through the eyes of the common soldier. Numerous photographs throughout the book would have had far more impact if they had been printed on better

paper, and it is a shame in that they detract from the text rather than add to it. Contrast these orphaned images with those in the central section which receive much better treatment and show what could be possible with a little more thought by the publisher. In summary, this book is a very good powerful read and notwithstanding my comments about the photographs is a gold medal contender for a place in anyone's collection on Burma or the British Empire. Highly recommended. (MS)

2011 Spellmount 978 0 7524 6092 5 pp239 £18.99

The Fishing Fleet: Husband-Hunting in the Raj Anne de Courcy

When the author appealed in *Chowkidar* for stories from people who had been part of the 'fishing fleet' or who had female relatives who were, I was doubtful if she would get many replies. The idea of young women going out to India specifically to find a husband, seemed so Victorian, so much of a long vanished era, that surely there would be no-one alive today who could contribute much. Yet to her credit Anne de Courcy found sufficient material, some from BACSA members, to produce this entertaining book. Drawing also on books published by BACSA over the last twenty years, like *The Kashmir Residency* by Evelyn Desirée Battye, a picture emerges of often very young British women sent out to 'fish' for a suitable marriage partner. In some cases there were ship-board romances, not always ending happily. In others, the girls would stay with relatives, enjoying the privileged life of Britons in the Raj, and often a much higher social standing than they had at home. Of course there were drawbacks, not least the climate, sudden awful illnesses, separation from one's children, sent home to be educated and boredom. 'If there is a hell for me it'll be an endless day in a club in the North Indian state of Assam', wrote one 'sitting in sterile circles drinking gin...' But there were compensations too, particularly if one was lucky enough to move among the topmost layer of Raj society and be invited to stay with maharajas (closely chaperoned of course). Inevitably some of the material will be over-familiar to those who have studied the period, but this is a very readable book. It is anecdotal, rather than an attempt to dig deeper into that curious ninety-year period that was the British Raj, but is none the worse for that. Old photograph albums have been opened to provide a wealth of pictures of pretty young women, some of whom look understandably anxious on their wedding day, and others who are having a jolly good time, which on the whole sums up this book. (RLJ)

2012 Weidenfeld & Nicolson 978 0 297 863823 pp335 £20.00

Notes to Members

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

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

If planning any survey of cemetery MIs, either in this country or overseas, please check with the Projects Officer or the Honorary Secretary to find out if it has already been recorded. This is not to discourage the reporting of the occasional MI notice, which is always worth doing, but to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort.

***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 £4.00 for registered airmail for a slim hardback, and £3.00 for a slim paperback. Sterling cheques should be made payable to Ram Advani. Catalogues and price lists will be sent on request. Email: radvanilko@gmail.com

The Editor's email address is: rosieljai@clara.co.uk



*The hauntingly beautiful Narinda cemetery,
Dacca, by Johann Zoffany (see page 34)*