

TRANSCRIPT

Nitin Palan - Golden Tours Foundation

Nitin Palan is a highly successful entrepreneur who is the founder of the Golden Tours Company, which has been in existence for around thirty years and has been synonymous with tourism in the heart of London. From the success of the company, Nitin Palan has set up the Golden Tours Foundation to 'give back' to the communities it serves. Nitin Palan holds several executive roles in addition to his Nitin has been in the forefront to help develop work with Golden Tours. This includes Directorships of BAPS Charities, Diwali in London and Hindu Christian Forum. He is also the National Coordinator for BAPS Interfaith Department which do extensive social action projects in the UK for better community relations and wellbeing. He is passionate about socially innovative ideas that help education the younger generations. His current projects include various educational and development projects in Indian and the UK, as well as the contribution of Indian soldiers during the First World War commemorations.

Good morning, Namaste, My name is Nitin Palan came to this country in 1971, from East Africa and I am Hindu practitioner. Two years ago I met with Warwick Hawkins and he suggested that there was the potential for a project about the Indian soldier's contribution in World War I, I said "what! I was unaware Indian soldiers were involved in WW1". Over the last five years one thing that I have learnt is that there is a need for young people to understand about each other's culture, what I have learn from my spiritual master is that 'the real education is education about the heart'. We have too many divisions: geographical, political etc. However we do not focus on topics that could that unite us like the contribution of Indian soldiers and the relevancy of it. This history could act as catalyst to bring people together. For me it's about relevancy, for me it's about people coming together to celebrates human beings effort in keeping humanity safe. So its kind of my catalyst in making this thing happens. But the real thank you belongs to the Alan and to Rana ji, they cornered me in a room about 9 months ago and said, 'would it not be nice if alot of good people that do a good work on the subject of WW1 could come together and something good came out of it'. So the next two days is about you, it is about your efforts, your sacrifices, your thoughts, your inspirations and for all of you to share that with each other and through that sharing perhaps a journey will began in 2018. I am hoping and praying that maybe we will do this again next year and the year after building into something much bigger in 2018.

I hope today that you will share your experiences, your inspirations, and your wishes too, I really should say thank you also to Sir Hugh Strachan, you are such a busy person sir, it is so kind of you to spend the time here with us today, we want to hear from you, we want you to inspire us to the next journey. The composition of what we will be talking about here has got interesting elements, pride, relevancy, sacrifices, what I hope and pray what we won't do is divide those people sacrifices with individual things and it might inspire us. During a recent interview the BBC asked me questions around the sacrifice of Sikhs Hindus Muslims, I said, "pardon! I thought that they were all Indians. The fact they had a faith was and individual thing but they died, they sacrificed as Indian soldiers".

With your permission could we have a minute silence to remember these people who did so much for us and in that silence perhaps we could say; we embrace them in their sacrifice for us. With your blessings can I have 60 seconds of silence please.

Thank you! Could I introduce Rana ji to come forward and take this to next panel, thank you all for you being here, wonderful, thank you.

Rana Chhina, United Service Institution of India (approved)

Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina served in the Indian Air Force as a helicopter pilot. A Qualified Flying Instructor, he is a recipient of the prestigious Macgregor Medal for best military reconnaissance in 1986 and had the distinction of carrying out the highest landing in the world by a medium-lift class of helicopter, at the time. He is currently Secretary and Editor of the United Service Institution of India Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research and Vice President of the Indian Military Historical Society, UK. Squadron Leader Chhina's main field of interest is colonial Indian military history. He is a member of the joint USI-MEA Steering Committee responsible for coordinating national commemoration of India's participation in the First World War in connection with the centenary of the conflict. He is also a member of the IAF Aerospace Museum Apex Steering Committee and the Government of India's Archival Advisory Board.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I would like to start by thanking the organizers, Nitin Ji, the Royal Pavilion and Museums Brighton and Hove and the Imperial War Museum, for making this symposium possible. There is a Chinese phrase that says "we live in interesting times", and I think these have been both interesting as well as exciting times. This gathering here today is something that I have been hoping would occur for quite some time. This is a remarkable opportunity that allows us to listen to what people from very diverse backgrounds have been doing; to share their plans and activities relating to the history of India in WW1 and WW2.

The logo that you see on the screen, the only slide I have, is that of the 'India and the Great War' Centenary Commemoration Project which we started at the USI in 2014. The project in itself was unique. For those of you who are familiar with public attitudes in post-independence India, will appreciate that for many years it wasn't really considered politic to engage with a history that was seen as a part of our colonial legacy. But I do think that we have now matured sufficiently as a nation. We have come out of the colonial shadow and are ready to embrace those parts of our history that stretch back to the period before 1947. This project was an outcome of this process. When we put up the proposal to the government it was supported by the Ministry of External Affairs largely as a public diplomacy initiative. I think another major milestone in the journey was a conference that was organized in New Delhi in March 2014. The Vice President of India delivered the inaugural speech. The Field Marshall John Chapel delivered the keynote and the validation by the Foreign Secretary. The reason I am mentioning this is that for the first time since Independence we had Indian Endorsement of our contribution to the 1st or the 2nd World War, which was a huge step forward.

I think that was in many ways similar to the butterfly effect: a butterfly flaps its wings in one part of the world and this leads eventually to a hurricane in another. I think that's an analogy which is quite apt for the way events have been unfolding since the time we began. We decided that the project would be in two parts. The first was academic, starting with an academic conference which we felt was the core and the meat of the entire matter. I am delighted to say that some of you that attended the conference are in this very room. The second part, which was equally important, was to engage with communities not just in India but outside India as well. Both elements, the academic and the popular, have been very central to what we have been doing since that time and what we are continuing to do today. As part of the project we are also engaging with descendants of the soldiers who fought in WW1.

We have also managed to collate writings by Indian soldiers from the First World War. Though not many, they are far more than we knew existed before the project

stated. These are in my opinion worth their weight in gold. We have soldiers who wrote about their experiences in Mesopotamia. Some of these are autobiographical accounts, their diaries or their letters and so on and so forth. It's also been very gratifying that the Government of India has actively engaged with the project in a very significant manner. Whenever the President of India visits different parts of the world, he makes it a point to lay a wreath and pay his respects at a war memorial. Very recently when he was in Papua New Guinea he actually went and laid a wreath at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) memorial in the memory of the Indian soldiers who died as prisoners of the war of the Japanese. The Prime Minister visited Australia and presented the Australian Prime Minister with a silver statue of the jam tin bomber from the 14 Sikhs at Gallipoli. Similarly when he came to France he presented them with a memento from the Garhwal Rifles. When the President visited this country he presented David Omissi's book to David Cameron. So, take a bow David, so it's very gratifying that we are finally waking up to shared history, shared past we are also engaging with various countries. The United Kingdom has been a key partner, as may be expected in this entire process, we had major reception hosted at the British High Commissioners' residence in October 2014. This reception actually proved to be catalyst for some very significant changes as the UK Secretary of Defense, the Indian Minister of Defense attended. We put on an exhibition and I think our Minister of Defense was so taken aback by what he saw that he actually announced that India would actually write the official history of India's involvement in First World War and that job has been tasked to the Ministry of Defense's History Division. The Minister also said that we would do the same for various other conflicts. This has started to happen and that's fantastic from our point of view.

So right now the main projects we are involved with are working very closely with CWGC, we have just signed an memorandum of understanding (MOU) with them but I won't talk too much about that as I am sure Glyn will talk about that later but the intent is to build up to a conference in 2018 in the details in which I am still working on. As far as the wish list is concerned, I wish we could have access to records greater resources, anybody with deep pockets please raise your hands and other thing that we are working on is trying to get Indian memorial at the Menin Gate which will become a world focus point for commemoration and remembrance Indian soldier fell in the WW1 and WW2. Thank you so much Nitin ji for making all of this possible and it fantastic and greatly forward to listening all of you.

Questions

Q. I am the Chairman of the Military Historic Society you mentioned your aspiration to have more memorials in India. Would these be of a national scale or regional level or indeed more regimental level or indeed memorials in UK?

A: As you know there are any numbers of memorials around India. The proposal is to erect memorials in countries outside India like Australia, New Zealand. We already have the Chattri over here, in France, I know the Cavalry Association is trying very hard to put up something and they have been offered but they are looking for funds. So basically the answer to your question is that we are looking to erect memorials outside of India and yes they should be national memorials.

Q .Well the Historian in me is rather fascinated by the project you are doing to develop an official history from scratch, is it too early to ask what shape it will look like, and how it would be conceived and how big.

A: It is being steered by the Ministry of Defence as you may be aware everything that happened in WW1 is a top secret; when I get to know what they were doing I shall definitely let you know.

smooth over to hide of unattractive aspects. This is a messy history and the creativity kind of stems from the engagement with the mess and the contradictiveness this history.

Dominiek Dendooven – In Flanders Fields Museum (approved)

Historian Dominiek Dendooven (Bruges, 1971) has been working as a researcher and curator for the award-winning In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres since 1998. He is associated researcher at the University of Antwerp and guest lecturer at the University of Louvain. Dominiek Dendooven has published extensively on the First World War and his main fields of interest are the involvement of ethnic minorities in the conflict and individuals' war experience.

Good morning, I would like to thank Mr. Palan and Golden Tours Foundation. I am delighted to be here, because this one of the very rare meetings and the aim of the meeting is to see how we could proceed beyond 2018. On the other hand it's not an academic conference this is a meeting which brings together academic and people working in what we call public history, quite a special occasion.

I have been working on the Indian Army off and on since 1999, usually the organising of exhibitions. I would like to plead for more integral approach of the Indians in the 1st world war and there are four points which I am going to talk you about;

1. The international Labour Corps:

So first recording the Indian Labour Corps there is only one scholar that has been really working on the Indian labour she is Radhika Singha. We are talking about huge numbers, around 40,000 Indian labourers, that were on the western front and what is very interesting is that they stayed on for quite a while after the war as the last companies left only in March 1920, which makes very interesting comparisons with some of the other groups like the Chinese Labour Corps who also stayed on till March 1920.

It is also interesting to compare by whom they were led you see missionaries played quite an important role in both the cases. Being a Belgium I am allowed to say that some Belgium priests played quite an interesting role in recruiting for instance some companies of 2000 men from Chota Nagpur to bring them over to Belgium and France. There is a big question around the influence their presence had in Europe and what happened once returned home. There is another interesting question regarding the education courses that were set up for both Chinese and Indians labourers and the way these people interacted and were seen by the local population. It is apparent that the Chinese labour force was intensely disliked by the local population by France and Belgium. However the Indian Labour Corps who replaced the Chinese, as a consequence of questions being raised in Belgium parliament, were liked and integrated well with the locals.

2. The involvement of local population in France and Belgium

Talking about local populations there is no doubt that in Belgium and northern France there was a linguistic issue. So the academics liaised with local institutions and local organizations in the France and Belgium who were working in the local history context, and even if it was local history it might have much wider importance. It's interesting because in Belgium more than France apart in rural areas most of these populations had never a non-European which makes the interaction interesting to study. Public engagement is very important as we academics know something about this aspect of history of WW1 but most of the people out there still don't. There is more understanding

in Britain because of the historical connection and the presence of people from India making their home here but in France and Belgium very few people know anything about India even though this is one of the very few places where the Indian history and continental history meets, so it creates an opportunity to meet and to let the people know about the culture.

3. A lot has happened in Brighton, but there were also other hospitals along the south coast. However, Indians stayed most of the time at the rear of the front in both Belgium and France. As pointed out, there is also the situation of the prisoners of war: there weren't that many but they left a legacy.

4. Involving private collectors; this is the only group that is not present among us. They are very hard to reach as well but they have the bulk of the material. Established institutions like the Imperial War Museum has less content than some private collectors. As I said there are local collectors out there and some of them have brilliant collections. These are people who live in the areas where the history happened go to a flea markets and they find for instance an Indian mess tins and some of these mess tins have inscriptions in Punjabi, in Hindi and they get fascinated with the subject. They live in the area so they know people and elder people who have known the Indians being there and there is a lot of potential that haven't been used yet. There are some books on the subject but there are still a lot out there including Germany. This material tends to be very moving and is the perfect vehicle if you want to engage your public. I strongly believe in using the emotional aspects to get people interested and you could use emotions to create an interest before people get engaged intellectually. There are sound recordings made by Germans in prisoner war camps and very often the Indians talk about themselves and how they feel and how they experienced being the prisoner of war. The fact that you can hear someone talking directly to you from 100 years ago is historic sensation that really works. These recordings are in Hindi or Gurmuki or one of the other languages so if that's your mother tongue and you hear it spoken by someone who was here hundreds year ago it really emotional and also meaningful.

I think it is important to create a forum whatever is formed to maintain the network that has been explored here in Brighton. 10 years ago I think this meeting wasn't possible. People were working here and there on the subject and academic fields and public is history but now at this Symposium there is a change to build a network and it would be pity if we would lose that potential after 2018. Of course it easy to create something but it also has to be maintained beyond e.g.with formula of having 2 yearly meetings, or a web forum. We have to be more intergrational as after all it is a very restricted area: there is Brighton, there is London and there is in northern France which is within 2 hours, 3 hours, making it very transnational area. However we need links to South Asia. I feel there is a need to get people hailing from Paskistan involved. They were such an important part of the troops in the war, it is the same with people from Burma and Nepal who were also recruited in the Labour Corps.

And finally what I personally want to do in my Museum, after a couple of years is to organize a major exhibition and bringing together aspects of Indian presence in Europe during the first world war both infantry, cavalry, Indian Labour Corps, prisoner of war, hospitals and the frontline. It would be a combination of academia, objects from private collections, recordings etc. I am very happy to have British partners in these project.

Q.. The first time we visited the Flanders Field Museum when researching the production of 'across the black waters' in 1998 the museum was there but not the magnificent thing that it's becoming now but still very inspirational to us. You mentioned the private

collectors, and I think this is something we have found a very rich vein of information. We are working with a private collector who is working with us. However, there was a person living very close to you that used to sell stuff, is he still around, he used to sell photographs of Indian soldiers. I should have bought them when I was there, is he still there now?

A: No but, unfortunately he is not there now, due to the rise of internet the prices have gone up. I think it is much more interesting to contact the people who did this at that time and who have these collections, but private collectors are very difficult species to deal with. One hand you can't do anything with collectors who are not ready to share, on the other hand you need to earn their trust so that they are ready to share their collections. They are very keen on sharing yet on the other hand they want to retain their collection which is very understandable.

Alan Jeffreys – Imperial War Museum

Alan Jeffreys is currently Senior Curator, Social History at the Imperial War Museum. He is also an editor of Helion's historical series 'War and Military Culture in South Asia, 1757-1947'. He is co-editor of 'The Indian Army, 1939-1947: Experience and Development' (Routledge, 2012), author of the forthcoming 'Approach to Battle: Training the Indian Army during the Second World War' (Helion, 2016) and is editing a volume on the Indian Army in the First World War to be published in 2017.

