

THE 10TH INDIAN DIVISION IN THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN, 1944-45: TRAINING, MANPOWER
AND THE SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE

By

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Abstract

This dissertation will observe the capabilities and experience of the Indian Army in the Second World War, by examining the 10th Indian Division's campaign in Italy. The focus will be on three themes of the division's deployment to Italy; its training, manpower and the experience of the Indian soldier. Whilst these themes are part of the wider historiography of the Indian Army; there has been no significant study of these topics in relation to Italy, which this work seeks to redress. Observing the division's training and manpower will indicate its capabilities during the Second World War. How did the Indian Army maintain an expeditionary force far from its home base, given the structural weaknesses in its recruitment and organisation? Did the Indian Army's focus on the war in Japan, and jungle warfare, have a detrimental effect on the training of troops deployed to Italy? The reforms that the Indian Army, made to its training and organisation were critical in overcoming the difficulties that arose from campaigning in Italy. Studying the experience of the Indian soldier through morale and censor reports will demonstrate their attitude towards military service, and how this shaped their attitudes on the post-war future of India.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

6th D.C.O. Lancers – 6th Duke of Connaught's Own Lancers

AA – Anti-Aircraft

AAI – Allied Armies in Italy

Adv O2E (Ind) CMF – Advanced 2nd Echelon (Indian) Central Mediterranean Forces

AFHQ – Allied Force Headquarters

ATM – Army Training Memorandum

Bn – Battalion

BO – British Officer

BOR – British Other Rank

C.M.P. (Ind) – Corps of Military Police (Indian)

C.O. – Commanding Officer

C.R.A. – Commander Royal Artillery

CCDC – Claims Commission District Officer

CMF – Central Mediterranean Forces

Coy – Company

Div – Division

DLI – Durham Light Infantry

DSO – Distinguished Service Order

E.S.O. – Embarkation Staff Officer

FF – Frontier Force

Fmns – Formations

GOC – General Officer Commanding

HQ – Headquarters

I.P.O. – Indian Postal Office

I.S.C. – Indian Service Corps

IAMC – Indian Army Medical Corps

IAOC – Indian Army Ordnance Corps

ICO – Indian Commissioned Officer

IEME – Indian Electrical & Mechanical Engineers

Inf – Infantry

IOR – Indian Other Rank

IRC – Indian Reinforcement Camp

IRTD – Infantry Reinforcement Training Depot

ISF – Indian States Forces

IST – Imperial Service Troops

IWO – Indian Warrant Officer

K.O. – King's Own

KCO – King's Commissioned Officer

LAD – Light Aid Detachment

LOB – Left Out of Battle

M.L.I. – Mahratta Light Infantry

M.T. – Motor Transport

MIDEAST – Middle East

NCO – Non-Commissioned Officer

NWFP – North West Frontier Province

O2E (Ind) ME – 2nd Echelon (Indian) Middle East

OR – Other Rank

PAIC – Persia and Iraq Command

PAIFORCE - Persia and Iraq Force

POW – Prisoner of War

R Sigs – Royal Corps of Signals

R.I.A.S.C. – Royal Indian Army Service Corps

RA (A/tk) – Royal Artillery, Anti-Tank

RA (Fd) – Royal Artillery, Field

RA (Grn) – Royal Artillery, Garrison

RA (LAA) – Royal Artillery, Light Anti-Aircraft

RAC – Royal Armoured Corps

RAOC – Royal Army Ordnance Corps

RASC – Royal Army Service Corps

RE (Fd) – Royal Engineers, Field

RE (L of C) – Royal Engineers, Line of Communication

Recce – Reconnaissance

REME – Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

Rft – Reinforcement

RTC – Regimental Training Centres

SEAC – South East Asia Command

TEWTs – Tactical Exercise without Troops

Tps – Troops

VCO – Viceroy's Commissioned Officer

VE Day – Victory in Europe Day

W.E. – War Establishment

CHAPTER 1: HISTORIOGRAPHY

In recent years the study of the Indian Army in the Second World War has experienced a renewed interest from historians; however this has mostly concentrated upon the army's role in the campaign in Burma. This is understandable, given that it was the primary commitment of the Indian Army, which required the greatest portion of its troops and equipment. As a consequence, very little research has covered the deployment of the Indian Army in Italy, something this dissertation seeks to redress, by following the activities of the 10th Indian Infantry Division.¹ This chapter will examine, firstly, the existing literature on the Indian Army, and the 10th Indian Division's, involvement in the Italian campaign. Secondly, it will show how this dissertation's decision to study the training, reinforcement and the experience of the Indian soldiers in the Italian campaign, are valuable additions to the wider historiography of the Indian Army.

The wider historiography of the Italian campaign has done little to further the study of the Indian soldiers who fought there. In books such as Edwin Hoyt's *Backwater War*² and Ian Gooderson's *A Hard Way to Make a War*³ the focus is largely confined to strategic and operational aspects of the campaign, the debate focusing on whether the campaign was worth the blood and treasure it cost, given false assurances it was the 'soft-underbelly of Europe'. The only mention these works make of Indian troops is to note their presence in the theatre. The exceptions to these are the studies concerning

¹ Hereafter referred to as the 10th Indian Division.

² E. P. Hoyt, *Backwater War: The Allied Campaign in Italy, 1943-1945* (Westport, 2002).

³ I. Gooderson, *A Hard Way to Make a War: The Allied Campaign in Italy in the Second World War* (London, 2008).

the fight for Monte Cassino; the 4th Indian Division fought in the Second Battle of Monte Cassino and is discussed in the literature that exists on the subject.⁴

Along with the US, British, New Zealand and Canadian Armed Forces the Indian military produced its own account of the Italian campaign in the Second World War, entitled *The Campaign in Italy, 1943-45*.⁵ However, this volume was not included in the eight volumes of the official history that were reprinted in 2012. The focus instead was on the campaigns in Africa, Asia and post war occupation duties in the Far East, which have seen greater interest from scholars. The volume of the official history, *India and the War*,⁶ provides an overview of the entire Indian war effort, which was included in the reprint. Yet, its account of the Indian contribution in Italy fails to mention the role or presence of the 10th Indian Division in Italy.

Two recent works on the Indian Army in the twentieth century, Kaushik Roy's *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars*⁷ and Alan Jeffreys' and Patrick Rose's *The Indian Army*,⁸ both contain studies of the Indian Army in the Second World War but none of them concerns the Indian Army in Italy. In 2011, Kaushik Roy commented that "no significant research has been done on the Indian Army's deployment in Italy and Greece during World War II."⁹ Charles Chenevix Trench covers the Indian campaign in Italy in *The Indian Army and the King's Enemies*.¹⁰ Trench himself asserted that the book should not

⁴ See M. Parker, *Monte Cassino: The Story of the hardest-fought battle of World War Two* (St Ives, 2004); P. Craddock-Adams, *Monte Cassino: Ten Armies in Hell* (London, 2012); D. Hapgood, *Monte Cassino: The Story of the Most Controversial Battle of World War II* (Cambridge, 2002).

⁵ D. Pal, *The Campaign in Italy, 1943-45* (Delhi, 1960).

⁶ B. Prasad, *India and the War* (New Delhi, 2012).

⁷ K. Roy (editor), *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2011).

⁸ A. Jeffreys and P. Rose (editors), *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Farnham, 2012),

⁹ K. Roy, "Introduction: Warfare, Society and the Indian Army during the Two World Wars," in K. Roy (editor), *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2011), p. 3.

¹⁰ C. Chenevix Trench, *The Indian Army and King's Enemies, 1900 – 1947* (German Democratic Republic, 1988).

be viewed as a history, but rather a record and celebration of the achievements of the Indian Army in the twentieth century.¹¹

The most significant published works upon the Indian Army in Italy are the official histories produced by the government. *The Tiger Triumphs: the Story of three Great Divisions in Italy*¹² was the final account in the trilogy produced by the Government of India soon after the war that detailed the achievements of the Indian Army in Africa, the Middle East and the Mediterranean.¹³ Being a purely narrative account it mostly acts to celebrate the achievements of the Indian troops, without analysing their performance. It is primarily concerned with the story of the combat units¹⁴ with no mention of the role of the support units that were stationed in Italy. It does not go into the same detail of the official histories, as its production soon after the war's end made it impossible to use the same level of research that is present in the official histories.

The three Indian divisions that fought in Italy produced divisional histories to record their deeds during the war. The 10th Indian Divisional history, *From Tehran to Trieste: The Story of the Tenth Indian Division*¹⁵, offers a narrative account of its activities during the Second World War. No attempt is made to analyse its performance. Rather like the *Tiger* series it instead exists to celebrate the division's achievements. Chris Kempton's three volumes of '*Loyalty and Honour*': *The Indian Army September 1939 –*

¹¹ Trench, *The Indian Army and King's Enemies*, p. 7.

¹² *The Tiger Triumphs: the Story of three Great Divisions in Italy* (HMSO, 1946). Accessed at: <http://www.ourstory.info/library/4-ww2/Tiger/triumphsTC.html#TC>

¹³ The other entries in the series were *The Tiger Strikes: India's fight in the Middle East* (HMSO, 1942) and *The Tiger Kills: The Story of the Indian Divisions in the North African Campaign* (HMSO, 1944).

¹⁴ The 4th, 8th and 10th Indian Divisions along with the 43rd Gurkha Lorried Brigade fought in Italy.

¹⁵ *Tehran to Trieste: The Story of the 10th Indian Division*, p. 14, accessed here <http://archive.org/stream/TeheranToTrieste-TheStoryOfThe10thIndianDivision#page/n0/mode/1up>

*August 1947*¹⁶ are an invaluable reference resource. They provide campaign histories for all the divisions and brigades in the Indian Army during the war, as well as detailed orders of battle for divisions, brigades and battalions.

Other articles on the Indian Army include Gerald Douds and Richard Holmes's contributions to a *Time to Kill* on Indian Soldiers in North Africa and Italy.¹⁷ Douds essay suffers from the fact that when writing in a text covering several different topics, he has had to recognise that many of his readers may be approaching the topic of the Indian Army for the first time. As such, a portion of the text is devoted to matters such as the composition of the Indian Army, the role of the martial races, Churchill's attitude towards the Indian Army and the subversive activities of Subhas Chandra Bose. Whilst for the general reader it is useful, the more knowledgeable reader is disappointed at the lack of work actually devoted to the Indian soldiers' experience in North Africa and Italy. Holmes's work offers several insights into how the multinational force that made up the Allied forces in Italy treated the Indian soldiers and the colonial soldiers of other nations, namely France.

With a lack of published works on the 10th Indian Division's experience in Italy it is necessary to use unpublished works. The *United Service Institution of India* was founded in 1870 for the 'furtherance of interest and knowledge in the art, science and literature of the Defence Services.'¹⁸ For the officers of the Indian Army it served a similar purpose

¹⁶ C. Kempton; *'Loyalty and Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 – August 1947: Part I – Divisions* (Milton Keynes, 2003), *'Loyalty and Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 – August 1947: Part II – Brigades* (Milton Keynes, 2003), *'Loyalty and Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 – August 1947: Part III* (Milton Keynes, 2003).

¹⁷ G. Douds, "'Matters of Honour': Indian Troops in the North African and Italian Theatres," in P. Addison and A. Calder (editors), *Time to Kill: The Soldier's Experience of War in the West 1939-1945* (London, 1997), pp. 115-128 and R. Holmes, "The Italian Job: Five Armies in Italy, 1943-45," in P. Addison and A. Calder (editors), *Time to Kill: The Soldier's Experience of War in the West 1939-1945* (London, 1997), pp. 206-221.

¹⁸ <http://www.usiofindia.org/About/History/>

that the *Royal United Services Institute* did for officers of the British Army. During the Second World War it published several articles by officers who were serving with the Indian Army in Italy. The article 'An IAC Recce Regiment in Italy'¹⁹ details the activities of the 6th D.C.O.²⁰ Lancers who served in the 8th Indian Division. The article 'Poco Poco Italiano'²¹ was written by a 10th Indian Division staff officer about his experiences between VE day and the repatriation of the division to India. Articles which attempt to analyse aspects of the Italian campaign include 'Q (AE) at Work in North Africa and Italy'²², written prior to the 10th Indian Division's deployment to Italy by a staff officer, which criticised the lack of Indian Army representation in the higher staff positions of the Allied command in the winter of 1943-4. Major General Jenkins wrote 'Some Lessons from the Italian Campaign'²³, which was adapted from lectures he had given to Indian Army officers describing the tactical situation that confronted the Indian Army in Italy, and offered suggestions for training.

This dissertation will examine the Indian Army's contribution to the Italian campaign in the Second World War, through the experiences of the 10th Indian Division. The focus will be on three themes of the division's deployment to Italy; these being, operations, reinforcement and the Indian soldier's experience of the war in Italy. The topics of training and reinforcement are chosen because they feature in the wider historiography of the Indian Army. It is believed that by studying them in relation to Italy and the 10th Indian Division here, they can be a valuable addition to understanding the

¹⁹ J. M. Howson, 'An IAC Recce Regiment in Italy', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 75 (1945).

²⁰ Duke of Connaught's Own.

²¹ H. B. Hudson 'Poco Poco Italiano', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 76 (1946).

²² G. Barrington, 'Q (AE) at Work in North Africa and Italy', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 74 (1944).

²³ F. A. M. B. Jenkins, 'Some Lessons from the Italian Campaign', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 74 (1944).

capabilities of the Indian Army in the Second World War. The study of the Indian soldier's experiences in Italy will be an addition to the study of the social history of the Indian Army, which has so far neglected those troops deployed in Europe during the Second World War.

By focusing on one of the divisions that the Indian Army deployed to Italy, it is hoped to conduct a more in depth study than would be possible in a comparative study of all three divisions, given the constraints on space imposed on this dissertation. The 10th Indian Division has been selected because it has been eclipsed in writings on the Italian campaign by the 4th and the 8th Indian Divisions. The 4th Indian Division has been the recipient of much study due to its impressive war record. It was the first Indian division deployed overseas and the last to return, sustaining approximately 25,000 casualties. It was the subject of a detailed and extensive history by Lieutenant Colonel G. R. Stevens²⁴, which is arguably unique for the Indian divisions of the Second World War. The fact that the 4th Indian Division was involved in the battles to capture Monte Cassino, and that the 8th Indian Division was the Indian division which served the longest in Italy, mean they have featured more heavily in the literature on the campaign.

The chapter on the 10th Indian Division's operations in Italy will study how their training was influenced by their past and future operations. This chapter will not seek to be an exhaustive account of the 10th Indian Division's operations in Italy because this already exists in the literature detailed above. Nor will it attempt to ascertain the military effectiveness of the division and its commanders in Italy, for such an approach is not possible without comparison to the other Indian and Allied divisions that were employed in Italy. Instead it will seek to demonstrate the importance that the division, and thus the

²⁴ G. R. Stevens, *The Fourth Indian Division* (Uckfield, 2011).

wider Indian Army, placed on training. The subject of training in the Indian Army during the Second World War has been well documented by numerous scholars, although it is mostly related to the campaign in Burma. This dissertation will seek to redress that balance, whilst also questioning whether the Indian Army's emphasis on the war in Japan proved detrimental to its effort in Italy. Tim Moreman in *The Japanese and the British Commonwealth Armies at War*²⁵ and Daniel Marston in *Phoenix from the Ashes*²⁶ have researched the training of the Allied forces for the war in Burma. Their works show how the initial defeats suffered by the Japanese were a result of the Indian Army's rapid expansion which saw proper training shunned, as quantity was prioritised over quality. They argue that the eventual victory of the Indian Army in Burma was partly as a result of it recognising the importance of effective training for jungle warfare. Moreman has also studied how the Fourteenth Army developed tactical drills to defeat Japanese bunker defences, whose strength was threatening to become psychologically damaging to Allied soldiers.²⁷

The security of the North West Frontier was one of primary tasks for the Indian Army throughout its existence, and was the focus of Tim Moreman's *The Army in India and the Development of Frontier Warfare*.²⁸ It has recently been studied to see what role it had in the development of training and tactics for operations in the Second World War.²⁹ Operations on the North West Frontier and in Italy were frequently in

²⁵ T. Moreman, *The Japanese and the British Commonwealth Armies at War, 1941-1945: Fighting Methods, Doctrine and Training for Jungle Warfare* (Routledge, 2002).

²⁶ D. P. Marston, *Phoenix from the Ashes: the Indian Army in the Burma Campaign* (Westport, 2003).

²⁷ T. Moreman, "'Debunking the Bunker': From Donbaik to Razabil, January 1943 – March 1944," in A. Jeffreys and P. Rose (ed.), *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Ashgate, 2012), pp. 109-134.

²⁸ T. Moreman, *The Army in India and the Development of Frontier Warfare, 1839-1947* (London, 1998).

²⁹ See P. Rose, "Indian Army command culture and the North-West Frontier, 1919-1939," in A. Jeffreys and P. Rose (ed.), *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Ashgate, 2012), pp. 31-55 and T.

mountainous terrain, with one soldier who fought in Italy commenting “I can say now that the lessons of the North West Frontier Province apply 100% to the campaign in Italy.”³⁰

Alan Jeffreys, who is in the process of completing a book on the training of the Indian Army³¹, has published a number of articles on the Indian Army’s training in the Second World War. He has studied the effect that Lieutenant General Francis Taker had upon the training of officers in the Indian Army, showing how training was affected by Indianization in the Second World War.³² He has researched the publication of training manuals by the Indian Army in the Second World War, showing how the success of its training programme originated from the efforts of mid-level officers in the 1930s, who went on to command divisions and corps in the Second World War.³³ In these pieces Jeffreys does not dwell solely on the training of the Fourteenth Army in Burma, but also discusses the training of the divisions in Italy, observing that they had to be prepared to conduct a variety of operations, such as mountainous, urban and river crossings. Whilst the focus is on the training methods adopted by the 4th Indian Division, it is noted that training directives and instructions were used by all Indian formations and units in Italy.³⁴

Daniel P. Marston and Chandar S. Sundaram co-edited a volume on the military history of

Moreman, “‘The Greatest Training Ground in the World’: The Army in India and the North-West Frontier, 1901-1947”, in D. P. Marston and C. S. Sundaram (ed.) *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), pp. 53-73.

³⁰ Jenkins, ‘Some Lessons from the Italian Campaign’, p. 16.

³¹ A. Jeffreys, *Training the Indian Army* (Farnham: Ashgate, forthcoming).

³² A. Jeffreys, ‘The Officer Corps and the training of the Indian Army with special reference to Lieutenant General Francis Taker’, in K. Roy (ed.), *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2011), pp 285-309.

³³ A. Jeffreys, “Training the Indian Army, 1939-1945,” in A. Jeffreys and P. Rose (ed.), *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Ashgate, 2012), pp. 69-86.

³⁴ A. Jackson, ‘New Research on the British Empire and the Second World War: Part II’, in *Global War Studies*, 7 (2010), pp. 174-179.

India and South Asia.³⁵ Marston contributed a chapter on the evolution of the Indian Army in the Second World War which examines, albeit briefly, the role of the Indian divisions in Italy. In this study he notes that no study has been made that compares the performance of the Indian divisions in Italy with one another, nor with the other Allied forces in Italy.³⁶ However, Marston does take the time to dwell upon the training methods adopted by the Indian Army in Italy, including the divisional and brigade commanders of the 10th Indian Division.³⁷

In this chapter we will also chronicle the activities of the military forces of the Indian Princely States, the Indian States Force (ISF), who were deployed to Italy. Two ISF units fought with the 10th Indian Division in Italy, the Nabha Akal and Jodhpur Sardar infantry battalions. The contribution of the ISF to the Indian Army has been noted in passing, but very little work has been done to study in any great depth their wartime experiences. By August 1941 17 ISF units were deployed overseas.³⁸ By the end of the Second World War the ISF had contributed 50-60,000 troops to the war effort.³⁹ The subjects of the states themselves, who were not British subjects but 'British Protected Persons', also joined the Indian Army in their thousands. The states placed their economies on a war footing and many of the rulers such as the Nizam of Hyderabad, and

³⁵ D. P. Marston and C. S. Sundaram (ed.) *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007).

³⁶ D. P. Marston, "A Force Transformed: The Indian Army and the Second World War", in D. P. Marston and C. S. Sundaram (ed.) *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), p. 216 (footnote 51).

³⁷ Marston, 'A Force Transformed', pp. 102-122.

³⁸ CAB 66/21/34 - Memorandum on India's War Effort by Leo Amery, 30 January 1942, p. 2.

³⁹ B. Farwell, *Armies of the Raj: From the Great Indian Mutiny to Independence 1858-1947* (London, 1990), p. 233.

the Maharajas of Travancore, Baroda and Mysore donated warships and planes to the British.⁴⁰

However, prior to and during the Second World War there were doubts about the effectiveness and ability of the ISF troops, despite efforts to improve them. According to Major General Sir Arthur M. Mills, some quarters of the Indian Army were unaware of the existence of the ISF.⁴¹ His article on the 'Indian States Forces'⁴² published in 1938 is as an attempt to raise awareness of the ISF within the Indian Army, and points to the improvements that were being made. One of the major issues his article sought to address was the apparent negative perception of the ISF held by the Indian Army, concerning its abilities and professionalism. We will rely on the training notes and instructions published by the 10th Indian Division, its brigades and battalions, which are contained in their respective war diaries held at the National Archives.

The chapter on manpower concerns one of the biggest problems that confronted the Indian Army in the Second World War: how it maintained an expeditionary force thousands of miles from its home base. Gordon Corrigan's *Sepoys in the Trenches*⁴³ showed that during the First World War the Indian Army suffered horrendous casualties when deployed to France during 1914-1915, which they were unable to replace with fresh reinforcements, which eventually saw the force withdrawn from France. In the fighting in Burma in 1942 the Indian forces stationed there suffered from a lack of trained soldiers and reinforcements, because of the rapid expansion of the army in the early years of the war. By studying the Indian Army's attempts to maintain the 10th Indian

⁴⁰ W. Barton, 'The Indian Princes and Politics', *Pacific Affairs*, 17 (1944), pp. 189.

⁴¹ A. M. Mills, 'Indian States Forces', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 68 (1938), p. 302.

⁴² *Ibid.*, pp. 302-10.

⁴³ G. Corrigan, *Sepoys in the Trenches: The Indian Corps on the Western Front 1914-15* (Brimscombe Port Stroud, 2006).

Division in Italy during the Second World War it is hoped to demonstrate the extent to which it had adapted to the demands imposed upon it from twentieth century warfare.

To understand how the Indian Army was able to reinforce the 10th Indian Division in Italy, we need to study the system of camps, naval convoys and clerks that ensured units were kept operationally viable. The 10th Indian Division, and the other Indian divisions in Italy, had been overseas for many years by 1944, and it will be important to see how the Indian Army managed those units which had been committed to operations for long periods. In addition we will see what preventative measures the 10th Indian Division took to reduce casualties from sickness and accidents, and thus the need for reinforcements. John Ellis observed that in the Second World War, the vast majority of casualties suffered by a unit were usually from non-battle causes such as disease or accidents.⁴⁴ This loss of manpower still required replacement and placed an additional burden on manpower requirements. The British Army's casualties for the three years it fought in Italy (see Appendix 1) show casualties from illness were far greater than those from battle, and this is true across all the theatres of operation where the British Army served in the Second World War.

The best evidence to gauge the success of the Indian Army's reinforcement system will be to analyse the strength of the infantry battalions which fought in Italy with the 10th Indian Division. These units, unlike the support units, had to contend with casualties from battle, in addition to sickness and accidents, and so would have needed more reinforcements. We can obtain the information on the strength returns of the British and Indian battalions in the division from the field returns and daily situation reports they completed, which are held in their war diaries at the National Archives.

⁴⁴ J. Ellis, *The Sharp End* (London, 1980 [2011]), p. 180.

Unfortunately, because not all the war diaries have the complete collection of strength returns, it will not be possible to adopt a standard methodology for all the units. Indeed sufficient records are not available for the 2/4th Gurkhas, and so it has not been included. Instead we will show a unit's strength approximately every two weeks in order to demonstrate the strength that the units were able to maintain throughout 1944 and 1945.

Our final theme will be the Indian soldiers' experience of the war in Italy, which has suffered from a severe lack of academic study, despite it offering a rare opportunity to tell the history of the Indian Army from a bottom-up, rather than top-down perspective. One of the faults of military history is that the focus has often been on the generals and commanders of armies, rather than the experiences of the vast numbers of men who made up those armies, although this is beginning to change. David Omissi's *Indian Voices of the Great War*⁴⁵ used soldiers' letters to share the Indian soldiers' experiences of war on the Western Front in the First World War. Kaushik Roy has used morale reports and disciplinary records to investigate the experience of Indian, British and African soldiers fighting in South East Asia.⁴⁶ The experience of British soldiers has been studied in J. A. Crang's 'The British Soldier on the Home Front', which used morale reports to show the numerous positive and negative factors, that affected it.⁴⁷ Whilst the experiences of soldiers from the other Allied contingents deployed to Italy have been recorded, most notably in Field Marshal Carver's *The Imperial War Museum Book of the*

⁴⁵ D. Omissi, *Indian Voices of the Great War, Soldiers' Letters, 1914-18* (Wiltshire, 1999).

⁴⁶ K. Roy, 'Discipline and Morale of the African, British and Indian Army units in Burma and India during World War II: July 1943 to August 1945', in *Modern Asian Studies*, 44 (2010).

⁴⁷ J. A. Crang, 'The British Soldier on the Home Front: Army Morale Reports, 1940-45', in P. Addison and A. Calder (editors), *Time to Kill: The Soldier's Experience of War in the West 1939-1945* (London, 1997), pp. 60-74.

*War in Italy*⁴⁸, both Carver's book and the wider literature have failed to study the experiences of the Indian soldier in Italy.

The sources that this dissertation will rely on to study the experiences of the Indian soldier are two forms of censorship reports. The first are those reports conducted by the censor sections of the Indian Army on the 10th Indian Division during its time in Italy. The second are the appreciation and censorship reports compiled on all the national contingents who fought under British command in Italy. Records of the testimony of Indian soldiers' wartime experiences are hard to find, and for scholars unfamiliar with Indian languages harder to use. Indian soldiers often corresponded with their families in their local dialect, so the censors had to be fluent in several languages. Thankfully, these reports were produced in English, which makes the testimony of Indian soldiers accessible to historians who are not fluent in all the different languages spoken by them.

The Indian Army's censorship reports on the 10th Indian Division do not cover its entire deployment to Italy, with no reports from March to November 1944. This is because of a shortage of censor sections to cover the Indian forces stationed in Italy, and later Greece, a shortage which was still present in January 1945.⁴⁹ As such the reports by 8 Indian Field Censor Section cover the 10th Indian Division and support units from 16 December 1944 to 30 September 1945.⁵⁰ They follow a common format, by which the censors monitored topics over a number of weeks or months on matters they deemed

⁴⁸ M. Carver, *Imperial War Museum Book of the War in Italy: A Vital Contribution to Victory in Europe 1943-45* (2002).

⁴⁹ WO 204/731 - Indian Field Censors: Deployment. Memorandum from Lieutenant Colonel E.P. Lovegrove of Communications Censorship, on Indian Army Base Censorship, CMF to G-2, 4 January 1945.

⁵⁰ See WO 204/707 - 8 Indian Field Section: reports. 01 December 1944 – 31 October 1945.

important. These topics, to name a few, included evaluations of the soldiers' morale and their opinions on pay, promotion, leave and political events in India.

However, the appreciation and censorship reports that were produced by the British Army in the Mediterranean theatre include coverage of the Indian troops, for as long as they were deployed in Italy.⁵¹ These reports were conducted in all theatres where British troops fought in the Second World War, and those on the home front were used in Crang's work, mentioned above. In the Mediterranean these were produced from 1942 to the war's end and featured every national contingent that fought under British command, including British, Canadian, South African, New Zealand, Palestinian, Italian and Indian forces. Each individual report covered a two week period, and used a common structure in its report of each nation's troops. The reports on the Indian troops are not divided by division, but deal with the entire Indian contingent in Italy and Greece. As such it may not always be possible to draw upon evidence provided by troops solely from 10th Indian Division.

One of the drawbacks to these reports is that they are not the 'raw' data, so we do not get the full letters but rather extracts which are used as examples of the thoughts of the Indian troops. However, there is no reason to doubt their worthiness as accounts of the Indian soldiers in Italy. These reports were produced to monitor the morale and opinions of the Indian soldiers, to catch the early signs of dissent or mutinous thought whilst ensuring that letters did not breach operational security. As such, it was within the report's authors own interests to ensure they were truthful and honest, so that they could ensure the troops were still willing to fight. We also know that the authorities did

⁵¹ See WO 204/10381 - Appreciation and Censorship reports, Numbers 1-52. 01 November 1942 – 30 September 1944 and WO 204/10382 - Appreciation and Censorship reports, Numbers 53-77. 01 September 1944 – 30 September 1945.

act upon the conclusions they drew from their analysis of the soldiers' correspondence. When one soldier wrote of alleged mismanagement at 16th Indian Reinforcement Camp, the censors subjected the mail of the camp to special review to see if there were any further complaints.⁵² In February 1945, the Indian Postal Directorate requested that all extracts in censorship reports that related to the loss or failed delivery of a soldier's mail or parcel, be relayed to them to help their efforts to solve the problem.⁵³

It is hoped that by studying the training, manpower and the Indian soldier's experience of the 10th Indian Division in the Italian campaign light can be shed on a period that has been neglected in the wider research on the Indian Army. By observing the 10th Indian Division's training and manpower in Italy, new light can be shed on the development of the capabilities and organisation of the Indian Army in the Second World War. Yet, to study the Indian Army as a bureaucratic institution is to ignore the fact that it was formed of people, who were experiencing one of the most life-changing events of a person's life – fighting in a war. This dual approach hopes to offer the reader a fuller and more nuanced view of the story of the 10th Indian Division in Italy.

⁵² WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 2, 1 – 15 January 1945, p. 3.

⁵³ WO 204/731. Extracts on Indian Postal Manners, by Major C.C.B. Rice, 3 February 1945.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

Before we assess the 10th Indian Division in Italy during the Second World War, it will be necessary to explore the origins and background to the organisation of manpower in the Indian Army. Firstly, the Indian Army self-imposed restrictions on those soldiers it could recruit, defining the Indian peoples as belonging to a martial or non-martial race and also denied Indians the chance to become King's Commissioned Officers. Secondly, the Indian Army and the 10th Indian Division were formed from three different sources, the Indian Army, the British Army and the forces of the Indian Princely States. These two factors had a huge impact on the ability of the Indian Army to not only expand, but also maintain its units whilst at war. Lastly, we will chronicle the developments in training and expansion of the Indian Army that arose from the First Arakan campaign in 1942-43, and which would impact on the 10th Indian Division during its campaign in Italy.

Allocation of manpower

The armed forces of the Second World War were not composed of a single element; whilst all soldiers were taught to fire a rifle not all served as infantrymen. During the Second World War the growth of the armies of the time was attributed to the need for men to man the support units that enabled the combat units to function.¹ Many works on the growth of the armies of the period, such as those by David French², Martin van Creveld³ and John Ellis⁴, have explored the ways in which manpower was allocated.

¹ J. Ellis, *The Sharp End* (London, 1980 [2011], p. 156.

² D. French, *Raising Churchill's Army: The British Army and the War against Germany 1919-1945* (Oxford, 2010 [2000]).

³ M. van Creveld, *Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance 1939-1945* (Connecticut, 1982).

⁴ Ellis, *The Sharp End*.

In the British Army the most able and intelligent, of those who had not already been by the Royal Navy or RAF, were generally sent into the engineers or signals with the less able posted to the infantry. As Major General J.E. Utterson-Kelso described the situation, the infantry were regarded as “the legitimate dumping ground for the lowest forms of military life.”⁵ The German Army selected recruits based on their physical ability, psychological state, education, civilian profession and their preferred services. Upon reaching their service arm, their unit commander would elect to train them in a role that suited the needs of the unit and the recruit. However the German Army also had quotas so all arms got an equal proportion of the best recruits.⁶

The US Army did many of the same tests as its contemporaries, such as evaluating physical ability and matching civil occupation and skills with corresponding military roles.⁷ However it was also heavily based on the Army General Classification Test which graded recruits on a system from I-V, with I being the highest and V the lowest. The result was that the lowest scoring recruits ended up being sent into the combat arms in higher proportions than the highest scoring recruits, who were disproportionally represented in support units.⁸

The Indian Army had organised its personnel differently to its contemporaries, partly because its primary role was as the guarantor of British imperial control in India, rather than to combat an external threat. The Peel Commission of 1858-9 had been tasked with rebuilding the British military presence in India after the Mutiny. After ruling out the idea of replacing the Indian Army with an all European force, it looked at how the

⁵ T. Harrison-Place, *Military Training in the British Army, 1940-1944: From Dunkirk to D-Day* (London, 2000), p. 42.

