

**‘No Pakis at Dunkirk’:  
Remembering and Forgetting  
Force K6 in Europe  
1939-1945**

Submitted

by

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# Abstract

The 2.5 million men and women of the Indian Army who served during the Second World War are not widely known about, either in Europe or in South Asia, the anguish of Partition overlaying their memory in India and Pakistan, and the new reality of post-war Austerity Britain taking precedence over remembering colonial contributions. Among those 2.5 million, the 4,227 men of Force K6 were unique in that they spent most of their war in Britain – the heart of Empire – 630 of them having been present at Dunkirk, a British *lieu de mémoire* on the French coast.

This thesis aims to recover their little-known story and analyse how and why they have been forgotten. The study aims to show that they are not remembered due to what Aleida Assmann has called ‘selective forgetting’ – what stays in the collective memory of a nation is what fits within their framework of culture and history. These soldiers fitted neither in the UK nor Pakistan, and so they have slipped away from official and popular memory, despite the efforts of family members and some local historians.

Through several different frames of memory the story of these men and their odyssey will be presented and analysed. As this is social and cultural history, the men themselves are in the foreground, with case studies that show individual soldiers and their families, and reflect diverse aspects of their experience. Their multiple identities then and now will be analysed, and the transnational encounter which is at the core of their story will be presented, showing that the normal rules of ‘race relations’ in Britain were suspended for the duration of the war. With an eye on the dangers of instrumentalising or abusing their memory, the thesis will show how they are currently remembered, and that they could be better remembered.

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## Glossary & abbreviations

ATC	Animal Transport Company
<i>atta</i>	Wholemeal flour
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
BEF	British Expeditionary Force
<i>bhisti</i>	Water-carrier (Urdu)
BT	British Troops
CSDIC	Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre
DSM	Distinguished Service Medal
<i>Durbar</i>	A regular meeting of an Indian Army unit to ask questions and air grievances
ECO	Emergency Commissioned Officer
GHQ	General Headquarters
HQ	Headquarters
IAVC	Indian Army Veterinary Corps
ICO	Indian Commissioned Officer
IGH	Indian General Hospital
IOM	Indian Order of Merit
<i>iftar</i>	Breaking the fast during the month of Ramadan
<i>izzat</i>	Honour (Urdu)
KCO	King's Commissioned Officer
<i>lascar</i>	Sailor from Asia in British merchant navy (Urdu)
Maulvi	Imam or chaplain
MBE	Member of the British Empire
MP	Member of Parliament
MT	Motor Transport
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NWFP	North West Frontier Province
Oflag	POW camp for officers ( <i>Offizierlager</i> )
<i>pagri</i>	Turban (Urdu)
POW	Prisoner of War
PT	Physical Training
RAF	Royal Air Force
RASC	Royal Army Service Corps (British)
RAVC	Royal Army Veterinary Corps
RE	Royal Engineer
RIASC	Royal Indian Army Service Corps
SDS	Supply Depot Section
Stalag	POW camp ( <i>Stammlager</i> )
<i>syed</i>	Descendant of the Prophet Muhammad
TB	Tuberculosis
VCO	Viceroy's Commissioned Officer
WAAC	War Artists Advisory Committee
WAH	Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar
WO	Warrant Officer
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
ZFI	Free India Centre ( <i>Zentrale Freies Indien</i> )

## RIASC ranks in 1939

	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>British Army equivalent</b>
Commissioned Officers	Major		
	Captain		
	Lieutenant	Lt	
	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant	2/Lt	
Viceroys Commissioned Officers (VCOs)	Risaldar-Major or Subedar-Major		Regimental Sergeant-Major
	Risaldar or Subedar		Company Sergeant Major
	Jemadar	Jem	Warrant Officer
Warrant Officers	Sub-Conductor	Sub-cdr	Warrant Officer
Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs)	Daffadar	Daf	Sergeant (cavalry)
	Quartermaster Daffadar	QMD	Quartermaster Sergeant
	Havildar	Hav	Sergeant (Infantry)
	Naik	Nk	Corporal
	Lance Daffadar		Corporal
	Lance Naik	L/nk	Lance corporal
Enlisted men	Driver		Private (RIASC)
	Sepoy		Private (infantry)
	Sowar		Private (cavalry)
Followers & Tradesmen	Maulvi, clerk		
	Blacksmith, carpenter, cook		
	Saddler, hammerman, tailor, barber, bellows boy, bootmaker, farrier, groom, mess servant		
	Dhobi, water carrier		
	Sweeper		

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## INTRODUCTION

In a Granada TV studio in Manchester in March 1998, the actors Richard Wilson and Caroline Aherne met to record an episode of the *Mrs Merton Show*.<sup>1</sup> Mrs Merton was a character played by Aherne in wig and glasses, a faux Northern old lady who sometimes asked cutting questions of her guests. The other guest that day was Bernard Manning, a northern comedian then in decline, known for his casual old-fashioned racism. During the show an audience member called Miles (possibly a plant) asked Manning a question, recalling a time thirty years previously when he'd been 'thumbing a lift' home from Manchester to Rochdale, and Manning had stopped and taken him home. Miles then asked the killer question:

What I want to ask Bernard is a) does he still drive a Jaguar and b) would he have picked me up if I'd been black [laughter].

After some badinage and some prompting from Aherne, Manning said that:

I don't drive a Jaguar now; I drive a Rolls Silver Spirit [audience 'woo'] and if you'd have been black, you'd still be stood there [laughter].

Wilson and Aherne both questioned Manning on this, which prompted Manning to switch the topic by way of justification, reaching into the ragbag of right-wing tropes:

It's a free country. That's why all our troops - *our* troops - died at Dunkirk, and Anzio and Arnhem and Monte Cassino.

When Wilson protested that Commonwealth troops were also involved in the war, Manning intensified his attack:

Not for us. They fought for themselves. You don't think Hitler would have let them off the hook if they'd won the war. There's no Pakis at Dunkirk, right up...

It is possible that Manning had never heard of the substantial Indian Army presence in the Italian campaign, at the battles of Anzio and Monte Cassino. Or he may have heard about them but chose to ignore them as inconsistent with his prejudices. What is more likely that is that neither he nor Wilson nor Aherne knew that there were in fact 630 Muslim Indian soldiers – 'pakis' in his reckoning - on

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<sup>1</sup> 'The Mrs Merton Show', 1998 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TbldMCfjwq4>>.

the beaches at Dunkirk. They probably didn't know that those men went on to march in the very first UN Day parade in London in June 1942, appeared in *The Illustrated London News* and *Picture Post*, and became the models for a set of Britain's lead soldiers. Manning was undoubtedly a racist, but in common with the vast majority of the British public, he probably did not know about the men of Force K6, the mule companies of the Royal Indian Army Service Corps (RIASC) that were attached to the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France and then spent several years in Britain. They had been forgotten, and remain so, to the point that the film-maker Christopher Nolan left them out of the 2017 film *Dunkirk*.<sup>2</sup>

### **The K6 story: who were they?**

The forgotten men of Force K6 were deployed to fill a gap in the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) in France. The British Army was fully mechanised, and the War Office had disposed of forage reserves, having been assured there would be not 'a horse in the force'.<sup>3</sup> The planners quickly changed their minds about the need for animals however, and as early as 31<sup>st</sup> August, before war was declared, the War Office sent a 'tentative enquiry' to India for '2000 trained pack mules about 13.1 to 13.5 hands [high] with pack saddles but without personnel'.<sup>4</sup> This was to be the core of K6. The basic unit of the Force was a driver, two mules and a Mark VII GS cart (see figure 1 below).<sup>5</sup> Each of the four companies that made up K6 contained 384 mules and around 330 men, including blacksmiths, cooks and a *maulvi* or imam to care for the men's spiritual needs.<sup>6</sup> Each company was designed to be self-contained and self-sufficient, like a Punjabi village transplanted into France (minus women and children). Indeed, a newspaper article from later in the war remarked:

Their camp life is extraordinary in the way they do everything themselves. They are experts in all forms of handicraft, and weavers, potters,

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<sup>2</sup> Christopher Nolan, *Dunkirk* (Warner Bros, 2017).

<sup>3</sup> Institute of the Royal Army Service Corps, *The Story of the RASC 1939-1945* (London: G Bell and Sons Ltd, 1955), p. 543.

<sup>4</sup> 'Pack Mules for BEF', 1939, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/WS/1/32.

<sup>5</sup> *RIASC Training Vol III: Transport* (Delhi, 1938), p. 127.

<sup>6</sup> This information comes from *RIASC Training Vol III: Transport*, also 'War Diary, 22 Animal Transport Company, 1940', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1437; 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1438.

leathermakers, carpenters and blacksmiths help to make the unit self-contained.<sup>7</sup>

When they disembarked at Marseilles on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1939, they totalled 1723 men and around 2000 mules, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Reginald William Welfare Hills, newly promoted for the occasion.<sup>8</sup> After a few days to acclimatise and organise, the companies were dispersed by rail across France. 25<sup>th</sup> Company and 32<sup>nd</sup> Company were assigned to work with II Corps and I Corps respectively, near Lille in northern France. Meanwhile, 29<sup>th</sup> Company went to the Lines of Communication command in Le Mans in North-western France, while 22<sup>nd</sup> Company stayed near Marseilles with the 47 Supply Dept Section (SDS) for the moment. The HQ and the Reinforcement Unit were also at Le Mans. The units were strengthened by the addition of a few trucks and drivers from the British Royal Army Service Corps (RASC), as well as a French soldier attached to each company as 'liaison officer'.<sup>9</sup> The winter of 1939-1940 was one of the harshest of the twentieth century: 'Forty degrees of frost were recorded... the ground looked black and dead; water froze in the water-bottles, mechanical transport froze up while on the move'.<sup>10</sup> This was difficult not only for the men of Punjab, who had to be issued with extra clothing, but also for the mules. The men were now part of the so-called 'Phoney War', an eight-month period when the Western Front was, more or less, all quiet, while the Germans built up their forces and prepared to attack. This period was an opportunity for training, for leisure and for visitors. But for K6, as supply troops, it was also a period of hard work. They were mainly used to transport engineering stores and ammunition, especially when the thaw began and the roads turned to mud, or off roads.<sup>11</sup> General Gort, the commander of the BEF, went on record to praise them: 'I am grateful to the Government of India for the standard of the animal transport units sent to France which have proved their usefulness on many occasion'.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> J.H. Morgan, 'With Indian Troops in Wales', *Unidentified Welsh Newspaper*, October 1941, Hexley collection.

<sup>8</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6', 1940, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1433.

<sup>9</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

<sup>10</sup> Augustus Muir, *The First of Foot: The History of the Royal Scots* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1961), p. 46.

<sup>11</sup> 'Force K6 Documents', 1942, India Office Records at the British Library, London, IOR/L/WS/1/355.

<sup>12</sup> 'Lord Gort's Dispatches', *Fauji Akhbar*, October 1941, Imperial War Museum.



Figure 1: The basic unit of Force K6 in France: a cart, two mules and a driver. These particular men are from 32<sup>nd</sup> Company at Bourghelles, photographed by Davies on 10<sup>th</sup> February 1940. Imperial War Museum F2478

The 'Sitzkrieg' turned to Blitzkrieg on 10<sup>th</sup> May, when the Germans invaded France and the Low Countries, brushing aside opposition, and reached the channel coast within two weeks, cutting off the bulk of the BEF and large parts of the French Army. 25<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> companies were separated from their bases on the west coast, and their commander at Le Mans, by 21<sup>st</sup> May. 32<sup>nd</sup> Company left their base near Douai and marched on foot across country, reaching Dunkirk on 24<sup>th</sup> May, where they were evacuated easily and without loss.<sup>13</sup> One of their number, a Lance Naik called Choudhury Wali Mohamed, told his son:

the orders they had was "we must save the men" get to sea and get on the boat. If your gun is bothering you, throw away your gun, just get there; if your clothes are bothering you, throw away your clothes and get there; if your shoes are bothering you, throw away your shoes and get there. That was the orders, to make sure the people were saved.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> 'War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1440.

<sup>14</sup> Interview with Zubair Mohammed, 2015.

There is an interesting by-tale of their journey. Captain John Ashdown, their second-in-command, later told his family that he was ordered to abandon not only the mules and equipment, but the men as well. He refused, was court-martialled but released. This story is relatively well known and has been quoted by recent journalists partly because Ashdown was the father of the British politician Paddy Ashdown<sup>15</sup>. Unfortunately there is nothing in the archives that bears out this story, either in London or Delhi.

25<sup>th</sup> Company were somewhat later escaping to the coast than 32<sup>nd</sup> Company. They had been stationed at Marquette-lez-Lille, just north of the city of Lille, since the freezing days of January. There they had established good relations with the locals. Aside from their work delivering supplies and looking after their animals, the men found time for leisure pursuits, and started regular gymkhanas, to which they invited the local villagers. A set of photos by Ted Malindine in the Imperial War Museum shows bareback riding, soldiers swinging round the mules' necks, and khattak dancing to the music of *dhol* and *chimta* (Punjabi percussion instruments).<sup>16</sup> A few days later the Germans attacked, and for 25<sup>th</sup> Company, like so many in the British and French armies, this was a time of enormous confusion. For ten days they did nothing, waiting at their camp at the Dillies' farm while history was made all around them. The RAF came and went from the airfield next door, and German aircraft bombed regularly.<sup>17</sup> On 19<sup>th</sup> May, six Messerschmitts flew over the camp and bombed the airfield. Warrant Officer (WO) Sirdar Ali and two drivers experienced a near miss when a bomb dropped nearby and splashed them with mud. Miraculously this was the closest that any men of 25<sup>th</sup> Company came to death during that fateful month. The next evening they finally received their marching orders. With their carts and lorries packed full of equipment and food for men and mules, they set off westwards along the Belgian border, reaching their destination in the middle of the night, having marched thirty-five miles. From there they went north towards the coast 'fighting

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<sup>15</sup> Patrick Wintour, 'Ashdown Tells How Father Stood by Indian Troops', *Guardian*, 8 November 2000 <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2000/nov/08/patrickwintour>> [accessed 26 February 2018].

<sup>16</sup> Mallindine, *A Group of the Spectators Evidently Enjoying the Proceedings*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, F3932.

<sup>17</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940'.

their way home to Blighty' as Churchill put it.<sup>18</sup> But the confusion continued, and they spent several days halted near Winnezele while their officers tried to make sense of the situation. During that time they took the opportunity to send their lorries back to the farm at Marquette, where they picked up some useful supplies, including a number of sheep, a cornerstone of their diet. It was not until Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> that their commanding officer Major Wainwright, having driven seventy-one miles around the tightening triangular pocket that contained the BEF and the French 1<sup>st</sup> Army, finally received clear orders to march to the coast. The mules were to be set free, and all equipment to be left behind, except their personal equipment and six days rations. And so, in the small hours of the 28<sup>th</sup> May, they reached that fateful beach, still together, still a unit, with all their men intact, but with only the clothes they stood up in.

They spent all of Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> on the beach at Dunkirk, marvelling at the awful spectacle of British men wandering aimlessly, while their officers searched for clarity about embarkation.<sup>19</sup> Rain fell in the afternoon, which combined with RAF sorties to mean that the beaches were relatively unharrassed by German aircraft that day. In the evening, while Major Wainwright and Captain Cole were looking for motor transport to carry the injured men, Major Akbar marched all 300 men four miles west along the beach from Bray Dunes to the East Mole, the wooden jetty which featured so strongly in Christopher Nolan's 2017 film and in the real evacuation that it portrayed. One can only imagine how that march looked to the Tommies and the French civilians: 300 mule drivers, grooms and farriers, carrying their *maulvi* and the other sick men, in an orderly column along the sands in the gathering twilight, en route from Punjab to Pirbright. They reached the jetty and had to fight through the crush to reach the boats, becoming split into small groups as they did so: the Mole processed 2,000 men an hour during its busiest times on this day. When they landed at Dover on the morning of Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>, the relief was so strong that some men asked the women feeding the returning troops to lend them their empty trays and buckets and they 'started playing folk

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<sup>18</sup> Nicholas Harman, *Dunkirk: The Necessary Myth* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1980), p. 161.

<sup>19</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940'.

lore tunes on these utensils. Our entire party joined in singing and dancing. Even the lady workers and many British spectators joined in the dance'.<sup>20</sup>

The story of K6's stay in the UK after Dunkirk can be summarised briefly. Like the majority of the British Army, they would spend 'the greater part' of the war in Britain itself, and only a minority of the time overseas.<sup>21</sup> In the summer of 1941, Hills' pressure for reinforcements paid off, and on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1941, three more Animal Transport (AT) companies left India to come to Britain: the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 42<sup>nd</sup> Companies.<sup>22</sup> From now on they were mostly under training, and two companies of white RASC men joined the Force, to be ready for operations by April 1941.<sup>23</sup> Their work was related to Operation Jupiter: one of the Prime Minister's 'strategic fantasies'.<sup>24</sup> Churchill's idea was to take and hold German airfields in Northern Norway, to 'safeguard the passage of convoys to Russia'.<sup>25</sup> Unfortunately, nobody shared the Prime Minister's enthusiasm for this idea, and it was never put into practice.<sup>26</sup> By the spring of 1942 the role for K6 was clear: they would provide the front line transport for British infantry, and train them in loading and unloading mules. They were also called on for specialised work in some odd corners of the UK. One such place was Loch Ewe on the west coast of Scotland, the departure point for the arctic convoys taking supplies to the Soviet Union, where the Reinforcement Unit were based for seven weeks in June and July 1942.<sup>27</sup> They left at least one mule shoe there, to be found decades later by local boy Donald Matheson.<sup>28</sup> Acutely aware of the RASC's 'lack of trained personnel' in India, Force K6 was recalled to India early in 1944.<sup>29</sup> They left the UK on 14<sup>th</sup> January, during the build-up to D-Day, with the country flooded with over a million American soldiers and a mood of optimism around. They arrived in

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<sup>20</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, Revised edition (Karachi: Islamic Military Arts Association, 1971), p. 177.

<sup>21</sup> *Listening to Britain*, ed. by Paul Addison and Jeremy Crang (London: Vintage, 2011), p. 60.

<sup>22</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5880.

<sup>23</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

<sup>24</sup> John Keegan, *The Battle for History: Re-Fighting World War II* (London: Pimlico, 1995), p. 20.

<sup>25</sup> J.R.M. Butler, *History of the Second World War, Grand Strategy III (Part II)* (London: HMSO, 1964), p. 647.

<sup>26</sup> Alan Francis Brooke Alanbrooke, Alex Danchev, and Daniel Todman, *War Diaries, 1939-1945* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2001), p. 187; J.R.M. Butler, p. 650.

<sup>27</sup> 'War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5885.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Stuart Mackenzie, George Miln & Donald Matheson, 2017.

<sup>29</sup> Srinath Raghavan, *India's War: The Making of Modern South Asia, 1939-1945* (London: Penguin, 2016), p. 379.

Bombay on 13<sup>th</sup> February, just three weeks before the Japanese attacks at Imphal and Kohima, pivotal points in the Asian war, to a heroes' welcome. *The Times of India* reported 'The band of a British regiment played military music as the vessel that conveyed them berthed at an Indian port, and in fine fettle and style the men marched off.'<sup>30</sup> A film crew was there to record the event, and General Alban greeted them.<sup>31</sup> A few days later they were inspected by the 'Auk' himself – General Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief of the 2.5 million-strong Indian Army - who had these words to say:

All of you have worthily upheld the traditions and enhanced the reputation not only of your respective Corps but of the Indian Army, and your stay in England, Wales and Scotland will, I hope, long be remembered by the many friends you have made there. The war will not be ended until Japan is utterly defeated. After the leave, which you have well earned, you will be called upon to play your part in her defeat, side by side with those of your comrades already in the battle area.<sup>32</sup>

Their job in Europe was finished, their role in the East was just beginning, and their stay in Britain would prove to be long forgotten rather than long remembered.

While their comrades in 25<sup>th</sup> Company and 32<sup>nd</sup> Company were to escape via Dunkirk, the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company had another fate in store. After several months working in Marseilles, they were attached to 51<sup>st</sup> Highland Division near the Maginot Line, in order to deliver supplies through the 'rolling country...peppered with huge beech woods and blossoming orchards'.<sup>33</sup> Motor transport was impossible due to the nature of the countryside and the close proximity of the German front line, and the mules were kept busy bringing up materials to reinforce the dugouts and trenches. Sapper Sherratt of the Royal Engineers recalled meeting them:

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<sup>30</sup> 'Return of Indian Contingent', *Times of India*, 17 February 1944, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> *Film: Interviews on Return*, 1944, Imperial War Museum, London, MWY92.

<sup>32</sup> 'RIASC Men's Impressions of England', *Fauji Akhbar*, 26 February 1944, p. 20, Imperial War Museum.

<sup>33</sup> Saul David, *Churchill's Sacrifice of the Highland Division* (London: Brassey's, 1994), p. .12; also John Clabby, *The History of the Royal Army Veterinary Corps 1919-1961* (London: JA Allen, 1963), p. 39.



Myself and two sapper comrades were resting in our bivouac on the edge of a small clearing in the Grossenwald forest...

Suddenly without any warning we were confronted by a mule column of the RIASC led by an officer, which had emerged silently from the forest. The Indian troops and mules were immaculate, their KD [khaki drill uniforms] was spotless and pressed, the mules shone. Quite a contrast to three scruffy sappers. The officer who had a chest full of ribbons starting from WW1 wanted directing to the 4 Black Watch. There were no paths in the forest so we had to point in the direction of the Black Watch HQ hoping they would not finish up in the enemy lines.

They disappeared as silently as their approach. We never saw them again.<sup>34</sup>

Following the German *Blitzkrieg*, the Highlanders retreated, leaving 22<sup>nd</sup> Company behind with a salvage unit to recover ammunition from artillery positions near Bois de Lutange.<sup>35</sup> 22<sup>nd</sup> Company left there on 24<sup>th</sup> May, and began their march southwards up the Moselle river, the start of a 600 km odyssey, mostly on foot. Meanwhile Hills, the India Office and Delhi were in great panic about the company. Hills wrote around that time 'had the enemy captured a unit of the Indian Army, much propaganda use would have resulted.'<sup>36</sup> Prescient indeed. On 14<sup>th</sup> June the company's Commanding Officer Major Hitchcock realised that his plan to escape by rail was no longer possible and communications with Hills had been cut, so he decided to march the company up the river towards the mountains, with the hope of eventually being able to escape into Switzerland. Their route took them via Pont-a-Musson, Nancy, Epinal and Remiremont, until they reached the ski resort of Gerardmer on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup>. There, after the French signing of the armistice on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, faced with a drastic shortage of water for the mules and artillery fire from the Germans, the fate of the company was clear. On Monday 24<sup>th</sup>:

Major Hitchcock ordered that a good turn-out be made, so during the afternoon kit was cleaned. At Metz I had issued out medal ribbons to the

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<sup>34</sup> Jack Sherratt, 'Letter from J.R. Sherratt of Stoke on Trent', 7 May 2002, Private collection of Paritosh Shapland.

<sup>35</sup> T.W.P. Hexley, 'Movements of No 22 Animal Transport Company (M) from Approximately 20th May 1940 to 25th June 1940', Private collection.

<sup>36</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

Coy [Company] and these made a good show. Buttons, boots, belts and harness were well cleaned and at 1100 hours the Coy was ready to march. The Coy marched steadily to the gates of Gerardmer in column of route and attracted the attention of many enemy officers and men by its smart turn out.<sup>37</sup>

Thus began five long years behind barbed wire for the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company. Chapter 1 will explore the story of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company.

## Research Aims

This thesis aims to recover the marginalised histories of the men of Force K6, tell some of their 4227 stories and explain the forgetting process. Force K6 stand at the intersection of a number of different histories, including the history of Empire, of South Asia, of the war in general, of the UK home front, and the history of race and migration. The Second World War was a truly global conflict in ways that are not recognised in public discourse, and this thesis aims to contribute towards a twenty-first century view of the war, which will include far more stories from the margins, drawing on newly-found materials. Currently the memory of the war is stored in a series of national boxes, and this thesis encourages us to step outside those boxes by sharing a trans-national account that links the UK, India and Pakistan at an intimate and personal level. There was a substantial Indian population living in the UK in 1939, enriched by the addition of these thousands of soldiers. They also helped to prepare the ground for the later 'Mangla Dam' generation of migrants, arriving in the mid-1960s.<sup>38</sup> Yaqub Mirza – a K6 man who came back to the UK and wrote at length about his experience - was from near Mirpur city, land now flooded by the lake created.<sup>39</sup> This thesis also links to literature of the Asian presence in the UK, connecting to later migrants and indicating a new dimension to the length and breadth of that presence. Additionally, the wartime multi-cultural population of the UK, 'sidelined in work that is dominated by a national frame of reference' can now be extended beyond London and the port cities into the villages.<sup>40</sup> For some people in remote parts of

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<sup>37</sup> Hexley.

<sup>38</sup> Arif Hasan and Mansoor Raza, *Migration and Small Towns in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 48.

<sup>39</sup> Yaqub Mirza, *An Autumn Leaf* (Nottingham: Nottinghamshire County Council, 1994).

<sup>40</sup> Wendy Webster, *Mixing It: Diversity in World War Two Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), p. 12.

the UK like Crickhowell, K6 was a major component of their experience of the war and of empire, and they recorded that through their memories and their family photo albums.

This thesis provides a new perspective on attitudes towards race and racism in the UK and the empire. The trajectories of the two Indian officers – Anis and Akbar - detailed in chapter 1, show that racism was embedded in the army even during the project of Indianisation, and the idea that only white men could lead proved hard to dislodge. Despite examples of individual kindness and enlightenment, the ‘institutional racism of the British army’ that Santanu Das explored in the Great War continued into the 1940s.<sup>41</sup> There was of course a spectrum or continuum of attitudes then as now – to argue otherwise would be ahistorical. But all those attitudes were embedded within what Elizabeth Stice calls ‘racialized thinking’– the wider race-focused *zeitgeist* of the early twentieth century.<sup>42</sup> This thesis provides examples from all points on the spectrum, including the swimming pool story in chapter 3, illustrating the concept of ‘fireside words’ – that which is spoken behind closed doors, the converse of the current idea of political correctness. The Mass-Observation data shows that people knew about India, held adverse ideas about Gandhi and carried clear racialised hierarchies in their heads.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless the overwhelming thrust of the evidence here - from oral history, newspapers and official documents - points towards a warm welcome. More than that, the Mass-Observation report shows a positive shift in attitudes from a quarter of their respondents which was directly caused by encounters with Force K6.<sup>44</sup> In this way, individual personal experience created ‘a new level of respect and connection’ between people.<sup>45</sup> Through leisure activities such as films, sport and music, the men interacted with the locals and started to form friendships. There are many stories of strong friendships made with children in Snowdonia and Cornwall and Scotland, and with the young Betty Foster in Derbyshire. Women are often seen as the epitome

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<sup>41</sup> *Race, Empire and First World War Writing*, ed. by Santanu Das (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> Elizabeth Stice, ‘Men on the Margins: Representations of Colonial Troops in British and French Trench Newspapers of the Great War’, *The Journal of Military History*, 83.2 (2019), 435–54 (p. 441).

<sup>43</sup> ‘Directives June 1943’, 1943, Mass-Observation archives at the Keep, Sussex University, SxMOA1/3/68.

<sup>44</sup> ‘File Report: Attitudes to People of Colour’, 1943, Mass-Observation archives at the Keep, Sussex University, SxMOA1/1/8/8/4.

<sup>45</sup> Stice, p. 450.

of the home front, and the letter from teacher Iby Fraser of Lairg WVS in chapter three shows a village where the men were welcomed into hearth and home, and their departure was a sad occasion. Meanwhile the Indian Comforts Fund's 60,000 knitters across the country were using their fingers to provide warmth and a feeling of home to the visitors. These trans-national encounters and hospitality, seasoned with tea, cakes and chapatties, speak of a previously undocumented deep level of relationship between Indian soldiers and British women and children at home. Like other servicemen working overseas, these men were also welcomed into women's hearts and beds, at a time of loneliness and fear when menfolk were away, and at least eight K6 babies resulted. The story of Paritosh Shapland is an addition to the literature on 'Brown Babies' and illegitimacy, and ultimately an uplifting one.<sup>46</sup> The category of 'mixed race' only exists because we acknowledge that races exist, but Paritosh has been able to embrace his heritage and his personal story and show an example of learning and growing.<sup>47</sup> Meanwhile at the heart of the wartime empire, at the heart of London, two sepoys stand at Waterloo station and watch the world whizz by, under the fingers of thousands of children completing the jigsaw of Helen McKie's poster.<sup>48</sup> By explaining who those two men were, this thesis puts the jigsaw in an imperial context.

By documenting the individual and the collective experiences of these men, the thesis also contributes to the general field of the history of war, state and society. This new approach to military history has penetrated even the mainstream *Journal of Military History*, with a recent article on colonial troops in the Great War from a social and cultural angle.<sup>49</sup> This thesis runs in parallel with Santanu Das' 2011 work on the Great War, the aim of which was 'to embed the experience and memory of the First World War in a more multiracial and international framework'.<sup>50</sup> The point of view of Indian soldiers in Europe in the Second World War has rarely been shown before, so this thesis moves into new

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<sup>46</sup> For example Graham Smith, *When Jim Crow Met John Bull: Black American Soldiers in World War II Britain* (London: Tauris, 1987); Webster.

<sup>47</sup> Tzvetan Todorov, 'Race & Racism', in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, ed. by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, 2nd edition (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 213–17 (p. 213).

<sup>48</sup> 'Waterloo Station Gibson G604 Jigsaw Puzzle', *London Transport Museum Shop* <<https://www.ltmuseumshop.co.uk/toys/games-puzzles/waterloo-station-gibson-g604-jigsaw-puzzle>> [accessed 30 July 2019].

<sup>49</sup> Stice.

<sup>50</sup> Das, p. 1.

territory by putting such a perspective at the centre. Equally, the Fall of Singapore in February 1942 is often taken as the great empire defeat and the beginning of the end of the British empire.<sup>51</sup> This thesis shows that Dunkirk was also an imperial battle, by the presence of 600 sepoys on the beaches (despite what Manning said and Nolan implied). The complicated question of military loyalty and loyalism within the empire in the absence of a nation state is elucidated through the stories of Abuzar and Anis in chapter 1, and Anis' equivocation in his response to Subhas Chandra Bose is perhaps the best example of how the officers felt – sympathy for a political cause tempered by a personal code of ethics. Some of the new insights into topics as diverse as second echelon, war as work, prisoners of war and the Battle of France contained here derive from extensive research in family archives and oral history interviews. Family history can be 'woven carefully with academic history' and thereby change the way we think and write about empire, the nation and the past.<sup>52</sup> The research for this thesis has used family, local and specialist history methods, and tapped into their rich seams of sources, to reveal previously unknown documents of rare power and impact. These sources include the poems of Quartermaster Dafadar Nawazish Ali in chapter 5, the rich archive of local interviews conducted by Giovanna Bloor in North Wales, the writings of sepoys in their newsletter *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* and the material by and about Anis and Akbar held by their families in Pakistan. A family can act as a 'powerful memory community', and that is certainly true in Akbar's case.<sup>53</sup> He is extensively remembered by three generations spread across Pakistan, Europe and the USA, a family rare in Pakistan, a country where 'the genealogical fervour that is assumed to have gripped the nation' has not bitten.<sup>54</sup> They have kept documents and photographs which they are willing to share, they carry stories and anecdotes and they collectively curate his memory, almost to the point of what Elizabeth Stone calls 'ancestor inflation'.<sup>55</sup> The oral histories gathered also contribute to a growing body of interviews about the Second World War, and may act on occasion as the only

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<sup>51</sup> *A World at War, 1911-1949: Explorations in the Cultural History of War*, ed. by Catriona Pennell and Filipe Ribeiro de Meneses (Leiden: Brill, 2019), p. 301.

<sup>52</sup> Tanya Evans, 'Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History', *History Workshop Journal*, 71, 2011, 49–73 (p. 52).

<sup>53</sup> Anna Green, 'Intergenerational Family Stories: Private, Parochial Pathological?', *Journal of Family History*, 38.4 (2013), 387–402 (p. 387).

<sup>54</sup> Anna Green, p. 390.

<sup>55</sup> Elizabeth Stone, quoted in Anna Green, p. 397.

evidence for an incident, as reinforcement of a written record or, as in the case of Idrees' Dunkirk story, as a fascinating insight into motivations and meanings for story-telling. One small story has the potential to change how we view the world, and 'when the past has become personal you never lose sight of the individuals about whom you are writing.'<sup>56</sup>

The key theoretical field that the thesis engages with is that of memory. The thesis is embedded in collective memory and ideas of its formation and evolution, as well as Aleida Assmann's concept of selective forgetting, in both Europe and South Asia.<sup>57</sup> The objective is to understand and pin down exactly when and how the men were forgotten, and thereby make a contribution to the wider understanding and theory of collective memory. This thesis applies Assmann's theory of seven types of forgetting and shows that forgetting works differently in different cultures, each with its own *cadre* or framework for determining that which is important. In both Pakistan and Britain the forgetting was powered by societal priorities and needs, but those needs were very different: in Britain after 1945 memories of these men were no longer relevant, in Pakistan and India they were unacceptable. The evidence in chapter 4 shows that these men were in the public eye during their stay in Britain. The large visual archive demonstrates they had seeped into public consciousness to the extent that their image was used in an advertisement to sell soap, as models for Britains' lead figures and in the best-selling *Daily Mirror* to make a political point. But after the war ended, social rules that had been suspended were reimposed and the new grey postwar reality showed that life was tough once the VE day and VJ day euphoria had worn off. Physical and social reconstruction were the order of the day, and the men of K6, along with the wider Indian Army and empire contributions were not on the news agenda. This gradual slide into oblivion led eventually to a public unconsciousness that could produce an utterance like Manning's, but perhaps the turn of the century was the last time somebody could get away with saying that on TV. Meanwhile in South Asia, the forgetting was a wider one, a general forgetting of the 2.5 million men of the Indian Army. Here, the memory of the mid-century is completely dominated by Partition and

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<sup>56</sup> Tanya Evans, p. 59.

<sup>57</sup> Aleida Assmann, 'Forms of Forgetting' (unpublished Lecture, The Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences, 2014) <<http://castrumperegrini.org/2014/10/30/forms-of-forgetting/>> [accessed 25 March 2018].

independence and its attendant violence, especially in Punjab. The Community Archives of Pakistan - introduced in chapter 5 - are the only organisation of any size doing Oral history work in that country, and are totally focused on 1947. When the Second World War comes up, it is through 'personal stories' and not as part of a national narrative.<sup>58</sup> The men of the Indian Army are not seen as heroes in the way that they are outside for they were not fighting 'our own war'.<sup>59</sup> Indeed, the men of the 950 regiment – Indians who fought on the German side – are just as likely to be considered heroic. This thesis contributes to a process of re-remembering whereby, as Das says of the Great War 'the colonial non-white participants are slowly being wheeled in from the shadowy chambers of modern memory'.<sup>60</sup> In order to personalise and individualise those participants as they are wheeled in, the appendix includes the names of over 2000 of them, gleaned from the archives.

This is primarily a human story, from a social and cultural history perspective, with the emphasis firmly on telling stories that reflect a bigger picture. Within that focus, visual images are important both as key determinants of collective memory and as ways to illuminate the stories themselves, so there are forty-five within these pages, many of them unknown outside of families. Film representations will also be under scrutiny, as sources of evidence and crucially as blueprints for memory. The *Guardian* journalist Ian Jack, reviewing the 2017 film *Viceroy's House*, which dealt with the time around Partition, pointed out that the central claim of the film was a false one, and that:

The film is unlikely to do very well at the box office. Even so, it will attract a far larger audience than any book on Partition, and for many people it will be their only understanding of the subject. As with 'fake news', so with 'fake history'. Detecting it needs curiosity – critical rather than passive consumption – otherwise it never gets found out.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> Interview with Community Archives of Pakistan staff Aaliyah Tayyebi, Zain Shaikhzadeh, Zehra Shah and Javeria Vaqar, 2018.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Gen Anwar's children, 2018.

<sup>60</sup> Das, p. 6.

<sup>61</sup> Ian Jack, 'This Downton-in-Delhi Tale of India's Partition Brings Fake History to the Screen', *Guardian*, 18 March 2017.

This thesis supports Jack's assertion of the importance of visual, popular culture in the creation of popular and collective memory and history, as well as its call to action. By knitting together lost and neglected fragments of the tapestry that is K6, this study aims to present the restored picture to the world, for integration into a revised view of what happened in the war.

### **Collective Memory in action**

History is three things, according to the American historian Robin Winks: 'what happened in the past, what people believe happened in the past and what historians say happened in the past'.<sup>62</sup> If the first dimension is 'what actually happened' and the third is historical consensus or historiography, then the middle part is collective memory. Wulf Kansteiner has remarked that collective memory is a 'slippery phenomenon', for it has many faces and definitions, and not a few critics.<sup>63</sup> As an individual can only truly 'remember' something that they witnessed or participated in, then the idea of a 'collective' or group memory cannot really exist. Alternative terms for collective memory abound. Raphael Samuel talks of the 'domain of the historically known' and Indra Sengupta refers to a 'collectively constructed and shared signification of the past'.<sup>64</sup> Bernard Cohn meanwhile says that 'Historians frequently talk of the "climate of opinion", the *zeitgeist*, the "feeling of an age" or the *weltanschauung*, but infrequently tell us how they are established, maintained and transmitted.'<sup>65</sup> All of these terms are useful in broadening our understanding of what collective memory is and how it operates, but none are as widely used or established as 'collective memory'. So although it may be a misnomer, it will serve for this thesis. The working definition used in this

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<sup>62</sup> *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume V: Historiography*, ed. by Robin Winks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. xiii.

<sup>63</sup> Wulf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', *History & Theory*, 41, 2002, 179–97 (p. 180); A good discussion of critiques of the concept can be found in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. by Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).

<sup>64</sup> Raphael Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, 3 vols (London: Verso, 1994), 1, p. 274; *Memory, History and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. by Indra Sengupta, German Historical Institute London, Bulletin, Supplement No 1 (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> Bernard S. Cohn, *The Bernard Cohn Omnibus* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 230.



thesis is 'that which is widely or generally understood within a given culture (or sub-culture), about a particular event or person or period in the past'.

The initiator of the idea of collective memory was the French sociologist Maurice Halbwachs, who died in Buchenwald in 1945. In his posthumous work *On Collective Memory* he identified the importance of *cadres* or frameworks, socially constructed systems within which individual memories are held as 'the instruments used by the collective memory to reconstruct an image of the past which is in accord, in each epoch, with the predominant thoughts of the society'.<sup>66</sup> His work has been much criticised for seeming to suggest that the group is capable of thought, but in a separate work he made clear that only individuals can remember: 'while the collective memory endures and draws strength from its base in a coherent body of people, it is individuals as group members who remember'.<sup>67</sup> In this way there is a direct connection between *mentalités* and collective memory: *mentalités* power the collective memory – the people that think alike, remember alike. An important development in memory theory came from another Frenchman: Pierre Nora, with his work on *Lieux de Mémoire*, defined as 'any significant entity, whether material or non-material in nature, which by dint of human will or the work of time has become a symbolic element of the memorial heritage of any community'.<sup>68</sup> In his original conception, such *lieux* could include places such as the caves of Lascaux, literary people such as Proust, symbols, institutions and even dates such as 1789. Nora wanted to retain this powerful concept for France only, but such exclusivity has been rebuffed by Sengupta, demanding an 'extended use of the concept' and a methodological dialogue with the approach.<sup>69</sup> She and others explored the application of *Lieux* in relation to colonialism and postcolonialism in a 2009 collection.<sup>70</sup> Jay Winter gave a 'resounding yes' to the idea of using the concept for colonial history, with suitable revision in order to 'fit the contours of colonial and postcolonial societies', bearing

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<sup>66</sup> Maurice Halbwachs and Lewis A. Coser, *On Collective Memory*, The Heritage of Sociology (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 40.

<sup>67</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, 'The Collective Memory', in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. by Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 142.

<sup>68</sup> Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), p. xvii. Although the English translation of the book uses the word 'realms' for *lieux*, this thesis will stick with the original French term.

<sup>69</sup> Sengupta, p. 1.

<sup>70</sup> Sengupta.

in mind that postcolonial sites of memory are hybrid ones, with meanings that may be hard to decipher.<sup>71</sup> Aleida Assmann, whose work is pivotal for this thesis, reinforced that complexity, pointing out the potential for conflict where ‘what is sacred for one group may be offensive to another’.<sup>72</sup> Finally in this connection, Nora made a distinction between the *lieux* and the *milieux de mémoire*, the latter being ‘settings in which memory is a *real* part of everyday experience’, rooted in the present.<sup>73</sup> His contention is that in France the people no longer hold memories in their everyday lived experience, so a place like the Bastille is merely a ‘vestige, an outer shell from which the living tradition has departed’.<sup>74</sup> This may be a useful distinction when thinking about *lieux de mémoire* in South Asia.

Cohn’s quote above is a reminder of the need to map the sources of collective memory, as well as the changes it goes through, for collective memory has its own history and evolutions. Samuel asserts the supremacy of visual elements in creating and maintaining collective memory, giving the example of the Bayeux tapestry as ‘probably most people’s idea of the Norman Conquest’.<sup>75</sup> This is useful, and will help in considering the memory of the Second World War. Feature films can be particularly influential. Astrid Erll thinks that popular cinema is arguably ‘one of the most powerful media for symbolic investment in sites of memory’, and it is possible that without personal experience of a particular time, a feature film can become the entirety of your knowledge, your version of that time.<sup>76</sup> Another determinant of collective memory is surely the education system, in the broadest sense, which includes textbooks, teachers, exams, the whole formal educational establishment, as well as the broader cultural climate, what

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<sup>71</sup> Jay Winter, ‘In Conclusion: Palimpsests’, in *Memory, History and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. by Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, Bulletin, Supplement no 1, 2009), pp. 167–73 (p. 167).

<sup>72</sup> Aleida Assmann, ‘How History Takes Place’, in *Memory, History and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, ed. by Indra Sengupta (London: German Historical Institute London, 2009), pp. 151–65 (p. 152).

<sup>73</sup> Nora, *Realms of Memory*, p. 1, emphasis added.

<sup>74</sup> Monica Juneja, ‘Architectural Memory between Representation and Practice: Rethinking Pierre Nora’s Les Lieux de Memoire’, ed. by Indra Sengupta, *Memory, History and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, German Historical Institute London, Bulletin, Supplement no 1 (2009), 11–35 (p. 13).

<sup>75</sup> Samuel, I, pp. 26, 28.

<sup>76</sup> Astrid Erll, ‘The “Indian Mutiny” as a Shared Site of Memory: A Media Culture Perspective on Britain and India’, in *Memory, History and Colonialism: Engaging with Pierre Nora in Colonial and Postcolonial Contexts*, German Historical Institute London, Bulletin, Supplement No 1 (London, 2009), pp. 117–48 (p. 140).

Samuel called 'the knowledge which creeps in sideways'.<sup>77</sup> Crucially for this study, collective memory can evolve, across time and from place to place. Any given group or nation is not able to remember everything that has happened, so choices are made about priorities; events and people slip off or join the list as time moves on and the waves of history advance and retreat.<sup>78</sup> Assmann asserts that 'the dominant focus in memory research today is on understanding the past as a construction that responds to the needs and possibilities of the present' – as the present moves, so too does the way that the past is recalled, to match current interests, anxieties and politics.<sup>79</sup>

Within the UK in general the Second World War has a controlling place in collective memory, whereby 'even those who were born in its aftermath have particular "memories" of it'.<sup>80</sup> Part of a broader culture obsessed with the past, the basic discourse relating to the Second World War has been summed up as the 'Two world wars and one world cup' school of historical thinking.<sup>81</sup> This is a fundamentally antagonistic and nationalistic approach that sees the Germans and the Japanese as still almost-enemies, and generally denigrates allies as well. In a 2018 opinion poll, British respondents were asked 'Who do you think played the most important role in defeating the Nazis during World War 2?' Half thought it was the British, while only thirteen per cent said the Russians, who had in fact lost most citizens.<sup>82</sup> Within that general framework of the war as a key element of British memory, certain 'signal events' occur again and again.<sup>83</sup> Ashley Jackson writes of the 'loading' towards 'big players, big battles and grand strategies' and lists the Phoney War, Battle of Atlantic, Desert War, Pacific War, strategic

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<sup>77</sup> Samuel, I, p. 5; See also Pierre Nora, 'History and Memory: Between the Personal and the Public' (Tel Aviv, 2014) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Zemgzzmg80>> [accessed 13 October 2017]; James Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 150.

<sup>78</sup> Samuel, I, p. x.

<sup>79</sup> Aleida Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity* (Oxfordshire: Fordham University Press, 2016), p. 5.

<sup>80</sup> *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War*, ed. by Lucy Noakes and Juliette Pattinson (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> Noakes and Pattinson, p. 1; see also Paul Gilroy, *After Empire: Melancholia or Convivial Culture?* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2004), p. 117.

<sup>82</sup> Matthew Smith, 'Half of Britons Think That Britain Did More than the US and Russia to Defeat the Nazis', 2018 <<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/international/articles-reports/2018/05/08/half-britons-think-britain-did-more-us-and-russia->> [accessed 22 March 2019].

<sup>83</sup> Sonya Rose, *Which People's War? National Identity and Citizenship in Britain 1939-1945* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 1.

bombing, Eastern front, D-Day, and the downfall of Hitler as examples.<sup>84</sup> Dawson, writing earlier, includes Dunkirk, and certainly any analysis since Nolan's film would not omit that signal event, now firmly back in the British national consciousness.<sup>85</sup> Looking at the education system as a constituent part of the forming of collective memory, it is interesting to note that the only World War Two topic that must be covered in Key Stage three (students aged eleven to fourteen) is the Holocaust.<sup>86</sup> In primary schools, the war is usually met through the Home Front – evacuation, gasmasks and rationing. Samuel considered that after the war, the British had restructured the way they looked at the past, focusing on the near rather than the distant, so the year 1940 had replaced 1688, 1649 or 1066 as 'the central drama of the national past'.<sup>87</sup> This view is borne out in some of the reviews of Nolan's film, which drew direct parallels between the events of the movie and its timing, released the year after the Brexit vote in the UK.<sup>88</sup> There was a feeling that on one level this was a movie about Brexit. Michael Paris wrote:

Perhaps because it was the nation's last great achievement on the world stage before relegation to the second division, 1939-45 has become, for the British people, a never-ending story told and retold to remind themselves of a glorious past, in a far less glorious and depressing present.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> *An Imperial World at War: Aspects of the British Empire's War Experience, 1939–45*, ed. by Ashley Jackson, Yasmin Khan, and Gajendra Singh (Farnham: Ashgate, 2016), p. 231.

<sup>85</sup> Graham Dawson, 'History-Writing on World War II', in *National Fictions: World War Two in British Films and Television*, ed. by Geoff Hurd (London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1984), pp. 1–7 (p. 1).

<sup>86</sup> 'National Curriculum in England: History Programmes of Study', 2013

<<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-history-programmes-of-study#key-stage-3>> [accessed 22 March 2019] A large proportion of the academic work on memory has been around the topic of the Holocaust, but that is outwith the boundaries of this thesis.

<sup>87</sup> Samuel, I, p. 140.

<sup>88</sup> See for example Max Hastings, 'Splendid Isolation', *New York Review of Books*, 12 October 2017 <[www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/10/12/dunkirk-churchill-splendid-isolation/](http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/10/12/dunkirk-churchill-splendid-isolation/)>; Yasmin Khan, 'Dunkirk, the War and the Amnesia of the Empire', *New York Times*, 2 August 2017 <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/08/02/opinion/dunkirk-indians-world-war.html>>.

<sup>89</sup> Michael Paris, *Warrior Nation: Images of War in British Popular Culture 1850-2000* (London: Reaktion, 2000), p. 221.

Other than the YouGov poll mentioned above, there have been remarkably few attempts by academics to quantify the collective memory of the war - data which could prove very useful in backing up the theories that are advanced.<sup>90</sup>

By way of contrast, collective memory in South Asia is a much less crowded field, and memory works that refer to World War Two are even rarer. In its thirty year run the journal *History and Memory* has only featured two articles about South Asia, one of which was by an American.<sup>91</sup> In the list of 300 or more references in the *Collective Memory Reader*, there are only two authors' names of South Asian origin.<sup>92</sup> Notably, Shahid Amin included the word 'memory' in the title of his 1995 work on Chauri Chaura.<sup>93</sup> The anthropologist Cohn included a chapter on 'views of the past' in his 1971 work *The Social Anthropology of a Civilisation* in which he gave a good paraphrase of collective memory in India as 'the rough picture, something of a caricature, which many educated Indians carry with them today.'<sup>94</sup> Those apart, all the most famous general works on memory draw on western classic mythology and scripture, topped up with St Augustine and Freud, and there seems to have been no work in English that engages with Muslim or Hindu approaches to memory. A hint on the cause of this discrepancy come from Peter Burke, who points to a common stereotype which contrasts 'the traditional Chinese concern for their past with the traditional Indian indifference to theirs'.<sup>95</sup> If South Asians are less interested in memory of the past, perhaps they are also less interested in making theories about it. So there is a significant

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<sup>90</sup> Exceptions include Wertsch, p. 151; Roy Rosenzweig and David Thelen, 'The Presence of the Past', in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. by Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); a 1984 survey in the French magazine *l'Histoire* quoted by Robert Frank, 'The Second World War through French and British Eyes', in *Britain and France in Two World Wars*, ed. by Robert Tombs and Emile Chabal (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 179–91 (p. 185); Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', p. 195 suggests historians could use data from TV companies.

<sup>91</sup> Elizabeth Buettner, 'Cemeteries, Public Memory and Raj Nostalgia in Postcolonial Britain and India', *History & Memory*, 18.1 (2006), 5–42; Mahua Sarkar, 'Changing Together, Changing Apart: Urban Muslim and Hindu Women in Pre-Partition Bengal', *History & Memory*, 27.1 (2015), 5–42.

<sup>92</sup> Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy, pp. 49–62 The names in question are Prasenjit Duara and Amritjit Singh.

<sup>93</sup> Shahid Amin, *Event, Metaphor, Memory: Chauri Chaura 1922-1992* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

<sup>94</sup> Bernard S. Cohn, *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilisation* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1971), p. 59.

<sup>95</sup> Peter Burke, 'History as Social Memory', in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. by Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 187–92 (p. 190).

theoretical gap, one that deserves significant work by scholars of South Asia. In the absence of scholarly work, this thesis falls back on other sources.

With regard to the mid-twentieth century, there is no shortage of collective memory in India and Pakistan: it is all around, controlled and monitored and state-sponsored. The dominant story within official Pakistan memory is about Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the *Quaid-e-Azam* or Great Leader, the Pakistan Movement and the 'bringing into being' of Pakistan in 1947. Within that overall framework, World War Two is simply a means to an end, a step along the way to a Muslim homeland in South Asia. According to this timeline the main event of 1940 is not Dunkirk or the Battle of Britain, but the Lahore Resolution, when a concrete idea of Pakistan emerged and Jinnah was seen as the 'sole spokesman'.<sup>96</sup> The noted Pakistani historian KK Aziz devotes three pages of his book *The Murder of History* to this resolution while giving no pages at all to World War Two.<sup>97</sup> World War Two had to be forgotten, cleansed, expunged on both sides of the Radcliffe Line, in order to create new state narratives – this is a classic example of the 'excess of memory... [and] the excess of forgetting' that troubled Paul Ricoeur.<sup>98</sup> Meanwhile in India, a new officer cadet in the army did not recognise the significance of battles like Kohima and Cassino, as:

this was a history that neither country wanted much to recall. The nation-states of India and Pakistan needed new histories for self-legitimation. And so they sought to gloss over the war years of common mobilisation and sacrifice. Commemoration of the Second World War was conspicuously absent in post-colonial South Asia.<sup>99</sup>

Meanwhile those who fought for the Japanese and the Germans (including a handful of men from Force K6) are remembered in some circles as heroes.<sup>100</sup> Their leader Subhas Chandra Bose is enshrined at the centre of Indian official

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<sup>96</sup> Stanley Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 182; Ayesha Jalal, *The Sole Spokesman: Jinnah, the Muslim League, and the Demand for Pakistan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

<sup>97</sup> K.K. Aziz, *The Murder of History: A Critique of History Textbooks Used in Pakistan* (Lahore: Vanguard, 1993), p. 145.

<sup>98</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. xv.

<sup>99</sup> Raghavan, p. 461.

<sup>100</sup> Raghu Karnad, *Farthest Field: An Indian Story of the Second World War* (Noida, Uttar Pradesh: William Collins, 2015), p. 241.

memory. In the National Archives of India is a large painting that depicts Mother India surrounded by four heroes who helped liberate her: Gandhi, Nehru, Ambedkar and Bose. Interestingly, attitudes to Hitler are very different from those found in Europe; indeed they might be considered offensive in some countries. He is seen as having been strong and determined. When a four-year old girl fell over in a street in Bombay in 1943, grazing her knee, a neighbour found her howling with agony and attempted to quell her tears by saying "Don't cry. Don't cry. Be brave - like Hitler".<sup>101</sup> In this way we can see that the reasons for forgetting Force K6 are very different in South Asia from those in Europe, even if the result may be the same. Of course, the collective memory is evolving in India as in the UK, as the BBC reporter Justin Rowlatt reported from Delhi on the centenary of the Battle of the Somme, describing a 'new era of remembrance.'<sup>102</sup>

The geographical departure point for this thesis - Dunkirk - is a contested *lieu de mémoire* with trans-national echoes, an *histoire croisée* with no clear consensus on its meaning.<sup>103</sup> For the French (who use its francophone name Dunkerque), the city is better remembered for its seventeenth century hero, Jean Bart, and even within their memory of the war, the siege of 1944-45 is as prominent as Operation Dynamo in 1940. A British historian says that the battle and the town have not featured in French popular culture nor 'been central in French collective memory.'<sup>104</sup> The French memory of the Battle of France is very different from the British: both sides blaming the other for the defeat, and the British liable to forget that the port perimeter was largely defended by French troops.<sup>105</sup> For the British, meanwhile, there is a positive armada of writing, more popular than academic, on the Nine Days Wonder of May - June 1940.<sup>106</sup> Penny Summerfield accords the city 'iconic status in British culture' while the film-maker

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<sup>101</sup> Matthew Diamond, 'World War Two Memories', 11 May 2017.

<sup>102</sup> 'Commemoration of Indian Cavalry Attack on the Somme', *Today* (BBC Radio 4, 2016) The reporter is the great grandson of the originator of the Rowlatt Acts.

<sup>103</sup> Assmann, 'How History Takes Place', p. 152.

<sup>104</sup> Martin S. Alexander, 'Dunkirk in Military Operations, Myths and Memories', in *Britain and France in Two World Wars*, ed. by Robert Tombs and Emile Chabal (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 94–118 (p. 102).

<sup>105</sup> P.M.H. Bell, 'Remembering & Forgetting, Introduction', in *Britain and France in Two World Wars*, ed. by Robert Tombs and Emile Chabal (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 155–60 (p. 98).

<sup>106</sup> For example John Masefield, *The Nine Days Wonder* (Kingswood: Windmill Press, 1941); Penny Summerfield, 'Dunkirk and the Popular Memory of Britain at War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 45.4 (2010), 788–811; Joshua Levine, *Forgotten Voices of Dunkirk* (London: Ebury Press, 2010); Joshua Levine, *Dunkirk: The History behind the Major Motion Picture* (London: William Collins, 2017).

Nolan (born in 1970) was able to remark that Dunkirk was a 'story I grew up with in its mythic, almost fairy-tale form.'<sup>107</sup> The battle has spawned the term 'Dunkirk Spirit', which was later 'generalised to mean a united response to any circumstances of extreme adversity', and has shown up repeatedly in the ongoing Brexit crisis.<sup>108</sup> Dunkirk has become:

a necessary myth... a meta-narrative affirming Britain's indelible role in World War II... necessary because the further the conflict receded into the past, the more Britons needed reassurance of their own key part in building Allied victory. The 1950s and 1960s delivered shocks to British self-esteem.<sup>109</sup>

Within British popular memory, film representations of Dunkirk stand out, especially given the marked lack of moving or still images of the original battle. Dan Todman believes that most politicians and pundits making references to the war are 'remembering not the conflict, but a mediated version of it' produced on film from the 1940s to the 1960s and repeated on TV.<sup>110</sup> A 1958 film starring John Mills focused on working-class characters, and was the result of 'intense competition over which version of history was to be portrayed'.<sup>111</sup> Nolan would surely have seen that film before making his 2017 epic, which contained the familiar tropes of sand, small ships and Stukas that inhabit every anglophone film representation of Operation Dynamo.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, a viewer would probably be disappointed if a Dunkirk movie omitted any of these expected elements. Including an Indian soldier in such a film would be a surprise, and would take the viewer out of their comfort zone. The meaning of 'Dunkirk' has changed, and will continue to do so.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Summerfield, p. 789; Christopher Nolan, 'Spitfires, Flotillas of Boats, Rough Seas and 1,000 Extras: Christopher Nolan on the Making of Dunkirk, His Most Challenging Film to Date', *Daily Telegraph*, 8 July 2017 <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/films/2017/07/08/spitfires-flotillas-boats-rough-seas-1000-extras-christopher/>>.

<sup>108</sup> Summerfield, p. 791.

<sup>109</sup> Alexander, 'Dunkirk in Military Operations, Myths and Memories', p. 104.

<sup>110</sup> Daniel Todman, 'Drunk on Dunkirk Spirit, the Brexiters Are Setting Sail for a Dangerous Future', *Guardian*, 6 March 2017 <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/jun/03/dunkirk-spirit-brexiters-uk-britain-europe>> [accessed 7 May 2019].

<sup>111</sup> Summerfield, p. 800.

<sup>112</sup> Nolan, *Dunkirk*.

<sup>113</sup> Summerfield, p. 810.



Meanings can change through processes of forgetting and re-remembering, processes which are central to this thesis. Assmann and Paul Ricoeur have written on the question of forgetting.<sup>114</sup> Ricoeur defines two types of forgetting, the first being the effacement of traces (traces written on paper, traces on the soul or traces on the brain).<sup>115</sup> The second type of forgetting puts memories in the *oubli de réserve* – the reserve of forgetting – from which memories may still be recalled.<sup>116</sup> This concept will be used in this thesis. More recently, Assmann has given a clear summary of seven types of forgetting, running from the automatic or natural forgetting to the therapeutic or cathartic forgetting which involves leaving the burden of the past behind.<sup>117</sup> Her third type is the one most relevant to this thesis – what she calls ‘selective forgetting’, or the power of framing. Within this mode she bases the ‘selection criteria’ for what is remembered and what is forgotten on Halbwachs and the frames offered by a particular society. ‘It is thus the desire to belong that regulates the interaction between remembering and forgetting’ she states - an individual forgets what is outside the core identity of the group. Even more relevant, Assmann goes on to write that ‘It is only when one memory frame is replaced by another that excluded memories have a chance of being re-appropriated by the group’, thus opening the door for the possibility of re-remembering, of a group or an individual recalling something from the *oubli de réserve* when a new frame is in place, a paradigm shift has taken place. Twenty-first century Britain is sufficiently different from 1945 Britain in terms of its ethnic and religious mix and its attitude to the world that the men of Force K6 can now fit within the frame. Complete forgetting - oblivion – is hard to achieve, and re-remembering is almost always possible, especially as a memory only requires preservation ‘in some limited portion of the social body’.<sup>118</sup> There are dangers in such re-remembering, as Pennell reminds us when writing of changes in collective memory of the Great War in Ireland, and a need to understand nuance and complexity.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Assmann, ‘Forms of Forgetting’; Ricoeur.

<sup>115</sup> Ricoeur, pp. 14–15.

<sup>116</sup> Ricoeur, p. 414.

<sup>117</sup> Assmann, ‘Forms of Forgetting’.

<sup>118</sup> Halbwachs, p. 144.

<sup>119</sup> Catriona Pennell, “‘Choreographed by the Angels’? Ireland and the Centenary of the First World War’, *War and Society*, 36.4 (2017), 256–75 (p. 274).

As well as collective memory, this thesis also works within the critical framework of the 'War and Society' approach to military history. In contrast with a more traditional 'drums, trumpets and cannons' approach to studying war, focused on soldiers in battle, this approach broadens the focus considerably. Stephen Morillo has given a useful definition that includes 'any historical study [of] military personnel of all sorts, warfare... military institutions, and their various intersections with politics, economics, society, nature and culture.'<sup>120</sup> This also gives us permission to look not only at the front line, but the second echelon, where the mule handlers of K6 are to be found. Within this context we can start to look at the World War Two British Indian Army in general, before zooming in on K6 in particular. This army is widely known, in academia at least, as the 'largest volunteer army in history', peaking at 2.5million men (and 11,500 women of the Women's Auxiliary Corps India).<sup>121</sup> As well as a raft of older, military history writers, there is an increasing interest in this army and the context from which it came.<sup>122</sup> The more recent wave of academic writers was headed by David Omissi in 1998, followed by Gajendra Singh, Santanu Das, Yasmin Khan and Srinath Raghavan among others, mostly of South Asian heritage working in the UK.<sup>123</sup> Between them they have examined such wide topics as the recruitment of sepoys, motivations for joining, the Martial Race theory, racism and discrimination in the army, Indianisation of the officer corps and the concept of 'loyalty'. All of these will be of value in the thesis. There is far more written from the point of view of the officer or Viceroy's Commissioned Officer (VCO) than the ordinary sepoy, so imaginative literature can be useful to help frame this analysis. This would include works by Mulk Raj Anand and Amitav Ghosh, as well as the biography of

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<sup>120</sup> Stephen Morillo and Michael Pavkovic, *What Is Military History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), p. p.4.

<sup>121</sup> Raghavan, p. 1.

<sup>122</sup> See for example Kapur, P.K.D, *Footprints and Milestones*. (New Delhi, 1990), pp. 39–40; Philip Malins, 'The First to Take the Field', *Army Service Corps Journal*, 1995; *The British Commonwealth at War*, ed. by William Yandell Elliott and H. Duncan Hall (New York, 1943), p. 459; J. G. Elliott, *A Roll of Honour: The Story of the Indian Army, 1939-1945* (London, 1965), p. 19; Charles Chenevix Trench, *The Indian Army and the King's Enemies, 1900-47* (London, 1988), p. 138; S. L. Menezes, *Fidelity and Honour: The Indian Army from the Seventeenth to the Twenty-First Century* (New Delhi, 1999), p. 347, quoting Trench.

<sup>123</sup> David E. Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860 - 1940* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998); Gajendra Singh, *The Testimonies of Indian Soldiers and the Two World Wars: Between Self and Sepoy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014); Das; Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War: A People's History of India's Second World War* (London: Bodley Head, 2015); Raghavan; Vandana Joshi, 'Between Erasure and Remembrance: Shreds from the Kriegsalltag of South Asian Faujis (Sipahis) in Stammlagers, Arbeitskommandos, Lazarettts and Graves, 1939-45', 2018 <<https://www.swwresearch.com/single-post/2018/01/16/Between-Erasure-and-Remembrance-Shreds-from-the-Kriegsalltag-of-South-Asian-Faujis-Sipahis-in-Stammlagers-Arbeitskommandos-Lazarettts-and-Graves-1939-45>>.

three relatives written by Indian journalist Raghu Karnad.<sup>124</sup> Finally, there is an increasing flow of PhD theses appearing in the UK and South Asia, reflecting the growing interest in the topic.<sup>125</sup>

Force K6 were also part of a wider mass of colonial and imperial armies fighting in the war. Indeed, these African and Asian soldiers have been seen not as peripheral but as being at the heart of the war effort, as the title of an article by Jacques Frémeaux states quite clearly– ‘*Les contingents impériaux au cœur de la guerre*’ (the imperial contingents at the heart of the war).<sup>126</sup> Ten per cent of the French Army of 1940 was composed of colonial troops from West Africa, North Africa, Madagascar and Indo-China, and the majority of both Vichy and Resistance (FFI) troops were colonial.<sup>127</sup> On the British side, over half a million Africans served, around twenty per cent of them overseas, most notably in the Abyssinian campaign and later in the 14<sup>th</sup> Army in Burma.<sup>128</sup> The 8<sup>th</sup> Army has been described as a ‘multi-ethnic force’ (a fact which would have surprised Bernard Manning) with mule drivers from right across the Empire.<sup>129</sup> Among the 323,000 men of the King’s African Rifles (KAR), for example, was John Mandambwe, recruited in Zomba, Malawi, at the age of thirteen, present at El Alamein and in Burma.<sup>130</sup> Some Africans were used mainly behind the lines (as K6 were) - Nigerian soldiers whose war work consisted of ‘chopping, building, climbing’.<sup>131</sup> Mandmabwe’s was a more brutal and bloody experience – he became a sergeant at the age of eighteen when his men attacked the Japanese and killed thirty of them, describing ‘I did not feel the things I carried with me anymore, because of the excitement. We stormed their hideout and finished them off.’<sup>132</sup> K6 were similar to their African colleagues in some ways - they were used

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<sup>124</sup> Mulk Raj Anand, *Across the Black Waters* (New Delhi: Orient, 2008); Amitav Ghosh, *The Glass Palace* (London: Harper Collins, 2000); Karnad.

<sup>125</sup> See for example Diya Gupta, ‘Ms Diya Gupta’, *King’s College London Research Portal*.

<sup>126</sup> Jacques Frémeaux, ‘Les Contingents Impériaux Au Cœur de La Guerre’, *Histoire, Economie et Société*, 23.2 (2004), 215–33.

<sup>127</sup> Frémeaux, p. 218.

<sup>128</sup> David Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2010), p. 44; Biyi Bandele, *Burma Boy* (London: Vintage, 2008).

<sup>129</sup> Jackson, Khan, and Singh, p. 238.

<sup>130</sup> John Mandambwe and Mario Kolk, *Can You Tell Me Why I Went to War?* (Zomba: Kachere Series, 2008).

<sup>131</sup> Olly Owen, ‘Burma Boys in War and Peace: Transformational Experiences of Nigerian Soldiers in World War II’ (unpublished Lecture, Centre for Imperial and Global History, Exeter University, 2017).

<sup>132</sup> Mandambwe and Kolk, p. 57.

to support a country not their own, led by white men, often used in support roles, underscored by martial race ideology – but were fundamentally different from their British Empire colleagues in the nature of their posting. Being in France and then in Britain, they were better treated than many, they were welcomed into family homes, and they were there for a long period of time. Equally, as Frémeaux pointed out, they suffered more than European soldiers in being away from home and family for such a long time.<sup>133</sup> As POWs, 22<sup>nd</sup> Company were better treated than many French colonial prisoners, whose number included the future first President of independent Senegal, Léopold Senghor.<sup>134</sup> While Indian VCOs were accepted by the Germans as entitled to be in officers' camps (*Oflag*s) with white officers, a Black French officer named Captain Charles N'Tchorere was shot by a German officer for claiming the very same right.<sup>135</sup> Both groups are alike in that they were forgotten after the war - indeed the French colonial contribution was erased while the war was still in progress, with a process of *blanchiment* or whitening taking place in the winter of 1944, so that the newly-expanded Free French Army was seen to be a white one, rather than the multi-coloured one it had been until then.<sup>136</sup> The tide of that forgetting has changed however, notably with the 2006 film *Indigènes*, a change that has been reflected in the increasing presence of Indian soldiers in World War One commemoration, and one that may also show up with regard to the second war.<sup>137</sup>

So far however, the work on Force K6 itself is extremely limited, and mostly of the old-fashioned military history style. There is some detail in the novelist Compton Mackenzie's 1951 celebration of the Indian Army, and useful background in Philip Mason's overview of the Indian Army.<sup>138</sup> The fullest account, however, and the one on which many later accounts are based, is found in V.J. Moharir's Volume V of the History of the RIASC, published in India in 1979.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Frémeaux, p. 230.

<sup>134</sup> David Killingray, 'Africans and African Americans in Enemy Hands', in *Prisoners of War and Their Captors in WW2*, ed. by Moore and Fedorowich (Oxford: Berg, 1996), pp. 181–204 (p. 189).

<sup>135</sup> Martin S. Alexander, 'Colonial Minds Confounded: French Colonial Troops in the Battle of France 1940', in *The French Colonial Mind: Volume 2: Violence, Military Encounters and Colonialism*, ed. by Martin Thomas (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 248–82 (p. 265).

<sup>136</sup> Frémeaux, p. 228.

<sup>137</sup> Rachid Bouchareb, *Indigènes* (UK Film Council, 2006).

<sup>138</sup> Compton Mackenzie, *Eastern Epic* (London, 1951), 1: DEFENSE; Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army, Its Officers and Men* (London, 1974).

<sup>139</sup> V.J. Moharir, *History of the Army Service Corps (1939-1946)* (New Delhi: Sterling, 1979).

There are also Pakistani versions of the same story, written by retired officers, including Akbar from K6.<sup>140</sup> Another source has been the Indian Military History Society and its journal 'Durbar'. Such material should not be dismissed as 'un-Historical', as Buettner points out in writing about the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia.<sup>141</sup> Individuals and groups outside academe are just as important as those within to the process of decolonisation, she says, and the tendency to dismiss them as 'antiquarian' or 'marginal' is not helpful. A recent addition in that vein is a 2019 work by Chris Kempton that clearly maps out the journeys of K6.<sup>142</sup> The huge gap in the literature is also indicated by errors and omissions in recent works. Srinath Raghavan's comprehensive work of 2016 omitted K6 entirely and stated that the 4th Indian Division were 'the first formation of the Indian Army to serve on the frontline of the war' in Egypt in December 1940, thus erasing the men of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> AT companies seven months previously.<sup>143</sup> As recently as 2003, Sonya Rose stated that, unlike in the Great War 'no non-white colonial regiments or battalions were stationed in Great Britain except for very short periods of time'.<sup>144</sup> A 2019 children's book by Bali Rai telling the story of one driver from 32<sup>nd</sup> Company is an interesting addition, but is rather full of mistakes and is built around the Ashdown family myth.<sup>145</sup> Perhaps the most surprising erroneous mention comes in Bruce Chatwin's prize-winning 1982 book *On the Black Hill*, later made into a film. Two farmers on the England/Wales border near Abergavenny come home to find:

the farmyard swarming with 'darkies', some in lopsided hats, some with their beards 'wrapped in towels' – they were Gurkhas and Sikhs – all 'chittering away like monkeys and scaring off the fowls.'<sup>146</sup>

As Force K6 were the only unit of the Indian Army in the UK during the war, and were stationed near Abergavenny, there is no mistaking the origin of this mis-

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<sup>140</sup> Abdul Latif, *History of the Army Services Corps (Volume II)* (Rawalpindi: Pap-Board printers, 1986); Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*.

<sup>141</sup> Buettner, p. 8.

<sup>142</sup> Chris Kempton, *Force K6 The Indian Contingent: RIASC Mule Companies in France and UK 1939-1944* (Kempton, 2019).

<sup>143</sup> Raghavan, p. 99.

<sup>144</sup> Sonya Rose, p. 245.

<sup>145</sup> Bali Rai, *Now or Never: A Dunkirk Story* (London: Scholastic, 2019).

<sup>146</sup> Bruce Chatwin, *On the Black Hill* (London: Vintage, 2005), pp. 195–96.

remembered story.<sup>147</sup> The only substantial scholarly accounts come from Exeter University academic Florian Stadler, who covers the unit in two recent chapters, and Rozina Visram, who gives them a paragraph in her foundational text on South Asians in the UK.<sup>148</sup>

Visram's work has also been invaluable in setting the men of K6 in a wider context of race, racism and pre-Windrush migration from the Empire. Racism towards minorities was common before the war – Shompa Lahiri wrote that 'there is no getting away from the fact that racism was a fact of life for many South Asians in Britain'.<sup>149</sup> After the war too, the 1948 race riots in Liverpool show that some attitudes had not changed, if anything they had hardened.<sup>150</sup> It is hard to know whether those who were rioting distinguished a black person from an Indian, but a later riot in Middlesbrough in 1961 targeted black people and a Pakistani family of café owners.<sup>151</sup> One must not slip into the trap, however, of thinking that the rioters represented wider public opinion. One of the things that makes the K6 story so interesting is that the overwhelming body of the evidence shows us that ordinary British people were better than that. The photos, the press reports, the memories stored around the country show that these dark-skinned strangers were welcomed, that they made real, lasting bonds of friendship. The impression that comes from reading Fryer's seminal work is one of racism throughout society; but something different happened between the K6 men and the people they encountered in the Highlands of Scotland and the valleys of Wales. Chapter 3 will show some of the wider Indian population in the UK at the time, and examine some British attitudes to 'race' as reflected in Mass-Observation data and elsewhere, but the picture of tolerance and welcome – at least during wartime – is an interesting counter to Fryer's picture. In the post-war

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<sup>147</sup> Bivouac near Hay on June 25th 1941 in 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, 1941', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5911.

<sup>148</sup> Florian Stadler, 'Britain's Forgotten Volunteers', in *South Asians and the Shaping of Britain, 1870-1950: A Sourcebook*, ed. by Ruvani Ranasinha (Manchester, 2013); Florian Stadler, "'Home" Front: Indian Soldiers and Civilians in Britain 1939-1945', in *Culture, Conflict and the Military in Colonial South Asia*, ed. by Kaushik Roy (New Delhi: Routledge, 2017), pp. 258–76; Rozina Visram, *Asians in Britain: 400 Years of History* (London: Pluto, 2002), p. 343. Honourable mention also to the photo on the back of the dust jacket in Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War* (London, 2006), taken July 1942 in Scotland .

<sup>149</sup> *A South Asian History of Britain*, ed. by Michael H. Fisher, Shompa Lahiri, and Shinder S. Thandi (Oxford: Greenwood World Publishing, 2007), p. 142.

<sup>150</sup> Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto, 1984), pp. 367–71.

<sup>151</sup> Fryer, p. 380.

period, the Windrush generation of migrants from the Caribbean is now much better known in the UK. In contrast, the story of South Asian migration is still not widely told. Although none of the K6 men were able to stay in the UK, some may have returned as part of the waves that started after the war. The building of the Mangla Dam in Kashmir (completed in 1965) led to large-scale migration from Mirpur to northern English mill towns, especially Bradford, following the footsteps of pre-Partition migration.<sup>152</sup> Mass migration from Pakistan started in the late 1950s and peaked just before the Commonwealth Immigrants Act curtailed most primary migration to the UK.<sup>153</sup> In 1951 the census showed 43,000 South Asians in the UK, of whom around 10,000 were Pakistanis. Thirty years later that had risen to around a million, with nearly a third from Pakistan.<sup>154</sup> This population has suffered a double dose of racism – as Manning’s ‘Pakis’ in the late twentieth century, and as Muslims in the new century. That may go some way to explaining the process of forgetting. Indian soldiers (and by extension, the Indian population) were allies in 1940. By 1947 that status was less clear, and the war was over. Race riots may have led people to rethink their attitude. Those who had met the sepoys carried the torch of their good impression, in many cases for decades as will be seen, but those who didn’t meet them had other things to think about, and other impressions of South Asia to overlay what they had read in the papers or seen in the newsreels. The brave new world of post-war Britain was tough, with rationing and austerity the order of the day, and a new international climate of cold war to live in. Wartime needs and alliances could be forgotten.

### **Finding the traces**

The approach taken to the research used a mixture of methods, involving archival research and oral history interviews. Neither of these are simply neutral heuristic tools or ‘sites of pure knowledge’ - they are politically charged, and may also prove to be contingent and random.<sup>155</sup> Archives can be a route to original, verbatim voices, and through them ‘we can hear what is happening on the other

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<sup>152</sup> Hasan and Raza, p. 48.

<sup>153</sup> Fisher, Lahiri, and Thandi, p. 170; Muhammad Anwar, *British Pakistanis: Demographic, Social and Economic Position* (Coventry: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick, 1996), p. 7; Sophie Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 47; Pnina Werbner, ‘Rich Man Poor Man – or a Community of Suffering’, *Oral History*, 8.1 (1980), 43–48 (p. 45).

<sup>154</sup> Fisher, Lahiri, and Thandi, p. 164.

<sup>155</sup> Antoinette M. Burton, *Empire in Question: Reading, Writing, and Teaching British Imperialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), p. 104.

side of the barricade'.<sup>156</sup> But as Ann Laura Stoler has pointed out, colonial archives, the 'supreme technology of late nineteenth century imperial state', are sites of 'knowledge production' as much as storage.<sup>157</sup> So a critical perspective was needed in relation to the documents stored and the ideologies that underlay the language used. There are a considerable number of documents relating to Force K6 in the 'Big Three' London archives: the Imperial War Museum, the National Archives and the India Office Records at the British Library – as Padma Anagol points out even 'imperial archives used imaginatively can yield rich materials too'.<sup>158</sup> Other national archives that had significant material included the National Libraries of Scotland and Wales, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission archives, the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst and the BBC Written Archives at Caversham. Kelvingrove Museum, The National Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum held useful material for the chapter on visual representations, and the Mass Observation records at Sussex University proved very interesting for background on attitudes in Britain in the 1930s and 1940s. Local collections across the country held all kinds of treasures, from Plymouth to Crickhowell, Woking to Dornoch and Doncaster. In France, the *Archives Départementales* in Epinal and Lille, and the *Archives Municipales* in Dunkerque, together with the national military archives of the *Service Historique de la Défense* at Vincennes were all valuable in giving insight into the situation in 1940 and the fate of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company. In Germany, the *Bundesarchiv* in Freiburg, Berlin-Lichterfelde and Koblenz held fascinating material on Prisoner of War (POW) camps. Three archives in Delhi held substantial useful collections: the National Archives of India, the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library at Teen Murti, and the United Services Institute. Archives in Pakistan proved more difficult to visit, and in fact I only succeeded in getting into the National Documentation Wing in the Cabinet Division in Islamabad, and could not enter the National Archives and the Punjab Archives in Lahore. As will be seen, there is an imbalance of material between Europe and South Asia: there is far more available in the West than the East, at least to a British researcher who speaks no Urdu, and this imbalance has certainly skewed the findings towards material by and about British soldiers.

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<sup>156</sup> Michel de Certeau, *The Possession at Loudun* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), p. 8.

<sup>157</sup> Ann Laura Stoler, 'Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance', *Archival Science*, 2 (2002), 87–109 (p. 87).

<sup>158</sup> Padma Anagol, 'Agency, Periodisation and Change in the Gender and Women's History of Colonial India', *Gender and History*, 20.3 (2008), 603–27 (p. 616).



Finding the material on the South Asian characters has not been easy, but has been rewarding. Private papers have helped to fill that and other gaps, notably those of Colin Hexley, Betty Cresswell and Giovanna Bloor.

Oral history was a crucial part of the research process, alongside the written records. Such research has three uses for the historian - to gain stories and evidence; as a means to explore memory and orality; and as a way to uncover attitudes and explore collective memory. A major criticism of oral history is the risk of unreliability of memory, especially in the second and third generation, and that theme will emerge strongly in this thesis. As the American oral historian and broadcaster Studs Terkel said of his monumental work on memories of the war 'this is a memory book, rather than one of hard fact and precise statistic.'<sup>159</sup> Terkel sees this a softer type of history, one that humanises the past by introducing the individual, the personal story of the small and weak as much as the great and powerful. The voices of the K6 family members can offer a much-needed human perspective to set against the 'hard' documents from the archives. As David Killingray put it, oral history at its best is 'illuminating, detailed in recall and powerfully descriptive... a useful supplement and sometimes a corrective to what was already known from archival research', and that has been the aim here.<sup>160</sup> Such stories however are not one hundred per cent reliable. Where there is no other evidence for an event, the oral history testimonies can be seen as a memory, a version of what happened. Where there is evidence that agrees, the interviews and archives act as data triangulation. In cases where the archive and the interview disagree, we are in the realm of competing stories that throw interesting light on how history is recorded and recalled, and on the motivations of individuals. The pitfalls can be especially deep in second and third generation memory, when family members are narrating what their father or grandfather did – or rather, their version of what he did. The field of Holocaust studies has identified the phenomenon of 'postmemory', a deep personal connection even where there is a separation in time and experience.<sup>161</sup> Postmemory works through 'stories, images and behaviors among which [descendants] grew up', which will

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<sup>159</sup> Studs Terkel, *"The Good War": An Oral History of World War Two* (New York: New Press, 1984), p. 3.

<sup>160</sup> Killingray, *Fighting for Britain: African Soldiers in the Second World War*, p. 3.

<sup>161</sup> Wulf Kansteiner, 'Generation and Memory', in *Writing the History of Memory*, ed. by Stefan Berger and William John Niven (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 101–34 (p. 128).

help to explain some of the long and sometimes distorted stories heard during the interviews.<sup>162</sup>

I conducted interviews with seventy-six subjects in Pakistan as well as twenty-three in the UK (see appendices D and E for a complete list of interviewees and the questions). These were semi-structured interviews, with the list of questions serving as a jumping-off point rather than a complete script, and indeed many of the interviewees took the discussion in unexpected directions. My approach to oral history is a subject-centred one - a short question with a long answer is best, as everyone has something interesting to say, so these were basically life history interviews, even if the veteran in question was not the subject but a relative. The interviews in Pakistan were conducted in early 2018, and included forty-five people related to K6 veterans, of whom eighteen were relatives of Major Akbar. Additionally I interviewed four actual World War Two veterans, including one member of the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India), none of whom were part of K6. Twenty-one of the subjects were women, fifty-five men. They were mostly from rural agricultural backgrounds, often with military experience in the Pakistan forces, with a substantial minority being urban landowners and professionals. Most of the interviews (forty-six) were conducted in Punjabi using a local interpreter, thirty in English. Many interviews became group efforts, often with an audience of friends and neighbours; in only two cases were there only two people present. This meant that subjects felt more relaxed and more able to speak but may also have led to a certain amount of 'groupthink'. The vast majority of the subjects were located through the efforts of Sabur, an army veteran who knew the villages and towns around Rawalpindi and the Potohari plateau well, and rode around on his motorbike following up leads, mostly from addresses on Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) graves. In every case, the subjects had made 'elaborate preparations' for the interview in terms of catering and arranging their best seats.<sup>163</sup> Analysis of interviews was both qualitative and quantitative, with emergent themes checked for recurrence. There was a vast amount of material from the interviews, much of which needed translating before it could be analysed, but in the best cases, as Studs Terkel believed, 'the

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<sup>162</sup> Marianne Hirsch, 'Generation of Postmemory', in *The Collective Memory Reader*, ed. by Jeffrey Olick, Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Daniel Levy (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 103–28 (p. 347).

<sup>163</sup> Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), p. 146.

testimony speaks for itself'.<sup>164</sup> I benefited enormously from transcripts and tapes of some excellent interviews conducted by Giovanna Bloor with her neighbours in Snowdonia.

Like any substantial work of research, this thesis reflects the interests and preferences of the author. It could not be otherwise. This is how the data speaks to me, but it is not the only approach. I am a cultural and social historian, interested in people, their experiences and their thoughts and feelings. So I have sought out people with experience or insight into the Indian Army in five countries, and listened carefully while they talked. The thesis is then built around a number of case studies – the stories of individuals. On a different level, Karl Schlägel has said that 'all our historical knowledge attaches to places'.<sup>165</sup> I have therefore tried to visit places that were significant to the men of K6, from Punjab to France to Britain, and attempted to strip away the accretions of seventy-five years of history in looking at Dunkirk beach or the Cnicht mountain in Snowdonia. By being there, seeing what they saw, I have tried to put myself into their skin and see things as they saw them.<sup>166</sup> Tawney is reputed to have said that every historian needs a stout pair of boots, and my boots have seen good use, notably in visiting the sixty-one K6 graves in Britain, France and Germany (see appendix F for the full list).<sup>167</sup> Local historians have been invaluable in helping me understand the significance of a place or memorial, and groups on facebook and the WW2talk website have helped to fill in details of military history.<sup>168</sup> All together, with archives and family papers, interviews and field visits, the approach has been like trying to reconstruct a jigsaw that was whole seventy-five years ago, where the pieces have been scattered round the world, some destroyed, some buried, some bent or painted over. 'Big pictures are constructed using lots of little people', and this study is intended to do just that.<sup>169</sup> This is not the grand sweep of history, the overarching book that Churchill or Raghavan or Braudel might produce. This is something smaller and more domestic, but with a trans-national reach. A small story of a few

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<sup>164</sup> Abrams, p. 155.

<sup>165</sup> Quoted in Assmann, 'How History Takes Place', p. 153.

<sup>166</sup> Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird* (London: Heinemann, 1960), p. 35.

<sup>167</sup> Samuel, I, p. 26.

<sup>168</sup> 'WW2 Talk' <<http://ww2talk.com/index.php>> [accessed 2 September 2019].

<sup>169</sup> Tanya Evans, p. 68.

men and women among the millions, which may serve to illustrate and exemplify, to widen perspectives.

Reflexivity demands that I should be aware of my own shortcomings as well as my strengths and take them into account as I work. As a white British man, am I to some extent implicated in the work of the colony, in the suppression of voices by my act of being white, male and British? Although none of my British ancestors that I know of worked in the colonies, does that excuse me? The postcolonial writer Bart Moore-Gilbert tells a fascinating story of a search for his father in archives and police stations in India, which suggests a continuity between his East African white childhood and being a professor of postcolonial studies.<sup>170</sup> Is the white privilege afforded to him (and to me and to all white researchers, however enlightened) simply an extension of the privilege of colonial officials of the past? Moore-Gilbert is given a great reception at a police station in Satara and wonders ‘what kind of reception would an Indian receive, if he came to a police station in England and said his father had worked there during the war and could he look at the files?’<sup>171</sup> A similar question occurs for K6 – imagine a Pakistani arriving in Crickhowell and asking to see the council minutes relating to the Indian soldiers at Llangattack Park. Moore-Gilbert acknowledges the privilege and power given to him by his skin colour, ancestry and connections, but he still makes use of it. The trick then is to use that privilege for the purposes of liberation, to mediate the voices with as light a touch as possible. Ranajit Guha said that we can relate to the past by ‘listening to and conversing with the myriad voices in civil society. These are small voices which are drowned in the noise of statist commands.’<sup>172</sup> By ‘conversing’, he means that we need to see the people with the small voices as fully human, as beings capable of thought and action. We must try not to patronise them, push assumptions about their power on to them from what we think about our society, our class structure. We can listen carefully through the muffles and the gags, treat them with respect, learn from them and try to understand, write about them not for them. ‘First we must try to understand’ wrote Michel de Certeau.<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> Bart Moore-Gilbert, *The Setting Sun: A Memoir of Empire and Family Secrets* (London: Verso, 2014).

<sup>171</sup> Moore-Gilbert, p. 162.

<sup>172</sup> Ranajit Guha, *The Small Voice of History: Collected Essays* (New Delhi: Permanent Black, 2009), p. 307.

<sup>173</sup> de Certeau, p. 9.