It's a great pleasure to introduce the key note speaker, Professor Sir Hew Strachan, who is taking time out from his extremely busy schedule.

Sir Hew Strachan – keynote speaker (approved)

*Hew Strachan, FRSE, Hon. D. Univ (Paisley) has been Professor of International Relations at the University of St Andrews since 2015. He is a Life Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he taught from 1975 to 1992, before becoming Professor of Modern History at Glasgow University from 1992 to 2001. He was Chichele Professor of the History of War at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of All Souls College 2002-15 (where he is now an Emeritus Fellow), and Director of the Oxford Programme on the Changing Character of War 2003-2012. He serves on the Strategic Advisory Panel of the Chief of the Defence Staff and on the UK Defence Academy Advisory Board, as well as being a Trustee of the Imperial War Museum, a Commonwealth War Graves Commissioner, and member of the national committees for the centenary of the First World War of the United Kingdom, Scotland and France. In 2010 he chaired a task force on the implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant for the Prime Minister. In 2011 he was the inaugural Humanitas Visiting Professor in War Studies at the University of Cambridge and became a specialist adviser to the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy. He is a Brigadier in the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers). In December 2012, Foreign Policy magazine included him in its list of top global thinkers for the year. He was knighted in the 2013 New Year's Honours, and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Tweeddale in 2014. His recent publications include *The Politics of the British Army* (1997); *The First World War: To Arms* (2001); *The First World War: a New Illustrated History* (2003); and *The Direction of War* (2013).*

I am very privileged to be given a proper amount of time in which to speak, for which I thank you very much. It is, however, totally undeserved because all of the people you've just been hearing from are working directly on the Indian Army, whereas I am a mere consumer of their efforts. When I started writing on the First World War, I quickly realized that we lacked serious quality work on the role of the Indian Army in the War. David Omissi had written his first book on the subject, one in which the Indian story had been voiced. There were general histories of the Indian Army written, quite frankly, in a pretty

unreconstructed way. In many cases, I found that there were two sorts of narratives, both of which I suspect are familiar to all of you.

The first narrative is imperialist and flourished in the 1920's: it depicts India as having rallied wonderfully to the imperial cause. The most obvious celebration of this point of view was the five volumes of The Empire at War edited for the Royal Colonial Institute by Sir Charles Lucas in the 1920s. The opening page of Lucas's first volume says: "The theme of this book is the way in which, and the extent to which, the Overseas people and the British Empire have saved the cause of the Empire in time of war, pre-eminently in the last and greatest of wars. Its object is to trace growing co-operation within the Empire at times when the Empire had been in peril from without; to tell how common effort and common sacrifice cemented unity; how distance, diversities of race, colour, land, and creed, yielded to loyalty to one Crown and devotion to equal laws and world-wide liberty. The empires of history, other than our own, have been the handiwork of war. To most men the word empire has in the past connoted conquest, subjection, and dependence. It is the glory of the British Empire that war has shaped its course, not by riveting an iron yoke upon unwilling subjects, but by creating a sense of partnership, joint responsibility, and mutual confidence."

This was a very odd view of India's history, but it was an easy framework within which to place the contribution of the Indian Army. The Indian Army was both the product of Britain's conquest of India and an agent in the perpetuation of British rule. But after the First World War it now became possible to describe this as a relationship more of partners than of colonial dominance, one founded on mutual respect.

Like Gavin Edgerley-Harris, I think of the tribute paid by Professor Sir Ralph Turner in the dedication to the first Anglo-Nepali Dictionary which he started compiling in the 1920s. Turner had served in Palestine with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles, and won an MC. What he said in his dedication was as follows: "My thoughts return to you, who were my comrades, the stubborn and indomitable peasants of Nepal. Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in the bivouacs or about your camp fires, on forced marches or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining, you endure hunger and thirst and wounds; at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle. Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous."

This was a tribute to the Nepali soldier, not the Indian soldier, but then, of course, all Gurkhas were part of the Indian Army, as many – including the descendants of 3rd Gurkhas – are to this day. Turner's dedication is still cited today by the Gurkhas, but it reflects an imperial relationship.

Turner had arrived in India in 1913, having joined the Indian Educational Service from Cambridge. As a young man he took up a post at Queens's College in Varanasi. He was, therefore, an agent of empire trying to move in some ways to a new relationship although one still based on condescension. I mean this in the way in which he portrays the Gurkha soldier: while admiring and affectionate he is also aware that they were subordinates under his command.

Now that's one narrative, a re-interpretation if you like of the imperial role. The other narrative is one that George Morton-Jack has addressed directly in his book, The Indian Army on the Western Front. I have read many versions, and it is both much more important in the portrayal of the First World War and almost exactly the opposite of Turner's portrayal of the Gurkhas. It went back before 1914 and it held that the Indian soldier wasn't actually that good. There were real problems in handling Indian soldiers. I began my research with a study of the British Army before 1854, and accounts from that period

reflect this this point repeatedly: you can only employ Indian troops if they are brigaded with a British regular army battalion. It came out of the close-quarter battles of Indian conquest, including the Sikh Wars. It became embedded after 1857, when Indian Army units would serve alongside units from the Queen's or subsequently from the King's Army. However, Indian warfare was also irregular warfare, so bringing us back to what Morton-Jack was saying about the Masood and the debate about the tribe's tenacity. These people could do irregular warfare on the frontier very well, but when it came to a stand up-fight or European styles of war, they were less good. This was the challenge the Sikhs had presented the British Army in the 1840s. The Sikh army was in many respects organized on European lines, designed to fight a European battle with a significant artillery contribution, and then you needed British soldiers alongside the Indians. The legacy of that view was to be carried through the First World War, and especially in that opening year of the war, of 1914-1915, in France, East Africa and Mesopotamia.

In 1914 the Indian Army formed five expeditionary forces: that fact alone of course is striking. When Britain formed a single expeditionary force in 1914, India formed I E F A, B, C, D, and E.

So let me just say few words about each of those because it is key to the overall point, about the initial disintegration in some respects of the contribution of Indian soldiers. IEF A was sent to France, and here, according to the counter narrative, it suffered from cold, home sickness and self-inflicted wounds, so much so, that in this narrative as result of all those problems it had to be withdrawn from France at the end of 1915. David Omissi has already referred to the problems with this interpretation, so don't for a moment imagine that I am subscribing to it. The point that George Morton-Jack has made is that it is absurd to regard the problems that Indian soldiers had in France as in any way distinct from the problems that other armies had in France. There were plenty of cases of self-mutilation across all armies on the Western Front in France in 1914-1915.

IEF B went to East Africa. It was not like IEF A, which consisted of first rank troops of the Indian Army. IEF B was made up of units from Bangalore and from the Indian princely states, and it landed Tanga on the 2nd of November 1914 and was then defeated as part of a failed British expedition. It has often struck me that there are comparisons between disaster at Gallipoli, disaster at Kut al Amara and disaster at Tanga. It is extraordinary how badly British army did amphibious and overseas operations when it went to war in 1914-1915, given t that it was overwhelmingly a colonial army. Richard Meinertzhagen left us an account of the Tanga battle, which has shaped the narrative to a disproportionate extent, and he called the troops of Indian Expeditionary Force B 'the worst in India'. That account was perpetuated by William Boyd when wrote The Ice Cream War in 1982, and I have often said to my students that, if you want to read about the war in East Africa, William Boyd is not a bad departure point. Again the portrayal of the Indian soldier is not a positive one.

IEF C was also deployed to East Africa, to Uganda essentially as garrison troops to secure Uganda against German East Africa. After the defeat at Tanga, IEF B and IEF C were combined into one body. IEF D was the one that went to Mesopotamia, to today's Iraq, and David Omissi has already referred to what happened to it when he talked about the Kut al Amara defeat of almost exactly 100 years ago.

The point about Kut al Amara and IEF D is that we run up against the same narrative once again: Indian soldiers are shown as not doing so well. Once again the story is largely one of the religious challenges and difficulties, principally because of the problems of supply. Santanu Das showed us a photograph of Indian soldiers in the France, which recognized that religious differences had to be shelved to the point that they were eating together. The story of the Kut garrison is exactly the same: the problems of distributing a

limited food supply to meet the dietary requirements of the different religions in the forces that were deployed, and particularly the different food requirements of the Hindus and Muslims and the need to achieve rational use of food as a consequence. Sir Charles Townshend, in his memoirs as the commander at Kut al Amara, says that what he ended up doing was promoting others in place of those Indian officers or non-commissioned officers who refused to eat horse meat. So they would be both fed and then rewarded as a result of being physically more able to fight as a consequence of their eating. Townsend's memoir refers to cases of self-mutilation and to cases of desertion specifically in Indian battalions.

Finally IEF E was the Indian expeditionary force that serviced the most important strategic role of all in 1914-1915 which was to maintain the link between Europe and India. It did defeat the Turks when they attacked in 1915, and so that is a success story.

This narrative of apparent failure in the opening months of war creates three problems for the historian. The first problem is truth. As I have already suggested, are we actually looking at the failures of Indian soldiers or are we looking at the inadequacies of their British senior commanders? The failure of Townshend at Kut made it necessary for him to find a scapegoat when he was writing his memoirs. Or the failure of Tanga: Tighe, the commander at Tanga, should really have been on the retired list long before the war broke out. Both officers had served in the Indian Army. Should they not have been more aware of the needs and the likely needs of their troops given that background. If they had been officers who had come from Britain having not served in India, then perhaps their behaviour and their failure as commanders might have been more understandable. In other words, one of the problems the historian faces is the possibility that the Indian Army has simply been used as a scapegoat for the Army's leadership inadequacies.

The second point: the challenges the Indian army confronted in 1914-1915 were not confined to the Indian army. You need to think of the record of the British Army over the same period: its defeat at Mons, its retreat to the Marne, its failure to exploit the success achieved by the French on the Marne. Then there is a story of frustration in much of the fighting across 1915, from Festubert to Loos, which was shared just as much by the BEF as by IEF A, and including defeat at Gallipoli. In the British Expeditionary Force courts martial for desertion in the face of the enemy resulted in executions running at a higher rate proportionate to its in 1914-1915 than at any other stage of the war. The numbers in 1917 and 1918 were higher, but the Army was much bigger by then than it had been in 1914. The criticisms levelled at the Indian soldier, however justified, do not fall solely on the soldiers of India but on those of all armies who faced the reality of industrialized war in 1914. The shock of battle proved too much for many of them. In the first volume of that history of the First World War, which Alan kindly referred to, I gave an account of a French battalion which left the battlefield on the 22nd of August, lock, stock and barrel, and ended up back at home in Brittany; that was the first time that they had made contact with the enemy. So don't imagine that this was something which was specifically Indian.

The third issue is how do we explain the performance of the Indian army in the second half of the war in 1917-1918, and particularly its contribution to the allied victories in the Middle East, in Egypt, Palestine and in Mesopotamia? What happened between 1915 and 1917 to the Indian Army? How was it changed and how did it adapt as an Institution? What happened to its recruitment patterns as they changed? How did it interact with the society from which it was drawn? How was that army officered and trained? How was it equipped? To most of these questions we don't have adequate answers. We still don't know, and that was my concern when 20 years ago I started writing about the First World War. This raises something which George Morton-Jack has already mentioned: what was the

function in these contexts of the Indian General staff? What did the Indian Commander in Chief do?

The Indian Commander in Chief at the beginning of the war was Sir Beauchamp Duff. He had been commissioned from the Royal Military Academy and had served in the Royal Artillery but transferred to the Indian Staff Corps in 1881. He served with the 9th Bengal Infantry and then the 9th Gurkhas, and became Commander in Chief in India in 1913 and held the post till 1916. He was also the first Chief of the General Staff in India, a post which was created in 1906, and he held that office until he was succeeded by Haig in 1909. Duff was very cautious about the Mesopotamian campaign and questioned the wisdom of pushing the advance in Iraq as fast as it was pushed. The campaign was very much the responsibility of the Indian government, and, the campaign having got under way, Duff was also very keen that it should remain an Indian Army operation and that it should be mounted from India. In 1917 the Mesopotamian commission reported on the conduct of the campaign and condemned Duff's role. The story is that Duff took to the bottle and some allege he committed suicide in January 1918.

Duff was succeeded as Commander Chief in India by Charles Monro who held the post from 1916 to 1920. Charles Monro was a very different character. Today he is best remembered for the withdrawal of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force from Gallipoli. By the time Monro arrived in India in 1916 he had already commanded a division and briefly an army on the Western Front. In other words he was well aware of the requirements of industrialized warfare in Europe. Recent literature and particularly Edward Erickson's book on Ottoman military effectiveness has focused on the idea that Allenby was the key creator of an efficient Egyptian Expeditionary Force in 1917-1918. He had come from France in 1917 whipped the EEF into shape, culminating in 1918 ending with the victory at Megiddo. So he was able to produce an army which could fight combined arms warfare in Palestine, just as the British army was doing in France by 1918. The question for me is: is that right? Was there something going on in India, particularly under Monro, that helps explain Allenby's success? Are the sources of the victories of 1917 – 1918 to be found, in the sub-continent, in South Asia and undivided India, rather than in Britain?

So let me roll back to 1914 and just think a bit more about this Army and its institutional functions. There were four strategic roles that the Indian army had to fulfill before 1914. Its primary role was to hold British India, and to keep India under subjection. For a generation that still remembered 1857, its task was to ensure that order was maintained. Plenty of pressures in 1914 kept that mission alive. Think above all of Lord Roberts, who won his Victoria Cross in 1857. He was still an enormously powerful influence amongst British senior officers in 1914. He was the power behind the Curragh mutiny and he certainly had an important role in shaping the ideas of Henry Wilson who was the Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the end of the war. Wilson was close to Roberts. It could even be claimed that Roberts died on service while with the BEF in France in November 1914, and he is listed on some war memorials as a result. So the mutiny of 1857 can be directly linked to the experiences of 1914 and even beyond, to 1918. George has already made that point in relation to what happened on the frontier to the Masood, but think too of Amritsar and of the 3rd Afghan War. There was still enough instability in India after the end of the war for the notion that the Army was there to hold India for the British to be a preeminent strategic requirement.

Simultaneously the theorists of empire were also aware of this in a more modern sense. In many ways they had begun to anticipate Charles Lucas' argument that the empire could be a force for the 20th century, as opposed to the 19th. J.R Seeley had written about the expansion of England in 1883 and his vision anticipated an empire made up of white settler

colonies. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada which could become a sustainable federation. Seeley acknowledged that Britain could continue to hold India in perpetuity. This was not a logical and natural relationship, however close the partnership might become. There had to be a moment of Indian independence. Even Lord Milner recognized that 20th century views of imperialism had to change from those of the past. The Anglo-Indian relationship was much more volatile than those with the white dominions and required something of the army if there was eventually to be an effective transfer.