⁶ van Creveld, *Fighting Power*, pp. 66-7.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

Bengal Army could be reorganised to prevent another mutiny occurring.⁹ Their solution was to impose a system of 'divide and rule' upon the Indian Army.¹⁰ They did not want to rely upon a specific caste to provide the troops for its army as it had done prior to the Mutiny. One of the major causes of the Mutiny was the monopolisation of the Bengal Army by high-caste Brahmins and Rajputs, who had rebelled when they became dissatisfied with their British employers.¹¹ The British did not believe that they could command soldiers to repress a mutiny when the mutineers were of the same caste. However, the British believed an army formed of different castes meant that these loyalties would never be tested, as it would be possible to pit one caste against another. One British general observed "it was not because they loved us, but because they hated Hindustan that the Sikhs have flocked to our standards. They were not attracted by mere daily pay. It was rather the prospect of wholesale plunder and of stamping on the heads of their enemies."¹² To this end units, in particular Sikh, raised in the Punjab for service during the Mutiny were integrated into the Bengal Army with remaining loyalist units.

The Peel Commission aimed to build an army for internal security duties, where loyalty came before fighting ability. This is expressed most succinctly by the 1879 Eden Commission on the Indian Army's Organisation, which stated, "as we cannot do without a large Native army in India, our main object is to make that army safe."¹³ However, in the latter half of the nineteenth century the Indian Army was presented with a new role to

⁹ The other two presidency armies, the Madras and Bombay, had remained loyal during the Mutiny and were left largely untouched by the Peel Commission reforms, already being composed of a multitude of castes.

¹⁰ D. Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj* (London, 1994), p. 8.

¹¹ T.T. Yong, 'Sepoys and the Colonial State: Punjab and the Military Base of the Indian Army 1849-1900', in P.S. Gupta and A. Deshpande (eds.), *The British Raj and its Indian Armed Forces 1857-1939* (New Delhi, 2002), pp. 23-4.

¹² Omissi, *Sepoy and the Raj*, p. 10.

¹³ S. P. Cohen, *The Indian Army: Its contribution to the development of a nation* (Oxford, 1990 [1971]), p. 38.

contend with. The 'Great Game', a possible Russian invasion of India through Afghanistan and the North West Frontier, saw the possibility of the Indian Army having to fight a European army in conventional warfare. Yet the poor performance of the Indian Army in the Second Afghan War (1878-1880) and the Third Burma War (1885-1889) made the commanders of the Indian Army question whether the Indian Army could effectively oppose a conventional European army. Lord Roberts of Kandahar, Commander in Chief of the Indian Army 1885-1893, believed that "the near approach of a great European power compels us to have [an] army composed of very different material from that which was sufficient when we had no external enemy to deal with."¹⁴ His solution was that the Indian Army "must have the best fighting material the country can supply, and can afford no place in the native Army to a soldier whose only *raison d'être* is that he acts as a check upon another soldier."¹⁵

Roberts believed that the best fighting material was found in the 'martial races' of India. The concept of martial races was formulated by the British, exaggerating pre-existing Indian notions of martial ability of certain castes through the ideas of racial social Darwinism.¹⁶ It broadly defined that the northern peoples of India, in particular from the Punjab, North West Frontier and Nepal, were more warlike than those in the South. They believed that these races, such as the Punjabi Mussalman, Sikh and Gurkha, were of 'proven' loyalty to the British as had been demonstrated by their efforts during the Mutiny.¹⁷ Alleged evidence of the 'martial races' superiority was found in the poor

¹⁴ Omissi, *Sepoy and the Raj*, p. 12.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

¹⁶ D. Omissi, 'The Indian Army in the First World War, 1914-1918', in D.P. Marston and C.S. Sundaram (eds.) in *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), p. 75.

¹⁷ F. W. Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies: Manpower and Organisation in Two World Wars* (Manchester, 1988), p. 83.

performance of the Madras Army, which was composed from southern, non-martial classes, during the Third Burma War.

However, the reality was that of the three presidency armies only the Bengal Army saw much active service because it was based on the North West Frontier. The re-constituted Bengal Army possessed a large number of soldiers from the Punjab, who had earned the admiration of many British officers for their service during the Mutiny. As the Bengal Army became the only place for officers to stand much chance of seeing active service, the other two presidency armies declined in ability and stature. The Madras and Bombay Armies began to contain large numbers of less capable, older and unfit officers, whilst their sepoys also began to be on average older due to the lack of active service. Roberts, as Commander in Chief of the Madras Army from 1881-1885, recalled on inspecting it that:

I tried hard to discover in them those fighting qualities which had distinguished their forefathers during the wars of the last and the beginning of the present century. But long years of peace, and security and prosperity attending to it, had evidently had upon them, as they always seem to have on Asiatics, a softening and deteriorating effect; and I was forced to the conclusion that the ancient military spirit had died in them, as it had died in the ordinary Hindustani of Bengal and the Mahratta of Bombay, and that they could no longer with safety be pitted against warlike races, or employed outside the limits of southern India.¹⁸

Consequently, Roberts began to replace his southern Indian infantry battalions with those from the 'martial races' from the Punjab.¹⁹ He said "I have no hesitation myself in stating that except Gurkhas, Dogras, Sikhs, the pick of the Punjabi

¹⁸ B. Farwell, *Armies of the Raj: From the Great Indian Mutiny to Independence 1858-1947* (London, 1990), pp. 180-181.

¹⁹ Omissi, *Sepoy and the Raj*, p. 16.

Muhammadans, Hindustanis of the Jat and Ranghur castes, and certain classes of Pathans, there are no native soldiers in our service whom we could venture with safety to place in the field against the Russians.”²⁰ The Parliamentary Commission of 1879, which called for the abolition of the individual presidency armies in favour of a single Indian Army, was the opportunity for supporters of the 'martial races' theory to press for their inclusion into the new unified army at the expense of the southern Indian units.²¹ Although some southern Indian castes continued to be recruited (notably the Madras Sappers and Miners) the majority of recruits began to be found amongst the martial races (see Appendix 3).

The Indian Army drew recruits in 1914 from twenty-four recognised martial races.²² At the start of the First World War three-quarters of the Indian Army was drawn from the Punjab, Nepal and North West Frontier.²³ The decision to recruit from the martial races had an impact on the organisation of the army. Combat units were organised into 'one class' or 'company class.' The 'one class' units were those formed entirely from one caste such as the Gurkhas, Sikhs and Garhwali. 'Company class' units saw a battalion's companies, each composed of a different caste or social group. The support units adopted the 'mixed class' system where soldiers were from all different castes.²⁴ However, the 1892 Afghan War had seen the recruitment system nearly break down, and the 1912 Nicholson Army Commission noted that recruitment could not be

²⁰ Yong, 'Sepoys and the Colonial State', p. 28.

²¹ D. M. Peers, 'The Martial Races and the Indian Army in the Victorian Era', in D.P. Marston and C.S. Sundaram (eds.) in *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), p. 47.

²² Farwell, *Armies of the Raj*, p. 189.

²³ Omissi, *Sepoy and the Raj*, p. 19.

²⁴ O. Khalidi, 'Ethnic Group Recruitment in the Indian Army: the Contrasting Cases of Sikhs, Muslims, Gurkhas and Others', *Pacific Affairs*, 74 (Winter, 2001-2002), pp. 530-1.

met from a limited section of the population in a future conflict.²⁵ Yet these warnings were ignored, and then cruelly exposed, when the Indian Army was sent to fight on the Western Front during the First World War.

The Indian Army experienced the same problems that the British Army suffered in the early stages of the war, as two forces designed for imperial policing were required to participate in a conventional war on a scale previously unseen.²⁶ However, the British Army was able to suffer the initial casualties on the Western Front because of the reservists of the Territorial Force, who numbered 268,777.²⁷ In contrast, the Indian Army numbered 241,934 in 1914, which included 34,767 trained reservists and 45,660 non-combatants.²⁸ The decision to form units based upon caste meant that, to maintain morale and combat ability, reinforcements had to be of the same caste. The inability of the Indian Army to replace the casualties it suffered on the Western Front led to its withdrawal from France in 1915. The organisation of the Indian Army, based on the recruitment of only the martial races and units organised on caste lines, caused problems throughout the First World War.

The British Army unlike the Indian Army was not limited to recruiting from a particular section of the population. This led to the martial races theory having a serious negative impact on recruitment, as despite high demand for troops many potential recruits were dismissed because they did not belong to a martial race.²⁹ As the war progressed, the Indian Army grew to meet growing commitments in Africa, Mesopotamia

²⁵ Cohen, *The Indian Army*, p. 70.

²⁶ K. Roy, 'Introduction: Warfare, Society and the Indian Army during the Two World Wars', in K. Roy (ed.), *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2011), p. 6.

²⁷ Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies*, p. 8.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 86.

²⁹ S. P. Cohen, 'The Untouchable Soldier: Caste, Politics, and the Indian Army', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 28 (May, 1969), p. 458.

and the Middle East. By 1918 the army grew to 573,000 strong, but the martial races could not hope to supply this alone.³⁰ In 1917, 63,000 Punjabi Mussalmans had been recruited from a population of 145,000 who were liable for service, and 43,500 Sikhs out of a total of 112,000.³¹ To meet the manpower requirements demanded by the expanding Indian Army, recruitment of the non-martial races began. The Indian Army recruited seventy-five 'new' martial classes during the First World War, which included Dogra Jats, Mahtam Sikhs, Punjabi Brahmins, Punjabi Hindus, Punjabi Christians, South Punjabi Muslims, West Punjabi Muslims, Oudh Rajputs, Mahars, Telugus, Bhils, Bengalis, and Moplahs.³² These alleged non-martial classes proved as capable as the martial classes. In his 1919 novel *The Sepoy*, Edmund Chandler wrote,

The war has proved that all men are brave, that the humblest follower is capable of sacrifice and devotion; that the Afridi, who is outwardly the nearest thing to an impersonation of Mars, yields nothing in courage to the Madras Christian...These revelations have meant a general levelling and the uplift of classes hitherto undeservedly obscure.³³

With the end of the war, the 1920 Esher Committee reduced the Indian Army in size due to government spending cuts. It was reduced from its 1918 strength of 573,000 to 120,000 by 1923; however the cuts had fallen disproportionately on those units of the non-martial races which had been raised during the First World War.³⁴ Throughout the inter-war years the Indian Army reverted to recruiting from the pre-war martial races, although there were some pre-war non-martial classes who were re-designated as martial races. One of the reasons for this was that the martial races had managed to

³⁰ Cohen, *The Indian Army*, p. 69.

³¹ Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies*, p. 93.

³² Cohen, *The Indian Army*, p. 69.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

obtain a degree of political power during their years of service in the Indian Army. They were unwilling to lose what were an important source of jobs for their communities, and worked to ensure it never happened. Yet it cannot be ignored that the belief in the martial races was incredibly strong in the officer corps of the Indian Army. The *Journal of the United Service Institution of India's* 1934 Gold Medal Prize Competition called for essays on the hypothesis that "it is often said that Indians are by nature divided into what might be called martial and non-martial races. This is a mere myth..."³⁵ Major General E. C. Alexander had argued in his essay that the martial and non-martial races were not myth but fact, writing that "experiences of the last two centuries generally confirm the deduction drawn from the general history of the previous twenty, that where Northerner and Southerner compete on no more than equal terms, the Northerner wins."³⁶ It continued well into the war with Leo Amery, the Secretary of State for India, commenting in 1942 that in India "...there is a vast reservoir of man-power; but the difficulties of utilising it, apart from those connected with equipment and training, are the complications which arise from differences of race (which carry with them considerable differences in military qualities)..."³⁷

The Indian Army expanded to aid the Allied war effort, from a force of 194,373 in 1939 to 2,049,086 in 1945, the largest volunteer army ever known.³⁸ It achieved this in spite of a range of problems. It was not expected that the Indian Army would have to make such a large contribution to the Allied war effort. In September 1939 the War Cabinet's Land Forces Committee predicted that hostilities would last only three years

³⁵ E. C. Alexander, 'Martial and non-Martial Races', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 65 (1935), p. 16.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³⁷ CAB 66/21/34 - Memorandum on India's War Effort by Leo Amery, 30 January 1942, p. 2.

³⁸ C. Kempton, *'Loyalty & Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 - August 1947: Part III* (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 104.

requiring a force of fifty-five divisions, to be provided by Britain, her Empire and Allied nations. Britain would provide thirty-two of these divisions, with fourteen from the dominions, a further five from Allied nations whilst the Indian contribution was to have been limited to four divisions.³⁹ This estimation was arrived at before the Allied failures in the opening stages of the war, when the possibility of large numbers of French troops aiding the British on the continent disappeared with the Fall of France in 1940. It is not clear whether this decision was taken because of the doubts by the British government on the effectiveness of the Indian Army or because of the fact that, unlike the forces of the dominions, the British government was liable to pay for the deployment of any Indian forces overseas. The lack of inter war funding of the Indian Army meant it had only begun mechanisation of its cavalry and transport arms in 1938, and so was short of quality equipment by the beginning of the war. Also, this modernisation effort was only being conducted because the Indian Army was at the time planning to reduce its forces due to budgetary constraints.

From September 1939 to April 1940 only 50,000 troops were added to the Indian Army, most of which came from the incorporation of the Indian territorial forces. However, between May 1940 and September 1941 approximately 550,000 Indians were recruited. From October 1941 recruitment averaged 50,000 per month, including 9,000 per month for the fledgling technical services of the Indian Army.⁴⁰ The strength of the Army in India (including British and ISF units) by October 1941 had increased to 820,000 from its strength of 237,500 at the beginning of the war. This rise can be largely

³⁹ French, *Raising Churchill's Army*, pp. 157-158.

⁴⁰ CAB 66/21/34, p. 1.

attributed to the expansion of the Indian Army.⁴¹ However, in order to meet the huge demands of manpower that the Indian Army required during the Second World War, it had been necessary to expand recruitment into the non-martial races. This, in terms of obtaining potential recruits, was very successful. Amery stated that “the response from practically all communities is highly encouraging and voluntary offers of service are much greater than can possibly be accepted.”⁴² By October 1942 he commented that “recruiting from the “Martial classes” recruited in the pre-war Indian Army is now gradually drying up, and the monthly intake of these classes is only just sufficient to maintain existing units. All further expansion has now to be carried out with Madrassis (Southern Indian classes), who were only recruited to a very small extent before the war.”⁴³

Yet the fact remained that India was a land of different castes, languages, customs and religions and this made creating a modern army a difficult proposition.⁴⁴ Despite opening up recruitment to those classes previously denied it, the Indian Army still continued to organise units according to caste and social group, continuing with the ‘one class’ and ‘company class’ battalions in the combat arms. This meant that the NCOs and VCOs of units had to be the same as the men they commanded. Yet for those units composed of the non-martial races there was not a pre-existing supply of trained NCOs and VCOs. Trials in using NCOs and VCOs from the martial races in these newly raised formations of non-martial troops were a failure, which according to Amery “might have been expected seeing that there is as much difference between the Northern Indian and

⁴¹ CAB 66/21/34, p. 1.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴³ CAB 66/34/39 - Memorandum on India's War Effort by Leo Amery, 1 March 1943, p. 4.

⁴⁴ CAB 66/21/34, p. 2.

Madrassi both in language and customs as between, say, a Norwegian and a Greek.”⁴⁵

Schools were immediately opened to allow instruction of entry level NCOs and VCOs, but these were not expected to be ready for active service before the summer of 1943.⁴⁶

One of the methods used in the expansion of the army was 'milking'. 'Milking' involved taking a cadre of experienced soldiers and officers from one or more units and using these as the nucleus of a new unit raised with new recruits. The vacancies in their old units were filled by recruits, the idea being that these veterans would provide training and experience to the new recruits. However, in the rush to expand the Indian Army as quickly as possible the 'milking' process was accelerated. Within eighteen months the number of infantry battalions had doubled via 'milking'.⁴⁷ The extent to which 'milking' was used left units which possessed 100% of their troops having seen combat, reduced to 40%, which was believed to be dangerous.⁴⁸

The expansion of the Indian Army reflected lessons learnt in the First World War. Recruitment of the non-martial races was implemented immediately, showing an understanding that the martial races could not meet the demands of expansion alone. The process of 'milking' had been used in the First World War to increase the number of infantry battalions in the army, with the army doubling in size between 1917 and 1918. As would be the case in the Second World War concerns were raised about the quality of this expanded force. However, the Indian Army was given time to train and supply its

⁴⁵ CAB 66/34/39, p. 4.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies*, p. 109.

⁴⁸ F. L. Roberts, 'Our Military Man-Power Problem', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 72 (1942), p. 337.

troops before committing it to battle against a fatigued opponent, a luxury not afforded to it in the Second World War.⁴⁹

The entry of Japan into the war proved the dangers of the 'milking' process. The majority of trained troops had already been deployed overseas to North Africa and the Middle East, leaving half trained and poorly equipped formations to confront the Japanese. By December 1941, half of the 600,000 strong Army of India were still in recruit training, 150,000 soldiers were stationed on the North-West Frontier and tasked with internal security duties, leaving just six divisions in India to face the Japanese, three of which were in the process of training and equipping and were without support arms.⁵⁰ The performance of the troops against the Japanese was criticised with the blame attributed to 'milking'. What the Indian Army needed was time, to allow reinforcement, training and new equipment to be acquired.

The Officers of the Indian Army

We have seen how the Indian Army expanded the rank and file of its forces in the Second World War, and it is now time to look at how it expanded its officer corps. Initially British officers had exercised command over the sepoys of the Indian Army, yet Indian demands for greater involvement in the governance of their country and the demands of twentieth century warfare eventually led to Indians being commissioned. The reasons for the presence of the British officer in an Indian unit are found in the early days of British involvement in India. The French had proved that Indian soldiers trained and equipped in the European style of warfare could defeat a native Indian army which, though

⁴⁹ Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies*, p. 95.

⁵⁰ CAB 66/34/39, p. 1.

numerically larger, was undisciplined.⁵¹ The European officers were the natural choice to instruct Indian soldiers in these tactics and weapons as they possessed first-hand knowledge of European warfare and were of proven loyalty to their paymasters, whether that be to the East India Company or the British Government.

The British officer held the King's Commission in the Indian Army and could rise to field rank. For Indians the King's Commission was not open to them, but they could become NCOs or VCOs. The Indian NCO served a similar function to that in the British Army, whilst the VCO was something unique to the Indian Army. A VCO was a veteran and distinguished soldier who operated as a tactical commander and cultural adviser to the British officer on Indian troops (see Appendix 2). He fulfilled many of the functions of a lieutenant or captain in the British Army by commanding platoons or troops and this allowed the British officer to experience a higher level of command far sooner than if he was in the British Army.⁵²

The events of the Indian Mutiny in 1857 were important in the development of the British officer in Indian service. The first point to note is that one of the reasons for the failure of the mutineers was that after they killed their British officers, many of the Indian leaders then lacked the tactical knowledge, which had previously been supplied by their British officers, to conduct operations. There were numerous occasions of outnumbered British and loyalist Indian units defeating larger mutineer forces due to their greater tactical ability.⁵³ However, the most important lesson was that the

⁵¹ Farwell, *Armies of the Raj*, p. 26.

⁵² C. S. Sundaram 'Grudging Concessions: The Officer Corps and its Indianization, 1817-1940', in D. P. Marston and C. S. Sundaram (eds.) *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), pp. 89-90.

⁵³ R. Callahan, 'The Great Sepoy Mutiny', in D.P. Marston and C.S. Sundaram (eds.) *A Military History of India and South Asia: From the East India Company to the Nuclear Era* (Westport, 2007), p. 27.

breakdown in the relationship between British officers and their Indian troops had been one of the main causes of the Mutiny. In planning for the future the army looked to those examples set by the loyalist Indian units, where officers had cultivated trust and honour between themselves and their soldiers. They had been repaid through valiant and loyal service. The importance of this relationship between an officer and his sepoys would become one of the Indian Army's greatest strengths, yet ultimately a weakness in the world wars that were to come.⁵⁴

This emphasis, in the Indian Army, of the relationship between the Indian soldier and his British officer was to unravel in the First World War, in particular on the Western Front. As has already been noted the Indian divisions who were sent to France in 1914 suffered horrendous casualties, and the British officers shared in this suffering. In their first contacts, the 57th Rifles and 129th Baluchis lost half their British officers which at full strength were only twelve per battalion.⁵⁵ However, unlike other national armies the Indian Army could not easily replace the loss of these men, not just because of the poor system of organising replacements but also the crucial role they played in sustaining the fighting ability of an Indian unit. Unlike a trainee officer for the British Army, a prospective Indian Army officer had to be familiar with the languages and the culture of the men he commanded, as well as the tactical and administrative knowledge necessary to command troops in battle. The British officer of the Indian Army commanded not just through his position but because he earned the loyalty of his soldiers by accepting Indian norms, which revolved at the time around multiplex relationships. He was not just a

⁵⁴ Callahan, 'The Great Sepoy Mutiny', p. 33.

⁵⁵ J. Greenhut, 'Sahib and Sepoy: An Inquiry into the Relationship between the British Officers and Native Soldiers of the British Indian Army', *Military Affairs*, 48 (1984), p. 16.

military leader but also a patron, father figure and counsellor.⁵⁶ The Indian soldier, contrary to the practice in Western armies 'respected the man, not the uniform.'⁵⁷ As such, when an Indian unit lost its British officers it usually resulted in a markedly reduced combat effectiveness, and often led to the units breaking and fleeing from battle. Unlike the British Army, where command could be taken over by subordinate officers or NCOs, this was not possible in the Indian Army. Pradeep Barua observes that the inability and poor performance of Indian NCOs or VCOs, when forced to assume command, was due to a system where Indian soldiers were made wholly dependent upon their British officers. As such, when the most senior Indian VCO was subordinate to the most junior British officer, it created a culture whereby Indian VCO's "position of subordination to British officers in the regiment is calculated to impair any initiative or leadership they may have originally possessed."⁵⁸

The demand for officers for the Indian Army grew as the war progressed and the army expanded. As such by 1917 the government decided, as part of a wider package of devolving political power of India to Indians, that "the bar which has hitherto precluded the admission of Indians to commissioned rank in His Majesty's Army should be removed."⁵⁹ With this statement Indians could hold the King's Commission and become officers in the Indian Army.⁶⁰ However, the inter-war years never saw Indianization⁶¹ reach the levels hoped for by its supporters. The reduction in size of the army in the 1920s, the inter-war popularity of the Indian Army for British officers and a lack of will on

⁵⁶ Greenhut, 'Sahib and Sepoy', p. 17.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ P. P. Barua, *Gentlemen of the Raj: The Indian Army Officer Corps, 1817-1949* (Westport, 2003), p. 16.

⁵⁹ Sundaram, 'Grudging Concessions', p. 94.

⁶⁰ Doctors in the Indian Medical Service were granted KCO status in 1912, in 1917 it was extended to all arms of the Indian Army.

⁶¹ For a full account of Indianization in the Indian Army see Barua, *Gentlemen of the Raj*.

the part of the British commanders of the Indian Army to carry out Indianization were all major factors. Even with the establishment of the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun in 1932 the subsequent decision to class its graduates as Indian Commissioned Officers (ICOs) as opposed to KCOs, which was earned by those who had qualified from Sandhurst, and appoint them as replacements for VCOs were a blow to Indianization.⁶²

As Claude Auchinleck stated to Leo Amery in 1940:

In my opinion, we have been playing a losing hand from the start in this matter of 'Indianization.' The Indian has always thought, rightly or wrongly, that we never intended the scheme to succeed and expected it to fail. Colour was lent to this view by the way in which each new step forward had to be wrestled from us, instead of being freely given. Now that we have given a lot we get no credit because there was little grace in our giving.⁶³

In 1919 there had been nine Indian KCOs, which had risen to ninety-one by 1929. On the outbreak of the Second World War there were 400 Indian KCOs and ICOs out of a total of 3000 officers.⁶⁴ The expansion of the Indian Army also affected the officer corps, and just as the First World War had unlocked the door for Indian KCOs, the Second World War flung it wide open. The demand for extra officers quickly exhausted the supply of British officers, which the Indian Army had to compete for with the British armed forces. In July 1940, compulsory service for European British subjects in India was introduced which raised 4,600 men. However, by 1941 Amery reported that "expansion is being held up by lack of officers," so the decision was taken to increase recruitment of Indians as

⁶² Farwell, *Armies of the Raj*, p. 300.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

officers. The aim was to increase the number of Indian officers being commissioned by 1942 to 2,000 a year from the previous figure of 900 a year.⁶⁵

The British Elements of an Indian Formation

Throughout its existence the Indian Army had served with British units in the same formations. All Indian infantry brigades had one British battalion alongside two Indian battalions (post First World War). In an infantry division the presence of British units was still evident as they formed artillery and logistical units. The 10th Indian Division in Italy was estimated to be 40% British.⁶⁶

British units had originally been brigaded with Indian troops as it was thought Indian troops took inspiration from seeing them fight. Ironically, it was the heavy casualties suffered by the British units during the Afghan War and Sikh Wars of the nineteenth century that were one of the reasons for the Mutiny in 1857, as they had dented its perceived image of invincibility against Indian troops. After the Mutiny, as a buttress against further uprisings, the Indian Army was no longer in control of its own field artillery; it would all be in the hands of the British Army. The decision was also taken to increase the number of British troops to one British soldier to every three Indian soldiers, (see Appendix 4).

This practice continued through the First World War and into the Second, although by then there were plans to give the Indian Army control of its own field artillery. However, the rapid expansion of the army meant not all Indian divisions had Indian artillery units, such as the 10th Indian Division. The supply of replacements now

⁶⁵ CAB 66/21/34, p. 2.

⁶⁶ WO 169/22249 - 10 Indian Division: G.S., 01 January 1945 - 30 April 1945. 10th Indian Division newspaper '*The Diagonals*', No. 11, volume 2, issued 17 March 1945.

meant that British units were being served by British bases and the Indian units from Indian bases.

The Armies of the Indian Princely States

A third of the Indian subcontinent was controlled by the Indian Princely States, a reminder of a time when India had been a patchwork of various states and kingdoms. After the Mutiny these states were incorporated into British hegemony through integration, not conquest. Queen Victoria's 1858 proclamation stated:

We desire no extension of our present territorial possessions; and while we will permit no aggression upon our dominions and our rights, to be attempted with impunity, we shall sanction no encroachment on those of others. We shall respect the rights, dignity and honour of native princes as our own; and we desire that they, as well as our won subjects, should enjoy that prosperity and social advancement which can only be secured by internal peace and good government.⁶⁷

They were allowed to keep their titles and lands and most had control of their kingdom's domestic affairs, with the British in charge of foreign policy and military matters.⁶⁸ However the British did on occasion intervene in the affairs of the states where they felt there was a threat of civil disturbances or acts of misrule, the latter leading to rulers being deposed.⁶⁹ By 1944 there were 562 Princely States, which ranged from those the size of villages, to the state of Hyderabad, which was the size of France with a population of sixteen million. Its resources, administration and culture were

⁶⁷ Farwell, *Armies of the Raj*, p. 221.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 220.

⁶⁹ W. Barton, 'The Indian Princes and Politics', *Pacific Affairs*, 17 (1944), p. 183.

claimed to be far beyond that of the independent Muslim nation states of the world at the time.⁷⁰

After the Mutiny the Princely States were permitted to keep their own military forces. The motivations for rulers in possessing a military force were personal, ceremonial, processional and imperial.⁷¹ The British rulers of India also gained from this arrangement. The states had cooperated militarily with the British prior to the Mutiny, participating in the 1803 Laswari campaign, the First Afghan War, the First and Second Sikh Wars and even during the Mutiny itself where it was observed that the military assistance from the states of Bahawalpur, Bikaner, Jind, Kapurthala, Nabha and Patiala “may well have saved the situation.”⁷² The fact that the Imperial Service Troops (IST), as the forces of the Indian States were first known, would possibly have to serve with British or Indian troops meant that efforts were made by the Indian Government to ensure that the IST were proficient and equipped with the same weapons and organisation as the Indian Army. In 1887 British officers began to supervise the training of the IST units and in 1889 an Inspector General of IST was appointed. As such the forces of the Indian States fought with the British in the Second Afghan War, the 1891 Hunza Nagar campaign, the 1895 Chitral expedition, the 1897 Tirah campaign, the Boxer Rebellion, Somaliland in 1903 and during the First World War. By 1918 there were 48,806 IST, of which 26,099 served overseas.⁷³ The IST who had remained in India replaced British and Indian Army units assigned to garrison or internal security duties, allowing the latter to be deployed overseas.

⁷⁰ Barton, 'The Indian Princes and Politics', pp. 183-4.

⁷¹ A. M. Mills, 'Indian States Forces', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 68 (1938), p. 302.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁷³ Perry, *The Commonwealth Armies*, p. 96.

In 1920 a committee on the IST saw them renamed the Indian States Forces (ISF), with one general in the Indian Army commenting that “the great change, as always in our army, was to be in name.”⁷⁴ ISF units were designated class A or B. Class A units were armed with heavy weapons and liable for service outside of the state from which they were raised, with some earmarked for service with the Indian Army overseas. Class B units were armed with light weapons and only intended for internal security operations within the state from which they were raised. This distinction in quality of the ISF units is because there was no minimum requirement for a state to raise a unit. Some of the larger states like Hyderabad and Mysore could offer a division in troops, whereas some of the smaller states possessed only one or two platoons. The Government of India in the 1920s had promised to offer weapons free to any state which sought to raise an ISF unit, with the states paying the costs of maintaining and replacing the rifles. The fact that the rifles were available to all states, with no restrictions on the size of the force to be raised, meant there was great demand from the states for the rifles, as many raised platoons in order to obtain them. The higher than expected demand outmatched the government’s ability to pay for the rifles and the scheme was stopped in 1932 as the effects of the Great Depression took their toll and states then had to begin paying for their rifles.⁷⁵

During peacetime the training of the ISF was overseen by the military adviser-in-chief and his staff of sixteen British officers, seconded to him from the Indian Army and given the title of military adviser, all serving for four year terms. The position of the military adviser-in-chief was a civilian one. He worked for the Political Secretary of the Government of India, and spent eight months every year touring India observing and

⁷⁴ Mills, 'Indian States Forces', p. 303.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 303-4.

supervising training. He, along with the military advisers, were concerned with matters of training, organisation and administration of the ISF; whilst all matters of policy relating to the ISF were the prerogative of the Political Department of the Government of India. By 1938 there were forty-nine Princely States in the ISF scheme who could raise 52,000 troops. However, only a portion of these were available for service as class A units (see Appendix 5).⁷⁶

The states were divided into nine military adviser's circles which were allocated military advisers in proportion to their size (see Appendix 6). It is interesting to note that the largest contributor of ISF units was the Punjab Circle, an area which had long been the main recruiting ground for the Indian Army. The position of military adviser was carried out by a major, or in the case of assistant military adviser a captain. The position carried no executive powers to make changes and as such it was vital that he was able to earn the trust and respect of the troops, officers and the state ruler to implement any changes he saw fit. The responsibilities of the military adviser were primarily concerned with overseeing training. He had to prepare classes on training for NCOs and officers and organise exercise camps. Major General Mills, as part of his essay seeking to improve the ISF, devoted time to the subject of military advisers, and the pay and benefits they could earn as an enticement for higher quality applicants in the future. Yet he also stated that "gone long since are the days when a tour with the ISF was looked on as four years leave on full pay. Military Advisers have a full day's work and more if they are going to pull their weight."⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Mills, 'Indian States Forces', p. 304.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 307.

Several of the states obtained the services of an Indian Army officer on a full time basis to act as an adviser and mentor to the troops. By 1938 there were only four Indian Army officers lent to states in this manner, all to the larger states as the costs for lending the officer had to be borne solely by the state, which could amount to Rs. 2000 a month for a major.⁷⁸ Cheaper alternatives for those states who wanted a permanent adviser to their troops were to hire a retired Indian Army KCO or VCO, although permission had to be obtained from the Government before they could take up the post. They did not replace the military adviser but worked with him.⁷⁹ Mills warned the retired British officer seeking service in an ISF unit against joining on the premise of taking a part-time/holiday posting.⁸⁰

Mills also outlined attempts to improve conditions of service and standards of training, moving away from 'spit and polish' towards tactical exercises and drills. To make more ISF units available for service with the Indian Army the number of training exercises with regular Indian Army units was increased. The NCOs and officers of ISF units were able to serve with the Indian Army on six month attachments. This was something that was built upon during the Second World War. By September 1942 there was a realisation that the training arrangements for ISF units in the Middle East were substandard. The problem was that ISF units were conducting internal security duties or guarding prisoner of war camps, and so found it hard to train for conventional operations. The fact many of the units were un-brigaded meant "higher direction of training is lacking and the elements of competition and example are absent." To rectify the problem, independent ISF units were affiliated with a brigade to allow administrative and tactical training to

⁷⁸ Mills, 'Indian States Forces', p. 307.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 307-8.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 308.

take place.⁸¹ Unaffiliated regular Indian Army battalions in the Middle East were also affiliated to brigades.⁸² Affiliation allowed an Indian infantry battalion the chance of training with a higher formation without permanently replacing it from its current duties. The intention was for the affiliated brigade to conduct TEWTs for officers and NCOs and attachments to the brigade headquarters for members of the affiliated battalion. Battalions on internal security duties were to be relieved by a battalion from its affiliated brigade, to allow it the chance to conduct company and battalion training. However this had to be approved by the formation under whose command the internal security battalion served.⁸³ By January 1943 the 10th Indian Division had an ISF battalion affiliated to each of its three infantry brigades whilst stationed in Cyprus.⁸⁴ The Middle East schools of instruction, which were open to the Indian Army, were also open to the ISF troops. During its time in Cyprus in 1944 the Nabha Akal ISF infantry battalion sent its officers and soldiers to courses held at the Middle East Training Centre.