Finally, it is worth clarifying a few terms that will be used throughout this thesis. The ordinary Indian soldier will be referred to as a 'sepoy', the most widely used term, derived from the Persian word سپاهی (sipahi), meaning soldier in the infantry.<sup>174</sup> Soldiers will be identified by the rank they held at the time, even if they rose to higher rank later (as many of them did). These men were part of a special force attached to the BEF that was called 'Force K6'. After their landing in Britain the name was changed to 'The Indian Contingent', but generally this thesis will stick with the original designation, it being more unique. The RIASC was part of what was generally known by Britishers as the 'Indian Army', with soldiers from India and all its officers (until 1919 at least) from the UK. This is a somewhat contested term – it was not a national army in the sense that Bose's Indian National Army was, so some writers of South Asian heritage prefer to call it the British Indian Army, or even simply the British Army. The latter term would be confusing – indeed 'British' Army can be a cover-all for Empire/Commonwealth forces (the 14<sup>th</sup> Army in Burma is often called a British army, although it was multinational, with many troops from Africa and India, white Britons being a minority). In general though, this thesis will stick with tradition and refer to the Indian Army and the British Army as separate entities. Even when they were attached to the BEF in France or British infantry divisions in the UK, K6 never stopped being part of the Indian Army. The war in which they fought has been referred to by some critics as the 'imperial' war, and it certainly had many imperial dimensions, but this thesis will use the more common and widely recognised terms 'World War Two' and 'Second World War'. Finally, the title of this thesis contains a highly offensive word: 'paki'. This term is an ethnophaulism, a word used to deprecate a group of people 'thus robbing them of their names and personality'.<sup>175</sup> It is used here because it is the insult that Manning reached for in his TV appearance, and was a common racist slur in late twentieth century Britain, to refer to anyone of South Asian heritage. Thankfully it is now considered inappropriate in public discourse (although it is almost certainly still used behind closed doors) and its use on national TV in 2019 would cause an outcry. Interestingly, the word 'Pak'

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<sup>174</sup> Although Singh prefers sipahi itself, being the word those soldiers used themselves. Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 193.

<sup>175</sup> Tariq Rahman, *Names: A Study of Personal Names, Identity, and Power in Pakistan* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 113.

is in common usage in Pakistan as a short form of 'Pakistani', such as Pak Army or Pak TV, showing the difference between a term used by an insider and an outsider. There is little real difference in the words themselves, the difference lies in the way they are used, and by whom.

### **Writing the Traces**

Each of the thesis's five chapters will trace a different aspect of memory, taking one or more K6 soldiers as case studies. The flow between the chapters is a thematic, not a strictly chronological one, with the general direction running from experience to memory. Thus we start with what they actually did and finish with how they are remembered, with their experiences of encounters in the UK in the middle. The first chapter examines the ideas of heroes and traitors through case studies of three soldiers (two of whom became POWs) that show the spread of reactions to the problem of loyalty, and the question of choice or agency. From a South Asian perspective their ambiguous status makes them hard to fit into a simplistic post-war narrative, and this chapter will also explore the dangers of the instrumentalization of their stories – using them for contemporary purposes through labelling them 'heroes' or 'traitors' or 'Muslims in British forces'. This chapter will also deal with the central question of when and how exactly they were forgotten. Chapter 2 deals with their identities, reflecting where they came from and showing that the men were all products of their backgrounds, with identities rooted in Punjab, in Islam and in the army of the Empire. Each man embodied those three identities plus many others. Their commanders were well aware of the need to keep up their morale so far from home, so ensured that they were well catered for, both figuratively with sports, music and dance– and literally with chapatties, mutton and fruit. The case study here is of Risaldar-Major Ashraf, who embodied all these identities throughout his life, but who has been comprehensively forgotten, to the extent that his widow and son were prevented from meeting the Queen when she visited Pakistan. Indeed, the men have been forgotten in South Asia because of their identities as sepoys of the Raj.

The third chapter moves on to consider the central question of the response to these men at the local level in Britain. All the evidence is positive - these men were welcomed, by women and children especially, wherever they went in the UK. The one exception, the single example of racism on record, will

be examined, and the concept of ‘fireside-words’ will be advanced – that people in Britain saved their racism for private gatherings. The memory of these men proved short however, and the enlightened response was for the duration only, with a reversion ‘back to bigotry’ after the war.<sup>176</sup> The chapter will consider the official responses to the men’s presence, including the Indian Comforts Fund and the work by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to commemorate those who died in Europe, thus creating sites that could become *lieux de mémoire* for South Asians in the UK or abroad. Throughout the country, local women welcomed the men into their beds as well, and one case study of a ‘K6 kid’ will be presented. Chapter 4 - *Deep Colours, Deep Eyes* – then looks at the wide array of visual representations of these men and asserts that the volume of material shows that they were well known and recognised in Britain during the war. They were perceived at the time as exotic and picturesque, and the responses of artists were conditioned by the process of premediation – everyone encountering them had preconceived notions from films and pictures of what Indians looked like, and only the best artists could paint what they actually saw. These images that linger in archives and family albums are a type of latent memory that could be used for re-remembering. Indeed, with Akbar’s portrait set to be on permanent display in the Imperial War Museum from 2021, we can see a return from the *réserve d’oubli* underway. The final chapter looks at the extent to which their genuine ‘voices’ are audible, eighty years after Dunkirk. In almost every case there is an intervening, mediating influence between them and us, one or more filters that distort what we hear. Their newsletter *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, which might have proved a way to access their thoughts, turns out to be mainly a propaganda vehicle, designed to cement their loyalty to the Raj. One soldier manages to break through however, and his writings will be presented and analysed as an authentic South Asian voice.

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<sup>176</sup> Terkel, p. 349.

## CHAPTER 1: HEROES AND TRAITORS: MEMORIES AT WAR

*It was strange to be sitting on one side of a battle line, knowing that you had to fight and knowing at the same time that it wasn't really your fight – knowing that whether you won or lost, neither the blame nor the credit would be yours. Knowing that you're risking everything to defend a way of life that pushes you to the sidelines. It's almost as if you're fighting against yourself. It's strange to be sitting in a trench, holding a gun and asking yourself: who is this weapon really aimed at? Am I being tricked into pointing it at myself?<sup>177</sup>*

In December 1941, Jemadar Wali Mohamed Dad Rana Khan from Hoshiarpur in Punjab was a Prisoner of War in Germany. He had been the medical officer attached to 22<sup>nd</sup> Animal Transport Company of the original Force K6 in France. According to a report from a repatriated British army doctor, Rana had an interesting story to tell:

Rana was sent for by the Germans and... went in a private car with a German officer to an address in Stalag IIID, where he found that these Indians were dressed flashily in civilian clothes. Rana discovered that some were from his old unit 22 AT Coy. They immediately jumped to attention.

On the guise of talking about their health he questioned the men and was told that... the man who had been their priest in 22 AT Coy and who had [led] them twice a day in prayer had been away for three months in Iran as a German agent there. These men were expecting to be dropped in Afghanistan to be helped over the frontier into India and they thought that they might be doing some "secret broadcasting" in India itself. These Indians were given two Red Cross parcels per week and they offered Rana any amount of food.<sup>178</sup>

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<sup>177</sup> Ghosh, p. 406.

<sup>178</sup> Report by Major Mackay in 'German and Italian Attempts to Suborn Indian Prisoners of War. Activities of Central Free Indian Bureau in Berlin and Rome', June 42 - Aug 45, The National Archives, Kew, WO 208/802.



This report reveals a number of things about life for Indian soldiers in the POW camps, and the choices that the sepoy of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company made. Firstly the men jumped to attention, showing that they still held Rana in high regard. They were dressed in civilian clothes, so they had not yet taken the step of putting on German uniforms. They were still receiving Red Cross parcels and had a surplus of food to share. Meanwhile their maulvi or priest had been parachuted into Iran as a spy, and they were hoping to be dropped into Afghanistan. The Germans clearly had high hopes of these men: they were being well looked after, attending an Urdu course with a view to broadcasting propaganda to India. As for Rana himself, he had stayed with 22<sup>nd</sup> Company after their surrender in France in June 1940, and his comrade-in-arms Tom Hexley wrote a report that is full of praise for Rana's work after his capture, including treating an outbreak of dysentery with Epsom Salts, and performing an eye operation in Longvic camp. Hexley wrote:

He is a great student of British History and Imperial Geography and can quote dates, facts and figures with great authority. His outspoken pro-British remarks to all and sundry used to alarm me for his safety. His greatest wish was to undergo training in X-ray in England. He was held in great respect by the French doctors there and was called in to diagnose cases which the others could not. He extracted teeth of anyone suffering and once caused quite a stir by performing an eye operation... He was held in such esteem by the French Major medical I/C of the hospital that the French Major got Dr Wali Mohd Khan [Rana] some six thousand francs back pay!<sup>179</sup>

As a Viceroy's Commissioned Officer he was later sent to an Officers' camp, initially to Oflag 9A at Spangenberg in the centre of Germany, where a Foreign Office report in April 1942 says that he was in charge of a hospital of 500 POWs, which was 'above average for his rank'.<sup>180</sup>

Within these two brief reports we can see a range of responses to incarceration. Some men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company were prepared to act as soldiers - spies even - for the Germans against the British. A traditional Empire view of loyalty would describe them as traitors to their word and bond, but an alternative

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<sup>179</sup> Hexley.

<sup>180</sup> 'Report on Oflag IXA', The National Archives, Kew, FO 916/19.

view, a South Asian nationalist view, would say that they were being loyal to their identity as Indians, and pursuing the logical path of opposing British imperialism. Dr Rana on the other hand, professionally stretched but rising to the challenge, stuck to his loyalty to the British and his Hippocratic Oath. He could be described as a hero. In the same vein, the wider group of Force K6 had travelled a third of the way round the world to fight for a country that was not their own, sepoys coming to the rescue of Mother England, and thus displaying a type of heroism rarely matched. But one could also call them dupes, mercenaries fighting for the imperial oppressor, traitors to the idea of a future independent India and Pakistan, fighting 'the wrong war... in the wrong place, against the wrong foe'.<sup>181</sup> For 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, the extraordinary times and circumstances of the POW camps brought out the best and the worst in men and forced them to make choices. From the perspective of the twenty-first century, wearing the glasses of collective memory, we can discover new ways to see them. Heroes, villains, loyalists, traitors: all (or none) of these labels could be used to describe these men.

The term 'hero' is of course a polysemic one, one that has evolved with time, and must be unpacked a little.<sup>182</sup> The Greek word *heros* means protector, and the ancient Greek mythical heroes like Achilles and Heracles combined courage and skill in fighting with a sense that they were on the right side, that they fought for what was good against what was evil. That fundamental combination of bravery, martial prowess and being on the right side has been modified but has continued as a core idea of what a hero is. The word has been widely used to describe military men - Nelson as 'The Hero of Trafalgar', for example. However, men and women of the contemporary armed forces dislike the word 'hero' or 'warrior' – an ex RAF officer preferring the term 'professional air force officer'.<sup>183</sup> During the Second World War, there developed a clear sense of a hierarchy of heroism, with tankmen, pilots and submariners at the top: 'the new knights of war' on their high-tech steeds.<sup>184</sup> In the twenty-first century, there

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<sup>181</sup> Boyce, quoted in Paul Taylor, *Heroes or Traitors? Experiences of Southern Irish Soldiers Returning from the Great War 1919-1939* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2015), p. 3.

<sup>182</sup> There is an excellent breakdown of the history of the term in Berny Sèbe, *Heroic Imperialists in Africa: The Promotion of British and French Colonial Heroes, 1870-1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), p. 8.

<sup>183</sup> 'Reith Lectures 2018: Making Sense of the Warrior' (York University, 2018)

<<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0b88hl4>>, see also <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-34770629>.

<sup>184</sup> Paris, p. 157 quoting Bartov; also see Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War*, p. 171.

is another meaning of 'hero' in Britain. After a period when the military were not generally well-received by the public, there was a shift in public opinion following wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. In 2007 a new (very successful) charity called 'Help for Heroes' was set up, which asserts that all veterans – everyone who served in the armed forces – are by definition heroes. This has led to a 'widespread social acceptance of a new orthodoxy of veterans as heroes at a time when public support for the wars in which veterans were fighting was in decline'.<sup>185</sup> A recent poll by YouGov showed a third of Britons considered all armed forces personnel to be heroes, while an opposing third believe that 'only those armed forces personnel who have performed particularly brave acts' should be described in that way.<sup>186</sup> So the term is contested. That contestation is often projected backwards in time: servicemen of an earlier generation have been constructed as heroes, as now happens for World Wars One and Two. In a similar way, one can posit that if Britons of the 1940s considered their armed forces to be heroes, while Germans and Japanese did the same, the term does not relate to morality, politics or a particular role, but simply means 'one of our boys' - somebody in the armed forces on our side. One man's hero is another man's villain.

This thesis asserts that the only men of Force K6 who could be called heroes are those who risked their own lives to help other humans. Belonging to the military is not enough, nor is killing the 'enemy' – something that K6 members did not get the chance to do during their time in Europe. So those men who helped to pull out the bodies from the smashed barracks block in Duporth camp during a gale were doing a heroic act.<sup>187</sup> Dr Rana, who exceeded expectations in his care for other men, was a hero. Those sepoy who protected or helped civilians and other soldiers on the retreat to Dunkirk were heroes. Joseph Campbell's definition is most apposite – 'a hero is someone who has given his or her life to something bigger than oneself.'<sup>188</sup> Additionally, those who refused to join the German Army could be labelled loyalists rather than heroes, although even that

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<sup>185</sup> Gareth Thompson, 'Help for Heroes: From Organisational Discourse to a New Orthodoxy', *Public Relations Inquiry*, 7.1 (2018), 24–43 (p. 26).

<sup>186</sup> Matthew Smith, 'Are the Troops Heroes? Americans, Britons and Germans Feel Very Differently', *Yougov*, 2018 <<https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2018/09/26/are-troops-heroes-americans-britons-and-germans-fe>> [accessed 26 July 2019].

<sup>187</sup> 'War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, June-December 1940', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5883; J. Martin, 'Letter from J. Martin to Paritosh Shapland'.

<sup>188</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Power of Myth* (New York: Doubleday, 1989), p. 123.

term is not as simple as it sounds. Dan Branch, writing of loyalists in Kenya during the Mau Mau period points out that it was often hard for colonial officials to be sure who was loyal, and there was a desire to ‘test’ everyone’s loyalty.<sup>189</sup> There was an ‘ambiguity’ at the centre of loyalism, with many motivations for Kenyans ‘staying loyal’; just as there were with K6 men who became prisoners, to be explored in this chapter.<sup>190</sup>

The projection of the term ‘hero’ backwards in time is one example of the instrumentalization of memory, a danger that applies to Force K6 as much as any group of people in the past. Instrumentalization is the process by which the memory of a particular group or person or event is co-opted or appropriated, the ‘use and abuse of that history in debates about contemporary problems.’<sup>191</sup> An example is that of Holocaust deniers, who ‘are not engaged in a search for truth, but manipulate and falsify the historical record for their own political purposes’.<sup>192</sup> When academic history becomes popular history, the danger of distortion or simplification is especially present – the film-maker Ken Loach takes the view that ‘the only reason to make films that are a reflection on history is to talk about the present’.<sup>193</sup> This process is doubly likely when a story, as in the case of K6, is not well known and when it becomes relevant to present concerns – in this case islamophobia and the position of Muslims in Britain, South Asian participation in the World Wars, and the rise of nationalism. The role of the historian is then put into question, and a historian may become, or be seen as, the mouthpiece of a pressure group, or as simply a dupe. Catriona Pennell, writing on the role of the memory of the Great War in Ireland and its place in twenty-first century reconciliation, asks whether reconciliation is really the business of historians<sup>194</sup>. Similarly, where a past conflict is remembered, there is a danger of adopting a militaristic stance, of being seen to be in support of present wars. In the specific case of K6, it would be easy to fall into the trap of presenting them as Muslims

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<sup>189</sup> Dan Branch, *Defeating Mau Mau, Creating Kenya: Counterinsurgency, Civil War, and Decolonization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 60.

<sup>190</sup> Branch, p. 209.

<sup>191</sup> Robert Aldrich, ‘The Colonial Past and the Postcolonial Present’, in *The French Colonial Mind: Volume 2: Violence, Military Encounters and Colonialism*, ed. by Martin Thomas (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), pp. 334–56 (p. 350).

<sup>192</sup> Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History*, New edition (London: Granta, 2000), p. 310.

<sup>193</sup> Quoted in James Chapman, *Past and Present: National Identity and the British Historical Film* (London: Tauris, 2005), p. 1.

<sup>194</sup> Pennell, p. 274.

fighting for the Crown, which could ‘help us to come together to address the challenges of integration that we face in Britain today’, as the President of the Islamic Society of Great Britain put it when talking in 2014 about the Great War.<sup>195</sup> Tony Kushner provides an interesting critique of a secondary danger lurking inside the re-remembering of colonial contributions, when writing on the RAF Museum’s 2009 exhibition ‘Diversity in the RAF’.<sup>196</sup> While that exhibition acknowledged pre-war discrimination, it seemed to imply that such racism was all in the past. Kushner quoted Squadron leader Ulric Cross, the highest-ranking West Indian in the RAF, who said that ‘the desire to show loyalty and sacrifice has meant that the continuation of racism, especially during Britain’s “finest hour” has been largely downplayed’.<sup>197</sup> There is also a danger that the memory of the men on K6 may be utilised to re-remember a particular soldier, especially one with an extensive family. Major Akbar became a General, and his family in Pakistan and elsewhere are keen to see his memory revived.<sup>198</sup> Equally, Bali Rai’s recent K6-inspired children’s book *Now or Never* seems to be in part a paean to ‘unsung hero’ Captain John Ashdown, father of British politician Paddy Ashdown.<sup>199</sup> Rai has picked up on the family myth, sadly not substantiated anywhere in the archives, that Ashdown was ordered to abandon the men of his 32<sup>nd</sup> Company, refused, was court-martialled and eventually exonerated (as discussed in the introduction).<sup>200</sup> The causes that the K6 memory is called upon to serve are not necessarily bad ones however, the issue here is over-simplification and whitewashing. The job of the professional historian (and indeed the journalist) is to see the complexity, resist the simplicity and tell the story as fully and honestly as possible, with warts and all.

In contrast to the ‘hero’ discourse above, another view of the men of Force K6 would construct them as professional soldiers doing their duty, or even simply

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<sup>195</sup> Ben Quinn, ‘The Muslims Who Fought for Britain in the First World War’, *Guardian*, 8 February 2014 <<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/aug/02/muslim-soldiers-first-world-war>> [accessed 15 October 2018].

<sup>196</sup> Tony Kushner, ‘Without Intending Any of the Most Undesirable Features of a Colour Bar: Race Science, Europeanness and the British Armed Forces during the Twentieth Century’, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 46.3–4 (2012), 339–74.

<sup>197</sup> Kushner, ‘Colour Bar’, p. 347.

<sup>198</sup> See for example the article by Akbar’s great-grandson Syed Hashmi, ‘Dancing on the Battlefield: The First Indian Unit at Dunkirk’, *Herald*, 22 January 2018 <<https://herald.dawn.com/news/1153998>> [accessed 25 July 2019].

<sup>199</sup> Rai, p. 203.

<sup>200</sup> See also Wintour; Interview with Mark Ashdown, 2014.

as mercenaries. Writers generally are agreed that the pre-war British Indian Army was a mercenary army, even if they then qualify that definition.<sup>201</sup> A twenty-first century view of the loaded term 'mercenary' would distinguish it from a 'professional' in that a mercenary fights only for money, not ideology, belief or patriotism; usually for a country other than their own; and brings previously-acquired skills and experience to the job. The first two elements match the sepoy in the British Indian Army, only the third is out of line. Yasmin Khan describes motives for joining up thus: 'a place in the Indian Army meant a job and a full belly'.<sup>202</sup> Philip Malins, a World War Two officer of the RIASC who wrote extensively after the war, reinforces that point. On joining the driver training regiment in India, he could 'vividly recall the transformation in mental and physical build up which occurred in the recruits. On arrival many were anaemic and suffering from worms... [they] rapidly put on weight on army diet.'<sup>203</sup> Raghu Karnad pointed out the oddity of their complicity in suppressing the people, describing them as 'paid soldiers who upheld the foreign occupation of their own land'.<sup>204</sup> Even Churchill admitted their mixture of motivations:

Indian soldiers are voluntary mercenaries. They fight for their pay and to support their families, also in the hope of rewards of gratuities, pensions and possibly grants of land, but above all, being drawn from classes with long martial traditions, they take pride in their profession, in which a leading element is personal loyalty to their British officers and general loyalty to the British Raj.<sup>205</sup>

Margaret Macmillan in her 2018 Reith lecture put these men in the context of centuries of mercenaries around the world:

It's no accident that many of the mercenaries from around Europe – the Swiss guards at the Vatican, for example, or the Scots or the Poles who fought around Europe – came from very poor parts... War gave some

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<sup>201</sup> See for example Omissi, p. 235; Raghavan, p. 64; Karnad, p. 27; Tai Yong Tan, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947* (New Delhi: Sage, 2005), p. 25.

<sup>202</sup> Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War*, p. 24.

<sup>203</sup> Philip Malins, 'The Royal Indian Army Service Corps in the Second World War', *Royal Corps of Transport Journal*, 1980, 6–10 (p. 8).

<sup>204</sup> Karnad, p. 27; see also Lanka Sundaram, *India's Armies and Their Costs: A Century of Unequal Imposts for an Army of Occupation and a Mercenary Army* (Bombay: Avanti Prakashan, 1946), p. 105.

<sup>205</sup> In a letter quoted in H.D. Sharma, *100 Best Letters* (New Delhi: Harper Collins, 2000), p. 320.

people a chance to rise socially, a chance for loot, a chance to get ahead.<sup>206</sup>

Such soldiers sound less like heroes, and more like guns for hire. Thus for many men from Punjab – from Muslim, Sikh or Hindu backgrounds - being a soldier was a trade, a profession, a job to be done, handed down from generation to generation. The idea of ‘nation’, especially in the pre-nationalist India of the British Raj, was secondary to the idea of a career that could lead to progression, wealth and *izzat* (honour).

This chapter is built around three contrasting case studies that explore the idea of ‘hero’ and ‘traitor’, and how they relate to ‘choice’, embodied in the men of K6. Major Akbar of 25<sup>th</sup> Company was one of the highest-ranking Indian officers in the whole Indian Army in 1939 and could be taken as a shining example of the Indian officer as ‘Empire hero’. His biography illustrates some of the vicissitudes of the Punjabi Muslim military experience throughout the twentieth century. Daffadar Abuzar was in 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, who all became POWs in the summer of 1940. In common with about ten per cent of their number, he joined the German Army and thereby in the traditional view, he stands for the ‘Empire traitor’. Captain Anis of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, on the other hand, narrowly resisted the strong temptation to join the fight against the British and stayed true to the King. After the war, however, he was faced with another dilemma: to join the new army of Pakistan or that of India. These three men change status when viewed through different lenses: to a South Asian nationalist, Abuzar is a ‘hero’, Anis is doubtful and Akbar a downright ‘traitor’. After a discussion of the precise time at which these men slipped from memory, this chapter will conclude with an attempt to find a way to describe all these men in a way that moves beyond simplistic, nationalistic boundaries and shifts the emphasis away from binary to humanity.

### **Major Mohammed Akbar Khan: ‘An officer of the old school’**

Striding along the beach from Bray Dunes to Dunkirk’s East mole on 28<sup>th</sup> May 1940, at the head of the 300 men of 25<sup>th</sup> Company of the RIASC, Major

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<sup>206</sup> ‘Reith Lectures 2018: Making Sense of the Warrior’.

Mohammed Akbar Khan was every inch the Indian Army hero and career soldier. From a military family, with experience of active service in the Great War, Akbar had worked his way up the ranks as fast as he could. He had been part of the very first training course for officers of Indian background and worked hard between the wars to progress to the rank of Major. After twenty-one years in the cavalry he was moved into the RIASC in the 1930s, having won an MBE and a Mention in Despatches, and proven his loyalty again and again. He was the only Indian officer at Dunkirk. He was able to meet the powerful men of England during his short time in Europe, and to have his portrait painted by an official war artist. By the end of the war he was ready for high command, and with Partition in 1947 he became the highest-ranking native officer in Pakistan - Jinnah's sole general. Thereafter followed a period of disappointment with the army and the politics of Pakistan, while he re-defined himself as a writer and grandfather. Like so much of the K6 story, he is now largely unknown in his own country: a forgotten hero of the old school.

This section draws on three main categories of evidence, all of which need to be taken with a pinch of salt. Firstly there are several documents in UK archives, including the National Archives, the India Office Records and the Amery papers in the Churchill archive. Generally, official accounts can be taken as accurate with regard to dates and places but touched with the standard colonial bias when it comes to reporting on the activities and motivations of Indians. The second set of sources is Akbar's own writings, which although considerable, are often incomplete. They are also hard to access, mostly being held by relatives in Pakistan. As they were generally written down decades after the events they portray, there are some predictable factual inaccuracies. There is also a change of perspective, perhaps some selective forgetting or adjustment, caused by his own changing view as his life developed during the time of independent Pakistan. Finally, Akbar's family have been very generous with their reminiscences and stories, as well as access to documents, and have given a very full picture of the man after retirement, even if there is a danger of familial hagiography there – looking back at him through rose-coloured glasses.

Mohammed Akbar Khan was in many ways a classic pre-Partition British loyalist: a strong, ambitious man who rose from the very bottom to the very top of



the army. He came from a classic 'martial race' background, being a Punjabi Muslim from Chakwal in Northern Punjab.<sup>207</sup> His father, Khan Bahadur Raja Fazal Dad Khan, had made his life and fortune in the army, spending 36 years in Probyn's Horse and reaching the rank of Risaldar-Major.<sup>208</sup> Akbar was his first child, born in 1897, his seven brothers included others who reached high rank in the Pakistan military.<sup>209</sup> As a young man, he was good at games, being six foot two inches tall and phenomenally muscular, but 'mediocre in studies'.<sup>210</sup> Akbar was keen to join the army, even though his father wanted him to be a farmer, so on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1914, three months before the start of the Great War, he joined Probyn's Horse, aged just 17, as a humble sepoy or *rangrut*.<sup>211</sup> After a period of training, and newly promoted to Jemadar at the tender age of 18, his regiment was posted overseas to join the large Indian Army contingent in Mesopotamia.<sup>212</sup> Details on his service there are vague, but clearly his first five years in the army were so successful that he was nominated to be part of an experiment in 'Indianisation' of the officer corps. Up till this point, all the serving officers in the Indian Army were white British men, with the exception of some medical officers. By 1918, due to the pressure of public opinion and the experience of the Great War having shown that Indian men were up to the job, the government looked around for a way to start training Indian officers in the way that Britishers were trained at Sandhurst. A group of young VCOs, aged nineteen to twenty-five were chosen 'on account of their aptitude as instructors and leaders', fluent in English and Urdu and with the 'ability to read indifferent handwriting as well as print'.<sup>213</sup> Akbar was one of those thirty-nine young men, along with the future commander of the Indian Army, Kodandera Madappa Cariappa (universally known as 'Kipper'), whom he would track rank for rank over the next thirty years.<sup>214</sup> As he grew to maturity and rose through the ranks, he drew praise from all the white

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<sup>207</sup> For more on 'martial races' see Omissi; Heather Streets, *Martial Races* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004); Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*.

<sup>208</sup> BBC, 'In It Together', 1940, BBC Written Archives Caversham, R51/252.

<sup>209</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Muhammad Akbar Khan', 1946, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/14/72491.

<sup>210</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography', p. 5, Private collection of Jawad Sawarna.

<sup>211</sup> *Indian Army Lists, October 1915*, India Office Records at the British Library.

<sup>212</sup> *Indian Army Lists Supplement, January 1920*, India Office Records at the British Library.

<sup>213</sup> 'Nominees from UK to Enter Training School at Indore', 1919, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/7/19036.

<sup>214</sup> Gautam Sharma, *Nationalisation of the Indian Army, 1885-1947* (India: Allied, 1996), p. 215; 'Temporary Indian Army Commissions; Selection of Candidates for Training at Indore', 1919, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/7/19014.

British officers around him. His annual report from 1922, by which time he was a Lieutenant with Probyn's Horse, reads 'A very capable young officer. His knowledge of... interior economy of the regiment is exceptionally good. A good rider and keen on all forms of sport. Commands the respect of all the Indian ranks.'<sup>215</sup> In 1930, now married to Kudsia, he was awarded the MBE for his actions in Lahore, where his 'presence in the regiment has been a matter of considerable value to his commanding officer during this time of political unrest'.<sup>216</sup> Unfortunately the precise nature of this service is yet to be uncovered, but it could be an example of loyalty to the crown in the face of a revolutionary conspiracy. In 1935 he joined an infantry regiment after twenty-one years in the cavalry, and soon after that the RIASC, the corps that would take him to Dunkirk and London. A year later he was mentioned in despatches for 'distinguished services rendered in connection with the operations in Waziristan' and on 17<sup>th</sup> July he became a Major, on the same day as his friend and rival Cariappa.<sup>217</sup> When the Indian Army was called on in 1939 to provide mules and troops for France, Akbar was a natural choice to go with them.

Akbar joined 25<sup>th</sup> Company at Kohat as Major, but not commanding officer – that job going to Major J.G. Wainwright. As Akbar had already commanded several AT companies in India, this rankled somewhat.<sup>218</sup> Nevertheless this was a great opportunity for him - as one of only two Indians among the twenty-four officers, and as the highest-ranking Indian officer in the army at that time. It was also a good choice for the India Office, for Akbar was by this time a tried and tested loyalist, a soldier with a lifetime's experience and a standard bearer for the new India. With fluent English and a smart bearing, he was also ideal material for public relations, and proved his ability in that field as much as on the battlefield. With 25<sup>th</sup> Company he was posted to Marquette-lez-Lille, near the airfield north of Lille, where he was billeted with the Mayor, M. Dillies and his wife, whom he remembered into the 1970s.<sup>219</sup> The Mayor had difficulty finding a bed of suitable length for such a tall soldier, and the company carpenter had to add extra planks

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<sup>215</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Muhammad Akbar Khan'.

<sup>216</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Muhammad Akbar Khan'.

<sup>217</sup> 'Mention in Despatches: Muhammad Akbar Khan', *London Gazette*, 18 February 1938, p. 1079; *Indian Army List, July 1939* (Delhi: Government of India).

<sup>218</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, pp. 131, 141.

<sup>219</sup> 'Interview with Gen Anwar's Children'.

to accommodate him.<sup>220</sup> When the Commander-in-Chief General Gort and the Minister of War visited on 15<sup>th</sup> February, in the falling snow, it was Akbar who showed them round.<sup>221</sup> Shortly afterwards he went on his first visit to the UK, meeting various politicians and military types, touring the South East and making his first broadcast on the BBC.<sup>222</sup> The loyalist was becoming a media star as well. At the start of May he was back in London, at the head of a leave party (figure 2), who were followed by a photographer as they visited the Houses of Parliament and Woking Mosque and met the London Fire Brigade.<sup>223</sup> Just a few days later all leave was cancelled when the Germans attacked and Akbar rushed back to his company. For 25<sup>th</sup> Company, like so many in the British and French armies, this was a time of enormous confusion. For ten days they did nothing, waiting at their camp at the Dillies' farm while history was made all around them. Then began the march to the coast, with Akbar taking responsibility for leading the men while Wainwright and Captain Cole tried to obtain clear orders.<sup>224</sup> As the company passed through Cassel, they were able to help some British soldiers of the Worcestershire Regiment by supplying them with cooked chicken 'and bread and butter which was very acceptable as we had not had anything to eat, except a few biscuits, for two days.'<sup>225</sup> When he arrived on the beach at Dunkirk a few days later, he was shocked by what he saw:

we found that the situation all along the beaches of Dunkirk was pathetic. One saw our defeated army in thousands in utter confusion. It was a most depressing sight to see thousands of unarmed soldiers miserably wet, hungry and thirsty and in despair.<sup>226</sup>

On 28<sup>th</sup> May, Akbar was again given prime responsibility for the men of 25<sup>th</sup> Company, as the war diary records:

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<sup>220</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, p. 135.

<sup>221</sup> *Mr Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State For War, With BEF in France, 1940*, Imperial War Museum, BDY 31/3.

<sup>222</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, p. 150.

<sup>223</sup> 'Indian Troops Visit London', *Morning Advertiser* (London, 7 May 1940).

<sup>224</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940'.

<sup>225</sup> E.W.B. Berry, 'Dunkirk - Carrier Platoon, 8th Battalion Worcestershire Regiment'

<[http://www.worcestershireregiment.com/wr.php?main=inc/h\\_dunkirk\\_8thBn\\_carrierPI](http://www.worcestershireregiment.com/wr.php?main=inc/h_dunkirk_8thBn_carrierPI)> [accessed 24 July 2019].

<sup>226</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, pp. 171, 172.

1830 Major Mohd Akbar Khan was ordered to march Coy to Mole while CO & Captain Cole did recce to obtain lorry to carry sick. Capt Cole went back to unit to get RASC driver after lorry had been found. CO remained with lorry. Driver failed to arrive & CO drove lorry to camp which he found vacated. He eventually caught up Coy at sea wall leading to the MOLE. Here company reported to be complete.<sup>227</sup>

In this way, Akbar became the only Indian officer on the beach at Dunkirk, giving him a status that his fellow loyalist officers at home might envy.



Figure 2: Leave party outside the Houses of Parliament, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1940, with MP Jocelyn May (Imran collection)

Major Akbar spent just over a year in the UK, seeing the heart of the Empire close up and cementing his place as a key Empire loyalist. Within two weeks of arriving he had met Leo Amery, the new Secretary of State for India, who was to become a regular correspondent and friend.<sup>228</sup> He was then sent with 25<sup>th</sup> Company to Scotland, to pick up 306 French mules that had arrived via

<sup>227</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940'.

<sup>228</sup> Leo Amery, 'Leopold Amery's Diary for 1940', Churchill Archive, Cambridge, England, AMEL 7/34.

Norway, and take them further north to Lairg.<sup>229</sup> On 8<sup>th</sup> August he was at Ashbourne in Derbyshire, where he met the King for the first time, when he came to inspect the men.<sup>230</sup> After a spell in Cornwall with 25<sup>th</sup> Company, Akbar was given command of 29<sup>th</sup> Company, based at Bulford near Salisbury Plain.<sup>231</sup> During that time, the company were spotted by war artist Henry Lamb, who lived locally, he 'pursued' the men and caught up with them in April 1941, when they were based at Hereford racecourse.<sup>232</sup> Here he painted Akbar and a driver (see figures 33 and 34 in chapter 4). Lamb was clearly unimpressed by Akbar's record or his boasting, writing dismissively in a letter that Akbar:

has an OBE or something of that sort as well as other more ordinary medals; having a King's (Viceroy's?) Commission he never stopped boasting because he was the first to be decorated mentioned(?) for gallantry in the field – some frontier show.<sup>233</sup>

Akbar became something of a darling of the press, being photographed many times and invited to social events. As the senior representative of the Indian Army in the UK at the time, he was perfect for propaganda. He learnt how to use a microphone, and became a regular on the BBC's home and overseas service (see figure 3 below).<sup>234</sup> The BBC described him as 'excellent, a useful broadcaster when divorced from Lt Col Hills his CO'.<sup>235</sup> The nature of his relationship with Hills is not entirely clear, but the commander was sufficiently impressed with his general conduct to recommend him for the award of the Commander of the Indian Empire, an award that was given 'sparingly'. Although not mentioning Dunkirk as such, Hills wrote in his recommendation:

I can not praise his services too highly, especially when it is remembered that he has had to carry out so many extraneous duties other than those performed by other officers... In addition to his military duties, this officer has been required to carry out much political work of value, including

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<sup>229</sup> Commanding Officer, 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company', 1940, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5906.

<sup>230</sup> 'The King and Queen in the Midlands', *The Times*, 8 September 1940.

<sup>231</sup> 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, 1941'.

<sup>232</sup> 'Henry Lamb MC, RA', Imperial War Museum, London, GP/55/33.

<sup>233</sup> 'Henry Lamb MC, RA'.

<sup>234</sup> BBC; Mohammed Akbar Khan, 'The Indian Army Today', *Listener*, 13 June 1940, p. 1121.

<sup>235</sup> 'Indian Talks', 1941, BBC Written Archives Caversham, R51/256/1.

regular broadcasts to the people of India, in which he has shown aptitude above the average and has achieved an outstanding success.<sup>236</sup>

Akbar was much admired by the British establishment, for military and propaganda purposes, but was not deemed sufficiently senior to deserve that particular award. And his time in the UK was drawing to a close.



Figure 3: Akbar at the BBC microphone, from *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* 11/10/40

After his return to India in late 1941, Akbar's ascent of the ranks continued. He was posted to Burma, and in 1944 was sent on tour round India, making speeches in support of the Army. There was some opposition to this work, which was correctly perceived as being deeply political in implication, although Akbar insisted 'I am a soldier and not a politician so my lectures were straight forward talks in English, Urdu and Punjabi'.<sup>237</sup> His promotions continued and his

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<sup>236</sup> 'Question of the Grant of Honours to Certain Members of the Indian Contingent in Europe', 1941, National Archives of India, 18(5) - H/41.

<sup>237</sup> Undated letter to Mrs Amery in 'Amery Letters', Churchill Archive, Cambridge, England, AMEL 6/3/120.

confidential report in the new post-war world of June 1946 reflected his continuing place in the Empire's 'Good Books':

He showed considerable tact and administrative ability at a difficult period... An officer of the old school, and one in whom I had the greatest confidence. Is not afraid to express his views, and has a balanced outlook. Respected by all ranks.<sup>238</sup>

At the time of Partition he was the senior native officer in the new Pakistan Army (still commanded by a white British man) with the number PA1. In common with most of the army, Akbar had reservations about Partition, and wrote to Amery on 9<sup>th</sup> September, when his new country was just three weeks old:

We in Pakistan have got a very hard task in front of us. We have to start an entirely new show and under very difficult conditions. However we are confident that we will achieve our object.<sup>239</sup>

Here is the officer of the old school, admired by the British establishment, with a solid thirty-year career behind him, among the chaos of the division of Punjab, putting on a brave face. But he made his choice to join the new country Pakistan, in contrast to his K6 colleague Anis. His religious identity as a Muslim and his local identity as a Potohari trumped any other considerations. In many ways this period was the pinnacle of his career. He was made Aide-de-camp to Jinnah, the *Quaid-e-Azam* or great leader, who referred to him as 'my *acloa* - my one and only general'.<sup>240</sup> His retirement just a few years later seems strange, but may have been a combination of disappointment with not being made Commander-in-Chief, and a dislike for politics. Perhaps he was seen as having been too much a tool of Empire, too close to the British, the wrong sort of hero. More than once he wrote 'Being a soldier by birth, by choice and by profession also, I cannot indulge in politics', and his grand-daughter expressed the family consensus well in saying 'he was too honest to be a politician'.<sup>241</sup> He was ready to move on to a new phase

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<sup>238</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Muhammad Akbar Khan'.

<sup>239</sup> 'Amery Letters 1947', Churchill Archive, Cambridge, England, AMEL 2/1/41.

<sup>240</sup> Interview with Jang Family; Aaliyah, Asad ullah and Sami ullah, 2018.

<sup>241</sup> 'Amery Letters 1947'; Interview with Shahid Hasan Khan, Roohi Hasan Khan, Hasan Akbar, Suraiya Aslam and Fareeda Akbar, 2018.

in his life: a thirty-year period of writing and family. The hero became a grandfather and a sage. Over the next decades he saw twenty-five grandchildren arrive, all were indulged with sweets and stories. His great-grandson marked the before-and-after well:

It is interesting to compare his pictures pre and post-retirement. Pre-retirement, the pictures are with soldiers and he is almost always in uniform. Post-retirement, he is almost invariably surrounded by family, with a genial smile on his face.<sup>242</sup>

Akbar remained a devout Muslim, as he had been all his life, going on *Umrah* (pilgrimage) to Mecca in 1965 with his eldest daughter Razia.<sup>243</sup> His grandson Sami Ullah relates a story of Kudsia's from before the war, when he was invited to a party where the British officers were drinking freely. Akbar never drank alcohol, so when a drunken officer tried to force him to drink:

He refused once, twice, thrice. When he got the cup to his mouth, [Akbar] literally lifted him and put him outside the room. My grandmother was worried that he might be court-martialled or something. Later we heard that after [the fellow officer] was sober he came back and apologised.<sup>244</sup>

He wrote over forty books under the name *Rangroot*, which can be translated as 'recruit', and which signifies 'enlisted man' or 'private soldier', showing his pride in the fact that he had risen from the lowest rank to the very highest. His works cover aspects of military history and Islam, and include a series on the History of the Army Service Corps. In 1959 he went to China, taking Kudsia and his youngest daughter Amna with him, and met Chairman Mao and Zhou Enlai.<sup>245</sup> It is fitting then that his home Lal Koti now has a Chinese language school on the ground floor, and his great grand-daughter is going to study in the People's Republic. Within six generations and 150 years his family, while remaining all the time in the same place, moved from independent Punjab, through British rule,

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<sup>242</sup> Hashmi.

<sup>243</sup> Interview with Amna Maqbool & Maqbool Ahmed, 2018.

<sup>244</sup> 'Interview with Jang Family; Aaliyah, Asad Ullah and Sami Ullah'.

<sup>245</sup> 'Interview with Amna Maqbool & Maqbool Ahmed'.



independent Pakistan and is now looking east towards the new world power, China.

So how can we evaluate this Empire hero, this officer of the old school? He is clearly much loved by his family, who would like him to be better remembered and recognised as a founding hero of Pakistan. Their eagerness to share their testimony and their memories was striking; perhaps they saw the visiting British historian as a way to rehabilitate his memory. His niece Suraiya believes that the leaders of the country after Jinnah were jealous of Akbar due to his success under the British and his closeness to the Great Leader. He was ‘a very truthful man’, she maintains, and ‘if you’re truthful, people don’t like you’.<sup>246</sup> It may be that his importance lay more in his role in pioneering the Indianisation process in the years from the Great War to Partition. Indeed there is a strong sense in which he was better appreciated by the British than the Pakistanis. When his grand-daughter Nasira went to London, she asked to see his portrait at the Imperial War Museum, and Akbar later remarked that ‘here [Pakistan] they haven’t appreciated me but my painting is hanging there’.<sup>247</sup> He was certainly liked and appreciated by prominent Britishers, including Auchinleck, Amery and Gracey. But his fellow officers in the army of Pakistan, some of whom became politicians, may well have seen him as a creature of the Raj, complicit in British exploitation and cruelty. It is striking that none of his many descendants have joined the armed forces – this may reflect the way that he talked about his military experiences later in life. His great grandson Jawad summarised his legacy as being located far more before 1947, followed by a ‘self-conscious move stepping away from society, cutting off his public exposure, distancing himself from army’.<sup>248</sup> Akbar was a career soldier and ‘Empire hero’ of the old school, a relic of the Raj, a much-loved grandfather and a prolific writer, and a key member of Force K6 for two of his eighty-seven years on the planet.

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<sup>246</sup> ‘Interview with Shahid Hasan Khan, Roohi Hasan Khan, Hasan Akbar, Suraiya Aslam and Fareeda Akbar’.

<sup>247</sup> Interview with Jawad Sawarna, Ahmed Sawarna & Nasira, 2018.

<sup>248</sup> ‘Interview with Jawad Sawarna, Ahmed Sawarna & Nasira’.

### **Daffadar Abuzar ‘A permanent danger to security’**

In marked contrast to the archetypal colonial hero Akbar, Daffadar Abuzar can be considered to be twice a turncoat; a shrewd man with a successful career in the British Indian Army, who saw which way the wind was blowing in 1942 and joined the German Army. Two years later, having risen to commissioned rank with the Germans, he once again read the signals and deserted, helping the Free French obtain weapons. There are good sources on Abuzar: he gets a few mentions in Sub-Conductor T.W.P. Hexley’s account of the early period of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company (the only source for much of their journey), and there is a twenty-five-page interrogation report in the India Office files. There are also entries in other primary documents and memoirs. Thus we know a little about his early life: he was born in a village in Jhelum in 1912.<sup>249</sup> He seems to have come from a military family, as at the age of eleven he went to live in Sialkot with a cousin in the RIASC. He was educated to middle school level, and was literate. He joined the RIASC himself in 1931, at the age of eighteen or nineteen, and transferred to 22<sup>nd</sup> Company in 1937, serving in Waziristan. The fact that he had risen to the rank of Troop Daffadar by the outbreak of war shows that he had both ambition and a talent for soldiering. Unfortunately there is no photograph of Abuzar, so we are unable to picture the man, but a photo of the launch of the Provisional Government of India in Berlin in November 1943 shows a group of Indians in German uniform (figure 4) and other evidence points towards his presence at the event, so we know that he is definitely in that shot.<sup>250</sup> In any event, Abuzar was with 22<sup>nd</sup> AT Company of the RIASC when they arrived in France as Troop Daffadar with ‘A’ troop, second-in-command of fifty-eight men under Jemadar Jehan Dad.<sup>251</sup>

Abuzar’s reputation in 22<sup>nd</sup> Company before and immediately after capture was that of a reliable soldier, according to Hexley. On 19<sup>th</sup> June 1940, shortly before their surrender, Abuzar took over command of ‘A’ troop, due to Jehan Dad’s illness, and Hexley writes that he carried out these new duties ‘most

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<sup>249</sup> ‘950 Regiment (Free Indian Legion) of the Wehrmacht: History and Interrogation of Former Members’, 1945, The National Archives, Kew, WO 106/5881.

<sup>250</sup> *Launch of the Provisional Government of India, Berlin, 1943*, Bundesarchiv, Germany, 146-1985-130-130; ‘950 Regiment’.

<sup>251</sup> ‘War Diary, 22 Animal Transport Company, 1940’.

efficiently and cheerfully'.<sup>252</sup> Later Abuzar made a draught board with his colleague Roda Khan, and they played games on a cart as the column meandered through the French countryside. In July, when the company was held in an old barracks in Strasbourg, Hexley wrote of the 'usual rivalry between troops for best kept barrack room', and that Abuzar's troop took the first prize.<sup>253</sup> By the following summer he crops up again in official records. The August 1941 Red Cross report from Lamsdorf POW camp shows 293 Indians, with Abuzar at their head as 'man of confidence', responsible for reporting direct to the Red Cross emissary.<sup>254</sup> At this stage then, a year after capture, the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company are still together, Abuzar is in command, and most have stayed loyal to the British. Over the next twelve months though, things were to change.

In order to understand the processes that led some of the men to join the German Army, we must rewind to before the war, and introduce Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose was a key figure in the Congress Party, its President in 1938, smart, handsome, and well-educated, a man of 'strong martial inclinations' but also a 'heart-throb'.<sup>255</sup> He was a great Indian 'hero' in the making, but one with fascist sympathies.<sup>256</sup> At the outbreak of war in 1939, Indians were confused and divided about the best path to take to achieve independence: should they fight for freedom against the British, should they fight against fascism with the British, or should they sit and wait? Against this background, Bose's stance was simple and logical. He favoured an armed struggle against the British state. He was therefore put under house arrest by the British, but escaped via Kabul and Moscow, and arrived in Berlin in April 1941, where he found a small group of Indian emigrés, ready to work against Britain.<sup>257</sup> In November 1941, the *Zentrale Freies Indien* (ZFI: the Free India Centre) was inaugurated.<sup>258</sup> At this stage it had a staff of four, and its main job was daily radio broadcasts to India in seven South Asian

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<sup>252</sup> Hexley.

<sup>253</sup> Hexley.

<sup>254</sup> 'Report on Stalag VIII B Lamsdorf', 1945, The National Archives, Kew, WO 224/27.

<sup>255</sup> Milan Hauner, *India in Axis Strategy* (London: German Historical Institute London, 1981), p. 576; Madhur Jaffrey, *Climbing the Mango Trees* (London: Random House, 2005), p. 60.

<sup>256</sup> Bose is described as a 'quasi-fascist' in Hugh Purcell, 'Subhas Chandra Bose: The Afterlife of India's Fascist Leader', *History Today*, 60.11, November 2010. Bose's book 'The Indian Struggle' has been characterised as a counterpart to Hitler's 'Mein Kampf', indeed 'Kampf' translates as 'struggle'.

<sup>257</sup> Rudolf Hartog, *The Sign of the Tiger* (Delhi: Rupa, 2001), p. 9.

<sup>258</sup> Hartog, p. 31.

languages. One of the members of the ZFI was Girija Mookerjee, later a professor of history. In his memoir *Europe at War* he expressed doubt about their alignment:

I was not quite sure if we were doing the right thing. We did not approve of National Socialism and none of us felt any attraction for it... Subhas' theory of England's enemy being our friend was all right so long as such an enemy stood for some broad political principles with which we could agree. But our whole political attitude was against all that Nazi Germany represented... none of us seriously believed in German victory or even wished for it.<sup>259</sup>

From the German point of view, an active unit of Indian soldiers on their side was something of great potential value, for both military and propaganda purposes. By the summer of 1941, after the invasion of the Soviet Union, the situation in the Middle East looked very favourable for Germany. Despite Hitler's much-quoted position that he would 'rather see India under British domination than under that of any other nation', the German High Command envisaged a three-pronged thrust towards Afghanistan and India: through Egypt, through Turkey, and over the Caucasus.<sup>260</sup> This was known as Operation Tiger, and was the foundational purpose of the Indian Legion.<sup>261</sup>

In November 1940 the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company had been transferred to another POW camp in Epinal where the VCOs were once again separated, and Abuzar was put in charge of the company.<sup>262</sup> In March 1941 they were transferred again, to Lamsdorf, in faraway Silesia. Here there were visits from 'various Indians', starting with Swaleh in May 1941, leading to a small group of eight Pushtu speakers, led by the company Maulvi, Said Ahmad Shah, 'all comparatively uneducated men from NWFP', volunteering to help the Germans.<sup>263</sup> According to Abuzar this group were persuaded by an unnamed Persian man, and therefore became the first to go over to join the Germans.<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Girija Mookerjee, *Europe at War* (Meerut: Meenakshi Prakashan, 1968), p. 201.

<sup>260</sup> Quoted in Giles MacDonogh, *A Good German: Adam von Trott Zu Solz*, Revised edition (London: Quartet, 1994), p. 187.

<sup>261</sup> Hartog, p. 34.

<sup>262</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>263</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>264</sup> '950 Regiment'.

They were sent to the *Regenwurm* (earthworm) training camp at Meseritz, where they 'were trained by German officers, commanded in English, and given special training for clandestine commando operations, such as wireless technology, sabotage, parachute jumping, mountain warfare and ciphering'.<sup>265</sup> The men were to be dropped into the North West Frontier, their native land, where they would set up resistance cells and carry out operations against the British 'occupation', like British Special Operations Executive (SOE) operatives in Europe. Jemadar Rana's report at the start of this chapter claims that the maulvi had already spent three months in Iran prior to December 1941.<sup>266</sup> If this is true, it represents a remarkable coup for German intelligence, at a time when Iran was occupied by the Indian Army, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union.<sup>267</sup>

Abuzar first met Bose in December 1941 at Annaburg camp. Abuzar, in his interrogation report, says that he saluted Bose and shook his hand, but that he still preferred to 'remain neutral' at that stage and told the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> coy to do the same.<sup>268</sup> That he saw his position at that time as 'neutral' is interesting, as one could equally classify it as 'loyal', in that he maintained his oath to the King. A few weeks later, after a row about the withholding of Red Cross parcels, Abuzar and seven other Havildars and Daffadars were sent to the infamous Colditz castle, a prison for recalcitrant POWs and persistent escapers. There Abuzar acted as interpreter, so his language skills must have advanced considerably.<sup>269</sup> Until this point he had remained loyal, but not long after that, Abuzar changed his mind and joined the Germans.

There seem to be four main reasons posited by writers in their analysis of why some POWs chose to join the Germans (and their counterpart in the East, the Indian National Army or INA), when others did not. Those reasons (which would probably have interacted) are: idealistic principle; material gain; pragmatism and small group peer pressure. Legionary Rajpal Singh, in an article in the Free Indian Legion (FIL) newsletter *Bhaiband* in 1944, wrote that poor

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<sup>265</sup> Hartog, p. 45 see also MSS Eur 275/25 and 26 and Abuzar report WO 208/5881.

<sup>266</sup> 'German and Italian Attempts'.

<sup>267</sup> Raghavan, p. 149.

<sup>268</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>269</sup> '950 Regiment'.

Indians like him had joined the British Indian Army in the first place not 'with gladness in their hearts; on the contrary, they carry in their breasts hatred, like a burning flame, towards the British'.<sup>270</sup> This recalls the spirit in which some Irishmen had joined the British Army in 1914, including Tom Barry, who wrote:

I knew nothing about nations, large or small. I went to the war for no other reason than that I wanted to see what war was like, to get a gun, to see new countries and to feel a grown man. Above all I went because I knew no Irish history and had no national consciousness.<sup>271</sup>

Barry went on to become a famous IRA commander in West Cork, fighting against the British Army that he had been part of for five years. This kind of turnaround from an experienced soldier is what Bose sought to inspire. Rudolf Hartog, who was one of the interpreters in the FIL, is clear that the main selling point for joining the Legion was Bose himself: 'it was Subhas Chandra's personality and conviction that won most of the men'.<sup>272</sup> This gives us a sense of a sepoy with nationalistic ideals towards an independent India. One of the most interesting testimonies on the ideological motivation comes from their Commander-in-Chief, Auchinleck, himself:

The strain and pressure to which these men, the majority of whom were simple peasant farmers with no educational or cultural background, were subjected is very difficult for any British officer, however experienced, to visualise.... It is quite wrong to take the attitude that because these men had taken service in a British controlled Indian Army that therefore their loyalties must be the same as those of British soldiers. As I have tried to explain, they had no real loyalty or patriotism towards Britain as Britain, not as we understand loyalty... It is no use shutting one's eyes to the fact that any Indian officer worth his salt is a Nationalist.<sup>273</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Quoted in Martin Bamber, *For Free India: Indian Soldiers in Germany and Italy during the Second World War*, ed. by Aad Neeven (Oosthuizen: Oskam-Neeven, 2010), p. 399.

<sup>271</sup> Tom Barry, *Guerilla Days in Ireland* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2013), p. 19.

<sup>272</sup> Hartog, p. 56.

<sup>273</sup> Quoted in G.J. Douds, 'The Men Who Never Were: Indian POWs in the Second World War', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 27.2 (2004), 183–216 (p. 199).

Indeed, the question of loyalty is problematic here, as 'loyalty' implies a nation state, an imagined community. Somehow, the sepoy were able to construct a loyalty in their heads that included India, Britain, the monarch and the regiment. In some cases, under pressure of combat or capture, that loyalty broke down. Even some Britons could see sense in that position. A young woman in the forces in 1942, responding to a Mass Observation survey on attitudes to India wrote: 'One can't very well blame the Indians for feeling pro-Jap (as so many do now) after all to them we must be as much aggressors as the Japs – if not worse!'<sup>274</sup>

Czech Historian Milan Hauner, on the other hand, believed strongly that material factors were the main motivation, specifically food, money and access to women.<sup>275</sup> Gerard Douds supports this view, adding that the segregation of officers from men left the ordinary rank and file more susceptible.<sup>276</sup> Two testimonies from ZFI workers support the pre-eminence of material conditions, this time acting in the opposite direction, against the recruitment of non-commissioned officers (NCOs). Ganpuley's interrogation report states that 'little success was achieved with the NCOs or with soldiers of long service, as they were unwilling to forfeit their pensions and family allowances in India', while Braja Lal Mukerji says they resisted due not 'so much to their loyalty to the British Government, as to their own selfish desire to retain their ranks and authority as before'.<sup>277</sup> This tangle of testimony is hard to unravel, and points towards a tangle of motivations.

There was clearly a pragmatic decision-making process going on. Jackson likens the flow of recruits to a barometer for how Indians were feeling about the rival sides in the war, and their chances of victory.<sup>278</sup> There is a sense of nuance here, of shifts in opinion, reflected by Yasmin Khan (writing of the INA), who wrote that 'soldiers may have been broadly sympathetic to Indian freedom but they were irritated by the timing of a movement that could derail their efforts against the Axis at a delicate moment in the war'.<sup>279</sup> The 'best of a bad lot' is the argument here,

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<sup>274</sup> Joan Black, respondent 3276 'Directives August 1942', 1942, Mass-Observation archives at the Keep, Sussex University, SxMOA1/3/59.

<sup>275</sup> Hauner, p. 583.

<sup>276</sup> Douds, p. 190.

<sup>277</sup> 'Statements of Civilians in ZFI Zentrale Freies Indien', 1945, India Office Records at the British Library, Mss EUR F275/24.

<sup>278</sup> Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), p. 370.

<sup>279</sup> Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War*, p. 188.

the lesser of several evils. This position is reinforced by the testimony of British MP Reginald Sorenson, talking to two INA leaders early in 1946, who were eager to convince him that their motives were neither pro-Japanese nor anti-British, but pro-Indian. They had felt forced to 'choose the least distressing of several alternatives... still [felt] conflicting elements in their minds.'<sup>280</sup>

Another strong factor in the decisions taken by individual sepoys was peer group pressure. Many military theorists have identified the small group of men around an individual soldier as the most important element in creating and sustaining motivation.<sup>281</sup> With 22<sup>nd</sup> Company having been together for such a long time in adverse conditions, and strong leadership from Abuzar, this could well have been a factor. Hew Strachan points out that that this pressure can cut both ways, leading men to 'refuse to fight, disobey orders, mutiny'.<sup>282</sup> The usual regimental *esprit de corps* might not have applied in a corps as large as the RIASC, which saw service in every theatre of war – indeed one of the wartime mutinies was of RIASC troops in North Africa in 1940.<sup>283</sup> And as mercenaries, perhaps it was just as easy to fight for one colonial master as another. Hauner describes rather contemptuously how N.G. Swami and Abid Hassan were 'particularly successful in bringing a large flock of rank and file to the Legion like shepherds', a sense of men following a strong lead.<sup>284</sup> Indeed, the maulvi brought with him several other Pushtu speakers when he joined up. Hills and his officers in London were obviously aware of this possibility, and conducted an intense letter writing campaign targeting the prisoners, with company commanders in the UK required to report on their monthly output of letters to Germany.<sup>285</sup> The only direct testimony we have from a 22<sup>nd</sup> Company recruit is from Abuzar himself and his motivations seem to fall into the category of peer group pressure. His

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<sup>280</sup> Reginald Sorenson, *My Impression of India* (London: Meridian, 1946), p. 168.

<sup>281</sup> for example Edward Shils and Morris Janowitz, 'Cohesion and Disintegration in the Wehrmacht in World War II', *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 12.2 (1948); Catherine Merridale, 'Culture, Ideology and Combat in the Red Army, 1939-45', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41.2 (2006), 305–24; Jonathan Fennell, *Combat and Morale in the North African Campaign: The Eighth Army and the Path to El Alamein* (Cambridge: CUP, 2011).

<sup>282</sup> Hew Strachan, 'Training, Morale and Modern War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 41.2 (2006), 211–27 (p. 213).

<sup>283</sup> V.K. Singh, *Contribution of the Armed Forces to the Freedom Movement in India* (New Delhi: USI, 2009).

<sup>284</sup> Hauner, p. 583.

<sup>285</sup> '950 Regiment'.



interrogation report reveals that he went to Frankenberg POW camp in June 1942 where:

He was very well treated and stayed with Abid Hassan, and Mohd Ibrahim. Gurbachan Singh and Dr Madan talked to him at length, suggesting that he should volunteer, and that if he failed to, he would be subjected to contemptuous treatment. [Abuzar] yielded and put on German uniform.<sup>286</sup>

By this point he had been two years in German hands: one gets the impression of weighing-up, of some kind of pro-and-con approach.

None of these writers are neutral, of course. Many have positions to justify, some are writing from avowedly political stances. Throughout this abundance of contradictory opinions, there is a sharp lack of primary evidence relating to the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company. Only Abuzar speaks, and his voice comes through the mediation of Combined Services Detailed Interrogation Centre (CSDIC) interrogation and report-writing. Actions may be clear, writing is legible, but thoughts are forever unreadable. We can speculate and theorise, but we will probably never know what precise mixture of motivations caused these men to change side. Like their mentalities and their prayers, their motivations are irrecoverable, and the historian can aim only to recover voices and speculate intelligently on motives.

Abuzar's decision to join the Legion involved a demotion to the rank of private: all legionaries had to start at the bottom. If he were solely influenced by his promotion prospects, he might have taken this as a factor against joining the Germans. In fact he rose rapidly, being promoted to *Gefreiter* in July 1942 and *Unteroffizier* in October (lance corporal and corporal respectively).<sup>287</sup> Having been restricted to the insides of camps for two years, he now had much greater freedom, going in September to the Brenner Pass to receive a delivery of 1400 Indian POWs transferring from Italian camps.<sup>288</sup> After a short posting in the Netherlands, the Legion moved to South-west France, where Abuzar became (according to his own report) the first Indian to be given an independent role, in

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<sup>286</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>287</sup> 'Kompanie Einteilung Organisationseinheit, 2./ Ind. Inf.Rgt. 950', 1942, Bundesarchiv, Germany, RS 4/1072.

<sup>288</sup> '950 Regiment'.

command of nineteen men guarding a bridge at Talmont. Soon after that, his career really hit the heights. He was promoted to *Leutnant* with ten other men in October 1943 and put in command of a company near Lacanau.<sup>289</sup> In November he was part of the grand launch of the Berlin branch of Bose's Indian provincial government. He is almost certainly one of the legionaries in the official German photograph of the occasion (figure 4 below). He even achieved sporting success, captaining the Legion's hockey team in games against German teams in Bordeaux and Paris.<sup>290</sup> It seemed as if everything was going swimmingly for this young soldier in the prime of life, this 'hero' to the nationalist cause.



Bundesarchiv, Bild 146-1985-130-30  
Foto: Hoffmann | 1943

Figure 4: Launch of the Provisional Government of India, Berlin November 1943. Abuzar is one of the cap-wearing Indians in the shot. Picture from Bundesarchiv 146-1985-130-30

But this was 1943, turning to 1944, and Abuzar was no fool. His interrogation report says 'as the war began to turn in the favour of the Allies, Z/207 [Abuzar] began to wonder what he would do in the event of a German defeat'.<sup>291</sup> In February he made friends with a local member of the French resistance, Max Joiris, and stole twelve rifles for the French to use when the time came. Abuzar

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<sup>289</sup> Hartog, p. 134.

<sup>290</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>291</sup> '950 Regiment'.

was keeping his options open, aware that his decision was reversible. As a mercenary soldier, he knew when the time was right to move on. The Allies invaded Normandy in June that year, and on 25<sup>th</sup> July Abuzar made up his mind. He deserted with two comrades and took shelter with Max Joiris in Bordeaux.<sup>292</sup> In December the 'notorious' Abuzar tried to cross the Pyrenees into Spain but was intercepted and flown to England for interrogation.<sup>293</sup>

As the POW camps were liberated at the end of 1944 and 1945, and the men of the 950 regiment were captured, 22<sup>nd</sup> Company was reunited in Eastern England. The India Office and British military intelligence had known of the existence of the Legion for some time, and their plans were ready. A new intelligence unit had been set up: CSDIC, and its Indian sub-branch CSDIC(I). From July 1943 they were talking about the men as 'Hitler Inspired Fifth Column (HIFs)' and had devised a colour code for grading POWs and Legionaries according to their loyalty: black, white and grey: the darker the colour, the deeper the treachery.<sup>294</sup> By August 1945 a 'grey' could include those who had served in 950 Regiment, provided they had been 'misled by their leaders or persuaded to join the enemy by torture or the hope of better conditions'.<sup>295</sup> In order to care for the liberated POWs, and to be sure that the gradings on 'colour' were accurate, a decision was taken to bring them all to the UK before their return to India. Accordingly, a number of camps were established in East Anglia in the summer of 1944. As the POWs started to arrive in the autumn of that year, many were found to be in poor health and:

many had lost all sense of proportion and had forgotten what discipline was. They had to be [handled] with firmness combined with tact. They took about two weeks to settle down and showed a great improvement on receiving new clothing and equipment. Many were sanctioned special diet after medical inspection.<sup>296</sup>

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<sup>292</sup> 'CSDIC - 950 Regt', 1945, India Office Records at the British Library, Mss EUR F275/25.

<sup>293</sup> 'German and Italian Attempts'.

<sup>294</sup> 'German and Italian Attempts'.

<sup>295</sup> 'Policy towards Those Who Joined INA & 950 Regt', 1945, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/R/3/1/330.

<sup>296</sup> 'War Diary, Indian PW Reception HQ, 1945', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5930.

By October 1945 the camps had done their work and were shut, with a grand total of 9,711 recovered prisoners (black, grey and white) having been processed and returned to India.<sup>297</sup>

The camps were also the venue for CSDIC's interrogations, with detailed reports written on each man. The conclusion of Abuzar's report is unequivocal and damning. Abuzar was branded a 'traitor who, on his own showing, has been one of the leading recruiters and a prominent member of 950 Regt ever since Jun 42'. It added that there was little doubt he had used violence in recruiting men to the Legion, and that the Germans considered him 'thoroughly reliable'. Although he had later acted in support of the Allies again, through his work with Max Joiris, the author of the report considered this was due 'not to a change of heart, but to a desire to feather his nest'. Finally, it concluded:

It is considered that he constitutes a permanent danger to security and it is recommended that he be categorised Black.<sup>298</sup>

The 'blacks' of 950 Regiment, with twenty or so from 22<sup>nd</sup> Company among them, returned to India in the summer of 1945. They found that public opinion was in a state of flux. The Adjutant-General in India wrote:

the bulk of the HIFs appear to be completely imbued with Bose's propaganda and to be thoroughly anti-British. It is probably the fact that HIFs fully realise the enormity of their crime in becoming HIFs which makes them display bravado such as shouting INQILAB ZINDABAD and scrawling... similar slogans on railway carriages.<sup>299</sup>

The men from Europe, Abuzar among them, were imprisoned at Bahadurgarh, just outside Delhi.<sup>300</sup> From there they witnessed the extraordinary procedures of the Red Fort Trials. In November three of the INA's senior officers were put on trial for treason - one Hindu, one Muslim and one Sikh: Prem Sahgal, Shah Nawaz Khan and Gurubaksh Singh Dhillon. Public opinion swiftly moved against

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<sup>297</sup> 'Prisoners of Wars', 1945, National Archives of India, Misc/3830/H.

<sup>298</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>299</sup> 'Prisoners of Wars'.

<sup>300</sup> Hartog, p. 171; Bamber, p. 336.

the British, with Nehru part of the defence team, and Gandhi expressing his support for the men in jail.<sup>301</sup> The men were found guilty and sentenced to death, but the public furore was considerable, with the INA men 'widely admired', and Auchinleck ordered the sentences be commuted.<sup>302</sup> This was a decisive victory by the nationalists, and the chant in the streets was:

*Lal Qila se aayi awaaz*  
*Dhillon, Sahgal, Shahnawaz*<sup>303</sup>  
(From the Red Fort comes the cry  
Dhillon, Sahgal, Shah Nawaz)

Soon after that, all the remaining men of 950 Regiment (and the INA) were discharged. The 'traitors' were in the process of being recast as 'heroes'. The novelist Ghosh described the public mood as 'imperialism and Fascism were twin evils, one being a derivative of the other. It was the defeated prisoners of the Indian National Army that they received as heroes – not the returning victors.'<sup>304</sup>

What then was the significance of the Indian Legion, and the participation of Abuzar and the other men of K6 therein? There is a clear consensus among writers of all sorts that their military significance was negligible.<sup>305</sup> Even Hitler remarked that 'The Indian Legion is a joke'.<sup>306</sup> As part of the independence movement, however, their political significance (alongside the INA) was considerable. In early 1946, the British MP Reginald Sorenson found students wearing buttons with Bose's portrait, and banners in the streets that read 'God bless our Netaji'.<sup>307</sup> Something had fundamentally changed. The INA and the Legion acted as a spearhead for public opinion, pointing inexorably towards independence and freedom, which came in 1947. As Raghu Karnad writes, the world had moved on, and the soldiers of the Indian Army 'found that they had spent the past six years on the wrong side of history'.<sup>308</sup> Philip Malins, RASC

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<sup>301</sup> Letter from Gandhi to Viceroy dated 25/7/45 in 'Policy towards Those Who Joined INA & 950 Regt'.

<sup>302</sup> Raghavan, p. 446.

<sup>303</sup> Hartog, p. 171.

<sup>304</sup> Ghosh, p. 479.

<sup>305</sup> Hauner, p. 592; Douds, p. 192; Hartog, p. 174.

<sup>306</sup> Bamber, p. 318.

<sup>307</sup> Sorenson, p. 166.

<sup>308</sup> Karnad, p. xix.

officer who joined the RIASC after seeing 29<sup>th</sup> AT Company at Plymouth in the summer of 1940, was at a reunion years later, and wrote that he was 'glad to have met old soldiers' from the INA, as they 'also fought for independence in a different way'.<sup>309</sup> From the distance of the twenty-first century, things look different in Indian popular memory: these men are heroes, revered by nationalists.<sup>310</sup>

As for Abuzar himself, nothing is known of what happened to him after the war. As a relatively young man, in the prime of his life, we can assume that he lived into the second half of the twentieth century. He may have returned to his home village in Jhelum, or his cousin's house in Sialkot. Whatever lay behind his decisions may never be known, but it appears he was a smart, capable young soldier, ambitious to get on. On two occasions he was on the horns of a dilemma and chose to switch sides. He rose rapidly up the ranks of 950 Regiment and got further than he probably would have done in the RIASC. According to any traditional view of loyalty, his defection would make him a traitor to the British, but it may also have made him a hero to the nationalists. Perhaps his family and friends in post-war Pakistan saw him in that way, or perhaps he never told the full story. The knowledge has gone from the world, and we can only indulge in guesswork and speculation, until further research reveals more.

### **Captain Anis: Neither traitor nor hero**

When Force K6 landed in Marseilles, there were two Indians among its twenty-four officers. Both were Muslim, and both would become Major-Generals after the war, Akbar in Pakistan, Anis in India. Sahibzada Anis Ahmad Khan was born in 1904, to a blue-blooded Indian Muslim family (*sahibzada* means 'son of a nobleman'). His father was Sahibzada Aftab Khan, educated at Cambridge and Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University, a man whose name was 'so illustrious, so highly respected in the whole of Hindustan' that there was 'not a single door that could not be opened' by his name.<sup>311</sup> Anis was one of the first Indians to attend the Royal Military College at Sandhurst in England, arriving on

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<sup>309</sup> Malins, 'The First to Take the Field'.

<sup>310</sup> Karnad, p. 241.

<sup>311</sup> Interview with Zeenut Ziad, 2018.



though, as one officer who rose to high rank remarked tersely ‘not enough on man-management’.<sup>316</sup> Author John Masters, who went on to serve with the Indian Army and Chindits, wrote eloquently of the spirit of cadets in the inter-war period, of their drinking and horseplay resembling the characters from *The Rake’s Progress*, and says laconically, ‘perhaps we were no worse than our contemporaries at Oxford or Cambridge’.<sup>317</sup> The impression here is of eighteen year old boys released from public school, treated like gentlemen, zooming up to London whenever possible, working hard and playing hard. They even had a special costume when off duty:

We all acquired the right clothes. These were: grey flannel trousers, a doggy tweed coat with skirts to the knees and two slits at the back, a tweed gorblimey cap worn well forward on the head, the peak sewn down to the rim of the brim. In this garb we were recognisable a mile off as Gentleman Cadets, and a good thing too.<sup>318</sup>

It is not clear whether the young Anis, scion of a respectable and academic Indian Muslim family, conformed with the expectations of the white British men around him, in drinking or in attire. Another Indian Muslim cadet recalled his life at the College a little later as ‘spartan’, and described the experiences of Indian cadets thus:

There was a sizeable community of Indian cadets at Sandhurst at that time and we clung to one another. Somehow we all sensed that we were regarded as an inferior species... The tragedy of belonging to a subject race depressed us more poignantly in the free air of England. My relations with the British remained formal, by and large. I was reserved and aloof by nature and the sense of isolation which we all experienced at Sandhurst was not conducive to mixing with the British. Among my own age group we had a lot of fun, laughing and tumbling together, but there was never any close understanding.<sup>319</sup>

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<sup>316</sup> Shepperd, p. 145.

<sup>317</sup> John Masters, *Bugles and a Tiger* (London: Michael Joseph, 1956), p. 55.

<sup>318</sup> Masters, p. 49.

<sup>319</sup> Mohammed Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters: A Political Autobiography* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 10.



Whatever he may have felt inside, acceptance and integration or inferiority and isolation, at the surface level Anis did what all cadets had to in order to graduate as a junior army officer, 'arrive, learn, conform, pass on'.<sup>320</sup>

Following the emerging tradition of the Indian Army, after leaving Sandhurst he was appointed for a year's probation to a British regiment stationed in India, in his case the Scots Greys.<sup>321</sup> He later recalled them as a 'haw haw regiment' complete with monocles and a sign outside the mess saying 'Dogs and Indians not allowed'.<sup>322</sup> After that initial year, he joined the Madras Pioneers as a Lieutenant.<sup>323</sup> He made good progress with the Pioneers and seems to have avoided the prejudice that was more common in the British regiments attached to the Indian Army. Every officer was the subject of an annual confidential report, and his were generally very complimentary, remarking often on his 'moderate' or 'strictly temperate habits'.<sup>324</sup> His daughter Zeenut was greatly amused by this, as she recalled he was fond of a glass of whisky all through his military career, until he abruptly stopped in 1952.<sup>325</sup> His confidential report for 1927, from Tian Zup in Burma, said that he 'is now commanding, efficiently, a company on detachment on the Frontier. He is dealing tactfully and firmly with his Hindu company, which resents having an Indian in command, and a Mohammedan in particular: this is much to his credit.'<sup>326</sup> This tact reflected a core belief of his: the equality of all religions. According to his daughter Zeenut, he was 'Colour-blind, faith-blind, gender-blind, class-blind' – fairly enlightened for pre-war India.<sup>327</sup> Indeed, years later in 1960, when she was thirteen, he told her that 'you can be a nuclear scientist or the president of Pakistan or both'.<sup>328</sup> His 1930 army report, now from Bangalore, warned of his 'excitable disposition' and his tendency to be 'argumentative' - perhaps the product of a privileged upbringing, but also indicating that he might be less uncomplicated in his loyalty to his superior

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<sup>320</sup> Masters, p. 42.

<sup>321</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan', India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/14/72487.

<sup>322</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>323</sup> *Indian Army Lists, October 1939*, India Office Records at the British Library.

<sup>324</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan'.

<sup>325</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>326</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan'.

<sup>327</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>328</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

officers.<sup>329</sup> By this time he was a Captain, and was married to Razia Sultana, from a wealthy Lucknow family.<sup>330</sup> She was the perfect modern wife for Anis, with similar values, and their marriage was to last until his death, and to produce five children (see figure 6). By 1938 he was commanding a company: 3<sup>rd</sup> AT Company of the RIASC.<sup>331</sup> Living in some comfort in Delhi, with 15 servants and a growing family, Anis could be excused for feeling that he was on a good career path with excellent prospects.<sup>332</sup>

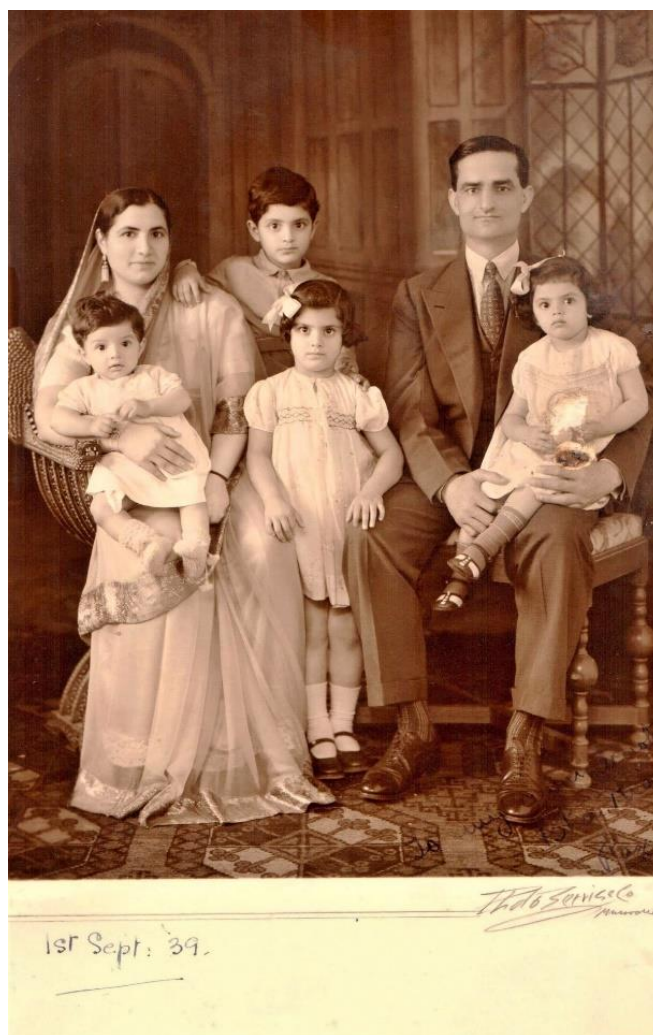


Figure 6: Anis, Razia and family shortly before the war. Zeenut was born after the war (Syed Ali Hamid collection)

On the outbreak of war, Anis spotted an opportunity for further advancement, and volunteered to join Force K6, even though this meant him

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<sup>329</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan'.

<sup>330</sup> *Indian Army Lists, October 1939.*

<sup>331</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan'.

<sup>332</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

being second in command of a company, the 22<sup>nd</sup>.<sup>333</sup> Unfortunately this is where his plans started to go amiss: he felt the BEF was generally very ill-prepared and disorganised.<sup>334</sup> During 22<sup>nd</sup> Company's march up the Moselle he became increasingly frustrated with Major Hitchcock, his commanding officer, and later told his daughter that at one point he felt Hitchcock was a coward who had lost his nerve, and that he might actually have shot him, but Hitchcock showed him a photograph of his own daughter, thus melting his heart.<sup>335</sup> With four young children at home, Anis felt some comradely sympathy: indeed he took a large framed photograph of his family with him to France: his batman kept it safe after the Germans separated the officers from the men.<sup>336</sup> As it was, he was captured along with the rest of the company on 24<sup>th</sup> June, and started his five-year period of captivity.

As the highest-ranking Indian officer in German hands, he was clearly something of a catch, with considerable propaganda potential. He quickly found he was being very well-treated, with good food and lodgings.<sup>337</sup> But he was also subjected to less welcome visits. One of the ZFI men, Swaleh by name, came to visit him on a monthly basis.<sup>338</sup> On the first visit, accompanied by a German officer, Swaleh asked Anis which family he was from. When Anis told him who his father was, Swaleh:

jumped up, came and hugged him, kissed him on both cheeks and said 'your father is one of the people I most admire in the world because I was at Aligarh'. Then he turns round to the German officer and says 'this man is not going to be used, we're not going to put him into the situation, I cannot allow this'. So [Sahibzada Aftab] saved his son's life.<sup>339</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> 'War Diary, 22 Animal Transport Company, 1940'.

<sup>334</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>335</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>336</sup> Hexley.

<sup>337</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>338</sup> 'CSDIC - 950 Regt'.

<sup>339</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

The Indian old boys' network could stretch all round the world, even into a POW camp. After the war, Swaleh became a friend of the family in Karachi: hero and traitor reunited in a new political reality.<sup>340</sup>

The Free India Centre had not finished their efforts to recruit this officer, however. A few months later Anis received a visit from Subhas Chandra Bose himself. Bose was building the Legion at this stage and said to Anis 'You are the most senior Indian officer, I would like you to take command.'<sup>341</sup> As a nationalist at heart, Anis was tempted, and when he told his daughter Zeenut many years later, she could not understand his response. He refused to join. Anis explained his decision to his daughter by saying that he had taken an oath to serve King George, he had tasted his salt (*namak khana*) and that a Muslim could not betray his word, nor could he resign his commission. There are layers of identity and loyalty at play here - loyalty to God, to King and employer, to his military heritage – too complex to explain to his young daughter. 'At some point in life you'll understand' he told her. Nevertheless, Anis' refusal to fight for the Germans did not mean he ruled out being friendly with them. Determined not to waste his time inside the prison walls, he learnt German. Although some fellow officers wanted him to try to escape, he was not prepared to take the risk, with a wife and four young children waiting for him in Delhi. Other officers were suspicious of him. Birendra Nath Mazumdar, an Indian Captain in the British Royal Army Medical Corps, mentions him disparagingly several times, but without being specific – perhaps they had had a disagreement.<sup>342</sup> The Senior British officer at Oflag 79 at Braunschweig wrote an adverse report about him, which has unfortunately not survived.<sup>343</sup> But Anis was coming from a very different background and in a very different position to his British comrades, as his daughter reported him saying 'I've got nothing against Germans... this is not my battle... [but] a battle between the European powers'.<sup>344</sup> In fact, the British were also equivocal in their attitude towards him. In September 1943 he was promoted to the rank of Major, even

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<sup>340</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>341</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>342</sup> '950 Regiment'; Interview with Birendra Nath Mazumdar, 1996, Imperial War Museum, 16800.

<sup>343</sup> 'Indian POWs and CSDIC', 1945, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/WS/1/1516.

<sup>344</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

though he was still inside the camp.<sup>345</sup> The mechanics of promotion by seniority continued, despite incarceration.

While thirty men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company chose to join the German Army, and around ten managed to escape, Anis and over eighty-five per cent of the company chose the third and most popular option: waiting stoically for the war to end either way, caught between fascism and Empire ‘two sources of absolute evil. The question for us is, why should we pick one over the other?’.<sup>346</sup> Many men chose not to make that choice - probably a wise one in retrospect. Their experience in captivity was the longest of any Indian POWs in the World Wars, possibly the longest ever: nearly five years in some cases. The 320 men were among 15,000 Indian prisoners who in their turn were part of around 170,000 British and Commonwealth POWs in Europe: a vast army of men sitting and waiting.<sup>347</sup> In common with many POWs, we know that 22<sup>nd</sup> Company men sent and received lots of letters. Hills, in Britain, was very concerned to keep in touch, and enlisted retired Indian Army officers and dignitaries like Viscountess Chelmsford and Lady Ampthill to write to the camps, as well as running regular letter-writing sessions among the companies in Britain.<sup>348</sup> One of the main threats to the men was boredom. An article in *Fauji Akhbar* in July 1943 appealed for books for prisoners, in order to ‘keep their minds active and their interest unflagging’.<sup>349</sup> POWs were photographed, and some even had their own cameras. A 1941 photo of five VCOs or NCOs from 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, together with an unidentified British soldier (possibly Major Hitchcock), appeared in *Fauji Akhbar* in 1943 (figure 7).<sup>350</sup> The men look thin, and frown rather awkwardly at the camera. Other recreational pursuits included music, drama and games, and at Annaburg at the end of 1941, ‘two plays of a social nature’ were put on by the Indian POWs.<sup>351</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> ‘Stalag IIIA Unterlagen Und Schriftwechsel Mit Vorgesetzten Dienststellen April 43- 45’, 1945, Bundesarchiv, Germany, RH 49/35.

<sup>346</sup> Ghosh, p. 293.

<sup>347</sup> Midge Gillies, *The Barbed-Wire University: The Real Lives of Allied Prisoners of War in the Second World War* (London: Aurum, 2011), p. 3.

<sup>348</sup> ‘Force K6 Documents’.

<sup>349</sup> ‘Books for Indian Prisoners of War’, *Fauji Akhbar*, 17 July 1943, Imperial War Museum.

<sup>350</sup> ‘Pictures from Abroad’, *Fauji Akhbar*, 4 October 1943, Imperial War Museum.

<sup>351</sup> ‘950 Regiment’.

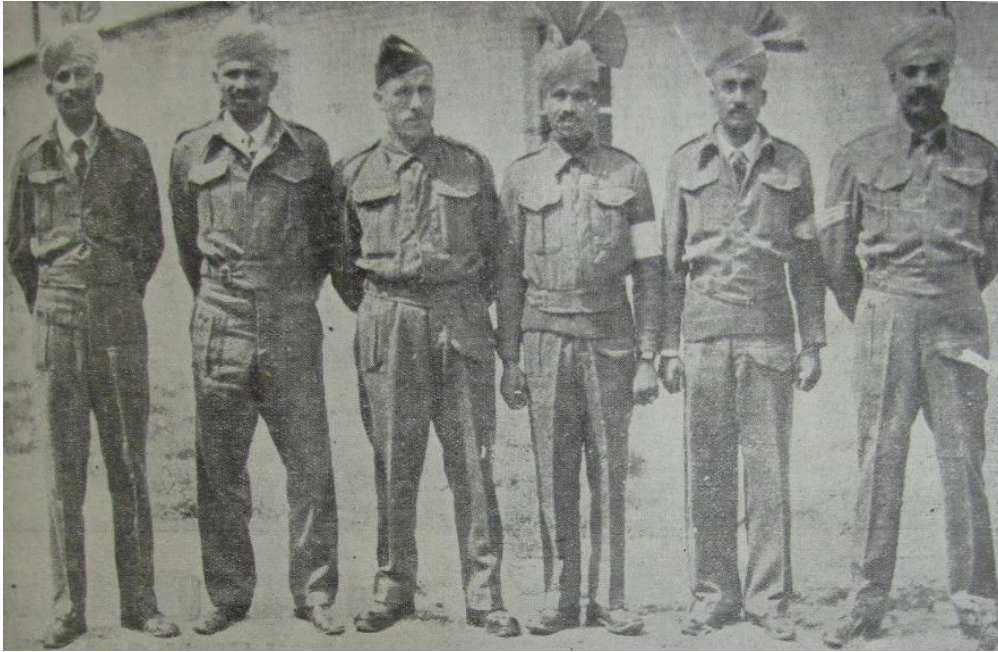


Figure 7: POWs at Stalag VIII-B. Photo from *Fauji Akhbar* 10/4/43. Original caption reads 'This photograph, probably taken in 1941... shows five Indian and one British prisoners of war at Stalag VIII-B, Germany. They are believed to be personnel of the original Indian Contingent RIASC captured on the Maginot line during the fall of France'

A crucial element in the well-being of the POWs was their regular Red Cross parcels. For Indian POWs these were provided by the Indian Comforts Fund (ICF). Each week every prisoner received a food parcel containing *dhal*, *ata* and *ghee*.<sup>352</sup> At the packing centre at India House, the office of the High Commissioner (see figure 17 in chapter 3), they reached a peak of 6500 parcels per week in 1944.<sup>353</sup> The Fund, which was chaired by Leo Amery's wife Adeliza Florence Hamar Greenwood Amery, became the official next of kin for all Indian POWs in Europe, and was therefore entitled to send monthly clothing parcels as well.<sup>354</sup> The ICF became adept at sourcing 'exotic' ingredients: in 1943 the Brazilian government donated fifty tons of banana flakes & 102 cases of tinned milk, while the Mexicans gave fifty-five tons of rice.<sup>355</sup> All prisoners, including

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<sup>352</sup> Claude Shepherd, *War Record of the Indian Comforts Fund* (London, 1946), p. 8.