The second strategic rationale: the need to hold India's land frontiers. The north-west frontier of India has already been referred to; the north-east frontier was also an issue, which was precisely why the Gurkhas were expanded. The Punjab Frontier Force had been specifically developed as a force designed to establish security on the north-west frontier. That related too, of course, to the domestic security role. The two obligations were not totally separate.

The third strategic rationale: the fear that India might be invaded by a major European power or a major Euro-Asian power. That fear increased in the minds of British officers as the actual likelihood diminished, although it was a very powerful threat in 1885. When Kitchener became Commander in Chief in 1902 he argued that it was time to restructure the Indian army so that its priority would be the capacity to meet an external major threat. He wanted to create was a field army capable of rapid concentration. He established a staff college at Quetta and set up an Indian general staff in 1910. He got support from London but faced real opposition in India and particularly from the Viceroy. Many saw this as a distraction from the army's major role, that of internal policing. Kitchener; won his argument because he managed to manipulate London rather better than the Viceroy, Curzon, did. He had very good political and press contacts back in London. The 1907 Anglo-Russian defused the argument, but didn't remove the basic question which was, should India's army be able to fight an external opponent?

This brings me on to the fourth strategic rationale: the idea that the Indian army might be used overseas. There was always a debate about this partly because of Hindu resistance to the idea of crossing the black sea. The main concern was that deploying Indian troops out of India would generate mutiny, which it had done on occasions previously. However, this fact had not prevented the use of the Indian Army in Persia, Burma and China in the second half of the 19th Century. They acted as precursors for the campaigns which the Indian Expeditionary Forces undertook in 1914-1915. In 1909 Douglas Haig came to India as the Chief of the General Staff in India, having been Director of Staff Duties in the War Office in London. In that job he had overseen the drafting and publication of the 1909 Field Service Regulations which were designed specifically to create an imperial army. The component parts, whether they were in India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, or South Africa, would operate according to common doctrine and a common set of expectations. Haig's hope was that the imperial Army would be trained to a European standard to fight in a European war. Others in the general staff, including William Robertson, would not accept this because – Robertson said – the British army was just as likely to fight in Afghanistan as it was in France. But the role and Haig's object were clear enough. Haig's planning to create an Indian Expeditionary Force to go to France was discovered by Lord Hardinge, then the Viceroy. He ordered that all such planning should cease. In 1912 the Army in India Committee concluded India should not be called upon to maintain troops specifically for war outside the subcontinent. The strategic roles of the army were defined in terms of internal security and frontier warfare. So the effect in 1914 was the story I have already told. India sent overseas Indian Expeditionary Forces which were improvised and hastily put together. The Indian Army was not organized on a European model and some argued that it had actually gone back in its capacity to conduct

European war. Moreover the effect of mobilization in 1914 was in the short term to deepen those problems and not resolve them.

How was this Army officered? How was it recruited? And how was it equipped? Quite frankly we don't know enough, it seems to me, to be able to answer those questions adequately, although I hope that some of you will put that right.

The story on the British side once again involves Kitchener. When he set about the formation of the New Armies in August 1914, he took British Indian army officers who were home on leave. About 500 officers of a total of 4744 British officers serving in India on the outbreak of war were home on leave and were released for British battalions. So immediately the Indian army was down 500 officers, many of them men of considerable experience. During the course of the First World War and up to December 1919, over 27000 British officers were sent from India on operations. Where did these people come from? How were they recruited? How were the losses made up? How were they given the linguistic skills to command the troops under their authority? We have no serious study of how the British officers of the Indian army were selected and trained: that is the first set of questions.

Secondly, how about the soldiers? At the outbreak of the war the total number of Indians serving in the army in India was 239,561, of whom 45,660 were non-combatants. As George Morton-Jack has said, during the war a total of 1.7 million served in the army. Of those over 1 million went overseas and over 121000 became casualties and of them over 53000 were killed. Where were those men found? We know that the principles of the martial races theory were not adhered to. But in what ways and with what effects was the pattern of recruitment changed? The burden of the war may have been borne disproportionately by Punjabis, but as you have also already heard there were growing worries about Punjabi loyalty. In January 1915, of roughly a quarter of million Indians of 'the chief fighting races', then serving, 35000 were Jat Sikhs, 45000 were Punjabi Muslims, and 27000 were Gurkhas: these were the principal groups.

The UK death rate for those who put on uniform in the First World War was 12% of those who served. The Indian death rate according to the figures produce by the War Office, 54000 of the 1.7 million who served, was is extraordinarily low by comparison: at only just over 3%. Frankly, I don't believe it. That sort wastage was entirely manageable if spread across the total population of India, but could not be accommodated so readily if certain tribes or communities suffered disproportionately, especially when they were the communities on which Britain was relying for soldiers. Monro in 1916 created a central recruiting board, which recruited not by classes but territorially. So what were the bases on which it operated? They seem to have worked: as many men were enlisted in 1917 as had been recruited in the two previous years put together.

Final point: from where and how was this army equipped? The Ordnance Factories in India produced 176 guns, 1.3 million shells and 583 million rounds of small arms ammunitions during the war. However, we know very little about the output from private enterprise in India and how that was funded. Where did it get its skilled workers from and how was its output used? Was it used to equip Indian forces in Indian operations in adjacent theatres or was it used to equip all Imperial forces in adjacent theatres? Partly this was a shipping question and when shipping conditions worsened, greater pressure was put on India to produce its own equipment for its own soldiers, particularly if they were fighting in theatres adjacent to India. In 1915 Tata Steel approached the India Office and asked if it could be taken over by the state; the India Office said no, that this was a matter of the Government of India. Tata Steel was not taken over by the state: ironically given the issue's contemporary relevance.

Much of current research and most of what we have heard today is trying to engage with the experience of the Indian soldier. There are people who have been doing really interesting work here, engaging with sources that are very difficult – and very different from those used in the study of the British soldier of the First World War. But the crucial question for me is that how do these findings relate to the narratives with which I began: the story of an empire at war. How fully from these sources do we get a sense of the morale of the Indian soldiers, however diverse Indian soldiers might be in terms of background? And how far does the political context matter here? In his history of the British Empire in the war, Lucas said that there were two threats to India in 1914. First was that posed by German ambition: the ambition both to exercise influence in India itself and also to take jihad to India and in a parallel to support Indian nationalism. An Indian National Committee was created in Berlin in 1914 in the attempt to encourage desertion within the Indian army. One of its tasks was to encourage prisoners of war from the Indian Army, particularly if they were Muslims, to join the war effort of the Central Powers. How did that pan out in practice among those who continued to serve? The other threat also highlighted by Lucas was the demand of educated Indians for representation, and ultimately for independence, which is running in parallel. How did that work out and what was the relationship, if any, between the two? Between those engaged politically in India, not least though the Congress party, and those serving in the Indian army, especially given the fact much of its recruitment was from peasant communities rather than from educated and urban elites? Most historians of India don't give us answers to these questions. British rule in India was never more vulnerable than it was in 1914-1918 and yet it remained largely unchallenged during the war. Instead it was almost immediately challenged when the war was over.

Thank you very much.

Questions

Q. Do you think there are any insights that we can gain about the performance of the Indian Army by comparing them for example French Colonial troops?

A: I have a research student beginning on this very question in September. She speaks French and she is herself from India, and so she has got the linguistic capabilities to do this. I think it's very important for her to decide which theatres she is going to look at it. She wants to begin with the Egyptian Expedition Force in Palestine. The important thing is to decide on a sensible French comparison. There is also a great deal to be done in terms of how British and French imperial soldiers thought about the nation. For the Indian soldiers of the British army, it was not a citizenship or loyalty of the sort with which the French soldiers would identify. It is striking that, when King George V produced his message to the Empire in 1914, he signed a different version for India from that which he produced for Australia, New Zealand, Canada or South Africa. This 'Commonwealth' version stressed democracy and the rule of law as the reasons for which Britain was fighting. The Indian version thanked his subjects in India for their loyalty and devotion. It was still partially about democracy but it was very different in tone from the one that went to the other parts of the Empire. How did it play out? The sticking point was that many of those who were politically aware in India, the members of the Congress party and professional middle class Indians, supported the British. They saw India as part of a democracy and they said that they could postpone the argument with Britain until after the war was over. Even Gandhi said that we can support Britain because Britain is on the right side for the time being; but after the war is over we will have another argument. Yes I think there is a good comparison to be made.

Q. Just following up on that exchange you just you had with an observation rather than a question. Rana Chinna and I attended a conference in Pondicherry last year about the role of India in the First World War. I haven't thought about the fact that the French were

recruiting Indians from their territories to serve there in the French army not as units but as individuals, and sent to them to their foreign service battalions. In relation to this there was a note that was produced by a lecturer (a local teacher) saying that the Governor addressed them as French citizens: in other words saying that they had a duty to sign up so it was more stick than carrot.

A: Well, it's very interesting you mentioned that. I hadn't thought of Pondicherry being the contrasting example for my student and that might well be the right one. If you look at the French sources on the reception of British Indian soldiers in France, it was extraordinarily warm. The British people never really saw the Indian Expeditionary Force, because it didn't land in Britain. The English saw Indians here in Brighton when they were wounded and came here to be looked after. But when they arrived in Europe, they landed at Marseille. They travelled through France and the French people saw them, and thought they were wonderful. Apart from anything else, the Indian cavalry really captured the imaginations of the French. In an exhibition at the Musée de la Grande Guerre in Meaux in 2014 called 'Join Now', India formed a big part of the story because it's so important in French public memory and imagination. It was also well photographed. Indians were treated with a degree of equality in France which struck the British at the time and made them worried about discipline in the Indian Army. Let's not get carried away by the virtues of the French empire but there is narrative here that suggests it left a better impression on Indians in France.

Q. One of the themes which has been going around here today is the appropriation of Colonial and Imperial military histories by post-Colonial Independent nation states. Could you say something about the tensions between nationalism and military history in your experience?

A. Well, absolutely, and I think we have had one reference already although not from within India. However, clearly it is an issue for India as it is for Pakistan. Let me first take the case of Turkey. The stories of the Turkish victories at Gallipoli and Kut al Amara are undoubtedly being used for national purposes. It will be very interesting to see how the Indian official history of the First World War plays out in national terms. It is actually an extraordinarily complicated story, and it's challenging. One of the reasons why I stressed the issues of officers, recruitment and equipment for the Indian army was precisely because it is much easier to find answers to those sorts of questions than it is for some of the things which you guys are trying to do. The archives are nationally generated, so the story which emerges from them is often not dealing with some of the difficulties which military historians confront. It is not just that you have to deal with a national narrative, which is difficult enough given the very sensitive and complicated challenges of post-1947 India. It is not just the diversity within India, but it is also how you engage with what is a range of common experiences, albeit very often experienced differently. So the challenge is to get at both that commonality and its difference, and you can't do that very well with a national story. The experience of this war was so diverse and the way in which it was incorporated in memory was so diverse. All these armies were multinational. There is another point too – and this is where the answers to this problem should actually appeal to operational military historians. You can't understand this war if you try to do so from one side of the war only. Because battles involve the clash of different nations, the outcome is the consequence of the engagement between different nations. To tell the stories of Anzac, you cannot tell the story as one involving either Australian or New Zealand only, as it was a joint effort. The real challenge for post-1947 India is not just the cultural or national difference but also the linguistic difference.

Q. Why you think Pakistan is relatively uninvolved in the centenary commemoration?

A: Glyn Pryor will know this story from the Commission's (CWGC) point of view. It goes right back to when Pakistan left the Commonwealth. Pakistan then re-entered the Commonwealth, but since then the Pakistani Army has had quite a lot of other things to

deal with, some of them in areas that we have been talking about, like the old north-west frontier or today's FATA. Part of the challenge is that the army we are discussing in this conference was very heavily recruited from today's Pakistan. It was called the Indian Army. There is one big problem. However, one of the things that makes me most buoyant about the centenary commemorations has been the good things that have come out of the engagement with the past, which can be relevant today, and can even become a source of reconciliation. It is important that both India and Pakistan are involved in this centenary.

Rana Chhina has already made clear that there was a real issue for post-partition India about how it could engage with its pre-1947 past. But that engagement has happened. Indeed we would not be here if it hadn't. That's great because as a result there are opportunities which have arisen for scholars as well as for public understanding. It is public understanding that is the exciting part of this because public knowledge has moved on since 2014, and done so exponentially. Quite frankly the level of ignorance in 2014 in this country about the First World War was staggering. In late 2013 or early 2014, at the UK advisory committee, Richard Dannatt arrived with a ceramic poppy, and announced the plan to plant over 800,000 of them, each one to represent a soldier or sailor of the British empire killed in the First World War, in the moat of the Tower of London. Being a typical academic, I said that it would not catch on and also that it was not right, because most of these soldiers were not dead in 1914. They were dead by 1918. I thought that 2018 was the year when we should be doing this, or alternatively we could do it year by year. I was wrong. The fact that every imperial soldier killed in the First World War was commemorated in 2014 was crucially important in mobilizing the British public in the process of a four-year centenary. This form of commemoration resonated with what the population already knew of remembrance, and they went on from there to a deeper understanding. They also became aware that Indian, Australians and New Zealanders served in the war. The result is that today we are in a far better place.

Dr. Glyn Pryor, Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Approved)

Glyn Pryor is Chief Historian at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Formerly an academic, his current role involves historical interpretation, research and communication projects for the CWGC. He has worked closely with UK government on First World War commemorations and also represents CWGC in the media.

I'm sure that many of you will be aware of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, but for those of you who aren't: it is the organization which is responsible for the commemoration of 1.7 million members of the forces of the British Empire who lost their lives in both World Wars. In terms of the Indian Army, our online database lists the names of 160,000 who were affiliated with the Indian forces. Of those 74,000 served and died during the First World War. And of course, there are others of Indian heritage who weren't serving with Indian forces: one thinks of Laddy Roy, the pilot, or a soldier named Bukkan Singh who was serving with the Canadians.

The organization was established during the First World War, in May 1917, by Royal Charter. So we have our own centenary coming up next year, and I think it's a really important opportunity for thinking about interactions between the elements of Empire and Commonwealth as it became. We have war graves and memorials all over the world, in 23,000 different locations, and in 154 different countries and territories. Many of you will be familiar with those memorials, such as the Neuve Chapelle Memorial in France which

commemorates Indian soldiers with no known grave and also serves as memorial to the Indian Army on the Western Front, or the Menin Gate. But there are others further afield, in places like Basra in Iraq, the Helles Memorial on Gallipoli which was mentioned earlier, and of course the India Gate in Delhi, which lists the names of soldiers who died in the 3rd Anglo-Afghan War as well as being a memorial to all of the Indian forces who served. In Mumbai there is a very interesting Memorial to merchant sailors who lost their lives at sea during the First World War, but also places like Salonica and even in Africa. So wherever Indian forces served across the world, you will find those physical elements of commemoration.