Steps were being taken to improve cooperation between the states themselves. An annual Senior Officer's School, modelled on Belgaum, for ISF officers was established which allowed ISF officers to give lectures to their contemporaries and also to network with officers from other branches and states. The state of Gwalior ran a musketry course which was attended by all the states in the Central India Circle (see Appendix 6). Kashmir had a widely respected fifteen year old training school which offered unit instructor

⁸¹ WO 201/2598 Indian units: training of and miscellaneous questions on, 01 September 1942 - 31 May 1944. GHQ MEF to Ninth Army on the Training of ISF Battalions, dated 27 September 1942.

⁸² WO 201/2598 GHQ MEF to Ninth Army on application for unbrigaded Indian infantry battalions, dated 12 December 1942. The 1/9 Gurkha Regiment and 2/7 Gurkha Regiment were affiliated to the 7 Indian Infantry Brigade of the 4 Indian Infantry Division.

⁸³ WO 201/2598. GHQ MEF to Ninth Army on application for unbrigaded Indian infantry battalions, dated 12 December 1942.

⁸⁴ WO 201/2598. GHQ MEF to Ninth Army on Affiliation of unbrigaded Indian infantry battalions, dated 10 January 1943. The affiliated units were the Jaipur Infantry to the 10 Indian Infantry Brigade, the Bhopal Infantry to the 20 Indian Infantry Brigade and the Nabha Akal Infantry to the 25 Indian Infantry Brigade.

training, physical training, weapons training (including Lewis and machine guns), section training and an education course. The value of the physical training course was acknowledged by the Indian Army, which allowed graduates to proceed to its Physical Training School without the preparation period which other applicants had to go through.⁸⁵

The troops who served with the ISF units were generally held to be of a good quality. Mills notes that service conditions were ever improving for the troops, whilst housing and equipment were of a good standard. The states were beginning to offer pensions after twenty years' service, central messing for the troops and clothing and ration allowances, although variations between the states were great.⁸⁶ Of more concern was the quality of the officers of the ISF. The officers were Indian, selected from the states' subjects, but their training varied considerably as they did not go through any Indian Army schools of instruction during their officer training. Mills stated that the "tools are good but the carpenters are weak. We want to improve the carpenters."⁸⁷ Although improvements had been made, Mills claimed that nepotism in the ISF had been greatly reduced, more was still to be done. One proposition was to have trained the states officer cadets at the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun, but the financial cost, which the state had to pay, usually prevented this.⁸⁸ By 1938, if an ISF unit was mobilised for service it would have been accompanied by special service officers from the Indian Army to advise and assist the ISF officers. These special service officers were to be deployed five to an infantry battalion, four to a cavalry regiment, three to an artillery

⁸⁵ Mills, 'Indian States Forces', p. 309.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 304.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 310.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 308-10.

battery, two to a field company and one to a transport unit.⁸⁹ It was predicted that the improved performance of ISF officers would mean the number of special service officers required would be reduced. This dissertation will show that the question of the competency of ISF officers was still an issue in the Second World War.

During peacetime ISF troops were administered by their own state's military department which was where rations and reinforcements were drawn from. During active operations it had to rely on the organisation, supply and infrastructure of the Indian and British armed forces, particularly during the Second World War with the need for overseas deployment. However, the state's military department still had a role in supplying their formations during the Second World War. The extract below comes from a censor's report of incoming mail into the Middle East theatre during January and February 1944. It accused the Nabha State's Military Department of being corrupt, incompetent and that favouritism and nepotism were thriving. We have no details on the sender, but we do know that the statement was enough for the censor to suggest that the department be investigated.

Nowadays, there is great corruption in your Department. It has become a mutual admiration society. The favourites are having a grand time. Even the Sepoys' rations are distributed to others. There is no other party to check them. The state of affairs in the Department is such that nobody knows what the future will bring. Self-respecting people have to suffer and meanness is flourishing. What we see is beyond imagination. The more we hear about reforms, the worse it becomes in action.⁹⁰

⁸⁹ Mills, 'Indian States Forces', pp. 304-5.

⁹⁰ WO 169/18768 - M.I.12 Ind. Censor Sec, 1944. Middle East Military Censorship Fortnightly Summary Number 166 for 26 January – 8 February 1944, p. 4.

Indian Army Reforms 1941-1943

Before turning to the training and reinforcement of the 10th Indian Division prior to and during its deployment to Italy, it is important to observe the wider reforms that took place in the Indian Army, as a result of its experiences against the Japanese Army during 1941-43. The army conducted a root and branch review of itself, following its disastrous performance against the Japanese in the First Arakan campaign during 1942-43, one of the most important parts of which was the Infantry Committee which sat from 1-14 June 1943. Assessing the performance of both Indian and British units who had served in Burma, it recognised that one of the most serious defects of the army was providing trained reinforcements, stating “this is [the] most urgent problem facing us, and one which requires prompt and energetic action if results are to be produced in time for the winter campaigning season.”⁹¹ The major problem was that there was no reserve of trained manpower, either British or Indian, to call upon to replace casualties. British reserves were effectively non-existent due to the low priority of the Far East for the British Army; replacements were obtained from support units in India, usually with little or no training in jungle warfare. For Indian troops a drop in recruitment and the ravages of malaria had left no effective manpower reserve, so troops were sent half trained from their training centres to make up losses with disastrous consequences.⁹²

The poor state of training was the most obvious factor affecting the quality of reinforcements. Major General Gurdon observed on 25 May 1943 that “the standard of training of recruits and reinforcements has been disgracefully low... I keep on insisting that unless we take our chance in putting our house in order now, we shall never get

⁹¹ T. Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth Armies at War 1941-45: Fighting Methods, Doctrine and Training for Jungle Warfare* (Abingdon, 2005), p. 83.

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 83-4.

another chance... What we want is quality and not quantity and in order to achieve the former we must be ruthless about cutting down the latter.”⁹³ The major flaw with training was that too much was attempted in too little time, with basic training lasting only three months.⁹⁴ This limited opportunity to train was hampered by a lack of skilled instructors and sufficient equipment to train with.⁹⁵ Training had generally not given the troops the specialist skills in jungle warfare which they urgently required as it had never been deemed necessary by the Indian Army. The pre-war planning of the British Empire had never envisaged a need for the Indian Army to fight a war in jungle terrain because the empire's strategy in the Far East was centred upon the idea of Fortress Singapore. Furthermore the opening stages of the conflict saw India build up its forces for the prospect of fighting the Germans and Italians in North Africa and the Middle East. All this meant that, when war with Japan came, the Indian Army was designed to fight a different foe in a different setting. The decision to not designate certain regiments or units for a specific type of warfare meant that Regimental Training Centres (RTC) often had to train recruits for a variety of tasks. A case in point is the 13th Frontier Force Rifles RTC stationed in Abbottabad, which was charged with supplying recruits for fourteen battalions which were operating on six different war establishments, to meet demands for jungle and desert warfare.⁹⁶

The reforms suggested by the Infantry Committee were implemented with vigour by General Claude Auchinleck who took over India Command in mid-1943, as its task was changed to becoming a supply and recruitment base for the Indian Army, whilst SEAC

⁹³ Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, p. 79.

⁹⁴ D. P. Marston, *Phoenix from the Ashes* (Westport, 2003), p. 96.

⁹⁵ Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, p. 79.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

became responsible for operations against the Japanese in South East Asia. One of the changes made was to prolong and simplify the basic training new Indian recruits undertook, aiming for a better quality soldier instead of larger numbers of half trained recruits, as advocated by Gurdon. Basic training for an enlisted soldier lasted eight months, an increase from three months, and took place at the RTC. His training here instilled the basic military skills required, covering weapons training (including company and platoon weapons), discipline, learning about regimental history/traditions, section and platoon training but with little reference to jungle warfare.⁹⁷ Skills in jungle warfare were obtained from attending one of the two Indian training divisions, the 14th and 39th, if he were an Indian soldier, whilst British soldiers and officers attended the same course at the 52nd Infantry Brigade. Opening in December 1943 they ran a two month training programme for both enlisted men and officers, which included realistic and tough training which was constantly revised to reflect the circumstances at the front.⁹⁸ The British soldier undertook an average training period of six to nine months whilst the Indian soldier had an average training period of eleven to thirteen months for enlisted men, and nine months for officers. The reason for this longer training period was attributed to the fact that “in INDIA the potential soldier must be educated before he can be taught to fight.” The paper stressed that the training period achieved “excellent results...so that any reduction of effort would have an adverse effect.”

Conclusion

An overview of the Indian Army demonstrates that it was an organisation that sought to learn from the mistakes and failures of its past; however, it was not always

⁹⁷ Marston, *Phoenix from the Ashes*, p. 96.

⁹⁸ Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, pp. 93-4.

willing to implement these changes of its own volition because of the conservatism of senior officers and a lack of preparation and foresight. The changes made to the Indian Army's recruitment and organisation policies between 1857 to 1940 reflect its struggle with its primary commitment as being the guarantor of the British hold on power in India, whilst also being able to assist in conventional military operations in service of British imperial objectives. The former required a force whose loyalty to the British Raj was unquestionable, and which was tasked with internal security duties and proficiency in asymmetric warfare. However, the latter needed an army that placed military efficiency and capability as the major pre-requisite. Whilst the First World War had demonstrated the inability of the martial races to meet the manpower demands of the Indian Army in twentieth century total warfare, the inter-war years saw a return to an army formed predominantly from the martial races. Upon learning of its expanded role in the Second World War the Indian Army, in order to raise the extra formations required, opened recruitment to non-martial races and Indians for officer training. Whilst this is an example of the Indian Army applying the lessons of a past conflict to a contemporary one, it is also apparent that had the inter-war Indian Army been composed from a broader section of the Indian population, then the problems experienced in raising new formations would have been reduced. Reforms to tactical and training policy, which followed the Indian Army's defeat at the hands of the Japanese Army in 1942-3, are particularly impressive given the lack of focus on jungle warfare by the Indian Army prior to the war. It will be shown in the next chapter that during the 10th Indian Division's campaign in Italy, it used similar methods to ensure its own tactical and training policies were still relevant to the operations it conducted. Whilst the Indian Army was slow to implement the steps necessary to make it a force suitable for the Second World War,

once in place they were key to providing the foundations for future victories in Burma and Italy.

CHAPTER 3: TRAINING AND OPERATIONS

It has been written that “training is a matter which is apt to be belittled by the uninitiated. But training for war is just as important as training for sport, and where contestants are equal it may decide the issue.”¹ It is training that turns the civilian into a soldier. This chapter will examine how the 10th Indian Division trained for the campaign in Italy, demonstrating the great flexibility that the division possessed, with its ability to master multiple forms of warfare as terrain and circumstances required. The training notes and instructions issued by the division and its brigades to direct the training of troops will be assessed to see how the division formulated new training priorities. The ISF units that fought with the division will also be included in this section to analyse their training regime prior to and during their time in Italy, and also the reasons for their deployment.

The 10th Indian Division: 1941-3

The 10th Indian Division was formed in January 1941, and first saw action in Iraq in April to overthrow the pro-German government in power. The division was formed from the 20th, 21st and 25th Indian Infantry Brigades², and was under the command of Major General W. J. Slim. Landing in Basra the division moved up the Euphrates to capture Baghdad and the oilfields and pipelines north of Mosul by the end of June. This led the Germans to base aircraft at airfields in Syria, with the approval of the Vichy French authorities, to strike at the British in Iraq. Australian and Indian forces had invaded Syria in May from Palestine and the 10th Indian Division were sent into Syria from Iraq in June

¹ T. Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth Armies at War 1941-45: Fighting Methods, Doctrine and Training for Jungle Warfare* (Abingdon, 2005), p. 7.

² Hereafter referred to as the 20th, 21st and 25th Brigade respectively.

1941. With 21st Brigade as the strike force, 20th Brigade guarding the lines of communication and the 25th Brigade remaining in Iraq to guard the oilfields around Mosul, the division attacked towards Aleppo.

With the surrender of the Vichy authorities in Syria on 11 July the division returned to Iraq to continue guarding the oil pipelines. In August the division cooperated with Soviet forces in the invasion of Persia. After its success in Persia the division returned to Iraq where it trained and conducted internal security duties until May 1942, when it was despatched to North Africa. Major General T. W. Rees had assumed command of the division in March 1942, following Slim's appointment to command Burma Corps. Having covered 1,500 miles in two weeks it reached the Halfaya Pass by 4 June. The division fared badly in the encounters against Rommel, with its brigades committed piecemeal in accordance with the strategy of defensive boxes. On the retreat from Libya the division was ordered to hold Mersa Matruh on the coast, but was overwhelmed by the Axis forces. During the retreat from Mersa Matruh, 60% of the division evaded four enemy divisions to reach Allied lines at El Alamein in twenty-four hours. Most of the division was sent to the Nile Delta to rest and refit, except for Robcol, formed from the survivors of 10th Indian Division and assorted units who held Ruweisat Ridge. The ridge was central to the El Alamein position and Robcol, commanded by the division's C.R.A.³ Brigadier Waller, held the position against attacks throughout 2-3 July, until relieved by the 5th Indian Division.

In August 1942 the division was sent to Cyprus, under the command of Major General A. B. Blaxland, where it undertook responsibility for the defence of the island. The 21st Brigade had left in June whilst the division was still in Africa, so the 10th Indian

³ Commander Royal Artillery.

Infantry Brigade⁴ joined the 20th and 25th Brigades in the division. By August 1943 the 10th Indian Division was stationed in the Middle East under the command of Major General Wilfred L. Lloyd, who had assumed command in July 1943. Under the division's command were 20th and 25th Brigades and the 1st Greek Brigade, composed of royalist Yugoslav and Greek soldiers. The 10th Brigade would not re-join the division from Cyprus until January 1944. The division had been training throughout the summer of 1943 for a role in the invasion of Rhodes, as part of the ill-fated Dodecanese campaign. Due to the Allied defeats at Los and Keros the attack on Rhodes was cancelled, and the division was sent to Lebanon in November. Here the division conducted internal security operations, following the French authorities' decision to imprison the Lebanese government after their declaration of independence. The matter was resolved when the French acquiesced to internal pressure to recognise the independence of Lebanon, but the division did not take part in the occupation of Lebanon by Allied forces for the remainder of the war. Instead, the division resumed training in conventional operations, as laid down in 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2 issued on 27 November 1943.⁵

Training for the Italian campaign

Divisional Training Instruction No. 2 covered training from the division's movement into winter quarters to 31 March 1944, and was the training guide by which the division prepared for future operations in Italy. The instruction forecast that the division would return to active operations in spring 1944. The instruction indicated that the roles the division would have to prepare for had not changed from the division's HQ Training Instruction No. 1 of 1943, which was most likely issued in preparation for the

⁴ Hereafter referred to as the 10th Brigade.

⁵ WO 169/14782 - 10 Indian Division: 'G' 1943 Jan.-June, Aug.-Dec. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, issued 27 November 1943.

division's cancelled invasion of Rhodes. Training Instruction No. 1 called for training in amphibious assault, operations with motor vehicles on a single road in mountainous terrain, all arms attacks on enemy defences in mountains, night ops and plans for consolidating and exploiting the capture of a position.⁶ The only new addition in Training Instruction No. 2 was the crossing of water obstacles.⁷ The roles the division was training to carry out were those called for by Major General Jenkins for units being sent to Italy.⁸

During the Second World War the 10th Indian Division conducted training of the formations within it, and also as part of a larger formation. Training consisted of the theoretical and practical, with the subject influenced by the operations it was intending to conduct. Theoretical training included demonstrations, lectures given by officers on a particular topic or a tactical exercise without troops (TEWT). The TEWT was mostly concerned with officers, not the private soldier. Subordinates could demonstrate before a senior commander that they could make the right tactical decisions in certain circumstances. There is of course much difference between theory and practice; and the divisional command was well aware of this. It noted that the only way of learning tactics was through practical training, but felt that these theoretical exercises provided "an admirable opportunity of allowing [officers] and NCOs to air their views by discussion etc."⁹

However, the reality is that it was not always feasible for practical training to be conducted. One problem was the area in which a unit was stationed. The division

⁶ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, p. 1.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁸ F.A.M.B. Jenkins, 'Some Lessons from the Italian Campaign', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 74 (1944). pp. 8-17. Jenkins had commanded the 17th Indian Infantry Brigade of 8th Indian Division for a short while and had observed the campaign in Italy. His article published in this journal was given as lectures at staff colleges.

⁹ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, p. 5.

conducted exercise 'Lark' during 17-23 December 1943, which saw the 20th Brigade assault a position held by the 25th Brigade with support arms in mountainous terrain. Training Instruction No. 2 had made mountain warfare a priority, and the terrain in the Middle East was perfectly suited for conducting practical training exercises in it. However, in training for the crossing of water obstacles the training instruction noted that "it is realised that practical trg in this will be difficult in our new location, but the study of the theoretical side of the question will be considered."¹⁰ In the light of there not being suitable training areas in the immediate vicinity to practice river crossings, theory training was the only option. As such, exercise Kingfisher was conducted on 7 January 1944, which was a TEWT on the river Auja in Palestine. The division did eventually participate in a practical training scheme on a river crossing; exercise Crocodile over 1-8 March 1944, was staged over the river Jordan and was a Ninth Army exercise in which the 10th, 20th and 25th brigades operated together as a division for the first time since leaving Cyprus in 1943. The weather also disrupted the division's training plans. In Cyprus, during March 1943, heavy rains impacted pre-scheduled training rotas and forced the cancellation of 20th Brigade's exercise for 20 March.¹¹

Another issue in conducting practical exercises was the number of troops involved and the availability of suitable training grounds. Practical training was composed of individual and collective training; both were necessary but only one could be conducted at a time. The publication of 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 3 on 9 December 1943 covered "the use of ground for training and field firing and the allotment

¹⁰ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, p. 1.

¹¹ 20th Indian Infantry Brigade operated under the title 10th Armoured Brigade as part of the deception plan for units in Cyprus to provide false intelligence to the Germans.

of Ranges".¹² With three brigades seeking to use the same facilities for training, this instruction established a universal system for using training grounds to avoid 'double-booking' of training areas. It was far easier to train smaller units such as platoons and battalions because they did not require such large logistic support to train them, nor the use of large training areas. Smaller units were able to make use of training areas numerous times. For instance, in January 1943, whilst stationed in Cyprus, the 25th Brigade set up a training area at Malounda to give infantry companies an opportunity to practice mountain warfare tactics and withdrawal of motor transport by night. From 12-30 January four companies of the 2nd Royal Sikhs and three of the 1st Kings' Own completed the exercises. Also at this time a brigade sniper competition was held at the same location.¹³ Training Instruction No. 2 set out that every infantry platoon in the division would attend the two week battle drill course at the divisional battle school by the end of February 1944.¹⁴

Collective exercises, especially at army, division and brigade level, were much less frequent because they took more planning and preparation due to the need to move larger forces. The preparation of a brigade exercise involved a member of the divisional or brigade staff performing a reconnaissance of a proposed training area. There were few instances of the same brigade repeating a training exercise at the same location. This was because if units gained familiarity with a training area, then it would not be as challenging as if it was held at a new location each time. In a place such as Cyprus, where training areas were limited, brigades had to take turns as to where and when they could conduct exercises on a large scale. Training Instruction No. 2 set out that brigade

¹² WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 3, issued 9 December 1943, p. 1.

¹³ WO 169/14869 - 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q. 1943. War diary entry in January 1943.

¹⁴ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, p. 3.

exercises would not take place until February 1944, and only then once every six weeks. Unit exercises, which included battalions, were conducted once every four weeks from January 1944.¹⁵ The opportunity to conduct corps and army level exercises was even more difficult. Troops required relief from their operational responsibilities, and training areas large enough to accommodate such exercises. Most corps and army training exercises were therefore theoretical.

The 10th Indian Division was based in the Middle East, an area which had been building up its infrastructure and logistical support since 1939, which included training facilities. In April 1943 the division were given lectures and demonstrations by the Mountain Warfare Centre on platoon and company tactics and pack transport problems.¹⁶ In May 1943 the commander of the 20th Brigade, Brigadier J. Moffat, was appointed commander of the Middle East Mountain Warfare Training Centre. Soldiers from all units and service arms were able to attend courses at the many schools of instruction in the Middle East. The 25th Brigade participated in exercise Duchess in August 1943 to train for an amphibious landing; preparation for the planned invasion of Rhodes where the brigade was to provide the assault troops.

The other issue that hampered the division's opportunities to conduct practical training was the need to maintain good civil-military relations. Neither the Indian Army nor the British Army had any pre-existing training establishments for collective training in Cyprus or the Middle East (they had few in Britain and India). Instead they had to make use of whatever was available which often meant having to train close to civilian populations. When the division was stationed in Palestine the tense political situation

¹⁵ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, p. 3.

¹⁶ WO 169/14782. War diary entry in April 1943.

between the Jewish and Muslim populations was a cause for concern. The Divisional Order of 28 July 1943 stated "all ranks are warned for the need for great care in discussing or expressing opinions in public on the internal political problems of PALESTINE. Incautious remarks are liable to be quoted as authoritative statements and may cause deteriorating the relations existing between the races."¹⁷ The reasoning for this is clear; if the situation was to deteriorate to the point where hostilities broke out between the two populations then the 10th Indian Division would be involved in the operations to quell the unrest. Their involvement would have cost them casualties and lost time in training for operations in Italy or the Dodecanese.

Troops whilst on training exercises were given strict instructions on avoiding unnecessary damage and to repair any damage that was done. Divisional Order 120 warned troops against unnecessary damage to trees, in particular olive trees.¹⁸ Olive trees were part of a farmer's crop and any damage to them would have resulted in a financial loss for him. On Cyprus the planned training programme of 20th Brigade was curtailed as collective training would have meant damaging crops.¹⁹ The damaging of crops may have produced a food shortage on the island which the military authorities would have had to make up. Training Instruction No. 3 ordered that training was to avoid all unnecessary damage to crops and property, with training in orchards strictly prohibited.²⁰ The policy of British and Indian units was to give compensation for any damage done to civilian property during training. Any unit involved in a training programme which involved operating away from roads had to appoint a Brigade

¹⁷ WO 169/14783 - 10 Indian Division: 'AQ', 1943. Divisional Order No. 203, issued 28 July 1943

¹⁸ WO 169/14783. Divisional Order No. 120, issued 14 June 1943.

¹⁹ WO 169/14857 - 20 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943. War diary entry in January 1943.

²⁰ WO 169/14782. 10 Indian Division Training Instruction No. 3, p. 1.

Compensation Liaison Officer to deal with civilian complaints. He was responsible for notifying civilian populations and the Claims Commission District Officer (CCDC) forty-eight hours in advance of any major training exercises happening in their area, so any necessary safety precautions could be taken. He was not permitted to make compensation payments himself but instead to note instances of damage to civil property (e.g. walls, fences, crops, trees, animals) and report this to the area's CCDC.²¹

Brigadier T. N. Smith of the 10th Brigade, along with other officers, had visited Italy in January 1944 to see what lessons could be learned from operations and applied to training. In a lecture to 20th Brigade on 23 February regarding the Italian front he placed special emphasis on the importance of patrolling. Training sought to teach what had been learnt from harsh experience and the 10th Indian Division were not above learning from others. The 8th Indian Division produced '8 Indian Division Training Instruction Number 1' in 1944, which detailed the lessons learnt from its experiences in Italy during the period 19 October to 17 December 1943.²² This was distributed to all Indian divisions in Central Mediterranean Force (CMF²³), the Middle East and Persia and Iraq Command (PAIC²⁴), including the 10th Indian Division.²⁵ It is highly likely that this training instruction was used by the 10th Indian Division to prepare for its involvement in Italy. On 22 August 1943 the 4th Indian Division opened a patrol school in Palestine, to

²¹ WO 169/14783. Appendix to Divisional Routine Order 128 of 1943, issued 22 June 1943.

²² WO 204/8302 - 8 Indian Division. Training Instruction 1, 01 October 1943 - 31 December 1943. 8 Indian Division Training Instruction Number 1.

²³ The Central Mediterranean Force, CMF, was the title given to the highest Allied field headquarters in Italy. Over the course of the campaign the force was also called the Fifteenth Army Group, Allied Armies in Italy and Allied Forces in Italy. It was composed of the US Fifth and British Eighth Armies, and commanded by Field Marshal Alexander and General Clark during the Italian campaign.

²⁴ PAIC (Persia and Iraq Command), also known as PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq Force), was the name given to the British and Commonwealth forces based in Persia and Iraq. It was responsible for securing the oil supply in these countries and supply routes to the Soviet Union.

²⁵ WO 204/8302. Distribution List. The other formations were the 4th and 6th Indian Infantry Divisions along with the 31st Indian Armoured Division.

impart the lessons it had learnt from its operations in Tunisia, and the 10th Indian Division was quick to make use of it. The war diary of the 20th Brigade commented that “during exercise LARK several suggestions emanating from 4 Ind Div were being tried out, especially Special Patrol Platoon and Patrol Masters.”²⁶ On 18 March 1944, days before the division’s departure to Italy, they were briefed by Major General Hawkesworth, the commander of 46th Division, on operations and conditions in Italy.²⁷ The 46th Division had been operating in Italy since September 1943 and had been sent from Italy to the Middle East in March to rest and refit after the casualties it had suffered, before returning to Italy in July.

Many of the troops of 10th Indian Division, who were bored with the months of not seeing active service, expressed irritation at training, as the comments below from an Indian and British officer emphasise.

I'm getting rather browned off with life, just a bit. It's all training which never seems to get us anywhere... It's very bad for the officers and men and there is a great deal of unnecessary ill-feeling – a bad thing. A Subedar of a Gurkha Battalion.²⁸

I have just returned from a 3 weeks tour in another theatre of war and found that Lord Gort's definition of war 'periods of excessive boredom punctuated by moments of intense fear' just about fills the bill. I've got damned good unit and a fine set of VCOs and NCOs taken all round. So that I've got nothing to grumble about apart from the fact that they seem to be winning the war without us. A Major of an Indian Engineers Field Company.²⁹

²⁶ WO 169/14857. War diary entry for August 1943..

²⁷ WO 169/18813 - 10 Indian Division: G.S., 01 January 1944 - 31 July 1944. War diary entry for 18 March 1944.

²⁸ WO 169/18768 - M.I.12 Ind. Censor Sec, 1944. Middle East Military Censorship Fortnightly Summary Number 165 for 12 - 25 January 1944, p. 9.

²⁹ WO 169/18768. Middle East Military Censorship Fortnightly Summary Number 167 for 9 - 22 February 1944, p. 11.

In January 1944, Major General Lloyd was killed in a car accident whilst umpiring an armoured exercise in Egypt. Lloyd had been responsible for the training program set out in Training Instruction No. 2. He had served as commander of 5th Indian Infantry Brigade in 4th Indian Division during Operation Compass in North Africa, the battle of Keren in East Africa and the invasion of Syria where Slim asserted he had “outstandingly distinguished himself as a fighting brigadier.”³⁰ He was recalled to India to command the 14th Indian Division, which he led during the First Arakan campaign. Slim’s evaluation of Lloyd reveals that he was a soldier who believed in the importance of training. Lloyd had decided to keep the 14th Indian Division concentrated for as long as possible for training during the summer of 1942, although this had had the negative effect of the division not conducting patrolling in the Arakan as aggressively as Slim thought best. On Slim’s advice he moved the division south to continue training and to conduct more aggressive patrolling and Slim expressed every confidence in Lloyd’s abilities.³¹ During the First Arakan campaign, Lloyd was relieved of his command of the 14th Indian Division after the failure to capture the bunker complex of Donbaik and the subsequent losses suffered by the Japanese counter attack. He was, however, appointed to the command of 10th Indian Division in July 1943 replacing Major General A. B. Blaxland. Slim said that “his death...was a great loss, as, in spite of a failure in the Arakan for which he was by no means wholly responsible, he would, had he lived, have regained his place in the group of brilliant divisional commanders the Indian Army produced.”³²

Major General Lloyd’s replacement as the commander of the 10th Indian Division was Major General Denys W. Reid. At the war’s beginning he commanded the 3/5th

³⁰ W. J. Slim, *Defeat Into Victory* (London, 2009 [1956]), p. 145.

³¹ Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, pp. 169-170.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 178.

Mahratta Light Infantry in the 9th Indian Infantry Brigade, 5th Indian Division in the East African campaign. He led the battalion in the battle of Keren, where the Mahrattas' capture of the Pinnacle position on the mountain earned him the DSO.³³ He was appointed to command the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade of the 5th Indian Division in October 1941 which, with South African and British troops attached, formed 'E' Force during Operation Crusader in North Africa. Reid led the brigade during its fighting retreat to El Alamein in 1942, but the brigade was destroyed in the Fuka pass at the battle of Mersa Matruh in June where Reid was taken prisoner. Reid remained in an Italian prisoner of war camp for eighteen months before he escaped to British lines in November 1943.

The battle of Keren is regarded as one of the greatest achievements of the Indian Army. Alan Jeffreys suggests it was an example of the evolution from the old-style Indian Army, which guarded the North West Frontier, and the modern army of the Second World War.³⁴ He believes that the battle, which had seen the troops train in mountain warfare for a month prior to the final assault, had a lasting influence on the Indian Army. The battle produced an army commander, two corps commanders and seven divisional commanders (including Lloyd and Reid). Jeffreys notes that all these commanders followed the practice of issuing training instructions once they commanded their divisions, which is evident in the 10th Indian Division.³⁵

³³ Distinguished Service Order.

³⁴ A. Jeffreys, 'Training the Indian Army, 1939-1945', in A. Jeffreys and P. Rose (ed.) in *The Indian Army, 1939-47: Experience and Development* (Ashgate, 2012), p. 80.

³⁵ Jeffreys, 'Training the Indian Army', p. 81.

The ISF in the Middle East

The 10th Indian Division operated with ISF units in Italy, the Nabha Akal and Jodhpur Sardar infantry battalions. These did not deploy with the division when it was sent to Italy in March 1944 because they were not then fit for operations. By April 1944 there were eight ISF and four Indian Army infantry battalions in the Middle East.³⁶ This dissertation has already discussed how in 1942-3, in an attempt to improve the training of ISF units, they were affiliated with a brigade whilst conducting their garrison duties. However, in an office note on the future employment of the ISF battalions written in March 1944 it was stated that “no Divisional Commander would accept any of these units [ISF in Middle East] in their present state for inclusion in a formation that is liable to have to fight Germans.”³⁷ The Indian Army wanted the ISF battalions to achieve the standards of regular Indian Army battalions, which would require four to six months training with regular units.³⁸ However, the problem in such an approach was that to facilitate the four to six months of training the battalion needed, it would have to be relieved from its current duties. The ISF battalions had not reached the standard required for operations in Italy, despite affiliating them to a brigade.

The four best ISF units identified by the authorities to begin training for service in Italy were the Nabha Akal, Bhopal, Jaipur Guards and Jaipur infantry battalions.³⁹ The solution was to use lesser formations to undertake the duties that were currently being done by the best ISF units, so these could be released for training. As such in May 1944

³⁶ WO 201/2598 - Indian Units: Training of and miscellaneous questions on, 01 September 1942 - 31 May 1944. Units for Italy, 29 April 1944, p. 1. These battalions were the Nabha, Bhopal, Rampur, Mewar, Alwar, Jaipur Guards, Jaipur Infantry and Gwalior.