<sup>353</sup> Shepherd, p. 21.

<sup>354</sup> Shepherd, p. 16.

<sup>355</sup> Shepherd, p. 17.

those who joined 950 Regiment, acknowledged how important the parcels were in keeping body and soul together: their arrival was 'a rare moment of pure joy'.<sup>356</sup>

Conditions deteriorated towards the end of the war: the winter of 1944/45 was a harsh one, and many POWs had to make forced marches away from their camps: it is not clear whether any Indian POWs went through this particular ordeal. Anis had been moved around, from Stalag IIID in Berlin in April 1941, to Annaburg in March 1943 and finally to Oflag 79 at Braunschweig. He sent a card to his cousin Shahid Hamid, also of the RIASC, in June 1941 from the camp in Berlin, full of kind entreaty but with no news of his own condition. In March 1943 he wrote from Annaburg (figure 8), to say 'I am quite well by the Grace of God'.<sup>357</sup> Clearly the tough conditions had not yet started to bite. A year later, things had changed considerably, as the RAF and the USAAF were now carrying out regular bombing raids in Germany - the Americans by day and the British by night. A fellow Indian prisoner wrote, in August 1944:

the camp was picked up as target and was raided at 11.20 a.m. The scene was horrible; nearby barracks, German guardrooms and kitchen were reduced to ashes. Seven bomb craters were created and a good number of anti-personnel ammunition was dropped on the camp... The dangers of really heavy air raids are only known to those who survive these terrors of war, half-starved for years enclosed by barbed wire fences.<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>356</sup> Gillies, p. 31.

<sup>357</sup> 'Letter from Anis to His Cousin Shahid Amin from Oflag IVE', 19 March 1943, Shahid Ali Hamid papers.

<sup>358</sup> Jit Singh Sarna, 'Indian Army History Thread', *Bharat Rakshak*, 2007 <<https://forums.bharat-rakshak.com/viewtopic.php?f=3&t=2623&start=40>> [accessed 26 July 2019].



Figure 8: Letter to his cousin Shahid Amin from Anis in Oflag IVE (private collection)

For a white British officer like Major Hitchcock, surrounded by hundreds of men like him, such privations would have been easier to bear.<sup>359</sup> But Anis was different: he was a fish out of water, and an odd fish at that. He was one of very few Indians and fewer Muslims, with a sneaking feeling that he was only still in the camp because he had not given that one word ‘yes’ to Bose, a word that he could so easily have given but for his sense of *izzat* or honour. His life must have been lonely: one can feel his need for company in his cards to his cousin Shahid. Even his batman, driver Dost Mohamed, had been taken from him, having died in the camp at Berlin in November 1941: his name is inscribed on the Dunkirk memorial as one of the Indian soldiers whose grave is unknown.<sup>360</sup> Zeenut recalled one especially striking story of the food they ate towards the end of the war: the men were sitting round a cauldron, waiting for the soup to be ready, watching a ‘horse’s head bobbing up and down’ - their only source of protein to add to the potatoes and black bread.<sup>361</sup> Like so many of his fellow prisoners, Anis praised the ICF for making their parcels, and the Red Cross for delivering them: the parcels meant they were actually able to eat better than many of the German civilians around them, and also use their contents to trade with the guards. Soon before the liberation of Oflag 79 Anis was moved around with other prisoners by train, and as an intensely private man, was revolted by the sordid reality that there

<sup>359</sup> Laurence William Hitchcock, ‘In German Hands’, *RIASC Journal*, XIV (1946), 8–17 (p. 15).

<sup>360</sup> ‘Mohammed Dost. German POW Card’, 1945, The National Archives, Kew, WO 416/100/316.

<sup>361</sup> ‘Interview with Zeenut Ziad’.



was no toilet in the cattle truck, so 'if you had to pee, there was one can that was passed around'.<sup>362</sup>

The camp was liberated by the American Army on 12<sup>th</sup> April 1945, and Anis was horrified when he saw the newly-freed prisoners looting cameras, binoculars and radios: 'like children let loose... breaking into homes and shops and carting away lots of stuff'.<sup>363</sup> Soon after that, CSDIC requested that he be sent for questioning, but that he should not be sent under escort.<sup>364</sup> They wanted to talk to him, to hear his story, but they did not wish it to appear that he was under suspicion. In fact, he was back in the army in a few short months, so clearly he was not deemed to have crossed the line to black 'traitor' status. He came home in 1946, to his wife and four small children. His fifth child Zeenut was born in January 1947 in Lucknow, by which time he was an acting Colonel. He had been in prison for almost five years – the longest imprisonment of any Indian officer in the war, and being in prison 'was a defining thing for him'.<sup>365</sup> His health was affected - he lost many teeth for example – but he bounced back quickly. He attended staff college in Quetta for five months at the end of 1946: this was an essential requirement for progress from a regimental officer to higher rank.<sup>366</sup> The report written by the college notes that he 'has recovered from captivity remarkably well.' and generally praises his intelligence, common sense and skills. He was also described as 'a loyal officer who mixes well, and is tolerant and tactful', so any lingering sense of his having been any kind of 'traitor' during his stay in the camp had gone, at least from the army command.

Soon after that, Anis made a decision that seems remarkable in hindsight, but which made perfect sense at the time. With the Partition of the country in August 1947 came the Partition of the Army. At this stage Anis was fourth in the seniority table of Muslim officers (Akbar was first), so could expect to advance quickly once the armies were under their own national control.<sup>367</sup> The vast majority of the men of Force K6 became citizens of Pakistan, even if their homes had been

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<sup>362</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>363</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>364</sup> 'German and Italian Attempts'.

<sup>365</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>366</sup> 'Individual Service Record for Anis Ahmad Khan'.

<sup>367</sup> Z.H. Zaidi, *Jinnah Papers First Series* (Islamabad, 1994), II, p. 285.

in East Punjab, now part of India. Anis made a different decision. Aligarh, where he had grown up, was in Indian territory, and his siblings were divided in their decisions: three went to Pakistan, three to India. For Anis, according to his daughter, the clincher came from a conversation with Jinnah, the *Quaid-e-Azam* or Great Leader of Pakistan. Jinnah told him 'there are going to be vast numbers of Muslims in India... your family is so well known and admired here... if you decide to stay you will be providing that kind of encouragement to the Muslims.'<sup>368</sup> Indeed, he was a supporter of Jinnah's All India Muslim League and Jinnah's papers show that Anis made a donation of 500 rupees to the party just two weeks before Partition.<sup>369</sup> Anis took that fateful decision and stayed in India, trusting that the new country would carry out the promises made by the Congress leadership to be secular and inclusive. At first it looked as if he had chosen well: by 1949 he was a Major-General and Director of Supplies and Transport running all the service corps operations.<sup>370</sup> Thus, in a way that is hard to believe in the increasingly polarised world of the twenty-first century, he became the first Indian Muslim to become a Major-General in the Indian Army.<sup>371</sup> But this was not to be the end of Anis' remarkable twists and convolutions. In 1953 he decided to go to Pakistan after all. Frustrated at his lack of promotion, observing younger men rising to the rank of Lieutenant-General around him, Anis left the army and moved to Karachi. There was an outcry in the press and the *Lok Sabha* (the Indian parliament), both were convinced that he would betray all of India's military secrets to the enemy, and questioned the loyalty of all Muslims in Indian uniform. In fact, according to Zeenut, he remained loyal to the Indian Army and died a few years later at the age of sixty-four in 1966, 'of a broken heart'.<sup>372</sup>

Was he betrayed, or was he the betrayer? In the POW camps he fraternised, he learnt German and he was frowned on by the white British officers around him (and even by Mazumdar), but he kept his word. He was reinstated in the army without a stain on his character – indeed the adverse report in the National Archives in London may have been deliberately removed by an official

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<sup>368</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

<sup>369</sup> Z.H. Zaidi, *Jinnah Papers First Series* (Islamabad, 1999), IV, p. 381.

<sup>370</sup> P.K.D. Kapur, *Footprints and Milestones* (New Delhi: General Supply and Transport Army Headquarters, 1990), p. 36.

<sup>371</sup> 'First Indian Muslim to Be Major-General in Indian Army', *Statesman* (Calcutta, 9 October 1949).

<sup>372</sup> 'Interview with Zeenut Ziad'.

keen not to have the stain remembered. He made his decision in August 1947 and rose high in the newly-divided army. But not high enough. The last few years of his life read like a story of decline and disappointment. He left no memoir to explain or to preserve for future generations and many of his letters and papers went missing during the time his daughter was at university in the UK.<sup>373</sup> And yet he inspired a fierce loyalty in those who knew him best. His long-time cook Mohammed Shaffi, a ‘scrawny little fellow’ who used to get drunk on his whisky, was devoted to him, and asked that ‘when I die, I want to be buried at the general’s feet’.<sup>374</sup> To inspire such loyalty in others must indicate a level of loyalty in oneself. One can regard him as a four-time traitor who betrayed his people by serving the British, betrayed the British by fraternising with the Germans, betrayed the Muslims by joining the Indians, and finally betrayed the Indians by decamping to Pakistan. Or one can say he was a strong-willed man of ambition who did what he thought was right, was put into quandaries and circumstances that tied him in knots, and made decisions that look bad in retrospect. Neither hero nor traitor, but a good father and a good man, a man whose identity shifted with the changing century. Forgotten by all sides because he seems to have betrayed them, but worthy of memory for his extraordinary powers of endurance and resilience.

### **How and when were Force K6 forgotten?**

The process of forgetting was a twofold one, different in South Asia and in Britain. In each case the forgetting was societal, a collective process, governed by what Assmann calls the ‘selection criteria’ – the men were forgotten because they did not fit the *zeitgeist* or the *cadre*.<sup>375</sup> In both Britain and India there was a need to create a new society after the war, and hence a focus on the internal rather than the external. Assmann said that ‘each social frame necessarily excludes a whole spectrum of memories which are either considered not relevant or not acceptable from the point of view of the group’<sup>376</sup>. In the new Britain, the memories were not relevant, in the new South Asia, they were not acceptable. The precise point at which they were forgotten, following Assmann & Halbwachs’ frames, must

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<sup>373</sup> ‘Interview with Zeenut Ziad’.

<sup>374</sup> ‘Interview with Zeenut Ziad’.

<sup>375</sup> Assmann, ‘Forms of Forgetting’.

<sup>376</sup> Assmann, ‘Forms of Forgetting’.

therefore have been the point at which they were no longer useful, when they no longer fitted the frame. This assertion is by necessity theoretical - there is as yet no repository of 1940s public opinion stored in an archive, although there are some hints in the Mass-Observation archives, Gallup polls and the BBC.

Generally speaking, in South Asia there was no forgetting of K6, because they were never widely known there. Perhaps they were known in 1940, when there was little other war news for that section of the Indian public. Their arrival in France, Dunkirk and the anxiety of the fate of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company were all covered in the press, at least *The Times of India*.<sup>377</sup> But that was rapidly overlaid by the other exploits of the Indian Army, first in East Africa, then in Egypt and Libya, and so on. But Force K6 are part of a wider tide of forgetting, the forgetting of the Indian contribution in general – the 2.5million men of the Indian Army. In a country of around 390 million, it would be hard to forget so many soldiers, so what was forgotten was what had to be forgotten - the fact that so many had fought for the Empire, and a smaller amount had fought against the Empire. By the summer of 1947, two years after the war ended, there were two countries where there had been one, and there was a need for new state narratives. David Armitage has written of the desire, in the aftermath of a civil war, to ‘repress memories’ and replace them with ‘something more constructive, more hopeful, and more forward-looking.’<sup>378</sup> This form of forgetting is more in line with Assmann’s sixth type - ‘constructive forgetting’ or ‘tabula rasa for a new political biographical beginning’.<sup>379</sup> In order to create new states and new memories in India, in West and East Pakistan, some inconvenient truths had to be set aside. As Ranajit Guha has written, each generation needs a new set of memories and its own version of History, and ‘it is forgetting that enables the past to emerge meaningfully again and again at each recall’.<sup>380</sup>

In Britain, however, the story is different, for here the men of Force K6 were widely known. The combination of coverage in the press and on newsreels, the many photos and their appearance in parades across the country meant that

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<sup>377</sup> ‘Indian Troops in France’, *Times of India*, 28 December 1939; ‘Made Way through Burning Dunkirk’, *Times of India*, 7 June 1940; ‘Indian Unit Missing’, *Times of India*, 11 June 1940.

<sup>378</sup> David Armitage, *Civil Wars: A History in Ideas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017), p. 120.

<sup>379</sup> Assmann, ‘Forms of Forgetting’.

<sup>380</sup> Guha, *The Small Voice of History*, p. 336.

they were well known by the public, peaking probably in 1941, with seventy-one newspaper articles about them in 1940. Their last appearance in the British press was a story in the local paper about their presence at a service in Dornoch Cathedral in September 1943 – they had long dropped off the national papers.<sup>381</sup> In the summer of 1945, everything changed. The novelist Alan Sillitoe was seventeen that year, and wrote a short memoir entitled 'End and Beginning: 1945'.<sup>382</sup> The 8<sup>th</sup> May and 15<sup>th</sup> August are remembered in the UK as VE Day and VJ Day, and Sillitoe reminds us that that those dates were also the start of a brave, new post-war world. British society had become 'classless for the duration' of World War Two, and there were some sections of the public who were able to move beyond the colour-bar racism of the time.<sup>383</sup> But when peace came in 1945 attitudes and priorities shifted quickly, and the desire to remember 'our boys' was paramount, in a rapidly-changing world where British prestige and the Empire were in slow, constant retreat. The new Labour government under Attlee was internally focused, keen to change society.<sup>384</sup> Those British people who had only seen the sepoys in a newsreel or in the paper had a multitude of other images to process by August 1945: North Africa, Italy, D-Day, Burma, the liberation of Belsen, Atom Bombs. The war was gone, the need was gone, the relationship with India was in rapid flux. There was a new frame in place. Churchill, in a speech in Zurich in 1946, where he famously called for a 'kind of United States of Europe' also pointed to the importance of forgetting:

We must all turn our backs upon the horrors of the past. We must look to the future. We cannot afford to drag forward across the years that are to come the hatreds and revenges which have sprung from the injuries of the past. If Europe is to be saved from infinite misery, and indeed from final doom, there must be an act of faith in the European family and an act of oblivion against all the crimes and follies of the past.<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>381</sup> 'Battle for Britain Sunday in Dornoch', *Northern Times*, 30 September 1943, p. 4.

<sup>382</sup> Alan Sillitoe, 'End and Beginning: 1945', in *War Culture: Social Change and Changing Experience in World War Two*, ed. by Pat Kirkham and David Thoms (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995).

<sup>383</sup> Paris, p. 209.

<sup>384</sup> Paul Addison, *Now the War Is Over* (London: BBC, 1985), p. vii.

<sup>385</sup> Winston Churchill, *The Sinews of Peace. Post-War Speeches by Winston S. Churchill*, ed. by Randolph Churchill (London: Cassell, 1948), p. 200.

For Churchill, the focus was on Europe, as it was in Philip Zec's famous cartoon from the end of the war 'Here you are – don't lose it again'.<sup>386</sup> In front of a ruined townscape, a grimy, wounded British soldier reaches towards the viewer, holding out an olive branch and a slip of paper that reads 'Victory and Peace in Europe.' This is the prize, this is what we have striven for over six years. Now we must focus down, inwards, not outwards. With a sigh of relief the British people elect a Labour government and get on with reconstruction. The world has changed and a small group of sepoys in *pugris* with mules does not fit the new narrative.

Within the UK there is an element of racism in the general forgetting of the Indian Army, although the Gurkhas have managed to dodge that by continuing to be part of the post-war army and thus part of the 'frame' of collective consciousness. The particular circumstances of the K6 story only serve to bring out the injustice of their forgetting. They were here, at Dunkirk and in UK, they left traces on paper, on the soul and the cortex as well as material traces like horseshoes and graffiti, they were unique, so their forgetting is greater than that of the wider army.<sup>387</sup> On another level they were just too small, too few to be remembered - they only actually encountered a few people, who are the ones that remember them. They were mostly posted outside the cities, they were 'support' troops not front line heroes. And, crucially, people may not have realised that those marching before them in parade in Exeter or Edinburgh were the same men as had been in France, the same men who appeared in *Picture Post* and the same men used for a cartoon in *The Daily Mirror*. There were of course a number of individuals and communities who carried the torch of K6 memory for years or even decades. People who had met them in villages across the country, and more latterly those with special interests such as the Indian Army, or mules, or some World War Two specialists. But there were never enough of such people to represent a critical mass that could be said to indicate 'they are not forgotten'.

Ricoeur and Assmann both hold out the prospect of change in the collective memory, of a return from the *oubli de réserve*. Indeed Ricoeur suggests

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<sup>386</sup> Donald Zec, *Don't Lose It Again! The Life and Wartime Cartoons of Philip Zec* (London: Political Cartoon Society, 2005).

<sup>387</sup> Ricoeur, p. 415.

the historian should 'expand, complete, correct, even refute the testimony of memory regarding the past.'<sup>388</sup> The period 2014-2018 has seen a massive correction to the collective memory of the Great War of 1914-1918, including a large body of work by academic and public historians on the role of the South Asian forces. It is not unreasonable to predict a similar adjustment for the Second World War; indeed it is already underway. What has been forgotten is still waiting in the archives and the private papers and the memories of children and grandchildren. The challenge is for historians and others to find it, to piece it together and to present it; to make it interesting – to demand the attention of the public in a busy field by polished presentation and by making the connections to contemporary life. As Jay Winter writes, we need to hear other songs about the past which 'celebrate plurality and embrace contradiction as our unavoidable fate.'<sup>389</sup> The words of those songs are scattered like shards across British culture - in the office at Waterloo station, in Bruce Chatwin's *On the Black Hill* – like smudges of brown on a white clay background, unrecognised, unconnected, waiting to be identified as shards of the same pot, and the pot reconstructed. The case studies and stories in this thesis show that they should be remembered, once they are joined up - the story is just too valuable to lose. The stories of men like Abuzar and Nawazish Ali can have a great impact, and help to counteract a tendency identified by Karnad:

People have two deaths: the first at the end of their lives, when they go away, and the second at the end of the memory of their lives, when all who remember them are gone. Then a person quits the world completely.<sup>390</sup>

These men can help in the tide of re-remembering of India in World War Two, to do what Samuel calls 'enlarge the domain of the historically known'.<sup>391</sup> The danger is one of instrumentalization - what Singh calls 'demonology' - that their memory is co-opted for current political use in Britain or South Asia, that their 'voices' are abused.<sup>392</sup> The key to avoiding that trap is to ensure that the complexity and the individuality of their stories are remembered and honoured. To paraphrase Marx,

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<sup>388</sup> Ricoeur, p. 498.

<sup>389</sup> Winter, 'In Conclusion: Palimpsests', p. 173.

<sup>390</sup> Karnad, p. xix.

<sup>391</sup> Samuel, I, p. 274.

<sup>392</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 192.

historians have always interpreted forgetting and memory, the point however is to change it.

### **Conclusion: Warts and all**

World War Two was the ultimate binary. Nations lined up with the Axis or the Allies. Some changed sides; very few remained truly neutral for the duration. Nuances were suppressed and the world was simplified: you were either with us or against us. In occupied countries individuals were forced to choose, and John Keegan reckoned that only one nationality 'stands untainted by collaboration: The Poles'.<sup>393</sup> Similarly, citizens of India who were taken prisoner or living in countries occupied by the Axis had a choice forced upon them. Collaborate or resist. Stay true to Empire or true to future nation. Or do nothing and wait, as eighty-five per cent of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company did. Choice implies agency, implies information, implies volition. But the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company were in a situation with very little information, and what they did have was often twisted and distorted by one side or the other. Those who joined 950 Regiment, whatever their mix of motivations might have been, will be remembered as heroes by nationalists in India and Pakistan, but as traitors by those who support the Empire then and now. We could label them as 'patriots, half-patriots or reactionaries'.<sup>394</sup> The Atlantic Charter, drafted in August 1941 as the cornerstone of the Allies war aims, enshrined the principle of self-determination. Put simply, that was one of Bose's core aims. Those members of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company who escaped, even those who sat it out, are heroes to the Empire, traitors to their country. As Bamber points out 'True objectivity is difficult for those born in either country' – we are all tainted by the view of the 1940s that we have grown up with.<sup>395</sup> The concepts of 'hero' and 'traitor' are predicated on nationalism, and constructing them in retrospect as 'heroes' or 'traitors' is an exercise in exploitation of memory by modern-day nationalists. These men were professional soldiers on a career ladder, responding to the circumstances in which they lived.

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<sup>393</sup> John Keegan, 'Do We Need a New History of the Second World War?', in *War Experience, Self Image and National Identity: The Second World War as Myth and History*, ed. by Stig Ekman and others (Stockholm: Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation & Gidlunds Förlag, 1997), pp. 82–97 (p. 89).

<sup>394</sup> Mookerjee, p. 229.

<sup>395</sup> Bamber, p. 340.



Jemadar Dr Rana, Captain Anis, Daffadar Abuzar and Major Akbar could all be regarded as heroes or traitors, depending on where you stand. Jay Winter asks of the sepoy of the two world wars: 'Did they perpetuate the Raj or indirectly help liberate their country? Both are true'.<sup>396</sup> In fact, none of the men of Force K6 were heroes. Or all of them were. They were men, human beings, warts and all. Doing their jobs, trying to get by. Not highly political or ideologically driven, keen to stay with their friends. Some of them were smart, resourceful, ambitious. Many of them were placid, easy-going, happy to take the simplest choice, to sit it out and thereby 'stay loyal'. Like millions of men and women around the world during the war, they were ordinary folk in extraordinary circumstances, forced on occasion into making difficult choices, when they were tired or hungry or under pressure, without knowing all the information. The logic of binaries like traitor/loyalist and hero/villain breaks down in the face of the choices made by the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company. Like all of us, their decisions were sometimes wise, sometimes not. Because, like us, they were a complicated mixture of motivations and identities. 'We are not wholly bad or good, who live our lives under Milk Wood', said Dylan Thomas.<sup>397</sup>

A grown-up view of World War Two combatants, a view not driven by Hollywood notions of 'goodies' and 'baddies', will show good and bad on all sides - the line dividing good and evil 'cuts through the heart of every human being'.<sup>398</sup> A British soldier who survived the German massacre at Wormhoudt in France in 1940, said:

I don't believe that all the Germans are evil or wicked or bad. Any more than I believe that all Britons are great and good and kind. Part of the reason that you get all these national conflicts is because people are willing to generalise.<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>396</sup> Winter, 'In Conclusion: Palimpsests', p. 168.

<sup>397</sup> Dylan Thomas, *Under Milk Wood* (Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes, 2010), p. 63.

<sup>398</sup> Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago* (London: Collins, 1974), p. 168.

<sup>399</sup> Levine, *Forgotten Voices of Dunkirk*, p. 152.

Mason, writing of the classifications of Indian POWs as white, grey and black, remarked 'shake the kaleidoscope and black turns white'.<sup>400</sup> CSDIC classified POWs and Legionaries using a spectrum that included dark grey and light grey as well as white and black. That may take us a little beyond a simple binary, but it is still a British-driven spectrum. From a German point of view or a South Asian point of view, the colours flip, and white becomes black. An Empire hero is a nationalist traitor and vice versa. Of course one can argue that in joining the German Army, Abuzar and the men of 950 Regiment were supporting fascism, and should therefore always be considered to be on the wrong side. Or one could argue that by joining the British Indian Army they were supporting the Empire, which was complicit in the death of two million Bengalis in the 1943 famine, and therefore naturally on the wrong side. Which might leave only those, like Gandhi, who didn't take sides, on the right side. Or one could argue that Bose and his colleagues held their noses and took a deep breath, because they knew they could use the 'dirty fascists' for their own purposes. In the face of such complex relationships and conflicting memories, categories like 'hero' and 'villain' and 'traitor' are facile and increasingly meaningless, driven by contemporary needs to justify this or that political position. They are merely representations, chimera, public relations in action. Humans are always infinitely more complex, hard to understand at the time, harder still in retrospect. We need to work to understand individual stories. In the words of 'V', the anti-hero with the Guy Fawkes mask:

Everybody is special. Everybody. Everybody is a hero, a lover, a fool, a villain. Everybody. Everybody has their story to tell.<sup>401</sup>

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<sup>400</sup> Philip Mason, *A Matter of Honour: An Account of the Indian Army, Its Officers and Men* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1974), p. 519.

<sup>401</sup> Alan Moore, and David Lloyd, *V for Vendetta* (New York: DC, 2005), p. 26.

## CHAPTER 2: MULTIPLE IDENTITIES IN MOTION: K6 AT HOME AND ABROAD

*I can be, at the same time, an Asian, an Indian citizen, a Bengali with Bangladeshi ancestry, an American or British resident, an economist, a dabbler in philosophy, an author, a Sanskritist, a strong believer in secularism and democracy, a man, a feminist, a heterosexual, a defender of gay rights, with a non-religious lifestyle, from a Hindu background, a non-Brahmin, and a non-believer in an after-life (and also, in case the question is asked, a non-believer in a “before-life” as well).*<sup>402</sup>

We are all multiple. Human beings construct their subjectivities from forces around them and make choices about what to express or not to express, and so we have multiple identities, as Amartya Sen demonstrates. Eric Hobsbawm explained it in modern terms: ‘as every opinion pollster knows, no one has one and only one identity’ but each person is ‘a combination of many characteristics’.<sup>403</sup> The men of Force K6 were no different. It is commonplace to talk and write about ‘the Indian soldier’ or ‘the sepoy’, using the definite article as if there were only one soldier, or one ‘type’ that all individuals adhered to. But to see them that way is to construct them through an essentialising and racist lens. If Tommies and Fritzes and GIs were capable of individuality, so were sepoys. If a soldier today can be an individual, so can one from the mid-twentieth century. And if officers and politicians - the Great Men of history - were able to express themselves through word, thought and deed, why not the small voices as well? Gajendra Singh writes that Indian soldiers were ‘as complex and sophisticated as their metropolitan peers’ – to say otherwise is to do them a disservice.<sup>404</sup> Social history is predicated on the idea that the story of an individual from an obscure background is just as worthy as any one of the already-famous dead white men who have benefited from a plethora of biographies. Bertolt Brecht questions whether Julius Caesar defeated the Gauls all by himself: ‘did he not even have a cook with him?’<sup>405</sup> The men of K6 are like Caesar’s cook: they were there, part of

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<sup>402</sup> Amartya Sen, *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny* (New York: Norton, 2007), p. 19.

<sup>403</sup> Eric Hobsbawm, ‘Identity Politics and the Left’, *New Left Review*, 217, 1996, 38–47 (p. 41).

<sup>404</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 191.

<sup>405</sup> ‘Fragen ein lesendes Arbeiter’ in Bertolt Brecht, *Poems, 1913-1956* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1976), p. 252.

the war effort, but unwritten; essential support workers who enabled the front line to function.

Each member of K6 was a mix of identities. To transpose Amartya Sen's riff above, a K6 soldier might be at the same time all the things we might expect: a Punjabi, a Jat, a citizen of British India (and thus a British subject), a speaker of Punjabi and Urdu languages, a man, a traveller, a father and a husband and a son, a farmer, a Sunni Muslim, a mule driver, but also perhaps some of the things that we know individuals became: a lover, a champion runner, a bagpiper, a lover of early Bollywood films, a singer, a poet, a supporter of the Congress Party or the Unionist Party or the All India Muslim League. We can divide them up into ranks, categories and castes: all of these categories are relevant, just as the influences of Punjab, Islam, agriculture and military are relevant in identity-formation, but they are not everything. If identity is how we see ourselves, our self-concept, then we can ask how a soldier of K6 would have responded to the question 'who are you?'. Context is all: if the person asking were an officer, the response would be a standard military one involving name, rank and serial number. But in a social setting, when invited to tea, perhaps the soldier would reveal other identities: their family situation, their sporting prowess, even aspects of their religion. Equally, when speaking about a soldier in the third person, in their absence, one might choose to say that they were Muslims at Woking, soldiers in France, fathers and husbands at home, hockey players in Kingsbridge, spectators in the cinema, and so on. And the sense of fun that is present in Sen's self-definition was also there: a look at a few of their photographs will confirm that – the broad smiles evident when they are playing cards in a tent at Ashbourne, for example.<sup>406</sup> Their identities showed as much through their leisure time as through anything else. Although one's cultural identity may be a product of powerful social forces, 'rooted in material conditions' over which we have little control, that does not mean there is never any agency present.<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>406</sup> Pathé, 'Indian Army Special Newsreel (1940)', 1940

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yq6E1luxLQQ&t=>> [accessed 25 May 2017].

<sup>407</sup> Gary Younge, 'We Can Choose Our Identity, but Sometimes It Also Chooses Us', *Guardian*, 21 January 2005 <<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2005/jan/21/islamandbritain.comment7>>.

Identities can also change - there is potential for fluidity. The modern Swiss Muslim thinker Tariq Ramadan says that we all have 'multiple, moving identities.'<sup>408</sup> Sara Salih summarises Judith Butler's view of identity as 'a contingent construction which assumes multiple forms even as it presents itself as singular and stable.'<sup>409</sup> Travelling to new, strange countries, these men experienced a number of micro-culture-shocks: everyday differences in the landscape and the humanscape: trees, temperatures and languages; 'the birds of alien lands'.<sup>410</sup> Individuals reacted in different ways, as individuals do. Some men did not notice, some men laughed, some men noticed and passed on, but some may have, in subtle ways, changed their behaviour, their practice, their attitude. To have done otherwise would be inhuman. If only we could track all those stimuli and all those responses, we would be in total control of the history of these companies, but we can only identify a few. The choice of who to study is made for us by the survival of documents and records, and the random nature of such survival. This information serves as evidence, as data, and the men are thus recalled through the prism of their identities. We do not always know whether the men presented to us in the archives are from the 'mainstream' of K6 (Muslims from Pothwar) or outliers from other religions or other areas. They may be men who conformed or those who, in whatever small way, asserted their individuality by some kind of rebellious behaviour. Surprisingly, it was not always the richer, better educated and higher-ranked that are accessible through documents: many of the personal files of the white British officers are not to be found among the India Office Records, while there is considerable biographical data on those other ranks who are buried in Europe, thanks to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. The vicissitudes of history are random and contingent.

This chapter will aim to identify some of the key influences in the men's backgrounds and explore the 'mean' or average among them, with chapter 5 picking up the outliers and the divergences. First there is an analysis of one of their number as an example of the many identities they embodied: Risaldar-Major Ashraf Khan. The next section examines identities at home - Punjab as the

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<sup>408</sup> Tariq Ramadan, *What I Believe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), p. 5; see also Hobsbawm, p. 42.

<sup>409</sup> Sara Salih, 'Introduction', in *The Judith Butler Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 1–17 (p. 2).

<sup>410</sup> From a Punjabi mahiya quoted in A.B. Rajput, *Social Customs and Practices in Pakistan* (Islamabad: R.C.D. Publications, 1977), p. 45.

crucible where their identities were formed. This includes analysis of the Pothwar plateau, the villages and farms and agricultural background that so many of them came from and returned to, as well as their masculine identities as Punjabi Muslim soldiers. The third section deals with what the men were given by their parents as children: their religion and their names, and the food that they ate: all important markers of culture and identities at heart. Finally the chapter examines the way that the men expressed their identities in their evenings and weekends: games, sports, films and music – identities at play.

### **Mohammed Ashraf Khan: Identities embodied**

One example of the many identities embodied in a single sepoy was the distinguished figure of Muhammad Ashraf Khan, whose identities unfolded over a lifetime and beyond. To the military historian he presents himself first and foremost as the prime exemplar of gravitas and *izzat* (honour) – the Risaldar-Major (equivalent to Regimental Sergeant-Major) of K6 from the start until 1943. Short and portly, with a fine-looking beard and moustache, he looks sternly at the observer in many photographs (see figure 9). From his enlistment as a sepoy in the RIASC at the age of seventeen in 1913, he rose steadily through the ranks, as an article in an early edition of *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (K6's own newsletter, explored in chapter 5) explained to his colleagues.<sup>411</sup> In the Great War he served in all the major campaigns involving the Indian Army: in France, Egypt, Gallipoli and Mesopotamia. By 1918 he was a Naik (corporal), a Daffadar (sergeant) six years later, and received a VCO's commission in 1930. When K6 left India in 1939 he had reached the age of forty-four and the highest VCO rank: that of Risaldar-Major. He was a man in his prime, with a lifetime of military experience, advising the younger VCOs and keeping the men in line. He went through the Battle of France, became an Honorary Lieutenant and finally an Honorary Captain, retiring in 1946.<sup>412</sup> His entire service, therefore, was in the British Indian Army (he never served in the Pakistan Army) he was a veritable pillar of the Raj, one of the last of the type.

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<sup>411</sup> 'Ek Jang-Azmuda Afsar', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (London, 18 May 1940), p. 2, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>412</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5881.



Figure 9: Risaldar-Major Ashraf Khan, 7<sup>th</sup> May 1940 in London with a leave party (Major Akbar behind him with peaked cap)

So he seems like an archetypal Punjabi Muslim: one from a noble martial race. Indeed, his grandfather served with the British under Major Abbott against the Sikh rulers in the 1840s.<sup>413</sup> Interestingly, however, he was not from Punjab itself, but the North West Frontier. His home was in the village of Dubran, a remote place beyond the reach of proper roads until the 1980s. To reach it from the rest of India, as he did when he came home on leave in September 1942, required taking a train to Haripur, 60 miles north of Rawalpindi.<sup>414</sup> A *tonga* to Shah Maqsood town was the next stage, followed by a ten mile walk across the hills – a half day in itself.<sup>415</sup> Ashraf was of the Karlal tribe of the Hazara people, speaking a language called Hindko. The writer of the District Gazetteer of 1884 sneeringly

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<sup>413</sup> 'Ek Jang-Azmuda Afsar'. The city of Abbottabad is named after that officer.

<sup>414</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

<sup>415</sup> Interview with Abdul Jalil, 2018.

remarks that the Hazara people are 'attached to their homes and to their fields, which they cultivate simply and industriously. For the rest their character is crafty and cowardly'.<sup>416</sup> It is hard to imagine how the British establishment would see such a figure as Ashraf a coward, but it seems that the judgment was based on an incident during the 1857 Rebellion, often the baseline for British assessments of Indians' abilities.

During his time in Europe he moved into new roles, new identities, as so many of his comrades were forced to do. But as his son recalled many years later, this was a positive experience for him: 'the times he talked about most were in England during the war'.<sup>417</sup> He became a *de facto* ambassador for India, meeting the press and European dignitaries on many occasions. He was photographed shaking hands with the Duchess of Kent and the Maharaja Jam Saheb Sri Digvijaysinhji Ranjitsinhji – the senior-most Indian in the Cabinet - in Scotland.<sup>418</sup> In all of these he was acting as the face of K6: ultra-smart, ultra-conforming, ultra-loyal. This loyalty was rewarded, for he met King George on at least two occasions: shaking his hand as he stepped from the car at Ashbourne in August 1940 and then a few months later receiving the Indian Order of Merit (second only to the Victoria Cross) at Buckingham House.<sup>419</sup> Ashraf himself wrote a detailed description of the latter ceremony in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, describing how he went to the Palace with Captain Lowman and Mrs Bell, and that when his name was called, he 'took a left turn and stepped forward and saluted. The king put the medal on my chest. He gave me a smile.'<sup>420</sup> This was clearly a high point in his life. As well as writing articles for the newsletter, he became a broadcaster accustomed to the ways of the BBC microphone, recording a programme for broadcast in India entitled 'Why the Mohammedans are fighting against the Axis Powers'.<sup>421</sup> In this way he performed his identity as a Muslim Indian in a very public manner. And as Major Akbar recalled years later,

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<sup>416</sup> *Punjab Gazetteer Series: The Hazara District Gazetteer 1883-84* (Lahore, 1884), p. 69.

<sup>417</sup> 'Interview with Abdul Jalil'.

<sup>418</sup> 'Badshah Salamat Ke Chhote Bhai', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 11 July 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705; Lockyear, *His Highness Shaking Hands*, 1942, Imperial War Museum, H23939.

<sup>419</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

<sup>420</sup> Mohd Ashraf, 'Shahi Mahal (Buckingham Palace) Mein Tamgon Ki Taqsim Ki Taqrib', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 20 June 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>421</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.



he was an expert tea-maker and benefactor. On the beach at Dunkirk, on 29<sup>th</sup> May 1940:

A reserve of biscuits, tea, tinned milk and sugar was to be under the care of Risaldar Major Mohammad Ashraf Khan for emergency use. I was pleased to see that [the] Risaldar Major had offered tea and biscuits to many foreign nationals who had literally starved for a couple of days or more as rations supply system had completely collapsed.<sup>422</sup>

That “cuppa char” from an Indian hand must have been most welcome amid the smoke and chaos on the beaches.

There were other angles to his personality, other identities he assumed at home and abroad. Although a simple man, as his son Abdul Jalil was keen to point out, who had left school at the age of twelve, he was something of a linguist: communicating in English and Urdu as well as his mother tongue. He was a family man, one of ten siblings, marrying twice and having six children. The local paper in Ashbourne found him ‘particularly picturesque’, which may have been code for ‘handsome’.<sup>423</sup> He was also a deeply religious man. His given name ‘Ashraf’ is often an indicator of descent from the prophet Ali, but in South Asia it more generally means upper caste or noble.<sup>424</sup> He attended many religious ceremonies during his time in the UK, for example the opening of a new mosque in Cardiff in July of 1943.<sup>425</sup> He went on the Hajj in 1952, thus assuming a most respectable new identity as a Hajji, and his son recalled how friends and relatives would come weeks and months later to congratulate him.<sup>426</sup>

He was certainly a loyalist of the old school, who had met the King-Emperor and looked forward to a long and prosperous retirement, surrounded by family in his home village. There are, however, a couple of clues among his family documents and memories that point towards disappointment in retirement, a sense that his identity had been betrayed or marginalised. In 1946, he applied to the Viceroy’s office for the position of aide-de-camp: a position of great honour,

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<sup>422</sup> M. Akbar Khan, *The History of the Army Service Corps Volume III: Royal Indian Army Service Corps* (Karachi: Islamic Military Science Association, 1971).

<sup>423</sup> ‘Indian Camp an Ornamental Wonder’, *Ashbourne Telegraph*, September 1940.

<sup>424</sup> Rahman, p. 200.

<sup>425</sup> ‘War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, 1943’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5886.

<sup>426</sup> ‘Interview with Abdul Jalil’.

and one fitting for a soldier with such a track record. The job went to another Risaldar however, and a letter from Simla explains that ‘there are many aspects to be considered’ and realises that Ashraf ‘will be disappointed’.<sup>427</sup> With thirty-three years’ service, with the Indian Order of Merit and having met the King twice or more, he would indeed have been disappointed at this outcome. He was also a moderately rich man – he employed several servants and had enough surplus funds to lend two thousand rupees to a mine owner in Rangoon.<sup>428</sup> He was a member of the local *jirga* or tribal council, and was even a friend of Ayub Khan, general and later president of Pakistan, who hailed from a village nearby.<sup>429</sup> He was also a compassionate man and easily moved to tears. His son remembered a family feud in 1955 involving a shooting and a jail sentence for a relative: in recalling it, Ashraf had tears in his eyes.<sup>430</sup>

There is also a strong sense from his son of disappointment, nostalgia for a vanished lifestyle, even betrayal. Abdul Jalil speaks with some bitterness about ‘nouveau riche’ classes of people who rely on money, often from illegal sources, while older families ‘fade away’. This betrayal seems to have reached its pinnacle in 1997, as Abdul Jalil revealed at the end of the interview. In that year Queen Elizabeth came to visit Pakistan. Abdul Jalil took his mother, Ashraf’s widow, and set off to Islamabad and Murree, aiming to meet her. As he says ‘we didn’t want anything – just recognition. We still have the old loyalties – a sense of Queen as symbolic figure’. He hoped that his mother could meet her woman to woman, and he took along a photograph of Ashraf shaking hands with King George - his father and the Queen’s father together. The junior officials around the royal party would not listen, Abdul Jalil and his mother were unable even to get near the Queen and went away disappointed. Fifty years earlier, a retired Risaldar-Major’s widow would have been held in high esteem and admitted to the royal presence, but the late twentieth century sensitivities have changed. In the eyes of the world, the *izzat*-heavy identity of a retired Risaldar-Major in the British Indian Army no longer

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<sup>427</sup> Douglas Currie, ‘Letter from Colonel Douglas Currie to Col Mohd Akbar Khan’, 1 July 1946, Abdul Jalil collection.

<sup>428</sup> ‘Letter from M.A. Haq, Mine Owner Padatchaung, Burma to Mohd Ashraf Khan’, 30 March 1946, Abdul Jalil collection.

<sup>429</sup> ‘Interview with Abdul Jalil’.

<sup>430</sup> ‘Interview with Abdul Jalil’.

carries weight, and what remains is a set of photographs and a few family memories.

### **Identities at home: Punjab**

Unlike Risaldar-Major Ashraf, the vast majority of the men of K6 started their Odyssey in Punjab. This was where they were formed, the crucible of their identities and the context for their experiences in Europe. They were part of a giant, multi-directional trans-national wave of movement of soldiers that took place all round the world. As Indians fighting for Britain, however, they were part of a wider and longer tradition of involuntary colonial migration.<sup>431</sup> The many micro-culture-shocks that they experienced were against the background of colonial-era Punjab. So it is useful to identify some of the key influences on them from their environment. How far they conformed to those influences is another matter, but the fact that so many of them returned to their original villages after the war suggests that however much they had changed, and however much India had changed, they still saw Punjab as home. It would be interesting to know whether they felt an attachment to a wider collective identity than their village or Punjab; but there is no evidence from archives or interviews of any wider identification. It is also possible that many did not feel a strong sense of nationality or statehood in a modern way. Pakistan was a thing of the future.

As part of Moghul India, as an independent state ruled by Sikh kings, as a province of British India, and since 1947 as part of both India and Pakistan, Punjab is a land defined by water. Its name refers to the Five Rivers which run through it: from west to east the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej: the Ravi being the river of monsters, and the Chenab the river for lovers, according to tradition.<sup>432</sup> All five rivers drain into the Indus, which in turn enters the sea near Karachi. The massive escarpment of the Great Salt Range divides the Pothwari plateau from lower Punjab, and at its foot is found the Khewra salt mine, discovered by the armies of Alexander the Great when their horses refused to eat the vegetation there. The *Imperial Gazetteer* of 1908 tells us that Punjab made up a tenth of the area of British India, and that a quarter of the area was

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<sup>431</sup> See for example Sugata Bose, *A Hundred Horizons: The Indian Ocean in the Age of Global Empire* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006); Visram; Fisher, Lahiri, and Thandi.

<sup>432</sup> Rajput, p. 14.

taken up by native states. The total population in 1901 was nearly twenty-five million.<sup>433</sup> Its importance to the British Empire for the ninety years from 1857 to Partition cannot be overstated: it was both the breadbasket and the sword arm or 'garrison state' of British India.<sup>434</sup> It was 'the hinge that kept India together' and Imran Ali has identified the way that the colonial state oiled that hinge through a period of 'relative political peace and stability... [and] vigorous economic growth'.<sup>435</sup>

The Pothwari plateau, the K6 heartland, was a land of contrasts. Cutting through on its route from Kabul to Bengal, ran the Grand Trunk Road (GTR), an artery that is thousands of years old, a 'broad, smiling river of life' that carried all the people of India.<sup>436</sup> As you moved away from the GTR, however, you encountered a slower pace: 'the hinterland of Punjab, where distances are measured in footsteps and at the speed of bullock-carts'.<sup>437</sup> The Pothwar is, according to the anthropologist A.B. Rajput, a creative and inspirational land, where the Vedas were composed, a 'fountain-head of songs, poetry and tales from the earliest times', whose name means land of the poppies.<sup>438</sup> More prosaically, villages can be quite isolated, as ravines which 'wind and intersect' cover the territory, and separate villages from their neighbours.<sup>439</sup> Some areas are more fertile and productive: Chakwal district was known as *dhani dharti* or wealthy land and Rawalpindi district enjoyed rainfall that was 'fairly copious' and was 'considerably cooler' than the plains below the escarpment of the Salt Range.<sup>440</sup> The Pothwar plain was also the heart of the Indian Army, the Rawalpindi cantonment being the most important in India in the early twentieth century.<sup>441</sup>

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<sup>433</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer of India: Provincial Series: Punjab 1908* (Lahore, 1998), p. 31.

<sup>434</sup> Tan, *Garrison State*.

<sup>435</sup> Interview with Omer Salim Khan (Omer Tarin), 2018; see also Tan, *Garrison State*, p. 20 on government investment; Imran Ali, *The Punjab under Imperialism, 1885-1947* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. vii.

<sup>436</sup> Rudyard Kipling, *Kim* (London: Penguin, 1989), p. 109.

<sup>437</sup> Bapsi Sidhwa, *Ice-Candy-Man* (Delhi: Penguin, 1988), p. 108.

<sup>438</sup> Rajput, p. 43, although care must be taken to avoid his teleological nationalism when reading Rajput.

<sup>439</sup> Government of Punjab, *Rawalpindi District Gazetteer 1907* (Lahore, 1907), p. 7.

<sup>440</sup> 'Interview with Gen Anwar's Children'; *Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 674.

<sup>441</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 173.

As nearly ninety per cent of Punjabis lived in the countryside in 1901, the Punjabi village was home for many of the K6 men.<sup>442</sup> Care needs to be taken not to romanticise or fetishise ‘the’ village, something that happens in both colonial and indigenous discourse. The very use of the definite article ‘the’ before Punjabi village, indicates a flattening-out of difference, a reduction of the thousands of villages to a singularity, which can only ever be an over-simplification. Of course there were similarities between villages, in Punjab as in Devon or Northern France, but there are always differences as well. A romantic vision is given by Waris Shah, in his 1766 telling of the Punjabi love story of Hir and Ranjha, where he lovingly paints a picture of a Punjabi village waking up:

As he set out, the skirt of night was lifted and the yellow dawn appeared. The sparrow chirped and the starling began to sing. The men took their oxen out to plough, and the girls brought their milking stools and cleaned the milk cans. The women of the household began to grind corn, while others kneaded flour with their hands. The noise of the grinding stone was heard in every courtyard.<sup>443</sup>

The colonial administrator Malcolm Darling was more prosaic, writing of the ‘thick cluster of flat-roofed houses made of sun-dried bricks or clods of mud dug from the village pond, it still suggests an ant-heap rather than the home.’<sup>444</sup> Houses had a different use from those in Britain - the climate required that ‘the house is used for storage, as a kitchen, as a place in which women sleep, and as a place in which men and women have sexual relations’ while people often slept outside the house on a *charpoy*.<sup>445</sup> A house in the British countryside, with its sloping roof, beds inside and fireplace for burning coal or wood, must have seemed very exotic. The Punjabi village social life was centred on the mosque, the well and the *chaupal* (guest house).<sup>446</sup> Complete with imam and shopkeeper, with food grown locally and everything to hand, villages were self-supporting and self-sufficient, in the same way that a Punjabi animal transport company was able to

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<sup>442</sup> Balwant Singh Saini, *The Social & Economic History of the Punjab 1901-1939: (Including Haryana & Himachal Pradesh)* (Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 1975), p. 23.

<sup>443</sup> Waris Shah, *The Adventures of Hir & Ranjha* (Karachi: Lion Art Press, 1966), p. 37.

<sup>444</sup> Malcolm Darling, *Punjab Peasant in Prosperity and Debt* (London: Oxford University Press, 1925), p. xiv.

<sup>445</sup> Cohn, *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilisation*, p. 120.

<sup>446</sup> Saini, p. 115.

look after itself in France or Britain. Indeed, each company must have somehow resembled a village, transplanted from rural India to rural France, and then again to rural Wales, England and Scotland.

The company resembled a village except in one crucial aspect: there were no women or children present. This was a deeply gendered, overwhelmingly masculine environment. There is a profound gap at the heart of this story, a gender void, an empty space for women to step into. A gap that the men felt keenly, which may go some way to explain how happy they were to meet and interact with women (and children) during their time in Europe – explored below in chapter 3. Their identities as men were performed through their daily practice in work, play and eating, as well as their seeking for female companionship - ‘the accomplishment of an always tenuous heterosexuality’ as Judith Butler puts it.<sup>447</sup> The only reference to homosexual behaviour comes from 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, shortly after their capture in June 1940. Hexley writes of a German officer who cycles up & down the column, and Abuzar explains:

hesitatingly in a round about way... It appeared he was a homeo-sexualist [sic] and was going systematically down the column trying to find a kindred spirit among the men by questions and signs. I doubted this at first but TD Abuzar called up some men and from their replies to my questions and imitations of the motions of the enemy officer...<sup>448</sup>

From this reference at least, the men stuck to their tenuous heterosexuality. Of course, an absence of evidence does not mean that these men did not have sex with other men, or desire such sex. Further research could unearth other stories.

Another crucial way that the men expressed their masculinity, or had it expressed for them, was as members of a ‘Martial Race’. The Martial Race theory, as propounded by generations of colonial soldiers and administrators, stated that there were some groups of people – some ‘races’ – that were inherently warlike.<sup>449</sup> These groups included such ‘savage representations of masculinity’ as Scottish Highlanders and West African Hausa, as well as Gurkhas

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<sup>447</sup> Judith Butler, *The Judith Butler Reader*, ed. by Sara Salih (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), p. 247.

<sup>448</sup> Hexley, p. 12.

<sup>449</sup> The classic expression comes within George MacMunn, *The Martial Races of India* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, 1932).

and Sikhs in India.<sup>450</sup> The men of K6 were Punjabi Muslims (PMs), another crucial Indian martial race, helping to form the backbone of the British Indian Army, and therefore automatically possessing, and required to show 'masculinity...fidelity, bravery and loyalty'.<sup>451</sup> In Punjab at that time, male meant soldier meant British Army, and performing the rituals of soldier-hood meant performing masculinity. As boys, they would have seen men around them joining the army and going to the Great War, and thus their loyalty was won in their villages, before they even enlisted.<sup>452</sup> Military service was a way of life, and, according to the British recruitment handbook, 'looked on by the best Punjabi Musalman Rajputs as their true *métier*, and all the best known families have given sons to the Indian Army'.<sup>453</sup> That identity implied strict adherence to discipline, a sense of loyalty to the Raj, and a strong sense of *izzat* or honour. The men needed to be aware of their rank and number – the essential defining characteristics of any soldier – in February 1941 Hills insisted that all his men learn how to 'write his name and number in Roman Urdu'.<sup>454</sup> They were required to be aware of the sensitivities of uniform and insignia - much more complicated in France and Britain than at home in India. There was a strong sense of static, unilinear and collective male identity here – they stood in ranks, they looked the same and they behaved in the same way from 1857 to 1947, and Ashraf was both their archetype and their role model. Unlike the majority of their colleagues in the British Army, they were pre-war professionals, who had volunteered to join the army, so the pressure to conform was considerable. Chris Bayly gives a summary of why they had joined up: a combination of pay and expenses, gaining new skills, and even the influence of Hollywood films, all topped off with family honour.<sup>455</sup> It was this military identity more than any other that has led to their selective forgetting in South Asia. Unlike the INA and the 950 regiment who are sometimes seen as heroes (as explored in chapter 1), the men who fought for

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<sup>450</sup> Streets, p. 1.

<sup>451</sup> Tan, *Garrison State*, p. 65.

<sup>452</sup> Tan, *Garrison State*, p. 26.

<sup>453</sup> James Masson Wikeley, *Recruiting Handbooks for the Indian Army: Punjabi Musalmans* (Calcutta: Government of India, 1915), p. 4.

<sup>454</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

<sup>455</sup> C. A. Bayly, 'The Nation Within: British India at War, 1939-1947', in *Warfare, Religion, and Society in Indian History*, ed. by Raziuddin Aquil and Kaushik Roy (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 265–85 (p. 301).

the British are hard to construct in such a positive manner in India or Pakistan, and so they slid away from the collective memory over a period of decades.

The men of Force K6, mostly born in the period between 1890 and 1920, were growing up in a time of massive political and social change. We know their ages because Captain Empey, one of the medical staff attached to K6, listed the ages of 263 men in K6 in 1942: a quarter were under twenty-five years old, a quarter between twenty-five and twenty-nine, and the other half over thirty, with thirteen per cent being aged forty or more.<sup>456</sup> So the period from the turn of the century to 1930 is important as the period when they were growing up, and many of them were children during the Great War. This war uprooted thousands of their fathers and uncles, taking them to Mesopotamia and France and Gallipoli (a significant few K6 men had also served in that war). After 1918, movements for some degree of home rule were increasingly felt throughout India, with the notorious Jallianwala Bagh massacre taking place in 1919 in the heart of Punjab, at Amritsar. During the Second World War, the government of Punjab was initially in the hands of the staunchly loyalist Unionist Party, run by Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, known as the 'soldier premier'.<sup>457</sup> His eldest son Shaukat Hyat Khan joined the army before the war, fought in East Africa and later visited K6 in Britain.<sup>458</sup> Writing in the 1990s, he portrayed his father's attitude in 1939 as being one of pragmatic loyalism: 'if the Punjab could help win the war it would bring a strong moral case for a free India or at least Dominion status'.<sup>459</sup> Thus the war dominated all aspects of life in Punjab, with supplies of manpower and food that 'surpassed herculean efforts' of 1914.<sup>460</sup> Villages were stretched to near breaking point.

Whether they liked it or not, the K6 men all started off as citizens of British India, subjects of the British crown, and therefore required to sing 'God Save the King'. In 1947 however, almost all them acquired a new identity, one that was

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<sup>456</sup> William Stewart Empey, 'The Effect of Change of Environment on the Incidence and Type of Tuberculosis in Indian Troops' (unpublished MD, Queens University Belfast, 1942), p. 4.

<sup>457</sup> Yasmin Khan, *The Raj at War: A People's History of India's Second World War* (London, 2015), p. 221; 38; Tai Yong Tan, *The Garrison State: The Military, Government and Society in Colonial Punjab, 1849-1947* (New Delhi, 2005), p. 283.

<sup>458</sup> Shaukat Hyat Khan, *The Nation That Lost Its Soul: Memoirs of a Freedom Fighter* (Lahore: Jang, 1999).

<sup>459</sup> Shaukat Hyat Khan, *The Nation That Lost Its Soul: Memoirs of a Freedom Fighter*, p. 35.

<sup>460</sup> I.A. Talbot, 'Deserted Collaborators: The Political Background to the Rise and Fall of the Punjab Unionist Party', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, IX.1 (1982), 73–93 (p. 82).



new to the world: citizens of Pakistan. So the nation, a particular marker of collective identity and one of the 'two great incubuses of historiography' changed for them whether they liked it or not.<sup>461</sup> Like the lunatics in the story *Toba Tek Singh*, Manto's famous depiction of Partition, they woke up and found themselves in a different country, even though they had stayed in the same place.<sup>462</sup> There is no evidence that these men felt strongly 'Indian' or even 'British' at any stage: indeed they may have identified much more with Punjab as homeland. It is also worth recording that in analysing the primary and secondary sources on Punjab, neither the colonial British nor the modern Pakistani sources are quite neutral on their stance, so care is needed to avoid transferring their bias.

Many of the mule drivers of K6 were from farming families: indeed many of their descendants still farm the same land. Agriculture was central to their identities. Although famous for the quality of its 'rich alluvial soil', it was the absence or presence of water that made all the difference to Punjabi farmers a century ago when the K6 men were growing up.<sup>463</sup> Rainfall in South Asia is highly seasonal, and if the rains do not come when expected, this can lead to 'widespread distress'.<sup>464</sup> It must have been very strange for these men to come to Britain where rain can come at any time of year, and is invariably cold in temperature, unlike the regular, warm rain of the monsoon. The British government's creation of irrigated 'canal colonies' in the west of the region from 1885 was an essential step in developing agriculture, transforming arid wasteland into rich farming areas.<sup>465</sup> However, this usual discourse on Punjabi farming does not apply to the majority of the men we are considering, who came from the Pothwari plateau, which was not, and is still not irrigated, and where the soil is often of poor quality. Here the water comes from rain, well and pond, and the Persian wheel or *Rehat* is still seen as an essential way to water the crops: an ox turning a chain of buckets. Agriculture, then as now, was by no means a passport to wealth, indeed being free of debt in the inter-war period was 'no mean achievement'.<sup>466</sup> The 1908 Imperial Gazetteer calculated that it took four and a

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<sup>461</sup> C. A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2003), p. 199.

<sup>462</sup> Saadat Hassan Manto, *Black Margins* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>463</sup> Saini, p. 2.

<sup>464</sup> Saini, p. 34.

<sup>465</sup> Talbot, p. 76.

<sup>466</sup> Rajit K. Mazumder, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab* (Delhi: Orient Blackswan, 2003), p. 27.

half rupees per month to feed a family, plus another one and a half rupees for 'furniture, clothing and other necessities'.<sup>467</sup> Such seemingly small sums may have evaded a farming family struggling to win a living from a few *kanals* of land.<sup>468</sup> As the old Punjabi riddle has it *Chitti kukri chitte pair, Chal meri kukri shehr-o-shehr* (Little white hen with little white feet, Run my hen: every town, every street): the answer is a silver rupee, always escaping from our hands.<sup>469</sup>

We can tell the importance of agriculture to the men of K6 from a number of sources. Their newsletter ran regular features on the price of grains at home. They visited several farms during their time in the UK and helped out on numerous occasions, and they raised questions about agriculture in the UK and at home during their monthly *darbar* sessions. They must have found several surprises in the way farmers work in the UK. The rectangular Punjabi fields are flat, to allow for flood irrigation, and surrounded by a low ridge of soil, unlike the hilly, irregular shaped fields surrounded by hedgerows and Devon banks that they found in the counties of England and Wales. They must have puzzled over how British farmers could irrigate a sloping field. Two harvests can be had in one year in Punjab: the *rabi* of wheat that is planted in January and harvested in May, and *kharif* of maize planted in summer.<sup>470</sup> Other crops were planted too: *sarson* (mustard) and *gargir* (rocket), for example, as well as a wide variety of fruit and vegetables.<sup>471</sup> Trees dotted the landscape – the *thika* or acacia is pervasive, as is the eucalyptus. Both of these could also be found in Europe, but the tree-minded among the men would have missed the majestic *bol* or Banyan tree (*ficus benghalensis*). This extraordinary arboreal monarch grows wide rather than tall. When it feels a little unstable, it drops down a creeper from a branch, which then takes root, thickens and becomes a new trunk. Thus over the decades a banyan may develop many trunks to support a wide canopy, and so the banyan resembles a little wood all by itself. The Mughals put numbers on some of the larger specimens and used them to help their armies navigate. Another tree

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<sup>467</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 70.

<sup>468</sup> Punjabi land is counted in *kanals*, one *kanal* being around 25 metres by 25 metres, and eight *kanals* making an acre.

<sup>469</sup> *Rajput*, p. 61.

<sup>470</sup> Cohn, *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilisation*, pp. 15–16.

<sup>471</sup> For a sense of the fruit and vegetables available, see *An Eastern Market* (British Instructional Films, 1928), British Film Institute <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6aLDcOPTLjw>>; See also Javed Mirza and Mumtaz Bokhari, *Fruits and Vegetables of Pakistan* (Rawalpindi: Ferozsons, 1996).

familiar to the K6 carpenters such as Sada Khan (Figure 21 in chapter 3) was the *thali* or shisham (*dalbergia sissoo*). This large, deep-rooted tree tends to grow fast and crooked. Its grey bark, vertically marked, peels and sheds like the plane trees the men saw in France and London. With yellow flowers that emerge in March, and brown keys or seeds that stay on the tree throughout the mild Punjabi winter, the men would have looked around in vain for anything similar in Britain. They turned to willow for *miswak* or teeth-cleaning twigs, something that the shisham is much used for, mentioned in both Muslim *hadith* and in Sikh scripture.<sup>472</sup> As firewood for cooking and forges in Britain, they would have been forced to use local varieties like oak, ash and hazel, and perhaps would have missed the *pulai* (*alstonia scholaris*), famed for producing the best firewood in Punjab.<sup>473</sup>

Some of the animals encountered in the European hills and valleys would have been familiar, some strange and exotic. In place of the *cheels* or kites which are omnipresent in Punjab, they might have been surprised to find seagulls doing the scavenging work in Britain. They may have found the grouse in the heather and the seals in the bays of highland Scotland unusual, but one thing that was familiar was the sheep. The breeds were different (there are no fat-tailed sheep in Britain), but they are still the same *ovis aries*. The presence of sheep would have been a regular part of camp life for them, and the omnipresence of good grass would have been a pleasant surprise.<sup>474</sup> The highland crofters and Welsh hill farmers were happy to sell them stock from their herds, for each company needed around forty live sheep per week: one sheep per fifty-four men per day.<sup>475</sup> They were often in just the right place to find such meat: Lairg is the home of the largest lamb sale in Europe - 40,000 in a single day at its peak.<sup>476</sup> Film footage from Ashbourne shows Major Akbar walking past a marquee, with a small herd of sheep wandering free in the background. A small dog wanders past as well,

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<sup>472</sup> Interview with Edgar Parry Williams, 2001.

<sup>473</sup> For some Punjabi trees, see Sayed Qamar Mehdi, 'Trees of Pakistan', *Dawn*, 2 August 2012 <<https://www.dawn.com/news/739177>> [accessed 2 August 2019].

<sup>474</sup> J.L.S. Harrison, *Sheep Lined up Ready for Slaughter*, 1943, Imperial War Museum, H29508 shows a large herd of sheep behind chicken wire at the K6 camp in Crickhowell.

<sup>475</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6', 1940, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5879.

<sup>476</sup> 'High Prices as 15,648 Lambs Sold at Lairg', *Northern Times*, 17 August 2016 <<https://www.northern-times.co.uk/news/high-prices-as-15648-lambs-sold-at-lairg-148070/>> [accessed 2 August 2019].

probably an officer's pet or a stray, not a sheepdog.<sup>477</sup> The constant presence of dogs must have been unusual, for dogs are unwelcome in Islam, and the mouth of the dog is considered *haram* by some Muslims.<sup>478</sup> To see dogs, including sheepdogs, being welcomed, with human hands stroking and being licked, must have seemed repellent to these men of Punjab, and yet that would have been one of many micro-culture shocks they experienced. Cattle are an important feature of rural life in Britain, as they are in Punjab, where they are used for ploughing as well as meat and milk. Unlike in Britain, cattle manure is used for fertiliser and for fuel.<sup>479</sup> Cow dung is formed into *thapi* or patties, and then put on walls to dry – this odourless fuel is then used in places where wood is scarce. Donkeys, mules and camels were common as pack animals, and goats were used for milk and meat: none of these were common in mid-century Britain. British livestock was generally in better condition too. On visiting the royal farm at Stoke Climsland in Cornwall, men of the Reinforcement Unit were 'deeply interested' in the herd of eighty pedigree Devons, and a photo in the *Scottish Daily Record* shows a sepoy leading a sturdy looking bull to pasture.<sup>480</sup> Their Punjab roots were strong, their military identities cemented, but there were other aspects of their subjectivities that were granted from an early age.

### **Identities at heart: names, food and religion**

Wherever they are born, children acquire culture and identity rapidly from birth onwards in a process that sociologists call 'socialisation'. A baby is given a name soon after birth, with its mother's milk it starts to develop familiarity with certain tastes: it eats what the mother eats. Soon the child becomes aware of religion: not in a theoretical way, but through practice evident around. The men of K6, as children in Punjab in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century, absorbed these influences around them. Daily bodily practice was an outward manifestation of the 'givens' of the culture they grew up in. Later in life, as we will see, some chose to move away from the influences, and prolonged exposure to life in

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<sup>477</sup> Pathé.

<sup>478</sup> Ingrid Mattson, 'What's up with Muslims and Dogs?', *Ingrid Mattson*, 2011 <[ingridmattson.org/article/whats-up-with-muslims-and-dogs/](http://ingridmattson.org/article/whats-up-with-muslims-and-dogs/)> [accessed 29 June 2018].

<sup>479</sup> Saini, p. 10.

<sup>480</sup> 'Greatest of Honours', *Western Morning News*, 16 November 1940; 'Far From Home', *Daily Record and Mail*, 7 August 1940.

Europe proved to dilute others, but these central aspects of identity can be hard to escape.

At the core of a person's identity is their name. A name is an essential tool to humanise somebody – when your name is taken away, you start to lose your identity. We are all given names by our parents when we are born, and some people acquire other names later in life, through marriage, as a nickname or by changing their name. By looking at the names of the K6 men we can learn a lot about who they were and where they came from. The linguist Tariq Rahman, in his study of onomastics in Pakistan, points out the importance of names, suggesting that Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* shows us that names 'are a matter of life and death and not pointless labels', and that 'names have cultural capital'.<sup>481</sup> In South Asia the study of names has long held a fascination for locals and imperialists alike, with R.C. Temple's 1883 work on Punjab an example of orientalist's desire to categorise and understand, drawing on census data from the district of Ambala.<sup>482</sup> Within the complex society of colonial India, names were a clear way to indicate one's religion, signifying implicit meanings to the in-group, while declaring one's faith and caste alignment to members of other groups. The seventh day after a birth in a Muslim family brings the ceremony of *aqiqah* or shaving. On this day the baby's head is shaved, the *adhan* or call to prayer is recited into their right ear, and then the child is named.<sup>483</sup> One of the father's obligations to his new child is to give her or him a good name, one that serves to 'bind... the child into the family unit', often by reflecting the name of a grandparent.<sup>484</sup> Within Islam (and almost all of Force K6 were Muslims), there are names that are preferred and names that are shunned.<sup>485</sup> A hadith says:

Call yourselves by the names of the Prophets. The names dearest to Allah are Abdullah and Abdur-Rahman, the truest are Harith and Hammam and the worst are Harb and Murrah.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>481</sup> Rahman, pp. 2, 54.

<sup>482</sup> R.C. Temple, *A Dissertation on the Proper Names of Panjâbîs, with Special Reference to the Proper Names of Villagers in the Eastern Panjâb* (Bombay: London Calcutta Education Society's Press, 1883).

<sup>483</sup> Rajput, p. 135; Temple, p. 79.

<sup>484</sup> Annemarie Schimmel, *Islamic Names* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1989), p. 14.

<sup>485</sup> Schimmel.

<sup>486</sup> Sulaymān ibn al-Ash'ath Abū Da'ūd, *Sunan Abī Da'ūd*, trans. by Ahmad Hasan (Lahore: Muh Ashraf, 1984), p. 1377.

This indicates that in the time of the prophet, some Bedouin families gave their sons names that would seem very strange today – *harb* being the Arabic word for war, for example, while *harith* means ploughman. As Rahman says, ‘the giving of a name... is an act of power’.<sup>487</sup>

A look at the list of K6 personal names gives a fascinating insight into their religions and origins. As part of the research process for this thesis, a database of over 2200 names of men (and one woman) associated with Force K6 has been compiled, drawn from a wide variety of archival documents in the UK and South Asia (see appendix A). This specificity of names makes the men of K6 real, concrete – it draws them out of the shadows of anonymity. Of the 2187 Indian names on that list, just fifty-two are Hindu, Sikh or Christian, giving a percentage of 97.7% Muslim and 2.3% non-Muslim. Nearly half of the fifty-two non-Muslims are sweepers, six are officers and five are VCOs with medical responsibilities: all categories that fall outside the core jobs of drivers, tradesmen and NCOs. It is not possible to draw any firm conclusions about the correlation between name and occupation from the database. Almost all the tradesmen are Muslim, except one Hindu *dhobi* (laundryman), one farrier who may be a Hindu (his name was Guggar), three Hindu water carriers and twenty-four of the twenty-nine sweepers. There were, however, five drivers with non-Muslim names, including Jug Lall and Waje Singh (of whom more anon). Colonial administration required precise nomenclature, but nomenclature that fitted their needs. It is impossible to have a modern bureaucratic state without names, but in this case the names recorded are different from local practice, focusing exclusively on given names and service numbers.<sup>488</sup> Just as white British soldiers usually had a first name and a surname, so the records show most of the men of K6 with two names, but the father’s name and village name is almost never recorded.<sup>489</sup> The tradition in Muslim India, however, has no surname or fixed family name, and a ‘caste’ name is also optional. So men would be known by their given name (single or double), plus their father’s name, or village of origin or caste name. In a few cases, where there

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<sup>487</sup> Rahman, p. 54.

<sup>488</sup> Rahman, p. 2.

<sup>489</sup> These data may have been recorded at the point of enlistment, but such lists have not yet come to light in the research process.

were VCOs with identical names (VCOs' service numbers not usually being recorded), they are differentiated by use of the capitalised Roman numeral, giving us Jemadar Ghulam Mohd III and Jemadar Ghulam Mohd IV on the same list for repatriation in December 1942.<sup>490</sup> The potential for confusion was considerable.

Not surprisingly, the most common first name on the list is Mohammed, with 317 entries.<sup>491</sup> There are fifty-one Alis, but just eighteen Ahmeds. Names starting with *'abd* are common, as indicated by the hadith quoted above. This prefix is the Arabic word for slave and should traditionally be accompanied by one of the names of God, thus Abdul Rahman breaks down as *'abd* = slave, *el* = of the, *Rahman* = compassionate: the slave of the compassionate.<sup>492</sup> There were thirteen Abdul Rahmans in the database (including two variant spellings) and twelve Abdullahs, among a total of ninety-five names starting with *'abd*.<sup>493</sup> The single most popular name on the list, however, is Khan, which appears as a first name twenty-five times and a second name 515 times: 540 altogether. Thus over a quarter of the men had the name 'khan'. This ultra-common name has diverged from its origin - Temple explains that it used to be the equivalent of 'Chief... in Scotland, among the clans, but nowadays Khans are as common... as Esquires in London'.<sup>494</sup> There were also eighty-five men with the name 'Shah' as first or second name, a Persian word meaning king.<sup>495</sup> The fact that so many of the men had names which are closely related to the traditional canon of Muslim names does not, of itself, indicate that these men or their parents were especially religious. Rather, it shows a combination of custom and aspiration: these were the names available to Muslims having children in the early twentieth century, and a more 'pure Muslim' name may indicate the parents' desire for their new child to be a good follower of the faith.

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<sup>490</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6', 1942, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5881.

<sup>491</sup> Including all variants such as Mohd, Muhammad.

<sup>492</sup> Schimmel, p. 20.

<sup>493</sup> There are also 92 men with the name Ghulam, also meaning servant or slave.

<sup>494</sup> Temple, p. 72.

<sup>495</sup> Rahman, p. 211.

More interesting perhaps are some of the less popular names that indicate local Punjabi preferences and roots outside Punjab.<sup>496</sup> There are, for example, a scattering of Muslim names of United Provinces (UP) provenance – including Sadiqui, Naqvi and Jaffery. There are others that are clearly Pashtun, from what was then North West Frontier Province, like Painda or Ajaib. Fifty-two men were called ‘rose’ or *gul* or one of its derivatives: Gulistan for rose garden or Gulab for rosewater. Other names that derive from nature include Taus (peacock) Budar (moon) and Bagh (leopard or tiger). Some names are more exotic: Misri means Egyptian sugar, and Khor Dil is sister’s heart. Some names may have started as nicknames: Nikka means small and Shoda means show-off. There are also a number of old-fashioned, rural ‘quintessentially folk-islamic names’ such as Piran Ditta (given or granted by a *pir* or saint) and Allah Ditta (God-given), which occurs eighteen times.<sup>497</sup>

Of particular interest are those occasions when a soldier changed their name, for this may indicate a fundamental shift of identity. There are three instances recorded in the newsletter *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*. In May 1943 there was a double announcement: Jemadar Muhammad Ishrat Yar Khan of Bareilly in UP became M.I.Y. Khan, a strategy designed to ensure easier recording in official documents, and in line with the common South Asian practice of using initials only. At the same time, Driver Abdul Khan of 42<sup>nd</sup> Company became Abdur Rahman. This is an interesting move and may have taken place for religious reasons. Properly speaking, ‘Abdul’ is not actually a name by itself, but a prefix, as noted above. Calling your son Abdul is an indication of a less educated, less religious family: Temple called it ‘a queer common abbreviated Indian name’.<sup>498</sup> This man decided to move away from the identity granted at his *aqiqah* and to take one of the names dearest to Allah: slave of the compassionate. Perhaps this mule driver had been on a spiritual journey during his time in the UK. The final example is also of a religious nature. In 1943, 815932 Driver Waje Singh of 25<sup>th</sup> Company announced he would be changing his name to Shaikh Ghulam Mustafa.<sup>499</sup> The name Waje Singh is a Sikh name, whereas his new name is a

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<sup>496</sup> Analysis of these names combines Temple, Schimmel, Rahman and an interview with Pakistani academic and poet Omer Salim Khan (Omer Tarin) in Abbotabad on March 13<sup>th</sup> 2018.

<sup>497</sup> Rahman, p. 41.

<sup>498</sup> Temple, p. 43.

<sup>499</sup> ‘Nam Ki Tabdili’, *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 3 December 1943, Imperial War Museum, E6705.



Muslim one. The honorific term *shaikh* may be used to mean ‘teacher’, but is also often used in South Asia to indicate a convert.<sup>500</sup> Waje Singh/Ghulam Mustafa may have been a driver with 25<sup>th</sup> Company since their departure from Punjab in December 1939, or he may have come later as a replacement. In any event, as a Sikh surrounded by Muslims, he decided to convert. Perhaps, knowing that they were soon to return to India, he wanted to stay with his barrack-mates, and so decided to join them in worship as well as in work.<sup>501</sup> Perhaps he was making a strategic decision to fit in with those around him, to assimilate and conform. In this case the change of name represents both a rebellion from his roots, and an act of conforming to what was around him. A fundamental shift of identity had taken place.

As 97.7% of the men of K6 were Muslims, some examination of Islam in South Asia and Britain is in order. Much ink has been poured on paper on the nature of Islam in South Asia, and the extent to which a ‘Muslim Indian’ was a Muslim, an Indian or both.<sup>502</sup> Sophie Gilliat-Ray rightly warns us of the danger of seeing a Muslim citizen as primarily or only Muslim, and not ‘simply as human being’.<sup>503</sup> So we must tread carefully in unpicking the actions of these men seventy-five years ago, and the assumed motivations behind those actions. Equally there is a danger of foregrounding their Muslim-ness at the expense of other aspects of their identities, for current political usage. The men may become a site of conflict between those who wish to claim them as Muslims or as Pakistanis, as heroes or as pioneers of British race equality or as victims of racism. Current identity politics among British Muslims and Pakistanis may point towards classing these men as Muslims first and foremost, but there is no evidence from that time to support that view.

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<sup>500</sup> Temple, p. 17.

<sup>501</sup> There is also the faint possibility that he was changing only his name, as what Rahman calls a destigmatisation strategy, but retaining his birth religion.

<sup>502</sup> See for example Francis Robinson, *Islam and Muslim History in South Asia* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000); Markus Daechsel, ‘Military Islamisation in Pakistan and the Spectre of Colonial Perceptions’, *Contemporary South Asia*, 6.2 (1997), 141–60; Markus Daechsel, ‘Islam and Development in Pakistan’ (Centre for Imperial and Global History, Exeter University, 2016); Nile Green, *Islam and the Army in Colonial India: Sepoy Religion in the Service of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Javed Majeed, ‘Pan-Islamism and Deracialisation in the Thought of Muhammad Iqbal’, in *The Concept of Race in South Asia*, ed. by Peter Robb (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 304–25.

<sup>503</sup> Sophie Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain: An Introduction* (Cambridge, 2010), p. xi quoting Hussain.

Francis Robinson has pointed out that one-third of the world's Muslims live in South Asia and that one third of the citizens of South Asia are Muslim: the past and the present of South Asia and Islam are intricately interlinked.<sup>504</sup> Many writers have explored the extent to which Islam in India is distinctive or different from elsewhere, in language and customs, in the use of music and painting, and crucially in the ways that Hinduism and Islam have mixed and cross-fertilised. Liberal writers inside and outside the region point towards the mixed character of Punjabi villages prior to 1947: Malcolm Darling remarked on the common ancestry of Punjabi Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs, and said they were as 'mixed up as the ingredients of a well-made pilau'.<sup>505</sup> Of course, 1947 saw that pilau being systematically deconstructed, in the most violent way imaginable. These men were not the first Muslims to come to Britain, however, although they may have been the first large organised group to stay here for an extended period. Although Muslim-British contact goes back to the earliest days of Islam, widespread British exposure to Islam started in India from the eighteenth century onwards, as the East India Company made deeper inroads into the country.<sup>506</sup> With this increasing contact, migration from India followed, a mixture of uneducated *lascars* (sailors) and sophisticated residents like Dean Mahomed, who introduced Indian food and head massage to Britain and died in Brighton in 1851.<sup>507</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century there were an estimated 10,000 Muslims in the UK, and they already had a purpose-built mosque at Woking.<sup>508</sup>

The elegant Shah Jahan Mosque, by the side of the main railway line from Portsmouth to Waterloo, was to be an important *lieu de memoire* for the men of K6. It was founded in 1889 by the Jewish Hungarian-British linguist and Orientalist Gottlieb Leitner, registrar of Punjab university and principal of Government college in Lahore: thus Punjabi links and influences were present from the very birth of the building.<sup>509</sup> In late Victorian Britain it became a centre

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<sup>504</sup> Robinson, p. 62.

<sup>505</sup> Quoted in *Inventing Boundaries: Gender, Politics and the Partition of India*, ed. by Mushirul Hasan (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 32.

<sup>506</sup> Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*.

<sup>507</sup> Visram, p. 37.

<sup>508</sup> Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*, p. 32.

<sup>509</sup> Gilliat-Ray, *Muslims in Britain*, p. 174.

for elite converts to Islam as well as a growing South Asian diaspora.<sup>510</sup> It was therefore 'a reminder that Victorian Britain embraced a wider range of cultural expression than its straitlaced image suggests' and that peaceful co-existence between Muslim and non-Muslims in the UK was the norm before the Windrush generation.<sup>511</sup> During the Great War the Woking Mosque was an important place for the many Muslim Indian soldiers who were convalescing in the South East of England, and several were buried at the Horsell Burial Ground nearby.<sup>512</sup> Its influence increased in the inter-war period, until it became 'the symbol and centre of Muslim activity in Britain'.<sup>513</sup> Indian and other Muslims visiting Britain saw it as a home-from-home: with Nawabs' sons rubbing shoulders with visiting politicians. So when a small detachment of K6 arrived in Britain on leave in May 1940, it was a logical place to include on their itinerary.<sup>514</sup> Four short weeks later, after Dunkirk, the 25<sup>th</sup> and 32<sup>nd</sup> companies visited *in toto*, marching from nearby Pirbright on a Friday morning. The mosque became their official leave centre from May 1941, with parties of thirty arriving weekly, and regular trips to London, Waterloo station being just twenty-five minutes up the line. A Risaldar from the 47 SDS was seconded as camp commandant, together with a Bell tent and a store tent, clearly visible in official photos (see figure 10), and three Nissen huts were built.<sup>515</sup> Later in the war the leave centre was transferred to Roehampton, and then Edinburgh.

Everywhere the men were stationed they found a place to pray, for a mosque can be any place that is used in prayer - a tent, a building or in the open air: film footage from Ashbourne shows the latter.<sup>516</sup> At their northernmost posting, the village of Lairg, they made use of a corrugated building, previously used as the United Free Church. Joan Leed still recalls hearing the call to prayer, and

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<sup>510</sup> K. Humayun Ansari, 'The Woking Mosque: A Case Study of Muslim Engagement with British Society since 1889', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 21.3 (2002), 1–24 (p. 10) lists Lord Headley, Marmaduke Pickthall; Sir Archibald Hamilton and Lady Evelyn Cobbold as converts.

<sup>511</sup> Robert Winder, *Bloody Foreigners: The Story of Immigration to Britain* (London: Abacus, 2004), p. 215.

<sup>512</sup> 'New War Burials; 1939 - Indian Graves In UK', 1939, Commonwealth War Graves Commission archives, Maidenhead, A/72/1.

<sup>513</sup> Ansari, 'The Woking Mosque', p. 1.

<sup>514</sup> 'Hamare Rukhsati Woking Men', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (London, 25 May 1940), p. 1, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>515</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6', 1943, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5882; Purwez Salamat, *The Woking Shahjahan Mosque* (Chichester, 2008), p. 57.

<sup>516</sup> Pathé.

seeing the shoes lined up neatly outside.<sup>517</sup> At Rossington Hall in Yorkshire the local paper waxed lyrical about their makeshift place of prayer:

There was a plain carpet on the grass, railed off with a cord, no roof, no sides, open to the sun, and it is on that carpet that these men from India assemble five times each day and make their dutiful obeisance to Allah the All-knowing. Their mullah, or religious leader, turbaned, bearded, robed and sandalled, without a word of English, was good enough to recite a few verses in Arabic from the Koran - including the Fatiha, or opening chapter, which almost corresponds to our Lord's Prayer and is recited by Moslems on all special occasions. His sonorous tones, now low, now rising to a higher level, rang out in that typical English scene, and made many of us wonder if ever the Koran had been recited in a stranger setting.<sup>518</sup>

A little later, Watkin Evans of Croesor recalled the prayers of one of the medical staff:

I remember there was a doctor there and he used to come up to the house, an Indian doctor, a tall chap, a big man, and he came up to Coed Ty nearly every day. And every time he comes in, straight upstairs and he wanted a towel and he was praying on the towel in the bedroom... He used to pray for about 10 minutes. We used to peep to see what was going on but he would close the door - one could not hear him. My parents didn't mind. He was a nice chap, a very nice chap. Very polite. With quite good English.<sup>519</sup>

Wherever they prayed, the beautiful appearance of the first mosque built in Britain must have been a welcoming beacon for group after group, staying in their memories for years afterwards. Choudry Wali Mohammed wrote 'we returned to India after a last longing look at the Shahjahan Mosque.'<sup>520</sup> His son runs a successful taxi business in the same town today.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>517</sup> Interview with Joan Leed, Donny MacDonald and Marlyn Price, 2016.

<sup>518</sup> E.P., 'A Colourful Glimpse of the Orient in Yorkshire: Young and Old Punjabi Warriors Meet a "Great English Sahib"', *Doncaster Chronicle*, 8 August 1940.

<sup>519</sup> Interview with Watkin Evans, 2002.

<sup>520</sup> Salamat, *The Woking Shahjahan Mosque*, p. 58.

<sup>521</sup> 'Interview with Zubair Mohammed'.



Figure 10: Tented accommodation in the grounds of Woking Mosque (D5153, Imperial War Museum)

All the available evidence shows that the men of K6 were practising Muslims, despite what is written in the British official recruitment handbook: that not all Punjabi Muslims are ‘devout’, but are satisfied with six basic practices.<sup>522</sup> As well as an abundance of photographs of them at Woking Mosque, there are also references to their being present at the opening of the East London Mosque in August 1941, and a new mosque in Cardiff.<sup>523</sup> Many of the relatives interviewed during field work attest to their religious adherence later in life. Kalsoom Akhtar, for example, said of her father ‘he was a pious and devoted worshipper and used to perform Tahajjud prayer in the mosque.’<sup>524</sup> Nighat, grand-daughter of Saddler Nawab Khan of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, still has the *Rehal* or Qur’an stand that her grandfather made as a prisoner-of-war in Germany, and a 1943 photo in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* shows a group of seven men from 3<sup>rd</sup> Company reading the

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<sup>522</sup> Wikeley, p. 28. The six mentioned being ‘The performance of circumcision; The five daily prayers; The assembled prayers on Friday in a mosque; The abhorrence of pork; The clipping of the moustache in the centre; Observance of the fast of Ramazan and the celebration of Id’ .

<sup>523</sup> *Wudu at Opening of East London Mosque*, 1941, Imperial War Museum, D5137; ‘War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, 1943’.

<sup>524</sup> Interview with Kalsoom Akhtar, 2018. Tahajjud is an optional night-time prayer.

Qur'an together.<sup>525</sup> When they waved goodbye to the King and Queen at Ashbourne in August 1940, they shouted *Allah u Akbar* and *Ya Ali* – traditional war cries of Punjab.<sup>526</sup> As Markus Daeschel puts it 'religion was never obliterated or personalised but was simultaneously encouraged and controlled by institutionalisation.'<sup>527</sup> An eye on the *maulvi* was crucial if the officers were to keep the men in good order.

These *maulvis* or Imams were attached to each unit. We know the names of four of these men: Rafi ullah Shah of 3<sup>rd</sup> Company, Mohammed Arif of 25<sup>th</sup> Company, Abdul Ghani of 32<sup>nd</sup> Company and Said Ahmed Shah of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company.<sup>528</sup> Two of them are shown in film footage from Ashbourne in August 1940, offering coins to the King in the ceremony of *nuzoor*, whereby gold and silver coins are offered to a monarch, who touches and then returns them.<sup>529</sup> The duties of the *maulvi* included leading prayers five times a day, answering questions from the men relating to religion, and generally caring for their spiritual development. There is no evidence on record of sepoy disregarding the wishes of the *maulvi* or doing anything that was blatantly *haram* or forbidden (drinking alcohol or eating pork, for example). Indeed, the evidence available all points towards men who were devout in their faith, from the fifty sepoy who attended the celebrations of the Prophet's birthday in London in 1941, to the report from the *Aberdeen Evening Telegraph* that 'while in Scotland they grew to admire the Scottish people, who refused to play games on Sunday, just as they themselves strictly observed the gameless Mohammedan sabbath'.<sup>530</sup> We may never know about those occasions when individuals rebelled against their religion. As Carlo Ginzburg remarks, talking of another religion and another time 'the hearts of men are not so easily known except by God'.<sup>531</sup> The only place to read the heart is in

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<sup>525</sup> Interview with Nighat Waqas Ahmed Robena, 2018; 'Indian Contingent Jahan Apni Duniya...', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 13 August 1943, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>526</sup> 'Their Majesties the King and Queen...', *Fauji Akhbar*, 3 August 1940, Imperial War Museum.

<sup>527</sup> Daeschel, 'Military Islamisation in Pakistan and the Spectre of Colonial Perceptions', p. 147.

<sup>528</sup> 'Indian Camp an Ornamental Wonder', *Ashbourne Telegraph*, September 1940; Commanding Officer, 'War Diary, 22 Animal Transport Company', 1940, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1437; 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'; '3 Mule Company RIASC Daily Orders Part II DGIMS', 1941, National Archives of India, DGIMS 8/9/2/41.