I would also like to reflect on the theme of diversity, which was mentioned by George Morton-Jack earlier. These names are not just those of soldiers: they are sailors, they are labourers, they are members of the Indian Mule Corps. The principle behind the Imperial War Graves Commission's approach was that of equality of treatment regardless of rank or class, or indeed where you came from. Of course, there are different approaches depending on religion: those Sikhs and Hindus who were cremated will generally have cremation memorials rather than graves.

Over most of its 100 years, the Commission's work has focused on maintenance, on gardening and architecture. However, in the last few years we've moved towards far greater engagement and communication. This involves things like interpretation both on site at our memorials and cemeteries and also online. We're developing access to our archives, which are an incredibly rich resource, and also being more proactive in terms of engaging with communities. Rana mentioned a project which we're just about to launch in association with the USI of India which is called "India Remembers". The idea behind the project is to engage with communities across India to help them rediscover their past in the First and Second World Wars, as well as afterwards.

Sir Hew earlier expressed a hope we share: that through remembrance activities we can move people towards a deeper understanding of the history behind those commemorations and the people involved. We have a similar project in the U.K. called "Living Memory", to engage with British communities, many of whom of course may have South Asian heritage. There are lots of places around the U.K. where members of the Indian forces are commemorated, like the Chattri and the Cremation Memorial here in Brighton, but also places like Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey where you can go and see the graves of Muslim soldiers who died during the First World War. So this is about engaging people with the history behind those names, and using commemoration in the fullest sense to understand the experiences of all those who served and who died as representatives of the greater whole. It's about emphasizing the variety and diversity of those experiences, and of highlighting the people behind those names and behind those headstones. Thank you very much.

Questions;

Q: In a museum I've seen example files of Australian soldier where the Commonwealth War Grave Commission has a file correspondence about the location of the grave and

maybe correspondence of the family. Would there be a correspondence file on every single known grave?

A: It's unlikely. One of the challenges that we've had at the moment is to develop our awareness about our archives. We now have an archives team dedicated to looking into those questions, but you have to remember that this was a very messy process during the First World War. In fact the Commission itself is a unique product of the conflict and the way in which it approached commemoration was unprecedented. But certainly in terms of India while information about specific individuals may be limited, there is plenty of material about Indian War Graves and the approach to Memorials of Indian Forces. One of the projects which we are developing at the moment is to look at the Basra memorial and all those Indian names who are associated with that memorial, and trying to see if we can develop extra information about those individuals.

Q: Do you have any correspondence files relating to Indian casualties with British officers or Indian soldiers.

A: Yes there are some but of course not all of them.

Q: Are they available to the public?

A: If you get in touch with me or the archives team they would be happy to assist.

Q: I just wanted to ask about Neuve Chapelle it is absolutely magnificent and opens in about 1926. Are there any records of that first opening because I've seen one image which looks fantastic and gives you a sense of the local people obviously British people and the Indian Army.

A: Yes absolutely. We have records all the way through the development of that memorial. Herbert Baker was the Architect who thought very carefully about how to represent India. His original idea was to have a glass bowl filled with Ganges water at the very top of the central column but that idea was rejected. There is one brilliant photo of Indian soldiers looking up at the names of people they knew. It's an image we're used to seeing for British and European soldiers not so much for the Indian soldiers, and I think it's a very important story.

Gavin Edgerley-Harris, The Gurkha Museum (Approved)

Gavin Edgerley-Harris has been the Director of The Gurkha Museum in Winchester since 2013.

Formerly a Solicitor, he started working at the Museum in 1993 with the archives. From 1998 he became Assistant Curator and took over as Director three years ago.

He is an Honorary Member of the Gurkha Brigade Association, 6th and 7th Gurkha Rifles' Associations and a Committee Member of The Britain - Nepal Society. In 2014 he curated the Museum's Exhibition "Across the Black Water" highlighting the role of the Gurkha Brigade and Indian Corps on the Western Front in 1914 and 1915. His work involves

managing and promoting all aspects of the collection, displays and archives recording over 200 years of Gurkha Service to the Crown.

Gurkha Museum is very close to the Indian general Hospital at Brockenhurst in the New Forest and we are very proud to be able to represent the history of the Brigade of Gurkhas back 200 years. Before 1974 there was no Gurkha Museum and it was thanks to Officers like a Major Chapple who subsequently became a Field Marshal and other officers to realize that there should be brought together a collection of archives and artefacts, not as a single regiment museum, but as a museum representing the whole of the Gurkha Brigade and culture of Nepal making it a truly unique military experience in the UK. This was done by bringing together the regimental records of the various Gurkha units in the British Army. In 1947 when the 10 regiments of Gurkhas in the Gurkha Brigade was split between Britain and India, four units came to the U.K. and six regiments stayed with the Indian army. The units that remained in India kept their archives with them, so we have exceptionally good regimental records of 2nd, 6th, 7th and the 10th Gurkha Rifles being the regiments that came to the British Army

Our day job is to open the Museum to the public so they can come and see the history of the Brigade of Gurkhas but it is also the role of the Museum to engage with all those who ought to know about the contribution made to this country by the Brigade of Gurkhas and the wider Indian Army. We do this in various different ways, we help and assist different serving units of the Brigade, we have Unit Heritage Officers who engage very closely with us which is a fairly unusual practice by the serving Army. We also engage with schools, adult education groups, community groups, and the increasing number of Nepalese visitors or residents. This is achieved via a series of lectures, events and exhibitions.

In 2014, we had an exhibition called 'Across the Blackwater' on the Gurkha Brigade's contribution in France during World War One and this year we are having an exhibition on gallantry awards to Gurkhas in the two World Wars and throughout the last 200 years. We have ten Victoria Crosses held at the Museum but sadly I don't think we will be having any more because we are now competing in a very competitive market. The Gurkha 200 project, which was the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service to the Crown, held last year has led to a greater realization to the British public about the contribution of Gurkhas and the Indian Army to the British activities in the First World War. We are always looking to increase engagement, one of the reasons why I'm delighted to come here today is because we have a very small staff at the museum. However we do try and engage as much as we can with organizations such as yours. And to make it known that although we are small in number and we have limited financial resources we are always keen and happy to help wherever we can in the supply of information on the heritage of Gurkhas, the Indian Army and the culture of Nepal and the Indian subcontinent. Thank you

Questions

Q: It's really thrilling to know that the Gurkhas have such a very positive image in Britain. What do you think are the reasons for this?

A: I think I've always said the British love affair with Gurkhas probably goes back to the sepoy rebellion in 1857 where the British public first became aware through the Illustrated London newspapers. As you may know Gurkhas did not mutiny with other units of the Bengal Army and remained loyal. Queen Victoria recognized their loyalty with the presentation of a unique Truncheon, and ever since then Gurkhas have been fully and effectively occupied fighting the King's and the Queen's enemies throughout their long and distinguished history. They are traditional they operate at the highest standards and they represent everything that the British public admires.

Brigadier (Rtd) Clive Elderton CBE, Military Historical Society (Approved)

Brigadier (Retd) Clive Elderton CBE was commissioned from The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1973 and enjoyed a 38-year career in the British Army which took him all over the world. In 2005, he attended the National Defence College in Delhi as a student and from 2006 to 2009 served as the British Defence and Military Attache based in Delhi. During this time he was able to indulge his passion for Indian military history and travel. He is currently the Chairman of the Military Historical Society www.militaryhistoricalsociety.co.uk.

As Chairman of the Military Historical Society I would like to add my sincere thanks to The Golden Tours Foundation and all involved in organising this ground breaking Symposium and for inviting me to take part. I have a great passion for, and a deep interest in, Indian military history but I recognise that in this company I am a minnow and I am bound to confine my remarks to the purpose of The Military Historical Society (MHS) and give my own thoughts on the challenges we face going forward.

The MHS is a charity which was formed in 1948 with the somewhat wordy charitable purpose as follows:

"The advancement of the education of the public by the promotion of the study of military history of the uniformed forces of the crown, of uniforms and weapons, and all aspects of military history and the dissemination of knowledge relating to such matters."

Although we are not specifically focused on India or Indian military history our members include those who are interested in the sub-continent and we routinely publish articles on Indian military themes in our quarterly Bulletin. We achieve our charitable purpose by:

- *Holding formal educational talks and meetings.*
- *Promoting the collection of objects of military interest.*
- *Doing such other lawful things as shall further the objects of the Society.*

As a charity we are governed by our charitable purpose but this is broad as you can see and therefore our membership have a considerable influence on the direction we take. Our headline statistics are that we have about 600 paid up members, 50 of whom are overseas including a couple in India. We publish a quarterly Bulletin and every couple of years a Special Number - a Special stand alone publication on a specific theme. Most recently this was a ground breaking work on the machine gun core in the First World War.

Our biggest challenge going forward is how to maintain our membership numbers at a time when people seem to be less inclined to participate in Clubs and Societies and generally prefer to access information 24/7 via the internet at the touch of a button and often on a very specific basis. The consequence is that I think many specialist Clubs and Societies are struggling to keep going as the cost of overheads on such as printing, room hire and so on keeps going up. Despite these pressures I'm pleased to report the MHS are in good shape but we can't be complacent.

My own view and I think this was echoed by some of the speaking this morning is that an interest in history is most often stimulated by people and personal experience and I sense we must ensure we focus our efforts accordingly. In my own case my own interest in Indian military history was stimulated in my early teens by school friend who produced a box of family medals. His father had been commissioned in the Punjab Regiment in 1934. He subsequently won the Military Cross in 1945 in Burma and post war emigrated to Canada and transferred to the Canadian Army. His Grandfather George was a senior railway official in India and served for over 40 years in East India Railway Volunteer Rifles. His great uncle, George's brother, served during World War One in the 14th Hussars and the Corps of Indian Engineers. His great grandfather, George Ward, served in the Second Battalion Somerset Light Infantry in Burma in the 1880's and his great, great grandfather served in the 6th Light Cavalry as a trumpeter during the uprising and his 1857 medal carries the bar Central India. So this was a family really steeped in India. They were not unique but the marvellous thing for us as boys was that we could speak with his grandmother who he lived with because she had been born, schooled and married in India. She had first hand experience of the British Indian Army both regular and auxiliary and was happy to share her wonderful stories which fired our imagination. Their garage was piled high with huge trunks each carrying labels with the names of various places in India. We weren't allowed to actually explore what was inside but they provided a source of endless wonder and curiosity.

The key point to all this is that in my view the common theme is people and it is people who make and shape and are made and shaped by history. The number of people with these experiences is fading at a time when interest in family and military history is growing. So in facing the challenge of declining membership I am determined that we do all we can to make information about people widely available and use such as the Internet to the full and encourage the formation of loose networks of like-minded people to share and exchange information and human experiences. In this The Golden Tours Foundation in arranging this symposium is showing the way. Thank you.

For more information please see www.themilitaryhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Dr. Antonia Moon, British Library (Approved)

Dr Antonia Moon is an archivist and a lead curator at the British Library, working on the India Office Records. Since joining the Library in 1997, she has worked to make the Records accessible to national and international audiences. Recent projects include the digitisation of archives on the history of colonial science and on the Indian contribution to

the First World War. Antonia is a Member of Council of the British Records Association and acting Chair of the South Asia Archive and Library Group.

I am a curator working on the India Office Records. The India Office Records are the records which accumulated in London of the administration by the British in India up to 1947; there are 9 miles of them held at the British Library. As you would expect, we have substantial materials on World War One. For the centenary commemoration, our challenge was to identify some of the important materials, to promote them, and to set them in some kind of context, as part of the library's wider remit to make its material accessible. The principal reason we were able to do this was through our involvement with the digitisation project 'Europeana 1914 to 1918', which I hope that some of you have heard of. It was a consortium of European Libraries, the aim being to gather materials from both sides of the conflict, with heritage materials from libraries and archives, and to put them online free of charge, as far as possible using public domain material. I know there have been some questions about charging for use of items. We have chosen only items which are free to use and re-use. The project was aimed at a popular audience and this did influence our choice of materials. We have a series of war diaries, for example, almost 2000 volumes, but we put those aside in favour of materials which would highlight the Indian contribution to the War. This underlines our particular strengths, which are not only the material on the Western Front but also material from the Middle East, because of the Government of India's involvement in Mesopotamia. To this end we were concerned to choose and digitise items which had a personal flavour and to balance these items with some of an official character. One of the key series which we digitised was a series of reports from the Censor of Indian Mails, which include extracts from the letters written by soldiers on the Western Front. These are well known to writers like David Omissi, but they were not known to a wider audience. We digitized them all and put them online. Over 26 volumes, they really give a strong flavour of the soldiers' personal concerns and preoccupations. I think their power is enhanced by the fact that we have a whole sequence of them, so you can trace a gradual movement from optimism to disillusion. When these records were being selected, we came across material from the military department which gave some personal histories, for example, testimonies of Indian soldiers who were captured by the Germans and Turks. I am thinking of a file from an Indian soldier in Germany who wanted a new uniform. He wrote to the Indian office giving exact details of the clothing (tunic length, etc.) he wanted. We have many statistics on the Indian contribution to operations in Mesopotamia, especially the operations around the siege of Kut.

I will quickly move on to exploitation. To some extent we have promoted the material through normal channels. That means diplomatic visits from the Pakistan High Commission, the Indian High Commission and a wide range of audiences such as scholars, families, historians and school workshops. These are extremely important. We have also introduced this material to our schools' Indian Independence workshop, really to broaden out the whole concept of Indian Independence and to see how to get the children thinking on what might have influenced Nationalist assessments of the war.

Finally the special events. We have been reactive rather than proactive, because we have been approached by groups like the Sikh Heritage Association to provide workshops to show the resources to them at the Library. This has been very rewarding for us, because we have received expert input, really giving a whole new perspective on records which were mainly seen by curators before. In conclusion I would like to say that one is always conscious of the records that have been left out. In research for this I personally was amazed by the depth of our resources from the Economic Department of the India

Office. For example, Tata Steel was often mentioned. There is a real story to be told from the archives, I think, about the economic impact on India during this period and certainly our next hope is to get that kind of material catalogued and digitised.

Questions

Q: You have got war diaries; the National Archives have war diaries, who has what? I mean what's the division between the two?

A: I'm afraid I don't know exactly what the division is, except that as ours are printed and those of the National Archives are in manuscript, I think that ours are more top-level.