³⁷ WO 201/2598. Office note on ISF battalions – present policy and future employment, 28 March 1944, p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³⁹ WO 201/2598. Office note on ISF battalions – present policy and future employment, 28 March 1944, p. 1.

the Jaipur Guards, who were guarding POWs in Egypt, were relieved by a Cape Corps battalion. This was done as the Jaipur Guards were undermanned for the role of POW guards. The War Office had approved the use of African troops as POW guards, due to the expected influx of 10,000 German POWs into the Middle East.⁴⁰ The Jaipur Guards were sent to Italy in accordance with an AFHQ⁴¹ request to relieve the ISF unit, the Jaipur infantry, who were on garrison duty. The Jaipur Infantry would then take the place of 1st Welch in 37 Beach Group.⁴² The movement of Indian troops from the Middle East to Italy was also because of fears from the Indian Army and government of upsetting Muslim opinion in India.⁴³ Wavell, Viceroy of India, had agreed in November 1943 to the use of Indian troops in Italy and their possible use in the Dodecanese, France and Germany. Yet he forbade their potential employment in the Balkans or Turkey because of "Indian Muslim public opinion."⁴⁴ Later in May 1944 it was requested that all press releases detailing Indian troops involved in internal security operations in the Middle East be prevented from being published, until approval from Auchinleck, in response to Indian and foreign Muslim opinion.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ WO 201/2598. Guards – PW Camp by Major General J. A. Baillow C.G.S, 4 May 1944.

⁴¹ AFHQ, Allied Force Headquarters, was the headquarters in control of all allied military operations in the Mediterranean theatre of war from 1942 to the war's end.

⁴² WO 201/2598. Units for Italy 29 April 1944, p. 1.

⁴³ During the First World War the Indian Army had been reluctant, at first, to send Indian Muslim troops against the Ottoman Empire, which had called a Jihad in order to subvert them. In the context of the Second World War, Wavell's reluctance to see Indian Troops engaged in internal security duties against predominantly Muslim populations is because of the political climate in India. The sight of Sikh or Hindu soldiers being forced to suppress disturbances by Muslim protestors would no doubt inflame members of the Muslim League and Indian National Congress. Particularly when the two sides were in negotiations with one another to prevent any partition of India along religious and communal lines.

⁴⁴ WO 201/2598. Employment of Indian Troops, 9 November 1943.

⁴⁵ WO 201/2598. Use of Indian troops for Internal Security duties, 5 May 1944.

The 10th Indian Division in Italy, March - September 1944

The request from CMF to Middle East over the transfer of 10th Indian Division to Italy was not made until 28 February 1944⁴⁶, with approval granted on 9 March.⁴⁷ Departing from Egypt the division arrived in Taranto on 28 March, and resumed the rigorous training programme it had conducted in the Middle East. On 4 April 1944 the 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No 4, titled 'Patrols, Observation and Snipers', was issued. The purpose was for all units of the division to adopt a common organisation and practice of these skills, and involved many of the recommendations made by 4th Indian Division the previous year. To help in the training of soldiers in patrolling the appendices featured extracts from Army Training Memorandum (ATM) No. 46 of 1943, which were published by the War Office, and featured lessons from Tunisia in 1943.⁴⁸ Major General Reid placed high value upon these tactics as they were a means of collecting information, writing "It must be continually stressed to all ranks both in training and operations that there is no item of information, however trivial in itself, which may not usefully contribute to the picture that is continually being pieced together at HQs from Bn HQ to higher formations."⁴⁹

Reid intended that all members of a rifle company be able to conduct a patrol; however, he did authorise the establishment of a special patrol section in each company, which grouped together to form a special patrol platoon at battalion level. These were manned by soldiers skilled in patrolling and intended to conduct particularly challenging missions. Reid formed these units "until it [was] considered that training of all ranks is

⁴⁶ WO 201/2337 - Move of 10th Indian Division to Allied Armies Italy, March 1944. Message from Freedom to Mideast, 28 February 1944.

⁴⁷ WO 201/2337. Message from AFHQ to Troopers, 9 March 1944.

⁴⁸ WO 169/18813. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 4, Appendices C.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

sufficiently advanced to make it unnecessary.”⁵⁰ Reid cautioned against overworking these units in case they suffered heavy casualties, which meant they would “not be available when the real need for their use arises.”⁵¹ Also by relying heavily upon the special patrol units it would not improve the skill of all infantrymen which was a stated aim of Reid’s, who did not want patrol work to be seen as a task for specialists.⁵² Observation posts were to aid in the gathering of intelligence by operating in the day, whilst patrols operated at night. The division’s snipers, in addition to their tactical use of eliminating enemy targets, were an additional intelligence source.⁵³ Brigade and battalion patrol masters were created to supervise, train and organise patrols at their respective levels, as well as collect and process information gathered from patrols, observations posts and snipers.⁵⁴

The 10th Indian Division had moved to Italy because of the Allies’ need for “BRITISH equipped inf fmns to go into the line in EASTERN defensive sectors to release tps now there for offensive ops.”⁵⁵ To this end, the 10th Indian Division relieved the 1st Canadian Division in the Ortona sector on 22 April 1944, deploying all three brigades on a seven mile front under the command of V Corps (see Map 3). It held this sector with the 4th Indian Division, which was recovering from its experience at the battle of Monte Cassino. The sector allowed the division to be ‘blooded’, which was necessary given its two years spent in the Middle East away from active operations. Vigorous patrolling aimed to keep as many enemy troops committed in the east, so they couldn’t be sent to stem the offensive around Cassino. The division did not ‘throw its soldiers into the deep

⁵⁰ WO 169/18813. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 4, p. 2.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁵² WO 169/18813. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 4, p. 2.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 3-5.

⁵⁵ WO 201/2337. Message from ACMF to AFHQ on Emergency Ops, 9 March 1944.

end'; the 10th Brigade's defensive plan for the Ortona sector laid out that "patrolling policy will be to gradually extend our offensive activities as confidence is gained."⁵⁶ For those infantry battalions held in reserve by their brigades training continued, and the 10th Brigade's reserve battalion trained with tanks for the first time in Italy.⁵⁷

The 20th Brigade, under the command of Brigadier J.B. MacDonald, produced its own training instruction when stationed in the Adriatic sector, titled Brigade Training Instruction No. 1 (Adriatic), which was compiled from lessons learned on the battlefield. The instruction was split into parts A and B; part A related to the brigade's operations in the Adriatic, whilst part B relayed conclusions from corps and divisional study days on consolidating a position. The intended audience for this training instruction was the officers, from battalion to platoon commands. The instruction detailed the mind set with which commanders should conduct their operations, calling for guile, cunning and initiative. In part A of the instruction MacDonald instructed his commanders to be more aggressive and forward thinking, writing that "the very mention of the word defence is sufficient to instill [sic] in most minds a feeling of being forced to sit in prepared positions to parry blows delivered by the enemy."⁵⁸ He called for improvements in patrolling and intelligence reporting, suggesting improved briefing and preparation of commanders and more detailed observation post records.⁵⁹

The division remained in the Adriatic sector until 4 June when it was relieved by 4th Indian Division, and moved to Venafro in central Italy to undertake further training. The training here focused on mountain warfare, which the divisional history records had

⁵⁶ WO 169/18856 - 10 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1944. Defensive Policy Ortona Sector April 1944, p. 1.

⁵⁷ WO 169/18856. Resume of verbal orders given to certain reps 10 Bde Otona, 17 April 1944, p. 1.

⁵⁸ WO 169/18875 - 20 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1944. Brigade Training Instruction No. 1 (Adriatic), 13 May 1944 p. 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

become a speciality of the division because of its training in Cyprus, Syria and Palestine.⁶⁰ During this time a training team from the 8th Indian Division was attached to the division, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Whitty of the 1st Royal Warwickshire battalion, continuing the cooperation in training between Indian divisions.⁶¹ The 8th Indian Division training team discussed battle training methods and brigade exercises with the divisional staff, and organised a demonstration by 3/1st Punjab battalion on urban warfare for the division.⁶² The 10th Brigade discussed mountain warfare tactics used by 78th Division with the commander of the 6th Royal West Kents.⁶³ Divisional exercises were not possible at this time, so exercises at brigade, battalion and company level were conducted. The 3/18th Royal Garhwal Rifles took part in exercise Eagle, a forty-eight hour battalion exercise involving mule transport.⁶⁴ The 2/3rd Gurkhas put all their rifle companies through an urban warfare exercise, with particular attention to specialist training.⁶⁵ The 10th Indian Division sent 184 soldiers of all ranks, from all service arms, to be trained at the Mountain School in rock climbing, mules, signals, medical evacuation, man pack and engineering course.⁶⁶ Operating in mountainous terrain made casualty evacuation very difficult and so special training was given on the evacuation of casualties by mules on 23 June.⁶⁷

Upon being returned to operations following the end of their training, Reid issued a personal message to all commanders in the division offering tactical advice for

⁶⁰ *Tehran to Trieste: The Story of the 10th Indian Division*, p. 14, accessed at <http://archive.org/stream/TeheranToTrieste-TheStoryOfThe10thIndianDivision#page/n0/mode/1up>

⁶¹ WO 169/18813. War diary entry for 7 June 1944.

⁶² WO 169/18813. War diary entries for 8-12 June 1944.

⁶³ WO 169/18875. War diary entry for 8 June 1944. The 6th Royal West Kents served in 36th Infantry Brigade with 78th Division in Italy.

⁶⁴ WO 169/18995 - 3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles, 1944. War diary entries for 9-11 June 1944.

⁶⁵ WO 169/19000 - 2/3 Gurkha Rifles 1944. War diary entries for 13-14 June 1944.

⁶⁶ WO 170/3840 - The Mountain School, 1944. War diary entries for 21-24 June 1944.

⁶⁷ WO 170/3840. Mule training programme for 10th Indian Division over 22-24 June 1944.

forthcoming battles. Reid asked for his commanders to use their initiative in the operations that awaited, fully aware that the German Army was retreating to the Gothic Line. If they encountered strong resistance then a set piece attack would be necessary, but when resistance was light he explained to commanders that “determination – the will to go forward – to go wide and clear out the enemy or get to grips with him must be the sole aim of all ranks. Risks will have to be taken and taken quickly and boldly.”⁶⁸ As the operations in the Tiber Valley that lay ahead would involve them advancing, as opposed to holding a defensive position, Reid gave guidance on the capture and consolidation of a position.⁶⁹

The division returned to the front line on 28 June relieving the 8th Indian Division, which had pursued the German Army since the Allied breakthrough in May at Cassino, near Perugia. The terrain north of Perugia was dominated by the Northern Apennines which the divisional history describes as:

The Apennines, ribbed for two hundred and fifty miles by an interminable succession of ridges and rivers. The high hills commanded the countryside for miles. Rivers and mountain torrents, bereft of their bridges, became grievous obstacles, while the towns and villages had been transformed by extensive fortification into fortresses.⁷⁰

The training the division had been conducting in mountain warfare served them well in its advance up the Tiber Valley, allowing them to exert maximum pressure on the enemy forces stationed there (see Map 4). The nature of the terrain meant that to capture the towns and villages stationed in the valley required the seizure of the heights on both sides of the river. Their recent training in mountain warfare was put to good use

⁶⁸ WO 169/18813. Personal Message from GOC 10 Ind Div, to all Commanders 24 June 1944, p. 1.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁷⁰ *From Tehran to Trieste*, pp. 13-14.

in this environment, as the division made full use of infiltration tactics to penetrate deep into enemy positions and attack the enemy from the flank or rear. With 10th Brigade operating west of the Tiber and 20th and 25th Brigades east, the division advanced up the valley (see Map 5). By 2 July the division occupied the town of Umbertide, but it was not secure until the capture of Montone on 7 July by the 1st King's Own. The capture of Citta di Castello on 22 July allowed the division entrance to the Tiber Basin where it was able to operate with tank support, by 1 August the leading elements of the division had reached the north of the basin.

In a month all three brigades had been in constant fighting and had advanced forty miles over difficult terrain.⁷¹ *The Tiger Triumphs* records that during this advance Reid:

Had a penchant for slogans, rightly believing that a significant phrase can mean more than a tome. As Tenth Division prepared for the critical work ahead, the instruction "Always lean forward" became its watchword. Interpreted, this slogan demanded deeper penetration, more intimate exploration of the enemy's rear, speedier infiltration.⁷²

The 20th Brigade produced a review of its operations in the Tiber Valley on 16 July, which served a similar purpose to the training instruction it had produced previously when stationed in the Adriatic. Brigadier MacDonald also adopted a meaningful phrase to characterise operations:

I would like them to realise that by "going wide" in this difficult country they have surprised the enemy, and have in many cases split units and sub-units into small parties

⁷¹ *From Tehran to Trieste*, p. 20.

⁷² *The Tiger Triumphs: the Story of three Great Divisions in Italy* (HMSO, 1946), Chapter 9, accessed at <http://www.ourstory.info/library/4-ww2/Tiger/triumphsTC.html#TC>

acting on their own without direction; hungry; thirsty; and ripe to be killed or “put in the bag”.⁷³

MacDonald was pleased with the performance of his troops believing that, on all but two occasions, the operations the brigade had conducted had caused the maximum damage to the enemy at the minimum cost to themselves, against an enemy the equal of any in Italy. MacDonald detailed what he believed were the mistakes from the two battles that had caused heavy casualties, the first being the 8th Manchesters advance to Piccione and the second the 3/5th Mahrattas at Pt 624 6625 on 9 July. With regard to the Manchesters he believed that the battalion’s line of advance was the cause of casualties, with it selected because it offered the fastest route to its objective. MacDonald believed the Mahrattas high casualties were caused by the battalion undertaking hasty counter-attacks without adequate artillery support.⁷⁴ However, MacDonald believed that the brigade’s success during its operations was because it had, for the most part, conducted operations which were well planned and timed that utilised the full range of supporting arms, such as artillery and machine guns. One of the most notable qualities that the troops were commended on was their field craft, with the 2/3rd Gurkhas in particular, praised for their skilful use of ground and cover, often during night operations.⁷⁵ With the onset of cold weather approaching he also studied the rations and equipment that troops should carry with them whilst on extended marches.⁷⁶

The 10th Brigade produced a wide-ranging review of its operations from 28 June to 9 August, detailing the tactical difficulties encountered in pursuit over mountainous terrain and how the responsibility for operations fell largely on the infantry battalion

⁷³ WO 169/18875. Notes on Operations, 16 July 1944, cover note.

⁷⁴ WO 169/18875. Notes on Operations, 16 July 1944, p. 1.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

commanders.⁷⁷ In this review it was noted that the patrol master and special patrol units, formed in Training Instruction No. 4, were no longer required. The patrol master system could not cope with the demands of mobile operations, whilst the huge improvement by all ranks in patrolling had meant the special patrol units had been abolished in all but one of the brigade's infantry battalions.⁷⁸ The revoking of methods laid down in a previous training instruction does not mean they were wrong in the first place, rather that as the enemy changed its tactics so did the division. Training Instruction No. 4 had been issued whilst the division was to be deployed in a static, defensive position, whilst the 10th Brigade's review assessed the tactical lessons of having conducted an advance through mountainous terrain. This demonstrates an awareness within the 10th Indian Division of the need to keep its training relevant, so they constantly assessed their recent operations to see what tactical lessons could be learnt.

Further advance northwards required the capture of the Alpe di Catenaia heights to the west of the Tiber Basin. The position was "...an agglomeration of ridges and peaks rising to 4,000 feet... this solid block could not be by-passed by way of either of the river valleys."⁷⁹ The position dominated the eastern approach to Florence and could not be taken by infiltration, which the division had become so proficient at in the past month, but by a set piece assault. The assault began on the 4th at Monte Altuccia, the capture of this position and the defeat of the German counter attack, led by the fresh troops of their corps reserve; permitted an attack on Regina, the last of the high peaks on the 6th, but the troops could not hold the position in face of German infiltration. By this time the

⁷⁷ WO 169/18856. Summary of Operations, Perugia (end June) to Anghiari (early August), p. 1.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁷⁹ *The Tiger Triumphs*, Chapter 9.

division was less than ten miles from the Gothic Line, the closest of any Allied troops.⁸⁰ Whilst this operation was ongoing the division had to take over the section of the corps sector previously held by 4th Indian Division, which had moved to the Adriatic Front. By 14 August the division held a front of fifteen miles requiring it to revert to infiltration in light of its inability to launch set piece operations. Reid found a new slogan with which to promote an offensive spirit "Step up. Keep stepping up," which meant:

Wherever patrols penetrated, the support groups must be at their heels. A patrol would find an opening. A platoon would occupy the position unobtrusively. Next night a company would consolidate the ground. The battalion would then move in, and the patrols would set forth on a fresh venture.⁸¹

The 20th Brigade produced another review of its operations, which covered its operations on the Alpe di Catenaia range, in August. MacDonald drew conclusions on the experiences of the combat and support units, analysing both their successes and failures.⁸² He also discussed the thoughts he conveyed in the review with the battalion commander of the 2/3rd Gurkhas. The major point of disagreement was on MacDonald's views on the conduct of marches, in particular whether the soldier should carry his own pack or have mules carry it. The commander of 2/3rd Gurkhas thought it best if the soldier carried it, as if on a mule there was a high possibility that enemy action would prevent the soldier from getting his pack as the mules may be delayed.⁸³ The note also records that MacDonald conducted similar discussions with the other infantry battalion commanders in the brigade.

⁸⁰ WO 169/18814 - 10 Indian Division G.S., August 1944. *The Diagonals*, issue no. 2, 12 August 1944, p. 1.

⁸¹ *The Tiger Triumphs*, Chapter 9.

⁸² WO 169/18875. Notes on Operations, August War Diary.

⁸³ WO 169/18875. Appendix A to HQ 10 Ind Inf Bde No. G/11 dated 23 August 1944, p. 1.

The division's reversion to infiltration tactics led to the capture of the Alpe di Catenaiia on 19 August, when the 3/1st Punjabis captured the position from the rear. Aggressive patrolling forced the enemy to retreat to their positions on the Gothic line with the division holding the X Corps front alone (see Map 6). Despite probing attacks the 10th Indian Division did not attack in the mountains they had become so well acquainted with, for on 17 September the division was transferred (less 10th Brigade) to the Adriatic Front to aid in the attempt to pierce the Gothic Line. In its place Skinner's Horse, 8th Manchesters and the Nabha Akal infantry⁸⁴ formed Wheeler Force to eliminate the enemy forces that remained on Route 71 between Florence and Bibbiena.

The ISF in Italy

We will now return to the ISF units that served in Italy. A letter on 29 August regarding the employment of two ISF battalions, the Jaipur Infantry and Nabha Akal, due to arrive in September, sought the recommendation of commanders as to "whether or not bn is suitable for employment in an Ind Div in relief of a tired Ind bn."⁸⁵ The request outlined above was undoubtedly from people who were unfamiliar with the Indian Army. For although Indian policy was in favour of using ISF battalions in active operations, there was a belief within CMF that the ISF battalion may be inferior to a regular Indian battalion.

Regardless of the belief of members of CMF, the ISF battalions were confident in their ability to fight as well as other Indian units did. Upon hearing of plans to classify the Jaipur Guards as a garrison battalion, its British commander wrote:

⁸⁴ The Nabha Akal infantry joined the division on 8 September 1944.

⁸⁵ WO 204/7394 - Indian Battalions: Employment and Movements, 01 August 1944 – 31 May 1945. Letter from Chief of General Staff Allied Armies in Italy to Fifth and Eighth Armies on 29 August concerning future employment of ISF battalions.

I desire to record my strongest objection to such grading...As an Indian Garrison Bn is recruited from the non-fighting classes of India and its officers and NCOs are usually the “unfits” and the “unwanted” of the Army the stigma attaching to this grade of units is obvious. Apart from the adverse effect on the morale of the Troops which such down-grading will undoubtedly produce His Highness the Maharaja will personally suffer a blow to his Rajput prestige which can not [sic] be measured in words.⁸⁶

Consequently, the Jaipur Guards were used as a garrison battalion but not classified as one.⁸⁷ The motivation behind this decision is an example of the attempts by the Indian Army to consider the feelings of the rulers of the Princely States where their forces were concerned. Indian Army staff in the Middle East in April 1944, when expecting a visit from the Maharajah of Bhopal, decided “a plan for BHOPAL must be prepared in order that it may be put before the Maharajah of Bhopal should he question our future intentions regarding his bn.”⁸⁸

Assessments on the suitability of the ISF battalions for active operations all had similar points to make. The report on the Nabha Akal commented that in its initial operations it had performed well. It had joined the 10th Division on 8 September 1944, before being attached to Wheeler Force from 17 September to 20 October. The British commanding officer was praised for his ability and the assistance provided by attached British officers from 10th Indian Division was commended, yet greater training in operating as part of a brigade was needed and help in organising their transport.⁸⁹ The

⁸⁶ WO 204/7394. Jaipur Guards from Colonel J.W.H Benson, 14 September 1944.

⁸⁷ WO 204/7394. AAI to AFHQ on the Jaipur Guards, 25 September 1944.

⁸⁸ WO 201/2598. Proposal to Flag B by Indian Army Staff in the Middle East, April 1944.

⁸⁹ WO 204/7394. Report from 15 October 1944 on Employment of ISF Bns concerning the Nabha Akal State Battalion from Eighth Army, p. 1.

battalion was deemed fit to operate in an infantry brigade, and consequently joined the 20th Brigade on 23 October, with whom it served until April 1944.⁹⁰

A report on the Jodhpur Sardar's ability to operate in Italy stated that in the spite of equipment shortages, individual training was of a good standard and there were suitable reserves of specialists.⁹¹ The greatest difficulty was in its collective training, as their duties in Sicily prevented them from conducting battalion exercises as "owing to guards and duties the Bn was unable to have more than two rifle coys and half the specialists and HQ Coy at any one time for training."⁹² The officers needed "stimulus" according to their Indian Army training officer and the second-in-command (an ISF officer) was replaced by a British officer due to his incompetence.⁹³ Nevertheless, it was believed that with training the battalion would be fit to serve in Italy and so was to be trained with an Indian division for one month before conducting operations.⁹⁴ The battalion served with the division's 10th Brigade from December 1944 until March 1945.

The 10th Indian Division in Italy, October 1944 - November 1945

Following their withdrawal from the Apennines a divisional conference was held on 28 September, which included representatives of all the units serving with the division. The subject of the conference was on recent and future operations, tactical lessons from the previous three months fighting were discussed, and priorities for future training.⁹⁵ The division relieved the 4th Indian Division at the Rubicon River, on the east

⁹⁰ WO 204/7394. Report from 15 October 1944 on Employment of ISF Bns concerning the Nabha Akal State Battalion from Eighth Army, p. 2.

⁹¹ WO 204/7394. The Jodhpur Sardar infantry, 25 October 1944. Appendix A Report of the Training of Jodhpur Sardar Infantry, 11 October 1944 by Major J.A. Shaw.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ WO 204/7394. The Jodhpur Sardar infantry, 16 October 1944.

⁹⁴ WO 204/7394. The Jodhpur Sardar infantry, 25 October 1944.

⁹⁵ WO 169/18856. Notes taken at Div Conference 28 September 1944, pp. 1-2.

coast of Italy, on 3 October and came under command of V Corps (see Map 7). During its time here the 10th Brigade re-joined the division on the 5th, and the 43rd Gurkha Lorried Brigade was attached to the division on the 7th. Operating in the foothills of the eastern Apennines the division was tasked with protecting the left flank of V Corps advance. It achieved this by seizing the high ground to the west, so as to facilitate 46th Division's assault on Cesena on 19 October. To achieve its objectives the division used both infiltration and set-piece assaults to capture the ridges and peaks required to protect the corps' flank. The division continued to protect V Corps left flank on the advance to Forlì, forcing bridgeheads across the rivers Savio and Ronco along the way until it was relieved by the 46th Division on 3 November for rest and training.

The division's training in November was based upon Divisional Training Instruction No 7. This training period was tasked with preparing the division for operating in the plains of northern Italy and the Po Valley, which would be a departure from the mountain warfare it had previously conducted. In regards to training, reforms to the organisation of patrols were made and efforts undertaken to "overcome [the] tank and 88mm hoodoo."⁹⁶ New equipment like the WASP flamethrower tank was to operate with the division and so troops were trained in its use. There was a strong possibility that static conditions would arise during operations in the Po Valley and training on field defences and mine laying was undertaken.⁹⁷

The division returned to V Corps to aid in the assault towards the river Senio on 18 November. It was tasked with protecting the right flank of the Corps' advance, whilst the Canadians forced a crossing over the River Lamone, which had to be crossed before

⁹⁶ WO 169/18815 - 10 Indian Division G.S., October 1944. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No 7, 3 November 1944, p. 2.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

the Senio could be assaulted. The division conducted this advance with their first large scale use of armour, provided by the 7th Armoured Brigade. On 14 December the division, together with the 2nd New Zealand Division and Polish Corps, assaulted the German held ridge between Pideura and Perfola which guarded the approaches to the river Senio. The tenacity of the enemy's defence in this operation is evident meant that the division failed to achieve its primary objectives for the first time.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, the advances of the New Zealanders on the right forced the Germans to withdraw to prepared positions beyond the Senio. The 10th Indian Division advanced to the banks of the Senio, yet despite the lack of enemy presence on the far bank, Reid did not allow his troops to occupy positions there, permitting only the establishment of a patrol base. This was because of the casualties the division had suffered and the logistical difficulties in supplying a force on the western bank.

During the division's time on the Senio sector during the winter of 1944-5 vigorous patrolling was conducted to constantly harass the enemy. A British soldier of the division during this time reflected:

Ever since we came to Italy we have been in the thick of the fighting and indeed the Div [10th Indian Division] has become nearly famous now and bids fair to outshine the other two well-known ones... Everybody seems to depend a devil of a lot on the Indian Divisions and fair play they get through some sticky work. Incidentally, I have been with the same Div ever since I left India. A British Warrant Officer from 125 Indian Mobile Workshop Company, IEME.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ *From Tehran to Trieste*, p. 36.

⁹⁹ WO 204/707 - 8 Indian Field Section: reports, 1 December 1944 – 31 October 1945. Censorship Report No. 3 Covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 16 – 31 January 1945, p. 2.

Training continued in the division, although the decrease in Allied strength in Italy by 1945 meant the division was unable to undertake divisional training on the same scale as in April, June and November 1944, due to the need for it in operations. Instead, training was conducted by brigades, practical whilst held in divisional reserve with officers conducting theory training when in the line. The 20th Brigade when held in reserve in January 1945 produced a training note which set out priorities for training. In the training of officers, the brigade promoted the study and discussion of approved training pamphlets and manuals at battalion level when in the line. The arrival of many new officers from India to replace casualties led to language classes being held, both in and out of the line. The weather of the Italian winter led the brigade to use cloth models for officers' training, for the discussion of tactical scenarios. The theoretical lessons that officers learned in the line were then tested during practical training. This was conducted whilst held in reserve, where each battalion conducted an exercise which focused on battle drills and weapons training.¹⁰⁰

On their relief by the 3rd Carpathian Division on 9 February 1945 the division was placed under the command of XIII Corps. The division subsequently relieved the 78th Division and 6th British Armoured Division in their sector between Monte Verro and Monte Grande in the Apennines south of Bologna, where the First German Parachute Division awaited them. The divisional history described the sector as:

Monte Grande, a hilltop sector north of the Sillaro River, fifteen miles from outskirts of Bologna. It was a place of ill-omen which had seen much heavy fighting. The Germans

¹⁰⁰ WO 169/22296 - 20 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 01 January 1945 - 31 October 1945. Training Notes, 20 January 1945, pp. 1-2.

set great store by it. The country was deerstalker's landscape, with high lookouts and deep scours...¹⁰¹

The 20th Brigade once again produced a review of its operations in Monte Grande in February, which found that patrols were too reliant on firing at long range and using mortar fire instead of using the bayonet. MacDonald also demanded improvements in the construction of fortified positions, particularly those based on houses, and improved use of snipers and observation posts for intelligence gathering.¹⁰² On 9 March the 25th Brigade was tasked with taking over the 85th U.S. Division's sector, which was to the west of where the 10th Indian Division was currently stationed. It meant that all of the positions on Monte Grande came under the division's control. Despite having three brigades of four battalions the division was given extra infantry and artillery units to man such a long sector. These units were the Lovat Scouts, 2nd Highland Light Infantry, 2nd Loyals and the Italian irregular unit 'F' Recce Squadron. The division conducted aggressive patrolling against the enemy in this sector, and plans were made for the defence of the sector and to attack in conjunction with the planned spring offensive in 1945.

On 13 April the division left Monte Grande for the Adriatic Front, to participate in the advance into the Po Valley. Due to the attachment of additional infantry units, the division left six of its infantry battalions behind to guard the Monte Grande sector, including the Nabha Akal, Jodhpur Sardar and 4/11th Sikh battalions. Deployed on the right of the 2nd New Zealand Division, under the command of XIII Corps, the division was tasked with expanding the battlefield and exerting the maximum pressure on the enemy (see Map 8). Operating with only one brigade forward, the 10th Brigade led the advance

¹⁰¹ *Tehran to Trieste*, p. 38.

¹⁰² WO 169/22296. Notes on Operations by Brigadier MacDonald, February 1945, pp. 1-2.

until their replacement by the 20th Brigade on the 19th, who were tasked with assaulting the Idice River where the Wehrmacht made its final stand. On the 20th the 1/2nd Punjabs assaulted the Idice, at tremendous cost to themselves, but German resistance prevented them from securing a bridgehead on the far bank. The 21st found that the Germans had abandoned their positions on the Idice and the advance continued. With the Allied forces now in pursuit the 10th Indian Division found itself squeezed out of the advance by other formations but were warned of being committed to operations in the mountainous terrain south west of Padua should the enemy attempt to make a stand there. The 20th Brigade issued a training note to prepare its troops for these operations, which had been compiled from training instructions issued by Reid. It called for troops to revert to the “Step up” tactics that had been used in the Apennines, stating:

We have our own drill and technique for this which had proved successful in the hills. We may be able to use it also in the country when tps are held up but will have to do it in greater strength.¹⁰³

However, the declaration of the ceasefire on 29 April prevented them from having to put this training to the test. A quick return to India was denied when the division was tasked with preserving the peace in Trieste due to the threat posed by Tito's partisans. This presented the possibility of a return to internal security duties, which had last been conducted in the Middle East in 1943-4. In preparation for this a guide to the principles of controlling an unarmed mob was distributed to all commands.¹⁰⁴ The situation in Trieste was peacefully resolved, so the division turned its attention towards training for jungle warfare, given the likelihood it would be committed to operations against Japan in the

¹⁰³ WO 169/22296. 20 Brigade Training Note, 25 April 1945, p.1.

¹⁰⁴ WO 169/22307. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 01 January 1945 - 30 November 1945. Appendix F to 10 Indian Division Operational Instruction No. 2, Outline Principles of ‘Aid to Civil Power’, Guiding the Use of Force when Dealing with Unarmed Mobs.

Far East. The Indian Army published the training pamphlet “Jungle Jottings”, which was adapted from the “Jungle Omnibus” jungle warfare training guide issued to troops in the Far East, for the use of soldiers in Europe being sent to the Far East to fight the Japanese.¹⁰⁵ The division ran a jungle warfare training course that all units sent officers to attend, these officers would then instruct their units in jungle warfare.¹⁰⁶ Although the Japanese surrendered before the 10th Indian Division could test its aptitude in jungle warfare, it seems likely it would have been given training in a jungle environment before being committed to operations. It finally departed Italy on 22 November and arrived in India on 17 December 1945.

Conclusion

The campaign of the 10th Indian Division in Italy is an example of the importance that the Indian Army placed on training, following its reorganisation in the latter half of the Second World War. By 1 April 1944 the total number of troops located at training formations and establishments in India Command was 523,151 (a detailed breakdown of the allocation of these troops is shown in Appendix 7). Of these personnel 14% (73,220) were allocated for the training of troops despatched overseas to Italy, the Middle East, Aden, Persia, Iraq and North Africa.¹⁰⁷ The troops staffing Indian training establishments reflected 20% of the total strength of the Indian Army, whilst for training establishments

¹⁰⁵ WO 231/402 Jungle Jottings (based on a series of articles originally published in Army in India Training Memoranda, collected and republished by GHQ India as 'Jungle Omnibus', now rearranged and edited, adapted and abridged, for officers leaving Europe to serve in the Far East), 1945.

¹⁰⁶ WO 169/22296. Training Note, 20 June 1945, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ CAB 44/209 - Book II: situation and events in India command 1941-1943, by Brigadier M. Henry. Analysis of Manpower in India Command, SEAC and Overseas (as affecting British and African Troops in India and Indian troops in all theatres) as at 1 April 1944, p. 24.

in the U.K. staffing levels only represented 12.5% of the total strength of the British Army.¹⁰⁸

The infantry was recognised as the dominant arm in the war in Burma and was beginning to be given the best of the new recruits, both officers and enlisted men, as opposed to them going to the technical units of the army.¹⁰⁹ These measures to improve the infantry in the Indian Army were no doubt greatly appreciated by Alexander, who commanded Allied forces in Italy, where infantry was also the dominant arm. In a memo on the future employment of Indian forces overseas on 21 February 1944 it was noted that "Alexander proposed a general reduction in armour in order to apply the maximum possible weight against the Hun in the shape of Inf. I do not know how this proposal fits in with our higher strategy, but it certainly seems that Inf will be the predominant arm in all our future battles in Europe."¹¹⁰ Soldiers sent out to units in Italy still went through the same training as those destined for service in Burma. It was found that training for future operations in 'enclosed country' was best done in the three new training formations located in India and had "been found to be necessary in order to provide the final polish and toughness for operation in SEAC and ITALY."¹¹¹

One of the great weaknesses of the units which had fought in Burma in 1942 was that many had initially been trained for operations in the Middle East and North Africa, with a heavy emphasis on desert warfare. From 1943 it was decided "in all training, whether individual or collective, emphasis will be laid on our immediate enemy in the

¹⁰⁸ CAB 44/209. Analysis of Manpower in India Command, SEAC and Overseas (as affecting British and African Troops in India and Indian troops in all theatres) as at 1 April 1944, p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, p. 81.