<sup>529</sup> Pathé.

<sup>530</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6', 1941, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5880; 'Indian Soldiers' Memories of Scotland', *Evening Telegraph* (Aberdeen, 23 November 1940).

<sup>531</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms* (London: John Hopkins, 1980), p. 94.

the private writings of soldiers: such literature is extremely rare for Indian soldiers in the Second World War.<sup>532</sup>

During Ramadan (or Ramzan as it is called in South Asia), there is ample evidence of their adherence to the *roza* (fast), even though many authorities grant an exemption to soldiers on active service.<sup>533</sup> Having grown up fasting for twenty-nine or thirty days a year the men would have known how to pace themselves and avoid illness. Colonel Hills recorded in 1940:

last day of the Ramzan, which practically all of the contingent observed, and to which they have all stood up well. Parties from units despatched to the Woking Mosque for the celebrations.<sup>534</sup>

In 1942 a *hafiz* (someone who has memorised the entire Qur'an) from the contingent was allowed to officiate at the Woking Mosque for the whole of Ramadan.<sup>535</sup> This was indeed an honour, for to memorise the Qur'an is a widely-respected feat in itself, and then to be able to recite it at such a respected mosque would have increased the honour to the individual and the Contingent as a whole. That their non-Muslim officers were aware of the month and its implications indicates the seriousness with which the army establishment treated such matters.

During Ramzan or outside it, the men of K6 had brought their taste buds and their food preferences with them, as all travellers do. Food is a defining aspect of cultural identity: we learn our tastes with mothers' milk, if not *in utero*, and what we eat literally makes us. These men grew up with chillies, garlic and ginger, as well as an abundance of fruits and vegetables in season, including the 'king of fruits' itself, the mango.<sup>536</sup> The Indian Army ration tables were designed to meet nutritional needs, but also to account for these cultural preferences, even

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<sup>532</sup> KCL student Diya Gupta has written a thesis on this topic. See Diya Gupta, 'Exploring Emotional Worlds: Indian Soldiers' Letters from the Second World War', *British Library Untold Lives*, 2016 <<http://blogs.bl.uk/untoldlives/2016/12/exploring-emotional-worlds-indian-soldiers-letters-from-the-second-world-war.html>> [accessed 6 November 2018].

<sup>533</sup> *Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilisation and Religion*, ed. by Ian Richard Netton (London ; New York, 2008), p. 169.

<sup>534</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

<sup>535</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

<sup>536</sup> Mirza and Bokhari, p. 39.

if not all authorities agreed on the wisdom of following such preferences. A Major of the Canadian Medical Corps, writing after some very detailed examination of nutrition in the 14<sup>th</sup> Army in Burma, reported that the ordinary Indian soldier 'enters the Indian Army with ingrained traditional and religious prejudices about his food and eating habits' which lead to 'nutritional harm'.<sup>537</sup> There was often considerable difference between what Indian troops (IT) and British troops (BT) were given to eat, but there was never any question of feeding 'IT' the same as 'BT'. Statistics from nutritionists showed that a soldier required 3249 calories per day (rising to 4738 in the tropics), which is credible given how hard they worked - even in the quiet periods they still had to feed, water, groom and exercise their animals daily.<sup>538</sup> Their basic 'field service' ration was built around chapatis: each day they were entitled to 24 ounces of *atta* or wholemeal flour, enough for around twelve chapatis. There are several photos of chapati-making, and when they were inspected by the King and Queen at Ashbourne in August 1940, the cooks presented the Badshah with two of these traditional breads, to give to his daughters: Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret Rose.<sup>539</sup> Watkin Evans of Croesor remembered their catering arrangements well:

They had a big canteen there... You know where Bryn Pandy is, there was a cookhouse there, Indian cookhouse there. They used a pinkish lard. Every Sunday they were killing lambs. They did not buy them from the local farmers, the lambs came there by wagon. They killed the lambs by Min Afon a bit further up. They had their own butchers. I always remember going there to collect swill from the canteen and it went to Garreg Hyllidrem and this Indian he was on the top of the table, square table, making the bread with his feet, standing there. They had this big oven, half round oven, and they used to make it [chapatis] flat like a pancake and drop it on of that and give it a turn and it was ready.<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>537</sup> Robert Kark, 'Nutritional Surveys of Indian Troops 14 Army: Pioneer Corps and Army Service Corps', 1945, The National Archives, Kew, WO 203/269.

<sup>538</sup> E. M. Collingham, *The Taste of War: World War Two and the Battle for Food* (London: Penguin, 2012), p. 9.

<sup>539</sup> Commanding Officer, 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company'.

<sup>540</sup> 'Interview with Watkin Evans'.



As well as the flour, the daily ration included 3½ ounces of *dhal* or pulses, six ounces of meat, and ten ounces of vegetables.<sup>541</sup> Critically, the ration also included the South Asian essentials of chillies, garlic, ginger and turmeric - a photograph from Crickhowell in April 1943 shows one of the cooks grinding spices in a large mortar.<sup>542</sup> All of this was calculated to deliver 4500 calories per day, although Hills remarked on the tendency to overcook the vegetables, leading to a loss of Vitamin C and energy value.<sup>543</sup> Finally, each man was also entitled to tea, milk and sugar. For the Mohammed as much as for the Tommy, a brew-up was essential, consumed 'at all hours of the day' in the Indian manner 'very sweet and made, if possible, with tinned milk'.<sup>544</sup> The men were therefore very happy when they were given a mobile tea canteen in 1941 by Lt Col and Mrs Stevens: the photos of the occasion making it into their newsletter, and still taking pride of place in the house of Abdul Jalil, son of Risaldar Major Ashraf.<sup>545</sup>

As the war went on, the men's tastes evolved, and there were also experiments with new ways to supply them. To begin with, almost all their supplies, except fresh meat and vegetables, were imported from India. As Dr Empey reported:

Indian rations were provided and, as regards calorific value, were well up to the standard required for the energy expended. The vitamin content appeared adequate. There was of course a very limited supply of fruit in contrast to the unlimited quantities which these men can procure in their native land.<sup>546</sup>

They did however receive a special supply of that quintessential British fruit, the apple, for Ramadan in 1943, which ran from the start to the end of September that year: right in the middle of the apple season.<sup>547</sup> With shipping in short supply,

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<sup>541</sup> Government of India, *Scales of Rations and Supplies Issued by the R.I.A.S.C.* (Delhi: Government of India, 1941), p. 81.

<sup>542</sup> J.L.S. Harrison, *Indian Cook – Spice Mixing*, 1943, Imperial War Museum, H29507.

<sup>543</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

<sup>544</sup> 'The Indian Troops in France', *Illustrated London News*, January 1940; Kenneth Hord, 'Nothing Can Shake the Loyalty of Our Indian Troops', *Daily Mirror*, 28 July 1941.

<sup>545</sup> 'Hindustani Kantiinjant ke liye ke aram..', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 16 May 1941, p. 4, Imperial War Museum, E6705; 'Interview with Abdul Jalil'.

<sup>546</sup> Empey, p. 2.

<sup>547</sup> 'War Diary, 47 Supply Depot Section, 1943', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5894.

there were clear incentives to substitute local supplies where possible. In May 1942 they tried British manufactured *atta*, which was found to be acceptable.<sup>548</sup> There were experiments with canned and frozen meat, and on one occasion, in March 1942, when there were no chillies to be found in the UK, black pepper was issued in its place.<sup>549</sup> A little later, Hills wrote a long letter to the War Office, proposing several detailed changes to the schedule of rations.<sup>550</sup> He pointed towards the ‘changing tastes’ of the men in Europe, and proposed white bread as well as *atta*, less *dhal* and the introduction of pickles, jam and margarine: all available in the UK. He also suggested a revision to the spice mix: taking out garlic (which was not widely grown in the UK at that time and often did not last the distance from India on the boat) and adding a spice mixture, to include cumin, cloves, cinnamon and both white and green cardamom. Lime juice was preferred to lemon, the thrice weekly quarter ounce of marmite should be maintained, and the men were asking for British cigarettes rather than Indian *bidis* – particularly ‘Woodbines or Player’s Weights’. Smoking seems to have been almost universal, as it was with people around the world at the time: many photos show *hukas* or water pipes as well as cigarettes.<sup>551</sup>

An essential aspect of their diet was that their meat be *halal*, following the correct manner of slaughter (*dhabihah*).<sup>552</sup> In K6, this was done by one of the cooks, acting as a butcher. The word *bismillah* (in the name of God) was spoken, then the throat cut with a single movement of the knife, and all the blood drained. A series of photos taken at Crickhowell in April 1943 shows the cooks of 32<sup>nd</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> Company in the stages of this process: apparently there was to be an exhibition of these photos later: more exoticism in action.<sup>553</sup> The bones were sold as salvage to local bone merchants and the offal were also used but it is unclear what happened to the sheepskins.<sup>554</sup> Occasionally they ran into difficulties with

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<sup>548</sup> ‘War Diary, 47 Supply Depot Section, 1942’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5893.

<sup>549</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6’; ‘War Diary, 47 Supply Depot Section, 1942’.

<sup>550</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6’.

<sup>551</sup> Taylor, *During an off Duty Period an Indian Settles down for a Comfortable Smoke. The Pipe Is an Indian Relic*, 1942, Imperial War Museum, H21623; Bryan de Grineau, ‘Chutti Ke Waqt: the “Rest Period” of an Indian Mule Transport Unit Serving with the BEF in France’, *Illustrated London News*, 10 February 1940.

<sup>552</sup> Netton, *Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilisation and Religion*, p. 568.

<sup>553</sup> Harrison, *Sheep Lined up Ready for Slaughter* and series.

<sup>554</sup> ‘War Diary, Advanced Remount Depot, 1941’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5888; ‘War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1942’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5916.

the process, for example when the men of 42<sup>nd</sup> Company found that many of the ewes were pregnant, so the sheep were sold for one pound ten shillings apiece, and not slaughtered.<sup>555</sup> With a reasonable diet to sustain them, the men had sufficient energy for their work, as well as their leisure pursuits.

### **Identities at play: Leisure Time**

Games, sports and music were central to the men's experience, an expression of both culture and of identity. The Dutch historian and cultural theorist Huizinga (whose doctoral thesis was on the role of the jester in Indian drama) wrote that 'culture arises in the form of play... it is played from the very beginning'.<sup>556</sup> Leisure is an expression of culture – not all games or forms of music are shared in all societies. but the desire to play is universal. When we play, we are more truly ourselves. This section is all about play, and play as an expression of identity and culture – those occasions when 'soldiers were not expected to fight or otherwise be on duty, in which *sipahis* could relax, laugh and discuss among themselves.'<sup>557</sup> There is ample documentation (and photographs) of the men at play - watching films, playing music, at sports and games - and their officers were acutely aware of the need to maintain good morale, so the supply of leisure equipment was stressed from the outset. In reply to a letter offering help from Ikbal Ali Shah, a prominent Muslim living in London, Lieutenant-Colonel Hills replied, requesting 23 gramophones (one per troop), gramophone records to accompany, a wireless set for each unit, plus equipment for hockey and basketball.<sup>558</sup> These items remained essential to the men's identities even after capture, for Hexley reports variously on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Company gramophone, on a game of draughts and even, on a 'terrible' march from Selestat to Ernstien when 'we were given no halts', even then Blacksmith Ibrahim still had his hooka, and QMD Barkat Ali his gramophone.<sup>559</sup> Taken all together, games and entertainment were in good supply during their time in Europe, especially as the men became more established. These leisure activities proved very photogenic, and there is a large

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<sup>555</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1943', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5920.

<sup>556</sup> Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play-Element in Culture* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1949), p. 46.

<sup>557</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 1.

<sup>558</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'. Ikbal Ali Shah was the father of Idries Shah, the prominent writer and sufi.

<sup>559</sup> Hexley, p. 36.

reserve of photos of them at play – a store of latent memory that can be reactivated.

They were lucky to have their own designated welfare officer, responsible for organising a programme of visiting entertainers and films wherever the men were posted. This role (an indicator of the vital importance of morale) was taken by Dr Chandra Dharma Sena Gooneratne, given the honorary rank of captain for the task.<sup>560</sup> This interesting figure was a Ceylonese Christian working for the Indian YMCA. He had served in the First World War with the YMCA, and then attended the University of Chicago.<sup>561</sup> Lecturing around the USA, he had some interesting encounters with the racism of the Jim Crow type, but nevertheless persisted in his studies and gained a PhD in 1933.<sup>562</sup> A photo from 1926 illustrates the particular combination of qualities that made him the right man for the job (figure 11): he stands holding a smart-looking horse, in the uniform of the Chicago University Officer Training Corps, with a turban in place of a 'doughboy' hat. Gooneratne was with the sepoy from their time in France. Recommending him for a Medal (which was subsequently awarded), Hills wrote that:

His energy and zeal in this work is quite incredible, he never spares himself... He does not in any way try to influence any personnel on religious matters and been most meticulous in his avoidance thereof.<sup>563</sup>

Among the varied and somewhat bizarre entertainments that Gooneratne supplied were a juggler, an Indian conjuror by the name of Amin Bux, and a contortionist who performed in Victoria Hall in Ballater in the Scottish Highlands.<sup>564</sup> In December 1941 he wrote to the local Welsh paper to publicly thank some local entertainers: Professor Mars the conjuror, and Mr Peck, who put on a 'fascinating display of spoon music' in a situation where 'entertainment we are used to is not

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<sup>560</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), 'War Diary, HQ Force K6'.

<sup>561</sup> 'Medal Card of Gooneratne, C Corps: Young Men's Christian Association', 1920, The National Archives, Kew, WO 372/8/66779; Elizabeth Station, 'Scholar from Afar', *University of Chicago Magazine*, 2013 <<https://mag.uchicago.edu/scholarfromafar>> [accessed 2 August 2019].

<sup>562</sup> Manan Desai, 'The "Tan Stranger" from Ceylon', *South Asian American Digital Archive*, 2014 <<https://www.saada.org/tides/article/20140708-3618>> [accessed 2 August 2019].

<sup>563</sup> 'Grant of Honours'.

<sup>564</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5919; 'War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1943', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5917; 'War Diary, 3 Animal Transport Company, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5901.

easily available'.<sup>565</sup> At Christmas 1940, their first in the UK, he arranged a suitable entertainment for all of the men, as reported by Hills in *The Times of India*:

he arranged a Christmas party... [so the men] could see what happens to people in Britain at Christmastime. They had a Christmas tree, and every man received a present. They themselves gave a display of Punjabi dancing, sword dancing and physical training.<sup>566</sup>

Gooneratne's was an essential job in a time when Allied Armies increasingly emphasised welfare as a way to maintain good morale.



Figure 11: Chandra Gooneratne in 1926 at the University of Chicago, in the uniform of the Officers' Training Corps

Of course, the men were also more than capable of making their own entertainment. Photos in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* show a number of leisure pursuits. In early 1941, two sepoy are shown playing chess in great concentration, while visiting the Muslim Society of Great Britain, watched by

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<sup>565</sup> Chandra Gooneratne, 'Letter from Gooneratne', *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 19 December 1941.

<sup>566</sup> 'Indian Soldiers Life in Britain', *Times of India*, 25 February 1941.

another sepoy and an Indian civilian.<sup>567</sup> Reading was a popular pastime. Nellie Woods in North Wales, then aged twenty-one, recalled one of their veterinary staff, Malik Mohd Khan who:

rode a white horse, and rode in front of the troop. Spoke English well and was very well read... Malik asked for books to read. Would come to the house with his valet... who did not speak English. Malik would sit in their front room for hours reading. Very intelligent. He had scars from smallpox.<sup>568</sup>

Later, another photo shows a large group of men smiling happily at London Zoo, some of them seated on camels. In the winter of 1941/1942, one soldier is seen with a snowball in his hand, ready to throw at the photographer. And as the war goes on, there are more and more *latife* (jokes) in the pages of their newsletter, including this gentle dig at their English lessons:

Amman: Hamid, did you wash your face before the English teacher arrived?

Hamid: yes

Amman: and your hands also?

Hamid: yes

Amman: and your ears?

Hamid: Yes, but only the one that had to be near the teacher!<sup>569</sup>

Through the newsletter and other evidence it is clear that, like any soldiers with time on their hands, they were capable of enjoying themselves, they had the skills needed to do so, and they liked to laugh.

Sport was taken very seriously by the officers and the men. The officers of the Indian Army, mostly educated at public schools and Sandhurst, subscribed to the Victorian 'cult of games' that permeated army life.<sup>570</sup> The playing fields of Eton had been partially transferred to India, and the two armies had exchanged games in a process of cross-fertilisation. Cricket went from Britain to India, while polo travelled in the opposite direction, and Highland games were staged in India until

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<sup>567</sup> 'Rukhsat ke chand London men', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 14 February 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>568</sup> Interview with Nellie Woods, 1999.

<sup>569</sup> 'Latifa', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 13 February 1942, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>570</sup> J.D. Campbell, 'Training for Sport Is Training for War': Sport and the Transformation of the British Army, 1860–1914', *The International Journal of the History of Sport*, 17.4 (2000), 21–58 (p. 24).

1912.<sup>571</sup> None of these games, however, were especially popular with the men of K6, who preferred hockey, running and equine pursuits. Each company had its own physical training (PT) instructors, who wore a special badge to denote that role.<sup>572</sup> Photographs from 29<sup>th</sup> Company in France show them playing volleyball and doing PT, including a vaulting horse.<sup>573</sup> Clearly, war and sport were interlinked: 'as sport was training for war, war would be the ultimate form of sport'.<sup>574</sup> As an India-based PT instructor recalled many years later 'I gave battle exercises to soldiers which included how to fight with the army, how to fight many soldiers, tricks used in the fight'.<sup>575</sup> There were regular competitions and gymkhanas, including a large meet at Crickhowell on 10<sup>th</sup> September 1941, attended by 700 men, with the Chief Constable acting as commentator.<sup>576</sup> As well as various track events, there was an obstacle race and a horse race. Most of the winning athletes were drivers, including two from the white British RASC, who took top slots in the half mile. Interestingly the three new companies (who had been in the country less than four months at this point), came at the bottom of the points table, with the three 'old' companies that had been in France well ahead in achievement. This may back up what was generally felt by officers, that sport and games were 'essential to building character and esprit de corps among the men' - the newly-arrived units had not yet had the chance to develop the same skills, fitness or team spirit as the companies that had been out of India for nearly two years.<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>571</sup> J.D. Campbell, p. 49.

<sup>572</sup> 'Interview with Zubair Mohammed'.

<sup>573</sup> Keating, *A PT Class in Progress 'keeping Fit' Is One of the First Items in the Indians Life in France*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, F3803 and series.

<sup>574</sup> J.D. Campbell, p. 50.

<sup>575</sup> Interview with Nasir Hussain Shah, Aftab Hussain, Asad Shah & Fida Hussain, 2018.

<sup>576</sup> 'Indiyan Kantinjaint Ki Warzishi Khelon Ki Numa'ish', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 10 October 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705. The word 'gymkhana' itself was imported from South Asia, where it originally referred to a meeting. The annual British Royal Tournament was a manifestation of the military gymkhana tradition.

<sup>577</sup> J.D. Campbell, p. 32.

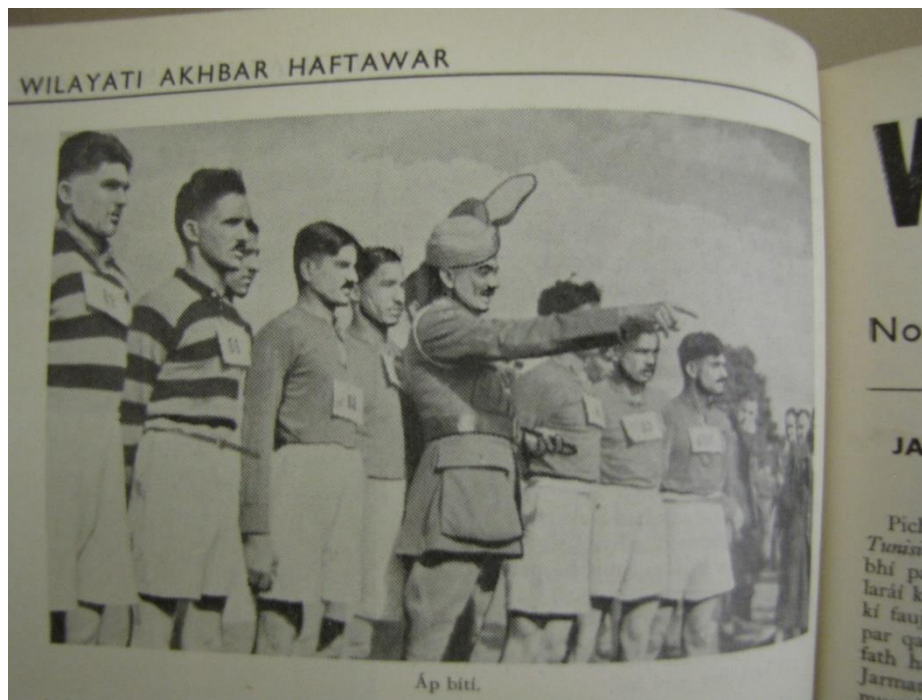


Figure 12: Cross country race at Shrewsbury: examining the course

Cross-country running was a fairly frequent pastime, and activities on horses and mules common. An official war photograph (figure 12) shows an Indian officer (possibly Gurdial Singh) indicating the cross-country course to his men at Shrewsbury.<sup>578</sup> There are several photos showing a variety of equine tricks. One in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* shows three men on a mule, pyramid style, with the topmost saluting.<sup>579</sup> Photos from 25<sup>th</sup> Company at Marquette-lez-Lille in April 1940 show the very popular gymkhana, which regularly ‘drew hundreds of French crowds... from far and wide’.<sup>580</sup> Sepoys can be seen riding bareback, swinging round mules’ necks and standing on their backs: an indicator of the animals’ placid nature and high standard of training.<sup>581</sup> Later, several local British newspapers were invited to witness these exploits, with the *Western Morning News* reporting on the unusual sport of mule wrestling, where eight men ride barebacked within a marked circle ‘the object being to pull each other from the animals back to the ground’.<sup>582</sup> Josephine Wright of Swansea remembered riding RIASC mules as a young girl for a treat at a public gymkhana, and

<sup>578</sup> Taylor, *An Indian Officer of the RIASC Pointing out the Course to His Team before the Start of the Team Race*, 1943, Imperial War Museum, H28442.

<sup>579</sup> ‘Ap Biti’, *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 20 November 1942, p. 4, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>580</sup> M. Akbar Khan, p. 137.

<sup>581</sup> Mallindine, *Bareback Jumping Competition on Mules*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, F3927 and series.

<sup>582</sup> ‘Wrestling on Mules’, *Western Morning News*, 25 November 1940.



described them as ‘stubborn creatures [which] you couldn’t get... to move, unless of course, you were right in front of the Grandstand when they would suddenly take off, kick up their heels and we would go over their heads!’<sup>583</sup> Football also crops up occasionally, but is clearly without the popularity enjoyed within the British Army.<sup>584</sup> There are also reports of swimming, which may have been a minority pursuit, as they mostly grew up hundreds of miles from the sea or a swimming pool, but with access to rivers and lakes.<sup>585</sup> There is but a single reference to that typical South Asian game, *kabaddi*.<sup>586</sup>

It was hockey that was the biggest and most popular game for these men from South Asia. They came from a country which had whole-heartedly embraced the sport, having won gold medals at the Olympics in 1928 and 1932. At the 1936 Berlin Olympics, 20,000 Germans and fifty Indians watched India beat Germany 8-1 in the final, and the German team were ‘simply unable to keep up with the Indians’ astonishing energy and skill’.<sup>587</sup> Kenneth Hord, wartime editor of the popular *Daily Mirror* reported of K6 enthusiastically in 1941 that ‘Hockey is their favourite sport and they are the best players in the world. The closest game they had last season was when they won 11-0.’<sup>588</sup> A team from 32<sup>nd</sup> Company played six hockey games in one month in early 1942, with two wins and four draws against teams from South Wales.<sup>589</sup> The following year, 25<sup>th</sup> Company war service diary records five hockey games, including one in Ramzan, when the players were fasting.<sup>590</sup> K6 teams played matches against the RAF, against the Royal Ordnance Factory and British regiments, including the Scottish Borderers, and often beat the white men at their own game. A team from 25<sup>th</sup> Company was challenged by Dennis Caseley, who ran a very successful youth club in Kingsbridge, Devon. His son Patrick remembers that the Indians won by four goals to zero, and afterwards:

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<sup>583</sup> ‘Peoples War: Josephine Wright of Swansea’

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/09/a5258009.shtml>> [accessed 17 May 2018].

<sup>584</sup> ‘War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1942’.

<sup>585</sup> ‘War Diary, Advanced Remount Depot, 1941’; Raymond Lewis, ‘Letter: Indians in the Swimming Pool’, *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 5 September 1941, p. 5.

<sup>586</sup> ‘War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1942’.

<sup>587</sup> Guy Walters, *Berlin Games: How Hitler Stole the Olympic Dream* (London: John Murray, 2006), p. 295.

<sup>588</sup> Hord, ‘Nothing Can Shake the Loyalty of Our Indian Troops’.

<sup>589</sup> ‘War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1942’.

<sup>590</sup> ‘War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, 1943’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5909.

both teams trooped off to The Cosy Café for tea and I went along with my parents to join them. I remember them being calm, polite and very pleasant men and I was certainly included in their company. My Dad managed to find an envelope which he opened out and asked them to list the members of their side which one of them did. I still have that piece of paper and... a copy of the stamp and postmark which has a 1941 date together with a copy of four names - my father's, my mother's, mine and also a member of the team.<sup>591</sup>

The list of names (figure 13) holds an interesting insight into religious and 'caste' sensitivities among the Indian Contingent. Among the Muslim names (Jemadar Sardar Ali, who scored three goals, bellows boy Mehtab Khan and so on) we find Rakha, a Hindu sweeper with 25<sup>th</sup> Company. It seems that the divisions between caste identities were suspended, at least for the ninety minutes of the game, and close physical contact was allowed, even if Rakha subsequently reverted to his 'untouchable' status: evidence perhaps of the unifying power of sport in action. Even when captured, they kept this love for the game of hockey – Abuzar captained the 950 regiment hockey team in games against German Army teams in Bordeaux and Paris.<sup>592</sup> Soon after their capture in June 1940, the men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company kept their hockey sticks (probably the same ones they had been sent by Ikbal Ali Shah the previous winter) as they marched off from St Dié in the Vosges mountains, with a 'tremendous bundle of kit' suspended, Dick Whittington-like.<sup>593</sup> Indeed, the sticks are clearly visible in a German photo of the men on the march – a physical reminder and symbol of this sporting manifestation of their masculine identity.<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>591</sup> Patrick Caseley, 'Email from Patrick Caseley to Ghee Bowman', 18 August 2017.

<sup>592</sup> '950 Regiment'.

<sup>593</sup> Hexley.

<sup>594</sup> *22 Animal Transport Company RIASC on the March, 1940*, Bundesarchiv, Germany, 121-0413.

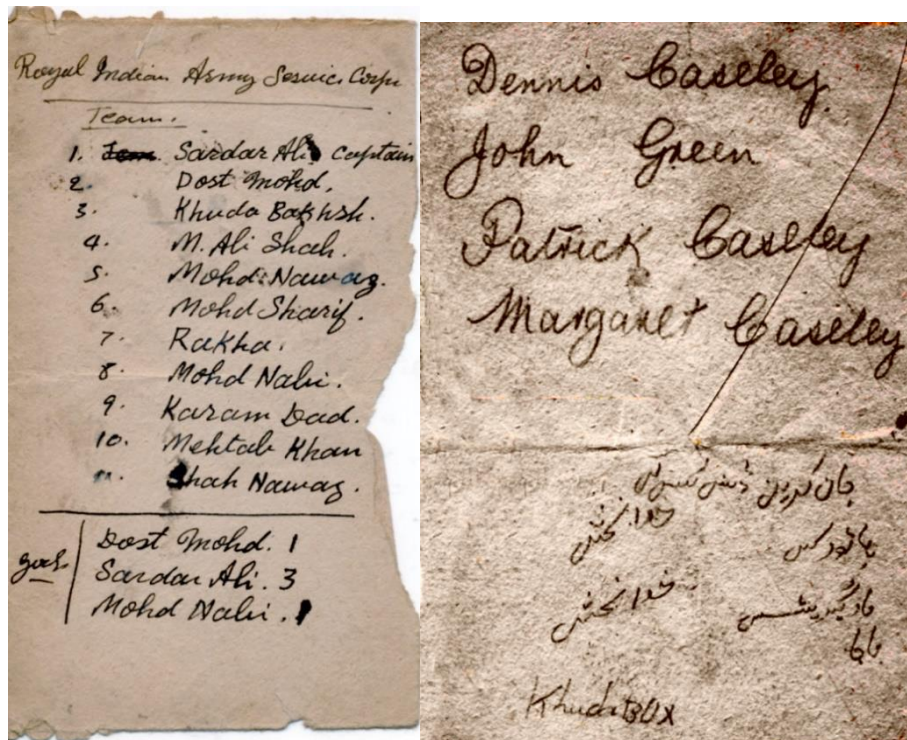


Figure 13: The team list from the 25<sup>th</sup> Company hockey match against Kingsbridge youth club

Watching films was an important part of their leisure activities. The war service diaries contain at least forty titles that they were shown. The films are an interesting mixture of Hollywood, British and Indian films, genres being mostly comedy, drama and war films, although it is not clear whether they are watching films that they actually wanted to see, or simply what was easily available at the time. Venues included the local cinema and impromptu halls and tents in or near their camp. War service diaries differ in the level of detail given - sometimes we are only told that there was a film show, but on other occasions we have more interesting information. Captain Kedge, commanding 3<sup>rd</sup> Company at the end of 1942, informs us that all personnel went to see 'The Defeat of the Germans near Moscow' at the cost of tuppence per head.<sup>595</sup> He neglects to tell us whether the men paid for themselves, or company funds covered the cost. Captain Darby of 32<sup>nd</sup> Company is of the opinion that the Abbot and Costello film *Hold that Ghost* 'was very much appreciated by all ranks' at the Pembrey Hall in South Wales.<sup>596</sup> Later, back home in India, Major Mohd Ashraf thinks that 7<sup>th</sup> Company did not

<sup>595</sup> 'War Diary, 3 Animal Transport Company, 1942'.

<sup>596</sup> 'War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1943'.

fully enjoy the Indian film *Zamin* 'owing to the lack of sufficient rural fun'.<sup>597</sup> Low comedy was what the officers thought the men preferred. *The Daily Mirror* has no doubt what their preference was: surprisingly it was the Northern British comedian and ukulele player George Formby. According to their report 'the sepoy go into raptures over him, and the loss of every Hollywood beauty would cause no pain as long as George had a new film to show'.<sup>598</sup>

The war diary of 32<sup>nd</sup> Company for 1943 is especially interesting for notes on films and other entertainment.<sup>599</sup> 32<sup>nd</sup> Company started the year at Golspie on the East coast of Scotland, but soon moved down to Pembrey, a village on the Welsh coast near Swansea. In April they moved to Llangattack Park at Crickhowell the hard way, marching across the Brecon Beacons and arriving at 0030 hrs on 21<sup>st</sup> April, when their commanding officer Major Darby wrote 'personnel received a ration of hot tea and were in bright spirits'. A few weeks later they were off again, this time by train, arriving back in the Highlands, first at Golspie and then at Lairg in September. Throughout the year there was a total of thirty-three films recorded in the war diary, more than one a fortnight, some of which were repeated more than once. In Crickhowell on 10<sup>th</sup> May, they watched *Kangan*, a 'sweet romance in a pastoral setting' with some 'enchanted songs' from the lead actors Ashok Kumar & Leela Chitnis.<sup>600</sup> This sounds like a typical early Bollywood movie, but the film they saw on 14<sup>th</sup> July in Golspie had something of an edge to it. This was the 1941 movie *Naya Sansar* (New World), about the 'crusade' of a journalist played by Ashok Kumar. Mixed in with the romance and dances is some 'progressive content' and even a theme song that 'clamoured' for independence.<sup>601</sup> The previous year, when asked by the BBC about their favourite music, Hills had included music from the film *Acchut Kanya*.<sup>602</sup> This 1936 classic of the early talkies, starring Devika Rani and Ashok Kumar, was photographed by a German cinematographer called Josef Wirsching, who was interned in India from 1939 to 1947. This was Kumar's second picture - he was to go on to be one of the giants of Indian cinema - and

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<sup>597</sup> '7 Ind AT Coy 1941-47', 1947, National Archives of India, Misc/3137/H.

<sup>598</sup> Kenneth Hord, 'Nothing Can Shake the Loyalty of Our Indian Troops', *Daily Mirror*, 28 July 1941.

<sup>599</sup> 'War Diary, 32 Animal Transport Company, 1943'.

<sup>600</sup> Firoze Rangoonwalla, *Indian Cinema*, Revised edition (Delhi: Clarion, 1982), p. 99.

<sup>601</sup> Rangoonwalla, pp. 102-3.

<sup>602</sup> 'Policy - Messages from India', 1943, BBC Written Archives Caversham, Reading, R34/465/1.

the kurta trousers that he wore sparked a trend among the pre-war Indian youth.<sup>603</sup> Unusually for an Indian film, it dealt with the subject of caste, being a 'sad sweet story' of love between an 'untouchable' girl and a Brahmin boy.<sup>604</sup> Such music and such films may have made the men homesick, but Hills and the other officers considered that on balance the effect on morale was a positive one, especially in 1943 when some had been away from home for four years, and conditions in India were getting difficult.

As well as cinema-going, music, dancing and singing were clearly important to these Muslim Indians. Just as the Tommies they served with might play a harmonica or sing about the 'Quartermaster's Stores', so too their Asian allies kept their spirits up and thought about home through music. Despite the perception that music is *haram* for Muslims, the men of K6 had no hesitation about singing Punjabi folk songs, part of their expression of a longing for home, perhaps. As well as being the target of their very own BBC broadcasts, they were keen to listen to Punjabi music whenever they could. On the same day that the POWs of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company carried their kit slung underneath hockey sticks, their Quartermaster, Barkat Ali, insisted on carrying the company gramophone.<sup>605</sup> But as much as consuming music, the archival record also shows these men producing their own music, in a variety of ways. The off-duty set of photos taken at Marquette-lez-Lille on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1940 shows men wearing long *kurta*, with a cloth on their heads, dancing a traditional *khattak* dance.<sup>606</sup> Another photo shows the musicians – one with a *chimta* or tongs, a metal percussion instrument based on the tool used by a blacksmith (of which there were three on hand as part of the company).<sup>607</sup> Next to him sits a drummer, playing a *dhol*, a drum with a bass sound coming from the right hand and a higher tone from the left, that 'remains mum when told to speak [but] screams upon being beaten'.<sup>608</sup> The drum and *chimta* may have been brought from India, but are more likely to have been sent

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<sup>603</sup> Rachel Dwyer, *100 Bollywood Films* (London: BFI, 2005), p. p.12.

<sup>604</sup> Rangoonwalla, pp. 86–87.

<sup>605</sup> Hexley.

<sup>606</sup> Mallindine, *Punjabi Dancers. In Their Hands They Carry a Kind of Castanet Consisting of Pieces of Wood with Bells on*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, F3923; M. Akbar Khan, p. 137. This may have been the first time that khattak or bhangra was performed in Europe .

<sup>607</sup> Mallindine, *An Impromptu Band Leads the Singing*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, F3922. I am grateful to Professor Jerri Daboo for confirming the exact nature of the dance.

<sup>608</sup> Amir Khusrau, *Amir Khusrau: The Man in Riddles*, ed. by Ankit Chadha (Gurgaon: Penguin, 2016), p. 13.

later or sourced in Europe, or even made by the musicians themselves. Akbar's memoir tells us that these gymkhanas had been running for several weeks on Thursdays and Sundays, until the point where the photographer was called in.<sup>609</sup> The final photo in this series by Ted Malindine shows a mixed group of Indian and French spectators, relaxed, smiling and clapping, children sitting on the soldiers' laps. Just nineteen days before the German *blitzkrieg*, 25<sup>th</sup> Company have succeeded in winning over the 'hearts and minds' of the locals and proved themselves 'excellent ambassadors of India'.<sup>610</sup>

A surprising aspect of these men's musicality is their use of the bagpipe. The *Western Morning News* report quoted above starts with a mention of the 25<sup>th</sup> Company bagpiper, Naik Buda Din, who is also seen in a photo leading the men and mules along the beach.<sup>611</sup> A reporter from *The Cornish Guardian* was also present, and wrote that:

the piper was playing a Scots air on a Scottish bagpipe given to the company when they were in Glasgow; and his playing proved that neither the Scots nor the Irish have a monopoly of piping talent. The company lost their own Punjabi bagpipes in France, but an officer said "They like the Scots bagpipe. It is very like their own, but even they say it is more tuneful than a Punjabi bagpipe".<sup>612</sup>

A photo in the newsletter from January 1941 carries the caption 'They say that when the Indian Contingent come together to play the pipes, then they embarrass the people of Scotland'.<sup>613</sup> In April 1943, Dr Gooneratne brought a bagpipe and two flutes for 42<sup>nd</sup> Company, and 25<sup>th</sup> Company had actually developed a pipe band by the same year, marching at Crickhowell and Monmouth.<sup>614</sup> Donny Macdonald of Lairg recalled that his father, who was from an old piping family, gave lessons to an Indian who 'spoke reasonable English'. In due course, the

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<sup>609</sup> M. Akbar Khan, p. 137.

<sup>610</sup> M. Akbar Khan, p. 136.

<sup>611</sup> 'Wrestling on Mules'.

<sup>612</sup> 'Indian Troops in West for the Winter: Punjabis and Mules in Camp', *Cornish Guardian*, 28 November 1940.

<sup>613</sup> 'Kahte hain ki jab Indian Kontinjaint...', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 17 January 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>614</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1943'; 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, 1943'.

BBC came and recorded the two men playing traditional Scottish airs together.<sup>615</sup> There is a remarkable cultural circuit in operation here. Scottish regiments had been posted to Punjab and met Indians on the Western Front in the Great War. Thus the Indians had developed an interest in the bagpipe, and started playing it in the Army. In the 1940s the instrument came back to Scotland with the pipers of K6. Having polished and improved their technique, the sepoy-musicians returned home and further spread the instrument. To this day, the bagpipes are popular in South Asia, often heard at weddings in Pakistan and India, and in many cases the pipers are ex-military.

The men of K6 also loved to sing. The cover of a 1942 edition of *Fauji Akhbar*, the Indian Army magazine, shows a group of eight sepoys smiling, clapping and singing round a BBC microphone (figure 14), with the captions 'Hello Punjab' and '...broadcasting to their families in India'.<sup>616</sup> They also had work songs - during their short stay in the Midlands in late 1940, they were used by local farmers as additional labour. *The Daily Mirror* ran a story in October under the headline 'Girl works in flax amid singing Indian soldiers' which told how land girl Miss Hicksett was surrounded by forty-five Indian soldiers 'chanting native songs' at Old Hall Farm in Dunstall, near Burton-on-Trent. Remarkably, these men were working long days in the fields while fasting, as this was during Ramadan.<sup>617</sup> When 25<sup>th</sup> Company landed at Dover on the morning of 29<sup>th</sup> May 1940, fresh from the hell of Dunkirk beaches, Major Akbar wrote that the men asked lady workers 'to lend them their empty brass trays and copper buckets' and then:

started playing folk lore tunes on these utensils. Our entire party joined in singing and dancing. Even the lady workers and many British spectators joined in the dance.<sup>618</sup>

Iain Macpherson of Nairn in north east Scotland recalled the men putting on a show:

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<sup>615</sup> 'Leed MacDonald and Price'.

<sup>616</sup> 'Hello Punjab', *Fauji Akhbar*, 23 May 1942, Imperial War Museum.

<sup>617</sup> 'Girl Works in Flax amid Singing Indian Soldiers', *Daily Mirror*, 15 October 1940, p. 12.

<sup>618</sup> M. Akbar Khan, p. 177.

in the local cinema on a Sunday night, when there would be singers, magicians and acrobats. I well recall that they always included the song 'I'll walk beside you', only they pronounced it "I'll valk beside you".<sup>619</sup>

A little later, in January 1941, two regional papers ran identical reports of a concert in a West country town. At first the men 'listened politely to the turns. Their faces were expressionless and they did not join in the applause.' Later, when they were asked if they would like to contribute to the entertainment:

solemnly they trouped on the platform. They sang a mournful hindu [sic] song, followed by another and yet another. For three quarters of an hour they sang, the audience clapping each number. At last the Indians permitted themselves one smile, revealing perfect white teeth, before [they] silently trooped away.<sup>620</sup>

Leaving aside the orientalism in the description of teeth and facial expressions, it is apparent that the men were willing and able to sing a number of songs in chorus, songs that they knew by heart and which were able to communicate across the language barrier. Folk songs, with their 'down-to-earth realism' came easily to these men.<sup>621</sup> Such songs were an essential aspect of their Punjabi identities which they were clearly able and willing to share.

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<sup>619</sup> 'Peoples War: Iain Macpherson of Nairn'

<<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/31/a2045431.shtml>> [accessed 17 May 2018].

<sup>620</sup> 'It Was the "Star Turn" at Regimental Concert', *Birmingham Evening Despatch*, 13 January 1941.

<sup>621</sup> Rajput, p. 17.



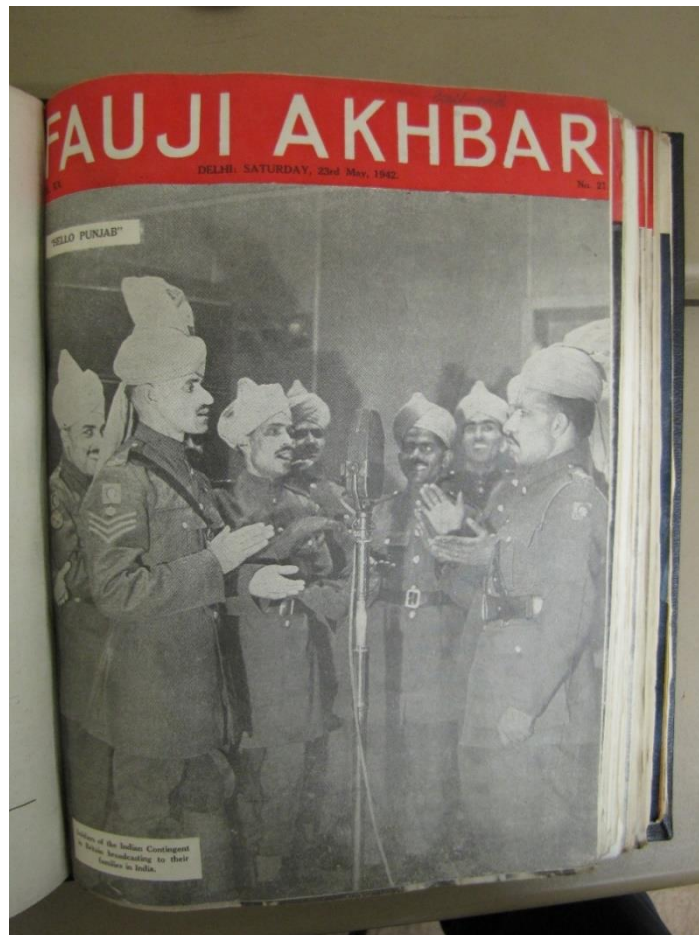


Figure 14: *Fauji Akhbar*, 'Hello Punjab' 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1942

Like any human beings, the identities of these men were in motion throughout their lives, and like so many who lived through the war, this was the time of greatest change. Some interesting glimpses of the changes shine through in their war diaries from the period soon after their return to India in early 1944. These routine reports from their commanding officers show the impact of their time in Europe. Captain Saifullah, for example, writing in May 1944 about 3<sup>rd</sup> Company reckons 'I am sure they do feel the difference between this country and UK. They all seem to appreciate the way of living in UK'.<sup>622</sup> Captain Rattan Singh reveals similar sentiments in 7<sup>th</sup> Company, who are showing 'disappointment because the hygiene and social life in India is not the same as these men have been accustomed to for at least two to three years'.<sup>623</sup> There is here an idea that, although thousands of miles from home, these men have witnessed and experienced a lifestyle outside the warzone that appeals: a softer, easier life. Both

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<sup>622</sup> '3 Ind AT Coy 1941-47', 1947, National Archives of India, Misc/3133/H.

<sup>623</sup> '7 Ind AT Coy 1941-47'.

the officers quoted above were also in the UK (although not part of the original K6). A report from an 'outsider' makes an interesting contrast. Colonel Noon, touring in May 1945, is frankly disparaging of the men and the influence of the soft European life:

Some of the IORs [Indian Other Ranks] of this unit have served with the Force K6 and have stayed in England [sic] a long time, where they were made much of, and consequently they have returned to India as spoilt children. They want concessions here which are not possible.

I have had a talk with the VCOs and NCOs of this unit, and they have given me the impression of a disgruntled lot, specially those who have returned from England, and in my opinion these men are having a bad influence on the rest.<sup>624</sup>

For this officer at least, the difference is evident, even a year after their return: England has softened and weakened them, and they are making demands that are impossible. They are like spoilt children whose *mabap* has over-indulged them.<sup>625</sup> Like the jackal who falls into a vessel of blue dye and pretends to be a peacock, these men were brought back down to reality, and sent off to wash in the stream.<sup>626</sup> Their identity had been stretched to a point that made their superior officers uncomfortable.

### **Conclusion: Collectives and individuals**

Identity is a product of both nature and nurture. The men of K6 were given their names and their religions by their parents, whether they liked it or not. Each one was born in a particular time and place, which had a profound effect on who they were. As soldiers they were sent, they were ordered, they were targets, not agents. It would be easy to see them as passive recipients of influences, as people who conformed to what was expected by parent or imam or officer, as very small cogs in the massive machine of World War Two. But they were not without choices. They chose to join the army, regardless of their family financial situation or any degree of pressure. They chose to stay with their comrades when retreating to Dunkirk, rather than trying to find refuge in a hedge. And for those of

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<sup>624</sup> '32 Ind AT Coy, RIASC', 1945, National Archives of India, Misc/1729/H.

<sup>625</sup> Mother-father: how the officer class viewed their relationship with the sepoy

<sup>626</sup> Mulk Raj Anand, *Folk Tales of Punjab* (Delhi: Sterling, 1989), p. 9.

22<sup>nd</sup> Company who became prisoners, some chose to escape, some chose to stay put and some chose to join the German army. Young men in India and Pakistan now probably have more agency in comparison, but one cannot conclude that their forefathers in earlier times had no power at all.

Equally, we need to draw a distinction between the influences on them, and their response to the influences, between the collective and the individual. Although it is possible to draw broad brush descriptions of their influences and stimuli, their background and roots, it is harder by far to say just how influential those factors were on individuals. The 'paradigm of collectivity' is hard to escape from: the idea that people, especially when viewed through a postcolonial lens, can only be understood by studying groups.<sup>627</sup> K6 were, in many ways, a 'closed' group: four thousand men from similar backgrounds sent thousands of miles around the world. The paradox of their individuality and their collective (just like any other group of humans) is that graphs and statistics never tell the individual story, but are useful in grasping a body, a company, a regiment. In the Venn diagram of K6 identities, the intersection of the circles at the middle indicates an average, while the portions of circles around the outside show the outliers or exceptions. If the circles are called 'Muslim', 'Punjabi', 'mule driver' or 'farmer' (all within the larger circle of 'soldier'), then most soldiers are within the intersection of those circles, but equally most have one factor sticking out. There are many combinations of groupings, but not an infinite number. As Bernard Cohn puts it, when describing different ways of looking at Indian society, 'variation is accounted for on the basis of statistical distribution – when we talk about India, we are talking about a statistical mean or mode.'<sup>628</sup> This chapter has indicated, as far as possible given the constraints of sources, the statistical mean or mode.

What shows through in studying the collective is that they were singers, they were sportsmen, they were men of faith, but not humourless automata. Looking at the list of their names, looking at the photographs and the film footage, the splashes of individuality shine through when they are off duty: smiles and laughter, relaxation and leisure time. Their story is far too complex for them to be

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<sup>627</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 191 quoting Arnold & Blackburn.

<sup>628</sup> Cohn, *India: The Social Anthropology of a Civilisation*, p. 3.

remembered in one simple way only. Whatever identities they expressed, they made an impression on the people around them, and some of those impressions have lingered long. The next chapter will explore some of those encounters.

### CHAPTER 3: WE'LL KEEP A WELCOME IN THE HILLSIDE: ENCOUNTERS IN BRITAIN

*Sidhaaren shaikh kaba ko hum inglistan dekhenge  
Wo dekhen ghar khuda ka hum khuda ki shan dekhenge<sup>629</sup>  
(Let the sheikh depart for Mecca, we'd rather go to Inglistan.  
He will see the house of God, we will see God's beauty)*

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May 1940: a group of fifteen Indian soldiers in their best walking-out uniforms and wearing medal ribbons from the Great War onwards are in a London park, chatting to an old gentleman out for a walk with his small dog (figure 15). He wears a trilby hat and carries a stick. Why has he stopped? Perhaps he was intrigued by their 'picturesque' appearance. Maybe he had seen photos of them in France in his newspaper and wanted to find out more. Or maybe he was one of the tens of thousands of British citizens who had been in India, in the army or the civil service or in business, and he wanted to reminisce and practise his Urdu again. Whatever the truth may have been, a photographer was there to capture the encounter, and allow us to speculate decades later. This was the first visit by most of the men of Force K6 to the heart of the Empire, and they were given access to some of the corridors of the highest power. On Friday 10<sup>th</sup>, the day of the German *blitzkrieg* in the Low Countries, *The Times of India* reported on a big reception at the East India Association, chaired by the new Secretary of State for India, Leo Amery, and attended by Lords and Dukes and other dignitaries from Britain and India.<sup>630</sup> The party toured the capital, visiting the Houses of Parliament and Buckingham Palace, and watching a display by the London Fire Brigade. When they arrived in London they were met by a large crowd who:

watched the Indians leave Victoria station and set out at a brisk march for the headquarters of the Moslem Society of Great Britain, in Eccleston Square, where they will stay.<sup>631</sup>

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<sup>629</sup> Akbar Allahabdi, quoted in Rauf Parekh, 'A Passage to London', *Dawn*, 30 August 2010 <<https://www.dawn.com/news/558122>> [accessed 5 March 2019].

<sup>630</sup> 'Indian Officers Entertained', *Times of India*, 5 October 1940.

<sup>631</sup> 'Indian Troops Visit London'.

From their first steps in England, the men of K6 were watched, photographed and welcomed. The reporters and the photographers were there, the great and the good were keen to meet them, but also the ordinary folk at Victoria Station were there, and even one man and his dog in the park were keen to stop and chat. This trans-national encounter, at the heart of the K6 story, was the taste of things to come for the next few years.



Figure 15: Leave party in London on 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> May 1940, possibly in St James's Park. Akbar is in the centre, talking to the bearded man with dog (Imran collection)

The famous Welsh song 'We'll keep a welcome in the hillside' was written that same year, 1940, by Mai Jones, a stationmaster's daughter from Newport who went on to be a BBC radio producer.<sup>632</sup> The spirit of the song is about Welshmen and women who are far away, who will be welcomed back home:

We'll keep a welcome in the hillside  
We'll keep a welcome in the Vales  
This land you knew will still be singing  
When you come home again to Wales

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<sup>632</sup> Huw Williams, 'Dictionary of Welsh Biography', 2001 <<https://biography.wales/article/s2-JONE-MAI-1899>> [accessed 23 April 2019].

The welcome of the song is one for the returning soldier, sailor or civilian, the welcome home. The homesickness or nostalgia is keenly felt, but the traveller is reassured and warmed by the prospect of the kisses when they return again home. This sentiment could equally be felt by the Indian soldiers in Europe: when they return home to Punjab they will find their wives, children, parents and villages there to welcome them home. But the song has another meaning, one that can apply equally well to the soldiers of K6. The welcome in the Welsh hillsides is for all travellers, wherever their home may be, travellers to Wales as well as travellers from Wales. This chapter will explore the extent to which the men of K6 were welcomed in the hillsides and the dales of England, Scotland and Wales, and whether the people of Britain lived up to the promise.

The tradition of hospitality is strong in many cultures. In the European tradition, Homer wrote thousands of years ago:

True friendship's laws are by this rule exprest,  
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.<sup>633</sup>

That same sense of generosity is reflected across the Muslim world, indeed the concept is embedded within Islam.. Many people would question whether such a concept exists in Britain, and support Benjamin Franklin's famous idea that guests begin to smell after three days. But others take a different view, and hold that, especially outside the big cities, British people have a 'genius for friendship'.<sup>634</sup> The Celtic people of the margins, especially, are keen to point out their warmth. Donald Caskie, the 'Tartan Pimpernel' wrote that 'strangers are always welcome when they visit Scotland. We are interested in foreign countries, and the viewpoints and customs of foreign peoples, and try to make our guests feel perfectly at home.'<sup>635</sup> The men of K6 spent the vast majority of their UK stay in the Celtic fringes. Added to that is the extraordinary nature of the times, when many Britishers were acutely aware that the defence of the country was a shared endeavour, and we may get a sense of the reasons behind the warm welcome

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<sup>633</sup> Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. by Alexander Pope, 1726; Book XV.

<sup>634</sup> Webster, p. 228.

<sup>635</sup> Donald Caskie, *The Tartan Pimpernel* (Oxford: Isis, 2008), p. 30.

reported generally towards K6. In a cold dark time, there was a need for warmth and friendship on all sides.

The places they were posted included country houses, mountainsides and villages, the fringes and the hinges of the country.<sup>636</sup> They met country people and upper-crust people, people away from the centres of the nation. In several cases their presence may have been the biggest and most exciting thing ever to happen to that community, and the locals' first experience of people with brown skin. Unfortunately there is no record of their first impressions of England after Dunkirk, but perhaps they felt like the historian Marc Bloch, who was one of over 100,000 French soldiers evacuated from Dunkirk to England, went by train across the country and then shipped back to France to continue the fight:

We landed at Dover. Then came a whole day spent in travelling by train across southern England... [including] the pleasure of devouring ham and cheese sandwiches handed through the windows by girls in multi-coloured dresses, and clergymen who looked as solemn as though they were administering the Sacrament; the faint, sweet smell of cigarettes showered on us with the same generous profusion; the acid taste of lemonade and the flat taste of tea with too much milk in it; the cosy green of lawns; a landscape made up of parks, cathedral spires, hedges and Devonshire cliffs, groups of cheering children at level-crossings. But what struck us more than anything else was the warmth of our reception.<sup>637</sup>

K6's first stay of any duration was in Ashbourne in Derbyshire in the middle of England, a town famous for its Shrove Tuesday football game, where they were based at a manor house outside the town. Outside Doncaster in Yorkshire 29<sup>th</sup> Company enjoyed the splendour of Rossington Hall, a grand house with extensive stables, recently vacated by an order of Catholic 'white fathers'.<sup>638</sup> In Devon and Cornwall they were posted in a variety of locations, including a holiday camp, town houses in Plymouth, an old monastery and several country manor houses by moor and sea. Their single longest concentration was in the pretty Welsh village of Crickhowell, a few miles west of Abergavenny in the shadow of

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<sup>636</sup> See appendix for list of postings

<sup>637</sup> Marc Bloch, *Strange Defeat* (USA: Important, 2013), p. 28.

<sup>638</sup> John Adam, *A History of Rossington* (Doncaster: Rossington History Group, 2008), p. 84.



the Black Mountains. From there detachments were posted across the Welsh hillsides and dales, including the hamlet of Croesor below the Cnicht mountain, south of the main range of Snowdon. This was a village of fifteen houses and scattered farms, with a population of around 500 where everybody knew everybody else, everybody knew everybody's business, and the injection of a thousand men all together had 'an amazing effect, like a [TV] programme'.<sup>639</sup> No wonder there are so many good stories from their brief stay there in the summer of 1942. Equally they are remembered in the Highlands of Scotland, in the neighbouring coastal towns of Dornoch and Golspie, where they left behind graffiti on the walls of the drill hall, and where two of them are buried. A brief stay on Loch Ewe is remembered in the Arctic Convoy museum, as is their work carrying materials for Royal Engineers erecting a smokescreen to protect the dam above the village of Kinlochleven, in a time when reprisals for the 'Dambuster' raid were feared.<sup>640</sup> Above all perhaps, the nine graves at Kingussie mark the centre of their stay in Scotland, as well as its legacy. In each of these places they were welcomed, and in most of these places they are remembered, and stories still told. The local collective memory is strong, linked to the physical memorials on the graves as well as familial stories.

This chapter, which lies at the heart of the K6 story, will chart responses to the men of K6 across the UK and attempt to assess the extent to which 'those boys' became 'our boys'. In the context of an embattled Home Front, with air raids, pressures of space and rationing, how much were brown-skinned foreigners welcomed and how much were they rejected? Having been on the beaches of Dunkirk, having been in Britain during the Blitz, were they, in some way, honorary Britishers - 'us' for the duration? Were they thereby seen as part of the 'Peoples war' idea that started in that summer of 1940? Sonya Rose has asked: 'Which peoples war?' – who was included and who was excluded at that time?<sup>641</sup> Did the welcome continue after VE Day and VJ Day in 1945, or was it for the duration of the war only?<sup>642</sup> Drawing on press reports and personal testimonies from across the country, the chapter will dig below the surface and

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<sup>639</sup> Interview with Giovanna Bloor, 2015.

<sup>640</sup> Arthur Hames, 'Email from Arthur Hames to Paritosh Shapland', 25 January 2003.

<sup>641</sup> Sonya Rose.

<sup>642</sup> Webster, p. 16.

uncover deeper attitudes and responses. This part of the story is unabashedly British in focus, for the overall story is as much a UK one as a South Asian one, and South Asian voices will be found in chapter 5. This is the voice of the Britishers who met them, both official and unofficial, national and local, top-down and bottom-up. The first section will examine the official view, how people were expected to respond. What did Britons know of India and Indians, what was the Indian presence in the UK in the 1930s and 1940s, what were the attitudes towards other foreigners, including people of colour? This section will also look at two aspects of the official response - the Indian Comforts Fund and the burial of bodies— specifically set up for the purpose of caring for the troops. The second section will study the individual, local, grassroots responses, as remembered in those communities, through several ways in which people met and interacted with them: such as children, celebrations, food and work. There will also be a consideration of the one published example of racism towards the men and how far this was typical, how far it reflected what was said around the comfortable fireplaces of home and pub – the ‘fireside words’ of the local inhabitants. The final section looks at the most intimate of encounters, sex. Stories of friendships from around the country will show that these men were welcomed into the bedrooms of some women, and that at least eight babies resulted. The case study of one such baby, Paritosh Shapland, will be considered in depth.

### **‘7000 miles to help you’ – official responses to India and Indians**

In order to understand the individual, personal responses of women, children and men in the villages and towns they went to, we need a grasp of the bigger picture, the prevailing climate of opinion and attitude in the UK in the 1930s and 1940s. How were foreigners perceived and received? What were the attitudes towards India, and how big was the Indian population in the UK then? How did official circles view K6, and what mechanisms were put in place to support or monitor them? Of course, there was no such thing as ‘the’ official view - the government, the national media and civil servants were not monolithic or monotone, but multi-faceted. Sources for this section include government papers, especially from the India Office records at the British Library, newspaper reports, and Mass-Observation questionnaires, although the latter come with their own set of reservations about self-selection of respondents and motivations of the organisers.

In general, attitudes towards foreigners in the UK were as varied in the mid-twentieth century as they are today, stretching from downright racism freely expressed, to enlightened welcome put into practise. According to Wendy Webster 'between 1939 and 1945, the population of Britain became more diverse by nationality and ethnicity than it had ever been before', and this gave an opportunity for all shades of opinion to be felt and expressed.<sup>643</sup> The writer Rose Macaulay, in the winter of 1940-41, perhaps the bleakest time on the Home Front, wrote a piece in the BBC's *Listener* magazine (a quasi-official medium) entitled 'Consolations of War', which was designed to reassure, to comfort:

the pageant of life is enormously enriched by the presence of so many foreigners in our midst.... The uniforms of Polish soldiers mingle with those of Czechs, Norwegians, Dutch and Free French; women from the Central European countries with handkerchiefs tied about their heads embellish the streets.<sup>644</sup>

She did not include any people of colour in her mix - perhaps she had not yet encountered the boys of K6. Her attitude is reflected by an anonymous reporter in the *Abergavenny Chronicle* a year later, who wrote of a multi-lingual evening bus ride with Belgians, French and Indians, where one of the locals paid the fare of an Indian short of change. The writer builds a picture of shared sacrifice and common cause:

as I sat there, the 'bus speeding along in the evening light, I felt a feeling of gratitude to these men who had come to fight alongside the British and to lay down their lives, if need be, in the defence of this country... Although the Indians couldn't understand the Frenchmen, who in turn couldn't understand the Belgians, I noticed that when they saw something in the scenery unusual or very interesting they would point and smile with a familiarity which I have never seen between men of different countries before... it was as if they all belonged to the same fellowship.<sup>645</sup>

One gets a sense from both of these writers that they are reporting what they have seen, but with a very specific purpose in mind: to bolster that sense of solidarity, the idea of nations standing shoulder to shoulder, they want to lift the

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<sup>643</sup> Webster, p. 2.

<sup>644</sup> Rose Macaulay, 'Consolations of the War', *The Listener*, XXV.627 (1941), 75-76 (p. 76).

<sup>645</sup> R.F.L., 'On the Evening Bus', *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 26 December 1941.

spirits of the British people by persuading them they are not alone. By emphasising connections, the two writers show how the 'other' has been absorbed and subsumed.

As well as those published opinions, the Mass-Observation movement was especially interested in topics of race and prejudice in its drive to mine the depths of public views. Mass-Observation recruited British citizens to send in regular diaries and responses to social questions, and became 'one of the key sources for social historians of wartime Britain.'<sup>646</sup> In the summer of 1943, Mass-Observation sent out their usual monthly 'directive' to their panel of respondents across the country. Probably responding to newspaper reports related to black American soldiers in the UK, question five read: 'What is your personal attitude towards coloured people, and is there any difference in your attitude towards members of different coloured races? Have wartime events or experiences had any effect on your attitude in this respect?'<sup>647</sup> The range of responses, as well as the report that summarises them, is fascinating. Lots of respondents say that they are prepared to accept 'coloured people' as equals in theory, but then continue to say something along the lines that 'I am ashamed to admit that in practice...', many going on to rule out mixed marriages. Many mention individuals who have moved their thinking 'one person, like Paul Robeson, can wield an enormous influence'.<sup>648</sup> Beatrice Heyworth, meanwhile, a lady in her late-fifties who had lived six years in South Africa, is not unusual in writing frankly 'I have a strong prejudice against coloured folk'. However, she then goes on to say that 'recently I have come in contact with the Indians serving in this country and I find I have no dislike of them'.<sup>649</sup> This personal shift is reflected more widely, and the official file report from Mass-Observation says that a quarter of respondents had noticed a change in their attitudes due to war - nearly all becoming more positive, 'this change has usually been brought about through personal meetings with either American Negro troops or Indian troops'.<sup>650</sup> In this way K6 had a concrete effect on improving race relations in the UK. One of the most interesting dynamics of the

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<sup>646</sup> Nick Hubble, *Mass Observation and Everyday Life: Culture, History, Theory* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 10.

<sup>647</sup> 'Directives June 1943'.

<sup>648</sup> Respondent 3155 J Anderson 'Directives June 1943'.

<sup>649</sup> 'Directives June 1943'.

<sup>650</sup> 'File Report: Attitudes to People of Colour'.

responses is that some people were very happy to offer a hierarchy of 'races', unprompted. R. Morris, at that time serving in the Royal Army Medical Corps says 'Dislike Japs most, respect Chinese most. Negroes next most, Distrust Japs and Hindoos, also Arabs'.<sup>651</sup> D.R. Sibbald meanwhile, a teacher in his early twenties, admits his order of preference 'may be quite irrational' but is happy to share it, putting Chinese and Japanese above Indians, followed by 'American Indians', then American Negroes and finally African Negroes. Their frankness is startling to a modern eye but is very useful for the social and cultural historian trying to gain a rounded view of society. A memo by K.L. Little in August 1942 gives a contemporary scholarly analysis, pointing out that reactions were based on 'a stereotype or conventionalised idea' due to lack of personal contact with 'educated' coloured people, and have been based 'largely on implications of inferiority, meniality and unintelligence... passed on by every cultural medium of our society' as well as education and 'even the pulpit'.<sup>652</sup> Racism clearly existed in those days, but so did tolerance and enlightenment.

As will be shown in chapter 4, the Indians of Force K6 were coming to a country with preformed, premediated impressions of what India was and what Indians were. Some of those impressions were based on personal experience, for there were at the outbreak of war somewhere between five and ten thousand Indians in the UK.<sup>653</sup> Among even 10,000 Indians, the injection of around 2,000 more soldiers must have made quite a difference to the visibility of Indians on the streets. Indians were to be found at all levels of society, from the *lascars* (sailors) who had settled in North Shields and Cardiff and men like Anant Ram, who arrived from Punjab in 1936 and worked as a vendor in London, to the intellectuals working at the BBC and the nobility passing through or in residence.<sup>654</sup> Rozina Visram has shown that some parts of the country had greater and longer experience than others. The fascinating story of the Kirkpatricks, told by William Dalrymple, remind us that there was (and is) another stratum of the Indian presence in the UK: descendants of eighteenth century marriages who

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<sup>651</sup> 'Directives June 1943'.

<sup>652</sup> 'Colour Prejudice', 1942, The National Archives, Kew, CO 875/19/14.

<sup>653</sup> Visram, p. 254. There are three sources given by Visram on this page, with widely varying estimates.

<sup>654</sup> Anant Ram and Darshan Singh Tatla, 'This Is Our Home Now: Reminiscences of a Panjabi Migrant in Coventry in an Interview with Anant Ram', *Oral History*, 21.1 (1993), 68–94 (p. 70).

moved to the UK and who may be among the invisible minorities.<sup>655</sup> By 1931 India was such an important part of the Empire that nearly 87,000 Britons had been born there, according to the census that year.<sup>656</sup> Although we can surmise that these people were 'overwhelmingly white Anglo-Indians', the census did not ask that particular question.<sup>657</sup> It is hard to assess to what extent K6 came into contact with these longer-term residents and Anglo-Indian families. Certainly their officers and the India Office endeavoured to keep them away from the 'undesirable' politicals like the India League and to steer them towards those who were more supportive of British policy in India.<sup>658</sup> That included men like the Jam Sahib, part of the War Cabinet, photographed visiting the Reinforcement Unit in September 1942, as well as those they met at the Woking Mosque in their regular visits.<sup>659</sup> But equally the men were given free rein to walk outside their camps and would have encountered a variety of people during their leave.

They certainly met some of their comrades in uniform, including visits from RAF pilot officers Sanghi, Shahi and Mehta to 32<sup>nd</sup> Company in August 1941 and Shaukat Hyat Khan, son of the loyalist governor of Punjab, who wrote a report on their morale, sadly lost in the archives.<sup>660</sup> Other Indians in uniform included Shanti Behari Seth of the Army Dental Corps, who lost his arm at Monte Cassino (unknown by Bernard Manning) and whose nephew is the writer Vikram Seth.<sup>661</sup> There was also the peculiar circumstance of the 80<sup>th</sup> company of the Pioneer Corps, recruited from Indians resident in the UK, mostly *lascars*, which reached a peak of 172 members.<sup>662</sup> They served in the UK, digging and carrying and doing manual labour, and even their small number of recruits indicates that there were

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<sup>655</sup> William Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth Century India* (London: Flamingo, 2004). Descendants of Princess Khair-un-Nissa live in Devon.

<sup>656</sup> *Census of England and Wales, 1931. General Tables Comprising Population, Institutions, Ages and Material Conditions, Birthplace and Nationality, Welsh Language* (London: HMSO, 1935), p. 179.

<sup>657</sup> Panikos Panayi, 'Immigrants, Refugees, the British State and Public Opinion During World War Two', in *War Culture: Social Change and Changing Experience in World War Two*, ed. by Pat Kirkham and Thoms (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995), pp. 201–8 (p. 202).

<sup>658</sup> Compare with reports on India League (Krishna Menon) approaches to trainees at Letchworth, from May 41 'Bevin Boys', India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/PJ/12/643.

<sup>659</sup> 'War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, 1942'.

<sup>660</sup> 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, 1941'; 'War Diary, 3 Animal Transport Company, 1941', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5900; Shaukat Hyat Khan, *The Nation That Lost Its Soul: Memoirs of a Freedom Fighter*, p. 65.

<sup>661</sup> Shompa Lahiri, 'Divided Loyalties', *History Today*, 57.5 (2007), 55–57 (p. 56).

<sup>662</sup> E.H. Rhodes-Wood, *A War History of the Royal Pioneer Corps, 1939-1945* (Aldershot: Gale and Polden, 1960), pp. 61–62.

enough working-class Indians present in the ports for the War Office to consider it a viable option. There was, in fact, a degree of normalcy around seeing an Indian during the war: Graham Greene's 1939 novel *The Confidential Agent* features more than one incidental Indian character, including Mr Muckerji who turns out to be a Mass Observer.<sup>663</sup> The official face of India-in-wartime-Britain can be seen in a photograph in the Amery archives, probably taken at India House, depicting all the India Comforts Fund staff from officers to cleaners, including many brown faces (figure 16).<sup>664</sup> One place that the longer-term and the temporary residents came together was in death. At a little cemetery outside Dornoch on the east coast of Scotland are three Indian graves. The two on the outside are of driver Ghulam Nabi and Naik Abdul Rakhman of Force K6, who both died of TB.<sup>665</sup> In the middle lies Ram Bhopal, who died in 1960. He was a pedlar, one of many hundreds who made a living before and after the war selling clothes and fancy goods door-to-door around the Highlands and Islands.<sup>666</sup> Although South Asian migration is often seen as a post-war phenomenon akin to the Windrush generation, the men of K6 were not the first, nor even the second, but actually merely a small chapter in the middle of a continuing story.



Figure 16: Indian Comforts Fund staff outside India House, date unknown (Amery papers AMEL 10/38)

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<sup>663</sup> Graham Greene, *The Confidential Agent* (London: Heinemann, 1952), p. 142.

<sup>664</sup> 'Photographs', Churchill Archive, Cambridge, England, AMEL 10/38.

<sup>665</sup> Hamish Johnston, 'A Corner of Pakistan in Scotland', *Highland Family History Society*, 2012; also Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

<sup>666</sup> Visram, p. 260.

British official attitudes to the Indians who might be encountered in Britain in those days were complex and divergent. On the surface, government attitudes were straightforward: Indians were part of the Empire, were British citizens, were welcomed here, and should not be subject to any discrimination. Scratch that surface, however, and the ideas are more complex. Wendy Webster identifies 'covert discrimination' in the War Cabinet's attitude to coloured servicemen in the UK.<sup>667</sup> Elspeth Huxley of the Colonial Office saw hypocrisy in the BBC's 'official non-discrimination and unofficial prejudice' when discussing the possibility of a radio programme on the colour bar in 1943.<sup>668</sup> Of course the government's (and the BBC's) prime aim was always to win the war, an attitude that explained and covered much, including behaviour towards the Congress party and others who supported Indian independence. The complicated attitudes of officialdom towards Indians in Britain are revealed in the case of Sir Hari Singh Gour. This was a similar situation to that of Learie Constantine which sparked the Zec cartoon described in chapter 4. Gour, the Vice Chancellor of Nagpur University and deputy President of the Indian National Assembly, was excluded from the Woodlands Park Hotel in Cobham in June 1941. The ensuing scandal drew in newspapers and members of the government. Home Secretary Herbert Morrison took an enlightened view:

Needless to say I entirely sympathise with your view that all practicable steps should be taken to discourage any tendency to anti-Indian discrimination amongst hotel-keepers. I also fully appreciate the point that we want to make it clear to public opinion in India that responsible people in England strongly disapprove of any such discrimination.<sup>669</sup>

The nuances of the phrase 'responsible people in England' show that Morrison was aware of the breadth of opinion. A civil servant in the India Office quoted in the same file is curiously egalitarian in his rudeness, saying 'Sir Hari Singh Gour is a great bore, but so no doubt are a great many English people of his age'.<sup>670</sup>

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<sup>667</sup> Webster, p. 119.

<sup>668</sup> Sonya Rose, p. 272.

<sup>669</sup> 'Liquor Licensing: Alleged Colour Bars in Hotels and Restaurants 1930-48', The National Archives, Kew, England, HO 45/24748.

<sup>670</sup> 'Liquor Licensing: Alleged Colour Bars in Hotels and Restaurants 1930-48'.



The prime motivation throughout the war, though, was to do everything possible to ensure India's continued military contribution to the war effort.

The attitude of ordinary British people towards India can be traced through Mass-Observation papers and Gallup Polls, although public opinion at the best of times is 'an amorphous and slippery concept, almost impossible to grasp and notorious for its resistance to easy definition'.<sup>671</sup> Gallup started their work in the UK in 1937, the same year as Mass-Observation and the BBC's listener surveys, so the industry of opinion measuring was in its infancy during the war. Gallup asked the same question to its 1000 interviewees in one hundred places in November 1939 and in January 1942: 'Should India's demand for self-government be granted during the war or should it wait until after the war?'.<sup>672</sup> The results were published in the left-leaning *News Chronicle*, and showed a small increase in those saying 'during' from 26% to 31%, and a larger decrease in those saying 'after' from 51% to 41%. What is more interesting perhaps is that this survey was predicated on the assumption that self-government (not the same as independence) would be granted at some stage soon. The British public were ready for that eventuality, and more than a quarter were ready at that point. Mass-Observation's questions were always more open and qualitative. In August 1942, during the Quit India campaign and after the failure of Stafford Cripps' mission to India, mass observers were asked 'How do you feel about present and recent events in India?'.<sup>673</sup> Responses were again very wide and reveal a variety of levels of knowledge and engagement with the topic. Many people knew and cared, sometimes on the basis of personal experience. Gandhi was named by many (and often misspelt), receiving both sympathy and brickbats. Mrs G. Lund called him 'a silly old goat' and Nella Last (who became famous later as the writer behind the Victoria Wood TV series 'Housewife, 49') said 'I think Gandhi should have been locked up long ago'.<sup>674</sup> There was widespread dissatisfaction with the Cripps Mission as a missed opportunity, as well as a sense that recent actions in

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<sup>671</sup> Daniel Hucker, 'International History and the Study of Public Opinion: Towards Methodological Clarity', *The International History Review*, 34.4 (2012), 775–94 (p. 775).

<sup>672</sup> George Gallup, *The Gallup International Public Opinion Polls: Great Britain 1937-1975* (New York: Random House, 1976), pp. 25, 54.

<sup>673</sup> 'Directives August 1942'.

<sup>674</sup> 'Directives August 1942'.

putting down demonstrations had gone too far. Charles Barren, a lecturer in the army wrote that he was:

Ashamed to be an Englishman. The very things for which we are supposedly fighting for for ourselves and, sic, allies, we deny to India. Blatant (English) hypocrisy.<sup>675</sup>

It is difficult to say how representative such enlightened opinions were. Certainly the support for Congress was manifested in public meetings in London, often preserved in archives due to government anxiety about 'sedition'. In early 1943, for example, the India League held five meetings in London, with illustrious speakers including Krishna Menon, Mulk Raj Anand and the Labour MP Reginald Sorenson. 700 people attended the meeting at Holborn Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> January, and the policeman who wrote the report on a meeting at the Coliseum recorded that the speakers 'in the main were either fair-minded and ill-informed or well-informed and unfair-minded'.<sup>676</sup> Set against that is a Mass-Observation report from an air raid shelter in Tilbury, where on one occasion 'one observer found that the race feeling at Tilbury was not so much Jew versus Gentile, but white against black, with the Indian contingent being the centre of attack from both the white communities'.<sup>677</sup> Taken together though, the evidence on popular feeling towards or against Indians is inconclusive, while the assumptions behind the Gallup polls stand out as a clear pointer of opinion on the political way forward.

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<sup>675</sup> 'Directives August 1942'.

<sup>676</sup> 'Indian Organisations in UK', India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/PJ/12/646.

<sup>677</sup> Tony Kushner, *The Persistence of Prejudice: Antisemitism in British Society during the Second World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p. 55.



A General View of the Wool Room, Indian Comforts Fund, Garments being sorted on arrival,

Figure 17: The Wool room at the Indian Comforts Fund (Amery papers AMEL 6/3/120)

Whatever the ordinary Britisher thought of Indians in theory, a lot of them were moved to reach out to help the men of K6 in a very practical way, with knitting needles. The Indian Comforts Fund (ICF), mentioned in chapter 1 in relation to POWs, found its greatest level of public engagement through an extensive programme of garment manufacture. Wool was despatched from its London HQ to a 'great band of unseen skilful knitters' around the country, who turned it into socks, gloves, balaclavas and other warm garments.<sup>678</sup> These work parties - of which there were 1683 at the end of 1941, totalling a staggering 60,000 knitters and using nearly 30,000 pounds of wool - ranged from small groups of women in a village, to whole schools. Early in 1942 two men from K6, VCOs Ahmed Nawaz and Gulzar Khan, visited a group of knitters in the village of West Woodlands near Frome with Colonel Hills, where they found 'nearly all villagers have been knitting comforts for the Contingent since Feb 40'.<sup>679</sup> A further sense of the scale of the work can be seen from the photo of the Wool room (figure 17), with deliveries of new garments coming in from the knitting groups and members of 80<sup>th</sup> Company of Pioneers doing the heavy lifting. As well as

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<sup>678</sup> *Indian Comforts Fund: Progress Report Oct 41-March 42, 1942*, p. 2, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/17/5/2327.

<sup>679</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

the knitting, the Fund supported K6 and other Indians in the UK (Pioneers, *lascars*, Bevin Boys) in a variety of ways. Books and board games were distributed, including *carrom* and *pachesi*, as well as 600 records in Urdu, Punjabi and Hindi.<sup>680</sup> The Deputy High Commissioner, S. Lall, was partly responsible for the welfare of Indians in the UK, and reported on the BBC, in the week after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, that the ICF held a tea party at India House 'every Tuesday for men from the Indian Contingent. Our young men are helped to establish contact with their fellows from all parts of the British Commonwealth and from America.'<sup>681</sup> Taken all together, the efforts of the Indian Comforts Fund represent a remarkable effort at both the official and the personal level, with thousands of ordinary women and men mobilised in their living rooms with their knitting needles. The marketing message of the ICF '7000 miles to help you', accompanied by a photo of a man in the Pioneers corps (figure 18), was clearly an effective one.



Figure 18: Advertisement for the Indian Comforts Fund (Amery papers AMEL 6/3/120)

Perhaps the most poignant example of the care extended to the men of Force K6 can be seen in their graves. There are thirty-seven K6 men buried in the UK, with a further seventeen in France and seven in Germany. The largest

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<sup>680</sup> *Indian Comforts Fund: Progress Report Oct 41-March 42.*

<sup>681</sup> 'S. Lall – Deputy High Commissioner', India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/I/1/1438.

concentrations of burials are near sites where their hospital was located - Kingussie in the Scottish Highlands (nine graves) and Brecon in Wales (eight burials). These graves are all looked after by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), each has a standard headstone, with regimental badge, name, rank and regiment, service number and date of death, and a short inscription supplied by the family which is 'subject to censorship'.<sup>682</sup> As graves for Muslims, these also carry a standard inscription in Arabic 'he is the forgiving one' at the top, and 'we belong to Allah and to him shall we return' at the bottom (see figure 19). The burials were conducted in accordance with Muslim practise: the body was washed and shrouded in three cloths, the grave was dug so that the body lay on its back, and the face turned to the right towards Mecca, and the funeral was followed by three days of mourning.<sup>683</sup> Wherever K6 units were posted, arrangements were made with a local cemetery for plots to be set aside in readiness, even though most of them were not actually needed.<sup>684</sup> In November 1940, a great storm blew down trees at the camp at Duporth, where 25<sup>th</sup> Company and the Reinforcement Unit were stationed. J. Martin, the ARP first aider, was among those called out, and recalled years later:

The winds were at gale force and it blew down a massive tree which landed right across the chalet in which the soldiers were sleeping... I remember the labour gang digging under the tree and chalet to get to the soldiers. I still have the picture in my mind [of] a gale force wind, a moonlight scene with scudding clouds being blown across the sky – and the weird chanting of the Indian soldiers around... The [bodies] were carried in a sitting-up position, to Charlestown cemetery. Most peculiar, the locals had never seen anything like it. They had a wonderful [singer] going along with their mules, and the officers in their turbans on horseback.<sup>685</sup>

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<sup>682</sup> Philip Longworth, *The Unending Vigil: The History of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission*, Revised and updated edition (Barnsley: Leo Cooper, 2003), p. 34.

<sup>683</sup> Abdul Rashid Gatrad, 'Muslim Customs Surrounding Death, Bereavement, Postmortem Examinations, and Organ Transplants', *British Medical Journal*, 309.6953 (1994), 521–23; 'Burials Of Moslems - Method', 1947, Commonwealth War Graves Commission archives, Maidenhead, A/175.

<sup>684</sup> 'New War Burials; 1939 - Indian Graves In UK'.

<sup>685</sup> Martin.

The two bodies were those of Tinsmith Ghulam Nabi and Saddler Muhammad Gul, and they were joined two days later by Warrant Officer Hashmat Ali, who died from his injuries (figure 19). The three bodies still lie in the cemetery at Charlestown, surrounded by primroses in spring. The care for the dead taken by the men of the units, the CWGC, the local communities and even the press, points towards a high level of human empathy. All that could be done, was done, and the ongoing maintenance of graves by the CWGC shows that even though the wider community may forget their sacrifice, the official remembrance continues. These graves represent *lieux de mémoire* for local people and those of South Asian heritage alike.



Figure 19: Headstone of Warrant Officer Hashmat Ali at Charlestown Cemetery in Cornwall (photo by Ghee Bowman)

Taken all together, a picture emerges of official care and respect for the men of K6, backed up by popular effort, always remembering that nobody could afford to alienate or anger Indian public opinion and the smaller sub-set of Indian military opinion. British newspapers, civil servants and government ministers showed an interest in how Indians in the UK were treated, even if that was

sometimes tempered with an air of paternalism – mothering the ‘other’. 60,000 knitters all round the country, clacking away with their needles making hats and gloves to warm the Punjabis, is a potent image. The continuation of that care can be seen now in the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the local volunteers who care for K6 graves.

### **‘The children have lost their good companions’ - individual, personal responses**

While the previous section gives an idea of the official reception and the broader context to their visit, this section intends to mine the deep seam of personal stories and reminiscence from around the UK, stories remembered to this day in many cases. This is the specific lived experience to put alongside the official theory, the bottom-up perspective that complements and amplifies the top-down angle from official papers. There is much to draw on, in newspapers and local history centres, but above all in the hearts and minds of people now in their eighties and nineties. Wendy Webster, in her book on diversity in wartime Britain, identifies various places of mixture where local people encountered foreigners, including public transport, the armed forces, workplaces, hospitals, schools, pubs, dance halls and private houses.<sup>686</sup> This section will use those and other categories (food, language) as themes to present some stories, and will also look at racism, examining the question of the shortage of evidence of ill-treatment of K6 men. Does this lack mean that the British population of the 1940s was free of racism, or are there are other reasons to be found, such as a reluctance to speak out in public?

One area where there is an abundance of stories is the soldiers’ friendships with children. This may be because the only people alive today who remember them were children when they met, but it may also reflect an ability to get on with young people that was widespread among these Punjabis a long way from home, a longing felt by these men-without-women, or an indication that children are less fully immersed in learned racist responses to difference. Wherever they were posted they made friends with youngsters, played with them, shared food and toys, and became companions. A photo from France in April

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<sup>686</sup> Webster, p. 13.

1940 shows French children sitting on their laps as they watch the gymkhana at Marquette-lez-Lille.<sup>687</sup> Many families took photos of an Indian with family members, as described in chapter 4. Joan Leed in Lairg was just three years old when her father snapped her with a mule and three soldiers in the village.<sup>688</sup> Alasdair Will in Dornoch has a picture of his uncle Leonard as a very young boy smiling while holding hands with an unidentified Indian and an older Scottish boy.<sup>689</sup> Jos Williams of Nantmor in Snowdonia has many stories full of games and tricks that indicate a level of intimacy and playfulness, like this example, where his sisters play a trick on a sepoy:

It was like this. The Indians used to come here for a cup of tea with mother, one at a time, many used to come. If there was one here, another one would not come... Lal Khan was the name of the batman - he used to come here every morning for fresh milk and eggs. They were not allowed to smoke in the camp so he would come through to this room to have a smoke, and every morning he would offer a cigarette to my sisters, Laura and Mair... What the wicked girls did! Laura told Mair "You take one tomorrow morning and he will put a light to it, I am sure he will do that, and you take a few puffs of smoking like that and pretend you go ill and fall off the seat" Of course it worked well!" She took the cigarette, he lit it, she collapsed off the seat and he shouted "mums, mums, water, water, water". He came back with water saying "Cleans, cleans, cleans" Oh we had fun with them!<sup>690</sup>

Edgar Parry Williams of the same village could recall two Indian lullabies, sixty years later, that he had learnt as a boy.<sup>691</sup> In Ashbourne, Doreen Allsop was then aged nine, living a mile from their camp on Shirley Common. She well remembers a friendly sentry called Khalil, who stopped her on the gate as she went to visit a relative and asked her what she'd been doing at school. She told him of a poem about a blackbird who 'sits in the tree singing from the bough', after that, Khalil requested she recite the poem every time she went through the gates.<sup>692</sup>

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<sup>687</sup> Mallindine, *A Group of the Spectators Evidently Enjoying the Proceedings*.

<sup>688</sup> 'Leed MacDonald and Price'.

<sup>689</sup> Alasdair Will, 'Email from Alsdair Will to Ghee Bowman', 28 October 2017.

<sup>690</sup> Interview with Jos Williams, 1999.

<sup>691</sup> 'Interview with Edgar Parry Williams'.

<sup>692</sup> Interview with Doreen Allsop, 2016.