MEETING OF THE MINDS SYMPOSIUM – BRIGHTON 2016

TRANSCRIPT

Nitin Palan - Golden Tours Foundation (awaiting approval)

Nitin Palan is a highly successful entrepreneur who is the founder of the Golden Tours Company, which has been in existence for around thirty years and has been synonymous with tourism in the heart of London. From the success of the company, Nitin Palan has set up the Golden Tours Foundation to 'give back' to the communities it serves. Nitin Palan holds several executive roles in addition to his Nitin has been in the forefront to help develop work with Golden Tours. This includes Directorships of BAPS Charities, Diwali in London and Hindu Christian Forum. He is also the National Coordinator for BAPS Interfaith Department which do extensive social action projects in the UK for better community relations and wellbeing. He is passionate about socially innovative ideas that help education the younger generations. His current projects include various educational and development projects in Indian and the UK, as well as the contribution of Indian soldiers during the First World War commemorations.

Good morning, Namaste, My name is Nitin Palan came to this country in 1971, from East Africa and I am Hindu practitioner. Two years ago I met with Warwick Hawkins and he suggested that there was the potential for a project about the Indian soldier's contribution in World War I, I said "what! I was unaware Indian soldiers were involved in WW1". Over the last five years one thing that I have learnt is that there is a need for young people to understand about each other's culture, what I have learn from my spiritual master is that 'the real education is education about the heart'. We have too many divisions: geographical, political etc. However we do not focus on topics that could that unite us like the contribution of Indian soldiers and the relevancy of it. This history could act as catalyst to bring people together. For me it's about relevancy, for me it's about people coming together to celebrates human beings effort in keeping humanity safe. So its kind of my catalyst in making this thing happens. But the real thank you belongs to the Alan and to Rana ji, they cornered me in a room about 9 months ago and said, 'would it not be nice if alot of good people that do a good work on the subject of WW1 could come together and something good came out of it'. So the next two days is about you, it is about your efforts, your sacrifices, your thoughts, your inspirations and for all of you to share that with each other and through that sharing perhaps a journey will began in 2018. I am hoping and

praying that maybe we will do this again next year and the year after building into something much bigger in 2018.

I hope today that you will share your experiences, your inspirations, and your wishes too, I really should say thank you also to Sir Hugh Strachan, you are such a busy person sir, it is so kind of you to spend the time here with us today, we want to hear from you, we want you to inspire us to the next journey. The composition of what we will be talking about here has got interesting elements, pride, relevancy, sacrifices, what I hope and pray what we won't do is divide those people sacrifices with individual things and it might inspire us. During a recent interview the BBC asked me questions around the sacrifice of Sikhs Hindus Muslims, I said, "pardon! I thought that they were all Indians. The fact they had a faith was an individual thing but they died, they sacrificed as Indian soldiers".

With your permission could we have a minute silence to remember these people who did so much for us and in that silence perhaps we could say; we embrace them in their sacrifice for us. With your blessings can I have 60 seconds of silence please.

Thank you! Could I introduce Rana ji to come forward and take this to next panel, thank you all for you being here, wonderful, thank you.

Rana Chhina, United Service Institution of India (approved)

Squadron Leader Rana TS Chhina served in the Indian Air Force as a helicopter pilot. A Qualified Flying Instructor, he is a recipient of the prestigious Macgregor Medal for best military reconnaissance in 1986 and had the distinction of carrying out the highest landing in the world by a medium-lift class of helicopter, at the time. He is currently Secretary and Editor of the United Service Institution of India Centre for Armed Forces Historical Research and Vice President of the Indian Military Historical Society, UK. Squadron Leader Chhina's main field of interest is colonial Indian military history. He is a member of the joint USI-MEA Steering Committee responsible for coordinating national commemoration of India's participation in the First World War in connection with the centenary of the conflict. He is also a member of the IAF Aerospace Museum Apex Steering Committee and the Government of India's Archival Advisory Board.

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I would like to start by thanking the organizers, Nitin Ji, the Royal Pavilion and Museums Brighton and Hove and the Imperial War Museum, for making this symposium possible. There is a Chinese phrase that says "we live in interesting times", and I think these have been both interesting as well as exciting times. This gathering here today is something that I have been hoping would occur for quite some time. This is a remarkable opportunity that allows us to listen to what people from very diverse backgrounds have been doing; to share their plans and activities relating to the history of India in WW1 and WW2.

The logo that you see on the screen, the only slide I have, is that of the 'India and the Great War' Centenary Commemoration Project which we started at the USI in 2014. The project in itself was unique. For those of you who are familiar with public attitudes in post-independence India, will appreciate that for many years it wasn't really considered politic to engage with a history that was seen as a part of our colonial legacy. But I do think that we have now matured sufficiently as a nation. We have come out of the colonial shadow and are ready to embrace those parts of our history that stretch back to the period before 1947. This project was an outcome of this process. When we put up the proposal to the government it was supported by the Ministry of External Affairs largely as a public diplomacy initiative. I think another major milestone in the journey was a conference that was organized in New Delhi in March 2014. The Vice President of India delivered the

inaugural speech. The Field Marshall John Chapel delivered the keynote and the validation by the Foreign Secretary. The reason I am mentioning this is that for the first time since Independence we had Indian Endorsement of our contribution to the 1st or the 2nd World War, which was a huge step forward.

I think that was in many ways similar to the butterfly effect: a butterfly flaps its wings in one part of the world and this leads eventually to a hurricane in another. I think that's an analogy which is quite apt for the way events have been unfolding since the time we began. We decided that the project would be in two parts. The first was academic, starting with an academic conference which we felt was the core and the meat of the entire matter. I am delighted to say that some of you that attended the conference are in this very room. The second part, which was equally important, was to engage with communities not just in India but outside India as well. Both elements, the academic and the popular, have been very central to what we have been doing since that time and what we are continuing to do today. As part of the project we are also engaging with descendants of the soldiers who fought in WW1.

We have also managed to collate writings by Indian soldiers from the First World War. Though not many, they are far more than we knew existed before the project started. These are in my opinion worth their weight in gold. We have soldiers who wrote about their experiences in Mesopotamia. Some of these are autobiographical accounts, their diaries or their letters and so on and so forth. It's also been very gratifying that the Government of India has actively engaged with the project in a very significant manner. Whenever the President of India visits different parts of the world, he makes it a point to lay a wreath and pay his respects at a war memorial. Very recently when he was in Papua New Guinea he actually went and laid a wreath at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) memorial in the memory of the Indian soldiers who died as prisoners of the war of the Japanese. The Prime Minister visited Australia and presented the Australian Prime Minister with a silver statue of the jam tin bomber from the 14 Sikhs at Gallipoli. Similarly when he came to France he presented them with a memento from the Garhwal Rifles. When the President visited this country he presented David Omissi's book to David Cameron. So, take a bow David, so it's very gratifying that we are finally waking up to shared history, shared past we are also engaging with various countries. The United Kingdom has been a key partner, as may be expected in this entire process, we had major reception hosted at the British High Commissioners' residence in October 2014. This reception actually proved to be catalyst for some very significant changes as the UK Secretary of Defense, the Indian Minister of Defense attended. We put on an exhibition and I think our Minister of Defense was so taken aback by what he saw that he actually announced that India would actually write the official history of India's involvement in First World War and that job has been tasked to the Ministry of Defense's History Division. The Minister also said that we would do the same for various other conflicts. This has started to happen and that's fantastic from our point of view.

So right now the main projects we are involved with are working very closely with CWGC, we have just signed an memorandum of understanding (MOU) with them but I won't talk too much about that as I am sure Glyn will talk about that later but the intent is to build up to a conference in 2018 in the details in which I am still working on. As far as the wish list is concerned, I wish we could have access to records greater resources, anybody with deep pockets please raise your hands and other thing that we are working on is trying to get Indian memorial at the Menin Gate which will become a world focus point for commemoration and remembrance Indian soldier fell in the WW1 and WW2. Thank you so much Nitin ji for making all of this possible and it fantastic and greatly forward to listening all of you.

Questions

Q. I am the Chairman of the Military Historic Society you mentioned your aspiration to have more memorials in India. Would these be of a national scale or regional level or indeed more regimental level or indeed memorials in UK?

A: As you know there are any numbers of memorials around India. The proposal is to erect memorials in countries outside India like Australia, New Zealand. We already have the Chattri over here, in France, I know the Cavalry Association is trying very hard to put up something and they have been offered but they are looking for funds. So basically the answer to your question is that we are looking to erect memorials outside of India and yes they should be national memorials.

Q. Well the Historian in me is rather fascinated by the project you are doing to develop an official history from scratch, is it too early to ask what shape it will look like, and how it would be conceived and how big.

A: It is being steered by the Ministry of Defence as you may be aware everything that happened in WW1 is a top secret; when I get to know what they were doing I shall definitely let you know.

smooth over to hide of unattractive aspects. This is a messy history and the creativity kind of stems from the engagement with the mess and the contradictiveness this history.

Dominiek Dendooven – In Flanders Fields Museum (approved)

Historian Dominiek Dendooven (Bruges, 1971) has been working as a researcher and curator for the award-winning In Flanders Fields Museum in Ypres since 1998. He is associated researcher at the University of Antwerp and guest lecturer at the University of Louvain. Dominiek Dendooven has published extensively on the First World War and his main fields of interest are the involvement of ethnic minorities in the conflict and individuals' war experience.

Good morning, I would like to thanks Mr. Palan and Golden Tours Foundation. I am delighted to be here, because this one of the very rare meetings and the aim of the meeting is to see how we could proceed beyond 2018. On the other hand it's not an academic conference this is a meeting which brings together academic and people working in what we call public history, quite a special occasion.

I have been working on the Indian Army off and on since 1999, usually the organising of exhibitions. I would like to plead for more integral approach of the Indians in the 1st world war and there are four points which I am going to talk you about;

1. The international Labour Corps:

So first recording the Indian Labour Corps there is only one scholar that has been really working on the Indian labour she is Radhika Singha. We are talking about huge numbers, around 40,000 Indian labourers, that were on the western front and what is very interesting is that they stayed on for quite a while after the war as the last companies left only in March 1920, which makes very interesting comparisons with some of the other groups like the Chinese Labour Corps who also stayed on till March 1920.

It is also interesting to compare by whom they were led you see missionaries played quite an important role in both the cases. Being a Belgium I am allowed to say that some Belgium priests played quite an interesting role in recruiting for instance some companies of 2000 men from Chota Nagpur to bring them over to Belgium and France. There is a big

question around the influence their presence had in Europe and what happened once returned home. There is another interesting question regarding the education courses that were set up for both Chinese and Indians labourers and the way these people interacted and were seen by the local population. It is apparent that the Chinese labour force was intensely disliked by the local population by France and Belgium. However the Indian Labour Corps who replaced the Chinese, as a consequence of questions being raised in Belgium parliament, were liked and integrated well with the locals.

2. The involvement of local population in France and Belgium

Talking about local populations there is no doubt that in Belgium and northern France there was a linguistic issue. So the academics liaised with local institutions and local organizations in the France and Belgium who were working in the local history context, and even if it was local history it might have much wider importance. It's interesting because in Belgium more than France apart in rural areas most of these populations had never a non-European which makes the interaction interesting to study. Public engagement is very important as we academics know something about this aspect of history of WW1 but most of the people out there still don't. There is more understanding in Britain because of the historical connection and the presence of people from India making their home here but in France and Belgium very few people know anything about India even though this is one of the very few places where the Indian history and continental history meets, so it creates an opportunity to meet and to let the people know about the culture.

3. A lot has happened in Brighton, but there were also other hospitals along the south coast. However, Indians stayed most of the time at the rear of the front in both Belgium and France. As pointed out, there is also the situation of the prisoners of war: there weren't that many but they left a legacy.

4. Involving private collectors; this is the only group that is not present among us. They are very hard to reach as well but they have the bulk of the material. Established institutions like the Imperial War Museum has less content than some private collectors. As I said there are local collectors out there and some of them have brilliant collections. These are people who live in the areas where the history happened go to a flea markets and they find for instance an Indian mess tins and some of these mess tins have inscriptions in Punjabi, in Hindi and they get fascinated with the subject. They live in the area so they know people and elder people who have known the Indians being there and there is a lot of potential that haven't been used yet. There are some books on the subject but there are still a lot out there including Germany. This material tends to be very moving and is the perfect vehicle if you want to engage your public. I strongly believe in using the emotional aspects to get people interested and you could use emotions to create an interest before people get engaged intellectually. There are sound recordings made by Germans in prisoner war camps and very often the Indians talk about themselves and how they feel and how they experienced being the prisoner of war. The fact that you can hear someone talking directly to you from 100 years ago is historic sensation that really works. These recordings are in Hindi or Gurmuki or one of the other languages so if that's your mother tongue and you hear it spoken by someone who was here hundreds year ago it really emotional and also meaningful.

I think it is important to create a forum whatever is formed to maintain the network that has been explored here in Brighton. 10 years ago I think this meeting wasn't possible. People were working here and there on the subject and academic fields and public is history but now at this Symposium there is a change to build a network and it

would be pity if we would lose that potential after 2018. Of course it easy to create something but it also has to be maintained beyond e.g.with formula of having 2 yearly meetings, or a web forum. We have to be more intergrational as after all it is a very restricted area: there is Brighton, there is London and there is in northern France which is within 2 hours, 3 hours , making it very transnational area. However we need links to South Asia .I feel there is a need to get people hailing from Paskistan involved. They were such an important part of the troops in the war, it is the same with people from Burma and Nepal who were also recruited in the Labour Corps.

And finally what I personally want to do in my Museum, after a couple of years is to organize a major exhibition and bringing together aspects of Indian presence in Europe during the first world war both infantry, cavalry, Indian Labour Corps, prisoner of war, hospitals and the frontline. It would be a combination of academia, objects from private collections, recordings etc. I am very happy to have British partners in these project.

Q. The first time we visited the Flanders Field Museum when researching the production of 'across the black waters' in 1998 the museum was there but not the magnificent thing that it's becoming now but still very inspirational to us. You mentioned the private collectors, and I think this is something we have found a very rich rein of information. We are working with a private collector who is working with us. However, there was a person living very close to you that used to sell stuff, is he still around, he used to sell photographs of Indian soldiers. I should have bought them when I was there, is he still there now?

A: No but, unfortunately he is not there now, due to the rise of internet the prices have gone up. I think it is much more interesting to contact the people who did this at that time and who have these collections, but private collectors are very difficult species to deal with. One hand you can't do anything with collectors who are not ready to share, on the hand you need to earn their trust so that they are ready to share their collections. They are very keen on sharing yet on the other hand they want to retain their collection which is very understandable.

Alan Jeffreys – Imperial War Museum

Alan Jeffreys is currently Senior Curator, Social History at the Imperial War Museum. He is also an editor of Helion's historical series 'War and Military Culture in South Asia, 1757-1947'. He is co-editor of 'The Indian Army, 1939-1947: Experience and Development' (Routledge, 2012), author of the forthcoming 'Approach to Battle: Training the Indian Army during the Second World War' (Helion, 2016) and is editing a volume on the Indian Army in the First World War to be published in 2017.