¹¹⁰ WO 201/2598. Minute 10 by Brigadier L.W. McKay Forbes, BGS (IA), 21 February 1944, p. 1.

¹¹¹ CAB 44/209. Analysis of Manpower in India Command, SEAC and Overseas (as affecting British and African Troops in India and Indian troops in all theatres) as at 1 April 1944, p. 26.

Eastern theatre, the Japanese, and the background of BURMA, MALAYA, NEW GUINEA, etc. will be given to all exercises, the enemy in every case employing Japanese tactics.”¹¹² This decision is perfectly understandable as the war in the East was of far greater importance to India and the Indian Army than the war in Italy, which could be seen as a sideshow to the main fight in Burma. Major General Francis Taker, commander of the 4th Indian Division, wrote whilst stationed in North Africa, “No formation can come straight into the show and do well... I would not take 4 Div into Malaya or Burma as it is. It would need and I would need at least a month’s hard training in the jungle with some instructors who know their job.”¹¹³

The success of the 10th Indian Division in Italy was because, whilst the majority of the Indian Army was focused on the Japanese, it remained focused on its own circumstances and requirements. Field Marshal Slim proudly commented that the divisions in Fourteenth Army were able to adapt their operations to whatever terrain or situation they found themselves in, and this is equally applicable to his first divisional command, the 10th Indian Division.¹¹⁴ In two years the division was prepared to conduct operations in amphibious warfare, internal security duties, mountain warfare, jungle warfare and conventional operations. During the Italian campaign the division was able to adapt its tactics to the environment it was deployed to, as demonstrated by first operating in the Apennines, and then on the plains of Adriatic Front during late autumn 1944 and spring 1945. The 10th Indian Division exhibited particular skill in mountain warfare and later went on to mentor troops stationed on the North West Frontier on

¹¹² Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, p. 87.

¹¹³ A. Jeffreys, ‘The Officer Corps and the training of the Indian Army with special reference to Lieutenant General Francis Taker’, in K. Roy (editor), *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2011), p. 307.

¹¹⁴ Slim, *Defeat Into Victory*, p. 626.

mountain warfare fought with modern weaponry, based on their experiences in Italy.¹¹⁵

The success of this training can be attributed to the efforts of the soldiers and officers of the 10th Indian Division. The dissemination of training instructions and directives at division, brigade and battalion level indicates that the officers of the Indian Army were fully aware of the importance of training to troops, and so put great effort into ensuring it was relevant to present and future operations. Both commanders of the division, Lloyd and Reid, demonstrated that they were examples of the new generation of Indian Army generals, who placed great importance on training, to the benefit of their troops. The story of the ISF battalions who fought with the division in Italy is great testament to the positive impact that training could have on a unit. The ISF troops were regarded by many as being second rate. However, by undertaking an effective training regime they proved themselves the equals of their Indian and British Army counterparts. The main purpose of training was to make soldiers better than their opponents, which decreased a soldier's chances of becoming a casualty. When a unit suffered a casualty another soldier was required to replace him; the next chapter will demonstrate the processes and difficulties that were involved in providing reinforcements to the 10th Indian Division in Italy.

¹¹⁵ T. Moreman, *The Army in India and the Development of Frontier Warfare, 1839-1947* (London, 1998), p. 184.

CHAPTER 4: MANPOWER

This chapter will show how the Indian forces in Italy were organised and maintained. Martin van Creveld wrote “of all the organisational problems an army has to solve, that of how best to merge replacements into existing units so as to ensure the cohesion of the whole is one of the most crucial, since on it depends the unit’s fighting power.”¹ This chapter will assess the infrastructure and practices of the Indian Army and the 10th Indian Division with regards to reinforcing its units in Italy. This will require understanding the system of naval convoys, administrators and camps that provided adequately trained soldiers to replace casualties. In addition we will look at the steps taken by the 10th Indian Division to reduce the likelihood and impact of casualties on itself. These efforts will be defined as preventative, which refers to the disciplinary, hygiene and training measures that the 10th Indian Division adopted in Italy. Given that the units of the 10th Indian Division that fought in Italy had been overseas for many years, we will observe how the Indian Army managed those units. The inability of the Indian Army to grant its soldiers regular leave to India shall be studied in the context of the beneficial impact it had on efforts to maintain the 10th Indian Division, and other Indian formations, in Italy. Finally, we will analyse the structural problems that created problems in reinforcing the British and Indian armies in Italy, before assessing the success of the Indian Army’s ability to reinforce the 10th Indian Division in Italy.

¹ M. van Creveld, *Fighting Power: German and U.S. Army Performance 1939-1945* (Connecticut, 1982), pp. 74-5.

The Indian Reinforcement System: Naval Convoys, Administration and the Indian Reinforcement Camps

The Indian reinforcement system relied on naval transport to get troops from India to Italy. The distances involved in transporting troops to these overseas theatres placed heavy demands on shipping space. Some troopships went from India direct to Italy, but others disembarked their troops in the Middle East where another ship took them onto Italy. An example of this is convoy XIF 10, which arrived in the Middle East in early February 1944 from India. The convoy consisted of three troopships transporting mostly Indian soldiers but with some British troops, all destined for units in CMF. Of the three ships, one proceeded directly to Italy with 1,880 Indian Army troops.² The other two ships would disembark 2,739 troops in the Middle East where they were held in transit camps before onward despatch to Italy.³

Indian troops travelled in 'Indian fitted ships' in naval convoy XIF 10 for transit to Italy.⁴ The different religions in the Indian Army led to different dietary and culinary requirements which had to be observed on troopships, hence the reason there were specially fitted Indian ships. An account from a British officer of 10th Indian Infantry Brigade⁵ during the division's move from Egypt to Italy gives an account of a journey on one of these ships.

On the voyage I was the Indian troops Messing Officer, and had about 1400 Indians to cater for. What a job! The cookhouse was a galley about 16 feet square, which had to be divided into two, one half for the Mohamedans and the other for the Hindus...I

² WO 201/2434 - India: reinforcement and stores to and from, 01 October 1943 – 31 October 1944. Drafts and Details ex India, 2 February 1944, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵ Hereafter referred to as the 10th Brigade.

consider it a damned scandal that suitable arrangements are not made for native troops of different religions.⁶

Given the other difficulties experienced in the expansion of the Indian Army it would be understandable if the number, or quality, of troopships for Indian soldiers was to be found wanting. In an attempt to create extra shipping space for Indian troops, officers from 16th Indian Reinforcement Camp on January 1945 inspected and advised on the conversion of a ship to an Indian troop carrier.⁷

One of the most vital components of the replacement system was administration. For the Indian Army this was carried out by the staff of Advanced 2nd Echelon (Indian), a branch of which was present in every theatre where Indian troops were stationed. In Italy it was called 'Adv O2E (Ind) CMF', or O2E, and was staffed by British and Indian personnel. The Indian personnel were, like most Indian service units, a mixed unit with both Hindu and Muslim soldiers working together. The only instance of the troops being segregated by their religion was during its move to Italy, the troops being split into drafts for travel, these being British troops, Indian Hindu troops, Indian Muslim troops, followers and the baggage guard.⁸ It is unclear if this was done because of the caste and religious requirements of the troops, which, the quotation above shows, were still observed on naval voyages, or simply to move the soldiers in an orderly manner. Each clerk was responsible for administering a unit's strength returns, from which the echelon calculated the strength of the Indian forces in Italy and Greece. O2E produced the 'X' lists which showed soldiers not attached to a unit because they were injured, known POWs,

⁶ WO 204/10381 - Appreciation and censorship reports: Nos 1-52, 01 November 1942 - 30 September 1944. Report No. 42 for period 1-15 April 1944, p. A-7.

⁷ WO 169/22862 - Reinforcement Camps: 16 Rft Camp 01 January 1945 – 30 October 1945. War diary entry for 9 January 1945.

⁸ WO 169/18727 - O2E Adv Ind CMF, 01 February - 31 December 1944. Move of Adv Echelon to CMF, Administration Instruction No. 1, pp. 1-2.

deserters, held in a reinforcement camp or on a training course. The 'X' lists were the raw data from which requests for reinforcements were made. The 25th Indian Infantry Brigade⁹ was forced to remind its units to promptly submit their strength returns, as there late submission caused delay in reinforcements being sent to Italy.¹⁰

During the Second World War soldiers of the Indian Army, both within and outside of India, had to travel large distances to reach their units. Troops sent from India to Italy had to cover a distance of over 4,000 miles in a troopship. In order to facilitate safe travel for these soldiers between units and bases, reinforcement and transit camps were formed in every theatre that the Indian Army fought in during the Second World War. The Indian reinforcement camps (IRC) played a crucial role in the reinforcement process for Indian formations in Italy. They were transit points through which Indian soldiers being posted to a unit, and through which those returning to India, passed. The advantage of such a system was that divisions were able to draw upon a reserve of trained manpower to replace casualties in theatre, which for a unit deployed overseas, such as the 10th Indian Division, was vital. It would have been inefficient to have only requested reinforcements from India upon first receiving casualties. The uncertainty of shipping times meant that by the time reinforcements arrived they would be insufficient to cover losses sustained in the time passed. An IRC was commanded by a lieutenant colonel with a headquarters section in charge of the administrative running of the camp, mess units responsible for catering, and an instructional wing for the training of the troops in the camp. The soldiers sent to act as replacements were placed into sections whilst they awaited transfer to their parent unit. The number of sections in a

⁹ Hereafter referred to as the 25th Brigade.

¹⁰ WO 169/18890 - 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1944. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Letter No. 24, 27 September 1944, p. 2.

reinforcement camp varied according to the number of troops the camp was expected to hold. In Burma, reinforcement camps had ten sections each whilst in Italy camps only had six. Each section was officially supposed to hold 300 soldiers.¹¹

By the war's end there would be three IRC in Italy. The 16th and 11th IRC served the 8th and 10th Indian Divisions, respectively, in Italy, whilst the 8th IRC supplied the 4th Indian Division in Italy and then Greece. The 16th IRC had been the divisional reinforcement camp for the 8th Indian Division since June 1943 and was the first camp to arrive in Italy, on 24 September 1943. It did not begin operating until October because the camp had not been able to unload all its stores off the ships during the move from Egypt, and those ships had then sailed to Oran. The camp commander noted to 8th Indian Division that the missing equipment would affect the ability of the camp to function.¹²

Being the only IRC in Italy, yet having the responsibility for all Indian reinforcements, stretched 16th IRC to the limit. Despite the 4th Indian Division arriving in November, its reinforcement camp (the 8th IRC) did not arrive until December and was not operational until April 1944. Nevertheless despite these extra burdens they still had a section taken away from them in November to set up a transit camp in Foggia on the 19th. This was in spite of the expected arrival of an advance party of 700 men from 4th Indian Division on the 22nd, which the camp was tasked with housing.¹³

By February 1944 the increase in reinforcements coming into the Italian theatre was too great for 16th IRC to cope with on its current war establishment, being the only functioning reinforcement camp for the two divisions and all other Indian units. It was

¹¹ J. H. Gradidge, 'How the Fourteenth Army was Reinforced', *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, 75 (1945), p. 452.

¹² WO 169/15599 - Reinforcement Camps: 16 Rft. Camp, 1943. War diary entry for 2 October 1943.

¹³ WO 169/15599. War diary entry for 19 November.

decided on the 9th at a meeting between O2E and the camp commander that, with the camp's current strength of seventy-five BOs and 2,600 other ranks (despite an official total capacity of 1,800 all ranks), the expected future arrival of over 2,500 reinforcements would be too much for the camp to handle. The camp reverted to a ten section establishment by taking four sections of 8th IRC, which was still in a staging area, to help with the future influx of reinforcements. These arrived on the 21st and totalled nineteen BOs, thirty-four VCOs and 2,677 IORs. So that the 4th Indian Division was less reliant upon 16th IRC for reinforcements the decision was taken on 16 February to form an immediate reserve for them using 'Y' Indian Rest Camp to hold ten BOs, seven VCOs and 356 IORs.¹⁴

By 5 April the 8th IRC became operational and supplied 4th Indian Division with reinforcements, despite having been in the country since 21 December 1943. It had been in a staging area in Taranto whilst efforts were made to find it a suitable camp site, and the men of the camp had occupied themselves with training. A site was found eventually at Benevento on 19 March and it began to set up camp there immediately, although it was not until the 24th that they were able to begin specialist courses given by the instructional wing. By the 21st, 16th IRC contained 120 BOs, 106 VCOs and 4,975 IORs despite an official strength of only sixty BOs and 3000 other ranks. On the 28th the 11th IRC, the reinforcement camp of 10th Indian Division, left Egypt for Italy. The 30 March saw a liaison visit to 16th IRC from Major General Denys Reid, who had just arrived in Italy with his division.¹⁵

The 11th IRC had been getting its camp assembled at Taranto having arrived on 4 May from the Middle East, becoming operational on 27th and operating on a six section

¹⁴ WO 169/19484 - Reinforcement Camps: 16 Rft Camp, 1944. War diary entry for 16 February.

¹⁵ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 30 March.

basis. The speed with which their camp was set up is in stark contrast to the experience of 8th IRC. The establishment of all three camps appears to have lessened the burden on 16th IRC, as on 5 June it despatched thirty-six BOs, sixteen VCOs and 1,144 IORs to 8th IRC, which included all 4th Indian Division personnel.¹⁶ Also on the 5th, 11th IRC took a draft of four BOs, nine VCOs, 504 IORs and 107 Non-Combatant personnel from 16th IRC.¹⁷ This brought the total personnel of 16th IRC camp down to 1,500 all ranks which was the lowest it had been in six months. The four sections that had been temporarily attached from 8th IRC earlier in the year were returned on the 8th.¹⁸

By August the Allied advance necessitated the use of transit camps for reinforcements travelling between the reinforcement camps and divisions as the distance was too great. However, there were no designated transit camps in Italy. Therefore O2E converted three Indian P.W. Cages (the 2nd, 7th and 11th), with 2nd Indian P.W. Cage being augmented by two sections of 8th IRC, into transit camps. One of these camps was located at Monte San Savino for the reinforcement of 8th and 10th Indian Divisions and non-divisional units, the second at the Assisi railhead and the third at Ancona to reinforce 4th Indian Division.¹⁹ In November plans were made to relocate 11th IRC to Ancona and, in December, the 8th IRC to Taranto, most likely because of 4th Indian Division's deployment to Greece.

On 23 January 1945 the Indian Section of 2nd Echelon of CMF, which was responsible for administering all manpower of Indian Army personnel in the Mediterranean theatre of operations, had decided on the allocation of Indian

¹⁶ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 5 June 1944.

¹⁷ WO 169/19481 - Reinforcement Camps: 11 Rft Camp, 1944. War diary entry for 5 June.

¹⁸ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 8 June 1944.

¹⁹ WO 169/18727. War diary entry for August 1944.

reinforcements for reinforcement camps in Italy (see Appendix 8, Table 1). It also approved the move of 8th IRC from Benevento to Taranto in January, where the 16th IRC was stationed. The 11th IRC moved north to Ancona from Taranto in February.

The 8th IRC was tasked with holding all reinforcements for 11th IRC sent from overseas until they were able to move forward (see Appendix 8, Table 2). Troops who were released from hospital or convalescent depots were sent to a camp dependent on their location.

- Troops released from hospitals or a convalescent depots south of Rome were sent to 11th IRC if fit for service, those who were to be evacuated out of Italy went to 16th IRC.
- Troops fit for service who were released from hospitals or convalescent depots near Rome were sent to the 32nd Indian Rest Camp at Rome, where they would then be sent to their units at the first opportunity.
- Troops fit for service who were released from hospitals or convalescent depots near or north of Arezzo and Jesi were returned to their units.²⁰

The 8th IRC was also responsible for prisoners from 5th Indian Military Prison, both those to return to their units from 8th and 11th IRC and those prisoners who were to be dismissed from the service.²¹ The camp also held those troops of the Indian Engineers and Indian military police in Italy until they could be sent to their respective training schools.²² The Indian engineers were sent to the Indian Wing of the School of Mechanical

²⁰ WO 169/22859 - Reinforcement Camps: 8 Rft Camp, 1945. Letter from 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp Adjutant to 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp personnel on allocation of reinforcements, dated 30 January 1945, pp. 1-2.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

²² WO 169/22859. Letter from 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp Adjutant to 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp personnel on allocation of reinforcements to sections, dated 30 January 1945, p. 1.

Engineers and Indian Engineers Telegraph Department at Capua, whilst provosts went to the Indian wing of the Corps of Military Police at San Guiseppe.

The above allocation was most likely decided by the fact that 8th IRC had eight sections as opposed to the six sections of 11th IRC, making it able to garrison more troops. The distance from Taranto to the front line made it impractical to send troops to 11th IRC forward as soon as they had disembarked from their troopship. It was more logical for combat units to be closest to the front line as they could be sent to their units quickest, which was the case with 11th IRC which held purely infantry reinforcements for 10th Indian Division and 43rd Gurkha Lorried Brigade and was the most forward deployed camp. The other two camps, in particular 8th IRC, contained support and service units who were deployed in the rear. However, the most important reason for placing 8th IRC in Taranto is that, as the designated reinforcement camp for 4th Indian Division, it would need to send its troops to Greece. Therefore being close to a major port was the most logistically sensible solution.

The 8th and 16th IRC both operated beyond their official capacity at times. On 5 February 1945, 16th IRC had to close down its VCO's mess as its cooks were required to serve the troops in the camp, suggesting it was garrisoning more than its established strength of 1,800 soldiers.²³ This situation was not eased in the short term as 18 February saw a draft of 2,000 soldiers from the Middle East arrive and, on 21-22 February, a draft of 3,000 troops from India. Such was the need to house all these extra troops the 16th IRC took on 2,000 men from the convoy of the 21-22, an increase of 500 from the original estimate after consulting with 8th IRC and 52 Area, who were responsible for administering the area in which the camps were based. This was done to relieve the

²³ WO 169/22862. War diary entry for 5 February 1945.

pressure on the 8th IRC, as it was estimated that, after the new drafts had been stationed in the camp, 16th IRC would have a strength of 5,000 all ranks, and 8th IRC 6,000 all ranks.²⁴ The final large draft of soldiers to arrive in CMF before the war's end was on 28 March 1945 where a party of forty officers and 1,600 IORs arrived from MEF.²⁵ The reinforcement camps were the one of the last units of the Indian Army to leave Italy, as they were needed for the return of troops to India.

Like so many aspects of the Indian Army in the Second World War, the successes of the reinforcement camps were founded in failure. During the First Arakan offensive in 1943 the reinforcement camps' capabilities had been called into question. Organised on the system of IRCs in the Middle East they were found wanting. They failed to provide adequate training opportunities to the troops who passed through them, despite often long periods of time spent waiting for transport or orders to move to their unit. It was discovered that in these lengthy spells of time spent travelling to and from the camps much military knowledge was forgotten.²⁶

The Middle East had reformed its IRCs in November 1942, deciding that all new reinforcements in the Middle East would stay at a reinforcement camp until they had passed their training tests, and would then be sent to their units. First reinforcements were to be held at reinforcement camps unless special circumstances, such as the unit being significantly below strength, deemed they should be sent straight to their unit. Certain service arms were permitted to hold their reinforcements within their units if the

²⁴ WO 169/22862. War diary entry for 18 February 1945.

²⁵ WO 169/22862. War diary entry for 28 March 1945.

²⁶ T. Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth Armies at War 1941-45: Fighting Methods, Doctrine and Training for Jungle Warfare* (Abingdon, 2005), p. 84.

reinforcement camps could not provide appropriate training for them.²⁷ Regardless of whether the failures in 1943 were due to the failure of the system or the rapid expansion of the Indian Army, major reforms were enacted to improve the reinforcement camps. The first, being the allocation of permanent section commanders, and the second, the association of a camp with a division, to whom it would be the sole provider of all its reinforcements. Troops for rear echelon and service units were distributed amongst the camps. The result of these changes was an improvement in the training of reinforcements.

Brigadier J. H. Gradidge, who was responsible for the reinforcement camps in India, believed the major problem was that section commanders had been found from officers passing through the camp on their way to or from the front. This arrangement left the troops in these sections poorly trained as there was rarely a permanent section commander who had any suitable length of time to train them properly, nor was he aware of the latest tactical lessons from the front.²⁸ He believed any improvement was linked to the appointment of permanent section commanders, but it was not until August 1943, with the support of General George Giffard, commander of Eastern Army in India, that they were introduced.²⁹ On 17 April 1944 a conference was held between Lieutenant Colonel Roberts of O2E (Ind) Mideast, Major Barton O2E (Ind) CMF and the camp commander and adjutant of 16th IRC. They discussed staff appointments to the camp, but also a plan to make all IRCs equal size. Another matter concerned section commanders, with the camp commander asserting that “with a camp of this size it is absolutely

²⁷ WO 201/2598 - Indian Units: Training of and miscellaneous questions on, 01 September 1942 - 31 May 1944. Minutes of a conference held to discuss Indian Reinforcements' Training, 30 November 1942, p. 1.

²⁸ A. Jeffreys, 'The Officer Corps and the Training of the Indian Army with special reference to Lieutenant-General Francis Taker', in K. Roy (ed.) *The Indian Army in the Two World Wars* (Leiden, 2012), p. 299.

²⁹ Gradidge, 'How the Fourteenth Army was Reinforced', pp. 452-3.

essential that all sections have their own permanent commanders.” They were promised that appointments would be made soon.³⁰

Camps bore the insignia of the division they served and the division provided the sectional commanders and instructional staff for their camp, to ensure the most recent battlefield lessons were being passed on to new reinforcements.³¹ The 4/10th Baluchis appointed temporary Major D. A. Hooper to the 10th Indian Division's training cadre at the 11th IRC in February 1945.³² An officer from 8th Indian Division visited 16th IRC on 17 October 1943 with a request that the camp begin a driving and maintenance course and the training of reinforcements for the 6th D.C.O. Lancers, with vehicles and instructors being provided by the division.³³ When the 4th Indian Division was moved to a location near to 8th IRC it provided “an opportunity for all Officers of the Camp staff and Div. Staff to liaise, and certainly wasn’t wasted. The lessons recently learnt in the Div. were passed on to the I.W. (Instructional Wing) both by Officers and men. The Officers commanding the various Units in the Div were both generous and co-operative in tackling the various administrative problems. The results of these talks will without doubt increase our efficiency in serving the Div.”³⁴

The fact that the camps and divisional staff began to recognise their mutual importance to one another raised standards and morale. A letter sent on 4 August 1944 to 16th IRC by Major General Dudley Russell, commander of 8th Indian Division, stated “you are doing excellent work for the Division, and I appreciate all your efforts. You and

³⁰ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 17 April 1944.

³¹ Gradidge, 'How the Fourteenth Army was Reinforced', p. 453.

³² WO 169/22380 - 4/10 Baluch Regt, 01 January 1945 - 31 October 1945. Field Return of Officers, dated 10 February 1945.

³³ WO 169/15599. War diary entry for 17 October 1943. The course began with 2 x 3 ton trucks, 4 x 15 cwt trucks, 2 carriers and 1 jeep.

³⁴ WO 169/19480 - Reinforcement Camps: 8 Rft Camp, 1944. War diary entry for 18 July 1944.

your staff play a vital part in our successes and I should have liked to have told you all so personally. Please tell all under your command how grateful the Division is for all they have done for us.”³⁵ This shows that the division saw the camp not as a separate unit but as a part of the division itself.

Training at the camps depended to an extent on the facilities available to the instructors and also on what its parent division wanted in terms of training, but there does appear to have been some similarities between the camps. All reinforcements who were held at one of these camps took part in training unless designated sick. General training for all reinforcements involved mandatory physical training, range shooting (if the facilities were available), general field training and educational training which were mandatory. The instructional wing of a camp also offered training in the specialist roles of the infantry and combat arms, such as two and three inch mortars, sniping, light machine guns, medium machine guns, intelligence and pistol shooting. These courses were open to not only the men in the camps but also those in the divisions. The 8th IRC had its own mortar and small arms ranges as well as a battle inoculation course. Its instructors were assisted in other areas by the Central Mediterranean Training Centre and the Royal Artillery, who offered them use of their firing ranges as well as letting the students attend any demonstrations which may have been useful to them.³⁶ Of crucial importance to the ability of the Indian Army to function was the ability of its British officers to speak the language of their troops, or at least have an understanding of Urdu (or Gurkhali if joining a Gurkha battalion), and so the camps began language classes for the British officers.

³⁵ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 4 August 1944.

³⁶ WO 169/19480. War diary entry for April 1944, pp. 5-6.

The staff of 16th IRC were responsible for aiding the port authorities in convoy embarkation and disembarkation, helping them with the language barrier. It was difficult for officers of the British Army to communicate with Indian soldiers. A letter of thanks was sent from 52 Area to 16th IRC stating “this is to thank you for the absolutely invaluable assistance given by your officers during the disembarkation and embarkation of our recent convoy. The language question is invariably a stumbling block when English speaking only E.S.Os [Embarkation Staff Officer] are employed and the quick disembarkation and despatch from quays of the large No. of Indian Army troops would not have been possible without the help of your officers.”³⁷

Managing the loss of troops

Commanders accepted that no matter how efficient a reinforcement system was it would take time for the soldier to reach his unit. Whilst waiting for its reinforcements to arrive the unit would be vulnerable if engaged in operations. Indian and British units deployed overseas with their first reinforcements, which equalled 10% of the unit's strength, giving it an immediate supply of troops to draw upon in the event of casualties. The 10th Indian Division brought its units up to full strength when ordered to deploy to Italy, and units travelled with their first reinforcements.³⁸ The 20th Indian Infantry Brigade³⁹ was scheduled to pick up reinforcements from a reinforcement camp in Egypt before embarking for Italy, “probable that rfts to complete W.E. plus 1st Rfts if available will join in conc area.”⁴⁰

³⁷ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 11 April 1944.

³⁸ WO 201/2337 - Move of 10th Indian Division to Allied Armies Italy, March 1944. Cipher message from Ninth Army to O2E MEF.

³⁹ Hereafter referred to as the 20th Brigade.

⁴⁰ WO 169/18875 - 20 Indian Infantry Brigade, H.Q., 1944. Movement Order No. 1, issued March 1944, p. 1.

To alleviate the effects of casualties, the 10th Indian Division trained reserves of key roles in its units, providing a ready replacement in the event of a casualty. The training of reserves was a way of enabling the division to continue to fight effectively in spite of suffering casualties. Specialists were the signallers, mortar personnel, six pounder anti-tank gunners, M.T. drivers, M.T. driver mechanics, M.T. fitters, snipers and pioneers of an infantry battalion. Their loss would diminish the capabilities of the unit. As such 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2 in November 1943 set the target of training 100% reserves of specialists.⁴¹ However, the individual brigade commanders increased the reserves to be trained. The 20th Brigade in November set a target for M.T. Drivers of a reserve of 150% by March 1944, with all other specialist roles aiming for reserves of 100%.⁴² Both called for speed and prioritisation in training specialists. The other two brigades make mention of training specialists much earlier in 1943. The 25th Brigade in May and April 1943 had aimed to train 100% reserves of M.T. and carrier drivers, with 50% reserves in other specialist platoons. This training was prioritised over the training of soldiers for the twenty-five pounder artillery gun, which was stopped until targets had been reached.⁴³ In May 1943 the 10th Brigade aimed to train 100% of reserves by June 1943, eventually reaching 200%.⁴⁴ The 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No 4 of April 1944 wanted there to be a fully trained reserve for the brigade and battalion patrol masters given the possibility of them becoming a casualty and

⁴¹ WO 169/14782 - 10 Indian Division: 'G' 1943 Jan.-June, Aug.-Dec. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 2, issued 27 November 1943, p. 2.

⁴² WO 169/14857 - 20 Indian Infantry Brigade, H.Q., 1943. Training Instruction No. 8, issued 25 November 1943, p. 2.

⁴³ WO 169/14869 - 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943. 7 Division Training Instruction No. 5, issued 10 March 1943, p. 1. The title of 7 Division is given because that was the name the 25 Indian Infantry Brigade operated under in Cyprus as part of the island's deception plans.

⁴⁴ WO 169/14841 - 10 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943. 10th Indian Infantry Brigade command conference minutes from 4 May 1943.

requiring replacing.⁴⁵ Units were instructed to aim for a 100% reserve in trained snipers for section, company and battalion level.⁴⁶

The loss of a unit's commander could be even more damaging to a unit, as was proven in the Indian units deployed on the Western Front in the First World War. In order to ensure that a replacement officer could quickly take on the duties of a wounded or killed officer, from June 1944 Indian infantry and machine gun battalions were permitted to have five additional officers attached to them in excess of their authorised war establishment.⁴⁷ 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No 7, covering training in November 1944, ordered that battalion second-in-commands were to command their battalion in action, so they could readily assume the responsibility if the commander became a casualty.⁴⁸ Reid also wanted infantry battalions to train their VCOs to command companies in case the company commander became a casualty.⁴⁹

In November 1944 the 2/3rd Gurkhas began to organise an NCOs training cadre, with three men from each rifle company and six from its HQ Company who had shown the potential for promotion to NCO rank. They would be trained to assume an NCOs duties should one become a casualty.⁵⁰ The commander of a battalion had control over promotion in his unit to the rank of Jemadar, which allowed a commander to quickly appoint new NCOs and platoon commanders in case of casualties.⁵¹ To assemble an adequate supply of reserve platoon commanders the division opened up the Senior

⁴⁵ WO 169/18813 - 10 Indian Division: G.S., 01 January 1944 - 31 July 1944. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No 4, p. 3.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁴⁷ WO 169/18890. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Letter No. 12, 16 June 1944, p. 1.

⁴⁸ WO 169/18815 - 10 Indian Division G.S. October 1944. 10th Indian Division Training Instruction No. 7, 3 November 1944, pp. 3-4.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵⁰ WO 169/19000 - 2/3 Gurkha Rifles, 1944. Note on Training, 5 November 1944.

⁵¹ WO 169/18890. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Letter No. 8, 24 May 1944, p. 2.

Indian NCOs Training Cadre, whose opening address on 23 February 1945 stated “the course is to give you while you have time and opportunity to think about them, ideas and help as to what you have to think of as a pl comd.”⁵² The importance of these cadres is evident in that it was Major General Reid who gave the address. The cadre covered theoretical training on subjects including field craft, night operations, navigation, urban warfare, attacks on fortified positions and infantry/tank combined operations.

The Indian Army by February 1944 “owing to the shortage of Staffs, Sigs [Signallers] etc... cannot now raise extra Fmns. The solution, therefore, seems to be to give our existing Bdes a fourth battalion, with a LOB [Left out of Battle] role. The advantages of this are that these units could be trained now with Bdes and that they would be available at hand to tide over the period when reinforcements are being sent forward.”⁵³ Left out of Battle (LOB) was used by the Commonwealth Armies in the First and Second World Wars. It involved leaving a cadre of men from a platoon, company or battalion in reserve whilst it was in action, to act as a nucleus to reform the unit if it suffered heavy losses in battle. In the context of the extract here it involved the fourth battalion of a brigade being able to take the place of one of the other three battalions, allowing it to rest and integrate reinforcements, whilst maintaining the brigade’s strength of three battalions.⁵⁴ The decision to give brigades a fourth battalion is one of the primary reasons for the deployment of ISF units to Italy. The LOB system was practiced not only at the brigade level, but also by infantry battalions. The 25th Brigade’s Indian infantry battalions were ordered to keep those officers held in addition to the war

⁵² WO 169/22249 - 10 Indian Division: G.S., 01 January 1945 - 30 April 1945. Notes of opening talk of Senior NCOs Training Cadre, 23 February 1945, p. 1.

⁵³ WO 201/2598. Minute 10 by Brigadier L.W. McKay Forbes BGS (IA), 21 February 1944, p. 1.

⁵⁴ http://www.bayonetstrength.150m.com/Commonwealth/commonwealth_armies.htm

establishment with their unit's LOB contingent when the battalion was committed to operations.⁵⁵

Preventing Unnecessary Casualties

During the Second World War, the Indian Army was at the forefront of efforts to decrease the impact of disease and sickness during the campaign in Burma. The development of medicines and procedures to combat the numerous diseases in that theatre were credited with being a vital factor in the eventual victory of the Fourteenth Army. The 10th Indian Division also took measures to decrease non-battle casualties from sickness and accidents in Italy. Whilst some may dismiss their presence as little more than 'health and safety rules', they were in fact a means of preventing unnecessary and needless casualties and reduced the demand for reinforcements.