Meanwhile in Golspie in Scotland, the story was that the children were discouraged from fraternising, and used to throw stones at the men, who sold cigarettes called Pasha and Cogent, which tasted 'like horse's dung', and gave away chapatties, rice and sultanas.<sup>693</sup> Further south, Vanessa Forbes, who had been born in Quetta, living near Cock Bridge in Aberdeenshire in 1942, recalls going down the hill in her pedal car as a long column of mules came up. 'They all had to wait for me' - she recalled gleefully.<sup>694</sup> Gerry Williams of Ashbourne, aged nine at the time, had a different sort of memory to share, of an officer who may have been Major Akbar:

With a couple of friends, we once met an Indian Officer, sitting alone on a seat on Derby Hill, enjoying the view across the valley. We were all impressed with his belt full of polished bullets and a most magnificent "six shooter" on his hip. I don't know if it was a "38" or "45" calibre but this guy let us all handle it and even demonstrated how to load it. We didn't get the opportunity to kill either him or ourselves!!! Can you imagine that happening in this day and age?<sup>695</sup>

One childhood friendship, based on just a few months of acquaintance, was to last a lifetime – that of Betty Cresswell and Gian Kapur.<sup>696</sup> When the units of K6 came to Derbyshire in the summer of 1940, a few of them were billeted at the home of Herbert and Gladys Foster. Herbert was a nurseryman who lived at a house called the Plateau, very close to Osmaston manor, Gladys was his wife and Betty their three-year old daughter. They had two acres of nursery for shrubs and trees, plus four pens for hens laying eggs. On 29<sup>th</sup> June that year, during the Battle of Britain summer and just a month after Dunkirk, the K6 Headquarters moved to Shirley, along with the 47 Supply Depot Section, the Remount Depot and the Reinforcement Unit. Part of the HQ was the accountancy department, led by Captain Gian Kapur (see figure 20). Kapur was a Hindu shopkeeper from Lahore turned army accountant in his mid-40s, with experience of service in the Great War.<sup>697</sup> As Kapur was a Hindu, he brought with him a Hindu cook, Kundan

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<sup>693</sup> Interview with Colin Hexley, Shirley Sutherland, John Melville & Robert Beaton, 2016.

<sup>694</sup> Interview with Hamish Johnston, 2016.

<sup>695</sup> Gerry Williams, 'Indian Soldiers in Ashbourne', 2 May 2015.

<sup>696</sup> Interview with Betty Cresswell, 2016 and materials supplied by her.

<sup>697</sup> 'Grant of Honours'.

Lall. Kapur and his colleagues very quickly became part of the family - Betty has strong memories of the men outside, cooking on a primus stove, while Kapur ate with the family (see figure 29 in chapter 4). The men who were working up at the 'big house' would come down to the nursery in their spare time and help Herbert with the hens and the shrubs in the nursery. Betty quickly learnt to call Kapur 'Uncle Gian' - a courtesy title common to India and rural England. After just four months the HQ moved on to Devon. Uncle Gian did not forget the Fosters' hospitality, however, and visited them several times before his return to India in 1942. By that point he had been awarded an MBE for his work with K6.<sup>698</sup> In his recommendation for the award, Colonel Hills was lavish with his praise:

Although an accountant is normally looked on with some, and probably unfair, suspicion in the service, Mr Kapur is extremely popular with and has the confidence of all ranks. In addition to his normal duties, he has exceeded them in his help to the Indians by writing letters for those who are illiterate, to their families.<sup>699</sup>



Figure 20: Gian Kapur and Herbert Foster, signed and dated 12<sup>th</sup> September 1940 (private collection)

<sup>698</sup> 'MBE for Gian Kapur', *London Gazette* (London, 6 December 1941), p. 3295.

<sup>699</sup> 'Grant of Honours'.

The impact of the short stay was not restricted to Captain Kapur. In January 1941 Herbert received a letter from Duporth camp at St Austell, from carpenter Allah Ditta of the Remount Depot. He expressed his affection to all the family and wrote that he was sorry ‘that you are not near to me otherwise I must send you a good chapattee and curry.’<sup>700</sup> After Kapur’s return to India, he kept in touch with the family. He wrote a letter every Christmas, and Foster wrote back. He sent presents for Betty – ornamental shoes, a bowl and a ring - which she keeps safely to this day. The letters did not stop until the 1980s, when he became ill. Gian Kapur died at Meerut in 1985, aged over ninety. The depth and the long duration of the friendship between this bespectacled businessman and the farming family from the middle of England is remarkable. It may be a product simply of circumstances – a friendly man a long way from home who was missing his home and family, at the first place he stayed after a traumatic time in northern France, coupled with a welcoming household who saw ‘things were very serious then’ and that ‘the Indians had come to help us’.<sup>701</sup> The fact that other sepoy held the family in high regard also, indicates a level of connection of great depth, perhaps also a product of the extraordinary times. In one of his final letters to England in December 1980, Kapur wrote ‘How I remember the night we went to Shirley pub & were challenged by the sentry. I answered “FRIENDS”’.<sup>702</sup> That seems like a suitable way to characterise that relationship, a warm memory of a warm friendship that lasted a lifetime.

An obvious meeting point between people is food – eating, sharing, trading. As well as being an expression of identity (as explored in chapter 2), food is also about community - we eat what we are used to, but we also come together to eat in a process that ‘reinforces ties, forges new memories, and allows people to reflect on the importance of eating together.’<sup>703</sup> This happened frequently for the men of K6 - there are many stories about chapatties for example, a foodstuff new to most Britons. They are often compared to pancakes, or to Derbyshire oatcakes for people near Ashbourne.<sup>704</sup> At a garden fete at Ashbourne Vicarage,

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<sup>700</sup> ‘Letter from Allah Ditta to Herbert Foster’, 26 January 1941, Betty Cresswell collection.

<sup>701</sup> ‘Interview with Betty Cresswell’.

<sup>702</sup> ‘Letter from Gian Kapur to Herbert Foster’, 13 December 1980, Betty Cresswell collection.

<sup>703</sup> Gillian Crowther, *Eating Culture: An Anthropological Guide to Food* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), p. 151.

<sup>704</sup> See for example ‘Indian Camp an Ornamental Wonder’.

chapatties were sold to raise funds for the Red Cross.<sup>705</sup> In the mining village of Rossington near Doncaster:

The Indian soldiers soon made friends with the locals, and young boys were soon introduced to eating chapattis that had been cooked over rocks heated by an open camp fire. The soldiers were invited into the mining village and Cambridge Street was the site at least one formal tea party, where a Yorkshire miner's family shared rations with soldiers who were thousands of miles from home.<sup>706</sup>

In a long article in 1942 entitled 'India in Scotland: A visit to Mule Company', the correspondent from *The Scotsman* gives a detailed description of the cooking process:

Beneath the shelter of a corrugated iron roof an Indian, squatting on his haunches, was busily making chapattis for lunch – throwing a lump of dough (flour and water) on to the metal plate on his right side, deftly kneading it, punching it, then taking it into his two hands and patting it into a flat pancake, before throwing it on to the hot plate which rested on an underground fire at his left hand. Keeping a watchful eye on the cooking chapattis as he worked, turning one over or throwing a cooked one on to the steadily growing pile beside him every few moments – he went on with his task as though time stood still and nothing mattered, save the making of chapattis.<sup>707</sup>

Perhaps chapatties are the right symbol for hospitality – the breaking of bread being an almost universal idea in welcoming people. Indeed, these staples were the gift that the men of 25<sup>th</sup> Company wanted to send to Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret Rose in 1940 from Ashbourne. Sadly history does not record what the King did with the bread on his return to London. As well as handing out food, the men were keen to supplement their rations with locally-bought foodstuffs. Joan Leed in Lairg reports a soldier coming to her house and asking for 'ax'. When her mother went to the shed to fetch the axe for chopping wood, the soldier

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<sup>705</sup> 'Indian Soldiers Aid Fete', *Derby Evening Telegraph*, 22 August 1940.

<sup>706</sup> Adam, p. 84. The men of the 29th coy were also given hot baths at the local colliery (WO 79/5910).

<sup>707</sup> 'India in Scotland: A Visit to Mule Company', *Scotsman*, 19 September 1942.

shook his head and indicated the chickens – he was after eggs.<sup>708</sup> There are also several stories of the Indians extending hospitality to the locals. An unidentified Aberdonian working at a butcher's 'was given my first taste of curried mutton on pilau rice almost sixty years ago and I've enjoyed Indian food ever since'.<sup>709</sup> Meanwhile in Chepstow, an officer who was probably Rattan Singh of 7<sup>th</sup> Company invited a whole family:

The Commandant had been educated at Oxford. He was friendly with my parents and my mother's young sister. As a result, all the family, including my grandmother, were invited to a meal at the camp. We sat at a low table where chapatti-type bread was passed around, and curry was served on the bread. No cutlery! A great fuss was made of my brother, who was taken around the camp and put on a large horse. I, a mere girl, was largely ignored! The commandant translated part of a letter from his mother in which she said "remember my son, all the lads in your care, are some other mother's sons."<sup>710</sup>

The men were also frequently entertained by the villagers throughout the land, as the story of the Yorkshire miners illustrates. Such parties were often around festivals, both Christian and Muslim. On 25<sup>th</sup> December 1942, the 42<sup>nd</sup> coy in Ballater all received presents from the local parish priest, Reverend J. Howart of The Manse of Glenmink.<sup>711</sup> One extraordinary unverified story comes from Kinlochleven, where the villagers organised a ceilidh to raise money for a sick soldier, whom they knew as 'Sunshine', who was the orderly of Captain Singh. Unfortunately he died on the voyage home.<sup>712</sup> As well as dancing, the men became used to the British style of hospitality in many ways, including the village pub. In an unnamed Derbyshire village in September 1940, the publican, the vicar and their wives gave tea, a concert and a walking tour of the district.<sup>713</sup> Probably the best story of village entertainment takes us back to the village of Lairg in the Scottish Highlands at the end of 1942. The Women's Voluntary Service (WVS) put on a party in the Drill hall and gymnasium just before Christmas. According

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<sup>708</sup> 'Leed MacDonald and Price'.

<sup>709</sup> 'The Aberdeen Mittwoch Blitz - Wednesday 21st April 1943', *The Doric Columns* <<http://www.mcjazz.f2s.com/Blitzkreig.htm>> [accessed 31 July 2019].

<sup>710</sup> Chepstow Society, *Wartime Memories: The Home Front in Chepstow 1939-1945* (Chepstow: Chepstow Society, 2000), p. 25.

<sup>711</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1942'.

<sup>712</sup> Interview with David McDougall, Sheena McDougall & Catriona Spence, 2017.

<sup>713</sup> 'Indian Soldiers Entertained', *Derby Evening Telegraph*, 26 September 1940.

to the local paper 'a splendid and bountiful supply of eatables was available', songs, stories and dances were performed by Indians and Scots and the Medical officer 'spoke eloquently in reply. Dr Fazal emphasised the strong bond that would always exist between Scotland and India as a result of the kindness and hospitality shown to Indian troops by the people of the Highlands.'<sup>714</sup> The evening concluded with a rendition of 'Auld Lang Syne' by an Indian bagpiper, possibly Naik Buda Din, which 'showed more than anything else the strength of the tie that links Scotland with India'. A week later, the Honorary Secretary of the Lairg WVS, Isobel Fraser (the local schoolteacher) sent a long letter to Colonel Hills.<sup>715</sup> In her eloquent and beautifully worded letter, she writes how sad the people of the village are that 25<sup>th</sup> Company has come and gone twice, and hopes they will return again 'for we had hoped these fine officers and men would be our guardians for the duration of the war'.<sup>716</sup> She gives an account of the party, including home-made cakes and three cigarettes for each man 'setting them on the table in "V" formation'. After settling the accounts, there was still £26 remaining, which was spent on 3000 cigarettes and 900 razor blades, plus £9 to Dr Fazal for 'hospital needs'. Fraser continues:

We felt like your men were very much like our people of the Highlands in many ways, and on their return to Lairg in October last, we felt that they were just coming home again. I cannot tell you just how pleasant they have been, how kind to the children, and how helpful to us all. For my own part, on my daily treks to school, I had often to pass horses and mules on the way to and from the watering-troughs. Being very nervous of these animals, though delighted to watch them at a distance, I was ever chary of passing them. Your men had not been two days in Lairg when they discovered my weakness, and never once did I appear but an officer or N.C.O. came to my rescue, halted the animals, and escorted me past them on my way...

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<sup>714</sup> 'Lairg WVS Entertain', *Northern Times*, 31 December 1942. 'Dr Fazal' is probably Jemadar Fazal Mohd IMD, originally attached to the IGH, who attended the London university course in July 1942 on 'international good will, citizenship and postwar'.

<sup>715</sup> 'Leed MacDonald and Price'.

<sup>716</sup> Letter is reproduced in toto in 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1943', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5882.

Lairg is bleak and deserted now that they are gone, and the empty stables are a mute reminder of the happy faces and busy figures that were ever seen there. The children have lost their “good companions” from whom they were never separated during the months of the Indian’s sojourn in Lairg, and the great majority of firesides have an empty chair tonight. No “Khuda hafiz” is softly spoken as the door closes on the beloved Indian friend. Lairg is a village of memories.

This letter speaks of such deep levels of mutual warmth and care between the people of this small village and the sepoy so far from home. Indeed, one might almost read it as a love letter for one going away, a promise that the welcome will be kept in the hillside.

Wherever they went, whomever they met, relationships between K6 men and locals were helped or hindered by the language abilities of both sides. For most of them their mother tongue was Punjabi or one of its dialects (especially Potohari), with a few speaking Pushtu at home. On top of that, they would all have had enough Arabic to say their prayers, and were able to understand Urdu, the official language of the British Indian Army. Having spent more than five months in France, they would certainly be able to speak some French, indeed one of their officers claimed in February 1940 that ‘the Indians seem to pick up French more quickly than British troops here’.<sup>717</sup> Their fifth language was English, the learning of which was seen as a priority by Colonel Hills. Warrant officer First Class F.E. Brown from the Army Education Corps was attached to the Contingent, and language lessons became commonplace among the soldiers. In the six months to April 1942, Hills was very pleased to report that 600 personnel had gained the army’s Third Class certificate in English.<sup>718</sup> For the February 1941 exam, candidates were required to write a 150-word essay on one of five topics, including ‘Winter in England’ or ‘My experience of British people’, and to answer comprehension questions on a passage about Subedar Richpal Ram, who had been awarded a Victoria Cross in the Middle East.<sup>719</sup> *The Scotsman* report in September 1942 reckoned that the VCOs could speak English ‘fluently’, but that

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<sup>717</sup> ‘Indian Troops in Forward Area’, *Times of India*, 16 February 1940.

<sup>718</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6’.

<sup>719</sup> RWW Hills (Commanding Officer), ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6’.

'few of the Indian private soldiers are able to converse in English'.<sup>720</sup> It is clear that the Indian KCOs all commanded English of near-native speaker level, and the filmed interview with Subedar Nasir Rahman on his return shows wide vocabulary and an accent that is easy on the ear for a Britisher.<sup>721</sup> A lack of English was not always a barrier, however: in Welsh speaker Edgar Parry Williams felt on an equal footing as 'they didn't have much English anyway and we didn't... either'.<sup>722</sup> The language lessons were not unidirectional. At Llangattack Park in 2015 there was a woman whose mother-in-law had done laundry for K6 officers and learnt to count to 20 in Punjabi.

Another field where contact was made that could cut across the language barrier was the area of work. All of the K6 men were manual workers in one way or another – experienced either with mules and horses, or with wood, leather, the needle or the care of people. Jos Williams in Snowdonia learnt how to cold-shoe a horse from one of the farriers - 'they taught me to do things. It widened my world a bit'.<sup>723</sup> In Lairg, the 25<sup>th</sup> Company's bootmaker, either Saini Ahmed or Allah Ditta, made friends with Angus Ross the local shoemaker, and compared leather techniques.<sup>724</sup> Meanwhile in Crickhowell, carpenter Charlie Edwards had his photo taken with his Punjabi equivalent, Sada Khan (see figure 21).

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<sup>720</sup> 'India in Scotland: A Visit to Mule Company'.

<sup>721</sup> *Film: Interviews on Return, 1944*, Imperial War Museum, London, MWY92.

<sup>722</sup> 'Interview with Edgar Parry Williams'.

<sup>723</sup> 'Interview with Jos Williams'.

<sup>724</sup> 'Leed MacDonald and Price'.





Figure 21: Carpenters Sada Khan and Charlie Edwards at Crickhowell (Crickhowell Museum)

Every village has its moments when community life is publicly foregrounded, and the boys of K6 were keen to join in with these local customs. Aside from the fetes and parties mentioned above, the parades in chapter 4 and the sporting activities in chapter 2, there were plentiful opportunities for the men to get involved.<sup>725</sup> These included large-scale high profile events like the Pageant of Empire at the Albert Hall in January 1942, attended by a delegation led by Jemadar Mohd Jamshaid Khan of 25 coy, who ‘when they entered in procession... received an ovation.’<sup>726</sup> This spirit of fitting-in also manifested through the great British tradition of charitable activities. Men of the Remount Depot sold poppies in Derby in the run-up to Remembrance Sunday 1941, collecting nearly £16.<sup>727</sup> Soon after their arrival in France, they gave £50 to the Royal Navy war amenities fund, in appreciation for their safe travel and arrival in

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<sup>725</sup> Unfortunately their stay in Ashbourne was not around Shrove Tuesday. One wonders what influence their presence would have had on the annual football game.

<sup>726</sup> ‘Exploits of Indian Troops’, *Times of India*, 1 May 1942.

<sup>727</sup> ‘War Diary, Advanced Remount Depot, 1941’.

Europe.<sup>728</sup> When they arrived at an unnamed village in the Highlands in the summer of 1942, they quickly learnt to change their leisure activities to fit in with local norms, according to *The Scotsman*:

The Indians met with an extraordinarily friendly reception in this same village, a welfare officer told us. One Sunday some of them were kicking a football around, as they had been accustomed to do in camp in England. They were surprised that none of the villagers turned up as usual to watch. One of them approached an officer who explained that it was Sunday, and that this corresponded to their Friday. When they realised what were the views of their Scottish friends, an impromptu conference was held on the field, and the game was there and then abandoned, and no more football was played on Sundays. The result was that the respect of the village for the Indian troops was intensified and relations became even more cordial.<sup>729</sup>

The men were aware of the life of the community around them and did their best to join in whenever they could.

All of which brings us to the question of racism, unwelcome, rudeness and rejection. Thus far the evidence is overwhelmingly on one side: British people from the hillsides to the Albert Hall welcomed these men, made friends and found numerous points of contact. But there are hints that not all reactions were that way. There were of course structural aspects of racism and discrimination throughout the Indian Army. The pay differential between the British and Indian armies was considerable, and also somewhat quirky in that the Indian Pioneer Company, recruited in Britain for the British Army, were paid British rates 'although they are not soldiers in the strict sense of the word, they are, by receiving British rates of pay, in a much better position than pukka Indian troops'.<sup>730</sup> Such pay discrimination mattered less when soldiers were kept separate, but during this war such separation became less common, and the men

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<sup>728</sup> 'Indian Troops Tribute to the Navy', *The Times*, 26 March 1940. They also donated nearly £100 towards the relief of air raid distress in London.

<sup>729</sup> 'Men and Affairs: Indian Gesture', *Scotsman*, 1 August 1942.

<sup>730</sup> Letter from Billcliffe to Darling in 'Indian Talks', 1943, BBC Written Archives Caversham, Reading, R51/257/1.

of K6 were everywhere working with their better-paid and lighter-skinned colleagues.

We can also see racism in society in general, as described above in some of the findings from Mass-Observation. In some ways this is not surprising, the 1930s and 1940s could be described as the apotheosis of racist theory and practise around the world - it was simply more normal. And it was not restricted to the Fascist countries – the British Union of Fascists enjoyed considerable support in the 1930s, anti-Semitism was rife and attacks on people of colour were perhaps only infrequent because the people who might make the attacks were too busy attacking Jews. During the war however there was a sense that racism had been, for some people anyway, suspended for the duration. Over 130,000 Black GIs were stationed in the UK for months or years.<sup>731</sup> Although they were segregated from their white American colleagues by official US government policy, they were generally welcomed by British citizens. The Communist *Daily Worker* ran a special feature in May 1944, entitled ‘We like our negro visitors’, with contributions from around the country, and concluded that ‘Colour prejudice is shown from time to time but in the main the British people welcome our Negro comrades’.<sup>732</sup> A Birmingham prostitute told Mass-Observation that she and her friends preferred black soldiers because they had plenty of money and showed a ‘respectful attitude which pleased them after the rather brutal manners of the white American soldiers’.<sup>733</sup> And a lady called Dot in Teignmouth showed sympathy for the black soldier against the white ones:

I’ve always remembered conflict between white Americans and black – who were non-combatant. What struck me was the attitude of some of them towards blacks. I saw white sailors taunting them into a fight. I was shocked to see someone picked on because of the colour of their skin. It was offensive. This was pure bullying. I felt so sorry for the victim...I saw this happen two or three different times.<sup>734</sup>

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<sup>731</sup> Graham Smith, p. 4.

<sup>732</sup> ‘We like Our Negro Visitors’, *Daily Worker*, 25 May 1944.

<sup>733</sup> ‘Bulletin Oct 43’, 1943, Mass-Observation archives at the Keep, Sussex University, SxMOA1/1/8/10/7.

<sup>734</sup> Gavin J. Andrews, ‘The Relational Making of People and Place: The Case of the Teignmouth World War II Homefront’, *Ageing and Society*, 37.4 (2017), 725–52 (pp. 740–41).

There is certainly no evidence of anything of this nature against the Indians of K6, but one incident stands out from all the press reports. In September 1941, the *Abergavenny Chronicle* printed a letter from Raymond F. Lewis, the Honorary Secretary of the Swimming Club. On the previous Sunday a 'certain lady' had complained about the presence of Indians swimming in the Bailey Park open air pool. The men had been ejected, as had several others throughout the week. The reason for their ejection is not given, but one can assume that the simple presence of brown male bodies in the same water as white female bodies caused offence. Interestingly, Mr Lewis is writing to express the 'disgust' of the swimming club at the 'scandalous' ejections – he stands in solidarity with the Indians. The letter continues:

These men, that lady may or may not realise, are our allies, who have come thousands of miles to fight by our side, to lay down their lives if need be, in the defence of Britain – and [of] that lady... I can only say, in conclusion, that her actions are without doubt entirely unsupported by anyone... for to let colour and creed prejudice one's minds in days like these, especially as these Indians are fighting for us, is almost too abominable to believe.<sup>735</sup>

There is strong feeling here, a feeling that today would be called anti-racist. Another letter the following week supports Mr Lewis, but unfortunately the outcome is not known. One could dismiss the 'certain lady' as a one-off, as indeed this story is a one-off among the many press articles about K6. But it is within a trend of sensitivity around swimming pools - the US Army put a British swimming bath out of bounds to female black soldiers, for example.<sup>736</sup> It is more likely that this is rather a thin end of the wedge, a hint of the unreported hinterland of private, unremarked racism. At the level of unfiltered language, what is said round the fireside or in the pub, when the tie is loosened and the guard is down, when people are 'liberated from shame and self-consciousness', we can be sure that racist opinions were felt and expressed.<sup>737</sup> We will never know how widespread

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<sup>735</sup> Lewis.

<sup>736</sup> Graham Smith, p. 109.

<sup>737</sup> William Golding, *Lord of the Flies* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963), p. 61.

they were, but we can be sure that they existed – the ‘certain lady’ of Abergavenny tells us that.

After the war was over, attitudes shifted quickly, as they had done at the start. Six weeks into the war, the government was forced to change the law to allow:

during the present emergency, British subjects from the Colonies and British protected persons who are in this country, including those who are not of pure European descent, are to be on the same footing as British subjects from the United Kingdom as regards eligibility for voluntary enlistment in the armed Forces and for consideration for the grant of emergency commissions in those Forces. This will apply in the case of all three Services, the Royal Navy, the Army and the Royal Air Force.<sup>738</sup>

This reflected a similar process during the Great War, which saw a spate of books that celebrated Empire contributions, showing that:

however racist these authors might have been before 1914, and however often Indians and Africans featured as the “Other” in colonial war, it was now imperative that old hostilities be put aside, and to remember that in the present struggle the empire was one family, a group of nations bound together in the great cause.<sup>739</sup>

In this way, in 1914 and in 1939, normal rules of racism were suspended for the duration, to be reinstated at the close of the hostilities. Perhaps this is understandable – desperate times call for desperate measures and British social norms underwent extraordinary, if not lasting, changes. Men and women signed on to join the forces ‘for the duration’, aware that they would be playing by different rules than in ‘civvy street’ - the *courte durée* in action. The suspension and return of racism was also one among many similar phenomena. Michael Paris asserts that ‘British society became classless for the duration’ of World War Two, and the idea that women were being allowed greater freedom on a

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<sup>738</sup> Hansard, ‘Hansard House of Commons Debate 19 October 1939 Vol 352 cc1083-4W’, 1939.

<sup>739</sup> Paris, pp. 130–31.

temporary basis was well understood even then.<sup>740</sup> A Mass-Observation respondent in 1942 said:

Look at the last war. Those hundreds of women ran our trams and did a wonderfully good job. When the war was over the Transport Department snarled at them “You’re doing a man out of a job” and they were flung into the streets without a word of thanks.<sup>741</sup>

There are no examples of K6 soldiers that illustrate this duration-only tendency, as they left before the end of the war, but plenty from other groups. The Guyanese airman Cy Grant, later famous as a musician and as the character Lieutenant Green in *Captain Scarlet*, returned to the UK from a POW camp in 1945 and ‘found his horizons clouded by racial inequality. He experienced very little racism in camp... The only time he was called a “nigger” was by an American airman from the Deep South.’<sup>742</sup> Many servicemen from the Caribbean stayed on at the end of the war or returned in the Windrush and found that ‘despite their contribution to the war effort black and Asian migrants found a less than enthusiastic official welcome as residents of peacetime Britain’, with officials ‘keen to prevent their permanent settlement in Britain’ even at a time of labour shortages.<sup>743</sup> The Jamaican-born founder of the League of Coloured Peoples, Harold Moody, wrote about suspending the colour bar that ‘we do not want it only for the duration of the war. We want it for all time’.<sup>744</sup> 1945, however, was a watershed in Britain in many ways – an end and a beginning. As the housewife Nella Last heard about the murder of European Jews on the radio, she pondered whether the post-war period would bring ‘the end of the white people in power – and the slow uptrend of coloured races’.<sup>745</sup> Meanwhile in South Asia, as the sun set on the Empire in summer of 1947, the band played *Abide with Me* and ‘the British were never more popular than at the moment of their departure... all was

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<sup>740</sup> Paris, p. 209.

<sup>741</sup> Quoted in Gail Braybon and Penny Summerfield, *Out of the Cage: Women’s Experience in Two World Wars* (London: Routledge Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 259.

<sup>742</sup> Gillies, pp. 419–20.

<sup>743</sup> Ian Spencer, ‘World War Two and the Making of Multiracial Britain’, in *War Culture: Social Change and Changing Experience in World War Two*, ed. by Pat Kirkham and David Thoms (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995), pp. 209–18 (p. 213).

<sup>744</sup> Quoted in Kushner, ‘Colour Bar’, p. 356.

<sup>745</sup> Nella Last, *Nella Last’s War* (London: Profile, 2006), p. 231.

forgiven'.<sup>746</sup> Force K6 had crossed continents to be in Europe to make their contribution, but memory proved short after VE day, when the common goal had been achieved.

These stories of welcome, of warmth and friendship, of children's games and sultanas, must then be tempered with a sense that other opinions existed, even if they were rarely turned into action. However much we may want to take these men as pioneers of a non-racist experience in the UK, the evidence is more subtle than that. Just as British women were allowed to fill all kinds of job vacancies during the war, but expected to revert to the kitchen at the end, the brown men of the Punjab were welcome as long as they were 'fighting for us', but treated differently once the war was won.<sup>747</sup> The children and the firesides of Lairg had lost their 'good companions' for ever.

### **'The dark baby on the sofa' - romance, sex and babies**

One sub-section of the British population had a special welcome for Force K6: young women looking for affection. Just as the American soldiers and other foreign nationals were accused of being 'overpaid, over-sexed and over here', so the Punjabis sometimes found themselves getting to know the white skins quite intimately. With so many young husbands and boyfriends away in North Africa, Asia or elsewhere, with so much depression caused by bombing and bad news, it is hardly surprising that British women sought solace and warmth in the arms of the handsome moustachioed Punjabis who were staying nearby. Like the artist Philip de Laszlo, introduced in the next chapter, they were attracted by the deep colours and deep eyes of these warm, friendly charming men. That such unions should lead to babies - at least eight are reported - is also to be expected. As Graham Smith writes, when talking of American soldiers 'no regulations or prohibitions could stop sexual relations or illegitimate babies'.<sup>748</sup> In the context of over 90,000 marriages between British women and Poles, Canadians and Americans, eight may be an under-statement.<sup>749</sup>

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<sup>746</sup> Zareer Masani, *Indian Tales of the Raj* (London: BBC, 1987), p. 130.

<sup>747</sup> Braybon and Summerfield, p. 259.

<sup>748</sup> Graham Smith, p. 207.

<sup>749</sup> Webster, p. 204; 205.

Of course, not all the contact between K6 men and British women was sexual, or even romantic. There are many stories of simple friendships that developed, with no strings attached on either side. At first Colonel Hills and others in the official hierarchy had reservations about brown men and white women mixing, reflecting a long-lived British anxiety, but such objections were later relaxed. When addressing the new companies in May 1941, Hills told them that ‘walking out’ of camp was only allowed in groups of two to five, in company with an English NCO and a pass.<sup>750</sup> By September that had been relaxed, and the men were allowed out solo, but still needed a pass. In May, Hills was keen to point out that ‘women should be treated with exactly the same courtesy and respect that is shown to Mohammedan women in India’, but by July he was sufficiently encouraged by the men’s behaviour to write that after ‘careful consideration’ he had ‘no objection to lady visitors’ to the camp between four and seven pm. The men were popular for the right reasons, it seemed. Hills and the others in the chain of command were comfortable with fraternisation in free time – hence the stories in this chapter. In fact, the degree of fraternisation was such that, after the war was over, according to Jos Williams in Nantmor ‘one of the Indians came all the way here to thank mother for her kindness’.<sup>751</sup> When the last few men left Shirley camp near Ashbourne at the end of October 1940, Major Finlay recorded the final scene in his report:

By 31 Oct the fine weather had ended. It was a dismal morning. Dawn was just breaking when the rear party crowded into the lorry that was to take them from Shirley Camp for the last time. A surprising number of womenfolk appeared from the nearby house. “Good-bye” they shouted. “Good-bye, good-bye” chorused the rear party in English and, as the lorry slowly drew away the grey, wet dawn was positively shattered by a full-throated and prolonged “War Cry”. Even my sophisticated and hard-boiled soul was stirred by this last episode in a camp I shall always remember with affection.<sup>752</sup>

Betty Creswell’s mother Gladys may have been among those womenfolk.

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<sup>750</sup> ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941’.

<sup>751</sup> ‘Interview with Jos Williams’.

<sup>752</sup> ‘War Diary, HQ Force K6, June-December 1940’, The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5879.



Some of the women, however, were definitely interested in more than just a wave and a smile. An unknown female voice from Chepstow said 'they came down the lane on horseback through the woods and down the grass path; I used to talk to them. They were some handsome looking fellows'.<sup>753</sup> Nellie Woods in North Wales (whom Giovanna Bloor dubbed the 'Polly Garter' of Croesor, referring to the young mother of many babies in *Under Milk Wood*) worked in Cooke's gunpowder factory at Penrhyndeudrath.<sup>754</sup> She reported that the Indians were very friendly and liked coming to people's houses, and that the factory girls 'flirted around' with the men at the cinema and dances.<sup>755</sup> In some cases relationships seemed to be normalised. In Kinlochleven Sheena McDougall's sister Georgia 'went out with' a sepoy called Tani, which may be short for Tanweer.<sup>756</sup> In other places, such relationships were frowned on. One Mass-Observation reported that the Indian Pioneer Company had been stationed near them 'and I was surprised to see how plenty of local girls were ever hanging around the barrack gate and walking out with the men'.<sup>757</sup> There was a general feeling of what Wendy Webster calls 'sexual patriotism' - that you should not have sex with foreigners, the taken-for-granted view that 'British women belonged to British men'.<sup>758</sup> The Mass-Observation directive on coloured people in 1943 shows a general opposition to mixed marriages and mixed-heritage children, although office worker R Gundry was an exception, writing 'if my son or daughter wanted to marry a coloured person, I would welcome this'.<sup>759</sup>

From the K6 men's point of view, there is no evidence of their being any more or less active sexually than any other soldiers a long way from home. Not all of the sexual attention given by these men was positive in nature. In Snowdonia, one of the men was known as somebody who 'would expose himself and we simply left and didn't take any notice of him really'.<sup>760</sup> In Inverasdale on Loch Ewe, sixteen-year old Dolly Cameron's father ran a small shop. According to her testimony recorded in the local museum:

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<sup>753</sup> Chepstow Society, pp. 24–25.

<sup>754</sup> Thomas.

<sup>755</sup> 'Interview with Nellie Woods'.

<sup>756</sup> 'Interview with David McDougall, Sheena McDougall & Catriona Spence'.

<sup>757</sup> 'Directives June 1943'; Response of Frewin J no 2743.

<sup>758</sup> Webster, p. 17; 200.

<sup>759</sup> 'Directives June 1943' respondent 1211.

<sup>760</sup> Edgar Parry Williams

Because they chased the local girls the men were confined to barracks. One soldier gave Dolly a photo and asked her to be his “little cabbage”. Once after school when she was working in her father’s shop counting coupons and weighing the rations an Indian soldier came in. He grabbed her by her blouse collar and said “kissie kissie”. When she pulled away he took out his knife and hit the counter.<sup>761</sup>

Unlike the Black GIs mentioned above, it seems that the men of K6 did not use prostitutes while in the UK. Shortly after the arrival of the new companies in May 1941, a special tent for VD cases was set up at Crickhowell, these nine men having picked up the infection before leaving India.<sup>762</sup> No other cases were reported during their time in Europe, a fact that Hills was very proud of. But they certainly did not abstain from sex – they were interesting and attractive to the local girls, and both sides were able to get over the colour bar. According to Yasmin Alibhai ‘women offered them ice-creams and more illicit pleasures’ because, as one veteran said ‘they loved our uniforms, the colour, the turbans’.<sup>763</sup> The evidence from the German 950 regiment, containing a handful of men from 22<sup>nd</sup> Animal Transport Company, is similar. The CSDIC report on the 950 regiment contains stories of long-standing relationships between two men of K6 and local women.<sup>764</sup> However much the India Office may have wished to keep the ‘race’ pure, the people on the ground did as they did around the world, and formed personal relations ‘out of sheer loneliness and the need to be loved’.<sup>765</sup>

One story in particular is both illuminating and inspiring: the story of Gladys, Jamal and Jeff.<sup>766</sup> Gladys Trump was born in Budleigh Salterton in 1907, the daughter of a master carpenter. Her background was strict and Victorian – her Methodist mother had a stick on the dining table to rap the children’s knuckles

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<sup>761</sup> Dolly Cameron, ‘Display at Aultbea Museum’ <<http://www.russianarcticconvoymuseum.org/>> [accessed 23 April 2019].

<sup>762</sup> ‘War Diary, Indian General Hospital, 1939-1943’, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 177/2262.

<sup>763</sup> Yasmin Alibhai, ‘Lest We Forget’, *New Statesman and Society*, 21 June 1991, p. 15.

<sup>764</sup> ‘950 Regiment (Free Indian Legion) of the Wehrmacht: History and Interrogation of Former Members’, 1945, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 106/5881.

<sup>765</sup> Photo caption in John Costello, *Love, Sex and War: Changing Values 1939-45* (London, 1986), p. 144.

<sup>766</sup> All the following comes from the interview with Paritosh (Jeff) Shapland and his unpublished memoir ‘Gladys’

with. Gladys was a talented woman with untapped skills – she played the piano well and offered tuition later in life. In 1930 she married an electrician named Albert Shapland, who had been born in Shahjahanpur in India, and they moved to 104 East Hill in St Austell, Cornwall. This was a ‘primitive’ terraced house, made of cob, with two bedrooms, an outside toilet and no running water in the house, and Gladys would live there until she was eighty. She was not happy in the house, and probably not happy in the marriage, for Albert was a serious drinker and a heavy smoker. Albert and Gladys had two children together, Edna and Nigel. When they were young, Gladys’ sister Julia came to stay, and gave birth to a baby girl Janet ‘out of wedlock’, who lived with the family for a while - a taste of things to come. When the war came, Albert found work in the docks in Plymouth, and would stay away from home for long periods, and in St Austell on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1940:

an extraordinary event took place. That morning several hundred Indian troops from the Punjab in full battle dress, wearing the headgear known as a pugree, marched from the railway station; a few hundred yards from where Gladys lived; with mules and horses to Duporth holiday camp just a mile or so away. Local people were astounded.<sup>767</sup>

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<sup>767</sup> Paritosh Jeff Shapland, ‘Gladys’ (Leicestershire, 2011), p. 64.



Figure 22: Gladys Shapland before the war (private collection)

These were the men of 25<sup>th</sup> Company and Reinforcement Unit, hotfoot from Ashbourne. Over the next few weeks they would become a regular sight in the town, as would the photographers and journalists who followed them. At some point in the next few months, and in some unspecified manner, Gladys met and fell in love with one of the Indian soldiers. Her son wonders what happened, writing that ‘she was almost certainly a very unhappy woman and looking for adventure’ and ‘perhaps he was well-educated, charming and fun, and swept her off her feet’.<sup>768</sup> What is certain is that at some time in the spring of 1941, a baby was conceived, and Gladys gave birth to her third child, Jeffrey Malcolm (Jeff, now called Paritosh) on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1942. But that was not the end of the affair – in May 1943 another ‘dark skinned baby with black hair and brown eyes’ was born, and named Ronald Clive. From that moment onwards, as Jeff wrote ‘she lived with the lie’, and indeed she never told her youngest two sons who their father was – she took the secret with her when she died. Albert accepted the two children as his own, but he died soon after the end of the war, in 1948. After that, Gladys lived ‘as someone who in her eyes, and I suppose in the eyes of many

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<sup>768</sup> Shapland, p. 64.

people around, had done something unforgivable.<sup>769</sup> Her crime was to love somebody, to help somebody in a dark time, and to have two children. Gladys lived a long life, eventually dying in 1994 at the age of eighty-seven. As Jeff writes 'she had never set foot outside of Devon or Cornwall but brought India and England together in two of her children'.<sup>770</sup>

Jeff Shapland grew up in the house at East Hill with his big sister and brother and his younger brother Ron (figure 23), but with no father. He did well at school, went to the local Grammar school and became the first one in his family to go to university, studying Chemical Engineering at Leeds. After graduating he worked at Avonmouth and lived in Bristol, where he married. In 1967 he became a science teacher, first in Grimsby and then in Leicestershire. He became a deputy head and in 1984, principal of Winstanley Community College in Leicester city, at the young age of forty-two. And for all this time, he thought his father was the white electrician Albert Shapland. How could that be?



Figure 23: Ron (L) and Jeff (R) Shapland in their back garden at 104 East Hill, early 1950s (Private collection)

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<sup>769</sup> Shapland, p. 67.

<sup>770</sup> Shapland, p. 69.

The process of his finding out about his father was a slow and gradual one. When he was at school, people would remark that he was 'darker than most people', and he always got a good suntan in summer. This was explained away by people talking about how Cornish folk have mixed ancestry, and perhaps there was 'some Portuguese blood in the family'. At Leeds university in the early 1960s he started to encounter people of colour, from South Asia and the Caribbean, and was amused when 'Indian men would come up to me and talk to me in Hindi', and he answered in English with his broad Cornish accent. A little later in Bristol, his landlady insisted she bring him meals in the room. When he complained to a fellow resident, he was told 'it's only you, we eat in the dining room... she doesn't think you should eat with us because of your colour'. Again, Jeff thought she had made a 'huge mistake' and felt 'dumbstruck... they were mistaking me for an Asian person'.<sup>771</sup> The 1972 influx of Ugandan Asians into the city caused 'uproar', and the atmosphere in the school became threatening. He was kicked and punched by students and called an 'effing paki' – the same term that Bernard Manning was still using years later on national television. So although he did not see himself as in any way Asian, his students did. However much he can look back now and put all these clues together, at the time each one was a separate incident in everyday life, and did not have such a great significance. Later still, after he got the Principal job at Winstanley, one of the governors told him:

really glad you got the job, but you nearly didn't... not all the panel wanted you, a couple of county councillors thought you were too short and too dark to command respect.

And as Principal, young Asian girls would come to him in the corridor and say 'Mr Shapland my mum wants to know, are you Asian?'

It was around this time that he expressed his feelings of confusion to his big sister Edna. She told him:

"in the war there were hundreds of [Asian people] at Duporth camp, one of them was very friendly with Mum and he used to sometimes stay the night and sleep downstairs in the small front room. His name was Jemal

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<sup>771</sup> Interview with Paritosh (Jeff) Shapland, 2016.

Khan, he wore a turban". We looked at each other... that was the seed that was sown.

Jeff was astounded. But even though his mother was still alive, he found it 'impossible to talk to mum about what had happened... my sister had remembered it for forty-odd years, how come she had not said anything'. The idea began to grow in his head that his father was not his father. A doctor told him that he had the pigmentation that people of colour have, and when his son was born, his wife noticed a dark patch in the middle of his back as many South Asian babies have. Eventually he persuaded his siblings to take DNA tests together, which proved that Edna and Nigel had a different father from Jeff and Ron. The siblings found it hard to process the news:

the struggle for me and my sister was to believe it. I knew it... the scientist in me needed it. Took me years to come to terms with this is what happened and my mother never told us. That felt very hard that she took that secret to the grave. She did tell my sister and my brother when she was very very old that she had a terrible cross to bear.

A little while later there was confirmation from another source. His cousin Janet, now living in Paignton, who had been born 'out of wedlock' before the war, told them:

we've always known that the boys had an Indian father because my mum... went down to help with their births. The knowledge was in the family, in the neighbours... [there was a] huge thing about secrets and lies.

She later wrote to Jeff:

How sad though that you were not able to hear it from our mother but in those days it was almost impossible to talk about such matters... Life is such an unknown path – when we are born in all innocence, we just don't know where it will take us.<sup>772</sup>

Along the way, in parallel to this extraordinary narrative of discovery, Jeff underwent another transformation. He became a follower of the Osho sect and

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<sup>772</sup> Personal communication: Janet in Paignton to Paritosh Shapland dated 16/5/08

took the name Paritosh. He also did a lot of deep thinking about his family and is now very comfortable with his story. He wrote:

I now have an easy confidence about explaining to people why I look the way I do... I feel comfortable in my skin and at peace with myself <sup>773</sup>

When asked if he sees Jamal Khan as his father, he answered:

yes, definitely... whatever that means... In some ways he's a sort of fictional character... I feel a sense of pride in him... coming all that way, fighting in France, coping.

Recently he has been speculating about his mother's choice of name for him. She called him Jeffrey Malcolm, the first syllables possibly drawing on the name of his father, 'Jemal'.

So who was Jamal Khan? There is very little in the archives about anyone called Jamal. In fact, there are only three Jamals and two Jamils among the 2187 Indian names found in the archives. Among those is only one Jamal Khan, a driver whose name occurs twice in the file DGIMS 8/9/5/41 among papers saved by the Directorate General of the Indian Medical Service, now held at the Indian National Archives in Delhi.<sup>774</sup> We learn that 180617 Driver Jamal Khan joined 25<sup>th</sup> Company from Reinforcement Unit on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1941 and a few weeks later, on 16<sup>th</sup> October, he was admitted to the hospital on the 'X' list. If he was Paritosh's father, then he would almost certainly have been part of the original Force K6, as Paritosh was conceived in April 1941, and the first draft of reinforcements arrived in Scotland in May 1941. Whatever his identity was (and this speculation is shown in order to give the reader of this thesis an idea of the detective processes involved), Edna remembered some other facts about him that she later told Paritosh. Firstly she recalled:

Jemal Khan had something he couldn't read one day and came to the door to ask for help. She remembers him being in the house when I was a baby on the sofa; that would be in 1942 presumably. She said he had come to see the dark baby.<sup>775</sup>

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<sup>773</sup> Shapland, p. 70.

<sup>774</sup> '25 Mule Company RIASC Daily Orders Part II DGIMS', 1941, National Archives of India, DGIMS 8/9/5/41.

<sup>775</sup> Shapland, p. 22.



After the war, she remembered ‘packets and parcels coming from India after the war mostly she thought containing spices’.<sup>776</sup> Most poignantly, Paritosh wrote:

When I was a few months old my father returned to St Austell to see me and a photograph was taken of him holding me. Edna tells me how she found it one day when she was rummaging about, as she calls it, and recalls that mother was furious with her for having seen it. The photo has long since disappeared.

The only link to his father is gone, presumably destroyed by the woman who loved him, out of shame.

Paritosh Jeff Shapland’s story is an extraordinary one that speaks volumes about his family and about how Britain has changed in his lifetime. The shift from a time of gossip and ‘secrets and lies’ to a time when ‘the cupboards can be opened and the skeletons are let out’ is a move that he values.<sup>777</sup> It has been a slow shift, and one that is not irreversible. Paritosh’s story is inspirational, sad, human, ultimately uplifting in his attitude. In 2019 we can get over the prejudices of previous times and be proud of who we are. As he says:

I know I didn’t find my father, Jemal Khan, through all this research but in a very real sense I found myself and it doesn’t get much better than that.<sup>778</sup>

Although Paritosh himself is comfortable in his skin, as are his immediate family, others may still find his parentage hard to accept. After his realisation, Paritosh went through a ‘coming-out’ process that involved local media coverage in Leicestershire and Cornwall. In its turn, that led to many letters and phone calls from people who remembered K6 in Cornwall and elsewhere, people who remembered 25<sup>th</sup> Company in St Austell, and even people with similar stories to tell. The vast majority of those communications were positive and supportive. As Paritosh said ‘we’ve come a huge way haven’t we’.<sup>779</sup>

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<sup>776</sup> Shapland, p. 65.

<sup>777</sup> Shapland, p. 70.

<sup>778</sup> Shapland, p. 70.

<sup>779</sup> ‘Interview with Paritosh (Jeff) Shapland’.

As indicated above, Paritosh and his brother Ron are not the only 'K6 kids' that research has found. Alan Grose, son of a St Austell greengrocer recalled two other mothers with similar stories in St Austell, one who was married, one unmarried.<sup>780</sup> There are at least four in Wales, three in the Snowdonia area and one in Pontypool. No K6 offspring have yet come to light in Scotland, but given the numbers in England, Wales and the Netherlands, it is likely that there were some births. Jos Williams in Nantmor told the following story about one of the children in Merioneth:

There was a little dark girl born in [place name omitted]. The husband of the woman (they had several other children) who had the little girl, would take the little girl in a perambulator along the roads, everywhere. I must give him credit, it made no difference at all, it was as if it was one of his own. Some people were cynical about those sort of things happening. The father of the woman who gave birth to this little girl, was almost, not quite blind, all his life, so he never saw she was dark. I don't know what jokes people had about it. But the girl became such a beautiful woman. I knew the Indian father – he was a vet and he used to come here a lot. "Johnny" we called him. He was asked "where have you been Johnny" "I have been resting with Mrs Jones" he said. And that was the result. My sister, jokingly, if I had been late somewhere on the farm would say "Where have you been?" "I have been resting with Mrs Jones!" I replied.<sup>781</sup>

Although there was no home for unmarried mothers in Merioneth, they existed elsewhere. There were a number of mixed heritage children born during and immediately after the war, their fathers being mostly African-American soldiers – the official history of the war reported 554 children born to Black American fathers and white British mothers.<sup>782</sup> Growing up in the forties and fifties was difficult for these children 'the most tangible legacy of the presence of GIs in Britain during the Second World War' and their mothers, with the attitudes illustrated above.<sup>783</sup> Among the smaller group of K6 children, Jeff and his brother

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<sup>780</sup> Details have been omitted from this account

<sup>781</sup> 'Interview with Jos Williams'. Names have been omitted or changed.

<sup>782</sup> S.M. Ferguson and H. Fitzgerald, *History of the Second World War: Studies in the Social Services* (London: HMSO, 1954), p. 131.

<sup>783</sup> Graham Smith, p. 187.

Ron had a happy childhood, albeit in straitened circumstances, and we can hope that the others did too.

The eight 'K6 kids' are the tip of the iceberg of affection and warmth extended to these men. Although there are also some more dubious stories relating to sexual desire, the massive weight of evidence points towards handsome young men and lonely women, coming together in cottages and barns and village halls, flirting and then sometimes making love. Paritosh Shapland and his seven contemporaries are part of the living legacy of K6, rejected or accepted by post-war society, but growing in confidence and pride as the years continue.

## Conclusion

After the men of Force K6 had left Crickhowell in May 1942, a column in the *Abergavenny Chronicle* lamented their departure. After writing of their 'orderly conduct' and gay parades, the writer concludes:

In the daily walk of life we often find how the ways of men vary. Some appear bright and cheerful, while others remain sullen and sad. This is not so in the life of our Indian friends, who always appear the same, for where or when ever they are met, whether it be an officer or rank, if saluted, you are sure of such a pleasant response that acts as a tonic to you.

And in bidding one and all a friendly farewell, it is unitedly hoped that when this cruel War is over, and they re-embark on their homeward journey to their respective homes so many thousand miles away, that both they and their beloved steeds will have a pleasant and safe journey, and take back with them happy recollections of their visit to Wales, is the wish of all their Welsh friends, who, to-day, mourn their departure.<sup>784</sup>

The welcome will be kept, is the message, in the little village below the Black Mountains and beside the River Usk.

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<sup>784</sup> 'A Local Lament', *Abergavenny Chronicle*, 29 May 1942.

The men of Force K6 received a range of responses from the British people. They came in contact with women, children, farmers and shopkeepers. They met through work and play, through food and farming, through their sense of play and fun, and through love, sex and romance. The vast majority of these relationships were positive, and lives were changed for the better. Indeed the post-war Britain that the Windrush generation came to would arguably have been even worse were it not for pioneers like the men of K6, winning hearts and minds through smiles and games. The official voices - of the officers, the journalists and the bureaucrats - pushed a line of propaganda that talked of assistance from the empire. The unofficial, everyday folk - the knitters, the workers and the gravediggers - had a wide range of personal experiences that illustrated common humanity. There was a welcome kept in hillside and dale, but was it for ever, or only for as long as the war lasted?

Raymond Lewis' letter to the *Abergavenny Chronicle* on the subject of the swimming pool finishes with the sentence 'to let colour and creed prejudice one's minds in days like these, especially as these Indians are fighting for us, is almost too abominable to believe.'<sup>785</sup> The key phrase is 'fighting for us'. The implication is that if they were on the other side, or if we were not engaged in war, then other rules would apply. Sonya Rose supports this analysis, writing that 'national unity of the magnitude that occurred during the war needed only to last the duration. It did'.<sup>786</sup> Lewis's letter also reminds us of the concept of 'fireside words' - the unknown uncouneted citizens who did not want the Indians here in any circumstances but kept their unfashionable opinions to themselves or their immediate circle. Friendships with ordinary white folk would also have been far more difficult to achieve in India itself, as the men probably found on their return. As Hamidullah says to Dr Aziz in *Passage to India* 'I only contend that it is possible in England... impossible here'.<sup>787</sup> In the end, we can feel positive - as Gladys Shapland did - in the thought that citizens like her son Jeff, now Paritosh, are proud of their mixed heritage and their unknown fathers, and that the welcome she created was of a special and lasting nature. The 60,000 knitters of the Indian Comforts Fund made a very practical gesture of warmth. Betty Creswell's parents

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<sup>785</sup> Lewis.

<sup>786</sup> Sonya Rose, p. 291.

<sup>787</sup> E.M. Forster, *Passage to India* (London: Random House, 1991), p. 4.

reached out to Gian Kapur in a way that created a relationship that continued to his death. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission continue to honour the dead of the Force. In such ways the welcome was kept, in the hillsides and dales of England, Scotland and Wales.

## CHAPTER 4: 'DEEP COLOURS AND DEEP EYES': VISUAL REPRESENTATIONS OF FORCE K6

*It is not Arts that follow and attend upon Empire,  
but Empire that attends and follows upon Arts*<sup>788</sup>

### Introduction

In 2015, the Tate Gallery in London mounted a special exhibition about the art of the British Empire, entitled *Artist and Empire: Facing Britain's Imperial Past*. Among the works was a sketch portrait from 1916 by Hungarian-born society portraitist Philip de Laszlo: *Portrait of Risaldar Jagat Singh and Risaldar Man Singh* (Figure 24). In this double portrait the two VCOs are in full dress uniform, looking straight at the viewer. The lower part of the picture, including their decorations, fades away into the background: the focus is on their faces. The palette is sombre – browns and khakis mostly, with a flash of light on their foreheads, and a hint of red in their haunting eyes. Bloodshot from the trenches perhaps, or the slightly hesitant, shy look of an outsider in London.<sup>789</sup> Beneath their turbans we can see some lightness - red on the right and white on the left – that serves to highlight Laszlo's real interest. Caroline Corbeau-Parsons writes that the artist focused on the psychology and the turbans of the men, and Laszlo himself, referring to his later Indian sitters – the Maharajah of Jaipur and the Maharani of Cooch Behar - wrote that he loved the 'deep colours and deep eyes' of Indian subjects.<sup>790</sup>

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<sup>788</sup> William Blake, quoted in Samuel Foster Damon, *A Blake Dictionary: The Ideas and Symbols of William Blake* (Providence: Brown, 1965), p. 29.

<sup>789</sup> Laszlo himself knew something of what it was to be an outsider, having been born to a family of poor tailors in Budapest, having an Irish wife, and later spending time in internment for 'various indiscretions' during the Great War. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Vol 32* (Oxford, 2004), p. 608.

<sup>790</sup> Corbeau-Parsons in *Artist and Empire: Facing Britain's Imperial Past*, ed. by Alison Smith, David Blayney Brown, and Carol Jacobi (London: Tate, 2015), p. 196.



Figure 24: Portrait of Risaldar Jagat Singh and Risaldar Man Singh by Philip de Laszlo, May 1916. Private Collection

Laszlo's use of this striking phrase bears some investigation. It is true that the two VCOs have dark eyes, and their skin is a medium-brown. The word 'deep' is often a synonym for dark, when describing colour. It is likely he meant more than that, though. As an artist he had a feel for colour, of course, and loved 'costumes and rich textures.'<sup>791</sup> But there is a sense in that phrase that he finds something profound in Indian faces, a deep truth, a deep insight, a sense of enlightenment. Perhaps another version of the Orientalist myth of the unknowable or inscrutable East. Perhaps there is a trace of homoeroticism – these men are handsome, exotic and deeply attractive. For the eyes are 'mirror to the soul', as the proverb has it, and they are what the observer's eye seeks in photos and paintings: the face, and the eyes within that face. Laszlo's motto was *veritas vincit* (truth prevails or conquers), reflecting his goal as an artist of 'capturing the essence of his sitters' character.'<sup>792</sup> In this case he thought the essence was deep, profound and soulful.

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<sup>791</sup> Caroline Corbeau-Parsons, *Philip de Laszlo Portraits* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2010), p. 29.

<sup>792</sup> Corbeau-Parsons, p. 11.

This chapter will pick up on the idea of depth and profundity by exploring ideas of representation, premediation and propaganda and relating them to images of Force K6; a visual archive of rare depth and breadth. This archive indicates that these men were well known and recognisable at the time, which makes their forgetting more poignant and noteworthy. The art historian John Berger argued that drawing was the polar opposite of photography: a photograph arrests or stops time, whereas a drawing flows with it.<sup>793</sup> That binary will be useful in delineating the sections of this chapter. After an introduction to the concept of premediation, this chapter goes on to examine K6 as they appeared in photographs, frozen in time. Film representations form the next section: K6 rolling through time. Finally, drawings and paintings show the sepoy's flowing with time, with the painting of Driver Abdul Ghani as the case study for this chapter.

### **Premediation and prejudice**

The term 'premediation' is a relatively new one, deriving from media studies. Richard Grusin, a professor of media studies in the USA, wrote an article in the journal *Criticism* in 2004, that defined premediation as being about predicting or rehearsing how a future event would be presented in the media. His examples related to 9/11, the 2003 invasion of Iraq, and Hollywood movies. Astrid Erll then helpfully extended the concept in 2009, relating it to collective memory. In an article on the Indian 'Mutiny' as a shared site of memory, she redefined premediation as drawing on 'existent media which circulate in a given society [which] provide schemata for new experience and its representation'.<sup>794</sup> These media can be defined widely as including the press, art, mythology and religion, with a special emphasis on popular films, which are, she says, arguably 'one of the most powerful media for symbolic investment in sites of memory' (as indeed the 2017 Nolan film *Dunkirk* has been).<sup>795</sup> She goes on to explain that stories of Indian-perpetrated atrocities from 1857 were premediated in Gothic horror and Christian imagery, and that later representations of World War One were used as a model for understanding what was happening in World War Two.<sup>796</sup> John M Mackenzie quotes a similar earlier example, relating how an 1833 Indian visitor

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<sup>793</sup> Quoted in Eamonn McCabe, 'Ways of Seeing John Berger', *Guardian*, 19 August 2017  
<<https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2017/aug/18/ways-of-seeing-john-berger>>.

<sup>794</sup> Erll, p. 140.

<sup>795</sup> Erll, p. 140.

<sup>796</sup> Erll, p. 124.



to Britain was followed by children shouting 'Tippoo' at him, thirty-four years after the death of the Sultan of Mysore. The children had seen Tipu's image on stage or in print, and were thus premediated to perceive any brown-skinned person in his image.<sup>797</sup> So the concept is related to prejudice and stereotypes, as well as the idea of Orientalism in art, but is more nuanced in using the analysis of media images as a way of predicting future images. It is also crucially a concept related to collective memory: the images that an artist draws on come from the collective memory frameworks existing in a given culture. This does not mean that there was only ever one way of showing Force K6 (or Indians more widely): it does mean that there were schemata or blueprints that artists, photographers and the public could draw on. One of those schemata was Laszlo's deep colours.

Another blueprint that was drawn on by contemporary media is the idea of 'picturesque' and 'exotic', words that were frequently used to describe the men of K6. The Oxford English Dictionary definition of picturesque includes 'like or having the elements of a picture... possessing pleasing and interesting qualities of form and colour.'<sup>798</sup> It is also a term with a specific meaning used by art historians, for an aesthetic ideal associated with the Romantic movement, applied to India as much as Europe. This gives a sense that for a landscape to be dubbed "picturesque" it must be beautiful, it must arrest the eye, and it must also be close to nature, with an emphasis not on realism but on creation of an arranged landscape that fulfilled certain expectations to match what Mackenzie calls 'the painter's idea of what India should look like'.<sup>799</sup> That phrase 'what India should look like' is a telling one, for it points towards the power of premediation when the subject in question is well-known. We have all seen the Pyramids of Giza in pictures or on TV, so we carry a strong sense of what they 'should look like'. When we encounter them in person, then, we may be disappointed by the way that the suburbs crawl up to their eastern edge, or the hawkers that surround them: these elements were never shown in the photographs, so 'should not' appear in real life. In this conflict between the lived reality and the premediated prejudice, the visitor to the Pyramids has a choice to take their photos in the traditional manner, or to turn round and contextualise the monuments as they

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<sup>797</sup> John M. MacKenzie, 'Art & The Empire', in *Cambridge Illustrated History of British Empire* (Cambridge, 1996), pp. 296–315 (p. 299).

<sup>798</sup> *Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1989), XI, p. 787.

<sup>799</sup> MacKenzie, p. 304.

actually are. In a similar way, a 1940s journalist or photographer encountering the RIASC men on the street could choose to find new ways to describe or photograph them, that reflect the reality of those individuals, or fall back on the cliché, the expected phrase or angle. In using the expected word 'picturesque' to describe the RIASC, journalists and others were taking the word in a broader more general way, and implying that there is something about these men that is specifically related to art: they are aesthetic objects, to be admired. 'Exoticism', meanwhile, is derived from the Greek word 'exo' meaning outside, so carries a sense of foreign, alien or strange. A recent conference on the idea of the exotic at Durham University was entitled 'the charm of the unfamiliar', a phrase which may well reflect the attraction that many in Britain felt for the sepoy of K6: we have not seen men like this before, but they charm and attract us in a way that we cannot quite explain.<sup>800</sup> A contradictory voice on the mystery of the East comes from Major Akbar himself, writing years later:

There is no mystery about the conduct of the people of the East, nor have they ever tried to shroud themselves with one – it was the prejudice [of] the British hawks of the colonial powers and these hawks managed to keep their own people and Government ridden with misunderstandings, deliberate distortions, and ignorance about the people of East.<sup>801</sup>

These images were not neutral but loaded with significance. As Gillian Rose reminds us, images are 'never innocent... never transparent windows onto the world. They interpret the world; they display it in very particular ways, they represent it'.<sup>802</sup> Or as James Ryan more specifically puts it, photos of Empire do not 'speak for themselves or show us the world through an innocent historical eye' but rather they are 'expressions of the knowledge and power that shaped the reality of Empire... The British Empire was constructed in the Victorian imagination through a variety of cultural texts.'<sup>803</sup> Throughout the nineteenth century, paintings, novels and advertisements all helped to create a picture in the mind of the average Briton of what India looked like: such a picture was largely

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<sup>800</sup> "'The Charm of the Unfamiliar': Myth and Alterity in Early Modern Literature'

<<https://www.dur.ac.uk/english.studies/events/?eventno=24019>> [accessed 23 May 2017].

<sup>801</sup> Mohammed Akbar Khan, *History of the Army Service Corps Volume I: The Commissariat*, p. 136.

<sup>802</sup> Gillian Rose, *Visual Methodologies*, 4th edn (London: Sage, 2016), p. 2.

<sup>803</sup> James R. Ryan, *Picturing Empire: Photography and the Visualisation of the British Empire* (London: Reaktion, 1997), pp. 19–20.

designed to support and reinforce the reality of the expanding British rule throughout South Asia.

The artists and photographers themselves would probably contend that they were just doing their jobs as well as they could, often under pressure of time. Although every artist and photographer always works within traditions and conventions (they learn their trade from older colleagues, they inherit from previous ways of painting portraits, they absorb the *zeitgeist* they live in) nevertheless each artist is different, just as each soldier is. Some - like the cartoonist Philip Zec - may have been more progressive, others - like the illustrator Helen McKie - more reactionary. Whatever their feeling about their subject, it would have been transmitted through their hands into their work. Coupled with that is the relationship between the artist and the subject, especially where there was an actual sepoy in front of them. The artist Henry Lamb, faced with the actual sepoy Abdul Ghani could choose how to view his subject – as an equal or an inferior, as an example of a ‘type’ or as a new, fresh subject, unique in the world. The common discourse says that the artist must paint what they see, the photographer simply clicks away and ‘the camera never lies.’ But the ability of any given artist to show what they actually see rather than what they think they see, what they imagine, is a thorny issue. To separate reality-now from imagined-before requires practice and an authenticity that a lesser artist, or one who has to work quickly, may not be able to deploy. Equally, a viewer may or may not say ‘this is a real, authentic portrayal, whereas that is a stereotype, drawn using out-of-date prejudices.’ As Ryan says, the ‘conventions of representing Empire were deeply set in the British imagination’.<sup>804</sup>

The choices of the pressmen and editors about how to represent these “strange” warriors, or the choices of the public in how to respond when they met them, were somewhat governed by what they had seen and read as children. The British collective memory of India and Indians was a central part of the education process for young Britons of the early twentieth century. Andrew Thompson has written that British children at that time used ‘juvenile periodicals’ not only for excitement and entertainment, but also as educational tools.<sup>805</sup> Many of the

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<sup>804</sup> Ryan, p. 11.

<sup>805</sup> Andrew S. Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back? The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Harlow: Longman, 2005), p. 102.

people encountering the mule drivers of K6 in Britain would have read some of the works of that arch-chronicler of the Raj, the 'hero loyal to Western civilisation' Rudyard Kipling.<sup>806</sup> How far people drew their ideas about India and Indians from such media is hard to quantify, but George Orwell believed it was a considerable amount: 'Personally I believe that most people are influenced far more than they would care to admit by novels, serial stories, films and so forth'.<sup>807</sup> Other popular influences of the time included the classic not-for-the-classroom history book so beloved of David Cameron, *Our Island Story*, first published in 1905, with its tales of the 'Mutiny' and the Black Hole of Calcutta.<sup>808</sup> This is hardly designed to make young Britons feel cordially towards Indians. Or maybe they had seen old photos of Abdul Karim, Queen Victoria's Muslim Indian servant and companion, who embodied the deep colours of India right at the heart of the Empire, as seen in the recent 'Orientalist fable' film *Victoria and Abdul*.<sup>809</sup> Also in the public memory was the Indian presence on the Western Front during the Great War, including the sight of Indian soldiers convalescing in Brighton and other south coast towns. Taken all together, it was highly unlikely that any Briton in 1940 had a *tabula rasa* for what 'India' and 'Indian' meant or looked like. The photographers who encountered them carried the same prejudices.

### Photographs of K6: Frozen in Time

The men of Force K6 were among the most-photographed troops on the Allied side.<sup>810</sup> The photos of them fall into four categories. Firstly, they were photographed multiple times by the official war photographers who went on to become the Army Film and Photography Unit (AFPU). Those images are now stored in the Imperial War Museum and represent 'the largest collection of authentic visual evidence of the Second World War accessible to the public, in existence anywhere in the world', an invaluable resource for historians.<sup>811</sup> There

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<sup>806</sup> Ashis Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 68.

<sup>807</sup> George Orwell, 'Boys' Weeklies', in *Inside the Whale and Other Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1960), p. 200.

<sup>808</sup> H.E. Marshall, *Our Island Story* (London: Nelson, 1905).

<sup>809</sup> Gajendra Singh, 'Victoria & Abdul: Simulacra & Simulation', *Not Even Past* <<http://notevenpast.org/victoria-abdul-simulacra-simulation/>> [accessed 10 July 2017]; Stephen Frears, *Victoria and Abdul* (Universal Pictures, 2017).

<sup>810</sup> 'Indian Troops in West for the Winter: Punjabis and Mules in Camp'.

<sup>811</sup> Fred McGlade, *The History of the British Army Film & Photographic Unit in the Second World War* (Solihull: Helion, 2010), p. 185.

were also numerous photos that appeared in the local and national newspapers, mostly taken by professional pressmen. Thirdly, there were many pictures taken by local British people, in gardens, outside doors, inside the house, or even in the snow: family album photos. Finally, there are a few photos taken by the men themselves, or at least commissioned by them.

Premediation was clearly at work in these photographs. The photographers, professional or amateur, came to their encounter with the sepoys with ideas in their heads about what to photograph and how. These ideas were a combination of their training and experience and what they had been commissioned to do. Running through their minds would have been their previous ideas about Indians: what they looked like, how to photograph them, which poses to request and so forth. As Samuel explained, the archetypal images and myths 'lodged... in the visual unconscious [and] spring to life at the camera's bidding'.<sup>812</sup> In his book on cartoons Martin Walker wrote that the convention was that 'Indians in British cartoons are identified by turbans, or loincloths or beds of nails'.<sup>813</sup> Of course a photographer does not have the cartoonist's luxury of inventing what is not there, but the high incidence of turban-related photos shows that some of that particular visual cliché existed in other media: they have the ability to request their subjects perform certain acts for the camera.

At the surface level, the level of the individual image, there was and is a pervasive belief that a photograph is a truthful mechanical record of what is put before the camera; that when we see the photograph we see the thing itself, or as Ludmila Jordanova puts it the 'assumption that some artefacts are capable of embodying people and attributes'.<sup>814</sup> But as Berger reminds us 'every time we look at a photograph, we are aware, however slightly, of the photographer selecting that sight from an infinity of other possible sights. This is even true in the most casual family snapshot'.<sup>815</sup> Photography does not so much record the real as signify and construct it.<sup>816</sup> Any photograph is part of a process of making meaning, a process that involves the photographer and their assumptions,

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<sup>812</sup> Samuel, I, p. 369.

<sup>813</sup> Martin Walker, *Daily Sketches: A Cartoon History of Twentieth Century Britain* (London: Muller, 1978), p. 17.

<sup>814</sup> Ludmilla Jordanova, *The Look of the Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 5.

<sup>815</sup> John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: BBC, 1972), p. 10.

<sup>816</sup> Ryan, p. 214.

background, their education, class, gender and ethnicity, but that also involves the viewer, the audience and their background and assumptions too. For every audience member is a 'discrete site of meaning-making' not a 'passive dupe'.<sup>817</sup>

Many of the un-named photos of these sepoy fell within the genre known as 'types'. Indeed, several carry that word in their caption.<sup>818</sup> This idea of 'types' was a product of nineteenth century race theory: that people could be divided into 'races' by physical characteristics such as length of nose, colour of skin or dimensions of cranium. It is, essentially, a racist construct and one that underpinned much of the ideology of the Nazi party in Germany. People were not perceived as individuals, but as 'specimens... to be displayed in albums like butterflies' and are transformed into 'illustrations of a general thesis'.<sup>819</sup> The pictures of this kind recall shots of the different 'races' of India used in books on Martial Race theory.<sup>820</sup> Certainly the men of K6 were frequently taken as exemplars, as illustrations of general rules about Indians. It is only in the family album photos that we see the one-to-one relationships portrayed: the people of the villages of the West Country, Highlands and Wales were able to make such personal bonds, and their photos show that. This reflects what Mackenzie identifies as a trend across the Empire, where birds, mammals and humans were sometimes painted as 'specimens' or types, and sometimes 'highly individualised, full of character and personality'.<sup>821</sup>

These photographs were used at that time and stored since with particular purposes in mind. The India Office had an agenda, Colonel Hills had a sharp appreciation of the value of a good photograph, and many of his officers would have shared his perspective. Len Puttnam, who photographed K6 on more occasions than any other professional, did not regard photography as art, but as 'a means of documenting truth – although well aware that, during the war, much of his work was as part of a morale boosting propaganda machine'.<sup>822</sup> Puttnam's

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<sup>817</sup> Gillian Rose, p. 259.

<sup>818</sup> For example, Puttnam, *Fine Types among the Indian Troops*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, F2015.

<sup>819</sup> Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London: Reaktion, 2006), pp. 138–39; Christopher Pinney, *Camera Indica: The Social Life of Indian Photographs* (Chicago: Reaktion, 1997), p. 42.

<sup>820</sup> for example J. G. Elliott, *A Roll of Honour: The Story of the Indian Army, 1939-1945* (London: Cassell, 1965).

<sup>821</sup> MacKenzie, p. 297.

<sup>822</sup> David Puttnam, 'Len Puttnam's Photographs of Indian Troops in France', 4 October 2017.

photos are now stored in the Imperial War Museum's photographic collection. As with any archive, we must remember that the Imperial War Museum is not a neutral, apolitical space, but rather a place that embodies 'the power inherent in accumulation, collection, and hoarding as well as that power inherent in the command of the lexicon and rules of a language'.<sup>823</sup> Established in the aftermath of the Great War, the museum's role was outlined by its first chair Sir Alfred Mond (later the chair of ICI) at its opening in 1920 thus:

The Museum was not conceived as a monument of military glory, but rather as a record of toil and sacrifice: as a place of study to the technician in studying the course of development of armaments; to the historian as an assembly of material and archives to instruct his work; and to the *people of the Empire*, as a record of their toil and sacrifice through these fateful years.<sup>824</sup>

The idea of the museum reflecting the efforts of the colonies as well as the metropole was present from the very beginning. Indeed, the name of the building (the Imperial War Museum) reflects that focus in a way that is too easily forgotten. Despite this stated aim, the education officer of the Museum admitted in 2003 that all the visual material on display in the Museum 'whether photographic or in posters, shows white "western"-looking faces'.<sup>825</sup> She therefore went on to produce educational packs featuring brown and black faces, because 'in today's multi-cultural Britain, it seemed vitally important to show that our history is a shared history'.<sup>826</sup> And as Matt Mead pointed out, as recently as 2012, black children visiting an exhibition on the RAF could not imagine that a World War Two pilot was black.<sup>827</sup> So although the Museum may seem like 'a site of knowledge... where no item was too insignificant to find space', and hold everything from veterans' passports to prayer beads, it also has a powerful role in 'authorising

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<sup>823</sup> Allan Sekula, 'Reading an Archive: Photography between Labour and Capital', in *Photography/Politics: Two*, ed. by Patricia Holland, Jo Spence, and Simon Watney (London: Photography Workshop, 1986), pp. 443–52 (p. 155).

<sup>824</sup> Quoted in Anthony Richards, 'Archive Report: The Department of Documents at the Imperial War Museum', *Contemporary British History*, 18.2 (2004), 103–12 (p. 111) emphasis added.

<sup>825</sup> Helena Stride, 'Britain Was Our Home': Helping Years 9, 10 and 11 to Understand the Black Experience of the Second World War', *Teaching History*, 112, 2003, 54–59 (p. 54).

<sup>826</sup> Stride, p. 56.

<sup>827</sup> Matt Mead, 'Plane Spotting, Military Portraiture, and Multiculturalism in the Imperial War Museum', *Photography and Culture*, 5:3 (2012), 281–93 (p. 286).

“official” Heritage culture’, by presenting a version of the wars of the twentieth century that is mainstream, and thus shaping the current and future collective memory of that century.<sup>828</sup>

Thus the 339 photos of Force K6 in the Imperial War Museum represent, at least to some extent, the official view of these men. Although the AFPU was not formally established until October 1941, the seeds were sown by the official photographers that went out with the BEF in 1939.<sup>829</sup> One of those was Len Puttnam, (father of the film director David Puttnam and mentioned above), who made Force K6 the subject of the first twenty-five war photos of 1940.<sup>830</sup> Among that first batch of pictures are fore-runners of tropes that will recur: mules, inspections and a barber shaving a mule driver. There is also the K6 image that was probably best-known at the time (F2016- see Figure 25). This is a high-angle shot of seventeen men, looking up at the camera and smiling. They are wearing light-coloured jerkins, an unusual item of clothing for K6, and their *pagris* (turbans) are very much in evidence. Indeed, their Daffadar displays the peacock-style *turrah* or tuft that senior NCOs and VCOs wore. This photo, with its caption ‘Fine types among the Indian troops’, was so successful that it was made into a postcard and appeared in newspaper articles.

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<sup>828</sup> Paul Wombell, ‘Face to Face with Themselves: Photography and the First World War’, in *Photography/Politics: Two*, ed. by Patricia Holland, Jo Spence, and Simon Watney (London: Photography Workshop, 1986), pp. 74–81 (p. 80); Mead, p. 286.

<sup>829</sup> McGlade, p. 31.

<sup>830</sup> Puttnam, *The Arrival of Indian Troops in France, 1940*, Imperial War Museum, F2001 and series.





Figure 25: K6 in Marseilles, 1<sup>st</sup> January 1940, by Len Puttnam, courtesy of the Imperial War Museum (F2016)

Within this first series of twenty-five shots, then, we can see a discourse emerging: smiling men in exotic clothing, eccentric habits such as shaving each other, mules and horses in a modern army, British officers in control. As George Orwell had written a few months before:

The King is on his throne and the pound is worth a pound... the grim grey battleships of the British Fleet are steaming up the Channel and at the outposts of Empire the monocled Englishmen are holding the niggers at bay.<sup>831</sup>

Here Orwell satirised the typical attitude of complacency at home, soon to be shattered by the German Army's rapid advance. These early images served to quell anxieties and reassure the metropole that the Empire was here – a 1940 version of the 'Cavalry to the Rescue' trope of the Hollywood Western.

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<sup>831</sup> Orwell, pp. 189–90.

This most-famous Puttnam photograph reminds us of another image that was famously described by Roland Barthes a few years later. Referring to a cover photo from *Paris Match* that showed a black cadet saluting the French flag, Barthes remarked that this signified:

that France is a great Empire, that all her sons, without any colour discrimination, faithfully serve under her flag, and that there is no better answer to the detractors of an alleged colonialism than the zeal shown by this Negro in serving his so-called oppressors.<sup>832</sup>

In a similar way, Puttnam's shot could be interpreted by Britons as signifying that Britain was a great empire, that Britannia ruled the waves and that all her sons, from the furthest reaches, answered the call to serve the King-Emperor. Further, that there was no better way to answer Indian nationalists than by showing the zeal, enthusiasm and good humour of these Indians in serving their so-called oppressors. This, then, is the discourse of Indian as propaganda-tool. The docile Indian body serves as a vehicle for a message: that of Empire, unity and steadfast opposition to the "Hun" and the "Jap". That is, until the war is over, when the tool can be rapidly dropped as a new narrative comes into play.

Content analysis of the photos in the Imperial War Museum archive shows that of the 339 K6 photos, there were 287 photos of K6 taken on twenty-three separate occasions in the F (France), H (Home) and A (Admiralty) series. Puttnam was the most prolific photographer, responsible for six separate series of photos, but in all there were eleven photographers involved, including Geoffrey Keating and Ted Mallindine. Almost every one of those shots features Indian soldiers, with very few shots of British officers, for the white men are not exotic or different, and the photographers had not come to capture white faces. On six occasions, there are photos of VIPs inspecting them on parade: a member of British or Indian royalty, or a politician. Sixteen shots are portraits of individual soldiers, some of them named. On four occasions, the photographer snapped the men winding or preparing their *pagri* (turban) - surely something that was staged for the benefit of the visitor, as it always seems to be happening in the middle of other work. Similarly, six shots from four series show men having a haircut or a

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<sup>832</sup> Roland Barthes, *Mythologies* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2012), p. 225.

shave from the barber attached to each company. Ten shots show them recording for the BBC, or listening to a BBC broadcast, while seven photos from two sets (all in France) show them performing: dancing, singing or playing music. In fourteen photos they are playing sports: volleyball, cross-country, riding or PT. Fifteen shots show preparation of food - mostly meat or chapattis - and eight show men working on shoeing or other blacksmithing tasks. Finally, mules or horses appear in nearly half of the photos. These pictures were taken with multiple audiences in mind: the British audience, to show the support and solidarity from the 'natives'; the Empire audience, to show that our boys have gone overseas and are welcomed, and the wider global audience, to show that Britain may be alone, but it is a 'Greater Britain' that includes millions of brown faces.<sup>833</sup> Equally, the men of the Ministry of Information and the AFPU had a sense of history, they knew of the Imperial War Museum's archives and would have been aware that their work was destined to join that archive. Pictures can act as evidence, as witness to the past: as Burke explains 'images are testimonies of past social arrangements and above all of past ways of seeing and thinking'.<sup>834</sup> Putnam and his colleagues were part of the process of gathering such testimonies

There are clear conventions at play here, reflecting the premediation, some well-established, some being established anew. There is a familiar convention of trade pictures, that Pinney describes as every *bhisti* (water-carrier) with a goats-skin, every coolie with a basket, every dhobi with an iron and bundle of clothes.<sup>835</sup> There are choices being made at every stage: of the activities that will be happening on the days of the photographers' visit; of which parts of the day to show; of angles and light; of processing and printing. We can be sure that those choices were made by white men: the photographers themselves, increasingly sure of themselves as the war went on and able to assert their preferences; the India Office; the K6 officers on the spot. On few occasions would those men in the shot actually have had any say in what was photographed: they were simply told, often through an interpreter, where to stand and what to do:

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<sup>833</sup> Stuart Ward, 'The Untied Kingdom: A World History of the End of Britain' (unpublished Lecture presented at the Centre for Imperial and Global History, Exeter University, 2017).

<sup>834</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 184.

<sup>835</sup> Pinney, p. 57.

docile bodies at work and at play. They are exhibits for the spectator to view, exotic ones at that; with their strange food and habits, but exhibits that are intended to provoke a warm feeling. That feeling springs from the fact that they are here to help, but also because they work with animals, and the British are often seen as an animal-loving nation. In the captions, and in some of the portraits, there is a feeling of the 'race' photographs, the anthropometric pictures so loved by nineteenth century British photographers across the empire.<sup>836</sup> As Razia Iqbal reminds us, every picture tells an individual story, but 'the individual is always living and experiencing some larger narrative, whether he or she likes it or not'.<sup>837</sup> In this case, the photographs transmit a narrative of Empire, of paternalism, of the colonies coming to help their imperial masters.

Many of these official photos were posed, and there is a remarkable convergence around the poses taken. The sepoys stand to attention, full face to the camera, or occasionally three-quarter face. They are in full uniform, but rarely in dress uniform: these are working men, interrupted from their work. In some cases they are smiling, but usually they look stern and serious. One can see why Puttnam's F2016 was so successful, many of the men are smiling in this shot, and their attitudes are very natural: clearly he was able to put them at their ease, despite the unusual angle of the shot, with the photographer positioned above the subjects, perhaps using a step-ladder.

There are also omissions and gaps among these albums. There are plenty of men, and plenty of animals on view, but very few women or children. In fact, the only women who do occur in these series are some French spectators at the 'gymkhana' on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1940, and VIP visitors: the Queen at Ashbourne (there is a charming photo of the Queen and a VCO smiling shyly at each other) and the Princess Royal (Princess Mary, daughter of George V) in Scotland.<sup>838</sup> This gendered view is perhaps not surprising, for the common view was that war was men's business. In fact, the Second World War was increasingly women's

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<sup>836</sup> See for example chapter 5 in Ryan.

<sup>837</sup> in Susheila Nasta, *Asian Britain: A Photographic History* (London: Westbourne, 2013), p. 10.

<sup>838</sup> Taylor, *The Queen Talking to One of the Officers*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, H2861; Wackett, *HRH Princess Royal*, 1942, Imperial War Museum, H22715.

business also, and many of the family photos examined below include women.<sup>839</sup> Perhaps the idea of ordinary British women being in the same shot as handsome exotic Indians with deep eyes was simply not conceivable for the official mind. There was probably a British officer just out of shot for many of these official pictures, setting poses and locations, translating instructions. Such officers would have been among the most cautious of projecting any idea of friendly relations between white British women and brown-skinned colonials.<sup>840</sup> There are also almost no photos of the men eating, despite the many photos of food preparation, which again must be a deliberate choice. Finally, there are no pictures outside those in the 'D' series discussed below, of the men praying or doing anything to do with their religion, and none of the maulvi that was attached to each company. Prayers would have been conducted five times each day, and on two occasions photographers visited during Ramadan.<sup>841</sup> It is hard to believe that these photographers were completely unaware that the men around them were fasting during daylight and eating *iftar* (breaking the fast) at nightfall. More likely, the British and Indian officers steered the photographers away from such scenes, concerned that these things might be simply too strange for a British audience, or misunderstood. A far cry from a modern approach to Islam in Britain, where difference is accentuated or even celebrated.

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<sup>839</sup> On women in World War Two, see for example Sonya Rose; Corinna Peniston-Bird, 'Sorority & Memorial', in *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War*, ed. by Lucy Noakes and Juliette Pattinson (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 67–87; Juliette Pattinson, 'A Story That Will Thrill and Make You Proud', in *British Cultural Memory and the Second World War*, ed. by Lucy Noakes and Juliette Pattinson (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), pp. 134–52; Eleanor Hancock, 'Employment in Wartime: The Experience of German Women During the Second World War', *War and Society*, 43–68, 12 (1994); Joanna Bourke, *An Intimate History of Killing* (London: Granta, 1999).

<sup>840</sup> Sonya Rose, p. 289.

<sup>841</sup> Bainbridge's series starting H14619 taken at Crickhowell on October 8th 1941, and Lockyear's H23939 series a year later, taken at Aviemore on the occasion of the visit of the Jam Saheb of Nawanager, an Indian prince

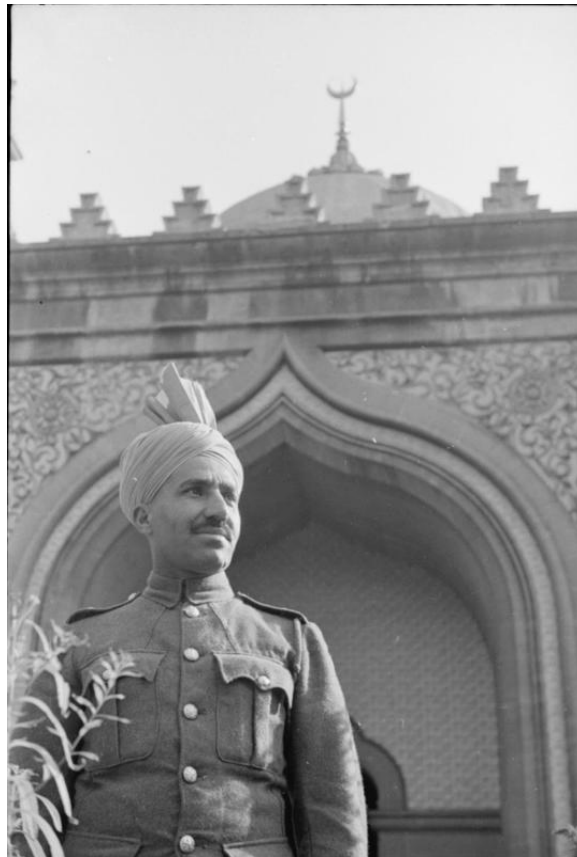


Figure 26: RIASC VCO in front of the Shah Jehan Mosque in Woking, Eid-ul-fitr festival 1941, Photographer unknown. Imperial War Museum D5154

There is a different tone to the photos of K6 that appear in the 'D' (domestic) series – images from the Home Front. The series D5127-5174 shows 1941 Eid celebrations at Woking and at the newly-opened East London Mosque on Commercial Road. As well as showing the men at prayer, they are seen socialising, chatting, eating and smoking. One photograph (D5137) shows a driver performing *wudu*, the ritual washing before prayer (figure 27). In this way the everyday is made special. This soldier would have performed *wudu* five times a day for all his adult life, but a white photographer has never seen it before and is keen to snap this 'exotic' ritual. In many of these pictures the K6 soldiers are among other Indian Muslims: one can surmise that these pictures were used as propaganda in Muslim countries around the world. In this case the implied message is that Muslims of all kinds are to be found in Britain, where they have found a home and can worship freely – presenting a stark contrast with religion under the Nazi yoke. There are also other pictures here that put Indian soldiers among the men and women from around the world who have come to the aid of

the Mother Country. D1013 shows ‘a group of servicemen from all over the world’, with Major M Akbar Khan seated in the middle of the group of twelve. D10369, by contrast, gives us another angle. This is one of a series of sixteen pictures taken in 1942 at an ‘Empire and World Party’ at the Overseas Club, and in this image we see Driver Mobed Shaffi, with legs crossed and *pagri* laid on the table, listening intently to the entertainment.



Figure 27: RIASC sepoy performing *wudu* at the East London Mosque, Eid-ul-futr 1941. Photographer unknown, Imperial War Museum D5137

During their time in Europe, K6 featured in the press at least 120 times in some way. More than half of those mentions were in 1940, with the numbers decreasing through 1941 and 1942 as the novelty wore off, and only twelve in 1943. There were seventy-six appearances in local and regional papers in the UK, twenty-four in national UK papers and magazines, three in the *New York Times*, one in a local paper in France, and two in New Zealand. The majority of

these were written stories, some with photographs, and occasionally there was a photograph only, without a story. The photographs were usually taken by the local photographer, but sometimes a newspaper used an official photograph, from among those analysed above, or a press agency photo. The photographs that appeared in the press included at least three photos of parades.<sup>842</sup> The caption from the *Western Times* photo of 27<sup>th</sup> March 1942 (figure 28) is typical:

Picturesqueness was added to Exeter's Warship Week inaugural procession by these representatives from India. They made an impressive feature and excited great interest.