It's a great pleasure to introduce the key note speaker, Professor Sir Hew Strachan, who is taking time out from his extremely busy schedule.

Sir Hew Strachan – keynote speaker (approved)

Hew Strachan, FRSE, Hon. D. Univ (Paisley) has been Professor of International Relations at the University of St Andrews since 2015. He is a Life Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, where he taught from 1975 to 1992, before becoming Professor of Modern History at Glasgow University from 1992 to 2001. He was Chichele Professor of the History of War at the University of Oxford and a Fellow of All Souls College 2002-15 (where he is now an Emeritus Fellow), and Director of the Oxford Programme on the Changing Character of War 2003-2012. He serves on the Strategic Advisory Panel of the Chief of the Defence Staff and on the UK Defence Academy Advisory Board, as well as being a Trustee of the Imperial War Museum, a Commonwealth War Graves Commissioner, and member of the national committees for the centenary of the First World War of the United Kingdom, Scotland and France. In 2010 he chaired a task force

*on the implementation of the Armed Forces Covenant for the Prime Minister. In 2011 he was the inaugural Humanitas Visiting Professor in War Studies at the University of Cambridge and became a specialist adviser to the Joint Committee on the National Security Strategy. He is a Brigadier in the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland (Royal Company of Archers). In December 2012, Foreign Policy magazine included him in its list of top global thinkers for the year. He was knighted in the 2013 New Year's Honours, and was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Tweeddale in 2014. His recent publications include *The Politics of the British Army* (1997); *The First World War: To Arms* (2001); *The First World War: a New Illustrated History* (2003); and *The Direction of War* (2013).*

I am very privileged to be given a proper amount of time in which to speak, for which I thank you very much. It is, however, totally undeserved because all of the people you've just been hearing from are working directly on the Indian Army, whereas I am a mere consumer of their efforts. When I started writing on the First World War, I quickly realized that we lacked serious quality work on the role of the Indian Army in the War. David Omissi had written his first book on the subject, one in which the Indian story had been voiced. There were general histories of the Indian Army written, quite frankly, in a pretty unreconstructed way. In many cases, I found that there were two sorts of narratives, both of which I suspect are familiar to all of you.

The first narrative is imperialist and flourished in the 1920's: it depicts India as having rallied wonderfully to the imperial cause. The most obvious celebration of this point of view was the five volumes of *The Empire at War* edited for the Royal Colonial Institute by Sir Charles Lucas in the 1920s. The opening page of Lucas's first volume says: "The theme of this book is the way in which, and the extent to which, the Overseas people and the British Empire have saved the cause of the Empire in time of war, pre-eminently in the last and greatest of wars. Its object is to trace growing co-operation within the Empire at times when the Empire had been in peril from without; to tell how common effort and common sacrifice cemented unity; how distance, diversities of race, colour, land, and creed, yielded to loyalty to one Crown and devotion to equal laws and world-wide liberty. The empires of history, other than our own, have been the handiwork of war. To most men the word empire has in the past connoted conquest, subjection, and dependence. It is the glory of the British Empire that war has shaped its course, not by riveting an iron yoke upon unwilling subjects, but by creating a sense of partnership, joint responsibility, and mutual confidence."

This was a very odd view of India's history, but it was an easy framework within which to place the contribution of the Indian Army. The Indian Army was both the product of Britain's conquest of India and an agent in the perpetuation of British rule. But after the First World War it now became possible to describe this as a relationship more of partners than of colonial dominance, one founded on mutual respect.

Like Gavin Edgerley-Harris, I think of the tribute paid by Professor Sir Ralph Turner in the dedication to the first Anglo-Nepali Dictionary which he started compiling in the 1920s. Turner had served in Palestine with the 2nd Battalion, 3rd Queen Alexandra's Own Gurkha Rifles, and won an MC. What he said in his dedication was as follows: "My thoughts return to you, who were my comrades, the stubborn and indomitable peasants of Nepal. Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in the bivouacs or about your camp fires, on forced marches or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining, you endure hunger and thirst and wounds; at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle. Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous."

This was a tribute to the Nepali soldier, not the Indian soldier, but then, of course, all Gurkhas were part of the Indian Army, as many – including the descendants of 3rd Gurkhas

– are to this day. Turner's dedication is still cited today by the Gurkhas, but it reflects an imperial relationship.

Turner had arrived in India in 1913, having joined the Indian Educational Service from Cambridge. As a young man he took up a post at Queens's College in Varanasi. He was, therefore, an agent of empire trying to move in some ways to a new relationship although one still based on condescension. I mean this in the way in which he portrays the Gurkha soldier: while admiring and affectionate he is also aware that they were subordinates under his command.

Now that's one narrative, a re-interpretation if you like of the imperial role. The other narrative is one that George Morton-Jack has addressed directly in his book, The Indian Army on the Western Front. I have read many versions, and it is both much more important in the portrayal of the First World War and almost exactly the opposite of Turner's portrayal of the Gurkhas. It went back before 1914 and it held that the Indian soldier wasn't actually that good. There were real problems in handling Indian soldiers. I began my research with a study of the British Army before 1854, and accounts from that period reflect this point repeatedly: you can only employ Indian troops if they are brigaded with a British regular army battalion. It came out of the close-quarter battles of Indian conquest, including the Sikh Wars. It became embedded after 1857, when Indian Army units would serve alongside units from the Queen's or subsequently from the King's Army. However, Indian warfare was also irregular warfare, so bringing us back to what Morton-Jack was saying about the Masood and the debate about the tribe's tenacity. These people could do irregular warfare on the frontier very well, but when it came to a stand up-fight or European styles of war, they were less good. This was the challenge the Sikhs had presented the British Army in the 1840s. The Sikh army was in many respects organized on European lines, designed to fight a European battle with a significant artillery contribution, and then you needed British soldiers alongside the Indians. The legacy of that view was to be carried through the First World War, and especially in that opening year of the war, of 1914-1915, in France, East Africa and Mesopotamia.

In 1914 the Indian Army formed five expeditionary forces: that fact alone of course is striking. When Britain formed a single expeditionary force in 1914, India formed I E F A, B, C, D, and E.

So let me just say few words about each of those because it is key to the overall point, about the initial disintegration in some respects of the contribution of Indian soldiers. IEF A was sent to France, and here, according to the counter narrative, it suffered from cold, home sickness and self-inflicted wounds, so much so, that in this narrative as result of all those problems it had to be withdrawn from France at the end of 1915. David Omissi has already referred to the problems with this interpretation, so don't for a moment imagine that I am subscribing to it. The point that George Morton-Jack has made is that it is absurd to regard the problems that Indian soldiers had in France as in any way distinct from the problems that other armies had in France. There were plenty of cases of self-mutilation across all armies on the Western Front in France in 1914-1915.

IEF B went to East Africa. It was not like IEF A, which consisted of first rank troops of the Indian Army. IEF B was made up of units from Bangalore and from the Indian princely states, and it landed Tanga on the 2nd of November 1914 and was then defeated as part of a failed British expedition. It has often struck me that there are comparisons between disaster at Gallipoli, disaster at Kut al Amara and disaster at Tanga. It is extraordinary how badly British army did amphibious and overseas operations when it went to war in 1914-1915, given that it was overwhelmingly a colonial army. Richard Meinertzhagen left us an account of the Tanga battle, which has shaped the narrative to a disproportionate

extent, and he called the troops of Indian Expeditionary Force B 'the worst in India'. That account was perpetuated by William Boyd when he wrote The Ice Cream War in 1982, and I have often said to my students that, if you want to read about the war in East Africa, William Boyd is not a bad departure point. Again the portrayal of the Indian soldier is not a positive one.

IEF C was also deployed to East Africa, to Uganda essentially as garrison troops to secure Uganda against German East Africa. After the defeat at Tanga, IEF B and IEF C were combined into one body. IEF D was the one that went to Mesopotamia, to today's Iraq, and David Omissi has already referred to what happened to it when he talked about the Kut al Amara defeat of almost exactly 100 years ago.

The point about Kut al Amara and IEF D is that we run up against the same narrative once again: Indian soldiers are shown as not doing so well. Once again the story is largely one of the religious challenges and difficulties, principally because of the problems of supply. Santanu Das showed us a photograph of Indian soldiers in France, which recognized that religious differences had to be shelved to the point that they were eating together. The story of the Kut garrison is exactly the same: the problems of distributing a limited food supply to meet the dietary requirements of the different religions in the forces that were deployed, and particularly the different food requirements of the Hindus and Muslims and the need to achieve rational use of food as a consequence. Sir Charles Townshend, in his memoirs as the commander at Kut al Amara, says that what he ended up doing was promoting others in place of those Indian officers or non-commissioned officers who refused to eat horse meat. So they would be both fed and then rewarded as a result of being physically more able to fight as a consequence of their eating. Townsend's memoir refers to cases of self-mutilation and to cases of desertion specifically in Indian battalions.

Finally IEF E was the Indian expeditionary force that serviced the most important strategic role of all in 1914-1915 which was to maintain the link between Europe and India. It did defeat the Turks when they attacked in 1915, and so that is a success story.

This narrative of apparent failure in the opening months of war creates three problems for the historian. The first problem is truth. As I have already suggested, are we actually looking at the failures of Indian soldiers or are we looking at the inadequacies of their British senior commanders? The failure of Townshend at Kut made it necessary for him to find a scapegoat when he was writing his memoirs. Or the failure of Tanga: Tighe, the commander at Tanga, should really have been on the retired list long before the war broke out. Both officers had served in the Indian Army. Should they not have been more aware of the needs and the likely needs of their troops given that background. If they had been officers who had come from Britain having not served in India, then perhaps their behaviour and their failure as commanders might have been more understandable. In other words, one of the problems the historian faces is the possibility that the Indian Army has simply been used as a scapegoat for the Army's leadership inadequacies.

The second point: the challenges the Indian army confronted in 1914-1915 were not confined to the Indian army. You need to think of the record of the British Army over the same period: its defeat at Mons, its retreat to the Marne, its failure to exploit the success achieved by the French on the Marne. Then there is a story of frustration in much of the fighting across 1915, from Festubert to Loos, which was shared just as much by the BEF as by IEF A, and including defeat at Gallipoli. In the British Expeditionary Force courts martial for desertion in the face of the enemy resulted in executions running at a higher rate proportionate to its in 1914-1915 than at any other stage of the war. The numbers in 1917 and 1918 were higher, but the Army was much bigger by then than it had been in 1914. The criticisms levelled at the Indian soldier, however justified, do not fall solely on

the soldiers of India but on those of all armies who faced the reality of industrialized war in 1914. The shock of battle proved too much for many of them. In the first volume of that history of the First World War, which Alan kindly referred to, I gave an account of a French battalion which left the battlefield on the 22nd of August, lock, stock and barrel, and ended up back at home in Brittany; that was the first time that they had made contact with the enemy. So don't imagine that this was something which was specifically Indian.

The third issue is how do we explain the performance of the Indian army in the second half of the war in 1917-1918, and particularly its contribution to the allied victories in the Middle East, in Egypt, Palestine and in Mesopotamia? What happened between 1915 and 1917 to the Indian Army? How was it changed and how did it adapt as an Institution? What happened to its recruitment patterns as they changed? How did it interact with the society from which it was drawn? How was that army officered and trained? How was it equipped? To most of these questions we don't have adequate answers. We still don't know, and that was my concern when 20 years ago I started writing about the First World War. This raises something which George Morton-Jack has already mentioned: what was the function in these contexts of the Indian General staff? What did the Indian Commander in Chief do?

The Indian Commander in Chief at the beginning of the war was Sir Beauchamp Duff. He had been commissioned from the Royal Military Academy and had served in the Royal Artillery but transferred to the Indian Staff Corps in 1881. He served with the 9th Bengal Infantry and then the 9th Gurkhas, and became Commander in Chief in India in 1913 and held the post till 1916. He was also the first Chief of the General Staff in India, a post which was created in 1906, and he held that office until he was succeeded by Haig in 1909. Duff was very cautious about the Mesopotamian campaign and questioned the wisdom of pushing the advance in Iraq as fast as it was pushed. The campaign was very much the responsibility of the Indian government, and, the campaign having got under way, Duff was also very keen that it should remain an Indian Army operation and that it should be mounted from India. In 1917 the Mesopotamian commission reported on the conduct of the campaign and condemned Duff's role. The story is that Duff took to the bottle and some allege he committed suicide in January 1918.

Duff was succeeded as Commander Chief in India by Charles Monro who held the post from 1916 to 1920. Charles Monro was a very different character. Today he is best remembered for the withdrawal of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force from Gallipoli. By the time Monro arrived in India in 1916 he had already commanded a division and briefly an army on the Western Front. In other words he was well aware of the requirements of industrialized warfare in Europe. Recent literature and particularly Edward Erickson's book on Ottoman military effectiveness has focused on the idea that Allenby was the key creator of an efficient Egyptian Expeditionary Force in 1917-1918. He had come from France in 1917 whipped the EEF into shape, culminating in 1918 ending with the victory at Megiddo. So he was able to produce an army which could fight combined arms warfare in Palestine, just as the British army was doing in France by 1918. The question for me is: is that right? Was there something going on India, particularly under Monro, that helps explain Allenby's success? Are the sources of the victories of 1917 – 1918 to be found, in the sub-continent, in South Asia and undivided India, rather than in Britain?

So let me roll back to 1914 and just think a bit more about this Army and its institutional functions. There were four strategic roles that the Indian army had to fulfill before 1914. Its primary role was to hold British India, and to keep India under subjection. For a generation that still remembered 1857, its task was to ensure that order was maintained. Plenty of pressures in 1914 kept that mission alive. Think above all of Lord Roberts, who won his

Victoria Cross in 1857. He was still an enormously powerful influence amongst British senior officers in 1914. He was the power behind the Curragh mutiny and he certainly had an important role in shaping the ideas of Henry Wilson who was the Chief of the Imperial General Staff at the end of the war. Wilson was close to Roberts. It could even be claimed that Roberts died on service while with the BEF in France in November 1914, and he is listed on some war memorials as a result. So the mutiny of 1857 can be directly linked to the experiences of 1914 and even beyond, to 1918. George has already made that point in relation to what happened on the frontier to the Masood, but think too of Amritsar and of the 3rd Afghan War. There was still enough instability in India after the end of the war for the notion that the Army was there to hold India for the British to be a preeminent strategic requirement.