Whilst based in Cyprus between January and June 1943 the division took steps to reduce illness from typhus fever, which was deadly and highly contagious. The first step to prevent the spread of the disease was by making soldiers bathe frequently but, if he did find a louse on his body or clothes, or if he displayed symptoms, he was to report sick to prevent it spreading. The camp orders stated "a lousy man is therefore a danger to himself and to other members of his unit."⁵⁶ In August 1943 anti-typhus inoculations began to prevent further outbreaks of the disease. Upon arrival in Italy in March 1944 the division segregated personnel from one of the troopships, where there had been an outbreak of smallpox, to stop it spreading to the rest of the division.⁵⁷ In April the 20th Brigade produced instructions on hygiene and anti-malaria precautions during their

⁵⁵ WO 169/18890. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Letter No. 12, 16 June 1944, p. 1.

⁵⁶ WO 169/14783 - 10 Indian Division: 'AQ', 1943. Camp Orders for Headquarters 10th Indian Division, dated 24 March 1943.

⁵⁷ WO 169/18816 - 10 Indian Division: A.Q., 1944. War diary entry for 2 April 1944.

posting to Ortona. Along with the more advanced methods of anti-malarial sprays, weekly skin inspections and the construction of suitable latrine and refuse trenches were also promoted to stop the spread of disease.⁵⁸

High standards of hygiene and sanitation were constantly aimed for. The 25th Brigade issued orders on sanitation in March 1945⁵⁹ and during June 1945 anti-malarial measures were maintained, even though hostilities had ceased.⁶⁰ Commanders used informal methods to communicate to the troops the need to maintain health and hygiene. In January 1945, with the division in a sector of the line by the Senio River, the harsh winter weather made trench foot a threat. To remind the troops of the danger this presented to them, Major General Reid used his column in the divisional newspaper, the *Diagonals*, to remind the troops that “difficult though it may be, will you all please try and take off your boots at least once a day, and give your feet a good rubbing. If you don't you'll have quite a lot of foot trouble.”⁶¹ Sanitation and safety measures were practised by all elements of the division. The quartermaster's branch of the divisional HQ was forced to construct deep trench latrines at its location in March 1945 for reasons of hygiene.⁶² It also collected and burnt six to eight thousand empty food tins that had been left scattered round the camp site.⁶³ At the same camp site the troops were tasked with the collection of spent ammunition cases and live ammunition that had been left there. The divisional Ordnance Officer was called first to make sure that the ammunition was

⁵⁸ WO 169/14857. 20th Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Order No. 2, 20 April 1944, Appendix B: Hygiene and anti-malarial precautions.

⁵⁹ WO 169/22307 - 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 01 January 1945 - 30 November 1945. 25th Indian Infantry Brigade, Adm Order No. 4, 14 March 1945, p. 3.

⁶⁰ WO 169/22307. 25th Indian Infantry Brigade Anti-Malarial Instruction No. 1, 6 June 1945.

⁶¹ WO 169/22249. *The Diagonals*, 6 January 1945, p.1.

⁶² WO 169/22251 - 10 Indian Division: A.Q. 01 January 1945 - 31 October 1945. War diary entry for 2 March 1945.

⁶³ WO 169/22251. War diary entry for 4 March 1945.

safe for the troops to collect it for disposal.⁶⁴ The administrative section of the divisional orders contained orders related to the preparation and cooking of food, availability of shower and bathing facilities, camp hygiene procedures and were repeated continually.

Another cause of non-battle casualties was the presence of motor vehicles, which in the Second World War were used on a far greater scale than in the First World War. It was this increased presence of motor vehicles in the British and Indian Armies that led to the huge increase in support troops.⁶⁵ It is worth remembering that the commander of the 10th Indian Division, Major General W.H. Lloyd, was killed in a motor accident whilst observing an armoured training exercise in Egypt in January 1943. During its time stationed in Cyprus there were sixty-eight traffic accidents in January 1943 and eighty-three in February 1943, with the threat of death or injury they posed.⁶⁶ During July 1943, with the division stationed in Palestine, there were fifty-two traffic accidents in the Haifa district which resulted in the deaths of four soldiers.⁶⁷ The military authorities certainly felt many of these incidents were avoidable and that lives could have been saved and felt that speeding was to blame. To this end they charged all warrant officers and NCOs to aid the military police in preventing speeding vehicles and to report the culprits to their parent unit for disciplinary action.⁶⁸ Other measures to reduce the number of traffic accidents include the imposition of speed limits in camps and the provision of safety helmets for motorcyclists.

⁶⁴ WO 169/22251. War diary entry for 5 March 1945.

⁶⁵ J. Ellis, *The Sharp End* (London, 1980 [2011]), p. 156.

⁶⁶ WO 169/14783. Camp Order no. 54, Traffic Accidents for 10th Indian Division Headquarters, issued 16 March 1943.

⁶⁷ WO 169/14783. 10th Indian Division Routine Order no. 276, issued 13 September 1943.

⁶⁸ WO 169/14783. Camp Order no. 54, Traffic Accidents for 10th Indian Division Headquarters, issued 16 March 1943.

Unit Management

The Indian Army, where possible, withdrew a unit when it had suffered excessive casualties, to give it time to reorganise and 'bed in' new reinforcements to regain its fighting ability. All eight of the Indian Army infantry battalions which would serve with 10th Indian Division in Italy were pre-war regular battalions. They had all been overseas since the beginning of the war and had experienced fierce fighting. They had come to serve with the 10th Indian Division in Italy because they had suffered severe casualties, and their time with the division in Cyprus and the Middle East was to allow them to regain their strength whilst conducting garrison duties (see Appendix 9).

The case of the 1/6th and 4/6th Rajputana Rifles, who had fought with the 4th Indian Division at the First Battle of Monte Cassino in February 1944, offers an example of this in relation to the campaign in Italy. Both of these were pre-war battalions who had served overseas for over four years, sustaining 1,800 and 2,700 casualties respectively, consequently their commander requested they be exchanged with fresh formations.⁶⁹ The two relieving battalions were the 3/12th Frontier Force Regiment and the 2/11th Sikhs, both pre-war battalions. The former had been in Italy since 1943 as a garrison battalion and relieved the 4/6th Rajputana Rifles in March 1944.⁷⁰ The 2/11th Sikhs had to be obtained from the Middle East, despite the 4/11th Sikhs being the battalion requested by AFHQ.⁷¹ The 2/11th were chosen because they had greater recent experience of battalion and brigade training, having trained with 10th Indian Division until October

⁶⁹ WO 201/2598. Cipher message from Allied Armies India to AFHQ on 19 April 1944 on the relief of 1/6th and 4/6th Rajputana Rifles.

⁷⁰ C. Kempton, *'Loyalty & Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 - August 1947: Part III* (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 41.

⁷¹ WO 201/2598. Cipher message from AFHQ to Mideast on 11 April 1944 on the relief of an Indian Infantry battalion from 4th Indian Division by 4/11 Sikhs.

1943.⁷² During their service in the war so far the 2/11th had suffered 250 casualties, compared to 4/11th's 1,200 casualties.⁷³ It was decided the 1/6th and 4/6th Rajputana Rifles would be returned to India after their relief, as their commanders felt "both Bns require long periods of rest and it is not considered that they will regain the former high standard by a period of guards and duties in ITALY or MIDEAST...In view of magnificent war record of both Bns strongly recommend that they be returned to INDIA for period of leave and recuperation after which they will undoubtedly regain their former high standard."⁷⁴

If we recall the reforms of India Command in 1943, the problems with the reinforcement system extended to not only the replacement of individual soldiers, but also the inability to relieve battalions from the front line, who may have been stuck in operations for several months, with fresh units.⁷⁵ On 1 January 1945 AFHQ produced a letter titled 'The relief of Indian Battalions in Persia and Iraq Command (PAIFORCE⁷⁶).'⁷⁷ The letter sent by AFHQ was their decision on a request from Commander in Chief of the Indian Army, General Sir Claude Auchinleck on 17 December 1944.⁷⁸ Auchinleck suggested the relief of seven regular Indian Army Indian infantry battalions from

⁷² The 4/11 Sikhs had been reforming after losses suffered in North Africa during 1942-3 and then served as the demonstration battalion at the Mountain Warfare School until February 1944. See Kempton, *'Loyalty & Honour,' Part III*, p. 39.

⁷³ WO 201/2598. Draft outgoing Cipher Message of April 1944.

⁷⁴ WO 201/2598. Cipher message from Allied Armies India to AFHQ on 19 April 1944 on the relief of 1/6th and 4/6th Rajputana Rifles.

⁷⁵ Moreman, *The Jungle, the Japanese and the British Commonwealth*, p. 83.

⁷⁶ PAIFORCE (Persia and Iraq Force), also known as PAIC (Persia and Iraq Command), was the name given to the British and Commonwealth forces based in Persia and Iraq. It was responsible for securing the oil supply in these countries and supply routes to the Soviet Union.

⁷⁷ WO 204/7394 - Indian Battalions: Employment and Movements, 01 August 1944 - 31 January 1945. Letter of 1 January 1945 from Lieutenant General John Harding, AFHQ Chief of Staff on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

⁷⁸ WO 204/7394. Letter of 1 January 1945 from Lieutenant General John Harding, AFHQ Chief of Staff on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE Appendix A, Letter of 17 December 1944 from C-in-C India to AFHQ on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

PAIFORCE by battalions from India, because these battalions were pre-war regulars who had seen little active service during the war. He proposed that the battalions in PAIFORCE be exchanged with their sister battalions in Italy, so the former could be used in active operations (see Appendix 10). The reasons for wanting to make use of these battalions were firstly, morale, of both the PAIFORCE and CMF battalions. Secondly, the PAIFORCE battalions' limited engagement in active operations meant there were a high number of long-service soldiers when compared to those in their sister battalions, who had been more heavily engaged in operations.

The scheme suggested by the Indian Army was one which Alexander, the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean, agreed with. However, Alexander sought the advice of his commanders before beginning the transfer of units. The British increment of Fifth Army replied by offering the opinion of Major General Dudley Russell, the commanding officer of the 8th Indian Division, in a letter dated 9 January 1945.⁷⁹ Whilst agreeing in principle to the idea of PAIFORCE infantry battalions seeing active service in Italy, he was only willing to do so on the condition that a triangular relief system was adopted over the direct system proposed by Auchinleck. The triangular relief system proposed that, instead of battalions being exchanged between Italy and PAIFORCE and PAIFORCE and India, battalions sent to Italy from PAIFORCE would be replaced by those from India, and those in Italy would be sent to India. Russell justified this approach on the grounds of the morale of the troops in Italy. He wrote that if a triangular relief system was not implemented it "would be better to risk a possible, and not necessarily, great loss of morale in Bns retained in PAIC, rather than incur a certain

⁷⁹ WO 204/7394. Message of 11 January 1945 to 15 Army Group from British Increment, G(SD) Branch, HQ Fifth Army on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE, Appendix A: Letter of 9 January 1945 from Major General Dudley Russell, 8 Indian Infantry Division on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

and complete collapse of morale in Bns sent from Italy to PAIC.” This was because Russell was well aware of the unpopularity of service in PAIFORCE with Indian troops, stating “it would be quite impossible to persuade any unit, ordered to return there [PAIFORCE], that the second tour would not be as bad as the first.”⁸⁰ He also noted that the intention to offer a generous leave scheme to those battalions sent from Italy could leave them having to conduct operations in PAIFORCE below full strength. Eighth Army commanders approved the move on the condition that the battalions moving to Italy arrived a month prior to the departure of the battalions they would relieve, and that the battalions relieved in Italy should not have their “ultimate return to India...be prejudiced by their transfer to PAIFORCE.”⁸¹ It shows that there was a universal belief that the battalions in Italy should not be withdrawn from fierce fighting, only to be called upon to conduct unpopular policing actions in the Middle East.

By 30 January the relief of the battalions in PAIFORCE was gaining momentum. Lieutenant General John Harding, Chief of Staff of AFHQ, informed Fifteenth Army Group that PAIFORCE had agreed to the reduction in their garrison of one infantry battalion.⁸² It intended to despatch the 3/11th Sikhs, 5/12th FF Regiment and 5/13th FF Rifles to Italy first, with the remaining battalions following. Indian divisional commanders believed the priority for relief should be based on length of service overseas.⁸³ As such it was requested that the first unit to be sent to Italy be the 5/13th FF Rifles, to relieve the 6/13th

⁸⁰ WO 204/7394. Message of 11 January 1945 to 15 Army Group from British Increment, G(SD) Branch, HQ Fifth Army on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE, Appendix A: Letter of 9 January 1945 from Major General Dudley Russell, 8 Indian Infantry Division on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

⁸¹ WO 204/7394. Cipher message from Eighth Army to 15 Army Group on 21 January 1945 on the relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

⁸² WO 204/7394. Message from Lt.-General John Harding of AFHQ to 15th Army Group on 30 January 1945 on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIC.

⁸³ WO 204/7394. Message from HQ 15 Army Group to AFHQ of 5 February 1945.

in the 8th Indian Division.⁸⁴ This was what Major General Russell had originally suggested when he gave his opinion on the matter in January. However, it had still not been clarified whether Russell's proposed triangular relief system, or the linear relief system, was to be used.

However, the authorities in London informed PAIC, India Command and CMF that the transfer of battalions was on hold whilst it assessed whether PAIC could afford to lose one Indian infantry battalion from its garrison.⁸⁵ It was not until 6 March 1945 that Alexander informed the Eighth Army that London had approved the transfer of battalions to Italy, with the first battalion to be sent, the 5/13th FF Rifles, scheduled to arrive in Italy mid-April, which would permit the return of 6/13th to India.⁸⁶ The fact that the battalion did not arrive in Italy until mid-April, and since it was not expected to be operationally ready until after a month of training, meant it did not play a part in operations as had been hoped when the scheme was launched in December 1944. On 29 April the decision was taken not to send any more Indian infantry battalions to Italy from PAIC, due to the imminent end of the war in the theatre.⁸⁷

The attempted relief of battalions in Italy by those from PAIFORCE shows that the Indian Army was attempting to solve the biggest complaint of the Indian soldiers in Italy: the lack of leave to India. This chapter will not deal with the effect that the lack of leave had on the morale and outlook of the Indian soldier. Instead, it will argue that the lack of leave granted to Indian troops in Italy made the reinforcement process much simpler. By

⁸⁴ WO 204/7394. Message from FREEDOM to ARMINDIA and PAIC on 13 February 1945 on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIC.

⁸⁵ WO 204/7394. Message from TROOPERS to FREEDOM, India, Mideast, PAIC and 15th Army Group on 18 February 1945 delaying the transfer of Indian infantry battalions from PAIC to Italy.

⁸⁶ WO 204/7394. Message from FREEDOM to 8th Army on 6 March 1945 on transfer of 5/13 FFR to Italy.

⁸⁷ WO 204/7394. Message from AFHQ to 15 Army Group, Eighth Army and GreekMil of 29 April 1945.

1 September 1945 there were over 19,000 Indian soldiers in Italy who had not had leave to India for three years or more (see Appendix 11). The 10th Indian Division by 1 October 1945 contained 666 soldiers who had served overseas for over four years without leave, and 1,393 who had served three and a half to four years.⁸⁸ The major problem in granting leave to Indian troops was transport, namely that it relied upon erratic and irregular shipping convoys, which was the view of the Major General Reid:

Time and again leave parties have proceeded to TARANTO [sic] – have passed to Middle East and have been held up for long periods owing to shipping arrangements breaking down. I have suggested and spoken to higher authority on this matter and attempts have been made to introduce “shuttle services” etc. These arrangements as I warned authorities before have all broken down because any arrangement that has not had the blessing of Movements is bound to break down.⁸⁹

By 31 March 1945, 16th IRC contained 1,600 Indian troops who were awaiting passage to India but had to be kept in camp due to a lack of shipping space.⁹⁰ The irregularity of shipping affected not only the return of soldiers to India on leave, but also their return to their units in Italy. Many troops that did manage to go on leave failed to return because they found themselves stuck in India awaiting transport to Italy, or were absorbed into units in India. Major General Reid found the latter of these to be a real problem with regard to medical personnel and RIASC⁹¹ drivers, as the time taken for replacements to arrive was too long and they were typically of inferior quality.⁹² The other problem that the delay or non-return of Indian troops from leave was that it denied

⁸⁸ WO 204/1667 - 10 Indian Division: repatriation. 01 September 1945 - 30 November 1945. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices, p. 7.

⁸⁹ WO 204/1667. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945.

⁹⁰ WO 169/22862. War diary entry for 31 March 1945.

⁹¹ Royal Indian Army Service Corps.

⁹² WO 204/1667. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices p. 2.

leave to other soldiers. Leave was carefully managed, with units being allotted vacancies for how many of their troops could go on leave. A soldier who went on leave was using one of these vacancies, and it could not be used by another soldier until he returned to his unit. Given the long delays in soldiers returning to their units this further decreased the availability of leave. The failures of the leave system are shown in Appendix 12, as troops who departed for two months leave to India took much longer to return to their units in Italy.

Major General Reid had been a tireless campaigner on granting adequate home leave to Indian troops in Italy. He believed that the creation of a regular 'shuttle service', a naval convoy travelling direct between Italy and India, was the best way of increasing the number of troops given leave. However, failing that he believed that if the transport could be undertaken by planes, rather than ships, the decrease in numbers of men sent on leave would be offset by troops knowing a quick and reliable service existed.⁹³ In August 1944 Reid proposed that a fleet of forty planes would permit ten planes a day to transport approximately sixty soldiers a day from each Indian division in Italy to India for leave. Reid calculated that such a scheme would have granted two months home leave to every soldier in an Indian division, who had served overseas for more than three years, in six months.⁹⁴ The planes were never granted, nor was the regular shuttle service formed, so by August 1945 there were 25,000 Indian troops in CMF and the Middle East who had completed three and a half years' service overseas. The limits of shipping meant that

⁹³ WO 204/1667. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices, p. 1.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Appendices, pp. 1-2.

despite 5,600 Indian troops returning to India every three months, it would still have taken over a year to repatriate them all.⁹⁵

Difficulties in Reinforcing the British Army

One of the major reasons for the contribution of the Indian Army in Italy, and the other dominion forces, was the increasing inability of the British Army to maintain its own combat units as years of war took their toll. The Indian formations had an interest in the reinforcement system for the British Army as the Indian divisions had British units serving with them. The 10th Indian Division not only had several British infantry battalions in its brigades, but also its artillery units were provided by the British Army. From March 1944 the British Army in CMF received no new infantry reinforcements from the U.K. with the exception of a few small drafts.⁹⁶ These small drafts were only 600-700 men per month, and were set at a War Office conference in February 1944. This manpower limit was put into place to simplify manpower planning for the British Army at home and overseas.⁹⁷ The overwhelming priority for the British Army was the invasion of Northwest Europe and so all reinforcements were earmarked for that. If no alternative source of manpower could be found for infantry reinforcements for British Army infantry battalions in Italy, there was a predicted deficiency in infantry reinforcements of 8,500 by 31 May 1944 and 22,000 by 30 September 1944.⁹⁸

The chosen solution was to convert personnel from other service arms in CMF into infantry reinforcements. The vast majority of personnel came from anti-aircraft (AA)

⁹⁵ WO 204/1667. Message from Swayne to VGIGS, 29 August 1945.

⁹⁶ CAB 106/451 - Operations of British, Indian and Dominion forces 1943 Sept.3-1945 May 2, part IV, O2E papers (i) disbandments and conversion of personnel of other arms to infantry; (ii) work of 'x' RTD re-allocation centre; (iii) statistics. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 7.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁹⁸ CAB 106/451. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, pp. 9-10.

regiments in CMF and the Middle East, although some personnel from the Royal Army Service Corps (RASC) and Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC) were also retrained. All personnel designated to become infantrymen received training at No. 1 Infantry Reinforcement Training Depot (IRTD) at Cervinara. The quality of the personnel from the IRTD was considered very high by the units that received them, who commented that they were superior to the previous drafts they had received.⁹⁹ However, even the 29,700 men obtained from disbanded or diluted AA regiments were insufficient to cover the manpower deficit.¹⁰⁰ The decision to re-task AA units merely meant that the 46th and 56th Divisions would not have to be 'milked' of their manpower to make up the deficiencies. These two divisions were promised the first batches of retrained AA personnel to make up their losses, with the remaining personnel being despatched as reinforcements for all CMF units.¹⁰¹ However, the disbandment of AA units was stopped in January 1945 due to the heavy casualties that the AA units had suffered since their deployment in a dual role.¹⁰² It was not just the infantry that suffered from shortage of replacements; it affected all British combat arms in CMF. As such the personnel obtained were not always allocated to the infantry, with many being sent to other service arms (see Appendix 13, Table 1).

The British infantry units in CMF received approximately half of the officers and other ranks that were available from the disbandment of units in CMF. However it should be noted that the infantry only received soldiers who had been retrained from the AA units in September, due to the time required to train them. From June to August

⁹⁹ CAB 106/451. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 9.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 10.

reinforcements had been obtained from the reorganisation of two support battalions, using the first reinforcements of 46th and 56th Divisions (who were then refitting in the Middle East) and the disbandment of two infantry battalions.¹⁰³ Even with the use of this extra manpower, it was still estimated that every service arm of the army would be deficient in manpower by 30 September, even when casualties and wounded who were fit to return to action were included (see Appendix 13, Table 2). This pattern was reflected in the service arms that received reinforcements from AA units up to 24 March 1945, and saw the infantry still receiving little more than half of the available reinforcements (see Appendix 13, Table 3).

The Jaipur Infantry, along with the 4/13th FF Rifles, arrived in Italy on 23 August 1944. Their arrival allowed the 74th Light Anti-Aircraft Regiment to be released from Fifth Army for disbandment, with the Jaipur Infantry and 4/13th FF Rifles replacing it. Any deficiencies the two Indian units had in vehicles and equipment were made up by CMF, suggesting that the theatre was rich in equipment but poor in manpower.¹⁰⁴ This shortage of infantry reinforcements eventually led to the departure of the 8th Manchesters from 10th Indian Division. The pre-war practice of having a British battalion in each brigade had been abandoned in the 20th Brigade since September 1944. Despite the loss of one of its British infantry battalions, the 10th Indian Division in Italy would operate with three brigades of four infantry battalions each, because of the deployment of extra Indian battalions to Italy. The attachment of 43rd Lorried Infantry Brigade saw the division operate with four brigades for a period in late 1944.

¹⁰³ CAB 106/451. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 16.

¹⁰⁴ WO 204/7394. Letter to Fifth Army and 2nd District on the 21 August 1944. Subject: Jaipur Inf and 4/13 FF Rif.

The deficiencies in manpower experienced by the British Army affected the ability of the British battalions in the division to effectively conduct operations. On 16 January 1945 the 2/3rd Gurkhas were informed that the planned contact patrol from the 1st King's Own was cancelled, because the 1st King's Own were too short of men.¹⁰⁵ In February 1945, on the Monte Grande sector, the 78th Division had only five battalions forward with each battalion having only three companies. On the 10th Indian Division's deployment to the sector it was able to deploy three brigades, 10th, 20th and 25th, of four battalions of four companies each.¹⁰⁶ The account of this period commented that "the Divisional [10th Indian] Commander was presented with no problems in finding himself sufficient troops to do this whilst retaining an adequate reserve."¹⁰⁷

However, the increase of Indian battalions in the 10th Indian Division placed extra strain on the divisional artillery, which was British, to support them. The greater number of infantry battalions available in the division could not win battles by themselves. They had to be used in conjunction with artillery, armour and air support to conduct all-arms operations. The success of the artillery units of the 10th Indian Division can be attributed to the long association between the infantry battalions and their assigned field batteries, which had been forged by training and serving together in the Middle East and Italy. This camaraderie continued to the end of the war. The gunners of 269 Battery, who were assigned to the 2/3rd Gurkhas throughout the campaign in Italy, presented a cup to them in memory of their service together in August 1945, an occasion celebrated with sports

¹⁰⁵ WO 169/22401 - The Gurkha Rifles: 2/3 Gurkha Rifles, 01 January – 30 November 1945. War Diary entry for 16 January 1945.

¹⁰⁶ WO 204/7223 - 10 Indian Infantry Division: operations, 01 August 1944 – 30 April 1945. Chapter 7: Reliefs and Planning, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

matches and a party.¹⁰⁸ When an infantry battalion was rested so were its assigned field battery and forward observation officers, allowing a fresh artillery battery to serve the relieving infantry battalion. The increase to four battalions in each brigade was not met with an increase in the war establishment of the divisional artillery units, in effect asking them to do more with the same.¹⁰⁹

Difficulties in Reinforcing the Indian Army

The expansion of the Indian Army in the Second World War had been achieved by recruiting from the non-martial races of the population, who had been denied entry into the army in the inter-war years. However, this did not change the fact that combat units were still organised by caste, along the company and one class system. In the 10th Indian Division the 4/10th Baluchis was made up of troops from four different castes, Punjabi Muslims (50% of the battalion strength), Dogras (25%), Yusafzais (16.66%) and Khattaks (8.34%). The 3/1st Punjab battalion was formed from equal contingents of Sikhs and Jats, Punjabi Muslims, Rajputs and Hazarawals. The recruitment from the Indian lower castes had necessitated the formation of their own, separate units (e.g. Mahar Machine Gun Regiment, Mazbhi and Ramadasias Sikhs, Chamar Regiment) because they did not work well with high caste soldiers.¹¹⁰

By 1943 pre-war units, who had been exclusively manned by the martial races, were unable to maintain the strengths of their battalions due to the extra demand the expansion of army placed upon the martial races. For these units to continue functioning

¹⁰⁸ WO 169/22401. War Diary entry for 18 August 1945.

¹⁰⁹ WO 204/7223. Chapter 5 Advance to the River Lamone, p. 9.

¹¹⁰ S. P. Cohen, *The Indian Army: Its contribution to the development of a nation* (oxford, 1990 [1971]), p. 142.

they had had to recruit from the non-martial races.¹¹¹ For instance, the 11th Sikh Regiment had its 2nd, 3rd and 4th battalions in the Middle East and CMF by 1944, all of which were pre-war regulars and relied solely upon the Sikh population for its troops. By 16 April 1944 it was understood in AFHQ and the Middle East that “INDIA can only maintain one SIKH bn in battle, which will mean that, unless other arrangements are made, 4/11 SIKH will be permanently in ME.”¹¹² The expansion of the army had diminished the recruitable Sikh population, meaning that it was proving harder to find new recruits to maintain existing formations. However, by 8 May 1944 AFHQ understood that the “Indian Rft position will now allow of operational employment of both 2/11 and 4/11 Sikh simultaneously....”¹¹³ The reversal in the decision to allow the deployment of two Sikh battalions was due to the fact that, unlike the 2/11th and the 3/11th battalions, which were manned 100% by Sikhs, the 4/11th was manned by both Sikhs and Punjabi Muslims.¹¹⁴

Given that the Indian Army organised its fighting manpower by caste it was necessary for reinforcements to be sent to a unit that was of their caste. The exchange of battalions of the same regiment between Italy and PAIFORCE would allow the unit sent from PAIFORCE to use the same reinforcements as the battalion in Italy. If the battalions exchanged were of different regiments, this would have created difficulties, as the example below demonstrates. On 15 February 1944 a draft of forty one IORs of 4/13th FF Rifles were sent to the 1/12th FF Regiment, yet the soldiers believed that they were sent from the Middle East “on the understanding that they would go to another Bn of their

¹¹¹ S. N. Prasad, *Expansion of the Armed Forces and Defence Organisation, 1939-45*, p. 85.

¹¹² WO 201/2598. Indian Infantry battalions and ISF battalions, 16 April 1944, p. 1.

¹¹³ WO 201/2598. Cipher Message from AFHQ to Mideast and AAI on 8 May 1944.

¹¹⁴ WO 204/7464A. Indian Army liaison mission to A.F.H.Q: war establishments, formation and liaison letters 1-7, 01 February 1944 - 31 May 1945. IALM Liaison letter No. 5, 23 December 1944, p. 1.

Group i.e. 6/13th FFR.” However, they were told that they were in fact sent out as pool reinforcements for any of the frontier force units. The use of the word group is ambiguous; it could easily denote regiment but, if that was the case, why not use the word ‘regiment’ in the first place? It could be that it was an issue of caste, and that they associated the regiment with the caste of the soldiers it recruited. The Indian Army did arrange an inter-battalion exchange, so that the draft for the 4/13th FF Rifles would go to 6/13th, if the latter agreed to send its previous draft from the 3/12th FF Regiment to 1/12th.¹¹⁵

The difficulty in granting leave (which in the Indian Army was for a period of two months) was it required another soldier to replace the soldier whilst he was on leave, so the unit could continue to function. Although it was possible to send a small number of men on leave without replacement, this policy would have meant that only a fraction of personnel would have been granted leave. Even in October 1945 the commanders of CMF were insisting on one for one replacement of personnel on leave, despite the war being over:

Emphasise continued leave mov [sic] entirely depended on return by ARMINDIA of 1 for 1 replacements. Recent numbers of replacements have fallen far short of leave details despatched. Unless full number replacements received leave will have to be stopped which we are anxious to avoid on grounds of morale.¹¹⁶

The continued organisation by social caste in the Indian Army applied to replacements for leave personnel as well as reinforcements for battle casualties. In response to suggestions from the British Army of cross-posting troops to allow soldiers to go on leave the Indian Army stated “we anticipated your proposals for cross postings.

¹¹⁵ WO 169/19484. War diary entry for 15 February 1944.

¹¹⁶ WO 204/1667. Message from CMF to Troopers, 21 October 1945.

Emphasise main difficulty is class composition which raises problems unknown in British Army.”¹¹⁷ Attempts were made to conduct these cross postings in order to allow leave for long service personnel in 4th Indian Division, which could be “carried out in 4 Ind Inf Div service units in GREECE but this cannot be effected in Inf Bns.”¹¹⁸

The official history commented on the expansion of the Indian Army, that “out of India’s total population of 390,000,000 it was estimated that only some ten million men had the requisite intelligence, aptitude and mechanical sense essential for service in modern armed forces.”¹¹⁹ Despite the success of voluntarily recruiting two million men who were suitable for military service, the demands for educated and intelligent men were not achieved as the war progressed. The Fourth Indian Manpower Review (shown in Appendix 14) forecast the manpower situation by 31 July 1945, and predicted shortages in both officers and enlisted men in all service branches and castes of the army. The number of formations raised by the Indian Army decreased massively in the latter years of the war (see Appendix 15). Recruitment was instead tasked towards maintaining already raised forces, in terms of reinforcements and raising service units.

Therefore even without the problems caused by caste, finding the soldiers required to replace those in Italy sent on leave would have been difficult. Providing leave to all the Indian soldiers in Italy did not mean just finding replacements for the infantrymen, in whom there were predicted deficiencies (see Appendix 14). It also meant having trained doctors, engineers, nurses, butchers and cooks of all ranks; to replace

¹¹⁷ WO 204/1667. Message from Armindia to Troopers, 20 October 1945.

¹¹⁸ WO 204/1667. Message from CMF to Troopers, 21 October 1945.

¹¹⁹ Prasad, *Expansion of the Armed Forces*, p. 78.

their counterparts in Italy. The manpower review predicted large deficiencies in these as well, with a shortage of 2,670 medical officers and 5,100 matriculation personnel.¹²⁰

The review also predicted a shortage of 15,850 clerks by July 1945.¹²¹ In 1944 it was noted that “the situation at Base Offices, regarding clerks and clerical staff, is acute, as that of units and other fmns in the fd.”¹²² The Adv O2E (Ind) section CMF was reliant upon clerks, as indeed was the entire Indian Army, which it found increasingly difficult to obtain as the war progressed. The shortage of clerks meant that many of them were denied promotion, because replacements for them could not be found. This caused resentment amongst clerks, who felt their intelligence and abilities meant they were prime candidates for promotion in the army. The opinion of one clerk is produced below:

For clerks like me, there is no hope of salvation in the Indian army. We do not get leave; we cannot rise higher and we are prohibited from applying for transfer to any other branch of service. I shall never advise even my enemy to join the Indian army as a clerk.¹²³

When Auchinleck had first suggested the exchange of PAIFORCE Indian Army battalions with those in Italy he had stated “our Ind Inf maintenance position is such that it is not possible to maintain more bns in high wastage roles.”¹²⁴ This suggests that the Indian Army was in no position to support additional infantry battalions for service overseas or in Burma by December 1944. This was most likely because the Fourteenth Army at this point was beginning its invasion of Burma and so all efforts were focused on

¹²⁰ WO 204/7464A. IALM Liaison letter No. 5, 23 December 1944, p. 1.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹²² WO 169/18890. 25 Indian Infantry Brigade Adm Letter No. 24, 27 September 1944, p. 2.