The photo, probably taken on Exeter's North Street, shows eight VCOs and NCOs of 42<sup>nd</sup> Company, mounted on their chargers, followed by men marching with rifles at the slope. All are in full dress uniform with *pagris* and bandoliers. As their uniforms and rifles are fairly standard issue, we can be sure that the 'picturesqueness' is a function of their brown skins and their turbans. The sub-editor needed a caption in a hurry, so reached into their bag of clichés and pulled out an old favourite. As well as Exeter, the archives show that the men of K6 marched in sixty parades in the UK from December 1940 to September 1943. They were invited on national events like United Nations day in Edinburgh in June 1943 and London, as well as local fundraising events from Penzance to Dornoch to Llanelli. Some of these parades were filmed and most of them photographed, so on top of the hundreds of thousands of citizens who saw them in person, there must have been millions who saw their mediated version.

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<sup>842</sup> For example 'Allies Week Parade in Edinburgh', *Scotsman*, 4 May 1942.





Figure 28: 42<sup>nd</sup> Company on parade in Exeter, March 1942

The 'picturesqueness' remarked upon in Exeter is reinforced through other photos of the unusual. *The Manchester Guardian* of 4<sup>th</sup> December 1940, accompanied by a caption 'Break for Music: Indian and New Zealand Troops', showed an Indian bagpiper called Budar Din leading a troop across rough country in Cornwall.<sup>843</sup> The exotic triumphs again. The press were so eager to run photos and articles on 32<sup>nd</sup> Company during its initial stay in France, that their commanding officer Major Martin wrote to his sister that he had been visited by at least fifty newspapermen and that the '*Times, Express and Telegraph* are always round'.<sup>844</sup> Truly these men were popular: the deep eyes had captured more fans.

The family album photos are of a different genre entirely. These are pictures taken by individuals in Wales, Scotland or the Midlands of their friends, their guests. Less driven by a discourse of propaganda, premediated in a different way, taken by people untrained in the conventions of art or more formal photography, these are more natural snapshots. Such family snaps were made

<sup>843</sup> 'Break for Music: Indian and New Zealand Troops', *Manchester Guardian*, 4 December 1940.

<sup>844</sup> 'Took Indian Unit to France', *Burnley Express & News*, 2 March 1940.

with a purpose – to help recall that strange person/place in years to come, to be part of the family album - ‘the memorial book of family ceremonies... an iconographic diary’.<sup>845</sup> In some cases the Indian soldier is standing alone, in many others they are with the family, smiling together at the camera in ‘classic poses of a rigid gestural code’ as Silvana Rivoir says of Italian soldier photos of an earlier period.<sup>846</sup> One gets the sense that these are for the album, taken in the same place and in the same way that a visiting cousin or grandparent would be snapped: almost a member of the family. These photos make an interesting contrast with the official and press photos described above. Here the men are more natural, having been allowed deep into the shelter of the family home. An example is the infant Betty Cresswell in Ashbourne, seen with her father and four sepoy: one smoking, one with a tool in his hand and his braces down (figure 29). They are aware that they are being photographed, but they do not feel they have to obey an order at that time: the photographer is clearly a friend, they are offguard, at home. Images that linger in archives and family albums are a type of informal latent memory that can be used for re-remembering.

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<sup>845</sup> Silvana Rivoir, ‘The Soldier Photographer’, in *Photography/Politics: Two*, ed. by Patricia Holland, Jo Spence, and Simon Watney (London: Photography Workshop, 1986), pp. 82–89 (p. 85).

<sup>846</sup> Rivoir, p. 82.



Figure 29: Betty Cresswell with her father and four sepoy, Autumn 1940. The one of the left is probably Kundan Lall, Captain Gian Kapur's cook

An interesting example of an album photo (figure 30) is that of an unnamed Daffadar (sergeant) found in the online history archives of Dornoch in the Scottish Highlands.<sup>847</sup> The picture was taken towards the end of 1943, shortly before K6 returned to India. The Reinforcement Unit was then stationed at Eaglefield to the south of the town, while their hospital was at the Station Hotel. The photo was taken indoors, probably in the sitting room of a house. With his trim, greying beard and his round-rimmed spectacles, his warm smile directed at the camera and his seated pose, he looks rather avuncular, like an old schoolfriend visiting for the weekend. He sits next to the family radio, with the switches in easy reach. Clearly this is a figure who is so well integrated in the house that he is given the seat of honour: one can imagine him sitting here every evening, drinking tea, eating shortbread and listening to the Home Service. He has crossed 7,000 miles, but he has found a home in this coastal Highland town.

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<sup>847</sup> Unknown, *Indian Army Sergeant Based in Dornoch WW2*  
<<http://www.historylinksarchive.org.uk/picture/number11889.asp>> [accessed 23 May 2017].



Figure 30: Indian Army Sergeant Based in Dornoch, 1943. Photographer unknown.  
Dornoch History Links

Among this great wealth of photographic representations there are few, if any, produced by the Indian sepoys themselves. Their visions are thus silenced, unknown, unrealised. It is highly unlikely that they were allowed to bring a camera in their kitbag, even if they owned one, although Christopher Pinney quotes a 1908 report that said that every tenth person in India carried a camera, so it is possible that some of the more prosperous NCOs and VCOs had a camera at home.<sup>848</sup> Certainly the British officers and Warrant Officers had cameras - there are plenty of photos among the papers of the British soldiers Tom Hexley and James English, attached to K6. One imagines their desire to photograph and be photographed was strongest at certain key points: being promoted or winning an award; when leaving a town or village where they had good memories of place or people; or after a significant event. Rivoir, writing of Italian soldiers in the First

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<sup>848</sup> Pinney, p. 72.

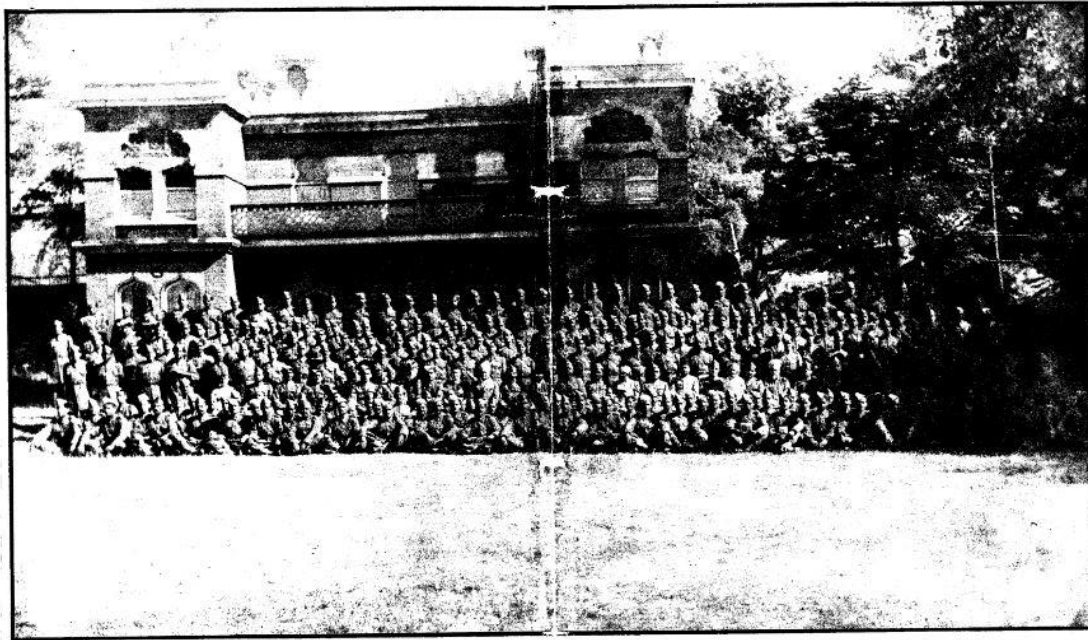
World War, remarks that there is 'perhaps, no other moment in which life, the amazement at being still alive, is photographed'.<sup>849</sup> For many K6 men this would have been the moment when they reached British shores for the first time, after evacuation from France in the summer of 1940. They may have offered a prayer, they certainly wanted to write home; it is quite likely they also sought out a photographer to help them give the message 'I'm still alive, and now in the very heart of the Empire'. There is a remarkable group photograph of 300 men of 32<sup>nd</sup> Company, taken at Woking Mosque shortly after their return from Dunkirk (figure 31). Standing and seated in rows in the Surrey sunshine, they must have felt relieved to have escaped from France, and happy to have found a mosque. As one of their number remembered years later:

We were all very puzzled how in this foreign land there could exist a mosque particularly as no Muslims seemed to live here... Soon after sunrise the next morning [Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June 1940] we gathered together and marched to Woking. When we were a short distance away we saw this small but beautiful mosque... We offered our prayers and thanked God for the opportunity to pray here.<sup>850</sup>

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<sup>849</sup> Rivoir, p. 85.

<sup>850</sup> Purwez Salamat, *The Woking Shahjahan Mosque* (Chichester: Phillimore, 2008), p. 57.



THE INDIAN MUSLIM SOLDIERS AT THE SHAH JEHAN MOSQUE, WOKING.  
The photo was taken in front of the Sir Salar Jung Memoria House, after the Jum'a prayers on Friday 7th June, 1940.

Figure 31: 32<sup>nd</sup> Company at Woking Mosque, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1940, two weeks after their escape from Dunkirk. *Islamic Review*, October 1940

One photo gives an idea of how the men themselves preferred to present themselves. Choudry Wali Mohammed (quoted above) of Vaince village near Rawat in Rawalpindi had a studio picture taken in Britain.<sup>851</sup> It shows four young men in shirtsleeves and trousers, in front of a generic leafy background (figure 32). One of them is Choudry, who was promoted Naik in 32<sup>rd</sup> Company in January 1942, and was one of the unit's PT (physical training) instructors, another is his friend Yaqub Mirza.<sup>852</sup> This is clearly a picture of four 'mates'. They look relaxed, they are smiling, their heads are bare (almost never seen in official photos) and their hair is groomed but they are informally dressed. Perhaps they each kept a copy of this picture in their paybooks and sent one home to their village. Perhaps they were all from the same village. What is clear is that this is *their* photo: taken by a white British professional photographer, but with them presenting themselves in the way they wanted. This is us, they say, we are individuals, not types. Unfortunately no more of these autobiographical pictures have yet come to light in the UK, but we know from other evidence that many

<sup>851</sup> I am grateful to his son, Zubair Mohammed, for this photograph

<sup>852</sup> '32 Coy IMD Daily Orders', 1941, National Archives of India, DGIMS 8/9/7/41.

were taken. Mrs J. Bray was working at a photographer's studio in St Austell at the time, and recalls feeling:

rather nervous when they arrived wanting studio portraits taken (I was very young) as we had very limited quotas of studio film, and had to refuse them at times, and it was difficult to make them understand that it was not 'would not' but 'could not'. One man was quite angry and said it was because he was an Indian we would not take his photograph... one man once followed me to the dark room where I had been working, and before I could stop him, dipped the end of his turban into the dish of "hypo" [Sodium thiosulfate] used for fixing prints! No doubt it bleached out to an interesting colour!<sup>853</sup>

This fascinating vignette shows not only that they liked having their photos taken, but that that they were aware of the possibility of racism and being discriminated against.



Figure 32: Choudry Wali Mohammed and three friends. Date unknown, photographer unknown. Private collection

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<sup>853</sup> J. Bray, 'Letter from Mrs J. Bray of Plymouth to Paritosh Shapland', 5 December 2001.

Although the men of Force K6 have generally been forgotten in the collective memory of the UK, their images have lingered. The sepoys and their likenesses lurk in the *réserve d'oubli* like ghosts awaiting recall.<sup>854</sup> The Imperial War Museum's photographic archives are often called upon to provide pictures for articles and books. In some cases, where a photo editor wants a picture of Indian soldiers for a general article about the Indian Army, K6 have been used. Yasmin Alibhai wrote an article for the *New Statesman* in June 1991 about Indian veterans living in the UK. The picture chosen to illustrate it was of a VCO from the Reinforcement Unit on a clifftop with a Tommy sentry.<sup>855</sup> William Dalrymple's *Spectator* review of Yasmin Khan's book *The Raj at War* was illustrated by a veteran K6 man winding his *pagri*, with the inaccurate caption 'A member of the Indian Army Services Corps at Dunkirk, 1940'.<sup>856</sup> The photos have also been called on for more specific purposes, including the back cover of Adrian Jackson's book on the Empire in the war (H21632) and a pamphlet by the Muslim Council of Britain on Muslim contributions to Britain's Armed Forces.<sup>857</sup> There is even a mis-attribution in Sushila Nasta's book of photos of Asians in Britain from the Getty archive, where a photo of Indians in uniform in the ruins of blitzed London is identified as 'Indian soldiers evacuated at Dunkirk and stationed in England', whereas in fact it could only be 80<sup>th</sup> (Indian) Company of the Pioneer Corps.<sup>858</sup> In this way the 'specificity of original uses and meanings can be ... made invisible' through a rather cavalier sub-editing process.<sup>859</sup> The photos are easy to find, but by being used in this general way, they lose their original meaning and become vague, impersonal, tokenistic. The memory of the real men depicted loses out, in favour of a universal but woolly concept of 'Indian soldiers in the war'.

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<sup>854</sup> Ricoeur, p. 284.

<sup>855</sup> Yasmin Alibhai, 'Lest We Forget', *New Statesman and Society*, 21 June 1991, p. 14 The photo is H5766.

<sup>856</sup> William Dalrymple, 'Britain Didn't Fight the Second World War — the British Empire Did', *Spectator*, July 2015. The picture is from the Getty archive – ref 3400188.

<sup>857</sup> Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War*; K. Humayun Ansari, *Remembering the Brave: The Muslim Contribution to Britain's Armed Forces* (London: Muslim Council of Britain, 2009). The picture is in the D5127 series.

<sup>858</sup> Nasta, p. 26.

<sup>859</sup> Sekula, p. 154.



## K6 on Film: Rolling Through Time

Seven newsreels featuring the men of K6 are preserved in the archives of the Imperial War Museum, in addition to other footage that was not shown. The newsreels include a substantial one from Pathé in January 1940, two shorter films of inspections by VIPs in England in the summer of 1940, two parades in London, and one very interesting long newsreel by Pathé, with voice over in Urdu, for projection in India. The first film shown was entitled 'Indian Troops in France', and includes footage from Marseilles, unloading ships, marching to the villa at Roi D'Espagne and in their camp there. Intercut with this is footage from northern France, of 32<sup>nd</sup> Company at Orchies and Bourghelles.<sup>860</sup> This was shown to British audiences in the long winter of 1939/1940, during the 'Phoney War'. There is much footage of the men at work, mostly with their mules; coming down the gangway from the ship, marching through the streets of Marseilles or with their carts, and measuring out fodder. The music is martial and western, and the voice over starts by stressing Imperial unity: 'we're proud to show these pictures following the arrival in Europe of the men from Australia and Canada: now it's India's turn'. As the sequence continues, we also see a cook preparing chapattis and the men eating, and the voice over has time for three little jokes to show that the Empire is united in humour as well as in toughness and martial spirit.

After the retreat from Dunkirk, the mood shifts. The two films 'Indian Troops in Britain' and 'King and Queen with Indian troops' were shot just a few weeks apart, the former in Surrey and the latter in Derbyshire.<sup>861</sup> In both cases we see long lines of troops on parade (now wearing tin helmets), and the voice over draws our attention to their toughness. In the film from Surrey, where the VIP is the new Secretary-of-State for India, Leo Amery, the theme of Imperial unity is brought out twice in just thirty-seven seconds. The commentary starts with the statement 'from all quarters of the Empire come the fighters for freedom', and concludes with 'brothers-in-arms, we salute you!'. With public anxiety running at maximum levels in the summer of 1940, the British audience required maximum reassurance, and the men of K6 were there to help provide it. The two

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<sup>860</sup> *Film: Indian Troops in France* (Pathe, 1940) <<http://www.britishpathe.com/video/indian-troops-in-france-1>>.

<sup>861</sup> Pathe, 'Indian Troops In Britain (1940)', 1940 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QpMK97TkGuM>> [accessed 25 May 2017]; 'King and Queen with Indian Troops', 1940 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gfVvd9uZHNc>>.

films of London parades show K6 briefly, as part of a larger march past. The first is from the Lord Mayor's Parade in 1941, and the other from the first United Nations Day parade on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1942. In both cases the men of K6 are one detachment of soldiers among many.

Perhaps the most interesting film is the collection made for Indian cinemas, entitled 'Indian Army Special Newsreel', with voice-over by ZA Bukhari.<sup>862</sup> This film of nearly eleven minutes, opens with footage of the 4<sup>th</sup> Indian Division in Egypt, but the vast majority (more than nine minutes) is of K6. The footage is the same as in the first three films shown in Britain, locations being Marseilles, near Lille, Surrey and Derbyshire. But much more is edited in; the choices are different. We see Indians being shaved and winding their *pagnosis* (surprisingly omitted from all the films shown in the UK). We see them at rest: reading a newspaper and playing cards. We see general shots of the camp, with sheep wandering through, and even a dog. Most interestingly, the Indian version includes a short section (about twelve seconds) of around thirty sepoy's praying on carpets between the tents among the trees, led by their Maulvi. Bukhari's voice over tells us that they went to God 'to pray for their success'. Of course, he had no way of knowing what was in those men's hearts, but it was clearly important to show an Indian audience, especially a Muslim one, that the men had not abandoned their religion after crossing the black waters. Bukhari also plays the style of the commentary differently from his British counterparts. Working for the BBC throughout the war, it is quite possible that he had a hand in the film editing process as well as the audio. He is keen on a joke, fitting in at least seven light-hearted comments in the nine minutes of K6 footage. The theme of the Empire helping is still there, but a new theme emerges, that of the troops' welfare. While still maintaining the brothers-in-arms rhetoric, he is also keen to stress that the men are being looked after, bearing in mind that it was highly likely their families would see this newsreel:

Enemies surrounded these soldiers. Enemies thought these soldiers would not be able to escape from their encirclement. But these soldiers came out with their British brothers and reached England... Mr Amery kept talking to these soldiers for a long time, asking them about their welfare.

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<sup>862</sup> Bukhari was with Richard Dimpleby and the BBC radio crew who interviewed K6 men in January 1940 in the depths of frozen France. After the war he went on to be the first Director-General of Pakistan Radio

This meeting continued for a long time and at the end he said 'goodbye' and prayed for their success, and left.<sup>863</sup>

It is also interesting to review the footage that was left out of the early newsreels, which survives in the archives of the Imperial War Museum.<sup>864</sup> There is a lot more time given to off-duty subjects: shots were set up of making and drinking tea, of Indian soldiers linking arms with white British soldiers or sharing a 'fag'. There are shots of sepoy's relaxing, a rare shot of an 'untouchable' sweeper walking through the frame, and some good shots of a farrier working with an anvil. There are more close-ups of various soldiers, and a strange sequence that shows Driver Nawab of Jhelum taking off his *pagri* and putting on his steel helmet, grinning all the while. The film crew clearly found this an amusing scene, but the editors thought differently. As with the official photos, we can be sure that the decisions about who and what would be filmed and edited in were made by white men, the film crew and RIASC officers in consultation.

With all this media interest, it is surprising that there was no feature-length film made, especially later in the war when things had settled down somewhat. Amateur film-maker and socialite Rosie Newman was aware of the appeal of these deep-coloured soldiers from afar, and included scenes from their time in France in her silent, colour film 'The France I knew', preserved in the Imperial War Museum archive.<sup>865</sup> We see them marching in a field, standing at ease, and a portrait shot of a VCO. Later that year, in August, she visited them in Ashbourne in Derbyshire, and showed them the footage of themselves in France at the Green Man Hotel.<sup>866</sup> While she was there, of course, she photographed them queuing outside the hotel, while the children of the town look on.<sup>867</sup> Thus they were photographed while they waited to watch a film of themselves marching - these men were part of an amateur and professional propaganda machine, spinning for all its worth. In fact a longer film was postulated on at least two

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<sup>863</sup> Pathé.

<sup>864</sup> *Unedited Footage from France* (British Paramount Films, 1940), Imperial War Museum, London, BAY23 1940-01-09; *RIASC Disembark at Marseilles*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, BBY 24 1940-01-01; *Film: 32 ATC in France*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, London, BCY35 1940-02-10.

<sup>865</sup> Rosie Newman, *Film: The France I Knew*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, MGH3772.

<sup>866</sup> 'War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, June-December 1940'.

<sup>867</sup> Newman, *Indian Troops Surrounded by Children*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, HU65952.

occasions. Colonel Hills had discussions on a scenario with Eric Costin of the Evening Standard in September 1941, and then visited a company called Public Relations Films Ltd the following January.<sup>868</sup> On both occasions the project was entitled 'Indians in England', but it came to nothing. Hills himself was acutely aware of the value of having film crews around. In January 1940, a month after their arrival in France, he wrote:

the propaganda value of such a procedure does not require to be stressed. A film unit would provide not only a record but a concrete education to other units, not so fortunate as to be the first to proceed on service to Europe.<sup>869</sup>

Clearly these men had enormous propaganda value in the UK and in the colonies, but the government were aware of the need for a nuanced approach to such propaganda. It was worth the considerable effort by ministry, soldiers and film crews to get useful footage that could be shown around the world to tell the story of an Empire coming together at a time of extreme stress. On one occasion, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1940 at Bourghelles near Lille, 32<sup>nd</sup> Company were visited by the photographer Davies, a film crew and an unidentified artist who all depicted the men unloading cement from a train with help from the British soldiers of the RASC.<sup>870</sup> One can almost imagine the artists jostling for the best vantage point to view the work, while the men try (often unsuccessfully) to ignore them. If they were unsure when they left India of the conventions of being filmed and photographed, they had surely learnt them by the time they were settled in Britain twelve months later, and were quite used to being media stars. It is clear that the India Office and Hills saw the importance of their role in making news. When they were inspected by the King and Queen at Ashbourne in August 1940, there was a press release prepared for the occasion.<sup>871</sup> Amongst such saturated coverage, with so many photographs and films made, their images would have been well-known across the country.

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<sup>868</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'; 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

<sup>869</sup> 'Force K6 Documents', 1942, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/WS/1/355.

<sup>870</sup> *Servicemen of the Commonwealth: Indian Troops Loading Mule Cart*, 1940, The National Archives, Kew.

<sup>871</sup> 'Press Release: The Indian Contingent', 1940, Betty Cresswell collection.

## Paintings and drawings: Flowing with Time

In the field of painting and drawing, there was a considerable back-catalogue of agents of premediation, built around a strong tradition of paintings of Indians by Britons, stretching back to the time of Tilly Kettle, probably the first significant British portrait painter to work in India, arriving there in 1769.<sup>872</sup> There were also strong traditions of painting portraits of Indians in uniform. As well as the Laszlo portrait mentioned before, the work of Rudolf Swoboda provided an example for mid-century artists to draw upon. Swoboda was from an artistic Austrian family and became something of a favourite of Queen Victoria's towards the end of her life. In the long hall at Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, there is still a collection of Swoboda's small 'Indian heads', generally around seven inches by eleven inches.<sup>873</sup> As well as the Queen's favourite Abdul Karim 'the Munshi', there are several portraits of military figures, including a Gurkha and Gulam Mohamed Khan, a Muslim soldier of the Queen, reflecting what Saloni Mathur calls Swoboda's 'preoccupation with "military types"'.<sup>874</sup> This preoccupation was widely reflected in Victorian and Edwardian society. A little later, in 1924, an Indian in uniform featured in a group portrait of 'Statesmen of World War One', alongside Churchill, Kitchener and Lloyd George.<sup>875</sup> Standing on the left of the picture, next to Louis Botha of South Africa, we find the Maharajah of Bikaner, Ganga Singh. At that stage of the Empire's development, it seems, an Indian loyalist was sufficiently worthy to make it on to the global artistic stage.

All of these military portraits served as premediation for Henry Lamb, official war artist and medical officer, who painted perhaps the most highbrow presentation of K6 men. In May 1941 Lamb caught sight of 'some fine looking turbaned Indians about Salisbury' and was determined to paint them.<sup>876</sup> 'I mean to pursue them as soon as I can make the arrangements', he wrote to the Secretary of the War Artists Advisory Committee (WAAC), Edward Montgomery O'Rourke Dickey, a person of 'generous personality and extraordinary

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<sup>872</sup> Tilly Kettle, *Muhammad Ali Khan, Nawab of Arcot, 1772*, Victoria & Albert Museum, London <<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O136746/muhammad-ali-khan-nawab-of-painting-kettle-tilly/>> [accessed 23 May 2017].

<sup>873</sup> Saloni Mathur, *India by Design* (London: University of California Press, 2007), p. 80.

<sup>874</sup> Mathur, p. 96.

<sup>875</sup> Guthrie, James, *Statesmen of World War I*, 1930, National Portrait Gallery, London, NPG2463 <<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw00301/Statesmen-of-World-War-I->>.

<sup>876</sup> 'Henry Lamb MC, RA'.

efficiency'.<sup>877</sup> Perhaps Lamb had also been smitten by deep colours and deep eyes. In any event he followed them to Hereford in June, and painted two twenty-four inch by twenty inch canvases: one of Major Muhammad Akbar Khan and one of Driver Abdul Ghani (figures 33 and 34). The portraits are clearly a pair: they show head and shoulders in front of a coloured background, designed to bring out the tones of skin and uniform. Muhammad Akbar Khan's portrait, now residing in the store room at the Imperial War Museum, looks to his left, perhaps to India, and the painting is certainly of the heroic style that Burke judges to have survived only in officers' messes.<sup>878</sup> The Major was pleased with the portrait, for he commissioned a photograph thereof, which he asked Lamb to sign. Lamb himself was more equivocal, writing that he thought the two pictures 'all right & likely to diversify some future exhibition in a useful way'.<sup>879</sup> The word 'diversify' here has echoes of a tokenistic approach to ethnicity that re-appeared decades later. The paintings were exhibited at the National Gallery later in the year, hanging either side of a painting of a policeman by A.R. Thomson.<sup>880</sup> The review of the exhibition in *The Times* said that Lamb's two portraits were 'to be noted', but sadly no other contemporary responses survive, although a later critic remarked that most of Lamb's World War Two portraits are 'extremely competent but unexceptional, those of the lower ranks tend to be livelier'.<sup>881</sup> The art historian Mathur describes the National Gallery as symbolising 'in many ways... the conservative arts establishment in Britain' - truly K6 had penetrated British society to its core.<sup>882</sup> But during the war the entire permanent collection of paintings had been evacuated to Manod Quarry in Ffestiniog in Wales, and so the hollowed-out space was filled by the pianist Myra Hess and her lunchtime concerts, and temporary exhibitions like that featuring Abdul Ghani and Akbar.<sup>883</sup> With Akbar's picture set to be on permanent display in the Imperial War Museum from 2021, a return from the *réservé d'oubli* is underway.<sup>884</sup>

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<sup>877</sup> Brian Foss, *War Paint: Art, War, State and Identity in Britain 1939-1945* (London: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 23.

<sup>878</sup> Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 150.

<sup>879</sup> 'Henry Lamb MC, RA'.

<sup>880</sup> 'Henry Lamb MC, RA'.

<sup>881</sup> 'War Artists Exhibition', 1941, National Gallery, London, NG24/1941/6.

<sup>882</sup> Mathur, p. 24.

<sup>883</sup> Suzanne Bosman, *The National Gallery in Wartime* (London: Yale University Press, 2008), p. 73.

<sup>884</sup> Interview with Alan Jeffreys at the Imperial War Museum, 2019.

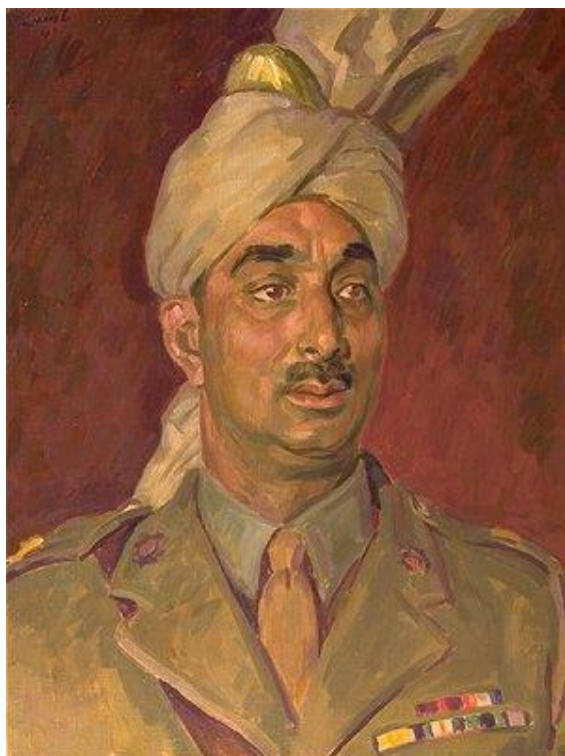


Figure 33: Major Mahomed Akbar Khan by Henry Lamb RA. Courtesy of the Imperial War Museum



Figure 34: Driver Abdul Ghani by Henry Lamb RA. Courtesy of Glasgow Museums

Driver Abdul Ghani is a prime example of the limits of the knowable for the men of Force K6. His portrait was given as one of seventy by the WAAC to the Kelvingrove Museum in Glasgow in 1948, as part of its redistribution of over 6000 works of art.<sup>885</sup> Since 2006 it has been on display on the 'Picture Promenade' outside the Conflict and Consequence gallery, a gallery that displays historical arms and armour alongside armour from the natural world.<sup>886</sup> It is reasonable to assume that the portrait was given to Scotland due to the long and deep connection between the men of Force K6 and that nation. He is therefore the only representation of Force K6 currently on public display in the UK, and a visible, physical presence in the 'Second City of Empire'. It is likely that K6 are better remembered north of the border than south, which may be related to the prominence of Abdul Ghani's portrait in the Glasgow imagination. Certainly

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<sup>885</sup> Foss, p. 188.

<sup>886</sup> Interview with Joanna Meacock, 2016.

Scotland was the first place to formally honour their memory, with a ceremony at Kingussie cemetery in November 2018.<sup>887</sup>

This portrait shows the driver in three-quarter view, looking slightly to his right. He is in full dress uniform, of course, with *pagri* tied carefully, lanyard on left shoulder, and bandoliers, which were used for rifle ammunition, across his chest. Lamb recorded in a letter to the WAAC that ‘he also has a frontier medal 1938 but to his chagrin this was eclipsed in the picture by his bandoliers.’<sup>888</sup> Lamb was quite prepared to show the soldier in a way that pleased the artist rather than the sitter: an easier task with a Driver than a Major with twenty-five years’ experience. The curator of British art at the Kelvingrove, Jo Meacock, finds the portrait somewhat ‘impenetrable... not giving a lot away, not intimate’.<sup>889</sup> This may be a function of the fact that, like Major Akbar in the partner portrait, the sitter is not making eye contact with the artist or the observer, but looking somewhat dreamily to the viewer’s left. Adding to the slight sense of disconnection is the plain, greenish background – a hue that matches the khaki of his kurtah. Lamb has not chosen a background that makes the sitter stand out, nor has he done what many portraitists do: put some tools of the trade in the distance. It would not have been hard to paint a mule or a cart behind the driver, but Lamb instead puts the focus on the man rather than the job. Abdul Ghani as human is prominent in this portrait - the focus is his eyes, his face, his slightly dreamy expression. It seems as if Lamb has also been captivated by the deep eyes. Meacock sees in the set of the mouth and chin and the erect stature, a strength of character and determination and a sense of pride. One wonders how Lamb chose this subject from among the 300 men of 29<sup>th</sup> Company, or whether the choice was made for him. On his head, Abdul Ghani wears, not a steel helmet which might signal imminent danger, nor yet a forage cap, which communicates a less formal setting, but the formal turban, so beloved of those who photographed or painted the men of K6. Overall one gets a sense that Lamb treated Abdul Ghani no differently from any other sitter: Meacock said in a lunchtime talk on the painting that the painter ‘doesn’t treat

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<sup>887</sup> ‘WW2 Indian Soldiers Who Died in Scotland Remembered’, 2018 <<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-46213059>>.

<sup>888</sup> ‘Henry Lamb MC, RA’.

<sup>889</sup> ‘Interview with Joanna Meacock’.



them as exotic other, but focuses on their humanity and the men as individuals'.<sup>890</sup> Lamb's artistic ability has triumphed over the Orientalising premediation.

Other than his service number (178415), we know little else of this soldier. We can surmise he is in his twenties or early thirties, so he was probably born in the 1910s. As most of K6 were from Punjab, we can assume that he was also a Punjabi, probably from a rural area. There are a couple more archival clues to his life. Shortly after the portrait was painted, he had a short spell of eighteen days in the Indian General Hospital at Brecon.<sup>891</sup> More interesting is his inclusion in the 'Unit Instructors Third English Course' that ran from 5<sup>th</sup> January to 20<sup>th</sup> February 1942, at Llangattack Park near Crickhowell, under the tuition of WO F.E. Brown.<sup>892</sup> Abdul Ghani was one of eighteen men on this course, two or more each from each unit, all well prepared with 'each student... in possession of one note book, preferably SO Book 135, 2 black pencils, 1 red or blue pencil and one 12" ruler'.<sup>893</sup> His inclusion in this course suggests he was an instructor in the company, perhaps a PT instructor. It also suggests that he had some aptitude for the English language, which may give a clue to his choice as subject for painting: Lamb would have needed to communicate with his sitters and having a translator in the studio would have been a waste of personnel.

It is relatively easy to trace the course of his company, and as men tended to stay with their mates for long periods, we can be reasonably certain that this was also Abdul Ghani's experience. Before the war, 29<sup>th</sup> Company was based in Peshawar, on the North West Frontier, just thirty miles from the Khyber Pass.<sup>894</sup> After arrival in France in December 1939, they were posted to Le Mans in North Central France, to work on the Lines of Communication. There they held a gymkhana on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1940, and were photographed by Geoffrey Keating playing volleyball, vaulting over a wooden horse, and performing a gas drill.<sup>895</sup> They left France on 18<sup>th</sup> June via St Nazaire, where their French liaison agent Sergeant

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<sup>890</sup> Meacock, Joanna, '10 Min Kelvingrove Talks - World War II - Jo Meacock on Henry Lamb's Portrait of Driver Abdul Ghani', 2017 <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETWQu2YNZSY&t=2s>>.

<sup>891</sup> '29 Coy IMD Daily Orders', 1941, National Archives of India, DGIMS 8/9/6/41.

<sup>892</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

<sup>893</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941'.

<sup>894</sup> 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 167/1439.

<sup>895</sup> Keating, *Indian Army Labour Personnel Centre*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, F3804 and series.

Robert Debon 'remained on quayside to see unit off' after throwing up bedrolls to the men on the SS Floristan.<sup>896</sup> On arriving in the UK they spent a few days at Plymouth before moving to Rossington Hall near Doncaster, where they were again photographed, this time by S.H. Kessell, driving horses and winding *pagris*.<sup>897</sup> After a spell on Salisbury Plain for rifle training, where Lamb first saw them, they were posted to Hereford, where he painted them. Next was Nantmor in North Wales, and in July 1942 they moved to North East Scotland, where they spent eighteen months until their departure for India: at Aviemore, Nairn, Fochabers, Maryculter and Ballater.<sup>898</sup> During his time in the UK, Abdul Ghani, like his companions-in-arms, would almost certainly have visited the K6 leave centres, at Woking Mosque and in Edinburgh. If he stayed with 29<sup>th</sup> Company after their return to India, he would have been stationed at Jullundur and then in Delhi: an Odyssey as great as many a serviceman or woman of the war.<sup>899</sup>

Abdul Ghani, then, is a small part of the city of Glasgow's collective memory of the Second World War. Thousands of people have passed the portrait on the balcony, even if they know nothing about the subject. With Jo Meacock's lunchtime talk, and the interest from the local Muslim community which led to the Kingussie ceremony, there is a discernible effort to re-remember this driver. The museum has a policy of widening the scope of its displays to include works by and about people from different backgrounds, so putting this portrait on display in 2006 was a political choice as well as an artistic one.<sup>900</sup> This portrait is a bridge that can help them to reach out to communities that might otherwise not engage with the museum. One wonders whether, like Major Akbar, the sitter received a signed copy to take home with him. Perhaps somewhere in Punjab the family still keeps this souvenir of their grandfather's time in Britain.

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<sup>896</sup> 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, June - December 1940', The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 179/5910.

<sup>897</sup> Kessell, *The RIASC, Now without Their Mules, Have a Consignment of Horses Brought by the French from America, Which Were Side-Tracked to This Country*, 1940, Imperial War Museum, H3963 and series; 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, June - December 1940'.

<sup>898</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1941', p. 29; 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5912; 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, Jan-June 1940'.

<sup>899</sup> '29 Ind AT Coy, RIASC', 1944, National Archives of India, Misc/1732/H.

<sup>900</sup> 'Interview with Joanna Meacock'.

As well as the high art of Henry Lamb, K6 also showed up in plenty of other drawings. On the same day as they were captured by photographer Davies and the film crew in France (10<sup>th</sup> February 1940), *The Illustrated London News* published a four-page spread about K6, based on pencil sketches by Bryan de Grineau, an artist with experience of service as a captain in the artillery in World War One.<sup>901</sup> His familiarity with the world of trench warfare served him well in the centrepiece of these five illustrations. In a double-page spread entitled *Chutti ke Waqt* (rest period or break), he shows, in a rough-and-ready pencil sketch, a group of fifteen or so sepoy, in the flog of a Nissen Hut, clustered round a stove smoking cigarettes and ‘hubble-bubble pipes’ (figure 35).<sup>902</sup> The sketch evokes a feeling that the viewer is there with the soldiers and can almost smell the damp and the smoke. Three of the other sketches are more military in character, showing a snowy road, a general’s visit, and a ‘big gun’. The final sketch is inside the RIASC cookhouse, where the cooks are preparing chapattis. There is an interesting contrast between the sketches themselves and the accompanying captions, which serve to ‘anchor’ the image, to explain and give meaning.<sup>903</sup> We learn that the Indians ‘have adapted themselves very successfully’, that horses and mules ‘receive many visitors’, that the sheep for the mutton stew are ‘killed, as they are needed, in the presence of the Maulvi, or priest, and religious susceptibilities satisfied’.<sup>904</sup> These are touches designed to help the reader appreciate the shared humanity of these ‘wiry mountaineers’. The killer punch is found in the middle of the caption: we are informed that this Indian unit symbolises ‘to all the world the unity of the Empire in the fight against Nazi-ism and the complete command of the sea by the allies’.<sup>905</sup> For that is the true propaganda purpose of de Grineau’s visit: to reinforce the ‘all in this together’ message that was so crucial in Britain, in the Empire and around the world, India to the rescue!

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<sup>901</sup> David Jeremiah, ‘Oxford Dictionary of National Biography Online: Entry on Bryan de Grineau (Online)’ <<http://0-www.oxforddnb.com.lib.exeter.ac.uk/view/article/103450>> [accessed 25 May 2017].

<sup>902</sup> de Grineau.

<sup>903</sup> Gillian Rose, p. 121.

<sup>904</sup> ‘The Indian Troops in France’, *Illustrated London News*, January 1940.

<sup>905</sup> de Grineau.

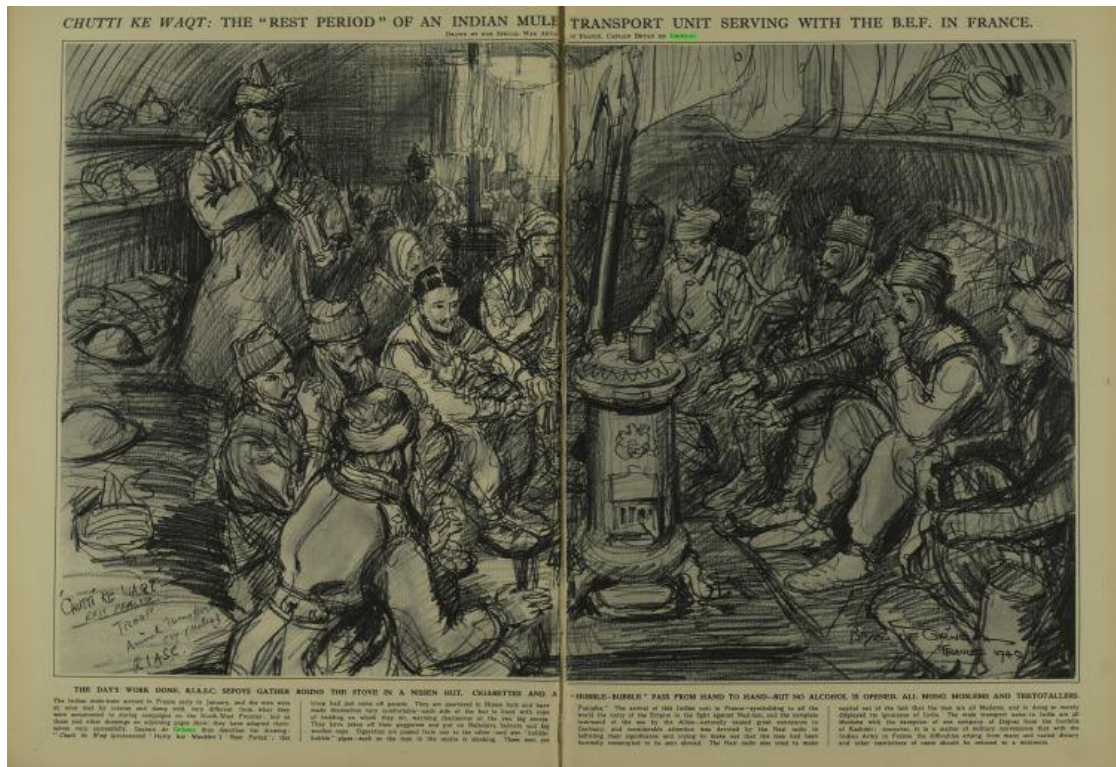


Figure 35: *Chutti ke Waqt* by Bryan de Grineau. Illustrated London News, 10<sup>th</sup> February 1940

Another instance of the ‘splash of colour’ afforded by exotic brown faces occurs in a then-famous poster by Helen McKie. McKie was an artist and illustrator, noted for her work in the ‘Bystander’ and other magazines. She was well known for her drawings of military figures during World War I, and ‘corresponded with soldiers on active service across the world.’<sup>906</sup> She continued that patriotic focus in the Second World War, when she was well into her fifties, doing large scale works featuring women and barrage balloons, shipyards, and a study of Churchill in the Admiralty War Rooms. She was commissioned for what was probably her most famous work by Southern Railways in 1943: a view of Waterloo Station (Figure 36).<sup>907</sup> Positioned at a high angle, where shops are now found, McKie drew an action-packed scene of the hustle and bustle of people criss-crossing the station concourse at eighteen minutes to seven. Here, in one of the main hubs of wartime London, we see all human life: matelots pulling a

<sup>906</sup> ‘Helen McKie, Artist and Illustrator, Papers 1889-2004’, 2005, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, AAD 2005/5.

<sup>907</sup> ‘Waterloo Station – War’, 1943, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, AAD 2005/5/16.

loaded trailer, lovers kissing goodbye, and a highlander carrying bagpipes. All the 'types' of London wartime life are there – the provocation is for the viewer to recognise somebody just like themselves. And there, in the foreground, front and centre, just to the left of the pair of nuns, we see a couple of Indian sepoy with *pagris*, rifles and kitbags. Standing between platforms eleven and twelve, not in conversation but watching the world go by, the two Indians are the only non-white faces in the crowd, as they would often have been during their time in the UK. Other allies are present: there is a Polish *schapka* (military cap) right at the front, and two white Americans near the corner, but the central place of the two RIASC men suggests that McKie wanted to accentuate the importance of the Empire in the defence of the motherland. Although the *pagris* are perhaps not completely accurate representations of those of 'Punjabi Mohammedans' like K6, there can be no doubt that K6 men were her inspiration. They passed through Waterloo regularly on their way to their leave camp at Woking Mosque, which they used between May 1941 and December 1942.<sup>908</sup> McKie put them in the picture because she saw them at the station – they were a part of the everyday swirl of station life at Waterloo, one of the busiest stations in the land. They are there because they were there. The railway station picture was an established genre, used to explore themes of 'social relations and social difference', and one that McKie returned to after the war.<sup>909</sup> So successful was this picture, issued as a poster by Southern Railways, that McKie returned in 1948 to make a companion piece, entitled 'Waterloo Station: Peace'. In this version, which matches the figures one by one, the two Indians are now in full-dress red uniforms, without rifles, watching the world go by. Partition and Independence may have come and gone, but for Helen McKie time was frozen, and the Empire with it. Unlike the work of the war artists above, the 1943 version is not a picture of a real scene. As an illustrator, McKie was used to imagining a scene, inventing an image without necessarily using real models, and thus her work approaches closer to stereotype than that of Lamb or de Grineau. Like their presence in the collective memory, the two sepoy in the middle of her picture are hiding in plain sight. They are clearly visible, but nobody knows who they are, or understands their significance. Nobody has joined up the dots. If anybody thought about them, they would have said 'some Indian soldiers'.

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<sup>908</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

<sup>909</sup> Gillian Rose, p. 204.

The picture has become a jigsaw puzzle, popular at the London Transport Museum, but the question at its centre has remained unanswered.<sup>910</sup>



Figure 36: Waterloo Station – War, by Helen McKie (1943)



Figure 36a: Detail from Waterloo Station - War, by Helen McKie

A similar invented but populist touch came from the cartoonist Philip Zec, who drew on K6 for inspiration in 1943. Throughout the wartime period, Zec worked for the *Daily Mirror*, which saw itself as the 'the newspaper of the masses,

<sup>910</sup> 'Waterloo Station Gibson G604 Jigsaw Puzzle'.

the Bible of the Services' rank and file, the factory worker and the housewife', with a circulation of over two million.<sup>911</sup> Zec was, in the words of his colleague Hugh Cudlipp, future editor of the *Mirror*, 'the people's cartoonist'.<sup>912</sup> As such, he had a keen eye for what would please and what would offend the Labour-voting readers. In March 1942 he drew a cartoon that nearly got the newspaper closed down: a merchant seaman is shown clinging to a piece of wreckage somewhere in the Atlantic, with the caption 'The price of petrol has been increased by one penny'. This was seen as an attack on the profits of oil companies, and Home Secretary Herbert Morrison called it 'wicked'.<sup>913</sup> The captions carried political weight, as Labour leader Michael Foot remarked – 'the cartoons were not only bang on the subject of the time. They were also saying something about what should happen after the war.'<sup>914</sup>

In September 1943, Zec chose to respond to another contemporary scandal, using K6 as a model and exemplar. The scandal revolved around Learie Constantine, the noted West Indian cricketer, who was refused entry to a hotel in London as a 'nigger'.<sup>915</sup> The Home Secretary protested in the House of Commons, and the case went to court. Zec's cartoon, published on 4<sup>th</sup> September (Figure 37), shows a black airman and an Indian soldier, recognisably based on K6 by the style of *pagri*. Carrying kitbags, they are seen in the palm court of an hotel, where a notice declares 'No coloured people admitted: by order'. One turns to the other and says 'We didn't see that notice in the trenches'. Zec's message is clear: these men have been in the UK helping, answering the call, and a colour bar is not the way to repay them. There is a sense of solidarity bleeding out of the drawing: here is one black-skinned airman and one brown-skinned sepoy together, and here is a white Jewish artist drawing them, saying to the mostly white public: we must work together. The depiction of both African and Indian is humane and sympathetic, unlike some other cartoons of the time which pander more to stereotypes which, being 'universally understood... are drawn upon

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<sup>911</sup> Hugh Cudlipp, *Publish and Be Damned: The Astonishing Story of the Daily Mirror* (London: Andrew Dakers Ltd, 1953), pp. 136, 6.

<sup>912</sup> Zec, p. 118.

<sup>913</sup> Mark Bryant, *World War II in Cartoons* (London: Grub Street, 2005), p. 97.

<sup>914</sup> quoted in Zec, p. 27.

<sup>915</sup> Hansard, 'Hansard House of Commons Debate 23 September 1943 Vol 392 cc443-4W', 1943.

again and again, reinforcing prejudice and undermining trust'.<sup>916</sup> Overall, one gets a sense that Zec has a clear call to the British people: he sees the struggle for freedom and democracy as a universal one, and calls the British public to walk the talk of national and imperial unity that was being preached so widely.



**“We didn't see that notice in the trenches”**

Figure 37: Cartoon by Zec, *Daily Mirror*, 4<sup>th</sup> September 1943

Zec's treatment of this event makes an interesting contrast with that of another famous cartoonist, David Low in the *Evening Standard*.<sup>917</sup> On 9<sup>th</sup> September, the *Standard* published a cartoon entitled 'Imperial Welcome', showing the renowned figure-of-ridicule Colonel Blimp refusing entry to a black

<sup>916</sup> Walker, p. 18; for a stereotyped portrayal of black soldiers, see for example, Ronald Niebour, *It Was Sho' a Swell Party - but We Should Have Had a Light Man to Let the Noo Year in*, 1943, British Cartoon Archive, NEB 1483 <<https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/Record.aspx>> published in the Daily Mail on January 1st 1943.

<sup>917</sup> Low, David, *Imperial Welcome*, 1943, British Cartoon Archive, LSE3344 <<https://archive.cartoons.ac.uk/record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=LSE3344>> [accessed 10 February 2017].



civilian carrying what may be either a trombone or a cricket bat. The sign in the background reads 'No Dogs or natives', and Blimp says:

Gad, sir. We can't have a coloured man here! It would take the minds of the resident stinkers off their struggle for the ideals of the British family of free and equal peoples!

Low chose to focus only on a black man, and a civilian at that: much closer to the real Constantine story. But Zec, who 'saw the issues of the war in clear terms of right and wrong', introduced an Indian as well, thus making a wider point about solidarity and co-operation.<sup>918</sup> As the *Guardian* journalist Martin Walker pointed out:

Britain suffered from an incomprehensible ambiguity about race. When they fought beside us, there was no praise too high for the Ghurkas [sic], Maoris and Indian Divisions. The troops mixed happily enough in the Western desert and when fighting the Japanese. The tolerance stopped however in civilian life. I find this hard to understand.<sup>919</sup>

No record of any discriminatory treatment like this towards K6 men has survived, but this may be because they were carefully chaperoned by their officers and never ventured into such elevated places.

So universal was the appeal of the deep colours and deep eyes, that there was even a commercial advertisement drawing on K6 iconography. On 13<sup>th</sup> June 1942, the *Daily Mirror* ran an advert for Sunlight Soap on page two (Figure 38).<sup>920</sup> Sunlight was one of several soap brands that were central to the British Empire and had been, in 1884, the first branded wrapped soap, thus ushering in an era of transition to 'great imperial monopolies'.<sup>921</sup> The advert is headed in Shahmukhi script with the caption *Hindustani boli* (Indian speech or language). In typical wartime advert style, there follows a story about a woman called Janet who has

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<sup>918</sup> Cudlipp, p. 173.

<sup>919</sup> Walker, p. 142.

<sup>920</sup> 'Advertisement for Sunlight Soap', *Daily Mirror*, 13 June 1942.

<sup>921</sup> Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 210–11.

not found a role in wartime Britain and is therefore a cause of concern to those around her. One day a matron from her local hospital declares that Janet is 'the only woman who can help us'. Some Indian soldiers have arrived at the hospital, but nobody can speak their language, and Janet had lived in India for many years. Janet goes to hospital, the sepoy is delighted, and Janet herself is happy to be 'bringing smiles to those brown bearded faces'; finally she is 'doing her bit', she has found herself. At the end of the story we see a picture of hatted Janet and bearded sepoy, whose precise religion or 'caste' is unclear, but who is certainly based on what the un-named artist would have seen of K6 and/or Indians in the Great War. The picture is followed by the legend 'Told thro' the Sunlight Window by the makers of SUNLIGHT SOAP 2½d per 8-oz tablet.' Despite the lack of a direct connection to soap in the story, the advert fulfils the dual purpose of so many wartime ads: to sell the product and to support the war effort. As David Clampin says, advertising in wartime was used to 'inform and direct' the public, with advertisers acting to 'guide, help and hearten millions'.<sup>922</sup> In this case, the message is aimed squarely at a female audience, being the ones who did the household washing (Sunlight was not used for bodily hygiene) and the ones who worked in hospitals. K6 men were in UK hospitals throughout their period in Britain: as well as their own Indian General Hospital they often had to draw on the resources of specialised units, for example in November 1941 there were several transfers to Woolaston Emergency Hospital in Newport.<sup>923</sup> So here we can see the brown body being used for a double purpose: to sell soap (that will make your clothes whiter than white) and to help hesitant ladies contribute to the home front. The sepoy was of use to the war effort in a wide variety of ways.

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<sup>922</sup> David Clampin, *Advertising and Propaganda in World War II* (London: Tauris, 2014), p. 31.

<sup>923</sup> 'War Diary, Indian General Hospital, 1939-1943'.

**ہندوستانی بولی**

**"AREN'T** you going to help in some way?"

**I**T was a question that Janet never liked. She was willing enough—but what could she do? Other women (it seemed to her) were so capable, so confident, compared with her. She had what people call an 'inferiority complex.' She lacked faith in herself. In fact, since she had come back from India—where she'd been a lady's companion—she had lived alone on a tiny pension, as quiet as a mouse.

And then one day the matron of the big hospital nearby happened to come across her in the street.

"Janet! I believe you're the one woman who can help us."

"Me!"

"Yes, you speak Hindustani, don't you? Well, some Indian soldiers have just arrived at the hospital. It would be so kind of you to visit them. It must seem very strange to them here, and I'm sure they'd

like to meet someone who knows their own country and speaks their own language."

Janet went. The Indian soldiers were delighted. Chatting away, bringing smiles to those brown, bearded faces, Janet quite forgot her shyness. She became a daily visitor. It wasn't much maybe, but at least she was 'doing her bit.' She felt a different woman.

It's true of all of us. There is some one special thing that we have to give. And in that giving the greatest gainers are ourselves!



*Told Thro' the Sunlight Window by the makers of*  
**SUNLIGHT SOAP**  
2½d per 8-oz. tablet  
2 COUPONS  
*(net weight when manufactured)*

LEVER BROTHERS, PORT SUNLIGHT, LIMITED

© 1946-648

Figure 38: Advertisement for Sunlight soap: *Daily Mirror*, 13<sup>th</sup> February 1942

The unknown commercial artist of the Sunlight advertisement may have been taking their premeditation from a popular contemporary example of an Indian in fiction: Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. This prince was Billy Bunter's classmate from the *Magnet* magazine, one of those twopenny papers that George Orwell described in 1939 as 'the best available indication of what the mass of the English people really feels and thinks'.<sup>924</sup> One of the so-called 'Famous Five' of Greyfriars school, Singh was presented as the 'Nawob of Bhanipur', a scion of aristocratic India, but known to his chums as 'Inky', a classic pre-war nickname that would rightly be seen as racist in the twenty-first century.<sup>925</sup> Greyfriars' creator Charles Hamilton (aka Frank Richards) painted his picture thus:

His complexion, of the deepest, richest olive showed him to be a native of some Oriental clime, and though clad in the ordinary Eton garb of the

<sup>924</sup> Orwell, p. 176.

<sup>925</sup> Orwell, p. 187.

schoolboy there was a grace and suppleness about his figure that betrayed the Hindoo. Slim and graceful as he was, however, there was strength in the slight form, and although the lips and the *dark eyes* were smiling there was resolution about the chin and a keen observer would have seen that the Indian was no mean antagonist if put upon his defence.<sup>926</sup>

This Orientalist discourse is reinforced when Singh speaks, describing his ambition 'to induce my esteemed and ludicrous chums ceaselessly to stop talking slangfully and to use speakfully only the purest and honoured English language as taught by my learned and preposterous native tutors in Bhanipur'.<sup>927</sup> The reader can laugh at his babu style of talking, while still admiring his physical beauty and martial qualities, and delighting in his dark eyes: surely the whole of Britain's perspective on India between the wars is embodied in this one character.

Possibly the most bizarre way that K6's image was appropriated and used was in the shape of a 'visual object'.<sup>928</sup> Britains Ltd were a company who made toy soldiers out of lead, one of the most successful in the world. In 1940 they produced their set no 1893: 'Royal Indian Army Service Corps, with Officer and Mule'. This set includes seven figures: one British officer, four sepoy with rifles, one muleteer and one mule. This was clearly based on K6, as collector Per Finsted remarks that:

Britains Ltd - and other toy companies - sought to catch the popular images of the time in order to further their products... It is my theory, that Britains Ltd was motivated to produce the figures from the Royal Indian Army Service Corps by press reports and photos of the Indian Army Pack Companies in France.<sup>929</sup>

These mule troops were so well known that they could be used to sell toys. Although Britains had to reduce production during the war due to shortages of lead, this range was revived in 1946 and produced until 1959. The men lived on in hollow-cast lead even when they had died out in memory.

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<sup>926</sup> Quoted in ES Turner, *Boys Will Be Boys: The Story of Sweeney Todd, Deadwood Dick, Sexton Blake, Billy Bunter, Dick Barton et Al* (London: Michael Joseph, 1948), p. 206, emphasis added.

<sup>927</sup> Turner, p. 207.

<sup>928</sup> Gillian Rose, p. 274.

<sup>929</sup> Per Finsted, 'Britains Figures - Royal Indian Army Service Corps' <[http://www.chakoten.dk/wp-content/uploads/Britains-figures-Royal-Indian-Army-Service-Corps\\_en-1.pdf](http://www.chakoten.dk/wp-content/uploads/Britains-figures-Royal-Indian-Army-Service-Corps_en-1.pdf)> [accessed 25 May 2017].

## Conclusion

The men of K6 were well known during that tough time in Britain – the extent of their images tells us that, even if their public profile was a slightly vague ‘those Indian soldiers’ rather than the more specific ‘RIASC muleteers’. The popularity of these imperial visitors with artists, photographers and the media is not difficult to understand. For photographers, their *pagris* and moustaches made a colourful contrast with the dull khaki of the British soldiers and the blue of the RAF. They looked different, they were ‘other’, but they were not too different: in wearing khaki and carrying a Lee Enfield they occupied a middle ground between the familiarity of a Tommy and the strangeness of a Chinese or Soviet soldier. Parading repeatedly through the streets of British towns, villages and cities; appearing regularly in the papers and on newsreels, playing football and hockey against local teams, Force K6 became a fashionable splash of colour in nondescript monochrome times.

But they also went beyond simply being who they were: they became tools that were iconic and representative. Rather than being seen as individuals, their individuality was brushed over by the ‘politics of the colonial palette’.<sup>930</sup> Philip Zec used them as a symbol of inequality and bad treatment within the Empire. Helen McKie used them as part of the hustle and bustle and the brief encounter of Waterloo Station. And Sunlight Soap used them to persuade housewives to buy more soap and find the right way to do their bit in society. The deep colours and deep eyes were perfect for propaganda. They were part of the nation, even if the nation would reject them soon after the end of the war as part of an Empire that was an embarrassment to Britain.

Laszlo’s attraction to deep colours and deep eyes was widely reflected among artists, photographers and the general public, and his portrait was just one of many mediated images of India that served to premeditate the interpretations of those who met K6. Their images were exploited, to sell a vision of exoticness and solidarity, of picturesqueness and hard work, of deep eyes and deep connections. And although they and their representations may have been

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<sup>930</sup> Mathur, p. 23.

dropped in 1945 as their usefulness was past, they lingered on in family albums in pictures of 'us and them together'; and in the hearts of the people they met in Britain. There is a bank of images in the *réserve d'oubli* to draw on, so the bespectacled Daffadar at Dornoch and his comrades may return decades later, to become part of a new discourse of the seeds of modern multi-cultural Britain. The collective memory can be revitalised from this pool of visual images, and the deep colours can re-surface.

## CHAPTER 5: 'WE POOR AND DOOMED SOLDIERS WHO DON'T POSSESS ANY VOICE': THE HUNT FOR TRUE SOUTH ASIAN STORIES

In one of the many K6 files stored in the UK National Archives in Kew resides a half sheet of paper, a flimsy carbon copy of a memo sent by a company commander to Lieutenant-Colonel Hills in January 1943. The memo contains a complaint from the men, passed up the chain of command:

We left India three years ago and some of us have not seen our families for more than six years as no leave was granted on the eve of our proceeding overseas.

Those VCOs whom we considered as our best leaders are now being repatriated leaving us behind. Presumably it can be said that as they possessed some power and could easily approach higher authorities therefore their case has been approved by the [Commander] Indian Contingent, and we poor and doomed soldiers who don't possess any voice have been overlooked and thus our sentiments and feelings have been very badly hurt. This policy has led to a good deal of deterioration in our morale and has left an everlasting impression on our minds which is beyond expression.

Most of us have also received information from their homes that their relatives have been killed in different theatres of war.

In view of the above it is requested that the higher authorities may please be approached and our grievance may please be rectified.<sup>931</sup>

This polite request actually represented a serious grievance. The men had been away from home for many years and were feeling overlooked. This was one stage of a long-running saga about repatriation. Hills' response was a supportive brush-off:

Remember two points: firstly that the [Commander] has great sympathy for you; he and higher authority are doing all in their power to make the

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<sup>931</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1943'.

necessary arrangements but, the offensive against the Axis has to have priority and secondly that taking a comparison from agriculture no man sows the seeds for his crops at the wrong season.

The complaint had clearly been thought of for a while, grumbled over and digested, and then expressed to the company commander. Thus, as often, the 'voice' of the sepoy was mediated through their officer, probably a white officer. So although the men protested that they 'don't possess any voice', in fact their feelings came through, to their officer, to the file in the archive; and ultimately to this thesis three generations later.

This chapter will map out some of the ways in which the 'voices' of the ordinary men of Force K6 can reach us across the decades or are prevented from doing so. The first part of the chapter will explore the meaning of the term 'voice', and pick up on Gayatri Spivak's famous question 'can the subaltern speak?' The associated ideas of agency and power will also be examined, and some examples given that may represent the voice of the sepoy. K6 had their own newsletter *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* produced just for them, and the second section will look at the extent to which it was also by them and of them. After that the third section covers oral history, and the question of whether the voice of the relative is the voice of the veteran, or whether other motivations may obscure the original. Generational and family memory may play differently from collective memory, but are always within Halbwachs' social frames. Finally, we look at Daffadar Nawazish Ali, a rare example of one who wrote about his experience in verse, and whose voice has therefore survived. He was both literate and literary, and the interview with his daughter Kalsoom was one of the highlights of the research process.

### **Can a Jemadar speak? The meaning of 'voice'**

In 1988, and again in 1999, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak asked the question 'Can the subaltern speak?'<sup>932</sup> By 'subaltern' she meant the people who were not the elite, especially in a South Asian context – 'the sheer heterogeneity of the

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<sup>932</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak', in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, ed. by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988), p. 104; Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1999), p. 308.



decolonised space'.<sup>933</sup> This section takes its title from Spivak, but recognises that the term 'subaltern' is problematic in a military context. Among soldiers, 'subaltern' means a junior officer, a second lieutenant or ensign, in command of a platoon of infantry or a troop of cavalry, recently out of Sandhurst or Dehra Dun with a new commission, on the long path (they hope) to general rank. To translate Antonio Gramsci's original Italian adjective *subalterno* to the word 'subaltern' in English is unhelpful in this context – better might be 'subordinate class' as used by Ginzburg.<sup>934</sup> In the case of K6, we can substitute a more specific, Indian Army term, VCO, or Jemadar, hence this section title. The question of whether a long-dead junior officer or sepoy can speak is a difficult one. When considering those of subordinate class in the past, they cannot in any real sense 'speak' to us now, any more than a dead person from the elite class can speak. That would be absurd, reminiscent of necromancy or exorcism.<sup>935</sup> Spivak's question actually asks whether subordinate people of the past can have power, can effect change now by what they said or did then. It is related to Edward Said's core idea that the 'Orient' was never allowed to speak for itself.<sup>936</sup> It demands the next question 'is the individual an agent or a victim of history?'<sup>937</sup> All of which throws up a slightly different set of questions: whether the men of Force K6 had a voice then, in the 1940s – whether they were listened to or ignored, whether they had more voice in some situations, whether some of them had more voice than others (as the letter at the top of this chapter implies). If by speaking, one can be said to show agency, to prove one's existence, then if you do not speak, do you even exist? By definition, they had no power. If they were subaltern, they were powerless, if they had power, or spoke, they became powerful and thereby ceased to be subaltern. Ultimately, the question is about power and agency.

Human agency, simply put, is the element of control or choice that people have - what Inden calls 'the capacity of people to order their world.'<sup>938</sup> Being closely related to causation, it is a fundamentally historical concept that 'goes to the heart of understanding change in history.'<sup>939</sup> No human being ever has

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<sup>933</sup> Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, p. 310.

<sup>934</sup> Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, p. 129.

<sup>935</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 192.

<sup>936</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003).

<sup>937</sup> Callum G. Brown, *Postmodernism for Historians* (Harlow: Pearson, 2005), p. 117.

<sup>938</sup> Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), p. 1.

<sup>939</sup> Anagol, p. 614.

absolute control over all factors in their life, only a level of control that is 'exercised within a specific situation defined by given constraints' and 'framed by social structures.'<sup>940</sup> These social structures are reminiscent of Halbwachs' *cadres* as determiners of memory. We make choices from within our social frameworks, just as we recall things that are within those same frameworks. So if nobody has complete freedom to act as they wish, everyone then has some freedom, some agency. Agency is a continuum according to David Gary Shaw, and one that includes animals as well as humans.<sup>941</sup> If Shaw can say that Wellington's horse Copenhagen had some agency, the ability to alter the situation, then assuredly Private Smith at Waterloo, or Sepoy Fazal Dad at Dunkirk are also entitled to some agency. A useful way to see it is advanced by Alcinda Honwana, writing on child soldiers in Lusophone Africa, when she talks of 'tactical agency', drawing on de Certeau.<sup>942</sup> This is a kind of limited or short-term agency available to young soldiers who might be seen as powerless, used 'to cope with the concrete, immediate conditions of their lives in order to maximize the circumstances created by their violent military environment.'<sup>943</sup> In the face of such analysis one can conclude that the naiks and drivers of Force K6, even the humblest sweepers, even those who were in POW camps, had some element of control. They were humans, our nature is to explore and exercise our agency, to use our voices.

When searching for sepoy's voices from seventy or eighty years ago, it quickly becomes apparent that none of the voices come direct – they are all muffled or distorted by a process of mediation - somebody or something that is between the sepoy and the reader today. A sepoy spoke, said something real in 1940 or 1944. Those words cannot be heard direct by a listener in 2019 (with one exception noted below) but in many cases somebody heard those words and wrote something down. That might have been one of their officers, or somebody acting as an interpreter, or somebody from the press. In this way, the words go through their first transformation. Before reaching the archive, the words may be

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<sup>940</sup> Alcinda Honwana, *Child Soldiers in Africa* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p. 70.

<sup>941</sup> David Gary Shaw, 'The Torturer's Horse: Agency and Animals in History', *History & Theory*, 52, 2013, 146–67 (p. 146).

<sup>942</sup> Honwana, p. 71.

<sup>943</sup> Honwana, p. 71.

passed via another person, and thus the pattern of distortion continues and is magnified, like a game of Chinese Whispers. Once in the archive, the words may wait to be read for decades - some of the K6 papers have not been looked at before. But when they are looked at, then the process of distortion starts again. At the point of recording or writing, the white officer edits and shapes. A translation from Urdu to English adds another layer of muffling. When I, the historian, read an archive document and select, interpret, shape, analyse and combine, then I run the risk of obscuring the original voice within it. When you, the reader, read this document, you add a further layer of shaping, transformation and interpretation. How could any 'voice' penetrate those multiple layers? The quest then is to find the voices which are mediated with the lightest hand, the least muffled or distorted sounds. Gajendra Singh warns the historian to be 'mindful of ones' own limitations and the limitations of history-writing as a mode of analysis' which will ultimately make the 'Sipahis complete self... unavailable and unreachable to the historian'.<sup>944</sup> The total voice will never come through, the historian must accept that and find a reasonable compromise.

One example of a voice that does come through is that of 780693 Driver Fateh Muhammad of the Reinforcement Unit. On 14<sup>th</sup> January 1943, he asked a question at his unit's monthly *darbar* 'will India be free after the war?'. The answer given by his commanding officer, Major Le Cornu, was a suitably evasive official one:

India is free. No nation that is not free could possibly make the war effort that India has. There seems to be little doubt that after the war India will obtain some form of self govt.<sup>945</sup>

The *darbar* itself was an old Indian Army tradition, a monthly meeting of officers and men, to air grievances and ask questions. The only K6 officer to record *darbar* questions in detail was Captain Gurdial Singh, during his time with 42<sup>nd</sup> Company in 1943.<sup>946</sup> The data from his war diary and from others shows thirty-two actual questions recorded, and in many cases gives the name and number

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<sup>944</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 186.

<sup>945</sup> 'War Diary, Reinforcement Unit, 1943'.

<sup>946</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1943'.

of the soldier asking the question. Of these thirty-two questions, thirteen are of a domestic nature, eight are about British customs and systems, five are about letters home and family, three about politics in India and three about the war in general. The notes from the Reinforcement Unit's January 1943 *darbar* session are handwritten, preserved as an appendix to the unit war service diary for that month. So it may seem that Fateh Muhammad's voice is reaching us direct, unmuffled, undistorted, that this is an authentic voice. But there is only Major Le Cornu's version to go on. True, the question is potentially a rebellious one, one that could have got Fateh Muhammad in trouble, so this sepoy took some courage in uttering it before his commanding officer. But were those his exact words? And was the original question spoken in Urdu or Punjabi? And who translated it - was Le Cornu up to the task, or was it done by one of the VCOs? Was the question expected, commonplace even? Or was it a one-off? 1942 was the year of the fall of Singapore, the Quit India movement and the 'shiver' that ran through the sub-continent.<sup>947</sup> All of which would have been known, to some extent, by the men of K6, 7000 miles away. Perhaps Fateh Muhammad was emboldened by these events, perhaps his friends encouraged him to ask the question. The end of that year had seen Allied victory at El Alamein, and by 14<sup>th</sup> January Paulus' 6th Army was surrounded in the *kessel* at Stalingrad.<sup>948</sup> The course of the war had started to turn, at least in the west. Perhaps Fateh saw this as an opportunity to ask the question on everyone's lips. His motives are lost, the precise wording is lost, and nothing further is known about Fateh Muhammad himself. But the question itself remains, as an assertion that even for a humble sepoy in far-off *Wilayat*, freedom was something to be hoped for. Fateh Muhammad's words are mediated, once by the interpreter, once by the officer who wrote them down, and once more in writing this thesis. But the spirit of the question comes through: that a free India was something to be desired, and that Fateh Muhammad was not too scared to ask the question, even if he could probably predict the evasive nature of the answer.

The processes of muffling and mediation might lead one to think that the white officers had an excess of voice, and the brown-skinned sepoy an excess of silence, but the reality is more complex. Partly this relates to the issue of who

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<sup>947</sup> Indivar Kamtekar, 'The Shiver of 1942', in *War and Society in Colonial India*, ed. by Kaushik Roy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), pp. 330–57.

<sup>948</sup> Antony Beevor, *Stalingrad* (London: Viking, 1998), p. 337.

is deemed worthy of having their voice heard. Lieutenant-Colonel Hills, for example, had a loud clear voice then – his words are written clearly in document after document in the files at the National Archives and the India Office Records (although there is surprisingly little biographical information about him, beyond what is contained in his official file).<sup>949</sup> Being an officer very much of the previous generation (he won the Military Cross in the Great War), his word is unlikely to prove popular with current generations of historians, who might object to his colonial-era views. Loud and clear at that time, unheard now. More interesting for this thesis are the voices of Indian officers like Anis and Akbar, examined in chapter 1, and especially VCOs, NCOs and drivers, who may be harder to find. With them, their voices were largely ignored at the time, but now they are positively sought after, and – perhaps surprisingly – found. The over-simplified categories of ‘elite’ and ‘subaltern’ are not sufficient to determine what is heard and what is suppressed.

In the very first edition of *Subaltern Studies*, Ranajit Guha laid out a manifesto for their school, which gave a note of terms explaining the hierarchy as he saw it.<sup>950</sup> This was subsequently extended by Spivak, giving this list that runs from high status to low status:

1. Dominant foreign groups
2. Dominant indigenous groups on the all-India level
3. Dominant indigenous groups at the regional and local levels
4. The terms “people” and “subaltern classes” have been used as synonymous throughout this note. The social groups and elements included in this category represent the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the “elite”.<sup>951</sup>

The fourth category then, is essentially ‘everybody else’. Even with her later admission that ‘subaltern’ can include a European worker of the nineteenth

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<sup>949</sup> ‘Records of Service of Officers: RWW Hills’, 1944, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/14/19294.

<sup>950</sup> Ranajit Guha, ‘On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India’, in *Subaltern Studies Volume 1* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>951</sup> Spivak, ‘Can the Subaltern Speak’, p. 79.

century as much as an Indian peasant, that still seems like an inadequate screen for analysing power structures and relationships within K6.<sup>952</sup> All the white Britishers would seem to show up only in category one, thus erasing all difference between (say) King George VI, Amery, Hills, Hexley and a lowly RASC driver. An attempt to map British and Indian social classes and 'castes' alongside this four-level hierarchy immediately makes it more complex and realistic. In Anand's novel of the Great War, for example, the cook Santu points out that the sepoy was 'his superiors in rank, as he was merely listed as a "follower" though they were inferior to him by caste, because he was a high-caste Brahmin'.<sup>953</sup> Within K6 the sweepers were mostly non-Muslims, and would have quite probably been seen as the very bottom of the heap by all observers, but Hills saw their importance as 'essential sanitary tradesman'.<sup>954</sup> Add to that the military ranks that were part and parcel of the RIASC, from general officer, through field officers and junior officers, VCOs and NCOs, drivers and followers. That yields three other hierarchies to put alongside Spivak's four levels. How then can one rank one hierarchy against another? Which is higher, a white British RASC driver or an Indian VCO? A British other rank was required to salute an Indian officer like Akbar or Anis – was that felt to be demeaning for an older soldier with experience in the Great War or in India? And were the Indians surprised at being served, in a café or on a train, by a white Britisher? Anand again expresses the surprise of the sepoy that the French 'waiter Sahib... incredible as it seemed to the sepoy, was their servant for the while'.<sup>955</sup> Within those complex categories, not all white servicemen and women have voices that come through. Driver Geoff Riley of the RASC, for example, was attached to 22<sup>nd</sup> Company in France, but barely shows up in the archival documents, only making an appearance through his contribution to Malins' recent work on military mules, where he is found on Juno beach on D-Day with the commandoes.<sup>956</sup> Sometimes there is an element of intersectionality at play. Only one woman appears as a member of Force K6. I.M.L. Pitts-Tucker of the FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) was the white British driver and

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<sup>952</sup> Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak', p. 70. It should also be noted that Spivak wrote as an outsider to the Subaltern Studies group.

<sup>953</sup> Anand, *Across the Black Waters*, p. 213.

<sup>954</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

<sup>955</sup> Anand, *Across the Black Waters*, p. 38.

<sup>956</sup> Philip Malins, Brian Nicholls, and Charles MacFetridge, 'The Indian Army Animal Transport Mule', in *The Military Mule in the British Army and Indian Army: An Anthology* (Solihull: B. Nicholls, 2000), p. 110.

secretary to Hills, but nothing else is recorded about her.<sup>957</sup> Her place in the pecking order and her reception by the men can only be imagined. Equally, all such talk of levels and hierarchy may have been irrelevant to some of the men. Sergeant Sidney Taylor of Ashbourne was posted to India with the West Yorkshire Regiment and his sister still treasures a photograph of the young man with an Indian colleague, and wrote:

As an eighteen-year-old who had never been out of the country before, and experiencing events he could not possibly talk about, he felt deeply for the young men who died so far away from home.<sup>958</sup>

It appears that Taylor was able to overcome the ethnic differences created by colonialism, and see the young Indians as his comrades, regardless of 'race'.

The hunt for voices, muffled as they are, is dependent on archival records, which have proved hard to find and often couched in standard imperial language. In an interesting handwritten letter to Muspratt at the India Office, shortly before the arrival of the three new companies in 1941, Hills wrote 'thank goodness WO have agreed to my new children coming to that area so they will be able to learn from sub-conscious absorption.'<sup>959</sup> The phrase 'my new children' reveals the pervasive paternalism that lay at the heart of attitudes of men like Hills and Muspratt, who themselves were at the heart of the Indian Army. By coming to the UK, Force K6 were bringing such attitudes home to roost. There is also a random element to the survival of documents. The escape report of driver Buland Khan, which tells of his journey home from a POW camp near Paris via Marseille, Gibraltar, Freetown and Durban, survives only in the National Archives of India, but not in any other archive.<sup>960</sup> Through this report Buland Khan is present in a way that would otherwise be completely impossible – this presence is thereby a voice. As Carlo Ginzburg wrote 'there is often as much material for reconstructing the life of some quite ordinary person as there is for writing a history of Robert of Normandy or of Philippa of Hainault.'<sup>961</sup> Just because an individual is from a

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<sup>957</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

<sup>958</sup> Barbara Hollands, 'Letter from Barbara Hollands to Ghee Bowman', 19 May 2015.

<sup>959</sup> 'AT Companies for France: Force K6', 1942, India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/WS/1/131.

<sup>960</sup> '1 AT Driver Trg Regt Jallandhar Cantt', 1941, National Archives of India, Misc/4460/H.

<sup>961</sup> Carlo Ginzburg, 'Checking the Evidence: The Judge and the Historian', *Critical Inquiry*, 18.1 (1991), 79–92 (p. 87), quoting Eileen Power.

higher rung on the ladder, it does not always mean that more sources survive. Other important documents by those higher up have yet to be found – Hexley’s report on his own escape, for example, or a report by Shaukat Hyat Khan on Force K6, mentioned in his book, but not yet located in any archive.<sup>962</sup> One can only wonder what else is lying hidden elsewhere, waiting to be found - a silenced voice that may speak again.

Oral history has its own set of unique problems that relate to transmission and muffling of voices. The oral historian makes their own archive, but that is a mediating process that may serve to distort. Subjects may be inarticulate, as many of the K6 relatives interviewed in Pakistan were. Or they may have mixed motivations, as will be seen in the interview with Akbar’s nephew Idrees below, leading to a vastly distorted voice. Or they may turn out to be surprisingly articulate and forthcoming, as was the case with Nawazish Ali’s daughter Kalsoom, a gem of an interview. Each interview, and each subject, must be judged on its merits. Subjectivity is ‘the unique and precious element’ of oral history, so the concept of ‘voice’ is centrally embedded in these interviews.<sup>963</sup> When oral history works well, lengthy analysis is not needed, as ‘the testimony speaks for itself’.<sup>964</sup> This is the case with some of the oral histories collected for this thesis, for example Edgar Parry Williams of Croesor, quoted in chapter 3. On most occasions however, the historian’s job is a larger one, involving cross-referencing, editing and careful selection, thus endangering an excess of muffling. An interview subject told Shahid Amin ‘*Babu! Apne dil se samajh leen! Ab kahwan le biyan kihal ja?* (Now sir! Fathom it after your own heart! How much more can one narrate)’.<sup>965</sup> In other words, the subject has told what they can, the task now is with the oral historian to go away and work it out, using heart not head. The subject’s voice has been heard and he now asks for mediation by the historian.

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<sup>962</sup> Shaukat Hyat Khan, *The Nation That Lost Its Soul: Memoirs of a Freedom Fighter*, p. 65.

<sup>963</sup> Alessandro Portelli, Robert Perks, and Alistair Thomson, ‘What Makes Oral History Different’, in *The Oral History Reader* (London, 1998), p. 67.

<sup>964</sup> Abrams, p. 155 referring to Studs Terkel’s approach.

<sup>965</sup> Amin, p. 8.



When presenting voices, each audience requires a varying amount and depth of context, so the voice is not unaccompanied, but situated within an orchestra of instruments that shed light on what is said. The basic premise of history according to Michael Roper is to 'render inchoate and otherwise forgotten experiences into coherent symbolic forms'.<sup>966</sup> Spivak, writing about teaching English literature in an Indian classroom, said that there is an element of complicity in doing this.<sup>967</sup> In order to understand the story, the Indian student needs to understand the culture, and thereby, to some extent, to assent to it. In a similar way, to understand the story of Force K6, the British reader needs some knowledge of Punjab, of Indian Army culture and of Islam - where these men were coming from, as presented in chapter 2 of this thesis. Without such background information, the voice itself may be inaudible. Sometimes a creative artist may be able to represent a voice better than a non-fiction writer, by making a character act as a substitute or proxy voice, and by painting in the background. Mulk Raj Anand wrote eloquently and with empathy of sepoys in the trenches in the Great War – his father had been a Subedar in the Dogras in the war.<sup>968</sup> Amitav Ghosh brings an immediacy and reality to the World War Two Indian Army through his imagination.<sup>969</sup> Equally, a journalist like Raghu Karnad, writing of three Indian Army relatives produces a biography that reads more like fiction, being easy to read while still breaking new ground in presenting the war to a general South Asian audience.<sup>970</sup>

Part of the process of respecting these men is to use their names. By naming something or somebody, its very existence is affirmed – indeed the post-war UN Convention on Rights of the Child includes the 'right from birth to a name' as one of its articles.<sup>971</sup> A name is an essential step towards agency (or at least recognition, being humanised). In the British court martial records for the Great War Chinese labourers are dehumanised and suppressed to the extent that they

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<sup>966</sup> Michael Roper, 'The Unconscious Work of History', *Cultural and Social History*, 11.2 (2014), 169–93 (p. 180).

<sup>967</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'The Burden of English', in *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2012), p. 137.

<sup>968</sup> Anand, *Across the Black Waters*.

<sup>969</sup> Ghosh.

<sup>970</sup> Karnad.

<sup>971</sup> 'Convention on the Rights of the Child', *United Nations Human Rights: Office of the High Commissioner* <<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>> [accessed 21 June 2019].

are identified only by number - no names are listed.<sup>972</sup> So in researching the men of K6, in attempting to honour and to humanise, I have recorded their names and compiled them in a database that also lists their ranks and numbers and whatever other information is available (see appendix A). In this way I try to re-inscribe humanity on them retrospectively, to 'insert them into the public sphere', as Spivak puts it.<sup>973</sup> To look back into history and say these are not 4,227 nameless, anonymous ones, this is Noor Hussain, Abdul Ghani, Nawazish – real men with real substance and human rights. By finding and using their names, they are given some agency, they become subjects not objects, they are placed at the start of the sentence not the end, they are the doer not the done-to. All of this links directly to memory – they are currently remembered, misremembered and forgotten by a variety of groups in many locations, through their documents, their photos, or what they wrote. Voice shapes memory and memory shapes voice. What is spoken strongly at the time and later is instrumental in forming collective memory. Later, what is remembered collectively influences what is spoken by the individual. What is aloud shapes what is allowed. By bringing together the multiplicity of voices and the contextual information, the aim is to remember them more clearly and more accurately, and thus to allow them to insert themselves into history.

### **Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar: newsletter as written voice**

The men of K6 had an official conduit and repository for their voices in the shape of their weekly newsletter, *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (WAH).<sup>974</sup> The name means 'Weekly news abroad', and it is worth noting that the Urdu word 'Wilayati' (abroad, derived from the Arabic ولاية *wilaya* meaning 'Province') is the source for the slang English word 'Blighty' meaning Home, the UK. This unique publication was launched on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1940, and was published every week for 186 issues until January 1944, missing only some weeks in the eventful summer of 1940. It was then revived in the same format in November of 1944, to cater for the recovered Indian POWs staying in camps in the east of England and ran for a further thirty-one issues until June 1945. It came in a four-page format, written in Roman Urdu,

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<sup>972</sup> 'Ledger of Field General Courts Martial', 1918, The National Archives, Kew, WO 213/21.

<sup>973</sup> Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *The Trajectory of the Subaltern in My Work* (University of California, 2008) <<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ZHH4ALRFHw>> [accessed 20 June 2019].

<sup>974</sup> The title of the first issue was different - see figure 39.

with many photos in each edition. The choice of Roman Urdu was probably to make the production process easier, as the printers (initially William Clowes of Beccles, later Unwin of Woking) would have difficulty printing in Nastaliq script. Equally, the editor would probably have struggled writing in Nastaliq. The editor was one Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Lloyd Ferrar, a pillar of the British establishment in India. A contemporary of Churchill's at Sandhurst, he served in the army and then joined the Indian Civil Service, rising to be governor of the Andaman Islands in the 1920s, where he had time to pursue his hobby of collecting butterflies.<sup>975</sup> Retiring in 1931, he returned to the UK and became an examiner in Urdu at Cambridge - he was clearly an accomplished linguist. In 1940 he was sixty-four years old, a Major in the Home Guard and living in Dunmow in Essex. He was also something of a scholar of Islam, having written a chapter on Muslims in India in the 1932 work 'Whither Islam?'<sup>976</sup> Quite how much of *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* was written by Ferrar is unclear, as the only articles that carried a byline were those written by Indian members of the force (usually VCOs, but also including NCOs and even drivers). That is an interesting choice in itself – anything without a name attached is the official voice, anything with one comes from an individual Indian soldier. Ferrar was keen to receive material from the men, as he emphasised in his first brief editorial, writing that 'certainly mistakes will be made by the English Editor. In this matter, the editor seeks forgiveness from readers and is also desirous of every kind of letter'.<sup>977</sup> In this way the men were being encouraged to use the newsletter as an outlet for their own voices.

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<sup>975</sup> *Who Was Who* (London: A&C Black, 1980), VII, p. 262.

<sup>976</sup> Michael Lloyd Ferrar, *Whither Islam?*, ed. by H.A.R. Gibb (London: Gollancz, 1932).

<sup>977</sup> Nun Feroz Khan and Michael Lloyd Ferrar, 'Janab High Commissioner Sahib Ka Khat', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (London, 20 April 1940), p. 2, Imperial War Museum, E6705.



Figure 39: Cover of the first edition of *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, under its original title *Haftewari Khabaren London se* (Weekly News from London). The name was changed for a ‘number of reasons’, according to Ferrar, who went on to ‘hope that the new name will be popular’.