Simultaneously the theorists of empire were also aware of this in a more modern sense. In many ways they had begun to anticipate Charles Lucas' argument that the empire could be a force for the 20th century, as opposed to the 19th. J.R Seeley had written about the expansion of England in 1883 and his vision anticipated an empire made up of white settler colonies. Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada which could become a sustainable federation. Seeley acknowledged that Britain could continue to hold India in perpetuity. This was not a logical and natural relationship, however close the partnership might become. There had to be a moment of Indian independence. Even Lord Milner recognized that 20th century views of imperialism had to change from those of the past. The Anglo-Indian relationship was much more volatile than those with the white dominions and required something of the army if there was eventually to be an effective transfer.

The second strategic rationale: the need to hold India's land frontiers. The north-west frontier of India has already been referred to; the north-east frontier was also an issue, which was precisely why the Gurkhas were expanded. The Punjab Frontier Force had been specifically developed as a force designed to establish security on the north-west frontier. That related too, of course, to the domestic security role. The two obligations were not totally separate.

The third strategic rationale: the fear that India might be invaded by a major European power or a major Euro-Asian power. That fear increased in the minds of British officers as the actual likelihood diminished, although it was a very powerful threat in 1885. When Kitchener became Commander in Chief in 1902 he argued that it was time to restructure the Indian army so that its priority would be the capacity to meet an external major threat. He wanted to create was a field army capable of rapid concentration. He established a staff college at Quetta and set up an Indian general staff in 1910. He got support from London but faced real opposition in India and particularly from the Viceroy. Many saw this as a distraction from the army's major role, that of internal policing. Kitchener; won his argument because he managed to manipulate London rather better than the Viceroy, Curzon, did. He had very good political and press contacts back in London. The 1907 Anglo-Russian defused the argument, but didn't remove the basic question which was, should India's army be able to fight an external opponent?

This brings me on to the fourth strategic rationale: the idea that the Indian army might be used overseas. There was always a debate about this partly because of Hindu resistance to the idea of crossing the black sea. The main concern was that deploying Indian troops out of India would generate mutiny, which it had done on occasions previously. However, this fact had not prevented the use of the Indian Army in Persia, Burma and China in the second half of the 19th Century. They acted as precursors for the campaigns which the Indian Expeditionary Forces undertook in 1914-1915. In 1909 Douglas Haig came to India as the Chief of the General Staff in India, having been Director of Staff Duties in the War Office in London. In that job he had overseen the drafting and publication of the 1909

Field Service Regulations which were designed specifically to create an imperial army. The component parts, whether they were in India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, or South Africa, would operate according to common doctrine and a common set of expectations. Haig's hope was that the imperial Army would be trained to a European standard to fight in a European war. Others in the general staff, including William Robertson, would not accept this because – Robertson said – the British army was just as likely to fight in Afghanistan as it was in France. But the role and Haig's object were clear enough. Haig's planning to create an Indian Expeditionary Force to go to France was discovered by Lord Hardinge, then the Viceroy. He ordered that all such planning should cease. In 1912 the Army in India Committee concluded India should not be called upon to maintain troops specifically for war outside the subcontinent. The strategic roles of the army were defined in terms of internal security and frontier warfare. So the effect in 1914 was the story I have already told. India sent overseas Indian Expeditionary Forces which were improvised and hastily put together. The Indian Army was not organized on a European model and some argued that it had actually gone back in its capacity to conduct European war. Moreover the effect of mobilization in 1914 was in the short term to deepen those problems and not resolve them.

How was this Army officered? How was it recruited? And how was it equipped? Quite frankly we don't know enough, it seems to me, to be able to answer those questions adequately, although I hope that some of you will put that right.

The story on the British side once again involves Kitchener. When he set about the formation of the New Armies in August 1914, he took British Indian army officers who were home on leave. About 500 officers of a total of 4744 British officers serving in India on the outbreak of war were home on leave and were released for British battalions. So immediately the Indian army was down 500 officers, many of them men of considerable experience. During the course of the First World War and up to December 1919, over 27000 British officers were sent from India on operations. Where did these people come from? How were they recruited? How were the losses made up? How were they given the linguistic skills to command the troops under their authority? We have no serious study of how the British officers of the Indian army were selected and trained: that is the first set of questions.

Secondly, how about the soldiers? At the outbreak of the war the total number of Indians serving in the army in India was 239,561, of whom 45,660 were non-combatants. As George Morton-Jack has said, during the war a total of 1.7 million served in the army. Of those over 1 million went overseas and over 121000 became casualties and of them over 53000 were killed. Where were those men found? We know that the principles of the martial races theory were not adhered to. But in what ways and with what effects was the pattern of recruitment changed? The burden of the war may have been borne disproportionately by Punjabis, but as you have also already heard there were growing worries about Punjabi loyalty. In January 1915, of roughly a quarter of million Indians of 'the chief fighting races', then serving, 35000 were Jat Sikhs, 45000 were Punjabi Muslims, and 27000 were Gurkhas: these were the principal groups.

The UK death rate for those who put on uniform in the First World War was 12% of those who served. The Indian death rate according to the figures produce by the War Office, 54000 of the 1.7 million who served, was is extraordinarily low by comparison: at only just over 3%. Frankly, I don't believe it. That sort wastage was entirely manageable if spread across the total population of India, but could not be accommodated so readily if certain tribes or communities suffered disproportionately, especially when they were the communities on which Britain was relying for soldiers. Monro in 1916 created a central recruiting board, which recruited not by classes but territorially. So what were the bases

on which it operated? They seem to have worked: as many men were enlisted in 1917 as had been recruited in the two previous years put together.

Final point: from where and how was this army equipped? The Ordnance Factories in India produced 176 guns, 1.3 million shells and 583 million rounds of small arms ammunitions during the war. However, we know very little about the output from private enterprise in India and how that was funded. Where did it get its skilled workers from and how was its output used? Was it used to equip Indian forces in Indian operations in adjacent theatres or was it used to equip all Imperial forces in adjacent theatres? Partly this was a shipping question and when shipping conditions worsened, greater pressure was put on India to produce its own equipment for its own soldiers, particularly if they were fighting in theatres adjacent to India. In 1915 Tata Steel approached the India Office and asked if it could be taken over by the state; the India Office said no, that this was a matter of the Government of India. Tata Steel was not taken over by the state: ironically given the issue's contemporary relevance.

Much of current research and most of what we have heard today is trying to engage with the experience of the Indian soldier. There are people who have been doing really interesting work here, engaging with sources that are very difficult – and very different from those used in the study of the British soldier of the First World War. But the crucial question for me is that how do these findings relate to the narratives with which I began: the story of an empire at war. How fully from these sources do we get a sense of the morale of the Indian soldiers, however diverse Indian soldiers might be in terms of background? And how far does the political context matter here? In his history of the British Empire in the war, Lucas said that there were two threats to India in 1914. First was that posed by German ambition: the ambition both to exercise influence in India itself and also to take jihad to India and in a parallel to support Indian nationalism. An Indian National Committee was created in Berlin in 1914 in the attempt to encourage desertion within the Indian army. One of its tasks was to encourage prisoners of war from the Indian Army, particularly if they were Muslims, to join the war effort of the Central Powers. How did that pan out in practice among those who continued to serve? The other threat also highlighted by Lucas was the demand of educated Indians for representation, and ultimately for independence, which is running in parallel. How did that work out and what was the relationship, if any, between the two? Between those engaged politically in India, not least though the Congress party, and those serving in the Indian army, especially given the fact much of its recruitment was from peasant communities rather than from educated and urban elites? Most historians of India don't give us answers to these questions. British rule in India was never more vulnerable than it was in 1914-1918 and yet it remained largely unchallenged during the war. Instead it was almost immediately challenged when the war was over.

Thank you very much.

Questions

Q. Do you think there are any insights that we can gain about the performance of the Indian Army by comparing them for example French Colonial troops?

A: I have a research student beginning on this very question in September. She speaks French and she is herself from India, and so she has got the linguistic capabilities to do this. I think it's very important for her to decide which theatres she is going to look at it. She wants to begin with the Egyptian Expedition Force in Palestine. The important thing is to decide on a sensible French comparison. There is also a great deal to be done in terms of how British and French imperial soldiers thought about the nation. For the Indian soldiers of the British army, it was not a citizenship or loyalty of the sort with which the French soldiers would identify. It is striking that, when King George V produced his

message to the Empire in 1914, he signed a different version for India from that which he produced for Australia, New Zealand, Canada or South Africa. This 'Commonwealth' version stressed democracy and the rule of law as the reasons for which Britain was fighting. The Indian version thanked his subjects in India for their loyalty and devotion. It was still partially about democracy but it was very different in tone from the one that went to the other parts of the Empire. How did it play out? The sticking point was that many of those who were politically aware in India, the members of the Congress party and professional middle class Indians, supported the British. They saw India as part of a democracy and they said that they could postpone the argument with Britain until after the war was over. Even Gandhi said that we can support Britain because Britain is on the right side for the time being; but after the war is over we will have another argument. Yes I think there is a good comparison to be made.

Q. Just following up on that exchange you just had with an observation rather than a question. Rana Chinna and I attended a conference in Pondicherry last year about the role of India in the First World War. I haven't thought about the fact that the French were recruiting Indians from their territories to serve there in the French army not as units but as individuals, and sent to them to their foreign service battalions. In relation to this there was a note that was produced by a lecturer (a local teacher) saying that the Governor addressed them as French citizens: in other words saying that they had a duty to sign up so it was more stick than carrot.

A: Well, it's very interesting you mentioned that. I hadn't thought of Pondicherry being the contrasting example for my student and that might well be the right one. If you look at the French sources on the reception of British Indian soldiers in France, it was extraordinarily warm. The British people never really saw the Indian Expeditionary Force, because it didn't land in Britain. The English saw Indians here in Brighton when they were wounded and came here to be looked after. But when they arrived in Europe, they landed at Marseille. They travelled through France and the French people saw them, and thought they were wonderful. Apart from anything else, the Indian cavalry really captured the imaginations of the French. In an exhibition at the Musée de la Grande Guerre in Meaux in 2014 called 'Join Now', India formed a big part of the story because it's so important in French public memory and imagination. It was also well photographed. Indians were treated with a degree of equality in France which struck the British at the time and made them worried about discipline in the Indian Army. Let's not get carried away by the virtues of the French empire but there is narrative here that suggests it left a better impression on Indians in France.

Q. One of the themes which has been going around here today is the appropriation of Colonial and Imperial military histories by post-Colonial Independent nation states. Could you say something about the tensions between nationalism and military history in your experience?

A. Well, absolutely, and I think we have had one reference already although not from within India. However, clearly it is an issue for India as it is for Pakistan. Let me first take the case of Turkey. The stories of the Turkish victories at Gallipoli and Kut al Amara are undoubtedly being used for national purposes. It will be very interesting to see how the Indian official history of the First World War plays out in national terms. It is actually an extraordinarily complicated story, and it's challenging. One of the reasons why I stressed the issues of officers, recruitment and equipment for the Indian army was precisely because it is much easier to find answers to those sorts of questions than it is for some of the things which you guys are trying to do. The archives are nationally generated, so the story which emerges from them is often not dealing with some of the difficulties which military historians confront. It is not just that you have to deal with a national narrative, which is difficult enough given the very sensitive and complicated challenges of post- 1947 India. It is not just the diversity within India, but it is also how you engage with what is a

range of common experiences, albeit very often experienced differently. So the challenge is to get at both that commonality and its difference, and you can't do that very well with a national story. The experience of this war was so diverse and the way in which it was incorporated in memory was so diverse. All these armies were multinational. There is another point too – and this is where the answers to this problem should actually appeal to operational military historians. You can't understand this war if you try to do so from one side of the war only. Because battles involve the clash of different nations, the outcome is the consequence of the engagement between different nations. To tell the stories of Anzac, you cannot tell the story as one involving either Australian or New Zealand only, as it was a joint effort. The real challenge for post-1947 India is not just the cultural or national difference but also the linguistic difference.

Q. Why you think Pakistan is relatively uninvolved in the centenary commemoration?

A: Glyn Pryor will know this story from the Commission's (CWGC) point of view. It goes right back to when Pakistan left the Commonwealth. Pakistan then re-entered the Commonwealth, but since then the Pakistani Army has had quite a lot of other things to deal with, some of them in areas that we have been talking about, like the old north-west frontier or today's FATA. Part of the challenge is that the army we are discussing in this conference was very heavily recruited from today's Pakistan. It was called the Indian Army. There is one big problem. However, one of the things that makes me most buoyant about the centenary commemorations has been the good things that have come out of the engagement with the past, which can be relevant today, and can even become a source of reconciliation. It is important that both India and Pakistan are involved in this centenary.

Rana Chhina has already made clear that there was a real issue for post-partition India about how it could engage with its pre-1947 past. But that engagement has happened. Indeed we would not be here if it hadn't. That's great because as a result there are opportunities which have arisen for scholars as well as for public understanding. It is public understanding that is the exciting part of this because public knowledge has moved on since 2014, and done so exponentially. Quite frankly the level of ignorance in 2014 in this country about the First World War was staggering. In late 2013 or early 2014, at the UK advisory committee, Richard Dannatt arrived with a ceramic poppy, and announced the plan to plant over 800,000 of them, each one to represent a soldier or sailor of the British empire killed in the First World War, in the moat of the Tower of London. Being a typical academic, I said that it would not catch on and also that it was not right, because most of these soldiers were not dead in 1914. They were dead by 1918. I thought that 2018 was the year when we should be doing this, or alternatively we could do it year by year. I was wrong. The fact that every imperial soldier killed in the First World War was commemorated in 2014 was crucially important in mobilizing the British public in the process of a four-year centenary. This form of commemoration resonated with what the population already knew of remembrance, and they went on from there to a deeper understanding. They also became aware that Indian, Australians and New Zealanders served in the war. The result is that today we are in a far better place.

Dr. Glyn Pryor, Commonwealth War Graves Commission (Approved)

Glyn Pryor is Chief Historian at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Formerly an academic, his current role involves historical interpretation, research and communication projects for the CWGC. He has worked closely with UK government on First World War commemorations and also represents CWGC in the media.

I'm sure that many of you will be aware of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, but for those of you who aren't: it is the organization which is responsible for the commemoration of 1.7 million members of the forces of the British Empire who lost their lives in both World Wars. In terms of the Indian Army, our online database lists the names of 160,000 who were affiliated with the Indian forces. Of those 74,000 served and died during the First World War. And of course, there are others of Indian heritage who weren't serving with Indian forces: one thinks of Laddy Roy, the pilot, or a soldier named Bukkan Singh who was serving with the Canadians.