¹²³ WO 204/10382 - Appreciation and censorship reports: Nos 53-77, 01 September 1944 - 30 September 1945. Report No. 55 for the period 16-31 October 1944, p. D-2.

¹²⁴ WO 204/7394. Letter of 1 January 1945 from Lieutenant General John Harding, AFHQ Chief of Staff on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE Appendix A, Letter of 17 December 1944 from C-in-C India to AFHQ on Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE.

that. The war establishments of the Indian infantry battalions in Italy were liable to be amended by Allied Armies Italy (AAI¹²⁵) to suit the conditions in the country. However, any proposal for an increase in the number of troops or officers in a unit had to be approved by India, so they were certain the increase could be supplied.¹²⁶ The AAI suggested that all Indian infantry battalions be placed on the same war establishment as British battalions, which would have required an increase in manpower of one officer and fifty-six other ranks.¹²⁷ The eventual increase in manpower for the 4/13 FF Rifles was limited to only thirty other ranks, which would suggest that this was applied to all Indian infantry battalions in Italy.¹²⁸ The refusal by India to supply more officers to the battalions in Italy is hardly surprising given the shortages of officers that the Indian Army was experiencing (see Appendix 14).

During the plans to use ISF battalions in active operations in 1944, special service officers in four to six man teams were intended to be assigned to ISF units to improve their standards.¹²⁹ However, the shortage of officers meant only four ISF units could be provided with special service officers.¹³⁰ Auchinleck responded to a proposal¹³¹ to give ISF units the same number of British officers as regular battalions with the reply, “officers are the difficulty will do my best to find them.”¹³² However, the decision to grant ISF

¹²⁵ The Allied Armies in Italy, AAI, was the title given to the highest Allied field headquarters in Italy. Over the course of the campaign the force was also called the Fifteenth Army Group, Central Mediterranean Force and Allied Forces in Italy. It was composed of the US Fifth and British Eighth Armies, and commanded by Field Marshal Alexander and General Clark during the Italian campaign.

¹²⁶ WO 204/1333 - Indian Allied Forces: policy, 01 June 1944 - 31 December 1944. Message from Armindia to AFHQ on 9 August 1944.

¹²⁷ WO 204/7408 - Indian Infantry Division: organisation, 01 October 1944 - 31 January 1945. HQ AAI, Application to convert a unit, 25 October 1944.

¹²⁸ WO 204/7408. AFHQ Conversion of Units – Inf, 15 November 1944.

¹²⁹ WO 201/2598. Office note on ISF battalions – present policy and future employment, 28 March 1944, p.

1.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³¹ WO 201/2598. Message to India from Mideast personal for Auchinleck from Paget, 17 February 1944.

¹³² WO 201/2598. Message from India to Mideast personal for Paget from Auchinleck, 21 February 1944.

officers emergency commissions in 1943, due to officer shortages, meant that the only way they could be replaced with a British officer was if they were proved unfit for service.¹³³ It was decided that India did not have the means to supply and maintain officers for the ISF battalions given other commitments, but it did allow for the possibility of using officers from within units in the Middle East for service with ISF units.¹³⁴ The request to deploy 43rd Gurkha Lorried Brigade in Italy was met with a reply from India who pointed out the difficulties it would cause for them to maintain it. In addition to the difficulties in raising troops it was the greater burden on officers that was the concern to India. Gurkha battalions would only accept British officers, not Indian, and the need to see that they were Gurkhali speakers placed further demands upon India.¹³⁵

Conclusion

To say that the Indian Army was successfully able to reinforce its units in Italy first requires us to define what success was. The Indian Army was never able to keep every unit reinforced to its full war establishment every day they were overseas. The difficulties were too great. Instead the Indian Army was able to keep its units supplied with troops so that they were still operationally capable, and it is because of this that it was successful. It is important to bear in mind that the German Army was also experiencing a manpower crisis. A divisional intelligence summary in January 1945 was able to reveal the German Army's strength classifications for its combat groups. A strong battalion was one with over 400 men, a medium strength battalion was 200-400 men, and a weak battalion was one with under 200 men.¹³⁶ The strength returns (see Appendices 14 and

¹³³ WO 201/2598. Message from India to Mideast personal for Paget from Auchinleck, 18 March 1944.

¹³⁴ WO 201/2598. Units for Italy, 29 April 1944, Appendix A.

¹³⁵ WO 204/1333. Message from India to AFHQ, 8 July 1944, p. 1.

¹³⁶ WO 169/22249. 10 Indian Division Intelligence Summary Number 163 3 January 1945, p. 2.

15) show that the Indian infantry battalions were able to keep their strengths higher than the British battalions, pointing to the difficulties the latter experienced in finding reinforcements. Throughout 1944 and 1945, Indian battalions possessed an average strength of between 700 and 900 men (see Appendix 18). Whilst greater difficulties were experienced in the reinforcement of British and ISF battalions, these would still have been classed as strong battalions in the German Army. The units' strengths were maintained through the reinforcement system of camps, naval convoys and administration that meant reinforcements were able to get to Italy from India. Whilst it is difficult to calculate the exact number of casualties it prevented, the division's application of health and sanitation measures prevented unnecessary casualties, and thus the demand for reinforcements. The Indian Army knew that casualties were inevitable and so took measures, through the training of adequate reserves and management of long serving units, to minimise the impact. Compromises were made in achieving this feat, most notably the failure to provide home leave to Indian troops who had been serving overseas for several years. Whilst it is important to understand how the Indian Army replaced the casualties it suffered, it is equally important to understand why Indian soldiers decided to suffer such hardships. It is to this question, amongst many more, that the next chapter concerns itself with.

CHAPTER 5: THE INDIAN SOLDIER'S EXPERIENCE OF THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

The experience of the Indian Army in Italy is unique amongst all the campaigns it fought during the Second World War. By using censor reports this chapter will observe what the experience of the 10th Indian Division in Italy was like. The focus will be on two major aspects of the division's deployment; the first will analyse the attitude of the Indian soldiers of the 10th Indian Division to the Italian campaign. How the Indian soldiers perceived the worthiness of the war in Italy, and the wider Allied cause? What were their opinions on their service conditions, such as their reaction to being denied home leave for several years? The second section will examine what the thoughts and hopes of the Indian soldiers were for the future, for both themselves and their country, and whether their military service influenced these in any way.

The Indian Soldier's Wartime Experience in Italy

In the previous chapter we saw the inability of the Indian Army to grant home leave to India for its soldiers. Here we will show the Indian soldiers' reaction to their lack of home leave. The majority of Indian troops who served overseas spent years without seeing their homes and families in India. This was not a new problem, nor one unique to Italy. When the 10th Indian Division had been stationed in the Middle East in early 1944 soldiers were unable to obtain leave. By 1 October 1945, the division contained 666 soldiers who had served overseas for over four years without leave, and 1,393 who had served three and a half to four years.¹ An Indian sweeper in November 1944 documented his experience of the leave system, writing "I tried to get leave but there is no hope. Men

¹ WO 204/1667 - 10 Indian Division: repatriation, 01 September 1945 - 30 November 1945. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices p. 7.

who came overseas in 1939-40 are still serving here without leave. I have passed 3½ years only and feel completely cut off from my family."²

There are no figures available for those soldiers who would have served similar lengths of time without leave, but were killed before they could be granted leave. The motivations for the soldiers, and their families, to return to India were often family reasons. Many soldiers had arranged marriages before they had been deployed overseas, which remained unfulfilled as troops were unable to obtain leave, as shown by this comment from the father of a Havildar clerk in an Indian infantry battalion in March 1944:

Your father-in-law is pressing hard for your marriage, because his daughter has attained puberty. According to our religion (Hinduism)³, it is disgraceful for both parties wither to break off the engagement or to delay the marriage. Try hard to come on leave early, even if the leave is for a few days only.⁴

The long separation of soldiers from their families and loved ones could cause marital breakdown, particularly when relatives became ill:

A year ago when my only child passed away, my wife wrote to me a...letter entreating me to come home on leave. I could not obtain leave and it exasperated [sic] my wife, who wrote to me her last letter denouncing our relationship. Her rash turning away has broken my heart and there seems to be no remedy for the wound in my soul. An NCO in December 1944.⁵

The major complaint the Indian soldier had over leave was the belief that their terms of service had promised them regular leave to India whilst based overseas. This

² WO 204/10382 - Appreciation and censorship reports: Nos 53-77, 01 September 1944 - 30 September 1945. Report No. 56 for the period 1-15 November 1944, p. D-3.

³ Censor's observation.

⁴ WO 169/18768 - M.I.12 Ind. Censor Sec, 1944. Middle East Military Censorship Fortnightly Summary Number 168 for 23 February – 7 March 1944, p. 3.

⁵ WO 204/10382. Report No. 59 for period 16-31 December 1944, E-2.

was regularly commented upon by the troops, as the opinion of this Indian soldier writing below illustrates. He wrote “yes darling, there is an order that after 2 years overseas service, everybody is entitled to 2 months leave in India. That is only an order which exists on paper...”⁶

The reason for the lack of leave was the lack of shipping space, as mentioned in the previous chapter. However, the experience for the Indian soldier who had been granted leave, only to be destined to wait on irregular shipping convoys was not an enviable one, as reflected by these words from an Indian NCO staying in 8th IRC:

It is about a month since I am waiting for the passage but it is a great disappointment to tell you that it would be long to reach home. I feel like going back to my unit. I am so much worried that I don't feel like coming home. I have suffered a lot and still have to face so many troubles that I can't describe.⁷

The censors in December 1944 noted in their analysis of all Indian mail in CMF that “the length of overseas service, coupled with the difficulty of obtaining leave, continues to be the chief complaint of Indian troops.”⁸ The troops in Italy felt particularly resentful given the belief that troops based in India and Burma were getting leave with greater regularity than themselves. One NCO wrote “those who serve in India get leave in no time, but we on overseas are not allowed to avail leave even after many years.”⁹ One British commander of an Indian infantry battalion writing in May 1944, had the utmost

⁶ WO 169/18768. Middle East Military Censorship Fortnightly Summary Number 165 for 12-25 January 1944, pp. 9-10.

⁷ WO 204/707 - 8 Indian Field Section: reports, 1 December 1944 – 31 October 1945. Censorship Report No. 4, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-16 February 1945, p. 5.

⁸ WO 204/10382. Report No. 59 for period 16-31 December 1944, E-2.

⁹ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 15, covering outgoing and incoming mail of all Indian Troops in Italy for period 1-15 September 1945, p. 3.

sympathy for his troops, believing that they suffered far greater than the British soldiers who were similarly denied leave:

I agree with your view on the iniquity of this forced separation with its absence of any definite time limit...You are very wrong when you think that it is different with the Indians. In fact, British people can correspond and control their affairs far more successfully than the I.O.R's. And the effect on a sepoy or VCO, too, for that matter, of knowing that his house is deserted, his land untilled, his animals possibly dead and his family parked on 'in-laws' is just as bad as in the case of British troops and possibly much worse. Some of our lads have been away for close on 4 years.¹⁰

The primary motivation for soldiers wishing to return to India was to help their families, given the dire financial state that the country was in. The Bengal Famine of 1943, in addition to the 1.5 million lives it claimed, led to skyrocketing food prices. Economic output was geared towards war production and this led to a shortage in commodities and textiles, which saw rapid price rises. The shortage and cost of everyday items led to a flourishing black market.¹¹ Families regularly called upon their relatives overseas to return home to help in this matter. Given the conditions in India the Indian soldier displayed displeasure with the financial terms of his service. The Indian soldier often felt that his pay was too low, in particular due to the fact that the war had led to prices rising in Italy and in India. Due to the economic hardships that soldiers' families were suffering in India, many of the troops sent a portion of their wage to help their families: known as the family allotment. The importance of this financial aid meant that one of the common themes of the censor reports was the non-receipt of the family allotment, and the attempts by soldiers and their families to remedy this. As this

¹⁰ WO 204/10381 - Appreciation and censorship reports: Nos 1-52, 01 November 1942 - 30 September 1944. Report No. 45 for period 16-31 May 1944, p. D-2.

¹¹ B. Prasad, *India and the War* (New Delhi, 2012), p. 267.

comment by an IOR from March 1945 shows, it was a matter of great concern to soldiers' families, "my dear father I am very sorry that you did not get the FA [family allotment] up to this time. I have also sent a wire to the OC of my Depot so don't worry."¹² Soldiers' families frequently requested that their family allotment be increased, which the soldiers found difficult to grant due to their low pay, as shown from this letter by an NCO to his family in November 1944, who wrote "you always write asking me to increase the family allotment and say that Rs 60/- are nothing in to-days hard market, but what can I do, I am helpless here, what I get for myself after deducting my family allotment is not enough even to buy cigarettes."¹³

Pay and leave were not the only complaints that Indian troops held regarding service in Italy, but they were the most common. Criticisms of their welfare arrangements varied from report to report. One of the most prominent topics was food, with the Indian soldier freely expressing his opinion on the matter. Although many of the comments were positive, complaints usually arose when rations did not contain enough fresh meat and vegetables, as this quotation from an engineer demonstrates: "the only difficulty for us out here is that we do not get fresh meat. The cigarettes we get in rations are those worthless Green 'V' cigarettes; consequently I have to spend about Rs.10/- monthly for buying other cigarettes from the NAAFI for smoking."¹⁴ Whenever possible the Indian soldier would attend the screening of Indian films and concerts. Perhaps due to the rarity that such opportunities were available, the Indian soldier was quick to criticise any performance that he felt was not of a high enough quality. One NCO's

¹² WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 7, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 17-31 March 1945, p. 4.

¹³ WO 204/10382. Report No. 57 for period 16-30 November 1944, E-2.

¹⁴ WO 204/10382. Report No. 55 for period 16-31 October 1944, D-2.

scathing review of an Indian concert party deemed that "the show was not worth even one Anna ticket."¹⁵

However, despite the grievances Indian troops held towards their service conditions, the same censor reports continually recorded that the morale and fighting spirit of the Indian soldiers was high. Below are the assessments from the morale and censorship reports on the Indian Army at various points during the campaign. In May 1944, as the 10th Indian Division was first committed to operations in Italy, and as the Allies were undertaking their spring offensive, the censors noted "a splendid fighting spirit is evident with 4 Ind Div and 8 Ind Div...10 Ind Div are in excellent spirits, and appear eager to see action."¹⁶ As the war progressed, and hopes of a German surrender before Christmas 1944 were dashed, it would have been understandable to have seen a drop in morale as the troops campaigned in the depths of winter. However, in December 1944, the censors observed that "despite the increasing cold met with on the Italian front, the excellent fighting spirit of the Indian troops remains very evident. Pride in their units, and in the achievements of Indian arms generally, is a marked feature of the mail of all ranks."¹⁷ As the war went on into 1945 the morale of the Indian troops was still high: "an idea can very easily be formed from the mail under review that the morale and high spirit of Indian troops is soaring higher and higher every day."¹⁸ Finally with German surrender in May 1945 the troops of the 10th Indian Division were able to rest and reflect on their efforts over the past year, with the censors commenting in June that "great pride

¹⁵ WO 204/10382. Report No. 62 for period 1-14 February 1945, E-3.

¹⁶ WO 204/10381. Report No. 45 for period 16-31 May 1944, pp. D-1 – D-2.

¹⁷ WO 204/10382. Report No. 59 for period 16-31 December 1944, E-1.

¹⁸ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 4, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-16 February 1945, p. 1.

is taken in Indian fighting units' hard-earned honours and awards after undergoing innumerable [sic] hardships during the campaign."¹⁹

Field Marshal Slim, who commanded the largest force of the Indian Army in the Second World War, the Fourteenth Army, wrote on the subject of morale in his account of fighting the Japanese in Burma, *Defeat into Victory*. It is useful to apply his thoughts on morale to the situation that confronted the Indian formations deployed in Italy. Slim believed morale was formed from three aspects: spiritual, intellectual and material. Spiritual is the belief that what a soldier fights for is a worthy cause; intellectual means that the soldier recognises that the cause he fights for is achievable; and lastly material that he will be given the best equipment and conditions in which to conduct his duties.²⁰ He noted that of the three, spiritual and intellectual were more important than material, writing that "the very highest kinds of morale are often met when material conditions are lowest."²¹ In Italy the Indian Army, including the 10th Indian Division, frequently had to contend with service conditions that tested their resolve. The problems of pay and leave had a negative effect on Indian soldiers' morale, yet they still believed in the worthiness of the Allied cause, and that it was in India's interests to fight, even if that meant delaying leave. For an IOR of 43 Indian Infantry Brigade W/S below, his reasons for wishing to delay leave until victory was achieved were from a sense of professional pride in his own, and his unit's achievements during his time in the army:

Don't ask me to come on leave. Victory is in sight and let me give it the finishing touch. We have been fighting hard for the last five years and now the result of our

¹⁹ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 12, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-15 June 1945, p. 1.

²⁰ W. J. Slim, *Defeat Into Victory* (London, 2009 [1956]), pp. 208-9.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 208.

privations is about to make its appearance. Let me remain in the battle-field till the final victory is achieved.²²

The extract below, from an NCO of the 4/10th Baluchis, conveys a firm ideological belief in the righteousness of the Allied cause, that the Axis forces were a severe threat to global prosperity:

Now-a-days you must be reading good news that this horrible war is in its final stages and once again there will soon be peace all over the world. I have seen this tragic drama for the past five years. There was a time when the existence of the world was threatened with total annihilation by the Axis aggression. All sorts of atrocities were committed and Axis tyranny was at its zenith when the destruction of humanity was spread for the sake of establishing the New Order in Europe. Thank God, the tables have been decisively turned upon the enemy and the sun of aggressive powers has sunk for ever [sic]. Hitler and his gang are going to get what they deserve and we are achieving what we have so dearly earned.²³

One of the reasons for the high morale of the Indian soldiers in the 10th Indian Division was the fact that they had not suffered a defeat during their time in Italy. The division had participated in a seemingly unstoppable push up the Italian peninsula, which reinforced the belief that victory was inevitable. Their morale was further strengthened by news of the victories on the Western and Eastern Fronts: "you must be in regular touch with the news. We are not doing much at the moment on account of the bad weather which is awful. However with the Russians doing as they are I swear I'll never spend another winter in Europe."²⁴ Given the threat posed by Japan to India, and the likelihood that soldiers knew people serving in the Fourteenth Army, any news of a

²² WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 3, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 16-31 January 1945, p. 1.

²³ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 8, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-16 April 1945, p. 2.

²⁴ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 4, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-16 February 1945, p. 2.

Japanese setback was gratefully received: "...even Japan is showing signs of an internal crack-up. Tojo has resigned and the Americans seem to be landing wherever they wish. I am firmly convinced that the war will be over this year, even with Japan."²⁵

However, with end of active operations against the German Army in May and the surrender of Japan in August, the Indian troops saw few reasons for their continued presence in Italy. The censor report for the first half of May covered much of the soldiers' initial reaction to the victory in Italy. It noted that the soldiers believed the "return of Indian troops to India is estimated to commence within a month or so and finish within six months."²⁶ Monitoring the subject of leave during September it was noted "complaints as regards leave and repatriation is again on the rise."²⁷ However, there was also a change in the Indian soldier's opinion and view of the granting of leave. When the Indian formations had been engaged in active operations in Italy, the lack of leave was attributed to being one of the sacrifices of war. After hostilities had ceased opinion changed because, to the Indian soldier, the end of the war meant their services were no longer required, as demonstrated below:

I do not know how long it will take for me to return to India. Germany and Japan both have been finished and there is nothing to be done out here now, but still from the circumstances it appears that it will [be] a year or two before I shall be able to see you all. I cannot understand the cause of my unnecessary detention in foreign countries after every thing [sic] is over. An IOR from GHQ 2nd Echelon (Indian) CMF, September 1945.²⁸

²⁵ WO 204/10381. Report No. 50 for period 1-15 August 1944, p. D-2.

²⁶ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 10, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division, Reinforcement Camps and Hospitals for period 1-15 May 1945, p. 2.

²⁷ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 15, covering outgoing and incoming mail of all Indian Troops in Italy for period 1-15 September 1945, p. 3.

²⁸ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 16, covering outgoing and incoming mail of all Indian Troops in Italy for period 16-30 September 1945, p. 8.

The slow rate of Indian repatriation was an issue that led to the intervention of the commander of the 10th Indian Division. Major General Reid wrote “the Tps under my command are in good spirits and morale and discipline is excellent. Never-the-less long, and to them apparently quite unnecessary, delay in return to India cannot but have a deteriorating effect. The fact too that the Winter [sic] months will have a restricting effect on their out-of-door recreation will be bound to cause a certain amount of inward thinking and restlessness.”²⁹ Whilst asserting that he retained control of his troops, Reid indicated the threat of possible unrest and ill-discipline by the Indian troops. Whether this threat was real or embellished, it is a reminder that the loyalty and service of the Indian troops was not unconditional, but earned. To support his position he earned the support of two members of AFHQ upper echelons. Major General M.W.M. MacDonald, the Deputy Adjutant General of G-1, AFHQ, wrote that “the whole question of returning Indians to India has been most scandalously shelved, mainly due to apathy on the part of India...In my opinion the Indians are being badly done down.”³⁰ Lieutenant General Harding, commander of XIII Corps, believed that in recognition of their service in Italy, the Indian troops deserved an explanation from the authorities as to why efforts to repatriate them had been so slow.³¹ Such a suggestion would no doubt have been warmly welcomed by the Indian troops, who seemed to suffer the most serious blow to their morale from the fact that they did not know the reasons for their continued presence in Italy:

²⁹ WO 204/1667. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, p. 2.

³⁰ WO 204/1667. Message from Major General M.W.M Macleod Commander DAG, G-1, AGHQ, Return of Indian units to India, 15 September 1945.

³¹ WO 204/1667. Transfer of 10th Indian Division to India by Lieutenant-General Harding, 11 September 1945.

I often think this waiting to be repatriated is the worst [sic] part of the war service. So long as the war was on, one did not think of the future [sic] very deeply and civilian life was very remote. Now it is [all] one thinks about and the time simply drags. No body [sic] has any interest in soldiering and this hanging about is soul-killing. An NCO from the 1/2 Punjab Regiment, September 1945.³²

Kaushik Roy believed that had the war in South East Asia continued for another year, the British Army's morale in that theatre would have collapsed, requiring the Indian and African armies to take on the bulk of the fighting.³³ The morale reports conducted in CMF reported on the willingness of each nation's soldiers to fight in the Far East against Japan. Of all the nations in CMF the Indian Army displayed the greatest willingness to fight the Japanese. The morale report conducted in early May 1945 is a useful insight into the opinions of each nation with regards to fighting against Japan, as the end of hostilities in Europe made it a realistic, rather than theoretical, possibility. The British troops' outlook depended on their eligibility. Veterans were increasingly unwilling to risk their lives further, as the opinion of this driver demonstrates: "they wanted volunteers for Burma and they said they would like to see every young soldier step forward...but I've done all the volunteering I'm going to do in this war."³⁴ Those who would be sent to the east to face the Japanese, accepted it with the stipulation that they be given home leave first, as surmised by one gunner: "I shall be one of the unlucky ones and end up in Burma, anyway as long as I get leave I don't mind where I go."³⁵ Similarly, South African troops were equally reluctant to go, with one NCO describing the reaction as "a few fellows here

³² WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 16, covering outgoing and incoming mail of all Indian Troops in Italy for period 16-30 September 1945, p. 9.

³³ K. Roy, 'Discipline and Morale of the African, British and Indian Army units in Burma and India during World War II: July 1943 to August 1945', in *Modern Asian Studies*, 44 (2010), p. 1282.

³⁴ WO 204/10382. Report No. 68 for period 1-15 May 1945, A-2.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, A-2.

and there have signed [for continuing their military service in the east], but the response is very lacking.”³⁶

The opinions of the New Zealand soldiers were more diverse, for whilst they had been fighting as long as the British and South Africans, the Japanese conflict was more of a concern for them than the war against Germany. One private surmised it as:

It brings a fellow more or less to a dead end wondering how long it will be before we either go home or on to fight the Japs. Opinion seems to be about equally divided between them among the boys around here. I hope that it will be home but have my doubts as the Japs were more our business than the Germans.³⁷

In contrast, Indian soldiers displayed an eagerness to take part in the fight against the Japanese. This is because the censor reports had observed that the Indian soldiers viewed the Japanese as the ‘real enemy’, due to the threat of invasion they had once posed to India.³⁸ An Indian officer commented that “the war in Europe has ended. All, especially the Sepoys, are in excellent spirit. After a period of relaxation at home they can be let loose against the Japs. They are ready to fight the Japs and are very confident. Wonderful fellows, these Indian Sepoys are!”³⁹ Whilst it cannot be ignored that this officer may have exaggerated the eagerness of the Indian sepoy to fight the Japanese, it is worth noting he specified that the Indian soldier, like his British counterpart, expected to be given home leave before being deployed in the east. This suggests that there was an acceptance that Japan had to be defeated, despite the wishes of many to return home, as demonstrated by this VCO of the 7th Madras Engineers:

³⁶ WO 204/10382. Report No. 68 for period 1-15 May 1945, C-1.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, B-2.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, D-1.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, D-1.

The war in the whole of Europe has now terminated. I am quite sure it will not take long for me to come back to India. But there is another snag, I cannot possibly get discharged unless Japan is defeated. Still if I go to Singapore I will certainly be happy and will do my best to bring about an early ruin on Japs.⁴⁰

The Indian Soldier's Thoughts for the Future

The thoughts of the Indian soldiers in Italy also turned towards the time when the war was over. Their service in the war had left an impression on many that India's contribution to the conflict should not go unrewarded. Many were aware of the irony that India, a nation not politically independent, was a force that had helped in the liberation of conquered peoples and nations, with one soldier writing "...viewing the whole situation of the world and seeing that even small countries demand independence, we can hope that India, which has played a prominent part in this war, will surely be given some political uplift in recognition of her splendid services rendered in this war."⁴¹ Those who wrote on the subject were all strongly in favour of, at the very least, self-rule and dominion status, or total independence. The morale reports convey a strong belief in the importance of political and religious unity for a future independent India, a belief formed by the experiences of Indian soldiers, of many castes and religions, serving together in the army:

We can not [sic] imagine why our leaders fail to achieve Hindu-Muslim Unity. Here in the army we have no quarrel between Muslim and Hindus. We live and dine together, and understand each other. By our joint efforts we have liberated many enemy-captured countries and can do many other things of this kind. I confidently hope that we ex-

⁴⁰ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 10, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-15 May 1945, p. 3.

⁴¹ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 16, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 16-30 September 1945, p. 11.

soldiers will do our utmost to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity which will surely pave the way for the independence of India.⁴² An unknown soldier of Skinner's Horse.

With these hopes for reform came, from some quarters, a heightened awareness of any slight towards India given her contribution to the war. The slow rate of repatriation was particularly galling to the Indian soldiers, especially when they saw ships whisking the soldiers of Brazil, South Africa and New Zealand home:

Though the war is completely finished, no body [sic] looks after Indian Soldiers. Soldiers of other nations are being despatched to their countries on a large scale, but for Indian soldiers no ships are provided. This state of affairs is deplorable and this reminds us of our inferiority among the nations of the world.⁴³ A VCO of 120 Indian Railway Construction Company.

Some soldiers believed that the decision not to have included the Indian Army in the armies of occupation in Europe was a slight on them and India, given that Indian soldiers had shared the same hardships of their British, French and American colleagues. An IWO commented: "my views on the Indian release scheme are that some Indian Units should have been retained here as occupation troops. After all, they have fought and died like any other Allied troops, why should they now be denied the honour and glory of occupation of European countries?"⁴⁴ An Indian officer believed the decision was a clear display of racism, writing "the war in Europe is over and with it the job of the Indian troops here. Only white nations will use their troops for occupation here, which cannot but remind us of racial discrimination."⁴⁵

⁴² WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 14, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 20-31 August 1945, p. 6.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁴⁴ WO 204/10382. Report No. 69 for period 16-31 May 1945, D-2.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, D-2.

In addition to their demands for political independence of India, the Indian soldiers' experiences in Italy influenced their opinions on what form Indian society and its economy should adopt in the future. Several writers attributed the higher living standards in Italy to the lack of caste and religious animosity, with an IOR commenting "the causes of our backwardness are not far to seek. The communal [dissensions] are a stumbling block in the way of our progress. Those who have visited the Western Countries will deprecate these things and strain every nerve to achieve communal harmony at all costs..."⁴⁶ Many writers attributed the achievements of the Italian people to the accessibility of education to its people, something they wanted replicated in a post war India. A VCO of Skinner's Horse wrote that "the European countries have taught me a great lesson about the prosperity of a country. The key to a nation's good lies in getting her people educated...In my view, free and compulsory education will lead India to its proper place among the nations of the world."⁴⁷ An IWO of GHQ 2nd Echelon (Ind) saw education as more than teaching science and mathematics, but as a means of breaking down the religious tension in India: "it is fact the World War II is over, but our religious trouble will never end. The trouble is actually due to the lack of education. When the whole world is finding some way to come forward our people are finding their way down. It is up to the Government to introduce compulsory and free education which will be beneficial to the people of India."⁴⁸

However, many of the troops were more concerned with their own more immediate futures, due to the predicted economic hardships of post-war India. The

⁴⁶ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 16, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 16-30 September 1945, p. 14.

⁴⁷ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 12, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 1-15 June 1945, p. 8.

⁴⁸ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 16, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 16-30 September 1945, p. 13.

inevitable demobilisation of the army caused great anxiety for the vast majority of troops, who believed prospects for future employment would be poor. The Indian government, unlike the British government, had not published any plans for resettlement or employment of demobilised soldiers. This fear of what awaited Indian soldiers, and officers, was still evident in August 1945, with one Indian officer commenting “now the Japs are out. What is your post-war plan? I don’t think anything substantial is being done in the way of our post-war employment...”⁴⁹ As the Indian officers quoted above and below demonstrate, these fears were held by the Indian officers as well as the IORs, which is surprising considering they were likely to be more educated, and so had better prospects for employment.

I have signed a form saying I would like to join the Police Force after the war. But I have no faith in such forms. They are only routine things to make a show of. There are hundreds of thousands of officers who may want such jobs...That is why I am saving every penny I can and want you to do the same thing.⁵⁰ An Indian officer, November 1944.

Those soldiers who were in the service units of the army, or who had learned a trade, were more confident of their job prospects than others. One soldier in December 1944 wrote, “the Army has made me an efficient mechanic and I am confident that I can equal any in my trade anywhere...A tradesman trained in the Army is bound to be a success when he starts life in civilian clothes.”⁵¹ Many soldiers resorted to calling upon their families to save whatever money they sent them to see them through the hardships ahead. An IOR wrote to his family in September 1945 to “save money as much as you can

⁴⁹ WO 204/707. Censorship Report No. 14, covering outgoing and incoming mail of 10 Indian Division and Reinforcement Camps for period 20-31 August 1945, p. 10.

⁵⁰ WO 204/10382. Report No. 57 for period 16-30 November 1944, E-2.

⁵¹ WO 204/10382. Report No. 59 for period 16-31 December 1944, E-3.

so that we may start cultivation after demobilisation. Savings will be our friends in our days of unemployment.”⁵² It is a sign of the desperation, and lack of faith in the government, felt by many soldiers that they were resorting to savings, in spite of the economic crisis that India was suffering. Given this, it is difficult to see how the families of Indian soldiers were able to put aside savings, given that that they were already struggling to make ends meet with the money they received from the family allotment.

Conclusion

From the appreciation and censorship reports conducted for the 10th Indian Division, and other Indian troops in CMF, we can draw several conclusions on the Indian soldier’s experience of war in Italy. The first point to mention is that soldiers complained freely, making clear any dissatisfactions they felt with their service conditions, particularly leave and pay. It would be rare to find any person in the world, let alone a soldier on campaign, who did not have some gripe with their lot in life. Even the most veteran soldiers of Napoleon Bonaparte’s famed Imperial Guard, the Old Guard, earned the nickname ‘the Grumblers’ from the Emperor himself for their incessant complaining. Yet even with this sobriquet, the Old Guard were still unwaveringly loyal to their Emperor, and forged a fearsome reputation on the battlefields of the Napoleonic Wars. The author lacks the knowledge to make an assumption on the psychological rationale for a soldier’s complaining, other than that it was a possible method of releasing stress. What is clear is that the complaints of the Indian soldiers never adversely effected the willingness of the majority of the troops to follow their orders. This suggests that whilst many of the soldiers had joined the army for employment and financial gain, they either possessed, or through their military service formed, a belief in the war effort. This

⁵² WO 204/10382. Report No. 77 for period 16-30 September 1945, D-4.

dissertation has shown that many saw India's participation in the Second World War in her own interest, believing that India's contribution to the war would be rewarded by political reforms, which could have led to independence.