The print run of the newsletter is not known, but its audience is – it was aimed principally at the men of Force K6. It is difficult to be clear on how many men in the Force could read and write. Literacy rates in Rawalpindi, where many of the men came from, were just eleven per cent in 1908, but would have risen considerably in the intervening thirty years.<sup>978</sup> Driver Jalal Din of 25<sup>th</sup> Company, for example, whose first language was Potohari was not literate in Urdu, but learnt the Qur’an in his time in England and also learnt to sign his name in English and Urdu, as many of his companions seemed to have done.<sup>979</sup> Hills reports that ‘practically all the personnel are literate and I think they will have no difficulty to

<sup>978</sup> *Imperial Gazetteer*, p. 168.

<sup>979</sup> Interview with Najm us Saqib and Ghulam Nabi, 2018.

write letters' but this was probably an exaggeration intended to fend off an unwanted offer of help.<sup>980</sup> There is a fine picture in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* of two grey-bearded veterans in the summer of 1940, reading magazines (figure 40), but they may have been only looking at the pictures. It is likely that the more literate read the newsletter aloud to their comrades during their time off, as also they would have done with local newspapers, letters and other printed matter. The purpose of the newsletter can be inferred from its contents – to inform the men about the war and to entertain them, but above all to keep up their morale and to persuade them that they were doing the right thing. It was a propaganda tool. This must have taken a considerable effort and expense to produce, indicating the importance the government placed on keeping the men of K6 happy.



Figure 40: Two Indian veteran soldiers, from *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* 23/8/40 (Imperial War Museum)

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<sup>980</sup> Letter from Hills to Ikbal Ali Shah, January 1940, in 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, Jan-June 1940', The National Archives, Kew, WO 167/1433.

The contents of the newsletter were quite varied. Around a quarter of the space was taken up with photographs, some of which have been used in this thesis. Wherever possible Ferrar used photos of the men of K6 themselves, and it must have caused some amusement among them to recognise their colleagues throwing snowballs or riding a camel at London Zoo. Indeed, one of the functions of the newsletter was to provoke laughter and light relief in dark times. There were plenty of photos of dignitaries and VIPs, as well as images from India or illustrating Indian participation in the war. A fairly typical picture appeared on the front of the second edition, showing Princess Elizabeth on her fourteenth birthday, in riding gear in Windsor Great Park, accompanied by the caption describing her as 'a jolly, intelligent and soft-hearted princess. May God make her life long'.<sup>981</sup> A large proportion of the written content, especially as the war extended beyond western Europe, was general war news. In the same way that British newspapers tried to keep up with a long and complex war, so WAH attempted to do the same for the sepoy overseas. This included maps and explanations of hitherto-unknown parts of the world like Eritrea and Crete. There was news from India, and grain prices from Punjab became a regular feature. Later on, the editor started to include poems, *latife* (jokes) and *kahane* (moral tales), possibly in response to feedback received. Another development was the use of the newsletter to announce name changes by the men, as detailed in chapter 2. At the beginning news about the Force itself was maximised, and the seventh edition, coming out on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1940, was completely devoted to a report on the royal visit to the camp at Ashbourne, with six photographs. This may have been, in media terms, their finest hour. Another introspective feature was the report on their sports day, held at Crickhowell in September 1941, as described in chapter 4.<sup>982</sup> In this case, the newsletter was being used less for their voices, and more for their bodies.

One recurring theme in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* was the question of the Islamic justification for the war. As almost all the men of K6 were Muslims, this was a crucial issue for their commanders in terms of loyalty. The voices that were allowed to speak on this topic were official ones, but official Muslim ones. Hills and Ferrar knew that the men would listen to an educated Muslim on this topic

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<sup>981</sup> 'Shahzadi Elizabeth', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* (London, 27 April 1940), p. 1, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>982</sup> 'Indiyan Kantiinjant Ki Warzishi Khelon Ki Numa'ish'.

far more than they would listen to a Christian British officer. So the Imam of Woking Mosque and Major Akbar were asked to demonstrate the legitimacy of Muslim participation against Germany. The company *maulvis*, one assumes, were not literate enough to write a piece for the newsletter. Imperial anxiety was high about the possibility of Axis recruitment of Muslims for a holy war against French and British Empires. In the Great War, the Germans had tried to subvert Muslims in the trenches, with some success.<sup>983</sup> Muslim POWs had received good treatment in the so-called *Halbmondlager* (half moon camp) at Wünsdorf, south of Berlin, the site of the first mosque in Germany.<sup>984</sup> These German efforts continued in the Second World War (see chapter 1) with a July 1940 memo from historian and archaeologist Max von Oppenheim to the Foreign Office on incitement of rebellion in the Islamic world.<sup>985</sup> Within this context, the powers-that-be were keen to do all they could to counter such propaganda with their own propaganda. Woking Mosque was the spiritual home to the men for their time in the UK, and there was a strong relationship between its management and the newsletter, with frequent articles and photographs. Imam Abdul Majid wrote on the front page of the very first issue, and again two weeks later on 11<sup>th</sup> May. In the second article he asserted that ‘Islam factually and principally is a religion of love, calm and peace’ but that:

we see from our experience that sometimes such situations are created in the world in which it is necessary to combat oppression and violation with armed force. Some people think that we should not use force even to establish justice against cruelty and violence. These people are just building castles in the air... This kind of uncomfortable situation cannot just be handled by words or negotiations.<sup>986</sup>

He finished by quoting from sura 23 (al Mu’minun) in the Qur’an: ‘Repel the evil deed with what is better’.<sup>987</sup>

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<sup>983</sup> Gajendra Singh, *Between Self and Sepoy*, p. 104.

<sup>984</sup> Wilhelm Doegen, *Kriegsgefangene Völker* (Berlin: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1921).

<sup>985</sup> David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany’s War* (Cambridge, Mass: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 15.

<sup>986</sup> Abdul Majid, ‘Imam Sahib Woking Ka Maqala’, *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 11 May 1940, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>987</sup> *The Qur’an*, trans. by Alan Jones (Exeter: Gibb Memorial Trust, 2007), p. 319, verse 96.

This is a clear case of using the newsletter to propagandise – these are not the sepoy's voices, but South Asian voices that would preach to them. There is a view that as the *umma* (the Muslim commonwealth of believers) is one community with a single viewpoint and a single voice, therefore the voice of the Imam and the voice of the experienced Muslim soldier equate to the voice of all Muslims and hence to that of the individual K6 sepoy.<sup>988</sup> This thesis rejects that view, preferring to search for individualised voices and opinions. The articles by the Imam and Major Akbar are not the voice of the sepoy, they are the official, sanctioned Muslim voice being deployed as part of the war effort. Against all the Axis propaganda, this is part of a massive campaign of British propaganda designed to keep Muslim subjects in the Empire in line. The articles purport to be about religion but are actually about control – religion in the service of power, cynically mobilising religious authority to back up secular authority. This reflects an official attitude towards the role of the Christian chaplain – a 1943 British textbook for chaplains defined their duties as including 'inculcating the fighting spirit' among the men, and it is fairly certain that the India Office saw the K6 *maulvis'* role in a similar way.<sup>989</sup> As Charles Kingsley said in 1848 'we have used the Bible as if it were a mere special constable's hand book, an opium dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they were being overloaded, a mere book to keep the poor in order'.<sup>990</sup> In this case the metaphorical beasts of burden (the men) were leading actual beasts of burden (the mules), and religion was being used to keep them compliant.

One voice that comes loud and clear via the newsletter and other media is that of Risaldar Nizam Din. He wrote two articles for the newsletter, one on the Lord Mayor's Show of November 1941 and a later one in praise of his colleagues. Risaldar Nizam Din of 25<sup>th</sup> Company is a soldier who comes across as a true loyalist – a VCO of the old school. He appears in many of the official documents, and is recommended for a mention in despatches after Dunkirk for 'setting an

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<sup>988</sup> *Encyclopedia of Islamic Civilisation and Religion*, ed. by Ian Richard Netton (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 669.

<sup>989</sup> Quoted in Bourke, p. 290.

<sup>990</sup> Quoted in Susan Smith Tamke, 'Separating the Sheep from the Goats: Victorian Didactic Hymns', *Albion*, 8.3 (1976), 255–73 (p. 255).



outstanding example' on the beaches.<sup>991</sup> He recorded a broadcast for the BBC in the summer of 1941 and attended the opening of the East London Mosque a few weeks later.<sup>992</sup> At the end of 1942 he received a King's Commission, becoming a second lieutenant, a rare honour for a pre-war soldier.<sup>993</sup> He is one of the few soldiers whose actual physical voice can still be heard, for he appears on a morsel of film footage held in the Imperial War Museum, speaking to the camera on his return to India in 1944.<sup>994</sup> His gap-toothed, craggy face is underneath the cap of a commissioned officer, unlike his fellow two interviewees who appear in forage caps. His Urdu words are brief, consisting of a summary of their time in France and Britain, very much in line with the other interviewees. With his face before us and his voice in our ears, it is much easier to feel that we know him in some way, that he is a real person with real senses and feelings whose voice is coming through. Nizam Din's first article appeared at the end of 1941, and was a write-up of the Lord Mayor's Parade held a few weeks previously.<sup>995</sup> This was a tough period in the war, with the *Luftwaffe* bombing of British cities ongoing, no good news from the desert, and the Germans gaining the upper hand on the Eastern Front. Indeed, a photo of the parade looks like a shot of a ruined and depressed city in the rain (see figure 41) - unsurprisingly this particular photo was not used as one of three of the parade in the previous week's edition. Nizam Din's article describes in detail the preparations, the journey to London and the actual parade, emphasising the Indian Contingent's third place in the parade, behind the Navy and the RAF. He does his best to convince the reader of the joy of the occasion:

Citizens of London were seen with happy faces. When we returned, His Majesty King and Exalted Queen were standing on a high terrace outside the Royal palace. We saluted them. It seemed that Their Majesties were expressing a lot of interest in whatever is happening around them...On the way, a British regiment treated us with much love and served us tea. We thanked them a lot. I thank everyone with true heart, especially

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<sup>991</sup> 'Recommendation for Award for Nizam Din', 1940, The National Archives, Kew, England, WO 373/89/851.

<sup>992</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, 1941', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5907.

<sup>993</sup> 'War Diary, 25 Animal Transport Company, 1942', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5908.

<sup>994</sup> *Film: Interviews on Return*.

<sup>995</sup> Nizam Din, 'London ko hamara ek khas safar', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 19 December 1941, Imperial War Museum, E6705. His second article appeared on 27th Feb 1942, and was a general piece in praise of the men of the Indian Contingent and their work.

Commander Sahib and all ranks. I also thank those British officers and soldiers who stood with us in this work.<sup>996</sup>

Although Nizam Din is clearly a staunch loyalist, supporting the Raj by his words and deeds, his strong relationship with his fellow soldiers is apparent. This is a British-inspired voice from India – an embodiment of complex loyalties and perspectives during the last few years of the British Indian Army.



Figure 41: Lord Mayor's show 10<sup>th</sup> November 1941, marching through bombed-out London (Hexley album)

The newsletter is an extraordinary, unique document, surviving in one thick volume at the Imperial War Museum. On balance it only occasionally functions as the voice of a sepoy, but is much more a demonstration of what the official voice said to them. Fundamentally it is propaganda – a tool to maintain morale and keep them in line, one of many such propaganda publications around the world. The criteria for inclusion that the editor Ferrar used are not stated, but the editorial conversations would have been interesting to hear. There is no mention of Gandhi or Jinnah to be found among the pages, nor of the INA, for example. Equally, there may well have been other submissions from sepoy that

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<sup>996</sup> Din.

were spiked as inappropriate or poorly written. And there is no evidence on whether the men enjoyed reading it at all. Nevertheless there is a lot to be learnt by reading it today, about how the government and Ferrar perceived them and what they wanted to tell them, and occasionally what one of them himself wanted to say. If we listen carefully against the grain, we can almost hear their small written voices breaking through – in photographs, articles and jokes – but overall this is not a vehicle for subaltern voices.

### **‘The state... overpowers their personal memory’: Truth and story in Oral History**

Alongside the written voices (the voice preserved in ink) there are also spoken voices (the voice preserved in breath and sound). Occasionally, as in the case of Nizam Din, the actual voice is recorded and may be heard again. More often, the spoken voice comes through relatives, daughters or nephews who pass on a story. That story may be massively distorted (filtered through the generations) or it may become two voices (the original and the relative) but it is still a voice that should be listened to. Oral history interviews can be a direct way to hear those voices from across the generations. One of the most interesting interviews conducted in Pakistan was with a group of siblings, children of Major Akbar’s brother Anwar, who gave a long and fruitful interview, with material on their father, on the history of Pakistan, as well as their Uncle Akbar.<sup>997</sup> Akbar’s voice comes through a multiplicity of written and spoken sources - there are even recordings of him speaking on Radio Pakistan many years after the war. In the interview with Anwar’s children, the idea of ‘story’ was as strong as that of ‘voice’. All four siblings were accomplished story-tellers who presented old material as if they were telling it for the first time, with dramatic repetition, dialogue and even acting out. They supported each other through the telling – it was like a group performance at times, the more special as their audience was a foreign researcher whose job was simply to listen to them. The three sisters (Sameena, Fauzia and Tehmeena) always deferred to their brother Idrees and let him speak first, even though all are highly intelligent and accomplished women, Tehmeena with a PhD from the Sorbonne. While Idrees was out of the room, they remarked

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<sup>997</sup> ‘Interview with Gen Anwar’s Children’.

that he 'knows much more, being the older one'. Langellier and Peterson have written that women in oral history interviews tend to be more conversational than men, more likely to support each other, to interrupt supportively, and to use politeness strategies.<sup>998</sup> So in an interview with three women present, they took the role of supporting their brother, but were not afraid to speak up and offer their own stories – Fauzia telling a long story about Akbar as POW, for example. Oral history has received much criticism for unreliability, and the four siblings were aware of these dangers. When describing Akbar's training course at Indore in 1919, Idrees said that as Akbar had graduated fourth out of thirty, and Cariappa only twelfth, Akbar was actually the seniormost Indian officer in 1947. He quickly qualified that however, saying 'check it out – my information is only word of mouth'.<sup>999</sup>

This interview threw up the intriguing question: how does the oral historian deal with a well-told story that is completely at odds with the historical record? Right at the start of the long interview, Idrees told this story:

During the evacuation of Dunkirk, this is when the Germans had attacked. Suddenly the British or the allied troops for that matter, they found themselves in a very difficult position, especially the British, who had not only the troops there and everything that goes along with them, but there were women and children also. And my uncle Akbar Khan who was then a Lieutenant-Colonel, he was put in charge of one of the main vessels for ferrying initially the women and children across the Channel... He had specific orders that until all the women and children had been evacuated, no other person - military or civilian - would be on board the ship. So as they were about to leave a Brigadier, a British Brigadier in uniform walked up and said "look it's very important for me to go, so I have to go". My uncle tried to reason with him and said "look I have very specific orders "- he was a very strong, disciplined person – a big fellow, he had been wrestling with or sparring with professional wrestlers also. People like the famous Gama<sup>1000</sup> and others. So he was a tough man and very thorough in his discipline and his professional work. So he said "no, there is no way

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<sup>998</sup> Quoted in Abrams, p. 119.

<sup>999</sup> In fact, Akbar was placed 13th in order of merit. 'Indore Cadets 1918-19', India Office Records at the British Library, IOR/L/MIL/7/19018. Cariappa and Akbar were both Brigadiers in 1947.

<sup>1000</sup> Ghulam Mohammed Baksh 1878-1960.

that I can take you because the main thing to do is to take the women and children, number one. Number two is that if I give you accommodation it will have to be a cabin or something, and in that cabin I could put many women and children. So I'm sorry I can't do this". But the Brigadier was adamant – I don't know his name. He was adamant, he said "no, I have to be on this ship". So again uncle tried to reason with him and said "sir, that is not possible". So at that the Brigadier got very angry and he said "what can you do to get me off. I'm on this ship and I'm staying". He said "sir if you put it that way I can get you off the ship". He said "what are you going to do?" He said "all right, since you've asked, I'll pick you up bodily and throw you into the sea". [laughter] Now this is a Lieutenant-Colonel, talking to a Brigadier in uniform. So he huffed and puffed, but when he saw that this big burly man stood his ground, he had no option but to get off the ship. Now because of that, I'm going on further, one [consequence] was the Court of Enquiry was held, and the latter consequence was that his promotion – he was to be promoted shortly after, during that time - his promotion was delayed. But during the court of enquiry he was put this question "did you do this?" He says "yes". "So why did you do it?" He said "because I was following orders and this was the right and proper thing to do." He said "would you have any...[regrets]... aren't you sorry that you did this". He said "no on the contrary, if I were in this situation again I would do it again". [laughter]... this was the British Raj. Here was an Indian officer, albeit the seniormost British Indian officer – he was the seniormost – all the same he was an Indian officer. And he stood up to a Brigadier in uniform in front of all those people and he told him to get off.<sup>1001</sup>

This story took over five minutes to tell, and was very well polished, almost rehearsed. There was dialogue and repetition used to build the tension and atmosphere. Idrees acted out some points, for example when Akbar 'stood his ground' and his sisters made hints to help him along, like 'big strong fellow'. This was a performance by four people who had lived together all their lives, a story of class, rank and ethnicity, a story of standing up for the right thing. And yet it is not borne out by the written record. None of the war diaries contain anything like this story, Akbar's own account of what happened at Dunkirk has nothing like this, neither do any of the thirteen other family members interviewed. There is no

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<sup>1001</sup> 'Interview with Gen Anwar's Children'.

account of a court of enquiry anywhere. The ship is made to sound like the Titanic, with a long journey from France to England ahead, rather than the twenty-two miles between Dunkirk and Dover, and there are almost no accounts of women or children in the evacuation. What then accounts for this beautifully-performed but almost-certainly invented story? Lynn Abrams may have a clue to the meaning of this extraordinary performance, when she wrote that 'it is rare to encounter such a perfectly formed narrative performance within an oral history interview' and 'we must pay attention because a story well told almost invariably possesses meaning for the respondent and it is being told for a reason'.<sup>1002</sup> There may be a germ of something in here that is accurate to history, and the story is somewhat similar to the Ashdown family myth in chapter 1 – picked up as the central theme of Bali Rai's children's book. Dunkirk was such a major event, and the Indian presence so comprehensively overlooked, that there is a desire to attach a big story to it that enhances the memory of an individual soldier. Leaving aside the accuracy however, Idrees tells this story to a receptive British researcher because he has a point to make. A point about the stupidity of the old imperial system in an emergency, about doing the right thing in difficult circumstances, about how his uncle was a strong man with strong principles who was not afraid, part of a new breed of South Asian officers who could deal with Britain in his own way. In this way the story helps to reinforce a picture of Akbar as a hero for Imperial India and a model for Pakistan today, a picture that his family would like to see clearly in place in the national Pantheon. One can imagine Akbar in later years telling the story after dinner with the four children at his feet. Perhaps the story started as something much smaller and grew over time – Idrees remarked that Akbar's stories were an 'ongoing process' – and perhaps Idrees helped it to grow further. The story becomes a medium to transmit values and political points, not simply a way to transmit 'truth', a challenge to historiography and a marker for a future recognition of a forgotten hero.

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<sup>1002</sup> Abrams, p. 151.



Figure 42: Sameena, Fauzia, Tehmeena, Idrees (photo Ghee Bowman)

The political and historiographical nature of story-telling through oral history was reinforced by the staff of the Citizen Archives of Pakistan (CAP). The CAP was set up in 2007 by Oscar-winning film-maker Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy to preserve the country's cultural heritage because 'we believe that history and culture belong to everyone, and everyone must have access to it'.<sup>1003</sup> They have conducted many oral history interviews from their bases in Karachi and Lahore, mostly focused on Partition memories, and have many useful insights into doing oral history in a country with no great tradition of such work, and indeed they can be viewed as pioneers in the field. Their manager laid out their philosophy as 'we at The Citizens Archive of Pakistan believe that the history that is found in the history books does not do justice to the actual narrative of history, and we believe that oral histories provide a more holistic and more personal view'.<sup>1004</sup> They have interviewed around 1800 people about their experiences of Partition, because, as Obaid-Chinoy remarked 'while the politics and brutality are often discussed,

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<sup>1003</sup> *Brochure of The Citizens Archive of Pakistan* (Karachi: Citizens Archive of Pakistan), p. 5.

<sup>1004</sup> Aaliyah Tayyebi in 'Interview with Community Archives of Pakistan Staff Aaliyah Tayyebi, Zain Shaikhzadeh, Zehra Shah and Javeria Vaqar'.

the personal stories of Partition are too often ignored'.<sup>1005</sup> They have found that the personal stories can provide an alternative perspective to the mainstream, official narratives, almost a counter-memory. As one of their staff members said:

a lot of times, when I've gone to interviews and I've heard them speak, a lot of times the state kind of overwhelms, or overpowers their personal memory.... a lot of times, when we ask that, okay, how did you feel when you came to Pakistan? Like, your first memory, right? The feeling, the sensation – they always say “I was happy, I was happy”, and I was like, why were you happy? And then they're like because we were supposed to be happy, like, because everyone was happy. Like, we're in Pakistan, we're happy... it always seems a bit like they're meant to feel this way, so then they do.<sup>1006</sup>

An individual's recollection of their personal experience may be out of step with what society presents them with, so the individual personal memory is 'overwhelmed' by the state memory. This reflects Alistair Thomson's famous interview with an Australian Gallipoli veteran, who found his memory out-of-sync with the national myth.<sup>1007</sup> There is something almost Orwellian about the idea that an individual might suppress their own version of history in favour of the national version, and there are implications also for memories of the Second World War. The war is not a major theme within Pakistani national memory, and when an individual's recollection of their personal experience is out of step with what society presents them with, the individual personal memory may have to be put in second place. Another CAP staff member talked about a Second World War veteran who:

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<sup>1005</sup> Homa Khaleeli, 'I Know There Will Be an Attempt to Silence Me: Interview with Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy', *Guardian*, 2017 <<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/jun/27/sharmeen-obaid-chinoy-home-1947-installation-manchester-international-festival-pakistan>> [accessed 21 May 2018].

<sup>1006</sup> Zehra Shah in 'Interview with Community Archives of Pakistan Staff Aaliyah Tayyebi, Zain Shaikhzadeh, Zehra Shah and Javeria Vaqar'.

<sup>1007</sup> Alistair Thomson, 'Anzac Memories: Putting Popular Memory Theory into Practice in Australia', in *The Oral History Reader*, ed. by Robert Perks, 1st edn (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 300.



had been serving in Germany or in Italy or somewhere or the other, but... what I feel is that these are just personal stories that pop in once in a while and it's something that dominantly that they are not aware of.<sup>1008</sup>

The veterans are only remembered at the family level, not the national level, and if the state ignores or forgets that the war even happened, it can be hard for people to maintain their own versions, needing a level of 'resistance' that requires considerable strength of purpose. As Aaliyah Tayyebi said 'the question that always keeps on pinging me is "is the national narrative being true to itself?"' There is an interesting paradox here, that oral history is about searching for the truth that lies within individual recollections, a truth that may challenge the official line, but at the same time the ultimate purpose of such work is to reinforce the state and its legitimacy. The last page of their brochure carries a quote from Jinnah, the founder of the country 'there is no power on earth that can undo Pakistan. It has come to stay'.<sup>1009</sup> There is a truly Pakistani conundrum here – a desire to show their patriotism and their loyalty to the state and its founder coupled with a wish to challenge some aspects of how the state perceives and presents its founding moment. Oral history can play a special role in their country because 'there are very few nations in the world who can have... access to their first generation. We are the lucky ones.'<sup>1010</sup>

The forgetting of the war in Pakistan, and the Indian Army within that, is regretted and resisted by many of those who fought and their relatives. Naik Abdur Rahman Khan was in Italy with the 1<sup>st</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Frontier Force regiment, and spoke in 1999:

It was a dangerous time, in many ways but also an exhilarating one for us. These memories will always be part of me. I would like to have these noted down, here, so that younger generations know we fought in this war, in this way, far from our homes. We helped defeat Hitler and save the British Empire. Let me tell you, it was not politicians like Jinnah-sahib,

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<sup>1008</sup> Javeria Vaqar in 'Interview with Community Archives of Pakistan Staff Aaliyah Tayyebi, Zain Shaikhzadeh, Zehra Shah and Javeria Vaqar'.

<sup>1009</sup> *Brochure of The Citizens Archive of Pakistan*.

<sup>1010</sup> Aaliyah Tayyebi in 'Interview with Community Archives of Pakistan Staff Aaliyah Tayyebi, Zain Shaikhzadeh, Zehra Shah and Javeria Vaqar'.

or Nehru, or others, who got freedom after the War, for the common people, the masses of India and Pakistan—I believe it was because of our brave efforts, that the government of the King-Emperor became pleased and it was because of this, as the reward for our sacrifices that we got this freedom. This is never mentioned in history, in schools and on TV, all they talk about is how politicians, so and so, ‘won’ independence for us! They were not even near the battlefields, they all stayed at home, talking away in their drawing rooms, how could they gain anything for anybody? Children should be told this truth. The whole nation should realize it.<sup>1011</sup>

This veteran, who lived to be ninety, has a strong political opinion about the war and its aftermath, a perspective that passes unknown in his country and beyond. Akbar’s nephew Idrees, meanwhile, has a clear answer to the reason for the forgetting:

Simple. We were not fighting our own war. We were fighting for the colonial government. We were fighting for the Raj. Why did we participate? Our people have this sort of a thing that once you do pledge allegiance to anybody, then you honour it... In France, Akbar wouldn’t give up, he wanted to fight on. Now he wasn’t fighting his own war, he was fighting for the allies or for the British. And for that matter for the French. That’s the type of thing that is ingrained in us, at least up to our generation. We still believe in that – once you’ve called somebody your friend or your benefactor, then that is it. Loyalty.<sup>1012</sup>

A sepoy’s voice can come through his relatives, even decades after the event. That voice may, however, be distorted or instrumentalised, made use of for political or other purposes, and such distortion may reach the levels where the story parts company with reality. The truth of Idrees’ story will probably never be known – whether Akbar himself inflated a small incident into this grand narrative, or Idrees developed it over many years, with the tale growing in the telling. Comparison with the written records means that Idrees’ story need not stand as

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<sup>1011</sup> Ilyas Khan, ‘A Compilation of Memoirs and Accounts of Service by Native Indian Officers and Ranks in Middle East and North Africa, During World War II (c 1941-44)’, Sophia Research Institute, Abbottabad, Pakistan.

<sup>1012</sup> ‘Interview with Gen Anwar’s Children’.

a faithful representation of what happened in that French port in May 1940, but can instead be heard as an example of great story-telling, of the distortions of time and of the wish to restore a family member to fame. Meanwhile, the CAP interview shows the wider possibility of the memories and stories of one person becoming swamped by the power and volume of a country still defining itself. The CAP walk a line between trying to add to the national story at the same time as questioning orthodoxy, and thereby run the risk of obscuring those very voices that they seek to promote. Voice is power, voice is politics, but voice is also memory. Educated, English-speaking subjects like Akbar's nieces and nephew or the staff of the CAP may find it easier to project their voices into society, but the hard-to-find, village-based, Urdu-speaking subject may prove just as rewarding.

#### **'Save us from the Parathas of a foreign land': the Jemadar speaks**

One voice that does come through clearly is that of Nawazish Ali, sepoy and poet. His was the only K6 account that spoke of violence or trauma, a gap in the sources that is therefore reflected by a gap in the thesis till now. Perhaps this is not surprising, for as rear echelon troops they would not have been exposed to direct fire very often. The only deaths from enemy action were four men of the Reinforcement Unit who were killed by bombing while on a train to join 22<sup>nd</sup> Company in France on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1940.<sup>1013</sup> In fact, all their experience of extreme violence is from outside the UK – in France, in POW camps or later in Burma, as was the case with Nawazish Ali. It is possible that this lack of evidence links to their being forgotten – World War Two memory is often built around 'heroism' and suffering – but certainly Nawazish Ali's experience included considerable suffering, as will be seen. Quartermaster Daffadar (QMD) Nawazish Ali's postal address was given in a welfare officer's report from India in June 1942 as Balesar village, Gujar Khan tehsil, Rawalpindi.<sup>1014</sup> His daughter, Kalsoom Akhtar, still lives nearby, and was approaching her seventieth birthday at the time of the interview, with a lively face and a beautiful smile that disappeared when her photo was taken (see figure 43). She had prepared for the interview by gathering materials

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<sup>1013</sup> '1 AT Driver Trg Regt Jallandhar Cantt'. The four men are buried in the Terlincthun British Cemetery near Boulogne.

<sup>1014</sup> 'War Diary, HQ Force K6, 1942'.

together – clothes, a book, some photographs. She started by recounting the period just before her father’s death over thirty years before, remembered in great detail. As the interpreter Waqar translated her words, we could sense that this interview was going to be different from the somewhat frustrating predecessors – this was the thirty-sixth person interviewed in Potohari villages, and we had yet to find an interview that felt substantial. Kalsoom was a story-teller, she acted out a story about a lost parcel, giving it a beginning, a middle and an end and clear characters, and insisting on telling the whole story before allowing Waqar to translate it. She told us how, whenever she is in pain, her father comes into her dreams. Perhaps because she was a woman, perhaps because she was better-educated and a teacher with thirty-two years’ experience, or perhaps simply because that was her way, Kalsoom had treasured the memories and the material objects that her father had left behind, and was happy to share them with the strange *gora* (white man) with the Zoom digital recorder. Towards the end of our time she produced his Jinnah (astrakhan) hat, his shoes, photos, and then a treasure beyond imagining: a book of autobiographical poems, written in *Si-harfi* form, printed by a local publisher. This was an interview of rare value, with two strong voices coming through: Nawazish Ali himself, and his daughter, challenging what Ginzburg called ‘the unacceptable notion that ideas originate exclusively among the dominant classes’.<sup>1015</sup>

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<sup>1015</sup> Ginzburg, *The Cheese and the Worms*, p. 126.



Figure 43: Kalsoom Akhtar holding a photograph of her father Nawazish Ali in uniform (photo Ghee Bowman)

Nawazish Ali (*nawazish* means 'kindness') was born around 1905 in Balesar village. His career before the war is unclear, but he joined the army probably in the 1920s, and rose through the ranks. By 1941 he was the Quartermaster Daffadar in 42<sup>nd</sup> Animal Transport Company of the RIASC and joined them as they travelled from India to Scotland. Each company had one QMD, who worked with the white British Sub-conductor (Hexley was one such), and took charge of the company supplies: tools, materials, food. This was a highly responsible job, requiring good administrative and book-keeping skills, as well as an air of authority (the QMD with 22<sup>nd</sup> Company, Barkat Ali, became the 'man of confidence' in two POW camps in Germany).<sup>1016</sup> Archival records show that

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<sup>1016</sup> 'Stalag VC Malschbach', 1945, The National Archives, Kew, WO 224/19A.

Nawazish was in hospital, probably at Brecon or Lyonshall, in September 1941, and his daughter told us that he had his appendix removed in the UK, and was looked after by white nurses.<sup>1017</sup> In due course he was promoted to Jemadar, and stayed at that rank until he left the Army.<sup>1018</sup> He probably returned to India at the start of 1944 with the bulk of K6. After a knee injury he was discharged in 1947, in his early forties.<sup>1019</sup> Being a small landowner, he started to run a depot for *jaggery* (raw sugar) and other basic foods, and later upgraded to a general store, which he called Mushtaq's store - a logical progression for a quartermaster in the RIASC, accustomed to supplying the suppliers. He also acted as a scribe for soldiers - he had probably done the same for his fellow-soldiers while with K6 in Europe. He also taught:

in winters, he used to spread a blanket on the floor and sat with us and taught us how to read Qur'an. He taught all the children himself and did not send them to tuition. Before his death, he used to teach his granddaughters on the blanket spread on the floor while there was no electricity and we only had lanterns. Our syllabus was Urdu, English and Maths. He taught me and my sister himself till 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Further, there was no school for girls and people of the village did not like the education of girls...When I passed matriculation exams, all the [VCOs] of the area came to congratulate and celebrated my results at my home in 1967. They were happy that a girl from the village had got education in an environment where even boys were not educated.<sup>1020</sup>

Nawazish was a modern man who insisted on educating his daughters, which sometimes brought him into conflict with relations. One of his sayings was 'knowledge is a wealth which nobody can take away from you'. This well-respected community member was also a pious man – when a *syed* came to stay, he asked Nawazish to pray for him, when usually the *syed* would pray for others. He had a political consciousness too – Kalsoom dropped her voice when she said that he thought 'we were slaves of the British', not wanting to offend the British interviewer. His experience of military discipline stayed with him, he took

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<sup>1017</sup> 'War Diary, 42 Animal Transport Company, 1941', The National Archives, Kew, WO 179/5918; 'Interview with Kalsoom Akhtar'.

<sup>1018</sup> 'War Diary, 29 Animal Transport Company, 1942'.

<sup>1019</sup> 'Interview with Kalsoom Akhtar'.

<sup>1020</sup> 'Interview with Kalsoom Akhtar'.

regular exercise and maintained standards of hygiene, teaching his children to do the same. From everything that Kalsoom said about him, he was a loving parent who lives in her memory. He died on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1987, during Ramadan, while staying in the mosque in constant prayer. Kalsoom said ‘we have spent our lives with him. Everything is in our memory as film’.

Although the interview was a fascinating one in itself, it was the artefacts that Kalsoom showed us that made the occasion so special, and unexpected. These artefacts could be seen as part of his voice, and of hers – by showing these personal items, she allowed us to understand more about him, and about her love for him. There were photos, of Nawazish in the UK (figure 44), a strange picture of men in fancy dress for a white officer’s birthday, and a photo of his grave. There was a coin - a Queen Victoria quarter anna from 1894. She had kept some of his clothes – a Jinnah or astrakhan hat, a turban, and his shoes. Most special of all, though, was the book of poems (figure 45).



Figure 44: QMD Nawazish Ali in Britain (photo from Kalsoom Akhtar’s collection)

Although the poems may not be of great literary merit, they are unique as a socio-historical document. The Punjabi scholar and poet Omer Tarin does not know of any other example of a memoir from a World War Two VCO, let alone a collection of poems, and remarked that it is 'extremely rare'.<sup>1021</sup> Like many Punjabi writers, Nawazish had a *takhallus*, or pen-name. He chose the name Mushtaq, meaning longing or desire, a name that he also gave his son and his shop, and one that he had used during the war. He was not, however, the only poet in the British Indian Army during the war. At least two other K6 men wrote poems - bellows-boy Aurangzeb and Driver Sardar Ali, who published a poem in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* entitled *Jang I Hal* (Present War).<sup>1022</sup> There were also the more famous poets Noon Meem Rashid and Faiz Ahmed Faiz who both served in the Indian Army in World War Two.<sup>1023</sup> Why and when Nawazish wrote is unclear. His surviving work includes the book of poems, of fifty-five pages encompassing 334 verses, and a few articles in Roman Urdu in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*. In the 1970s he wrote criticising martial law under General Zia, and asserting that 'Pakistan cannot progress without democracy' – this work may or may not have been published.<sup>1024</sup> There may well be other pieces of writing that have yet to come to light, including other poems and pieces of journalism. Nawazish clearly had a need to write, perhaps this was his way of coping with the boredom and trauma of military life. His poems and articles reveal a man with a conscience. He was interested in politics, in social affairs and in religion. Caught up in a massive conflict, the like of which has never been known before, he responded in verse. Within some of the war-focused verses there is an agony, an anguish that reminds the reader of Wilfred Owen. Equally, he wrote a joke for *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, involving a village mullah, a guava and an elephant which shows another side to the man: grounded, humorous, of the people.<sup>1025</sup> The joke is in the style of the folk hero Nasrettin Hoca, a long story that shows the central figure to be a fool but a wise one. Nawazish may have identified to some extent with the wise fool character, a local man with wisdom who is also interested in teaching his fellow-villagers. During his time in the army he probably had long periods of

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<sup>1021</sup> Omer Tarin, 'Poems of Nawazish Ali', 16 May 2019.

<sup>1022</sup> Interview with Abdul Mateen, Mohd Akram, Mohd Yunus & Mohd Rafique, 2018; 'Jang I Hal', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 13 February 1942, p. 4, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

<sup>1023</sup> *An Anthology of Modern Urdu Poetry*, ed. by M.A.R. Habib (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 2003), p. xxv.

<sup>1024</sup> 'Interview with Kalsoom Akhtar'.

<sup>1025</sup> Nawazish Ali, 'Ek Latifa', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 3 April 1942, p. 4, Imperial War Museum, E6705.



time with nothing to do, and this may partly account for the time he put into writing. In the second book in his collection *Soldier in the Army*, the first verse runs thus:

One day, a thought came into my mind to write another story;  
It is not good to spend time idly, it should be spent doing something fruitful;  
It will be my day and night's diversion along with eliminating thoughts of  
other things from my heart;  
O Nawazish! Have trust in God and Mushtaq put pen to paper.<sup>1026</sup>

Nawazish had time to spare and used his writing as a way to fill that time and to drive out other matters from his mind. It also shows the distinction between his *takhallus* and his personal name – the former is for writing only, the latter for all other purposes, including religion.

Nawazish's character also comes through in his writing in *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*. As well as the joke mentioned above, he wrote some advice for his fellow soldiers, in the winter of 1941/1942, his first winter in Europe.<sup>1027</sup> This was a list of fifteen ideas, clearly things that he held dear, and that he thought would be valuable for younger, greener soldiers to remember when 7,000 miles from home in a strange country. There are religious ideas like 'good prayer should be offered all the time' and 'always consider death in front of you and refrain from sins'. There are basic wisdoms that could occur in any culture or religion like 'a wise man is respected everywhere' and 'forgiveness is better than revenge'. And there are two pieces of advice that, in the English translation at least, sound rather military in character 'there is nothing better than good company' and 'differentiate an enemy from a friend'. In his mid-thirties and at the top of the NCO ranks, Nawazish felt that he had some useful ideas that his younger and less experienced colleagues could benefit from, and he responded to the invitation to contribute in writing. There is something avuncular in this passage - the wise older soldier sitting in his store, passing on his wisdom to the younger colleagues.

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<sup>1026</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Fauji Sipahi (Soldier in the Army)*, trans. by Waqar Seyal (Lahore: Qureshi Book Agency), p. 2.

<sup>1027</sup> Nawazish Ali, 'Chand ek Nasihatien', *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar*, 27 February 1942, p. 4, Imperial War Museum, E6705.

It is in Nawazish's poems that he really emerges as a hard-working writer. It is unclear when these poems were written, some may have been written during the war, but they were all published afterwards, in a self-publishing arrangement with a local Jhelum bookseller, and printed in Lahore, at Qureshi Book Agency in Kashmiri Bazaar. The poems are written in Nastaliq script (based on Persian) in the Punjabi language, with some dialect Potohari words used occasionally. The translations here are by Abdul Sattar & Waqar Seyal, although overly literal translations of Urdu poems often seem 'uninteresting or even banal' when rendered into English.<sup>1028</sup> The volume that Kalsoom had in her home is a self-assembled one, which includes five books. The first four are written in the verse form *Si-harfi*, a popular Punjabi form associated with the Sufi tradition.<sup>1029</sup> Like an acrostic in style, the poet starts by writing the thirty letters of the Arabic alphabet down the side of the page.<sup>1030</sup> The challenge then is to write a four-line verse for each letter. *Si-harfi* is not the most serious verse-form in Punjab, and 'is mostly used for amusement or playful linguistic use'.<sup>1031</sup>

There are many themes that recur in his verses. In verse five of book three, Mushtaq's plea, he addresses his beloved, speaks of the 'wine of union' and declares:

My heart has burnt like a Kebab, do not put it on the skewer<sup>1032</sup>

Whether his beloved was a woman or God, is hard to know – Punjabi and Urdu poetry is full of ambiguous references, and wine in Urdu tradition is used to represent 'ecstatic experience at the revelation of the beloved'.<sup>1033</sup> Later in the same poem he declares that 'the insect of separation has slowly eaten my brain'.<sup>1034</sup> In book four, *The Prophet's Lover*, the poet bemoans the experience of being a soldier far from home, and asks God:

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<sup>1028</sup> Habib, p. xxxv.

<sup>1029</sup> Rajput, p. 51.

<sup>1030</sup> Bullhe Shah, *Sufi Lyrics*, ed. by Christopher Shackle (London: Harvard University Press, 2015), p. xviii.

<sup>1031</sup> Tarin.

<sup>1032</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Di Zaari Mushtaq (Mushtaq's Plea)*, trans. by Waqar Seyal (Lahore: Qureshi Book Agency), p. 3.

<sup>1033</sup> Habib, p. xix.

<sup>1034</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Di Zaari Mushtaq (Mushtaq's Plea)*, p. 6.

O Lord! Save us from the Parathas of a foreign land and grant us food of  
our home<sup>1035</sup>

The heartfelt plea of a Punjabi used to good bread, thousands of miles from home. In his second book quoted above, verse eighteen starts with the letter ج (*jim*), and reads:

After reaching England, we saw a new system there;  
The streets were clean and the behaviour of the shopkeepers was good;  
Everything was placed in order and there was power of knowledge and  
skill;  
O Mushtaq! I saw lovers walking by holding arms and hugging.<sup>1036</sup>

This is the only part of his poetry that refers directly to the UK, and one of the very few examples where a K6 soldier records their feelings about Britain. Nawazish is fascinated by what he sees on the streets - the cleanliness, the order, and well-behaved shopkeepers - perhaps this affected his conduct later as a shopkeeper himself. Most of all though he is so carried away by the spectacle of men and women in pairs, in close physical contact with each other – unimaginable in India at that time – that he addresses his *takhallus* in order to convey his depths of wonder.

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<sup>1035</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Mahob Rasul (Prophet's Lover)*, trans. by Waqar Seyal (Lahore: Qureshi Book Agency), p. 5.

<sup>1036</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Fauji Sipahi (Soldier in the Army)*, p. 5.



Figure 45: the cover and title page of Nawazish's collected books of poems (photo Ghee Bowman)

The fullest, most interesting and most detailed part of Nawazish's writing is in the fifth book, entitled *Jangi Safarnama* or War Book of Travels. Here he comes closest to Jay Winter's description of the war-poet as 'psalmist and prophet of our century'.<sup>1037</sup> *Jangi Safarnama* is an account in couplets of his experience in the Burma campaign of 1944-45, after his return from the UK. It may well have been written during the actual campaign, and as such is a unique work of literature. The verses cover his journey forward to the front line, including a voyage by plane, and he names specific places where he was posted, including Assam and Ledo. He described the conditions at the front line in the jungle:

There was mud all around and the mosquitos didn't let us sleep  
 Insects were everywhere, sucking blood from our bodies.<sup>1038</sup>

<sup>1037</sup> Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 204.

<sup>1038</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Jangi Safarnama (War Safarnama)*, trans. by Waqar Seyal (Lahore: Qureshi Book Agency), p. 3.

He described a successful attack on Japanese positions, including the taking of prisoners, and the awful condition of bodies, including some vivid descriptions of death. This is followed by another attack across a river after supplies have been dropped by parachute. He expressed concern and humanity towards the Japanese opponents and the Burmese refugees that they encounter:

May all refugees return to their homes and enjoy their self

May all sorrows come to end so they will sing happy songs.<sup>1039</sup>

He finished with his happiness at VJ Day and by giving thanks to God. The poem resembles a memoir in verse of one man's part in the 'cold, efficient killing machine' that was the 14<sup>th</sup> Army.<sup>1040</sup> Unfortunately he does not tell us which unit he was with or his precise job, but we can be fairly sure that, as a Jemadar, he was in command of one among many RIASC mule units, just behind the infantry, supplying them with food, ammunition and other necessities. The Burma campaign used the largest concentration of mules in the war and was 'a supreme test of mule transport'.<sup>1041</sup> It is interesting to reflect a little on the contrast between what the poem shows, and what a military historian wishes for. The historian would like specifics of names, dates, places, unit numbers and battles in order to triangulate and locate further detail about Nawazish's unit from archival documents in the UK or South Asia, or published accounts of the campaign. What Nawazish offers is generalities and impressions, reflecting how little the ordinary sepoy knew or understood of their whereabouts and role, and as such is a true representation of 'voice'. He also gives a lot of references to God and religion – far more than one would expect from a British writer of the period - a function of both his personal feelings and the intended audience. The fact that he wrote in Punjabi and Potohari, when he was fluent in Urdu and had some English, indicates that the poems were intended for local consumption. He wanted friends, family and neighbours to read them, he was not interested in a broader South Asian readership, let alone an international one. But he did not restrict his writings to manuscript form – he thought them worthy of publication, and they would have

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<sup>1039</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Jangi Safarnama (War Safarnama)*, p. 9.

<sup>1040</sup> Christopher A. Bayly and Tim Harper, *Forgotten Armies: The Fall of British Asia, 1941-1945* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2005), p. 388.

<sup>1041</sup> Malins, Nicholls, and MacFetridge, p. 61.

been read by at least his friends and relatives, including other ex-soldiers. He may have been writing in order to work through his traumatic wartime experiences – one long section will suffice to give a flavour of the whole. This part describes what Nawazish witnessed after the successful attack on the Japanese:

Dead bodies were in such a bad condition  
I cannot describe the situation

Some bodies were hanging from the trees  
Some of them had uniforms while some of them were naked with their  
bodies in pieces

Some bodies were left like skeletons  
Crows were eating them, it was like Eid for them

I saw a deep hole where a bomb struck  
This large deep hole was filled with corpses

Allah knows, how many dead bodies were there  
Maybe there were a hundred or more

Dead bodies were on top of each other and there was water as well  
There were uniforms but inside rotten and stinking skin

There was so much stink that it had no limit  
Everyone walked away with a handkerchief on their mouth

All these dead were Japanese  
I saw no dead from my army.<sup>1042</sup>

The writer is dumbfounded by the scene, but he finds the ability to write about it, not in great detail, but just a little. As a human, he is filled with revulsion, but he is also glad that there are no Indian or other Commonwealth dead. Birds feast on the bodies as if it were Eid, the holy festival of sacrifice, and the stink has no limit. This scene must have haunted the Jemadar for years afterwards, and perhaps writing it down was a way to control the memories.

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<sup>1042</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Jangi Safarnama (War Safarnama)*, p. 6.

Nawazish's verse brings a strong individual voice to the table, and his daughter Kalsoom reinforces that with her love and her clarity. Despite the multiple stage process of translating and analysing, there is an honesty that speaks across the seventy-five years since the events he describes. The dual voices of father and daughter are far less mediated than any others of K6 and stand as the best example of true voices. If the words of Nawazish and Kalsoom cannot be triangulated and checked against known facts, that does not lessen their value as an earthy, personal and passionate account of the life of one sepoy, rare to the point of uniqueness. Further study is called for, by better linguists and literary scholars. What else may lie hidden in another village in Punjab, or in Bengal, or anywhere in South Asia? More research will find more voices.

### **Conclusion: listen and learn**

This chapter has shown that obscure voices are there if the historian is prepared to hunt for them. The concept of 'voice' is a useful one, especially as a signifier of agency or power. The mediated nature of the men's voices was evident in all sources but one. The newsletter *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* has been shown to be on balance a vehicle for official propaganda, aimed at the men rather than coming from them. Voices of relatives are traceable, but often loaded with meanings and purposes of their own, and may not serve to represent the veteran themselves. The nature of history in Pakistan has meant that such voices have not been captured systematically, and it is nearly too late. Of all the voices that have survived in archive and through interview, the truest is that of Nawazish and his daughter Kalsoom, hence their inclusion here towards the end of the thesis.

It was hard to locate the ideas and opinions of the sepoys of Force K6, but not impossible. They can rarely be found in the official war service diaries in the UK National Archives in Kew, so one needs to look beyond that repository. Almost every voice is mediated, of course, through an officer's writing, a court record, a newspaper editor, just as every British squaddie or matelot comes through a medium, a screen. The exception is Nawazish – his writings, intended for local consumption, are raw and honest and unfiltered by any officer or Britisher. The sepoy comes through. The mediation in other voices may reflect a modern

Pakistani post-colonial sensitivity, as in Idrees' story of Akbar and the Brigadier on the boat at Dunkirk. Oral history work has uncovered some other gems, hidden in the villages, and we can only wonder at what else lies hidden in the fields of sugarcane and rocket. Unexpected perspectives and enriching ideas may come from any soil, that is evident. Social history is bottom-up history. History was literally made by subordinate classes, as Bertolt Brecht told us:

The young Alexander conquered India.

Was he alone?<sup>1043</sup>

In the same way, the men of Force K6 were responsible for supplying the men who fought the battles that mattered in the summer of 1940 – Lord Gort (the BEF commander) was not alone. By hearing and presenting their voices, the hierarchy is inverted, putting the first last and the last, first.<sup>1044</sup>

The conundrum of why some men are remembered and others are not relates to the conditions of preservation. There is privilege at work here – the richer and better educated the soldier, the greater the chance of documents and artefacts being kept. Close family members themselves have forgotten about their veteran relatives, perhaps because the war experience does not reflect the national narrative of Partition and the drive for a Muslim state. There is also contingency in what has been recalled, sheer chance, dumb luck. But there is also the action of love – Kalsoom and other (mostly female) relatives have retained memories and objects because they retained love for their departed heroes. Nawazish, struggling with writer's block and trauma, wrote of his anguish:

My pen lost its spirit in the face of sufferings

It was writing sorrows so it broke into pieces

Lost its courage in a way that nothing could be written

If it writes, it spills tears while crying

While writing sorrows, the heart cries

The pen awakens the old sorrows.<sup>1045</sup>

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<sup>1043</sup> Brecht, p. 252, from *Fragen ein lesendes Arbeiter* (Questions from a worker who reads).

<sup>1044</sup> Robert Chambers, *Whose Reality Counts? Putting the First Last* (London: ITDG, 1997); Chambers took his title from Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 2001), p. 35.

<sup>1045</sup> Nawazish Ali, *Jangi Safarnama (War Safarnama)*, p. 11.



His voice is crying out across the generations. It is a voice that calls to another generation to listen and learn. Sepoys can speak clearly today if people are prepared to hear them, to prioritise their words and actions as high as the better-remembered soldiers who fought at Pearl Harbor or D-Day, or the mournful voices from the death camps. For voices to speak, ears need to be open wide. Amitav Ghosh wrote 'every life leaves behind an echo that is audible to those who take the trouble to listen'.<sup>1046</sup> We must take the trouble, and help others take that trouble too, for those echoes are what will make history more interesting, more varied and more true.

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<sup>1046</sup> Ghosh, p. 552.

## CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A NEW MEMORY

*It's not lest we forget, it's more, lest we remember. That's what all this stuff is about - the memorials, the Cenotaph, the two minutes silence. Because there is no better way of forgetting something than by commemorating it.*<sup>1047</sup>

This powerful speech comes from the film version of the Alan Bennett play *History Boys*, spoken by the teacher Irwin to his students, standing in front of a World War One memorial. Prior to that, Irwin talked about how Britain should share culpability for the start of that war. What Bennett is alluding to is that by commemorating the war in that particular way – official memorials and Remembrance Day celebrations – the full historical truth is clouded and obscured. The war memorial itself becomes, in Noravian terms, a *lieu de mémoire* rather than a *milieu de mémoire* - a place that shows not natural memory, memory that occurs in society because the members of that society are in touch with it, but rather the need to remind.<sup>1048</sup> Thus the nuances and the detail of the war are elided and replaced by something watered down, re-politicised, instrumentalised. The memorial is a sham, part of what Terkel calls 'disremembrance' and 'forgettery'.<sup>1049</sup> This is almost a professional historian's view – that popular memory can only cope with black and white, never grey. The point is to analyse not only the remembrance of war itself, but also how that remembrance takes place, by whom, to what effect, and for how long. If Bennett is right, a memorial for Force K6 – there is currently a proposal for one in Kingussie – would not work in helping to remember the full story. Looking at the Commonwealth Memorial Gates at Hyde Park Corner in London, erected in 2002, or the Animals in War memorial further up Park Lane, it is doubtful whether these newer memorials have led to an intelligent and nuanced understanding among the people of the UK of the role of colonial troops and animals in two world wars.<sup>1050</sup> Perhaps we need a play or a film, a British version of the French movie *Indigènes*, which brought to public attention the contribution of French colonial troops in the war.<sup>1051</sup>

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<sup>1047</sup> Nicholas Hytner, *The History Boys* (Fox Searchlight, 2006).

<sup>1048</sup> Pierre Nora, 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire', *Representations*, 26 (1989), 7–24 (p. 7).

<sup>1049</sup> Terkel, p. 3.

<sup>1050</sup> Judith Tydor Baumel-Schwartz, 'Beloved Beasts: Reflections on the History and Impact of the British "Animals in War" Memorial', *History & Memory*, 29.1 (2017), 104–33.

<sup>1051</sup> Bouchareb.

This thesis has been centred on memory; and on forgetting. It has shown that the sepoy of K6 were well known at the time, to the extent that they became the socialist cartoonist Zec's shorthand for 'Indian soldier', were drawn on to sell Sunlight soap, and showed up in mutated form decades later in Bruce Chatwin's novel of Welsh farmers on the borders. Since then they have been forgotten in different ways by different groups in different countries, but they have also been remembered by a few, individuals and groups with special connections to this unique party of men. The forgetting process took different shape in South Asia and in Britain but was in both cases determined by Halbwachs' *cadres* and Assmann's selection criteria. In Britain they were rapidly forgotten in the summer of 1945, as the blitz-shocked citizens started the process of physical and social reconstruction under a new, socialist government. The widespread knowledge of them, like so many other aspects of society, was duration-only. 1945 was an end and a beginning, and these dark-skinned friendly sepoy did not fit within that inward-looking beginning. Along with so much else, they became victims to what Churchill called 'an act of oblivion.'<sup>1052</sup> Women like Betty Creswell, Gladys Shapland and Joan Leed remembered them fondly, but the broader memory slipped away quietly. As Sapper Sherratt, who encountered 22<sup>nd</sup> Company in the clearing in the Grossenwald Forest by the Maginot Line in May 1940, recalled sixty years later: 'they disappeared as silently as their approach. We never saw them again.'<sup>1053</sup> Meanwhile in India and Pakistan, they were only ever known as part of the wider Indian Army and were forgotten in the same envelope. Whether they stayed 'loyal' in the POW camp or joined the German 950 Regiment is immaterial to South Asian memory – they were merely part of the runup to the awful events of Partition in 1947. Their ambiguous status in South Asia makes them hard to fit into a simplistic post-war narrative. The new countries needed new memories and new stories, with no room for such Raj-oriented 'mercenaries'.

That same analysis of forgetting holds within it the seeds of new memory, however. New *cadres* can be built, new selection criteria assembled, as indeed they have been for *indigènes* - colonial soldiers in France - and South Asian troops in the Great War. Public opinion and collective memory in Britain are shifting, and possibly also in Pakistan and India. As Halbwachs pointed out,

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<sup>1052</sup> Churchill.

<sup>1053</sup> Sherratt.

memories can be restored even if they are only preserved among a few people.<sup>1054</sup> We are at a pivotal point in the memory-trajectory of these sepoy – they could head for complete effacement in the next twenty years or so, or be restored from the *réserve d'oubli*. There are means to recall or re-remember them, in local communities in the UK, among British Pakistanis and in Pakistan and India. The large reserve of visual images, still and moving, can contribute to that process. Through telling the fascinating stories of Paritosh and Nawazish and Abuzar, this thesis has shown that they are worthy of being remembered.

The danger inherent in re-remembering is that of instrumentalization, of abusing their memory for contemporary or future political ends and point-scoring. They can be presented by different interest groups as heroes or traitors, as South Asian pioneers in the UK, as Muslims in the service of the crown. The thesis has shown that they were warmly welcomed throughout Britain, with only one example of overt racism on record. Set against twenty-first century Islamophobia, it would be easy to point towards this group of Muslims and their peaceful co-existence with the non-Muslim population around them as a shining example to go back to. The Shah Jahan Mosque in Woking and the old tin church in Lairg could become places to visit. In a similar way, their graves have the potential to become *lieux de mémoire* for South Asian visitors and locals alike, as the 2018 commemoration ceremony in Kingussie has shown, but such *lieux* may become over-simplified, in the way Alan Bennett outlined. Christopher Nolan missed the chance to include Indian soldiers in his film *Dunkirk*, but a hypothetical film by a South Asian film-maker might also reduce the story to a simple one of heroism or betrayal. There is an excellent example of a recall from Ricouer's *réserve de oubli* in the form of Akbar's portrait at the Imperial War Museum in London, to be on general display from 2021. Care must be taken that this portrait is used for a full version of Akbar's story. His nephew Idrees' story of the British Brigadier on the boat show that memories can be enormously distorted by time and by mixed motivations. And the work of the Community Archives of Pakistan shows that the memory of one individual can be overwhelmed by a dominant societal or collective memory – the individual memory at the service of the state discourse. One hopes that the recall process may bring some hope to Risaldar-Major

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<sup>1054</sup> Halbwachs, p. 144.

Ashraf's son, left embittered when he was not allowed to meet the Queen. There are many pitfalls in the remembering process, and historians must stand ready to offer their skills.

The men of K6 were not victims, nor were they powerless pawns. They had agency, they had choices to make, they had some freedoms. The Prisoners of War of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company were physically constrained to a great extent, but free in their minds. Chapter 1 of this thesis explored the variety of reasons for the choices that they made, which included politics, convenience and peer group pressure. Like Abuzar, some of them chose greater freedom in the *feldgrau* uniform of the German Army. That choice had its end-point in re-imprisonment by the British and later release, or for a few, death at the hands of the French Resistance. A few others managed to escape from prison, enduring hardships and privations greater than those inside the camps, but achieving a truer kind of freedom. Anis struggled with his choices, during and after the war, making decisions that look counter-productive in retrospect, for his daughter Zeenut as much as for history. Nawazish, meanwhile, was able to express himself through his writing – in this case his voice was a direct expression of his personal agency. More broadly, the men's choices were always limited by their background as male Punjabi Muslims in uniform, men who prayed, who ate chappaties and mutton, who liked to sing and dance and play hockey. But equally there were men among them whose tastes and interests evolved, preferring white bread alongside their traditional *roti*, changing their name and religion, as Waje Singh did, or falling in love with a local girl. Indeed, their agency, however mediated and controlled, is perhaps most visible in the friendships and love affairs that they conducted up and down the United Kingdom – the smiling photos from Betty Cresswell and Crickhowell show us that. Jamal Khan was not able to stay in the UK with Gladys in St Austell, as he might like to have done, but he made the choice to return to her during his time in Britain, to be photographed with the baby Jeff, and to write to her after the war.

Above all this thesis has shown that each one of these soldiers was an individual. They were not a homogeneous group, they were 4227 individuals who acted as individuals when they could. The men of 22<sup>nd</sup> Company in prison were not simply traitors or heroes, they were men, soldiers, who made choices – good

and bad choices – in difficult circumstances. Like their relatives and their friends and fellow-countrymen, some of them were nationalists, some loyalists, some apolitical, most of them were professional pre-war soldiers, who had chosen the job for a variety of reasons. Each one of the men had a name, and over half of those names have been recovered in the archives. Behind every name is a story, one that is profoundly different from the story next to him. Some of the photographs, drawings and film footage show an anonymous mass of men marching through the city or at work with their mules. The best images, however – generally those from families and friends – allow individuality to shine through. Driver Abdul Ghani with his bandoliers, the unnamed Sergeant by the radio in Dornoch, Uncle Gian posing with Herbert Foster – all these are pictures of individual human beings whose stories have been found and shared.

This contribution of this thesis then is twofold: that of finding and assembling their little-known story in all its glory and all its routine, and of presenting it to audiences in South Asia and the UK. This matters because they act as a microcosm for the wider Indian Army – two and a half million strong – and the wider-still contributions from the Empire. Just as the story of World War One has been retold since the centenary of the outbreak in 2014 as an imperial and colonial story, so the story of the World War Two is being re-evaluated in that same multi-cultural light. The microcosm that is K6 is more interesting and relevant still, because it happened in the heart of whiteness, the core of the Empire, *vilayet* itself - Great Britain. Thus, in full awareness of the perils of instrumentalising their memory, their story can be a useful counter to the Islamophobia present in the UK in 2019, and an interesting precursor of the post-war waves of Windrush and Mangla Dam migration. World War Two thus becomes a pivot point in ethnicity, empire, Britain and the world, with Dunkirk not Singapore acting as the crucial Imperial defeat. Force K6 are a small but significant example – one little story among so many – of what happened and what can be told, to broaden people's minds and their perspectives, to open up the possibility of seeing the war in a different way and to move beyond the simplistic memorialising that *History Boys* indicated.

The war is always with us, or as Dan Todman wrote, 'Britain can't shut up about the war'.<sup>1055</sup> It seems to be a British obsession that will continue, but an obsession with a narrow frame of reference, covering the Holocaust, the Home Front, Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, and D-Day. Those who have personal lived experience of anything different are dying out, so the impressions of the war are almost all second hand now. In this way collective memory becomes very important. The war remains a key determiner of how Britishers see themselves, something governed by the processes of collective memory outlined here, influenced by education, films, politicians and also by family, but less and less by 'professional' historians. The job of the historian needs to change, to engage with the collective memory and influence it, as Ricoeur suggested.<sup>1056</sup> For the war was far wider than any one individual knows, bigger and stranger and more multi-faceted. It was everywhere, from the Aleuts to the River Plate to Mongolia to Egypt to the Caucasus. Only a handful of countries were neutral, and all countries were affected. Nobody could know or grasp all of that, just like nobody could know everything in the world right now. It was truly a world war, and the time is due for a reassessment, led by professional historians but aimed at the general public, of its truly global nature. John Keegan said in 1995 that 'the history of the Second World War has not yet been written' and Jeremy Black wondered what might be the 'lasting memory of the fighting', what will still be remembered in 600 years, an interesting provocation.<sup>1057</sup> We can be sure that whatever is remembered will be as much a product of the twenty-seventh century as the twentieth. A twenty-first century view, one hopes, will include the 4000 men of K6 and their mules.

There are many unexplored avenues in the K6 story, many more possibilities for further research. A scholar of Urdu language could find much more in the pages of *Wilayati Akhbar Haftawar* and in Nawazish Ali's extraordinary poetry. Archives in Pakistan, including the National Archives in Islamabad and the Punjab archives in Lahore may hold the enlistment information on some or all of these soldiers, including their names and home villages. With or without such knowledge, further research with families could be undertaken, and who knows what gems lie buried in those memories and cupboards. Further

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<sup>1055</sup> Todman.

<sup>1056</sup> Ricoeur, p. 452.

<sup>1057</sup> Keegan, *The Battle for History: Re-Fighting World War II*, p. 30; Jeremy Black, *Rethinking World War Two: The Conflict and Its Legacy* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), p. 190.

cooperation with the Community Archives of Pakistan may yield contacts with specific individuals as well as more insights into processes of collective memory. Indeed, the field of collective memory theory in South Asia awaits opening up, drawing on indigenous traditions of 'memory' - Hinduism, Islam, Punjabi language - and the concept of *lieux de mémoire* could be a fruitful one in exploring contested memory sites across the nations of that region. Meanwhile in Europe, the wider narrative of 15,000 Indian POWs has barely been touched - there are archival documents across several countries that will throw light on those experiences, and the 'Great Indian Escape' from Epinal is a tale deserving of a good teller. Archaeological work in France and the UK has already produced mule shoes and hard standings for animal lines, and much more could be done. There are more 'K6 kids' like Paritosh to track down in Wales and Cornwall, and probably in Scotland too, while the topic of 'fireside words' – racism hidden behind doors – is worthy of theorising. Specific questions of K6 are unresolved - when exactly was their posting in Kinlochleven, what has happened to Shaukat Hyat Khan's report, to Hexley's account of his escape and the adverse report on Anis from the Senior British Officer in his POW camp. Finally there is a huge untouched area in the study of those creatures who 'had no choice' – the mules and horses who became the unlikely participants in the BEF and those who later came to Scotland, drawing on the emerging fields of animal history and animal agency.<sup>1058</sup> There is much work that could be done looking at, for example the 'good chemistry' that existed between a mule and a driver, and the extent to which that pairing was what David Gary Shaw calls a 'animal–human unity' or a 'type of being.'<sup>1059</sup>

Like the war memorial in Bennett's film, it is the graves of the men of K6 that have made the biggest impact. Farrier Asghar Ali was kicked by a mule at the river in Ashbourne, died a few days later and is buried in Ashbourne Cemetery. His grave is decorated with fresh flowers every year, from the local British Legion and from Sidney Taylor, who was a sergeant with the British Army in India.<sup>1060</sup> Very little more is known about the soldier than what appears on his Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone, the bare bones of a life. Here is the tomb of the identified but unknown soldier, remembered but forgotten.

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<sup>1058</sup> Baumel-Schwartz.

<sup>1059</sup> Shaw, p. 150.

<sup>1060</sup> Hollands.



The memories are fading while the gravestone stands - will Asghar Ali and Sidney Taylor be re-remembered, in order to prevent more Bernard Mannings? In 1943 TS Eliot wrote a poem entitled 'To the Indians who died in Africa', published in a book designed to raise funds for the Indian Comforts Fund. In it he draws a connection between Punjab and Britain that can stand as the end point of this study of encounter and memory:

This was not your land, or ours: but a village in the Midlands  
And one in the Five Rivers, may have the same memories.<sup>1061</sup>

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<sup>1061</sup> *Queen Mary's Book for India*, ed. by Cornelia Sorabji (London: Harrap, 1943), p. 61.

## Appendix A: Lists of K6 soldiers

This list was compiled through assembling all the names mentioned in archival documents in the UK and India, plus a few other references from press reports, photos and individual memories. Sources are indicated in the right hand column. There are currently (August 2019) 2255 names on the list, out of an estimated total of around 4000 K6 men in total. Of those, 5 are French, 62 are British, and the remaining 2187 are Indian.

The lists are presented by unit.

### 3 Animal Transport Company

Joined K6 in 1941. The only company to be stationed at Colchester.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abas	Ali	173872	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghafoor	21110	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghani	27020	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Aziz	29159	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Rehman	29161	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghani	61565	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghani	65565	Daffadar	
Abdul	Ghani	170625	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Khaliq aka Khilu Khan	171731	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Razaq	172515	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Khan	174458	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Rahman	780407	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Aziz	780442	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Nazir	780541	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghani	780802	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Ghani	780803	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Rahman	782193	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul	Rahman	783158	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul Majid	Khan	174766	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdul Majid	Khan	178416	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdullah		60263	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdullah	Khan	63014	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdullah	Khan	170290	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Abdullah		174896	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Afsar	Khan	170337	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Afsar	Khan	170852	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Afsar	Khan	783725	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ahmed	Din	47468	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ahmed	Din	65141	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ahmed	Khan	174697	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ahmed	Khan	780403	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ahmed	Khan	(7)38614	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Akbar	Khan	65836	QMD	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Akbar	Khan	173753	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Akbar		175110	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Alaf	Din	29675	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Alaf	Din	746024	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Alaf	Din	799164	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Dad	27019	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Mohd	27149	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Haider	62603	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Dad	170336	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Bahadur	171991	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Gohar	175321	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Mohd	176759	Tailor	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Gauhar	177574	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Gohar	780737	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941

Ali	Hussain	781588	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Bahadur	783729	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali Aksar	Shah	781966	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali yar	Khan	170307	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah	Banda	2266	Dhobi	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah	Ditta	48080	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah	Ditta	52569	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah	Din	175599	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah	Ditta	503302	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Allah Dad	Khan	780400	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ameer	Gul	62997	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Amir	Hussain		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Anar	Khan	780677	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Asgar	Ali	175598	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ata	Mohd	27451	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Atta	Ullah	45944	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Atta	Mohd	780676 or 780656	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Baboo	Din	780543	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Babu		783159	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bagh	Ali	63470	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bagh	Ali	780680	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bahadur	Khan	781459	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Barkat	Ali	180967	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Barkat	Ali	793559	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Baz	Khan	48801	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bhag		782086	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bhola		30343	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bir	Wali	1069	Sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Boota		60269	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Boota		172992	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bostan	Khan	179059	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Bundu	Khan	177791	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Chhailu		742339	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Chiragh	Din	781599	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dadan	Khan	783738	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dadu		64077	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
DB	Shaw		Lieut	WO 179/5902
Dil	Mohd	170864	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dilawar	Khan	783735	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dildar Hussein	Haideri		Hav S	WO 179/5902
Din	Mohd	179756	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dina		708408	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dosa		29843	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Dost	Mohd	21206/16306	Jemadar	
Faiz	Ali	177012	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Faiz	Mohd	782087	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fakir	Mohd	28085	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Faqir	Mohd	29387	Naik	

Faqir	Mohd	43142	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Faqir	Mohd	799176	Barber	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Faqir	Mohd		Jemadar	WO 179/5902
Faqir	Mohd		Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Faquir	Mohd	29160	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Farid	Alam	181760	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fateh	Mohd	22651	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fateh	Alam	29408	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fateh	Khan	65657	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fateh	Mohd	177150	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fateh	Mohammed	780693	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Ahmad	30065	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Illahi	47139	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Ahmad	50390	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Hussain	173411	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Karim	177392	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Ilahi	781591	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Dad	781593	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Karim	781938	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Din	783730	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal	Hussain	788482	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal Hussain	Shah	181666	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Fazal Hussain	Shah	780096	A/Naik	
Feroze	Din	48297	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Feroze	Khan		Hony Lieut	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Game	Khan	50766	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghaus	Mohd	174690	A/Naik	
Gheba	Khan	783898	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gheba	Khan	799159	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Mohd	22653	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Mohd III	26156	A/Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Mohd	29903	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Haider	170839	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Haider	173698	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Hussain	177381	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Mohammed	177846	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Hussain	780616	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Ali	780617	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Nabi	782784	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Husain	785229	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ghulam	Abass	V2313	Sowar	
Ghulam	Rasul		Risaldar	WO 179/5902
Gul	Zaman	22576	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Mohd	26060	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Khan	50093	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Hussain	65720	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Zaman	173498	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Mohd	175472	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Zaman	178777	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Muhammad	180616	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gul	Mohammed	180626	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gulab		64887	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gulab	Din	65598	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gulistan	Khan	784490	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gulzar	Khan	45568	Carpenter	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hadit	Ullah	781602	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Haider	Khan	65698	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Haider	Zaman	174681	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Haji	Mohd	172668	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Haji	Ahmed	736819	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hamid	Ullah	50780	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hamid ullah	Khan	174666	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hasan	Shah	780404	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hassan		5236	Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hassan	Mohd	65034	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hassan	Mohd	177537	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hazar	Khan	781430	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hukam	Dad	29937	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Hushara			Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ibrahim		177602	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Iftikhar	Ahmed	V.255	WO/Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Imdad	Hussain	780447	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941

Ismail		50786	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ismail		50983	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jaffar	Shah	780100	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jaggo/Jaggu		22668	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jagi		172311	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jalal	Din	22003	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jamil Ahmed	Khan		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Jug	Lall	780409	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Kala	Khan	28471	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Kalu	Khan	780023	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Kamal	Khan	780686	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karam	Din	25105	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karam	Din	60897	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karam	Dad	174368	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karam	Ilahi	176961	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karamat	Ali	781362	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karim	Bux	50074	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karim	Dad	170191	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Karim	Dad	171023	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khadam Hussain	Shah	780579	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khair	Din	63522	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khair	Din	172764	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Mohd	28513	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Mohd	30113	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Zaman	62962	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Zaman	65238	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Mohd	85259	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khan	Mohd	170637	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khani	Zaman	181644	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khor	Dil	173023	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khuda	Dad	172256	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khushal	Khan	52462	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Khushi	Mohd	65621	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Kurban	Hussain	180310	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Lal	Khan	177242	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Lal	Khan	180398	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Lal	Khan	780729	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Lal	Chand	NYA	M/W/tr	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Lall	Khan	11934	Jemadar	
Lall	Khan	170320	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Larasab	Khan	65290	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mah	Wali	170017	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mahanda		171200	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mahtab		783390	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Makhan	Shah	177691	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Makhan		780410	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Makhana	Khan	177832	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mana		60949	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Manzur	Khan	179185	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Matlab	Khan	780431	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Maula	Bux	176912	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Maw	Ali	11743	Ward servant	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mayia		736762	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mehar	Ban	173409	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mehar	Khan	181255	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mehr	Khan	180842	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mian	Haji	177817	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mir	Dad	780104	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mir	Haider	780673	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mir	Wali	783732	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mir	Hussain	799169	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mir	Akmed	NYA	Masalchi	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohabat	Khan	29158	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohammad	Hussain	179190	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohammad	Karim		Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Urfan	27194	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Hussain	27501	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sharif	28633	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Akbar	52332	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sher	65696	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Khan	170195	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Fazal	170648	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941

Mohd	Fazal	171620	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Din	171743	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sarwar	172333	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Fazal	172929	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Jawan	172946	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Hussain	173221	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sharif	173222	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Yusaf	175585	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Tufail	177627	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Din	177896	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Musa	178311	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sharif	178763	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Rafiq	179226	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Nazir	179977	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Khan	180857	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Bax	736765	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Yaqub	780451	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	780454	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Ayub	780458	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sharif	780547	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sharif	780619	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Azam	780674	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Afsar	780742	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Azam	780857	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Beg	781587	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	781670	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Hussain	783731	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Nawaz	783736	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Ji	783739	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Isaq	783740	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Khan	785328	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	788548	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Tofail	180985 or 180923	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	278494	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Hussain	NYA/799172	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mohd	Hussain		Barber	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Mokam	Din	174225	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Muhammad	Ayub	781458	Driver	
Munshi	Ahmed	781330	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Musahab	Khan	64558	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nabi	Ahmad	781374	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nausherwan		173431	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nawab	Khan	176833	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nawab	Khan	780678	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nazir	Ahmad	179922	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nazir	Shah	781807	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nek	Mohd	780582	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nizam	Din	26558	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Noor	Khan	28242	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Noor	Mohammed	29174	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Noor	Hassan	170658	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Noor	Dad	780146	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Mohd	11932	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Din	27767	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Mohd	28168	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Muhammad	181145	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Mohd	793314	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur	Ahmad		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Nur ullah	Khan	780432	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Painda	Khan	177814	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Painda	Khan	NYA/799162	Carpenter	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Pehlwan	Khan	178200	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Pinnu		29064	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Piran	Ditta	799232	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qaim	Din	736820	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qaim	Khan	783733	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qalandar	Khan	48343	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qasim	Ali	175387	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qasim	Ali	177141	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qurban	Hussain	173761	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Rafi ullah	Shah	741155/799165	Maulvi	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Rahim	Baksh	780551	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941

Rahmat	Khan	174228	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Raj	Mohd	NYA/799163	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Raj	Wali	62538 or 62588	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Raj wali	Khan	781592	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Raja	Khan	793292	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Raja Ghulam	Mohd		?Jemadar	Pete W photo
Ramzan		783157	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Rehmat	Ali	180711	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Roshan	Din	26390	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Roshan	Khan	179213	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sadiq	Mohd	179528	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Said	Ghulam	22638	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Said	Wali	29237	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Said	Mohd	177452	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Said Ali	Shah	178663	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Said Mir	Shah	181175	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Saif	Ali	63682	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Saif	Ali	173806	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Saifullah	Khan		Lieut	WO 179/5902
Sain	Khan	799170	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sakhi	Mohammed	28517	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sakhi	Mohd	170899	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sakhi	Shah	172520	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sakhi	Mohd	783724	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Salim	Ullah	18347	Subedar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Samundar	Khan	175652	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Samundar		V 1915	Sowar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sar	Fraz	85253	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sardar	Mohd	177920	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sardar	Ali	780684	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Saudagar		30223	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sawar	Khan	173273	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sayed Zahur	Mehdi	V-220	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Ahmed Khan	62775	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Ahmad	65083	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Baz	65188	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Khan	171757	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Khan	175144	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Dil	175236	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Alam	178207	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Mohd	780128	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Khan	780453	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Dil	783726	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher	Baz	783734	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sher Baz	Khan	28928	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sukar	Din	780553	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Mohd	174255	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Ali	179948	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Ali	780554	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Mohd	781457	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Alam	783741	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Mohd	799167	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Mohd	29108	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sultan	Mohd	746035 (NYA orig)	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Sundra		173294	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Suraj	Din	780297	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Taj	Mohd	180982	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Thomas	Boddington	ST/225	Lieut	WO 179/5884
Walayat	Khan	175653	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Walayat	Shah	180174	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Walayat	Khan	181216	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Wali	Dad	49975	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Waris		22664	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Yaqub	Khan	50044	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Yaqub	Khan	799171	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Yusaf		780411	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Zaid	Ullah	736766	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Zaid	Ullah	799160	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Zaman	Ali	170905	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941

# 7 Animal Transport Company

Joined K6 in 1941.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abdul	Rakhman	26929	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Abdul	Rehman	171704	Naik	
Abdul	Aziz	178759	Lance Naik	
Abdul	Hussain	181079	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Abdulla		799217	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Afsar	Khan	171224	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Afsar		780342	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ahmad	Din	51335	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ahmad	Khan	65364	Naik	
Ahmad	Shah	181392	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ahmed	Din	49725	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ahmed	Din	177743	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Aki	Khan	781721	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Alam	Khan	57145	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ali	Zaman	12971	Ward servant	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ali	Nabi	45073	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ali	Akbar	175439	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ali	Mohd	736797	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Ditta	47016	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Ditta	48862	Driver	WO 179/5905
Allah	Dad	62225	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Dad	63389	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Ditta	739487	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Dad	780319	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Rakha	784491	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Din	830038	Saddler	
Amir	Ali	180188	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Amjad	Khan	744389	Cook BT	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Atta	Mohd	47764	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Atta	Mohd	49390	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bagga	Khan	781719	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bahadur	Khan	61868	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bakar	Khan	781766	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Barkat	Ali	781549	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Barkat	Ali	781765	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bashir	Ahmed	780343	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bhulle or Bhulla	Khan	740551	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bir	Sahai	191283	Ward servant	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bostan		780344	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Charles James	Boswell		Lieut	WO 179/5903
Dewan	Ali	780561	Driver	
Dhuan	Khan	784535	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Dilawar		780361	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Eilahi	Bux	172496	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Faiz	Ahmed	61049	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Faiz	Mohd	780685	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Faqir	Muhammad	65446	Cook	
Faqir	Mohd	179194	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Farman	Khan	52123	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Farman	Khan ? Dupe		Daffadar	
Farzand	Ali	181395	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fateh	Mohd	179997	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fateh	Khan	780300	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fateh	Khan	780309	Lance Naik	
Fateh	Mohd	781032	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fateh	Khan		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fazal	Elahi	52308	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fazal	Dad	172684	Naik	
Fazal	Dad	173305	Troop Daffadar	
Fazal	Dad	178279	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fazal	Dad	178341	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Mohd	47332	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Hussain	173099	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Haider	174054	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Mohd	179319	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941

Ghulam	Rasul	780363	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Hussain	780869	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Ahmed	783843	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Hussain	784533	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Rasul	789570	Driver	
Ghulam	Hyder		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ghulam	Mohd		Risaldar	
Gul	Sher	30302	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Gul	Mohd	63213	Troop Daffadar	
Gulab	Khan	780311	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Gulab	Khan	781541	driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Gulab		V 1986	Sowar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Hassan	Mohd	52698	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Hassan	Mohd	783241	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Hayat	Mohd	781378	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
HEF	Morris		2/Lt	WO 179/5903
Hukam	Dad	24520	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Hussain	Din	173446	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ibrahim	Khan	171375	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ibrahim	Khan	175262	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ishwari	Dutt	43186	Nursing sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ismail		783598	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Jalal	Khan		Jemadar	
Jang	Bahadur	181210	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
John G	Darby		Captain	WO 179/5903
John Llewellyn	Keay		S/Conductor	WO 179/5903
Jumma	Khan	62845	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Karam	Khan	174695	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Karam	Din	781515	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Karam	Dad	783860	Driver	
Karamat	Hussain	170730	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khair	Din	52442	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khan	Mohd	179510	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khan	Mohd	780480	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khuda	Bux	177111	Tailor	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khushal	Khan	173443	Naik	
Khushal		799224	Masalchi	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Khushi	Mohd	816840	Driver	
Lall		58017	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Lall	Khan	175744	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Lall	Khan	181396	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Lehrasab		780870	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mangal		790338	Driver	
Manoranjan	Majumdar	??229	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mansabdar		174327	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mardan	Ali	781210	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Maula	Bakhsh	780367	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mir	Nawaz	180809	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mir	Dad	780303	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Miran	Bux	63049	QMD	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mirza	Khan	64918	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Misri	Khan	25436	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohamed	Said	28178	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Hussain	8232	Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Khan	22432	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	28494	Jemadar	
Mohd	Din	65384	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Shaffi	65432	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Sher	170506	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Ashraf	170756	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Din	173118	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Din	173169	Naik	
Mohd	Hussain	174082	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Alam	174128	Naik	
Mohd	Alam	175273	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Ghiasuddin	177046	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Sharif	177466	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941

Mohd	Shaffi	177673	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Afsar	177692	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Din	178267	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	178440	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886
Mohd	Yasin	179120	Driver	
Mohd	Abdullah	180275	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Ismail	180792	driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Din	180908	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Yaqub	181055	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Tufail	181469	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Hussain	780302	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Aksar	780304	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Nawaz	780305	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Nawaz	780368	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Ali	780801	Driver	
Mohd	Afzal	780900	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Sadiq	780963	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Khan	781720	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Iqbal	782739	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Zaman	783427	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Said	784536	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Din	799225	cook	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd	Hanif	817487	Driver	
Mohd Niam	Khan	SR18759	Subedar (CD)	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mohd or Mian Godi	Khan	784493	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Muhammad	Din	65553	Driver	
Muhammad		172870	Driver	
Muhammad	Ali	181389	Driver	
Muhammed	Anwar	178432	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Munshi		799227	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Mushtaq	Ahmad	780335	Driver	
Mustaq	Ahmed	781745	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Muzafar	Khan	780875	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nabba	Khan	48893	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nadar	Hussain	174162	A/U/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nathu	Khan	170655	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nazar	Mohd	177768	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Niaz	Ali		Jemadar	Misc 3137/H
Niaz Ali	Khan	783846	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nizam-ud	Din	787672	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Noor	Mohd	780077	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nur	Mohd	52064	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nur	Mohd	173539	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nur	Ahmad	780069	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Nur	Mohd	780336	Driver	
Orangzeb		174942	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Pahalwan		64465	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941

Pahelwan		782039	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Pahlwan		65448	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Painda	Khan	780318	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Piran	Ditta	175319	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Pirthi		743166	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Pirthi		799238	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Qutab	Din	23584	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Qutab	Din	62837	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Raham	Ali	51161	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rahmat	Ali	173772	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rahmat	Khan	175983	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rahmat		799234	Barber	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rameshwar		744415	W/man	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rameshwar		799235	Dhobi	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Ramzan	Ali	175435	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Rehmat	Ali	173272	Lance Naik	
Roshan		782530	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sadiq	Hussain	780885	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sadiq	Mohd	783198	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sadiq Hussain	Shah	781352	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Safdar	Ali	172873	Naik	
Said	Mohd	30264	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Salamat	Ali	782696	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Saleh	Mohd	780338	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Samundar	Khan	780339 or 180339	Driver	WO 179/5881 pic 6190
Sardar	Khan	65369	Daffadar	
Sardar	Khan	65408	Daffadar	
Sarwar	Khan	175831	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886
Sham	Singh	799237	M/Svt	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sher	Mohd	171165	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sher	Baz	177529	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sher	Mohd	783199	Driver	
Siraj	Din	177863	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sultan	Ali	46293	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sultan		173611	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sultan	Ahmad	177970	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Sultan	Ahmed	181092	Driver	
Talab	Hussain	781339	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Tikka	Khan	181233	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Tora	Khan	44185	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Tora	Baz	176770	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Wali	Dad	172543	Naik	
Wali	Dad ?dupe	172544	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Wali	Mohd	781036	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Yusaf	Ali	781889	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Zaman	Shah	29878	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941

## 22 Animal Transport Company

Part of the original K6. Stationed in Marseilles, then north of Metz by the Siegfried line. Taken prisoner in toto in June 1940. Personnel included Hexley, Jehan Dad, Anis and Abuzar.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abbas	Khan	180821	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Abbas	Khan	171448	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Hakim	24107	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Rashid	25174	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Manan	52159	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Khaliq	52173	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Aziz	173385	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Gani or Ghani	175818	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Rahman	178632	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Aziz	180629	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Majid	180738	Driver	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Haq		Daffadar	WO 106/5881
Abdul	Rahman	TB 179815	Groom	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Karim	TB 27113	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Abdul	Rahman		Risaldar	Hamid Hussain pc
Abdullah	Khan	170595	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Abuzar		170781	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1437
Ahmad	Din	45140	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ajaib	Hussain	179268	Driver	WO 167/1437
Akbar	Khan	48112	Driver	WO 167/1437
Akbar	Khan	175183	Driver	WO 167/1437
Akbar	Khan		Jemadar	
Alaf	Din	177383	Driver	WO 167/1437
Alaf	Din	TB 60265	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Ali	Shan	47381	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Ali	Bahadur	52463	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ali	Ahmed	170339	Naik	WO 167/1437
Ali	Muhammad	178379	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ali	Akbar	TB 170235	Cook	WO 167/1437
Ali	Mohd	TB 179276/5	Groom	WO 167/1437
Ali	Mardan	TB 24539	Water carrier	WO 167/1437
Allah	Dad	29038	Driver	WO 167/1437
Allah	Din	52697	Driver	WO 167/1437
Allah	Ditta	60266	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Allah	Dad	170611	Driver	WO 167/1437
Allah	Ditta	172854	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Allah	Dad	175683	Driver	WO 167/1437
Allah	Bakhsh or Bukhsh	177256	Driver	WO 167/1437
Allah	Ditta	178375	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Allah	Din	180193	Tailor	WO 167/1437
Allah	Ditta	TB 175889	Water carrier	WO 167/1437
Amir	Ahmed	7822	Risaldar	WO 167/1437
Amir		49146	Driver	WO 167/1437
Anaet	Missi		Sowar	WO 106/5881
Anis Ahmad	Khan		Captain	WO 167/1437
Anwar	Khan	180974	Driver	WO 167/1437
Anwar Hussain	Shah	180867	Driver	WO 167/1437
Asghar		173674	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ashraf		24134	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ata	Muhammad	178474	Driver	WO 167/1437
Att	Mohd		Sowar	
Atta	Mohd	170613	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Ayub	Shah	47220	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Azad		172319	Driver	WO 167/1437
Aziz	Ullah	28503	Driver	WO 167/1437
Aziz	A	48714	Driver	WO 344/360
Aziza		38714	Driver	WO 167/1437
Azizul	Rehman	171586	Driver	WO 167/1437
Babu	Lall	171928	Sweeper	WO 167/1437
Baga or Bagga	Khan	46800	Driver	WO 167/1437
Bagh	Ali	26789	Driver	WO 167/1437
Bagh	Ali dupe?	42378	Driver	WO 167/1437