The organization was established during the First World War, in May 1917, by Royal Charter. So we have our own centenary coming up next year, and I think it's a really important opportunity for thinking about interactions between the elements of Empire and Commonwealth as it became. We have war graves and memorials all over the world, in 23,000 different locations, and in 154 different countries and territories. Many of you will be familiar with those memorials, such as the Neuve Chapelle Memorial in France which commemorates Indian soldiers with no known grave and also serves as memorial to the Indian Army on the Western Front, or the Menin Gate. But there are others further afield, in places like Basra in Iraq, the Helles Memorial on Gallipoli which was mentioned earlier, and of course the India Gate in Delhi, which lists the names of soldiers who died in the 3rd Anglo-Afghan War as well as being a memorial to all of the Indian forces who served. In Mumbai there is a very interesting Memorial to merchant sailors who lost their lives at sea during the First World War, but also places like Salonica and even in Africa. So wherever Indian forces served across the world, you will find those physical elements of commemoration.

I would also like to reflect on the theme of diversity, which was mentioned by George Morton-Jack earlier. These names are not just those of soldiers: they are sailors, they are labourers, they are members of the Indian Mule Corps. The principle behind the Imperial War Graves Commission's approach was that of equality of treatment regardless of rank or class, or indeed where you came from. Of course, there are different approaches depending on religion: those Sikhs and Hindus who were cremated will generally have cremation memorials rather than graves.

Over most of its 100 years, the Commission's work has focused on maintenance, on gardening and architecture. However, in the last few years we've moved towards far greater engagement and communication. This involves things like interpretation both on site at our memorials and cemeteries and also online. We're developing access to our archives, which are an incredibly rich resource, and also being more proactive in terms of engaging with communities. Rana mentioned a project which we're just about to launch in association with the USI of India which is called "India Remembers". The idea behind the project is to engage with communities across India to help them rediscover their past in the First and Second World Wars, as well as afterwards.

Sir Hew earlier expressed a hope we share: that through remembrance activities we can move people towards a deeper understanding of the history behind those commemorations and the people involved. We have a similar project in the U.K. called "Living Memory", to engage with British communities, many of whom of course may have South Asian heritage. There are lots of places around the U.K. where members of the

Indian forces are commemorated, like the Chattri and the Cremation Memorial here in Brighton, but also places like Brookwood Cemetery in Surrey where you can go and see the graves of Muslim soldiers who died during the First World War. So this is about engaging people with the history behind those names, and using commemoration in the fullest sense to understand the experiences of all those who served and who died as representatives of the greater whole. It's about emphasizing the variety and diversity of those experiences, and of highlighting the people behind those names and behind those headstones. Thank you very much.

Questions;

Q: In a museum I've seen example files of Australian soldier where the Commonwealth War Grave Commission has a file correspondence about the location of the grave and maybe correspondence of the family. Would there be a correspondence file on every single known grave?

A: It's unlikely. One of the challenges that we've had at the moment is to develop our awareness about our archives. We now have an archives team dedicated to looking into those questions, but you have to remember that this was a very messy process during the First World War. In fact the Commission itself is a unique product of the conflict and the way in which it approached commemoration was unprecedented. But certainly in terms of India while information about specific individuals may be limited, there is plenty of material about Indian War Graves and the approach to Memorials of Indian Forces. One of the projects which we are developing at the moment is to look at the Basra memorial and all those Indian names who are associated with that memorial, and trying to see if we can develop extra information about those individuals.

Q: Do you have any correspondence files relating to Indian casualties with British officers or Indian soldiers.

A: Yes there are some but of course not all of them.

Q: Are they available to the public?

A: If you get in touch with me or the archives team they would be happy to assist.

Q: I just wanted to ask about Neuve Chapelle it is absolutely magnificent and opens in about 1926. Are there any records of that first opening because I've seen one image which looks fantastic and gives you a sense of the local people obviously British people and the Indian Army.

A: Yes absolutely. We have records all the way through the development of that memorial. Herbert Baker was the Architect who thought very carefully about how to represent India. His original idea was to have a glass bowl filled with Ganges water at the very top of the central column but that idea was rejected. There is one brilliant photo of Indian soldiers looking up at the names of people they knew. It's an image we're used to

seeing for British and European soldiers not so much for the Indian soldiers, and I think it's a very important story.

Gavin Edgerley-Harris, The Gurkha Museum (Approved)

Gavin Edgerley-Harris has been the Director of The Gurkha Museum in Winchester since 2013.

Formerly a Solicitor, he started working at the Museum in 1993 with the archives. From 1998 he became Assistant Curator and took over as Director three years ago.

He is an Honorary Member of the Gurkha Brigade Association, 6th and 7th Gurkha Rifles' Associations and a Committee Member of The Britain - Nepal Society. In 2014 he curated the Museum's Exhibition "Across the Black Water" highlighting the role of the Gurkha Brigade and Indian Corps on the Western Front in 1914 and 1915. His work involves managing and promoting all aspects of the collection, displays and archives recording over 200 years of Gurkha Service to the Crown.

Gurkha Museum is very close to the Indian general Hospital at Brockenhurst in the New Forest and we are very proud to be able to represent the history of the Brigade of Gurkhas back 200 years. Before 1974 there was no Gurkha Museum and it was thanks to Officers like a Major Chapple who subsequently became a Field Marshal and other officers to realize that there should be brought together a collection of archives and artefacts, not as a single regiment museum, but as a museum representing the whole of the Gurkha Brigade and culture of Nepal making it a truly unique military experience in the UK. This was done by bringing together the regimental records of the various Gurkha units in the British Army. In 1947 when the 10 regiments of Gurkhas in the Gurkha Brigade was split between Britain and India, four units came to the U.K. and six regiments stayed with the Indian army. The units that remained in India kept their archives with them, so we have exceptionally good regimental records of 2nd, 6th, 7th and the 10th Gurkha Rifles being the regiments that came to the British Army

Our day job is to open the Museum to the public so they can come and see the history of the Brigade of Gurkhas but it is also the role of the Museum to engage with all those who ought to know about the contribution made to this country by the Brigade of Gurkhas and the wider Indian Army. We do this in various different ways, we help and assist different serving units of the Brigade, we have Unit Heritage Officers who engage very closely with us which is a fairly unusual practice by the serving Army. We also engage with schools, adult education groups, community groups, and the increasing number of Nepalese visitors or residents. This is achieved via a series of lectures, events and exhibitions.

In 2014, we had an exhibition called 'Across the Blackwater' on the Gurkha Brigade's contribution in France during World War One and this year we are having an exhibition on gallantry awards to Gurkhas in the two World Wars and throughout the last 200 years. We have ten Victoria Crosses held at the Museum but sadly I don't think we will be having any more because we are now competing in a very competitive market. The Gurkha 200 project, which was the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service to the Crown, held last year has led to a greater realization to the British public about the contribution of Gurkhas and the Indian Army to the British activities in the First World War. We are always looking to

increase engagement, one of the reasons why I'm delighted to come here today is because we have a very small staff at the museum. However we do try and engage as much as we can with organizations such as yours. And to make it known that although we are small in number and we have limited financial resources we are always keen and happy to help wherever we can in the supply of information on the heritage of Gurkhas, the Indian Army and the culture of Nepal and the Indian subcontinent. Thank you

Questions

Q: It's really thrilling to know that the Gurkhas have such a very positive image in Britain. What do you think are the reasons for this?

A: I think I've always said the British love affair with Gurkhas probably goes back to the sepoy rebellion in 1857 where the British public first became aware through the Illustrated London newspapers. As you may know Gurkhas did not mutiny with other units of the Bengal Army and remained loyal. Queen Victoria recognized their loyalty with the presentation of a unique Truncheon, and ever since then Gurkhas have been fully and effectively occupied fighting the King's and the Queen's enemies throughout their long and distinguished history. They are traditional they operate at the highest standards and they represent everything that the British public admires.

Brigadier (Rtd) Clive Elderton CBE, Military Historical Society (Approved)

Brigadier (Retd) Clive Elderton CBE was commissioned from The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1973 and enjoyed a 38-year career in the British Army which took him all over the world. In 2005, he attended the National Defence College in Delhi as a student and from 2006 to 2009 served as the British Defence and Military Attache based in Delhi. During this time he was able to indulge his passion for Indian military history and travel. He is currently the Chairman of the Military Historical Society www.militaryhistoricalsociety.co.uk.

As Chairman of the Military Historical Society I would like to add my sincere thanks to The Golden Tours Foundation and all involved in organising this ground breaking Symposium and for inviting me to take part. I have a great passion for, and a deep interest in, Indian military history but I recognise that in this company I am a minnow and I am bound to confine my remarks to the purpose of The Military Historical Society (MHS) and give my own thoughts on the challenges we face going forward.

The MHS is a charity which was formed in 1948 with the somewhat wordy charitable purpose as follows:

"The advancement of the education of the public by the promotion of the study of military history of the uniformed forces of the crown, of uniforms and weapons, and all aspects of military history and the dissemination of knowledge relating to such matters."

Although we are not specifically focused on India or Indian military history our members include those who are interested in the sub-continent and we routinely publish articles on Indian military themes in our quarterly Bulletin. We achieve our charitable purpose by:

- *Holding formal educational talks and meetings.*
- *Promoting the collection of objects of military interest.*
- *Doing such other lawful things as shall further the objects of the Society.*

As a charity we are governed by our charitable purpose but this is broad as you can see and therefore our membership have a considerable influence on the direction we take. Our headline statistics are that we have about 600 paid up members, 50 of whom are overseas including a couple in India. We publish a quarterly Bulletin and every couple of years a Special Number - a Special stand alone publication on a specific theme. Most recently this was a ground breaking work on the machine gun core in the First World War.

Our biggest challenge going forward is how to maintain our membership numbers at a time when people seem to be less inclined to participate in Clubs and Societies and generally prefer to access information 24/7 via the internet at the touch of a button and often on a very specific basis. The consequence is that I think many specialist Clubs and Societies are struggling to keep going as the cost of overheads on such as printing, room hire and so on keeps going up. Despite these pressures I'm pleased to report the MHS are in good shape but we can't be complacent.

My own view and I think this was echoed by some of the speaking this morning is that an interest in history is most often stimulated by people and personal experience and I sense we must ensure we focus our efforts accordingly. In my own case my own interest in Indian military history was stimulated in my early teens by school friend who produced a box of family medals. His father had been commissioned in the Punjab Regiment in 1934. He subsequently won the Military Cross in 1945 in Burma and post war emigrated to Canada and transferred to the Canadian Army. His Grandfather George was a senior railway official in India and served for over 40 years in East India Railway Volunteer Rifles. His great uncle, George's brother, served during World War One in the 14th Hussars and the Corps of Indian Engineers. His great grandfather, George Ward, served in the Second Battalion Somerset Light Infantry in Burma in the 1880's and his great, great grandfather served in the 6th Light Cavalry as a trumpeter during the uprising and his 1857 medal carries the bar Central India. So this was a family really steeped in India. They were not unique but the marvellous thing for us as boys was that we could speak with his grandmother who he lived with because she had been born, schooled and married in India. She had first hand experience of the British Indian Army both regular and auxiliary and was happy to share her wonderful stories which fired our imagination. Their garage was piled high with huge trunks each carrying labels with the names of various places in India. We weren't allowed to actually explore what was inside but they provided a source of endless wonder and curiosity.

The key point to all this is that in my view the common theme is people and it is people who make and shape and are made and shaped by history. The number of people with these experiences is fading at a time when interest in family and military history is growing. So in facing the challenge of declining membership I am determined that we do all we can to make information about people widely available and use such as the Internet

to the full and encourage the formation of loose networks of like-minded people to share and exchange information and human experiences. In this The Golden Tours Foundation in arranging this symposium is showing the way. Thank you.

For more information please see www.themilitaryhistoricalsociety.co.uk

Dr. Antonia Moon, British Library (Approved)

Dr Antonia Moon is an archivist and a lead curator at the British Library, working on the India Office Records. Since joining the Library in 1997, she has worked to make the Records accessible to national and international audiences. Recent projects include the digitisation of archives on the history of colonial science and on the Indian contribution to the First World War. Antonia is a Member of Council of the British Records Association and acting Chair of the South Asia Archive and Library Group.

I am a curator working on the India Office Records. The India Office Records are the records which accumulated in London of the administration by the British in India up to 1947; there are 9 miles of them held at the British Library. As you would expect, we have substantial materials on World War One. For the centenary commemoration, our challenge was to identify some of the important materials, to promote them, and to set them in some kind of context, as part of the library's wider remit to make its material accessible. The principal reason we were able to do this was through our involvement with the digitisation project 'Europeana 1914 to 1918', which I hope that some of you have heard of. It was a consortium of European Libraries, the aim being to gather materials from both sides of the conflict, with heritage materials from libraries and archives, and to put them online free of charge, as far as possible using public domain material. I know there have been some questions about charging for use of items. We have chosen only items which are free to use and re-use. The project was aimed at a popular audience and this did influence our choice of materials. We have a series of war diaries, for example, almost 2000 volumes, but we put those aside in favour of materials which would highlight the Indian contribution to the War. This underlines our particular strengths, which are not only the material on the Western Front but also material from the Middle East, because of the Government of India's involvement in Mesopotamia. To this end we were concerned to choose and digitise items which had a personal flavour and to balance these items with some of an official character. One of the key series which we digitised was a series of reports from the Censor of Indian Mails, which include extracts from the letters written by soldiers on the Western Front. These are well known to writers like David Omissi, but they were not known to a wider audience. We digitized them all and put them online. Over 26 volumes, they really give a strong flavour of the soldiers' personal concerns and preoccupations. I think their power is enhanced by the fact that we have a whole sequence of them, so you can trace a gradual movement from optimism to disillusion. When these records were being selected, we came across material from the military department which gave some personal histories, for example, testimonies of Indian soldiers who were captured by the Germans and Turks. I am thinking of a file from an Indian soldier in Germany who wanted a new uniform. He wrote to the Indian office giving exact details of the clothing (tunic length, etc.) he wanted. We have many statistics on the Indian contribution to operations in Mesopotamia, especially the operations around the siege of Kut.

I will quickly move on to exploitation. To some extent we have promoted the material through normal channels. That means diplomatic visits from the Pakistan High Commission, the Indian High Commission and a wide range of audiences such as scholars, families, historians and school workshops. These are extremely important. We have also introduced this material to our schools' Indian Independence workshop, really to broaden out the whole concept of Indian Independence and to see how to get the children thinking on what might have influenced Nationalist assessments of the war.

Finally the special events. We have been reactive rather than proactive, because we have been approached by groups like the Sikh Heritage Association to provide workshops to show the resources to them at the Library. This has been very rewarding for us, because we have received expert input, really giving a whole new perspective on records which were mainly seen by curators before. In conclusion I would like to say that one is always conscious of the records that have been left out. In research for this I personally was amazed by the depth of our resources from the Economic Department of the India Office. For example, Tata Steel was often mentioned. There is a real story to be told from the archives, I think, about the economic impact on India during this period and certainly our next hope is to get that kind of material catalogued and digitised.