Bagh	Ali dupe?	52378	Driver	
Bagh	Ali	29234	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Bahadur	Shah	27355	Driver	WO 167/1437
Bakar		TB - 24512	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Bari	Sher	178785	Driver	WO 167/1437
Barkat	Ali	TB-45179	QMD	WO 167/1437
Basanta		TB 41247	Sweeper	WO 167/1437
Bhajini	Ram			WO 106/5881
Bijli	Khan	170624	Driver	WO 167/1437
Biran	Ali	44567	Farrier	
Bostan	Khan	27549	Lance Naik	WO 179/5881
Bostan		174774	Driver	WO 167/1437
Bostan	Khan	177157	Driver	WO 167/1437
Bostan		177253	Driver	WO 167/1437
Buland	Khan	780062	Mess servant	WO 167/1437
Burhan	Ali	TB 46567	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Chan	Khan	174208	Driver	WO 167/1437
Dilbar	Khan	170615	Naik	WO 167/1437
Ditta		26781	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Dost	Mohd	49149	Driver	WO 167/1437
Dost	Mohd	57123	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Dost	Mohd	178215	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Dost	Mohd	178787	Driver	WO 167/1437
Dost	Mohd	TB 57183?	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Essa	Khan	170616	Driver	WO 167/1437
Faiz Ullah	Khan	24212	Naik	WO 167/1437
Faiz Ullah	Khan	180930	Driver	WO 167/1437
Falik	Sher	177142	Driver	WO 167/1437
Faqir	Mohd	26357	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Faqir	Mohd	172995	Driver	WO 167/1437
Farman	Ali	172328	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fateh	Khan	27001	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fateh	Khan	63021	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fateh	Khan	170617	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fateh	Khan	178822	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fateh	Mohd	TB 181304	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Dad	27256	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Dad	27524	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Hussain	28501	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Ahmad	52614	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal		172312	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Karim	175930	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Dad	176873	Driver	WO 167/1437
Fazal		780063	Cook	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Rakhman	TB 41878	Hammerman	WO 167/1437
Fazal	Qadar		Lance Naik	
Feroze	Khan	173863	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghaus	Mohd	V 152	Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Ghazi	Shah	175164	Driver	WO 167/1437
Gheba	Khan	TB 24519	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Gherba	Khan	173277	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Rasul	17461	Naik	Fauji Akhbar
Ghulam	Haider	26361	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Hussain	28276	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Ali	52125	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Ghulam	Ali	52126	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Hussain or Hassan	172848	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Ahmed	172853	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Hussain	173389	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Haider	173410	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Mohd	173672	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Haider	177140	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Mustafa	780061	Bellows boy	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Hussain	780723	Barber	WO 167/1437

Ghulam	Razul	TB- 171461 or 17461	Naik	WO 167/1437
Ghulam	Hussain	TB 55048 or 65046	Hammerman	WO 167/1437
Gul	Badshah	8165	Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Gul	Zaman	178378	Driver	WO 167/1437
Gul	Khan	TB 23091	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Gulab		TB 172743 or 172748	Groom	WO 167/1437
Gulab or Gululab	Khan	46421	Driver	WO 167/1437
Gulzar	Khan	24231	Driver	WO 167/1437
Gulzar		52272	Driver	WO 167/1437
Gustasab	Khan	TB 177315	Water carrier	WO 167/1437
Hadayat	Shah	180351	Driver	WO 167/1437
Hari	Singh	TB 172734	Sweeper	WO 167/1437
Hashmat	Ali	49869	Driver	WO 167/1437
Hassan	Khan	174747	Driver	
Henry Collier Renny	Laslett		Lieut	WO 167/1437
HS	Molhatra		WO	
Hussain	Bux	TB 57126	Blacksmith	WO 167/1437
Hussain	Khan	V-1863	Sowar	WO 167/1437
Illahi	Bux	TB 62778	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Imam	Din	49549	Naik	WO 167/1437
Inayat	Ali	180396	Driver	WO 167/1437
Inayat Ullah	Khan		Jemadar	WO 179/5920
Jahan	Dad	25769	Driver	WO 167/1437
Jamil	Khan		Daffadar	WO 106/5881
Jan	Muhammad	178819	Driver	WO 167/1437
Jehan	Dad	7751	Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Juma(n)	Khan	TB 176916	Groom	WO 167/1437
Kaim	Khan	26939	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Kala	Khan	27925	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Kala	Khan	27928	Driver	WO 167/1437
Kala		28064	Driver	WO 167/1437
Kala		28371	Driver	WO 167/1437
Kala		TB 30106	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Karam	Dad	24303	Jemadar	
Karam	Dad	28319	Driver	WO 167/1437
Karam	Illahi	173511	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Karam	Illahi	TB 177316	Groom	WO 167/1437
Karam	Hussain	TB 178910 or 178810	Acting Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Karam	Illahi	TB 57117	Groom	WO 167/1437
Karam Hussain	Shah	52805	Driver	WO 167/1437
Karan	Dad	24303	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1437
Karima		26835	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Keba	Khan	46423	Lance Naik	
Khadam	Hussain	180327 or 180317	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Mohd	8256	Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Khan	Nawab	26015	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Khan	Mohd	26362	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Bahadur	48333	Naik	WO 167/1437
Khan	Mohd	52386	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Mohd	174717	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Zaman	180522	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Zaman	280936	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khan	Zaman	TB 170236	Groom	WO 167/1437
Khan	Gul	TB 173286	Groom	WO 167/1437
Khuda	Dad	174460	Driver	WO 167/1437
Khushal	Khan	25730	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lall		28037	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Lall	Khan	50221	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lall	Khan	170129	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lall	Hussain	173676	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lall	Khan	175032	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lall	Khan	48953 or 48593	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Lall		TB 26193	Driver	WO 167/1437
Lalu		TB 181093/8	Sweeper	WO 167/1437
Lawrence William	Hitchcock		Major	WO 167/1437
Mahmud	Khan	178680	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mahmud			Driver	WO 106/5881
Mahndi	Khan			WO 106/5881

Manga		24383	Naik	WO 167/1437
Mangu	Khan	172020	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mansab	Din	170603	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mansab	Dar	171478	Naik or L/N	WO 373/64
Mansabdardar	Khan	26528	Naik	WO 167/1437
Maskin	Khan	179182	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Mian	Khan	V-1614	Sowar	WO 167/1437
Mir	Zaman	780722	Barber	WO 167/1437
Mir	Dad	177382 or 177282	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mir	Alam	TB 172826	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mir	Zaman	TB 177395	Bootmaker	WO 167/1437
Miskin	Khan	179812	Driver	WO 167/1437
Misri		63013	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Mohabat or Mohbat	Shah	172835	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Karim	22658	Carpenter	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Hussain	28062	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Hussain	28600	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Khan	28867	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sarwar	29938	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Khan	49155	Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Zaman	49935	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Hussain	52464	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Khan	170601	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Din	173419	Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Nawaz	173515	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ali	173694	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Yusuf	174215	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Jan	174247	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Yusuf	174679	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sharif or Sharaf	175244	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sadiq	176868	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sher	177149	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Zaman	177540	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Shumar	177746	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ishaq	178270	Driver	WO 106/588 pic 5789
Mohd	Akbar	178377	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Hussain	178477	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ramzan	178633	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Fazal	178812	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Khan	180457	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ayub	180462	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Zaman	180969	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sharif	180971	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ashraf	780724	Dhobi	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sabar	178222 or 179222	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sarwar	26356 or 126356	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Zaman	F 120028	Clerk	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sadiq	H/1377	Nursing sepoy	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ramzan	TB 177437	Bellows boy	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Sadiq	TB 179262	Driver	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Anwar	TB 181097	Water carrier	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ibrahim	TB 22005	Blacksmith	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Wali	TB 27538	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Shafi	TB 28569	Cook	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Azam	TB 29385	Cook	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Ghani	TB 51886	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Hussain	TB 59303 or 95303	Bootmaker	WO 167/1437
Mohd	Afzal	V 2571	Sowar	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Mohd Ashraf	Khan	174775	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1437
Mohd Wali	Khan	TB ?25539 or 26530	Groom	WO 167/1437
Mughal	Khan	TB 24527	Farrier	WO 167/1437
Muhammad	Qazim or Qasim	179263	Driver	WO 167/1437
Muhammad	Sadiq	180624	Driver	WO 167/1437
Muhammad	Iqbal	181261	Driver	WO 167/1437
Muhammad	Aslam	178386	Driver	WO 167/1437
Munshi	Ahmed	180625	Driver	WO 167/1437
Munsibdar		177478	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Musahib	Khan	27015	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Muzaffar	Khan	170348	Driver	WO 167/1437



Muzaffar	Khan	180934	Driver	WO 167/1437
Naiz Ali	Shah	173877	Driver	WO 167/1437
Nawab	Khan	TB 60283	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Nazar	Mohd	180298	Driver	WO 167/1437
Nazar	Khan	180672	Driver	WO 167/1437
Nek	Mohd	172998	Driver	WO 167/1437
Niamat	Khan	173676 or 173673	Naik	WO 167/1437
Nur	Hussain	180350	Driver	WO 167/1437
Paında	Khan	178793	Driver	WO 167/1437
Pasand	Khan	173499	Driver	WO 167/1437
Pinoo	Khan	26784	Driver	WO 167/1437
Pinoo	Khan	63648	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41
Qaim	Din	179267	Driver	WO 167/1437
Qaim	Din	179221	Driver	WO 167/1437
Qamar	Din	49942	Driver	WO 167/1437
Qasim	Shah	180873	Driver	WO 167/1437
Rahim	Ali	180813	Carpenter	
Rahim	Dad	172971	Driver	WO 167/1437
Rahm or Rahim or Reham	Ali	TB 24533	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Rahmat	Ullah	65783	Driver	WO 167/1437
Raj	Wali	174968	Driver	WO 167/1437
Raja	Khan	179220	Driver	WO 167/1437
Ramzan		180399	Driver	WO 167/1437
Rehaa ?	Ali	TB- 180813	Carpenter	WO 167/1437
Rehin	Dad	174973	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Roda		28146	Driver	WO 167/1437
Roda	Khan	44666	Naik	WO 167/1437
Safri	Khan	177332 or 177732	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sahib	Din	177439	Driver	WO 167/1437
Said	Mohd	172839	Driver	WO 167/1437
Said	Mohd	174403	Driver	WO 167/1437
Said	Ahmed	177238	Driver	WO 167/1437
Said	Ali	TB 177497 or 177479	Groom	WO 167/1437
Said	Alam	TB 29459	Hammerman	WO 167/1437
Said Ahmed	Shah	780271 or 780721	Maulvi	WO 167/1437
Saif	Ali	G/11927	Ward servant	WO 167/1437
Samundar	Khan	50218	Driver	WO 167/1437
Samundar	Khan	173296 or 174296	Driver	WO 167/1437
Samundar	Khan	TB 29731	Groom	WO 167/1437
Samundar	Khan	178611	Driver	WO 167/1437

Samundar or Samandar	Khan	27154	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sangar	Khan	52733	Driver	WO 167/1437
Saraj	Din	173878	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sardar	Khan	174307	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sardar	Khan		Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Sardar or Sirdar	Khan	170622	Driver	WO 167/1437
Satar	Muhammad	177243	Driver	WO 167/1437
Saudagar	Khan	172845	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sayed Mohd	Ishaq	239	Jemadar	WO 106/5881
Shadman		25660	Driver	WO 167/1437
Shah	Zaman	TB-170161 or 170551 or 170151	Bellows boy	WO 167/1437
Shah Baz	Khan	175527	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sham	Dil	177000	Driver	WO 167/1437
Shara	Khan	TB 170152	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Sharaf	Shah	29235	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Sher	Zaman	49892	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Sher	Ahmed Khan	174694	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sher	Baz	177848	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sher	Ahmad	179180	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sher	Mohd	TB 180912	Bellows boy	WO 167/1437
Sheru	Khan	28033	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437
Sikandar	Khan	180521	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sohbat	Ali	179258	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sokhi or Sakhi	Mohd	TB 180491	Saddler	WO 167/1437
Sowar	Khan	173278	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sultan	Mohd	28372	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sultan	Mohd	179178	Driver	WO 167/1437
Sultan	Mohd	180802	Driver	WO 167/1437
Taj	Mohd	TB 173231	Driver	WO 167/1437
Thomas William Price	Hexley	ST/222	Staff Sgt	WO 167/1437
Umar	Din	170596	Driver	WO 167/1437
Umar	Hayat	TB 41233	Blacksmith	WO 167/1437
Walayat	Ali	TB 180735	Groom	WO 167/1437
Walayat	Shah	179177	Driver	WO 167/1437
Wali	Dad	28870	Naik	WO 167/1437
Wali Mohd	Khan	1890	Jemadar	WO 167/1437
Waris	Khan	172999	Driver	WO 167/1437
Waris Ali	Khan	51687	Driver	WO 167/1437

## 25 Animal Transport Company

Part of the original K6, stationed near Lille, escaped through Dunkirk on May 29<sup>th</sup>. Personnel included Akbar and Jamal Khan. The first company to go to Scotland.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abdul	Khan	26873	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdul	Khan	171004	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdul	Ghani	175576	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdul	Ghani	176734	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdul	Rahman	177018	Driver	
Abdul	Hamid	179896	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdul	Jabbar	171348 or 171318	Lance Naik	
Abdul	Jabar		Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Abdullah	Khan	171667	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ahmed	Khan	780920	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Alaf	Din	63942	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Alfred Euston Bonneville	Field		S/Conductor	WO 167/1438
Ali	Gauhar	26863	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ali	Akbar	30185	Driver	WO 177/2262
Ali	Bahadur	59383	Daffadar	
Ali	Gour	174145	Naik	
Ali	Sher	178102	Driver	
Ali	Khan	178245	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Allah	Din	1435	Sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Allah	Ditta	22417	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Allah	Ditta	78011	Barber	
Allah	Dad	172939	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Allah	Lok	177869	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886
Allah Yar	Khan	180605	Driver	
Amir	Zaman	V2406	Sowar	
Atta Ullah	Khan	177071	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Badar	Din	173773	Naik	
Bagga	Khan	174301	Naik	
Bahadur	Khan	178352	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Baqa	Mohd	46333	Nursing sepoy	
Barkat	Hussain	180381	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Bashir	Hussain		Jemadar	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Bhag	Din	63412	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Bhartu		175899	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Bostan	Khan	26959	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Bostan		30093	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Budar	Din		Naik	
Charagh	Din	780109	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Dadu	Khan	173022	Driver	WO 179/5881
Deen	Mohd	173938	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Dost	Mohd	27352	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Dost	Mohd	173309	Naik	
Dost	Mohd	174295	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Faqir	Mohd	43754	Driver	
Faqir	Mohd	TC 27456	Driver	
Farman	Ali	28848	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Farzand Ali	Shah	175870	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fateh	Din	61172	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fateh	Muhammad	171131	Driver	
Fateh	Mohd	178760	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fatteh	Khan	TC 29577	Farrier	

Fazal	Dad	46723	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal	Karim	52074	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal	Dad	170116	M/Svt	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal	Karim	173916	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal	Dad	174183	Jemadar	WO 373/89 and WO 167/1438
Fazal	Din	180609	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal	Dad	181128	Driver	
Fazal	Ahmad	780345	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazal Ajaib	Shah	52786	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Fazand Ali	Shah		Lance Naik	
Feroz	Deen	173939	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Gani	Khan	175843	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ghulam	Din	28840	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ghulam	Hussain	176797	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ghulam	Mohd	179193	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Gul	Din	TC 48308	Blacksmith	
Gulab	Khan	23275	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Gulab		23277	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Gulab	Khan	59527	Daffadar	
Gulab	Khan	59529	Daffadar	
Gulzar	Khan	177232	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Habib	Shah	180687	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Haidar	Khan	28337	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Hasham	Din	26885 or 26285	Naik	
Hayat	Mohd	175064	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Hayat	Mohammad	181301	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Hukam	Dad	23298	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Hukam	Dad	29777	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Ibrahim		176909	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Inayat	Ali		Risaldar	
Jabbar	Singh	27103	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Jalal	Khan	23578	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Jalal	Din		Risaldar	WO 167/1438
Jalal	Shah		Jemadar	WO 167/1438
Jamal	Din	175795	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Jamal	Khan	180617	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Jan	Mohd	170301	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
JG	Wainwright		Major	WO 167/143
Jumman		61880	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Kala	Khan	52071	driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Kallandar	Khan	59592	Naik	
Kallandar	Khan	177787	Driver	
Kaloo		23580	Hammerman	
Karam	Sher	28584	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Karam	Dad	43153	Saddler	
Karam	Bux	177074	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Karam	Dad	8578 or 8878	Jemadar	
Karam	Bux	V2471	Sowar	
Karim	Dad	28627	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Khadam	Hussain		Jemadar	
Khair	Din	60837	Blacksmith	
Khuda	Bux	21794	Lance Naik	WO 373/89

Khushi	Mohd	27443	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Khushi	Mohd	49056	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Kurbain	Hussain	176751	Driver	
Lal	Hussain	180690	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Lall	Khan	23362	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Lall	Khan	62611	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mahabbat	Khan	174423	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mahub	Alam	180499	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Makhan	Khan		Jemadar	
Mali or Malli	Khan	59302	Farrier	
Maula	Bux	174161	Driver	
Mehar	Din	50223	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mehdi	Khan	180100	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mehtab	Khan	173799	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mir	Alam	28574	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mir	Mohd	28846	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mir	Zaman	28964	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mir	Alam	29739	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mir	Zaman	44660	Jemadar	
Mir	Mohamed	173230	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Miran	Bux	TC 27465	Bellows boy	
Mirza	Khan	175971	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Misri		30249	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohamed	Khan	48677	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohammad	Ajab	29806	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Zaman	23396	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Shafi	170539	Driver	
Mohd	Aziz	170647	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Afsar	171739	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	172029	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sadiq	172795	Driver	
Mohd	Khan	172796	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	173127	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	173383	Driver	
Mohd	Din	173757	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Jawan	174378	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Din	174715	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Din	174735	Lance Naik	
Mohd	Jalal	175917	Bellows boy	WO 179/5879
Mohd	Nawaz	176732	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Lal	177208	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Zaman	177598	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Ali	177864	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	178186	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Qasim	178458	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Bux	178607	Driver	
Mohd	Shafi	179326	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sarwar	179437	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Yusuf	179457	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Zaman	180988	Driver	
Mohd	Akram	181062	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	181161	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Sharif	266882	Driver	
Mohd	Arif	780112	Maulvi	
Mohd	Boota	781061	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Feroze	V-2562	Sowar	WO 179/5879

Mohd Abdul	Ghani	174429	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd Akbar	Khan		Major	WO 167/143
Mohd Alam	Khan	29142	Naik	
Mohd Hussain	Khan	SR 18870	LD Clerk	
Mohd Jamshaid	Khan	V213	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd Nabi	Khan	V 2441	Sowar	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd Sulaiman	Aslam	2398	Jemadar	WO 167/1438
Mohd Suleman	Aslam		Jemadar (IMD)	
Mohd Suleman	Khan		Jemadar (VAS)	WO 167/1438
Mokhmad	Shah	22911	Naik	
Mubarak	Khan	42626	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Muhammad	Sarwar	175697	Driver	
Muhammad	Yusuf	178764	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Muhammad	Yar	179441	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Munshi	Khan		Jemadar	
Murad Ali	Shah	175847	Jemadar	
Muzaffar	Khan	178269	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Naser	Din	30022	Driver	
Nawab	Din	178347	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nizam	Din	7273	Jemadar	WO 167/1438
Nizam	Din	23460	Daffadar	LWS/1/131 f113
Nur	Hussain	170889	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nur	Hussain	173466	driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nur	Khan	179503	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nur	Muhammad	179531	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nur	Mohd	180422	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Nur	Ahmad		Jemadar	
Nur Mohd	Khan	29141	Naik	WO 373/89
Pahlwan	Khan	173734	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Palu		180682	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Pehlwan	Khan	174416	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Phor	Dil	179140	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Pinnu		29064	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Qutab Din	Khan		Risaldar	
Rab	Nawaz	8241 or 2841	Jemadar	WO 167/1438
Rahmat	Ullah	30023	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Raj	Mohd	62624	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Raj	Mohammed	181359	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Rakha		59343	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Rangi	Khan	171386	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Rehmat	Ullah	23597	Farrier	
Roland Noel Pearson	Cole		Captain	WO 167/143
Safdar	Khan	172036	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Said	Mohd	28134	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Said	Mohd	65342	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Said Ullah	Khan	26860	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Saida	Khan	44535	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Saif	Ali	29992	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Saifullah		62512	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Saini	Ahmed	45065	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sajawal	Khan	175564	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sajawal	Khan		Jemadar	
Sakhi	Mohd	170897	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sammundar	Khan	29964	driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sawar	Khan	29514	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41

Sawar	Khan	177196	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Shafait	Ali	23509	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Shafi	Khan	TC 57135	Farrier	
Shah	Wali	29654	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Shah	Nawaz	178761	Naik	
Shah Wali	Khan	186	Jemadar (VAS)	WO 167/1438
Shahab	Ud-Din	177366	Driver	
Shamas	Din	180688	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Shaukar	Din	46369	Driver	
Sheikh	Din		Risaldar	WO 167/1438
Sher	Mohd	27091	Troop Daffadar	WO 373/89
Sher	Dil	60373	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sher Ali	Khan	30306	Naik	
Sher Dil	Khan	171542	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sher Mohd	Khan	173822	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sikandar	Khan	64716	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sohna	Khan	28249	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sowar	Khan	29738	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
ST	Ahmed	TC 23650	Water carrier	

Suba	Khan	180455	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Suleman		781598	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sultan	Mohd	30217	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sultan	Khan	173700	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sultan	Khan	180052	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Sultan	Ali	SR 18249	UD Clerk	WO 167/1438
Syed Mohd	Amin or Hussain	766378	Sepoy clerk	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Taus	Khan	27282	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Tikka	Khan	28625	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Umar Hayat	Khan		Jemadar	
Waje	Singh	815932	Driver	Wilayeti Nov 43?
Walait	Shah	27028	Daffadar	L/WS/1/131 f113
Walayat	Khan	174831	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Walayat	Aslam		Jemadar (SAS)	WO 167/1438
Walayat	Shah		Jemadar	WO 167/1438
Wilayat	Khan	171048	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41

## 29 Animal Transport Company

Part of the original K6, stationed near Le Mans, escaped through St Nazaire. Stationed at Rossington Hall. Personnel included Driver Abdul Ghani.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
?	Mohd	7741692	Bellows boy	WO 179/5912
Abdul	Rahman	12831	Ward servant	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Rakhman	61961	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Rehman	63970	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Latif	173958	Daffadar	WO 179/5912
Abdul	Razaq	174506	Blacksmith	WO 179/5912
Abdul	Aziz	178147	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Ghani	178415	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Karim	178829	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Rahman	179754	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Ghani	784139	Driver	
Abdul	Shakur		Jemadar	
Abdullah		65129	Carpenter	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdullah			Jemadar	
Adar	Bux	59313	Saddler	WO 179/5912
AG	Khan		2/Lt	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ahmad	Nawaz	8338	Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ahmad	Khan	175506	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ahmed		170178	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ali	Sher	56106	Driver	
Ali	Hussain	62248	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ali	Mohd	62356	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ali	Mardan	177951	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Ali	Akbar	780951	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ali	Bahadur	V 94	Jemadar	
Ali Mohd	Khan	181224	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Allah	Din	180751	Cook	
Allah	Rakha	780043	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Allah Dad	Khan	180543	driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Amir	Khan	59829	Farrier	
Amir	Khan	171585	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Amir	Zaman	178092	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Amir	Zaman		Lance Naik	
Atta	Mohd	171179	Driver	WO 179/5912
Bagh	Ali	172577	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Barkat	Ali	178583	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Barkat	Ali	181719	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Bashir	Ahmad	178687	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Chanoo		30163	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Chuni		63803	Sweeper	WO 179/5912
Dhuman	Khan	173855	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Diwan	Ali	179318	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Dost	Mohd	65845	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Dost	Mohd	178748	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Dost	Mohd	179312	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Edmund Cecil Boyd	Shannon		Major	WO 167/143
Faqir	Mohd	50439	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Faqir	Mohd	58176	Daffadar	
Fateh	Khan	57230	Risaldar	
Fateh	Ali	59219	Blacksmith	WO 179/5912
Fateh Haid	Shah	SR 18236	UD Clerk	
Fazal	Mohd	65003	Daffadar	

Fazal	Ahmed	65334	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Fazal	Dad	172034	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Fazal	Hussain	173520	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Fazal	Ahmad	173876	Saddler	
Fazal	Din	174980	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Fazal	Hussain	175877	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886
Fazal	Khan	781630	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Fazal	Ahmed	53458 or 58458	Saddler	
Fazal	Elahi		Naik	
Firoz	Shah or Khan	179464	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Mohd	26051	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Ali	26547	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Mohd	59296	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Mohd	170533	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Rasul	175841	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ghulam	Rasul	179791	Lance Naik	
Ghulam	Haider		Jemadar	
Ghulam Mohd	Khan	180354	Acting Lance Naik	
Gul	Zaman	64086	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Gulab		63671	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Gulzar	Hussain	180939	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Habib	Khan	179352	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Haji	Ahmed	64941	Hammerman	
Hakam	Din	170382	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Hashmat	Khan	177956	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Hukam	Dad	85763	Driver	
Imam	Din	171235	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Iqbal	Shah	780953	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ishtiaq	Ahmed	AC 293	Jemadar	WO 179/5880
Jafar	Ali	58463	Blacksmith	
Jahan	Dad	50597	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Jahan	Dad	58235	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Jumma	Khan	58465	Saddler	
Kala	Khan	61964	Driver	
Kala	Khan	62802	Driver	
Karam	Din	59300	Farrier	
Khan	Mulk	58264	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Khani	Zaman	172665	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Khatab	Ali	20591	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Khawas	Khan	175224	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Kudrub or Quadrat	Illahi	51926	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Lal	Khan	173842	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Lall	Khan	85257	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Lall	Khan	177420	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Latif	Shah	50503	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Maila		65711	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Makhan	Din	178796	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Malik Mohd	Khan		Jemadar	
Mangli		64117	sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Manzur	Hussain	176848	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Manzur	Alam	V 258	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41

Maqbul	Shah	172000	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mehar	Din	48230	Saddler	
Mehdi	Khan	65229	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mehtab	Din	171431	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mir	Alam		Risaldar	Hamid Hussain pc
Mir	Zaman	26988	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mirza	Khan	177237	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mithoo	Khan	49604	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohamed	Zaman	28693	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Khan	22287	Farrier	
Mohd	Akbar	30086	Naik	
Mohd	Afsar	51375	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Khan	52051	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Hussain	58473	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Aslam	61657	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Akbar	63029	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Zaman	64666	Saddler	
Mohd	Hussain	65207	Saddler	WO 179/5912
Mohd	Ali	65660	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Ayub	170119	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Sher	172933	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Sarwar	174979	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Saleh	175201	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Jee	175269	Driver	
Mohd	Hussain	175894	Water carrier	WO 179/5912
Mohd	Afsar	180384	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Amir	180547	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Amir ?dupe	189547	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Afzal	740638	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Shaffi	780581	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mohd	Sadiq	782734	Driver	
Mohd	Alam		Jemadar	
Mohd	Ramzan		Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Muhammad	Sharif	171032	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Muhammad	Ayub	178455	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Muhammad	Zaman	180822	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Muhammad Ismail	Khan	180539	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Mukhtar	Khan	30155	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Munshi	Khan	65678	Lance Naik	
Muzaffar	Khan	174189	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Naushirwan or Nausherwan		172452	QMD	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Nawab	Khan	63032	Lance Naik	
Nawab	Din	65847	Troop Daffadar	
Noor	Hussain	52482	Driver	
Noor	Husain		Risaldar	WO 179/5879
Nur	Alam	170820	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41

Nur	Khan	780181	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Parkash Chandra	Khanna		Lieut	
Pehlwan		45079	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Pehlwan		174663	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Pir	Bux	65623	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Qutab	Mohd	178685	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Rab	Nawaz	180548	Driver	
Rahmat	Ali	766404	S/CD or Driver	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Rais Amjad Hussain	Shah	177799	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Raj Mohd	Khan	63628	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Ramzan		25095	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Rehmat		58377	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Robert	Debon		Sergeant	WO 167/143, 3/1/40
Roshan	Khan	179420	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sadullah		50290	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sahib	Khan	181585	Dhobi	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Said	Ahmad	63112	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Said	Rasul	181023	cook	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Said	Mohd		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sain		65659	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sajhar or Sujhar	Khan	175451	Daffadar	L/WS/1/131 f113
Sardar	Ali	11223	Driver	WAH
Satar	Din	177533	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Shah	Farman	179553	Driver	
Shah	Sawar	740521	Saddler	WO 179/5912
Sham Sher	Khan	178650	Lance Naik	
Sher	Jung	29063	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sher	Khan	63124	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sher	?Baz	63197	Naik	
Sher	Zaman	64570	Naik	
Sher	Dil	170271	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sher	Zaman	173587	Driver	
Sher	Mohd	178697	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sher	Bahadur	180426	Driver	
Shoda	Khan	47787	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Stephen Alfred	Lowman		Captain	WO 167/143
Sultan	Ahmed	176815	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Sultan	Mohd	177077	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Syed Bashir	Ahmed	177690	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Terence Allan	Shurlock		Captain	WO 167/143
Wali	Dad	170134	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Wali	Dad	174134	Naik	
Yaqub	Khan	175582	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Zaffar	Hussain		Jemadar	

## 32 Animal Transport Company

Part of the original K6, stationed at Orchies and Bourghelles, escaped through Dunkirk on May 25<sup>th</sup>. Personnel included Choudry Wali Mohamed and John Ashdown. Stationed at Steep Holm.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
?aris	Ali	177313	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
?Manda		176774	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Latif	174581	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Khaliq	177006	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Khan	180668	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Aziz	181198	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Ghani	189589	Maulvi	WO 167/1440
Abdul	Latif	781891	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul	Ghani	171223 or 181223	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdul Rakhman	Khan	175927	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Abdulla	Khan	170605	Naik	WO 373/16
Abdular		181108	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ahmad	Khan	49340	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ahsan Uddin	Sadiqui	SR 18660	Clerk	
Ajaib	Hussain	170012	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Akbar	Khan	172554	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Akbar	Khan	172730	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Akbar	Khan	175471	Groom	
Akbar	Khan	780521	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Alam	Sher	85246	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Alam	Khan	179346	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ali	Mohd	52028	Driver	
Ali	Zaman	178104	driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ali	Afsar	181112	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ali	Mohd	30320 or 30321	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Allah	Ditta	171710	Driver	
Allah	Rakha	171817	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Allah	Dad	175027	Driver	
Allah	Dad	743785	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Allah	Rakha		Driver	WO 179/5917
Allah Dad	Khan	173812	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Allah Yar	Khan	V2539	Sowar	
Amanat	Khan	180451	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Amir	Khan	20496	Cook	
Amir	Hussain	25829	Risaldar	
Anait	Shah	11928 IC	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Asghar	Ali	65635	Farrier	CWG list
Ashraf	Khan	175502	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Atta	Mohd	180779	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Aurangzeb	Khan	28748	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ayub	Khan	172303	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ayyam	Khan	171453	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ayyub	Khan		CDM	WO 179/5917
Aziz-ul-	Rahman	170626	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Badar	Din	170993	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Bagga	Khan		Driver	F2497
Bagh	Ali	26238	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Bagh Ali	Khan	175929	Driver	
Bagh Hussain	Shah	30121	Jemadar	WO 179/5917
Bagoo	Khan	65017	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Bhola		171122	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Bilor	Ali	24575	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Bostan		52652	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
BS	Lindorn		2/Lt	
Burhan	Ali		Lance Naik	F2498
Chanu		174326	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Dilawar	Khan	174289	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Dost	Mohd	176798	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Dost	Mohd	175165	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Faqir	Mohd	28325	Driver	
Faqir	Mohd	29682	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Faqir	Mohammad	180461	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Faqir Mohd	Khan	2229	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41

Faqira		45221	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Farman	Khan	TB 41502	A/Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Farman	Khan		Naik	F2502
Fateh	Shah	175372	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fateh	Khan	175454	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fateh	Khan	179775	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fateh	Khan	180628	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fattah		57235	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fatteh	Khan		Daffadar	
Fazal	Dad	29826	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Dad	170764	Driver	
Fazal	Ahmed	170994	Groom	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Karim	173874	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Hussain	174302	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Dad	174905	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Karim	177397	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Fazal	Dad		Naik	
George Frederick	Martin		Major	WO 167/143
Ghulab	Khan	170759	Lance Naik	
Ghulab	Khan	175820	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Hussain	27845	Carpenter	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Hussain	28829	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Haider	29908	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Mohd	30218	Blacksmith	
Ghulam	Mohd	46325	Nursing sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Mohd	61052	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Mohd	178418	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Nabi	178462	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Sarwar	180371	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Qadir	180619	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Mohd	210445	Ward servant	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ghulam	Mohd III		Jemadar	
Ghulam	Mohd IV		Jemadar	
Guggar		21534	Farrier	
Gul	Aftab	173578	Lance Naik	
Gulab		30194	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Gulzar	Khan		Jemadar	WO 373/16
Haidar	Shah	62523	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Haq Nawaz	Khan	V 260	Jemadar	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Hashmat	Ali	172576	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Hasmat	Ali		WO	L/Ws/1/355
Hayat	Mohd	45057	Saddler	
Ibrahim		172524	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Ibrahim			Naik	WO 179/5917
Imam	Din	21537	Saddler	
Iqbal	Mohd	177030	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Iqbal	Hussain	178322	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jaffar	Khan	TB 59575	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jaffar	Khan	27029	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jahan	Dad	48465	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jahan	Dad	180865	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jahan	Dad	780525	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jalal	Din	27088	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Jalal	Din	29764	Water carrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
James AK	O'Hara		Major	WO 167/143
John WRD	Ashdown		Captain	WO 167/143
Kala	Khan	20221	Nursing sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Kala		28122	Cook	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Kala	Khan	51697	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Kala	Khan	173810	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Kala	Khan	174310	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Kala	Khan	175226 or 175266	Driver	
Kala	Khan		Jemadar	H21636
Kamal	Khan	63394	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41

Kamar	Din	63616	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Karam	Elahi	41366	Carpenter	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Karam	Khan	51004	Hammerman	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Karim		63390	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Karim	Ullah		Tp Daffadar	F2496
Kasam	Ali	783329	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Khadam		27233	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Khan	Mohd	28497	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Khan	Mohd	52323	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Khan	Mohd	172970	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Khan	Mohd	180453	Driver	
La?		30140	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Labhu		26466	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lal	Khan		Risaldar	WO 179/5917
Lal Pir	Shah	780503	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall	Khan	30198	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall	Din or Khan	59333	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall	Khan	63840	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall	Hussain	176996	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall		793266	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Lall	Din	45575 or 45573	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mahbub	Khan	25970	Daffadar	LWS/1/131 f113
Mahmood	Hussain	174941	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Makhan		301349	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Makhan	Khan		Daffadar	
Makhan		30149	Daffadar	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Manda		170774	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mangi	Khan	174314	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mangi Sher	Khan	178016	Sepoy	
Mansabdard		172332	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Maula Dad	Khan		Jemadar	WO 373/16
Meharban	Ali	29879	Naik	
Mehr	Khan	180454	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mian	Khan	174179	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mian	Mohd		Jemadar	WO 179/5917
Mir	Afzal	20288	Nursing sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mir	Dad	29827	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mir	Mohd	170661	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mir	Ghulam	172313	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mir Hussain	Shah	180516	Driver	
Mirza		29584	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohabat	Khan	172021	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohammed		788572	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Azam	30058	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Hussain	41687	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Ashraf	52542	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Amin	57560	Risaldar	WO 179/5917
Mohd	Shafi	64971	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Jawan	171475	Driver	
Mohd	Sarwar	173026	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Fazal	173668	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Akbar	174096	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Ashraf	174291	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Sadiq	174524	Driver	
Mohd	Asgar	175107	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Alam	175247	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Niwaz	175445	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Hussain	178419	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Shafi	180187	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Shafi	181560	Barber	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Zaman	787869	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Asghar	792922	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Khan	792930	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd	Nabi	V2142	Sowar	
Mohd	Ashraf		Driver	F2500
Mohd	Asghar		Driver	F2499
Mohd	Khan		Naik	WO 179/5917
Mohd Akbar	Khan	173395	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mohd Amin	Jaffery		Hav Clerk	WO 179/5917
Mohd Haidar	Shah	788544	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Mokarab	Khan	173883	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41

Muhammad	Zaman	27673	Driver	
Muhammad	Ayub	179264	Driver	
Mumtaz	Khan	177398	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nadir	Khan	175140	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nadir	Ali	175272	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nauroze	Khan	171622	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nawab		172201	Driver	
Nawab		173965	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nazir	Hussain	172526	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nazir	Ahmed	793319	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nazra	Khan	28702	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Niaz	Ali	180517	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nikka		25920 or 28920	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Noor	Khan	173282	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Noor	Hussain	174211	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Noor	Hassan	174610	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Noor	Mohd		Jemadar	
Noor	Mohd	741776	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nowab	Khan	180627	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nur	Hussain	21550	Blacksmith	
Nur	Alam	60846	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nur	Mohd	64178	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Nur	Din	176864	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Paltoo		181572 or 171572	Sweeper	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Pehalwan	Khan	788555	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Qadar	Shah	22013	Farrier	
Rahim	Dad	171754	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Rahmat	Ullah	781259	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Rattan	Singh		Lieut	WO 179/5917
Rehmat	Ullah	177147	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Resham	Khan	174682	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sadiq	Hussain	177590	Bootmaker	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Saif	Ali	63351	Driver	
Sain		181561	Barber	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sakandar	Shah	26522	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sakhi	Mohd	63995	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sakhi	Shah	172956	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sakhi	Muhammad	178590	Lance Naik	
Saleh	Mohammad	181174	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Saraj	Din	172514	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sardar		178652	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sarse	Khan	TB 21496	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sarwar	Khan	28815	Naik	
Sarwar	Khan	52392	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Saudagar	Khan	172510	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sharif	Khan	179750	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886
Sher	Mohd ?dupe	64132	Driver	WO 373/89
Sher	Alam	174946	Bellows boy	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sher	Khan	179253	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sher	Zaman	180251	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sher Ali	Khan	24596	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sher Ali	Khan		Naik	
Sher Mohd	Khan	?5463	Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Sikandar	Khan	52654	Driver	
Sirdar	Khan	21486	Daffadar	
Suleman		63461	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Suleman		177472	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Syed Amir-ud-Din	Jaffery		Lieut	WO 179/5917
Tafsir	Hussain	178463	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Taleh	Mohd	181562	Mess servant	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Tika	Khan	30142	Driver	
Tikka	Khan	49405	Driver	
Umar	Din	781542	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Walayat	Shah	29700	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Wali	Mohd	781597	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Wali	Mohd		QMD	WO 179/5917
Wali (Choudry)	Mohd	179215	Lance Naik	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Yaqub	Khan	175217	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Yaqub	Mirza			Zubair photo
Zaman	Ali	23065	Blacksmith	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Zaman	Ali	170205	Naik	LWS/1/355



## 42 Animal Transport Company

Joined K6 in 1941. Personnel included Nawazish Ali.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
?Mehtar	Khan	780786	Driver	WO 179/5882
Abdul	Karim	58107	Jemadar	WO 179/5918
Abdul	Qadar	175222	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Abdul	Aziz	178144	Lance Naik	
Abdul	Khan	780223	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Abdul	Ghani	780877	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Abdul	Aziz	785238	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Abdul	Khaliq	V 252	IWO	WO 179/5918
Abdul	Ghani		QMD	WO 179/5898
Abdullah		783179	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Abdullah		740028 798984	Blacksmith	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Akbar	Ali	50420	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Akbar	Khan	780792	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Alaf	Din	52034	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Alam		174952	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Ali	Mardan	28432	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Ali	Hussain	43138	Farrier	
Ali	Shah	176894	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ali	Mohd	780221	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ali	Bahadur	780479	Bellows boy	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ali	Mohammad	782044	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ali	Bahadur	783512	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Ali	Mohd	785237	Driver	WO 179/5920
Ali	Dad	V 2558	Sowar	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ali Dad	Khan	48492	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Allah	Ditta	171711	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Allah	Ditta	740284	Saddler	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Allah	Ditta	780980	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Allah	Dad	783592	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Allah Beli	Khan	783381	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Bahadur	Ali	172453	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Bahadur	Khan	781017	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Bari	Sher	64164	Driver	
Binya	Min	780771	Driver	
Chaudri	Khan	178349	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Dai	Ram	738184	Sweeper	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ditta	Khan	22420	Hammerman	
Ditta	Khan	27052	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Faiz	Alam	780033	Farrier	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Faqir	Mohd III		Jemadar	
Farzand	Ali	783446	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fateh	Mohd	26778	Driver	WO 179/5882
Fateh	Alam	27703	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Fateh	Mohd	63215	Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Fateh	Khan	780745	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fateh	Khan	780930	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fateh	Khan	780937	Driver	WO 179/5920
Fateh	Khan	786164	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fateh	Khan	788481	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fateh	Khan	63215 or 63216	Naik	
Fateh	Mohd		Risaldar	WO 179/5918
Fazal	Din	51860	Daffadar	
Fazal	Illahi	175829	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42

Fazal	Elahi	781353	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Fazal	Hussain	782069	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fazal	Mohd	783142	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Fazar Ali	Khan	170294	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gharib	Khan	29400	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gharib	Khan	89400	Lance Naik	WO 179/5920
Ghulam	Mohd	29070	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Ghulam	Haider	64569	Naik	
Ghulam	Mohd	65042	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ghulam	Muhammad	782094	Driver	
Ghulam	Mustafa	783146	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ghulam	Mohd	783217	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ghulam	Rasul	798996	Farrier	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Ghulam	Nabi	175734 or 175754	Lance Naik	WO 179/5882
Ghulam	Mohd	783455?	Driver	WO 179/5882
Ghulam	Ahmed	V 199	Risaldar	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Gohar	Ali	781041	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Gul	Hussain	62323	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gul	Zaman	174033	Saddler	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gul	Zaman	780765	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gul	?Fam	780795	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gul Hussain	Shah	181583	Bellows boy	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gulab	Khan	180819	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gulab	Khan	781056	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Gulfar or Gulfranz	Khan	780773	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Gulzar	Khan	781053	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Habib-ul-	Rahman	780759	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Hadayat	Ullah	783164	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Haider	Shah	780780	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Hakim	Din	181344	A/U/L/Nk	WO 179/5886
Hassan	Mohd	739584 / 798997	Cook	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Hussain		48289	Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Hussain		780758	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Ibrahim		64993	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Imam	Din	780232	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Imanat		783168	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Imdad	Ali	781931	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Irfan	Hussain	783973	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Jhan	Khan	780709	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Kala	Khan	64475	Daffadar	
Kala	Khan	174838	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Kala	Khan	178573	Water carrier	WO 179/5920
Kalu		50163	Driver	
Kalu		50167	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Kalu	Khan	780346	Hammerman	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Karam	Ilahi	170636	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Karam	Ali	780748	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Karam	Din	782736	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Khair	Mohd	780949	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Khushi	Mohd	85012	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Khushi	Mohd	85102	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Lal Hussain	Shah	780777	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42

Lall	Din	783272	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mahabat		175187	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mahbub	Alam	175105	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Malak	Dad	172831	Daffadar	
Manawar	Shah	780766	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Maskin	Khan	780772	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Massu		783676	Driver	WO 179/5920
Mawaz	Khan	780713	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Mehar?	Din	780986	Driver	WO 179/5882
Mehr Ali	Khan	784241	Driver	WO 179/5919
Mehraj	Din	780982	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mir	Hussain	50364	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Mir	Zaman	58238	Jemadar	
Mir	Zaman	174427	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mirza	Khan	782382	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Misri	Khan	49541	Daffadar	WO 179/5917
Misri	Khan	52313	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Misri		171347	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Khan	46697	Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Khan	51260	Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Din	170005	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Amir	173986	Lance Naik	
Mohd	Khan	178007	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Ajaib	780675	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Yar	780762	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Mohd	Sadiq	780770	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Nawaz	780798	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Mohd	Usaf	780799	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Yaqub	780805	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Ali	780941	Driver	WO 179/5882
Mohd	Akbar	780944	Lance Naik	
Mohd	Ismail	780955	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Suleman	780960	Driver	
Mohd	Suleman	780962	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Sharif	780981	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Hussain	781062	driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Yaqub	783972	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Azim	784643	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Zaman	785240	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd	Khan	786430	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Mohd	Yaqub	740241 / 799009	Saddler	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Mohd Afzal	Shah	179357	Naik	
Muhammad	Sadiq	172305	Naik	
Munshi	Khan	170401	Daffadar	WO 179/5880
Munshi?	Khan	174059	Driver	WO 179/5920
Muqarab		788571	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Nane	Khan		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Nasib	Khan	780934	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Nawazish	Ali	52778	QMD	WO 179/5918
Nek	Muhammad	175592	Lance Naik	
Niaz	Mohd	172592	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Niaz	Ali	781942	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Noor	Hussain	780921	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Noor	Mohd	782773	Driver	WO 177/2262
Nur	Ahmed	62723	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Nur	Ahmad	62737	Naik	
Nur	Muhammad	179341	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42

Nur	Mohd	780752	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Nur	Khan	781016	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Qadar	Dad	783619	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Qudrat	Elahi	51926	Naik	WO 179/5920
Qurban	Ali	780337	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Rehmat	Ullah	65625	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Rusmat	Khan	180256	Farrier	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Said	Ahmed	22379	Carpenter	
Said	Mohd	49158	Lance Naik	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Said	Alam	51162	Naik	
Saini	Ditta	783425	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sakhi	Mohd	780957	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Sakhi	Mohd	795898	Ward servant	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Saraj	Din	177278	Tailor	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sardar	Khan	740246	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Sardar	Mohd	781025	driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sardar	Mohd	785242	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sardar	Khan		Clerk	WO 179/5919
Sarwar	Khan	780690	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Shah	Mohd	741679	Blacksmith	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Shah	Mohd	783509	Driver	WO 179/5920
Shahadat	Khan	740247	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Shahib	Din	785423	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Shakar	Khan	176712	Driver	WO 179/5919
Sham	Dil	780735	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Shamal	Khan	780768	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Shazada	Khan	780954	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Shazullah	Khan	65104	Daffadar	WO 179/5920
Sher	Zaman	11925	Risaldar	WO 179/5919
Sher	Mohd	30263	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sher	Bahadur	64572	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sher	Mohd	178736	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Sher	Khan	780931	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sher Mohd	Khan	780243	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sikandar	Shah	180622	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Suleman		780518	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Sultan	Khan	175833	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Suraj	Din	783511	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Suraj	Din		Tailor	WO 179/5919
Taj	Mohd	180841	Lance Naik	
Taj	Din	782774	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Taj	Din	783149	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5
Taj	Din	786504	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Tufail	Mohd	781023	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Walait	Khan	783510	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Walayat	Khan	740245	driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Wali	Mohd	745948	Mess servant	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Wali	Mohd	781021	Driver	
Wali		783195	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Willayat	Hussain	181762	Farrier	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Yusaf	Khan	172263	A/U/L/Nk	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42
Zaman	Khan	62417	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/5/42

# Reinforcement Unit

Part of the original K6.

Name		Number	Rank	Source					
Abdul	Majid	27923	Daffadar		Fazal	Ahmed	780362	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41
Abdul	Ghani	175270	Driver	WO 167/1435	Fazal	Dad		Naik	WO 179/5886
Abdul	Ghani	176838	Tailor		Frederick Raymond Marmaduke	Thompson		Captain	WO 167/143
Abdul	Razaq	176838	Bootmaker	WO 179/5884	Ghulam	Mohd I	9588	P/A/Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Abdul	Ghani	178709	Tailor	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Mohd	47027	Farrier	WO 179/5884
Abdul	Khaliq	180236	Driver	WO 179/5886	Ghulam	Hussain	173662	Farrier	WO 167/1435
Abdul	Rahman	180250	Driver	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Mohd	178257	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Abdul	Rehman	181569	Dhobi	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Nabi	178361	Saddler	DGIMS 8/9/2/1941
Adal	Khan	178433	Driver	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Mustafa	178587	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Adal	Khan	181571	Lascar	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Nabi	179422	Driver	
Adalat	Khan	179763	Driver	WO 167/1435	Ghulam	Nabi	736004	Tinsmith	
Ahmed	Khan	181143	Driver	WO 179/5883	Ghulam	Ali	78?923	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Alaf	Din	TB 177674	Driver	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B	Gopal Gopa	Kumar		Lieut	WO 179/5886
Ali	Dad	47019	Daffadar		Gordon Ephraim Batty	Kellett		2/Lt	WO 179/5884
Ali	Sher	174417	Driver	WO 167/1435	Gul	Ahmed	29071	Naik	WO 167/1435
Ali	Sher	736019 or 136119 or 186119	Cook	WO 167/1435	Gul	Muhammad	172264	Driver	
Ali Bahadur	Khan	48210	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/6/41	Gul Hassan	Shah	58191	Lance Naik	WO 179/5883
Alla	Bux	?179527	Driver	WO 167/1435	Gulam	Hussain	85231	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Allah	Jawaya	173620	Naik		Gulzar	Khan	180896	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Amir	Khan	28496	Cook BT	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Gurdial	Singh		Captain	WO 179/5885
Amir	Alam	171098	Daffadar		HA	Majid		Lieut	WO 179/5886
Amir	Alam		Jemadar	WO 179/5885	Hadayat Ullah	Khan	179796	Driver	WO 167/1435
Amir Abdullah	Khan	46368	Nursing sepoy	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Haider	Khan	50703	Naik	
Anayat	Shah		Jemadar	WO 179/5884	Haider	Zaman		Naik	WO 179/5886
Arthur Fernley	Estlick	ST/211	S/Conductor	WO 179/5883	Hakam	Khan	780110	W/man	WO 179/5886
Atta	Mohd	174977	Driver	WO 167/1435	Hashmat	Ali	201	Jemadar (IMD)	WO 179/5884
Aurangzeb		181367	Bellows boy	WO 167/1435	Hassan			Risaldar	WO 179/5884
AV	Cowell		Lieut	WO 179/5884	Hayat	Mohd	22827	Bootmaker	WO 167/1435
AW	van Ollenbach		2/Lt	WO 179/5884	Horatio Frederick	Gillmore		Major	WO 167/143
Azizan	Shah	174744	Driver	WO 179/5883	Hukam	Dad	22667	Bootmaker	WO 179/5886
Baloch	Khan	175406	Lance Naik	WO 179/5886	Hukam	Dad		Jemadar	
Barkat	Ali	783274	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42	Ilyas Asghar	Shah		Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Bostan		29893	Driver	WO 179/5883	Imran	Shah		Daffadar	WO 167/1435
Bostan		29949	Daffadar		inayat	Shah		Jemadar	WO 167/1435
Bostan		TB 28644	Driver	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B	Jagat Singh	Powar		Lieut	WO 179/5886
Buland	Khan	178216/8	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/4/41	Jalal	Din	?178086	Driver	WO 167/1435
Chanan	Din	58138	Daffadar	L/WS/1/131 f113	Jamal	Din	81567	Barber	
Chandki		173255	Sweeper	WO 167/1435	James	English		S/Conductor	WO 179/5883
Chanu	Khan	TB 50584	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B	James Charles Gooda	Bradfield		Lieut	WO 179/5885
Charles Henry Gordon	Busby		S/Conductor	WO 179/5883	Jan	Mohd	177184	Tailor	WO 179/5886
Charles Herbert	Stainforth		Lieut	WO 167/1433	Jhenti Bhusan	Gupta		Jemadar	WO 179/5885
Denis John Patrick	Weld		Captain	WO 179/5883	Jumma		174651	Cook	WO 179/5886
Dhari		178293	Sweeper	WO 167/1435	Kake	Khan	171777	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Dilber or Dilbar	Khan	V-197	Jemadar (IAVC)	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Karam	Ellahi	783844	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Din	Mohd	180922	Cook	WO 167/1435	Kasham	Ali	29511	Lance Naik	WO 167/1435
Dost	Mohd	38820	Nursing sepoy	WO 179/5886	Keppel	Jermyn		Major	WO 167/143
Dost	Mohd	175059	Driver	WO 179/5883	Khan	Mohd	58269	Naik	WO 179/5884
Dost	Mohd	180657	Driver	WO 167/1435	Khan	Mohd	780956	Driver	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Ebrahim		30103	Saddler		Khuda	Dad	23688	Naik	
Edward George	Kedge		Lieut	WO 179/5884	Lakhi		180282	Sweeper	WO 179/5883
Faiz	Ali	52408	Driver		Lal	Khan	28378	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Faqir	Mohd	64661	Lance Naik	WO 167/1435	Lutafullah		181485	Farrier	WO 167/1435
Faqir	Mohd	178086	Carpenter	WO 179/5886	Mahbub	Shah	180262	Driver	
Fateh	Mohd	780693	Driver	WO 179/5886	Manga		42036	Blacksmith	DGIMS 1942/3/4/F/42
Fazal		304	Groom	WO 179/5884	Mangal	Singh	175113	Sweeper	WO 167/1435
Fazal	Dad	28969	Naik	WO 179/5884	Mangoo		65111	Water carrier	WO 167/1435
Fazal	Ahmed	58458	Farrier	WO 179/5883	Mangta	Khan	173864	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fazal	Elahi	175910	Driver	WO 167/1435	Mehbub		178231	Driver	WO 179/5886
Fazal	Khan	179320	Driver	WO 179/1435	Mehdi	Khan	781418	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941
Fazal	Karim	780264	Farrier	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Mian	Mohd	173420	Saddler	WO 179/5886
					Mir	Zaman	170121	Water carrier	WO 167/1435

Mir	Zaman	173407	Driver	WO 167/1435	Siraj	Din		Naik	WO 179/5886
Mir	Alam	TB 50270	Lance Naik	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B	Subodh Chandra	Dar		Jemadar	WO 179/5885
Mirzaman		782018	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Sudullah	Khan	177083	Naik	
Mohd	Hussain	2466	Sowar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Sultan	Khan	347	Sowar	WO 179/5884
Mohd	Illahi	27060	Naik	WO 167/1435	Sultan	Ahmed	179367	Water carrier	WO 179/5886
Mohd	Rashid	29216	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1435	Sultan	Khan	180656	Driver	WO 167/1435
Mohd	Hassan	29660	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Sultan	Mohd	TB 175428	Driver	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Mohd	Khan	48627	Blacksmith	WO 167/1435	Sultan	Ahmed	179637	Water carrier	WO 179/5883
Mohd	Zaman	59158	Daffadar		W	Jameson		Lieut	L/MIL/14/4661-0182
Mohd	Khan	170817	Lance Naik		W or H	Thomas		2/Lt	WO 179/5884
Mohd	Hussain	170881	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941	Walayat	Ali	171487	Driver	WO 167/1435
Mohd	Din	173102	Lance Naik		Wali	Mohd	27295	Driver	WO 179/5884
Mohd	Khan	173444	Driver	WO 167/1435	Wali	Mohd	175850	Carpenter	WO 179/5883
Mohd	Khan	175208	Driver	WO 167/1435	Waris	Khan	176809 or 174809	Driver	
Mohd	Niwaz	175237	Driver	WO 167/1435	William Hurley	Bosworth		S/Conductor	WO 179/5885
Mohd	Zaman	177384	Naik		Yusaf		25074	Driver	WO 167/1435
Mohd	Ashraf	177396	Daffadar		Zaman		392	Groom	WO 179/5884
Mohd	Alam	179098	Driver	WO 179/5886					
Mohd	Abdullah	180275	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Mohd	Ramzan	181435	Driver						
Mohd	Qasim	181566	Mess servant	DGIMS 8/9/6/41					
Mohd	Hanif	736115	Lascair	WO 167/1435					
Mohd	Asghar	780952	Driver	WO 179/5886					
Mohd	Rashid	11801 or 11808	Risaldar						
Mohd	Hayat		Risaldar Major	WO 167/1435					
Mohd	Hussain		Carpenter	WO 179/5893					
Mohd	Hussain II		Jemadar	IWM 18798					
Mohd Hanif	Khan	781045	Driver						
Mohd Ibrahim	Khan		Subedar-Major	WO 179/5885					
Mubarak	Shah	175048	Naik	WO 179/5883					
Muhammad	Gul	177872	Saddler						
Murid			L Dfr	WO 167/1435					
Narain	Singh		Captain	WO 179/5885					
Nawab		46878	Saddler						
Nazar Hussain	Shah	171106	Daffadar						
Niaz	Ali	175572 or 175172	Cook	WO 179/5884					
Noor	Hussain	6344	Risaldar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Noor	Mohd	49595	Troop Daffadar	WO 167/1435					
Noor	Hassan	780859	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Nur	Mohd	181586	?	WO 179/5883					
Nur	Muhammad	81586 or 181568	Maulvi	WAH 16/8/40 pic7977					
Punni		181300	Sweeper	WO 179/5886					
Qazi	Azmatullah	1792	Jemadar	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Rahmat	Ali	41376	Farrier						
Raj	Mohd	27728	Driver	WO 167/1435					
Ramani Ramjan	Chakarborty		Jemadar	WO 179/5885					
Ramzan		63817	Groom	WO 179/5883					
Razaq	Khan	177764	Driver	WO 167/1435					
Robert McVitie	Hofford		Major	WO 179/5885					
Roshan	Khan	TB 179283	Driver	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B					
Rura		174625	Driver	WO 167/1435					
Sahib	Gul	12248	Ward servant	WO 167/1435					
Said	Ali		Jemadar	WO 167/1435					
Saidullah	Khan	780115	Bellows boy	WO 179/5883					
Sajawal		181564	Mess servant	WO 179/5886					
Sardar	Shah	181177	Driver						
Satar	Din								
Shan	Ali	TB 30346	Driver	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B					
Sharaf	Ali	50782	Naik						
Sharra	Khan	174299	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Sher	Mohd	26	Sowar	WO 179/5884					
Sher	Bay	21119	Farrier						
Sher	Khan	30144	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Sher	Ali	48885	Lance Naik						
Sher	Mohd	54132	Driver	WO 167/1435					
Sher	Khan	171709	Groom						
Sher	Mohd	180002	Driver	WO 167/1435					
Sher	Zaman	780881	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					
Sher Mohd	Khan	174866	Driver	DGIMS 8/9/3/1941					

## 47 Supply Depot Section

Part of the original Force K6. Major Finlay was the Commanding Officer.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abad	Ali		Naik	WO 179/5894
Abdul	Rahman	763048	Sepoy	WO 179/5891
Ahmad	Din	NR 1343	Sepoy	WO 179/1433
Akbar	Khan	9462	SWO II	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Barkat	Ali	SR 764705	Naik	WO 179/5893
Barkat	Ali		Jemadar	
Beli	Khan		Cook	WO 179/5893
Chiragh	Din	SR 763021	Jemadar	WO 179/5893
Dai	Ram		Sweeper	WO 179/5893
Fazal	Qadir	S 912	Issuer	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Fazal	Shah		SWO/Subedar, later Lt	WO 179/5891
George Robson	Charlton	ST/173	Lieut	WO 179/5884
Ghulam	Mohd	S-1316	Lance Naik	
Ghulam	Nabi	S-1336	Lance Naik	
Ghulam Hussain	Shah		Naik	WO 179/5894
Gul	Bahadur	SR 763036	Jemadar	WO 179/5893
Hussain	Shah	S 1962	Lance Naik	WO 179/5893
Hussain	Shah	S 3552	Clerk	WO 179/5893
Jalal	Khan		Issuer	WO 177/2262
Jan	Mohd	S 736011	Messenger	
JM	Khanzada		Jemadar	WO 179/5892
John	Finlay		Major	WO 167/143
Khurshed	Khan	763047	Sepoy	WO 179/5891
Mohd	Fazal	764542	Naik	
Mohd	Ali	S 736037	Paulin maker	
Mohd	Shabbir	S 736112	Naik Carpenter	WO 179/5893
Mohd	Shafi (I)	SR 763035	LD Clerk	WO 179/5893
Mohd	Shafi (II)		LD CLerk	IWM 18798
Mohd	Zaman		Subedar	WO 179/5892
Mohd	Latif		SWO II	IWM 18798
Mohd Ishrat Yar	Khan	SR 763032	Jemadar	WO 179/5893
MS	Shad		WO	WO 179/5893
Nabi	Hussain	SR 18652	LD Clerk	WO 179/5892
Nawab	Ali	767064	Lance Naik	
Nazar Hussain	Shah	S 3075	Lance Naik	WO 179/5893
Nazir	Ahmad		Jemadar	WO 179/5892
Sardar	Ali		Jemadar	WO 373/89
Sohan	Lal	736036	Sweeper	WO 179/5893
Suba	Khan	S 1111	Naik (checker)	WO 179/5893
Zafar	Hussain	S 181576	Lance Naik	WO 179/5893

**Advanced Remount Depot**  
Part of the original Force K6.

Name		Number	Rank	Source
Abdul	Ghafoor	412	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Ahmed	Din		Saddler	
Alam	Sher	R/402	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Allah	Ditta		Carpenter	Allah Ditta letter to Betty Cresswell
Bagh	Ali	R15	Groom	WO 167/1434
Bashir	Hussain Shah		Clerk	WO 179/5888
Faqir	Mohd	R19	Groom	WO 167/1434
Fateh	Mohd	R299	Sowar	WO 167/1434
Fazir	Mohd		Groom	
Ghulam	Haider	R/351	ALD	WO 179/5888
Ghulam	Yasin	R385	Sowar	WO 167/1434
Ghulam	Cadir		Groom	
Ghulam	Mohd		Groom	
Gul	Mohd	R/370	L Dfr	WO 179/5888
Gustasab	Khan	R/428	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Hussain	Khan	V 1866	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Khaki	Jan		Groom	WO 179/5888
Khuda	Yar	R/347	ALD	WO 179/5888
Lal	Khan		Groom	
Mohd	Khan	29	Groom	WO 179/5888
Mohd	Iqbal	R/401	L Dfr	WO 179/5888
Mohd	Fazal	R/419	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Mohd	Amir	R/420	ALD	WO 179/5888
Mohd	Afzal		Naik	
Mohd Hayat	Khan		Risaldar	WO 179/5888
Noor	Mhd	322	Sowar	WO 179/5888
Seth Thomas	Apcar		Major	WO 167/143
Sultan	Mohd	39	Sweeper	
Syed Zahoor or Zamoor	Mehdi		Jemadar (IAVC)	WO 179/5887

## Miscellaneous

Name		Number	Rank	Unit	Source
Abdul	Hamid		Subedar-Major	HQ/MAD	
Ali	Haider	NR/1059	Nursing sepoy	IHC	
Ali	Bux	195036	Water carrier /cook	IGH	WO 177/2262
Allah	Ditta	G/12060	Sweeper	No 1 Coy, IHC	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Aziz-ul-Rahman		N 1380	Nursing sepoy	No 1 Coy, IHC	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Barkat	Ali	MR-193	Jemadar	IMD, att IGH	WO 179/5880
Bashir-ud-Din	Ahmad	1/N/1401	Nursing sepoy	No 1 Coy, IHC	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Edmund Patrick Noe mary	Early		Major	IMS	WO 167/143
F	de Champeaux		S/Lieut	HQ	WO 167/143, 3/1/40
Fateh	Mohamed		Jemadar	Veterinary	IWM 18798
Fazal	Mohd	1988	Jemadar	IGH	WO 179/5880
FE	Brown		WO	Army Ed Corps	
FJ	Eardley		Major	RAVC	
FWT	Brewster		Major	?attd RIASC records	DGIMS 8/9/7/41
Geoff	Riley		Driver	RASC	Malins/Nicholls
GH	Bellman	123257	Driver	RASC/ 47 SDS	WO 179/5902
Ghazanfar	Ali	280	Jemadar	IGH	WO 179/5884
Ghulam	Din	173288	Driver	HQ	
Gian	Kapur		Captain	HQ	
GS	Dhillon		Lieut	RAMC	L/WS/1/355
Hakim	Din	NR/1364	Nursing sepoy	IGH	
Henry Nussey Noble	Fawcett		Captain	HQ	WO 167/143
IML	Pitts-Tucker		Driver	WTS/FANY	WO 179/5881
J	Barclay		L/cpl	RASC	WO 179/5880
Jhalla		100027	sweeper	IGH	WO 177/2262
JWA	Parsons		Captain	IMS	WO 167/143
K C	Kapila		Accountant	HQ	
Khuddam	Hussain	272333	Lance Naik	HQ	
Mohammed	Ashraf	IO 4952	Risaldar Major	HQ	WO 373/16
Mohd	Ali	180848	Driver	HQ att 25 company	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Mohd	Roshan	H 100385	Ward servant	No 1 Coy, IHC	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Mohd	Shaffi		Jem/Subedar (IMD)	IGH	
Mohd Abdul Aziz	Toani		Jemadar	IMD	WO 177/2262
Mohd Irtiza	Khan		Jemadar	IGH	DGIMS 8/9/5/41
Muzaffer	Khan	178738	Driver	HQ	
Nadar	Khan	195101	cook	IGH	WO 177/2262
Nana		60949	Naik	HQ	
Reginald W Welfare	Hills		Lt-Col	K6	WO 167/143
Shah	Sawar	H 195078	Cook IT	No 1 Coy, IHC	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Sheikh	Abdullah	12946	Sweeper	IGH	WO 177/2262
Sher Mohd	Mir		Captain	MAD att HQ	
Siddiq	Ahmad	2458	WO	IMD	WO 167/1437, att AFW 3009 part B
Sojawal	Khan		Jemadar (VAS)	IASC	
William	Aitchison			IGH	AMEL 6/3/140
William Stewart	Empey		Captain	medical	WO 179/5882
Zahur Mehdi	Shah		Jemadar	IASC	

## Appendix B: Men coming and going

Date	Number in	Number out	Reason	Source	Balance
26/12/39	+ 1723		The original K6 at Marseille	WO 167/143	1723
	+ 1		Hills joined		1724
			Repatriation from France		?
		-57	Buried in CWG	CWG list	1719
		-300	22 coy captured		1419
3/11/40		-79	Repatriation	WO 179/5883	1340
17/5/41	+ 1263		3 companies join, + 351 reinforcements for RU	WO 179/5900	2600
5/6/42 2/7/42	+ 240		Replacements	WO 179/5885 WO 179/5881	2840
17/7/42		-92	Repatriation (mostly sick)	WO 179/5881	2750
29/8/42			Total (Includes RASC personnel)	L/WWS/1/131	3400
29/12/42		-154	Repatriation (95 sick)	WO 179/5881	
13/1/43		-28	Repatriation (inc prisoners)	WO 179/5886	
21/6/43		-815	Repatriation	WO 199/917	
17/7/43			'Order of battle and strength' (inc 25 BOR)	WO 199/917	1389
8/10/43	+1000		Reinforcements	WO 179/5886	2400
14/10/43		-44	Repatriation (medical)	WO 179/5886	1990
10/11/43		-39	Repatriation	WO 179/5886	1950
<b>K6 total personnel</b>	4227				



## Appendix C: Places in the UK where K6 units were posted

Place	Dates	Units
<b>England</b>		
Crownwell Hotel, Shaldon	10/40 – 4/41	HQ
Woodbarton Monastery, Kingsbridge	12/40 – 5/41	25 coy
Modbury, Loddiswell,	12/40 – 5/41	25 coy
Plympton	10/41 – 5/42	42 coy
Meavy Bridge	4/42 – 5/42	42 coy
Truro	10/40 – 2/41	47 SDS
Plymouth	2/41 – 3/41	47 SDS
Devonport	10/40 – 4/41	IGH
Yelverton	3/41 – 4/41	47 SDS
Ivybridge	4/41 – 5/41	IGH
St Austell	15/10/40 – 27/10/40	25 coy
	19/10/41 – 13/6/42	7 coy
Ashbourne	15/6/40 – 30/10/40	All units
Rossington Hall	29/6-16/10/40	29 coy, IGH
Bulford	16/10/40 – 6/5/41	29 coy, 32 coy
Hereford	6/5/41 – 10/4/42	29 coy, 42 coy
Ross on Wye	2/7/41 -10/4//42	29 coy
Colchester	5/10/41 – April 42	3 coy
Pirbright	June 40	32 coy
Derby	10/41	ARD
Bracknell	10/41 – 5/42	HQ
<b>Wales</b>		
Llangattack	18/5/41 – 19/10/41	7 coy, 25 coy
	1/43 – 7/43	HQ, 7 coy, 25 coy, 32 coy, 42 coy
Caerleon	17/5/41 - April 42	25 coy tp, 32 coy tp
Monmouth	6/1/43 – 26/10/43	25 coy
Snowdonia	4/42 - 7/42	25 coy, 29 coy
Chepstow	5/41 – 4/42	32 coy
	9/1/43-18/4/43	7 coy
Pontypool	5/41 – 4/42	32 coy
	1/43 – 7/43	42 coy
Ruperra castle, Caerphilly	5/41 – 4/42	32 coy
Steep Holm	9/41 – 4/42	32 coy
Hafod Tanygran	6/42	32 coy
Pembrey	11/1/43 – 7/43	32 coy
Brecon	5/41 – 8/42	IGH
Wrexham	4/42 – 6/42	HQ

<b>Scotland</b>		
Lairg	14/8/40 - Oct 12/10/42- 6/1/43	25 coy
	7/43	42 coy
	9/43	32 coy
Dalwhinnie	17/7/42 -12/10 /42	25 coy
Fochabers	26/10/43	25 coy
	9/10/42 -23/4/43	29 coy
Nairn	26/10/43	25 coy
	9/10/42 -23/4/43	29 coy
Aviemore	13/6/42 – 9/1/43	7 coy, 29 coy, 42 coy
	6/42 – end	IGH
Muir of Ord	6/7/43 - ?	7 coy , 25 coy
Ballater	April 42 – 17/4/43	3 coy
Knock	4/43- 25/10/43	3 coy
Carnoustie	25/10-7/12/43	3 coy
Strowan	7/12/43	3 coy
Kinlochleven	?	
Maryculter	23/4/43 – 23/10/43	29 coy
Ballater	10/42 -1/43	42 coy
	23/10/43	29 coy
Poolewe	6/42 – 7/42	RU
Loch Insh	7/42 – 10/42	
Golspie	10/42 – 1/43 7/43 – 9/43	
Grantown on Spey	31/7/42 – 5/43	RU
Revack Lodge, Grantown-on-Spey	6/42 – 1/43	HQ
Boat of Garten	5/43 – 6/43	RU
Dornoch	7/43	RU
Allan Grange House, Munloch	7/43	HQ

## Appendix D: List of Interviews conducted in Pakistan

Subject	Date	Location of interview	Name of veteran	Notes
Ali Hamid	17/01/2018	his office	Shahid Hamid	
Najm us Saqib	13/02/2018	Jennys house in ISB	grandson of Jalal Din	
Mohamed Nawaz	19/02/2018	Sabur's house	Himself	
Mohd Rashid	19/02/2018	Jara village - Rashid's house	?grandson Of Khan Muhammad	Buried in Kingussie
Muhammad Waqas	19/02/2018	Jara village - Rashid's house	n/a	
Rifat Hayat	19/02/2018	Jara village - Rashid's house	Nawab Khan	
Masoud Pervez	19/02/2018	Jara village - Rashid's house	Abdul Hamid, Abdul Majid, Ghulam Nabi	
Sajid Mahmoud	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	nephew of Ali Bahadur	Buried in Brecon
Rifat Ali	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	son of Faiz Ali	
Sarwar Jan	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	wife of Sajawal Khan	
Ali Asghar	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	son of Ali Haider	
Mohd Ashraf	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	all - village elder	
Sabir Hussain	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	nambardar	
Sadiq Hussain	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	son of Mohabbat Khan	
Sajid Waheed	20/02/2018	Asman Zada Adre, Daultala	son of Fateh Sher	
Abdul Mateen	20/02/2018	Rajoha village	great nephew of Aurangzeb	Buried in Brecon
Mohd Akram	20/02/2018	Rajoha village	nephew of Aurangzeb	
Mohd Yunus	20/02/2018	Rajoha village	nephew of Aurangzeb	
Mohd Rafique	20/02/2018	Rajoha village	nephew of Aurangzeb	
Sajad	21/02/2018	Jennys house in ISB	grandson of Mir Zaman	Buried in Rennes
Malik Nasir	21/02/2018	Jennys house in ISB	grandson of Lal	Buried in Dunkirk
Aaliyah Jang	24/02/2018	Jang house in Karachi	grandchild of Akbar	
Asad Jang	24/02/2018	Jang house in Karachi	grandchild of Akbar	
Sami Ullah Jang	24/02/2018	Jang house in Karachi	grandchild of Akbar	
Jawad Sawarna	25/02/2018	Jawad's house in Karachi	great grandson of Akbar	
Ahmed Sawarna	25/02/2018	Jawad's house in Karachi	grandson-in-law of Akbar	
Nasira	25/02/2018	Jawad's house in Karachi	grand-daughter of Akbar	
Amna Maqbool	26/02/2018	Amna's house in Karachi	daughter of Akbar	
Maqbool Ahmed	26/02/2018	Amna's house in Karachi	son-in-law of Akbar	
Margaret	26/02/2018	by phone to Imran	Akbar's daughter-in-law	By Imran & Mahin
Aaliyah Tayyebi	27/02/2018	Air BNB in Karachi	Oral History project staff	OH in Pakistan
Zain Shaikhzadeh	27/02/2018	Air BNB in Karachi		OH in Pakistan
Zehra Shah	27/02/2018	Air BNB in Karachi		OH in Pakistan
Javeria Vaqar	27/02/2018	Air BNB in Karachi		OH in Pakistan
Nasir Hussain Shah	03/03/2018	Thau Hamayun village, Bhaun	himself	
Aftab Hussain	03/03/2018	Thau Hamayun village, Bhaun	son of Mohd Sarwar	

Asad Shah	03/03/2018	Thau Hamayun village, Bhaun	grandson of Gul Badshah	
Fida Hussain	03/03/2018	Thau Hamayun village, Bhaun	son of Nur Khan	
Kalloom Akhtar	04/03/2018	Kalloom house in Panch Gara village	daughter of Nawazish Ali	
Nazar Hussain	04/03/2018	Bhalesar village	nephew of Muhabbat Shah	Buried in Epinal
Abdul Ghafour	04/03/2018	Bhalesar village	son of Mehboob Ali	
Ghulam Rasul	04/03/2018	Bhalesar village	nephew of Maskin Ali & Boota Khan	
Allah Yar Hussain	04/03/2018	Bhalesar village	son of Abdullah Khan	
Ghulam Abbas Mumtaz (nambardar)	04/03/2018	Bhalesar village	son of Amir Dad Khan	
Wazir Khan	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	nephew of Tika Khan	Buried in Plymouth
Mohd Riyaz	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	grandson of Fateh Khan	Buried in Choloy
Mohd Sabir	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	nephew of Fateh Khan	
Mohd Razzaq	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	grandson of Fateh Khan	
Muhammad Khan	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	himself	
Jan Mohd	05/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	nephew of Mir Alam - Hexley's orderly	Buried in Schoenenbourg
Zeenut Ziad	11/03/2018	Zeenut's house in Chak Shahzad Farm	daughter of Capt Anis	
Omer Tarin	12/03/2018	Omer's house in Abbotabad		Collective memory
Abdul Jalil	13/03/2018	Omer's house in Abbotabad	Ris-Major Ashraf	With Omer Tarin
Shahid Hasan Khan	23/03/2018	Hasan's house in Lahore	grandson of Akbar	
Roohi Hasan Khan	23/03/2018	Hasan's house in Lahore	granddaughter of Akbar	
Hasan Akbar	23/03/2018	Hasan's house in Lahore	grandson of Akbar	
Suraiya Aslam	23/03/2018	Hasan's house in Lahore	Akbar	
Fareeda Akbar	23/03/2018	Hasan's house in Lahore	Akbar's daughter-in-law	
Azra Haq	24/03/2018	Azra's house in Lahore	Herself	
Idrees Anwar	26/03/2018	Anwar's house in Pindi	nephew of Akbar	
Fauzia Anwar	26/03/2018	Anwar's house in Pindi	niece of Akbar	
Sameena Anwar	26/03/2018	Anwar's house in Pindi	niece of Akbar	
Tehmeena Anwar	26/03/2018	Anwar's house in Pindi	niece of Akbar	
Asim Iqbal	28/03/2018	Rawalpindi Club		Brigadier in ASC
Agha Masoud Akram	28/03/2018	Rawalpindi Club		Historical section
Hafeez	28/03/2018	Rawalpindi Club		Historical section
Hakim Khan & Dilbar Khan	28/03/2018	Badyal village, Abbotabad	Ali Bahadur	By Zahid
Muhammed Yunis	29/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	son of Chanu Khan	
Gul Mubarak	29/03/2018	Jennys house in ISB	Grandson of Chanu Khan	

Nighat	30/03/2018	Chak Abdul Khaliq, Jhelum	grand-daughter of Nawab Khan	
Waqas Ahmed	30/03/2018	Chak Abdul Khaliq, Jhelum	grandson of Mian Ghulam Hassan	
Robena	30/03/2018	Chak Abdul Khaliq, Jhelum	grand-daughter-in-law of Mian Ghulam Hassan	
Malik Naseer	30/03/2018	Malik's house in Dhok Saiyan	brother of Mushtaq Ahmad	Buried in Kingussie
Muhammad Zaman	30/03/2018	Malik's house in Dhok Saiyan	son of Muhammad Din	Buried in Brecon
Aaliyah Gilani	31/03/2018	saboor's house in Jang Sayedan	daughter of Sayed Sadiq Hussain Shah	
Fizza Bibi	31/03/2018	saboor's house in Jang Sayedan	niece of Capt Badshah	
Saboor	31/03/2018	saboor's house in Jang Sayedan	son of Anwar Hussain Shah	
Ghayur Gilani	31/03/2018	saboor's house in Jang Sayedan	nephew of Anwar Hussain Shah	
Khair un Nissa	31/03/2018	Gohra Mast	grand-daughter of Tikka Khan	
Moh Riaz	31/03/2018	Gohra Mast	son of Mohd Afzal	

## Interviews conducted in the UK

Subject	Date	Location	Interviewed by	Name of veteran
Elwyn	?	Croesor?	Giovanna	
Jos Williams	13/03/1999	Croesor	Giovanna	
Nellie Woods	03/07/1999	Croesor?	Giovanna	
Edgar Parry-Williams	14/07/2001	Croesor?	Giovanna	
Watkin Evans	06/02/2002	Croesor?	Giovanna	
Mark Ashdown	06/05/2014	Mark's house in Bristol	GB	son of John Ashdown
Giovanna Bloor	19/05/2015	Giovanna's house in Nantmor	GB	
Geoff Sykes	20/05/2015	café in Brecon	GB	
Zubair Muhammed	18/06/2015	his office in Woking	GB	son of Chowdhury Wali Mohd
Paritosh (Jeff) Shapland	08/02/2016	Paritosh's house in Leics	GB	son of Jamal Khan
Betty Cresswell	09/08/2016	her house near Ashbourne	GB	Gian Kapur
Doreen Allsop	10/08/2016	outside her house in Ashbourne	GB	
Jo Meacock	15/08/2016	Kelvingrove Museum	GB	Abdul Ghani
Joan Leed	16/08/2016	Lairg	GB	
Donny MacDonald	16/08/2016	Lairg	GB	
Marlyn Price	16/08/2016	Lairg	GB	
Hamish Johnston	17/08/2016	Hamish's house Inverness	GB	step grandson of Finlay
Veronica	17/08/2016	Hamish's house Inverness	GB	
Eddie Lancaster	17/08/2016	Hamish's house Inverness	GB	
Colin Hexley	19/08/2016	Golspie Heritage Centre	GB	son of Tom Hexley
Shirley Sutherland	19/08/2016	Golspie Heritage Centre	GB	
John Melville	19/08/2016	Golspie Heritage Centre	GB	
Robert Beaton	19/08/2016	Golspie Heritage Centre	GB	
David McDougall	02/08/2017	Kinlochleven	GB	
Sheena McDougall	02/08/2017	Kinlochleven	GB	
Catriona Spence	02/08/2017	Kinlochleven	GB	
Stuart Mackenzie	05/08/2017	Aultbea	GB	
George Milne	05/08/2017	Aultbea	GB	
Donald Matheson	05/08/2017	Aultbea	GB	

## **Appendix E: Interview questions/topics**

*Interviews were semi-structured, following whatever direction the subject wanted to take.*

*These are the starter questions I used:*

- What did [insert name of veteran] say about his time in Europe?
  - What was his favourite bit/ least favourite?
  - Where did he go?
  - What did he do?
  - Whom did he meet?
  - What was everyday life like for the ordinary soldier then?
  - Did he talk about parades, food, nature, mosques?
  - Names of particular comrades, VCOs, officers?
  - Dates of departure & homecoming
  - What did he do before and after Europe?
  - What kind of man was he?
  - Did he leave any letters or pics or memorabilia?
- Why do you think the men of K6 are forgotten?
- How do you think they should be remembered?
- What is your message for the people of Pakistan?
- What is your message for the people of Britain?

## Appendix F: K6 graves in Europe

*Information from Commonwealth War Graves Commission and cemetery visits*

### France

<b>Soldier's name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service number</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Date of death</b>	<b>Burial place</b>
Fateh Khan	Sepoy	27001	22 Company	4/1/41	Choloy
Dost Muhammad	Sepoy	49149	22 Company	6/11/41	Dunkirk
Karam Illahi	Groom	57117	22 Company	7/6/45	Dunkirk
Lal	Sepoy	26193	22 Company	6/5/44	Dunkirk
Mughal Khan	Farrier	24527	22 Company	23/12/43	Dunkirk
Muhammad Ibrahim	Blacksmith	22005	22 Company	28/1/43	Dunkirk
Bagh Ali	Driver	52378	22 Company	18/5/41	Epinal
Muhabbat Shah	Driver	172835	22 Company	11/5/44	Epinal
Mir Zaman	Bootmaker	177395	22 Company	29/1/44	Rennes
Mir Alam	Sepoy	172826	22 Company	3/11/43	Schoenenbourg
Samundar Khan	Driver	27154	22 Company	11/8/43	Strasbourg
Akbar Khan	Groom	175471	22 Company	2/5/40	Wormhoudt
Gul Aftab	Lance Naik	173578	Reinforcement Unit	12/5/40	Terlincthun
Mangi Sher Khan	Sepoy	178016	Reinforcement Unit	12/5/40	Terlincthun
Muhammad Zaman	Driver	27673	Reinforcement Unit	12/5/40	Terlincthun
Sarwar Khan	Naik	28815	Reinforcement Unit	12/5/40	Terlincthun

### Germany

<b>Soldier's name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service number</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Date of death</b>	<b>Burial place</b>
Mian Khan	Sowar	1614	22 Company	16/2/42	Berlin
Wali Dad	Naik	28870	22 Company	1/12/42	Berlin
Babu Lall	Sweeper	171928	22 Company	29/1/43	Berlin
Abdul Aziz	Driver	180629	22 Company	11/12/44	Durnbach
Alif Din	Driver	177674	22 Company	11/12/44	Durnbach
Lall	Lance Naik	28037	22 Company	11/12/44	Durnbach
Sultan Muhammad	Driver	180802	22 Company	11/12/44	Durnbach
Muhammad Zaman	Driver	177540	22 Company	12/9/44	Durnbach



## Scotland

<b>Soldier's name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service number</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Date of death</b>	<b>Burial place</b>
Mir Zaman	Driver	782018	29 Company	13/1/43	Aberdeen
Abdul Rakhman	Naik	26929	7 Company	1/1/44	Dornoch
Ghulam Nabi	Driver	179422	Reinforcement Unit	28/9/43	Dornoch
Karam Dad	Driver	783860	7 Company	2/12/43	Grange
Ali Bahadur	Dafadar	59383	25 Company	22/11/42	Kingussie
Bari Sher	Driver	64164	42 Company	20/6/43	Kingussie
Dadan Khan	Driver	783738	3 Company	20/8/42	Kingussie
Fazl Ali	Driver	784364	?	25/6/43	Kingussie
Khan Muhammad	Driver	28513	3 Company	15/10/42	Kingussie
Khushi Muhammad	Driver	65621	3 Company	20/4/43	Kingussie
Muhammad	Driver	172870	7 Company	30/10/42	Kingussie
Muhammad Sadiq	Naik	172305	42 Company	28/6/42	Kingussie
Mushtaq Ahmad	Driver	780335	7 Company	19/10/42	Kingussie

## England

<b>Soldier's name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service number</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Date of death</b>	<b>Burial place</b>
Asghar Ali	Farrrier	65635	32 Company	13/9/40	Ashbourne
Ghulam Nabi	Tinsmith	736004	Reinforcement Unit	22/11/40	Charlestown
Muhammad Gul	Saddler	177872	25 Company	22/11/40	Charlestown
Hashmat Ali	Jemadar	201	Reinforcement Unit	25/11/40	Charlestown
Muhammad Ayub	Driver	781458	3 Company	10/1/42	Colchester
Ghulam Muhammad	Driver	782094	42 Company	3/6/41	Hereford
Allah Ditta	Driver	171710	32 Company	16/1/41	Plymouth
Fateh Muhammad	Driver	171131	25 Company	18/1/41	Plymouth
Kala Khan	Driver	62802	29 Company	11/5/41	Plymouth
Tika Khan	Driver	30142	32 Company	14/4/41	Plymouth
Qaim Din	Driver	179221	22 Company	28/10/44	Thetford
Frederick Thompson	Captain		32 Company	22/9/40	Tidworth

## Wales

<b>Soldier's name</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>Service number</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Date of death</b>	<b>Burial place</b>
Faqir Muhammad	Cook	65446	7 Company	19/4/43	Abergavenny
Ali Bahadur	Driver	783729	3 Company	12/10/41	Brecon
Aurangzeb	Bellows Boy	181367	Reinforcement Unit	13/3/42	Brecon
Gul Muhammad	Driver	172264	29 Company	29/5/42	Brecon
Meharban Ali	Naik	29879	32 Company	1/9/41	Brecon
Muhammad Ali	Driver	181389	7 Company	10/6/42	Brecon
Muhammad Din	Driver	65553	7 Company	10/7/42	Brecon
Muhammad Sarwar	Driver	175687	25 Company	17/6/41	Brecon
Muhammad Sharif	Driver	171032	29 Company	14/8/41	Brecon
Samundar Khan	Driver	780339	7 Company	1/10/42	Cardiff
Sakhi Muhammad	Lance Naik	178590	32 Company	2/5/43	Crickhowell
Kalu	Driver	50163	42 Company	21/5/43	Pontypool

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