Campaigning in Italy offered a unique experience for the Indian soldiers who were deployed there during the Second World War. The Indian troops began to compare their own political, economic and social circumstances in India, with those they found in Italy. However, it must be noted that the relatively small numbers of men who had fought in Italy, meant that their opinions and experiences were in the minority amongst their comrades in the army, and the wider Indian population. The Indian troops stationed in CMF numbered 96,100 by 8 May 1945.⁵³ This was approximately 4.7% of the total strength of the Indian Army in 1945⁵⁴, and approximately 0.025% of the Indian population during the Second World War.⁵⁵ Whilst there may have been a sizeable majority amongst the Indian Army who believed in a united India, free from caste and religious prejudice, this was evidently not the case in the wider Indian population. The partition of India led to the country erupting into widespread communal violence, and the splitting of the army between India and Pakistan.

⁵³ WO 204/1667. Message to Chief of Staff from Major General A.D. Ward, Assistant Chief of Staff (British), titled 'Return of Indian units to India', 24 September 1945, Tab D – Movement of Indian personnel from CMF to India.

⁵⁴ The Indian Army by 1945 was 2,049,086 men strong, see C. Kempton, *'Loyalty & Honour': The Indian Army September 1939 - August 1947: Part III* (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 104.

⁵⁵ The Indian population was 390 million, see S. N. Prasad, *Expansion of the Armed Forces and Defence Organisation, 1939-45* (New Delhi, 2012), p. 78.

CONCLUSION

The task that had confronted the soldiers of the Indian Army in Italy was not an easy one. Apart from having to fight a campaign in difficult terrain, harsh climate and against a dangerous foe they also had to find a method of sustaining this fight in what became the longest Allied campaign in Europe. This had to be achieved in spite of historical failings and a lack of pre-war planning and preparation for such a task. Its success is a testament to the organisational and operational capability of the Indian Army in the Second World War.

It is important to recognise that the 10th Indian Division found itself in a fortunate position upon its entry into the Italian campaign. The nature of the Allied campaign in Italy meant that it was not immediately thrown into the fray, and was instead given time to train before being committed to battle. It also benefited by being able to access the hard earned knowledge that the Indian and British Armies had learnt during five years of war, and then apply these lessons on the battlefield. Whilst it cannot be claimed to have been a visionary in the development of training and tactics, this does not mean its achievements are any less deserving of praise. The 10th Indian Division used the time that had been granted to it to become proficient at multiple forms of warfare during the Second World War, displaying a professionalism that served it well during its campaign in Italy. The division achieved this through ensuring that its training was tailored to the operations it was likely to conduct, most notably the training it received in mountain warfare in preparation for its role in the advance through the Apennines.

Arguably the greatest achievement of the Indian Army in the Italian campaign was in the successful reinforcement of the units it deployed, not just the 10th Indian Division.

Despite the admittance of non-martial classes into the Indian Army, the continued organisation of the combat units by caste caused difficulties in recruitment unimaginable to the British Army. However, the presence of 96,100 Indian troops in CMF by VE Day is ample evidence that the Indian Army had found a way to overcome these difficulties.¹ Such a large number of troops and units would not have been deployed without sufficient means to maintain them. In February 1944 it was commented, regarding the future employment of Indian Army units in Italy, that "8 Ind Div [sic] has been engaged for some months [in Italy]. It is now, however, on a relatively quiet front. It's [sic] morale is magnificent, and I think that it will be able to absorb the large number of reinforcements that are at last in sight without losing much of its fighting efficiency."²

The inability to grant adequate leave to units of the Indian Army in Italy reduced the burden on the Indian Army to provide troops to the theatre. The most effective way of giving troops leave would have been to redeploy them to India and the Burma front, where they could be given leave before commencing operations, as had been attempted with the battalions in PAIFORCE and those which had suffered heavy casualties. However, the decision making process for such issues was too long. It would not have been practical, given shipping restrictions, to swap battalions between India and Italy. Also, given the specialist training that was needed in both theatres, it would have been unlikely that theatre commands would willingly give up such units, for the promise of a battalion from overseas which would require training before operations. Yet, to the

¹ WO 204/1667 - 10 Indian Division: repatriation, 01 September 1945 - 30 November 1945. Movement of INDIAN personnel from CMF to INDIA.

² WO 201/2598 - Indian Units: Training of and miscellaneous questions on, 01 September 1942 - 31 May 1944. Minute 10 by Brigadier L.W. McKay Forbes BGS (IA), 21 February 1944, p. 1.

credit of the Indian Army it had made attempts to alleviate the burden on long serving units, as shown by its attempted exchange of battalions between Italy and PAIFORCE.

However, the role of the 10th Indian Division in the Italian campaign also meant its reinforcement was a simpler process than for its two sister divisions. Let us first turn our attention to the battle casualties that the Indian Army suffered during its deployment to Italy in the Second World War, as shown in Table 3.

Table 1: Battle Casualties in Italy, 3 September 1943 – 2 May 1945								
	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total	
Indian Unit	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR
4 th Division ³	39	501	117	1,649	13	251	169	2,401
8 th Division	48	746	144	2,239	15	294	207	3,279
10 th Division	24	247	69	935	4	105	97	1,287
Total							473	6,967
Source: Compiled from the data in tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 in Appendix 19. See for a more detailed breakdown of casualties suffered.								

The harsh reality is that the purpose of the division's presence in Italy was to gain the objectives set it, and this would require the loss of human life. The 10th Indian Division suffered the fewest battle casualties of the three Indian divisions in Italy, and as such would have had to draw upon fewer reinforcements. In relation to 8th Indian Division this was because of its shorter time in the Italian campaign. Whilst it eventually fought in Italy longer than 4th Indian Division, it did not experience a battle on the scale of Cassino, which explains 4th Indian Division's higher casualties. It is worth bearing in mind that in the period from 1 April to 25 August 1944 the 10th Indian Division lost forty officers and

³ Only shows casualties suffered in Italy, not those in Greece following division's move there in October 1944.

639 other ranks as battle casualties.⁴ During 26 August 1944 to 2 May 1945 it sustained fifty-seven officer and 648 other ranks as battle casualties.⁵ In 147 days, or 37.1% of the time it spent in Italy, the 10th Indian Division suffered 41.2% of its total officer and 49.7% of its total other rank battle casualties in the whole campaign. These of course were not the only drain on manpower; sickness and disease also took their toll but it is harder to find accurate figures on their impact. Nevertheless, if historians begin to choose their studies based on the highest number of battle honours a division has won, the subject will be all the poorer for it.

The purpose of this dissertation has not been to make a case of “exceptionalism” for the 10th Indian Division’s campaign in Italy. It has not argued that the division was the most advanced, or bravest; nor that it possessed commanders who were ahead of their time. Without proper comparison to the efforts of the other Allied forces in Italy, which lies outside the scope of this dissertation, it is not possible to draw a conclusion on that here. Rather, by focusing on the 10th Indian Division it is hoped to shed light on those elements of the Indian Army of the Second World War that have been overlooked by most historical studies, such as the role of Indian troops in Greece, Italy, the Middle East, Persia and Africa post-1943. The campaign of the 10th Indian Division in Italy is further proof of the transformation of the Indian Army from a colonial police force to a modern twentieth century army. It proved capable of training and maintaining an expeditionary force far from its home base. Yet, perhaps the lasting legacy of the division’s time in Italy was the impact it had on those troops who had fought beneath its banner. For the Raj, and its Indian Army, came to an end within two years of the troops returning home, to be

⁴ See Tables 1.1 and 1.2 in Appendix 19.

⁵ See Tables 1.3 and 1.4 in Appendix 19.

replaced by the independent states of India and Pakistan. Whilst the Indian soldiers' experiences from their military service would remain with them for the rest of their lives.

APPENDIX 1: BRITISH ARMY CASUALTIES IN ITALY, 1943-45

Table 1: British Army casualties per 1,000 ration strength per annum in Italy 1943-5			
	1943	1944	1945
Battle Casualties	64	90	10
Non-Battle Casualties	65	44	53
Sickness	575	513	441

Source: J. Ellis, *The Sharp End* (London, 1980 [2011]), p. 181.

APPENDIX 2: VICEROY'S COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Table 1: VCOs in the IA			
Cavalry	Infantry	Badge of Rank	Responsibilities
Rissaldar-major	Subedar-major	A Crown	One per battalion, enjoyed enormous prestige, respected by all British officers, village patriarch for sepoys, adviser on Indian life to British CO
Rissaldars	Subedars	Two Stars	Commanded troops/companies of troops
Jemadars	Jemadars	One Star	Assistant squadron leaders or platoon leaders

Source: B. Farwell, *Armies of the Raj: From the Great Indian Mutiny to Independence 1858-1947* (London, 1990), p. 28.

APPENDIX 3: AREAS OF RECRUITMENT FOR THE INDIAN ARMY, 1862-1914

Table 1: Regional Origin of Indian Infantry Battalions, 1862-1914				
	Year			
Region	1862	1885	1892	1914
Nepal (Gurkhas)	5	13	15	20
Hindustan east of the Yamuna (including UP and Bihar)	28	20	15	15
Punjab and NWFP	28	31	34	57
Bombay (including Rajputana and Central India)	30	26	26	18
Madras	40	32	25	11
Total	131	122	115	121

Source: D. Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj* (London, 1994), p. 11.

APPENDIX 4: INDIAN AND BRITISH TROOP NUMBERS IN INDIA

Table 1: Ratio of British to Indian soldiers deployed in India, 1863-1939		
Year	Indians	British
1863	205,000	65,000
1887	153,000	73,000
1903	142,000	77,000
1923	139,000	66,000
1939	177,000	43,000

Source: B. Farwell, *Armies of the Raj: From the Great Indian Mutiny to Independence 1858-1947* (London, 1990), p. 51.

APPENDIX 5: ISF UNITS IN 1938

Table 1: ISF units by service arm in 1938			
	Regiments	Squadrons	Troops
Cavalry	11	16	18 ½
	Horse Battery	Mountain Battery	Camel Battery
Artillery	2	3	1
	Company	Sections	
Sappers & Miners	1	8	
	Battalions	Companies	Platoons
Infantry	29	70	14 ½
	Troops		
Transport	72		

Source: A. M. Mills, 'Indian States Forces', Journal of the United Service Institution of India, 68 (1938), p. 304.

APPENDIX 6: ORGANISATION OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ISF

Table 1: Military Adviser's Circles for ISF units in India				
Circle	States supervised	Number of ISF units supervised	Military Advisers assigned	Location of Headquarters
Punjab Circle	Chamba, Jind, Kapurthala, Kashmir, Nabha, Patiala, Rampur	33	Total: 3 1 in charge and 2 assistants – 1 infantry, 1 cavalry	Ambala
Central India Circle	Benares, Bhopal, Datia, Dhar, Gwalior, Indore, Panna, Rewa, Tripura	25	Total: 2 1 in charge and 1 assistant – 1 of whom is to be a cavalryman	Gwalior (nominally at Agra for income tax purposes)

Rajputana Circle	Alwar, Bharatpur, Dholpur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kotah, Mewar, Palanpur	23	Total: 2 1 in Bharatpur and 1 assistant (cavalryman) at Jaipur	Bharatpur
Southern India Circle	Hyderabad. Mudhol, Mysore, Travancore	19	Total: 2 1 at Hyderabad and assistant at Bangalore	Hyderabad
Kathiawar Circle	Bhavnagar, Ohrangadra, Junagadh, Kutch, Nawanagar, Porbandar	12	Total: 1 Military adviser was a cavalryman	Rajkot
Guarajat Circle	Alirajpur, Baria, Baroda, Idar, Rajpipla, Ratlam	9	Total: 1 An assistant military adviser	Bavoda
Camel Corps Circle	Bahawalpur, Bikaner, Loharu	9	Total: 1 An assistant military adviser	Bikaner

Sapper Circle	Faridkot, Malerkotla, Mandi, Sirmoor, Suket, Tehri- Garhwal	16	Total: 1 An assistant military adviser	Roorkee
Artillery Circle	Bikaner, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Kashmir	6 (Batteries)	Total: 1 A military adviser	Ambala
Signalling ¹	All	All	Total: 1 An assistant military adviser	N/A

Source: A. M. Mills, 'Indian States Forces', Journal of the United Service Institution of India, 68 (1938), pp. 305-6.

¹ There was never a designated Signalling Circle as it was responsible for all ISF units in India but a military adviser was attached for training in signalling. It is included here as the Sapper Circle whilst never designated regionally as its responsibilities were across the entirety of India, is.

APPENDIX 7: TRAINING ESTABLISHMENTS IN INDIA COMMAND

Table 1: Allocation of troops in training establishments in India Command				
Training Formations and Establishments	British Army Units		Indian and African Army Units	
	Combat	Administrative	Combat	Administrative
14 Indian Division	2,413	-	18,509	4,835
39 Indian Division	112	-	17,790	3,622
52 Infantry Brigade	4,372	-	89	1,142
Eastern Command	-	-	810	2,890
Southern Army	-	-	47,782	67,343
North West Army	-	-	41,804	26,257
Central Command	-	-	197,250	86,131
TOTAL	6,897	-	324,034	192,220

Source: CAB 44/209, Book II: situation and events in India command 1941-1943, by Brigadier M. Henry, p. 29, Analysis of Manpower in India Command, SEAC and Overseas (as affecting British and African Troops in India and Indian troops in all theatres) as at 1 April 1944.

APPENDIX 8: UNIT ALLOCATION TO INDIAN REINFORCEMENT CAMPS

Table 1: Allocation of Reinforcements to Indian Reinforcement Camps in Italy from 23 January 1945.		
8 th IRC	11 th IRC	16 th IRC
Central India Horse	Skinner's Horse	6 th D.C.O. Lancers
6 th Rajput Rifles	3/1 st Punjab Regiment	Indian Artillery
3/10 th Baluch Regiment	1/2 nd Punjab Regiment	1/5 th Mahratta Light Infantry
2/11 th Royal Sikhs	3/5 th Mahratta Light Infantry	5 th Royal Mahrattas
3/12 th FF Regiment	4/10 th Baluch Regiment	1/12 th FF Regiment
1/2 nd Gurkha Rifles	4/11 th Sikh Regiment	4/13 th FF Rifles
2/7 th Gurkha Rifles	3/18 th Royal Garhwal Rifles	6/13 th FF Rifles
1/9 th Gurkha Rifles	2/3 rd Gurkha Rifles	3/15 th Punjab Regiment
Indian Engineers	2/4 th Gurkha Rifles	1/5 th Royal Gurkha Rifles
I.P.O.	2/6 th Gurkha Rifles	Jaipur Infantry
I.A.M.C	2/8 th Gurkha Rifles	R.I.A.S.C.
IAOC/IEME	2/10 th Gurkha Rifles	
I.S.C.	Nabha Akal Infantry	
I.G.S.C.		
Jaipur Guards		
Jodhpur Sardar Infantry		
C.M.P. (Ind)		

Source: WO 169/22859 Reinforcement Camps: 8 Rft Camp 01 January – 31 December 1945. Letter from 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp Adjutant to 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp personnel on allocation of reinforcements dated 30 January 1945.

Table 2: Allocation of reinforcements to sections in 8 th IRC		
Section	8 th IRC Units	11 th IRC Units (waiting for transfer)
1	2/11 th Sikhs Indian Signal Corps	4/11 th Sikhs
2	Jaipur Guards Jodhpur Sardar Infantry IAOC/IEME Indian Engineers CMP (I)	Nabha Akal
3	IPC IGSC IAMC Miscellaneous	
4	2/7 th Gurkha Rifles	2/6 th Gurkha Rifles 2/8 th Gurkha Rifles 2/10 th Gurkha Rifles
5	1/9 th Gurkha Rifles	3/18 th Royal Garhwal Rifles
6	1/2 nd Gurkha Rifles	2/3 rd Gurkha Rifles 2/4 th Gurkha Rifles
7	6 th Royal Rajput Central India Horse	3/5 th Mahratta Light Infantry Skinner's Horse
8	2/10 th Baluch Regiment 3/12 th FF Regiment	4/10 th Baluch Regiment 1/2 nd Punjab Regiment 3/1 st Punjab Regiment
9	Personnel from 5 Indian Military Prison	

Source: WO 169/22859 Reinforcement Camps: 8 Rft Camp 01 January – 31 December 1945. Appendix A to letter from 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp Adjutant to 8 Indian Reinforcement Camp personnel on allocation of reinforcements to sections dated 30 January 1945.

APPENDIX 9: DEPLOYMENT OF THE 10TH INDIAN DIVISION'S INFANTRY

BATTALIONS PRIOR TO THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

Table 1: The operational history of the Indian infantry battalions of the 10th Indian Division prior to the Italian campaign during the Second World War		
Battalion	Date deployed overseas	Service prior to joining 10 th Indian Division
4/10 th Baluch	01/11/39	Served with 10 th Indian Infantry Brigade in East Africa where the brigade suffered heavily in North Africa in 1942. 4/10 th were in reserve in June/July 1942 due to casualties. Moved to 10 th Indian Division in September 1942.
Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part II</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), pp. 20-21.		
3/5 th Mahratta Light Infantry	01/06/40	Served with 9 th Indian Infantry Brigade in Sudan, Eritrea and North Africa until June 1942 when it joined 25 th Indian Infantry Brigade later transferring to 20 th Indian Infantry Brigade in June 1943.
Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 25.		
1/2 nd Punjab	01/05/40	Served in Aden, British Somaliland and garrison duty in Egypt. Served with 161 st Indian Infantry Brigade at First Battle of El Alamein which suffered heavy casualties at Ruweisat Ridge. Conducted garrison duties in Middle East before joining division in January 1944.

	Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 21.	
3/1 st Punjab	01/09/39	Served with 5 th Brigade at Sidi Barrani, Syria and North Africa in 1942 with 5 th and 38 th Brigades. Moved to Cyprus in April 1942 before joining 10 th Division in November 1944.
		Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 19.
4/11th Sikh	01/09/40	Served in East and North Africa until July 1942 suffering heavy casualties. It began reforming at Cairo and Haifa until May 1943 when it became demonstration battalion at Mountain Warfare Training School until February 1944. Moved to Italy in July 1944.
		Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 39.
3/18 th Royal Garhwal Rifles	01/10/39	Served with 9 th , 10 th and 20 th Brigades in Eritrea and North Africa until July 1942 when it re-joined 10 th Brigade which was in the process of reforming. Joined division in May 1943 as part of 25 th Brigade.
		Sources: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part II</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 20 and C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 52.
2/4 th Gurkha Rifles	01/10/40	Served on the North West Frontier until October 1940 when it served with 21 st Brigade in Syria. Fought in North Africa in 1942 before moving to 10 th Brigade in May 1942, with whom it remained with until departing for

		Italy.
	Source: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 61.	
2/3 rd Gurkha Rifles	01/10/40	Served on the North-West Frontier until October 1940 when as part of 18 th Brigade it fought at the first El Alamein. The brigade was destroyed in the fighting there and never reformed. The 2/3 rd joined 10 th Brigade whilst it was reforming in August 1942 and moved to 20 th Brigade in January 1943.
	Sources: C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part II</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 27 and C. Kempton, <i>'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III</i> (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 61.	

APPENDIX 10: PROPOSED RELIEF OF INFANTRY BATTALIONS IN CMF BY
THOSE IN PAIFORCE

Table 1: Battalions in PAIFORCE and their sister battalions who served in CMF			
Battalions in PAIFORCE	Sister battalions in CMF and the division they are serving in		
	4 th Indian Division	8 th Indian Division	10 th Indian Division
4/8 th Punjab		3/8 th Punjab, 3/15 th Punjab	1/2 nd Punjab, 3/1 st Punjab
1/10 th Baluch	3/10 th Baluch		4/10 th Baluch
3/11 th Sikh	2/11 th Sikhs		4/11 th Sikhs
5/12 th FF Regiment	3/12 th FF Regiment	1/12 th FF Regiment	
5/13 th FF Rifles		6/13 th FF Rifles	

Source: WO 204/7394 Indian Battalions: Employment and Movements. Letter of 1 January 1945 from Lieutenant General John Harding, AFHQ Chief of Staff on the Relief of Indian Battalions in PAIFORCE and Appendix B showing sister battalions of PAIFORCE battalions serving in CMF as of 1 January 1945.

APPENDIX 11: OVERSEAS SERVICE OF INDIAN ARMY TROOPS BY 1
SEPTEMBER 1945

Table 1: Overseas service of Indian Army personnel in units deployed to Italy by 1 September 1945				
	Period of Overseas service (years)			
Formation	3 – 3½	3½ – 4	4 plus	Total
4 th Indian Division	1650	1273	592	3515
10 th Indian Division	1664	756	943	3363
Non-Division troops	2962	5396	4259	12617
	6276	7425	5794	19495

Source: WO 204/1667 10 Indian Division: repatriation. 01 September 1945 - 30
November 1945. Movement of INDIAN personnel from CMF to INDIA.

APPENDIX 12: TIME TAKEN FOR INDIAN TROOPS IN ITALY TO TAKE LEAVE TO INDIA

Table 1: Time taken for 10 Indian Division troops on leave to return to Italy				
Unit	Number of Troops	Date Departed	Scheduled Return	Actual Return
1 st Horse	75	01/12/44	01/04/45	01/09/45
20 th Indian Infantry Brigade	1 (Orderly)	22/06/44	N/A	12/03/45
3/5 th M.L.I.	35	29/01/45	N/A	Not returned

Source: WO 204/1667 10 Indian Division: repatriation. 01 September 1945 - 30 November 1945. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices p. 7.

Table 2: Time taken for RIASC troops on leave to depart and return to Italy				
Unit	Number of Troops	Date left unit	Date left Taranto	Date returned
HQ RIASC	3	21/02/45	22/04/45	Not returned
20 th IBT	3	02/02/45	22/04/45	Not Returned
25 th IBT	8	15/06/44	N/A	08/02/45
25 th IBT	4	31/08/44	N/A	25/03/45

Source: WO 204/1667 10 Indian Division: repatriation. 01 September 1945 - 30 November 1945. Movement – Indian troops by Major General Denys Reid, 9 September 1945, Appendices p. 9.

APPENDIX 13: CONVERSION OF BRITISH AA PERSONNEL TO INFANTRY

Table 1: Allocation of manpower to each service arm in CMF from June – September 1944										
Service Arm	June		July		August		September		Total	
	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs
RAC	74	1,310	4	280	-	-	32	230	110	1,820
RAC (Recce)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	145	-	145
RA (Fd)	3	174	99	1,024	-	102	60	1,850	162	3,150
RA (A/tk)	29	491	-	167	-	-	-	450	29	1,108
RA (LAA)	2	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	14
RE (Fd)	-	125	-	539	-	412	-	280	-	1,356
Infantry	-	1,179	126	2,826	50	1,400	140	3,555	316	8,960
Totals	108	3,293	229	4,836	50	1,914	232	6,510	619	16,553

Source: CAB 106/451 Operations of British, Indian and Dominion Forces in Italy 3

September 1943 to 2 May 1945. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 16.

Table 2: Estimated manpower position of each service arm in CMF by 30 September 1944					
Service Arm		Position as of 3 June 1944	Estimated Position as of 30 June 1944	Estimated Position as of 31 July 1944	Estimated Position as of 31 August 1944
RAC	Offrs	+70	+77	+8	-54
	ORs	-282	+580	+477	+155
RAC (recce)	Offrs	-27	-35	-42	-48
	ORs	-184	-224	-229	-289
RA (Fd)	Offrs	-20	-78	-8	-52
	ORs	-2,754	-2,965	-2,177	-2,387
RA (A/tk)	Offrs	+1	+21	+13	+6
	ORs	-1,198	-728	-542	-608
RA (LAA)	Offrs	+19	+16	+7	-1
	ORs	+122	+141	+226	+172
RE (Fd)	Offrs	-14	-26	-40	-51
	ORs	-1,284	-1,279	-690	-380
R Sigs	Offrs	-27	-26	+1	-2
	ORs	-805	-900	-804	-875
Ft Gds	Offrs	+42	+19	+2	-18
	ORs	+760	+388	+251	-3
Infantry	Offrs	+111	-34	-70	-148
	ORs	+1,452	-1,213	-1,595	-2,768

Source: CAB 106/451 Operations of British, Indian and Dominion Forces in Italy 3 September 1943 to 2 May 1945. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 17.

Table 3: Disposal of personnel from disbanded AA units as of 24 March 1945		
Service Arm	Heavy AA	Light AA
RAC	429	834
RA (Fd & A/tk)	1,494	2,422
RA (Grn)	1,219	2,125
RE (Fd)	392	740
RE (L of C)	377	549
R Sigs	404	616
Infantry	4,541	8,736
RASC	1,357	1,412
RAOC	17	18
REME	91	450
Total	10,321	17,902

Source: CAB 106/451 Operations of British, Indian and Dominion Forces in Italy 3 September 1943 to 2 May 1945. Part V Administrative Monographs, 4. O2E Papers, p. 26.

APPENDIX 14: THE FOURTH INDIAN ARMY MANPOWER REVIEW

Table 1: Manpower Deficiencies in the Indian Army as predicted by the Fourth Indian Army Manpower Review	
Service Arm	Manpower Deficiency
Combatant Officers	5,238
Medical Officers	2,670
Clerical personnel	15,850
Matriculation personnel	5,100
Non-Technical Classes	
<i>Pathans</i>	1,060
<i>Punjabi Muslims</i>	4,650
<i>Jat Sikhs</i>	2,370
<i>Jats</i>	4,750
<i>Gujars</i>	950
<i>Mahrattas</i>	1,830
<i>Ahirs</i>	770

Source: WO 204/7464A Indian Army liaison Mission, IALM Liaison letter No. 1,
15 July 1944, p. 1.

APPENDIX 15: DIVISIONS AND BRIGADES RAISED BY THE INDIAN ARMY

DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR

Table 1: Units raised each year by the Indian Army							
	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945
Armoured Divisions		1	1	1	1		
Infantry Divisions	1	5	6	6		1 ¹	1 ²
Armoured Brigades		2	2	1			
Tank Brigades			1				
Motor Brigades		1	1				
Infantry Brigades	1	13	26 ³	16	2	2	

Source: C. Kempton, 'Loyalty & Honour' The Indian Army, September 1939 – August 1947. Part III (Milton Keynes, 2003), p. 105.

¹ The 44th Indian Airborne Division.

² The BRINDIV division, the Commonwealth occupation force in Japan.

³ Includes one parachute brigade.

**APPENDIX 16: STRENGTHS OF THE BRITISH AND INDIAN INFANTRY
BATTALIONS OF THE 10TH INDIAN DIVISION DURING 1944**

The figures presented were obtained from strength returns and daily returns for the dates indicated from the sources cited.

Table 1: Strength returns of selected infantry battalions of the 10 th Indian Division in 1944								
Date 1944	1 st DLI	1 st K.O.	3/1 st Pun	1/2 nd Pun	4/11 th Sikh	Nabha Akal	3/18 th Garhwal	2/3 rd Gurkhas
01/01	544		792	814	793	965	874	877
15/01	619		790	875	806	957	874	871
29/01	644		779	872	842	957	874	874
05/02	637	757	836	804	841	957	862	865
19/02	740	773	842	779	857	923	862	863
04/03	741	755	841	765	866	908	895	865
18/03	752	840	818	778	851	904	895	844
01/04	737	782	838	830	895	902	926	821
15/04	822	813	800	821	869	782	920	878
29/04		802	800	822	785	782	854	853
13/05	780	789	780	782	789	761	832	798
27/05	765	785	800	823	827	761	849	817
10/06	744	794	850	831	828	872	843	874
24/06	733	788	850	886	829	871	883	875

08/07	763	733	800	895	821	882	861	847
22/07	692	695	850	904	821	882	780	834
05/08	638	684	809	902	811	877	782	852
19/08	642	677	900	896	792	877	863	809
02/09	653	687	970	889	843	911	909	803
16/09	744	748	920	844	714	907	903	897
30/09	735	713	910	861	724	881	863	906
14/10	705	678	855		742	802	807	829
28/10	694	707	855		768	783	824	860
11/11	718	730	840		768	742	900	898
25/11	692	718	840		741	719	882	900
09/12	665	694	800	870	732	692	940	904
23/12	637	627	740	833	765	696	827	924

Sources: 1 DLI: WO 169/16281 1 DLI, January – March 1944 and WO 170/1384 1 DLI, 1944.

1 K.O.: WO 169/16293 1 King's Own, February 1944 and WO 170/1417 1 King's Own, 1944.

3/1 Pun: WO 169/18960 3/1 Punjab, 1944.

1/2 Pun: WO 169/18961 1/2 Punjab, 1944.

4/11 Sikh: WO 169/18983 4/11 Sikh, 1944.

Nabha Akal: WO 169/19058 Nabha Akal, 1944.

3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles: WO 169/18995 3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles, 1944.

2/3 Gurkha Rifles: WO 169/19000 2/3 Gurkha Rifles, 1944.

Table 2: Strength returns of the Jodhpur Sardar in 1944	
Date	Jodhpur Sardar
01/01	1,092
15/01	1,005
06/02	1,039
19/02	1,029
04/03	1,040
12/03	1,060
01/04	1,051
15/04	1,054
29/04	1,011
06/05	1,007
20/05	1,004
03/06	1,005
17/06	957
01/07	980
15/07	968
29/07	960

Table 3: Strength returns of the 4/10 th Baluch in 1944	
Date	4/10 Baluch
02/01	890
16/01	885
06/02	887
20/02	893
05/03	879
19/03	869
02/04	871
16/04	840
07/05	813
21/05	888
04/06	849
18/06	867
01/07	834
15/07	705
29/07	762
12/08	838

05/08	955
19/08	989
02/09	972
16/09	935
30/09	939
14/10	949
28/10	964
04/11	965
18/11	966
02/12	939
16/12	953
30/12	947

Source: WO 169/19048 Jodhpur Sardar,
1944.

26/08	913
09/09	886
23/09	895
07/10	885
21/10	801
04/11	818
18/11	896
02/12	915
16/12	851
30/12	797

Source: WO 169/18979 4/10 Baluch,
1944.

Table 4: Strength returns of the 3/5 th M.L.I. in 1944	
Date	3/5 M.L.I.
30/09	834
14/10	834
28/10	770
04/11	932
02/12	801
16/12	862
30/12	855

Source: WO 169/18964, 3/5
Mahratta Light Infantry, 1944.

Table 5: Strength returns of the 8 th Manchesters in 1944	
Date	8 Manchesters
29/01	816
27/02	798
29/04	858
27/05	826
10/06	796
24/06	753
01/07	709
15/07	724
29/07	747
05/08	776
19/08	713
02/09	738
16/09	787
30/09	751

Source: WO 169/16303, 8
Manchester, January – February 1944
and WO 170/1437, 8 Manchesters,
1944.

APPENDIX 17: STRENGTHS OF THE BRITISH AND INDIAN INFANTRY

BATTALIONS OF THE 10TH INDIAN DIVISION DURING 1945

The figures presented were obtained from strength returns and daily returns for the dates indicated from the sources cited.

Table 1: Strength returns of selected infantry battalions of the 10 th Indian Division in 1945								
Date	1		3/1	1/2	4/11	Nabha	3/18	2/3
1945	DLI	1 K.O.	Pun	Pun	Sikh	Akal	Garhwal	Gurkhas
06/01	618	699	743	831	814	670	846	936
20/01	681	694	800	805	744	664	797	897
03/02	690	695	767	817	717	729	803	883
17/02	677	682	780	762	743	725	780	868
03/03	668	698	721	744	740	710	795	887
17/03	738	733	800	768	765	711	873	910
31/03	770	773	800	797	784	710	885	907
14/04	796	800	860	890	729		983	924
28/04	783	784	870	809	749		1002	916
12/05	785	791	937	825	779		925	903
26/05	797	795	910	835	778		909	879
09/06	809	808	900	852	756	882	916	881

23/06	784	793	900	878	766	894	925	919
07/07		794	900	874	753	878	917	954
21/07		892	900	831	740	813	815	893
04/08		879	910	842	784	863	842	895
18/08		577	910	821	780	863	862	879
01/09		631	910	776	804		880	884
15/09		630	910	862	824	874	904	858
29/09		736	910	874	867	861	947	859
13/10		746	910	858	870		943	885
27/10		837	910	850	926		940	664
10/11		843	920	854	911			664
24/11		822	1,010	885	944			952

Sources 1 DLI: WO 170/4998 1 DLI, 1945.

1 K.O.: WO 170/5029 1 King's Own, 1945.

3/1 Pun: WO 169/22363 3/1 Punjab, 1945.

1/2 Pun: WO 169/22364 1/2 Punjab, 1945.

4/11 Sikh: WO 169/22385 4/11 Sikh, 1945.

Nabha Akal: WO 169/22453 Nabha Akal, 1945.

3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles: WO 169/22398 3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles, 1945.

2/3 Gurkha Rifles: WO 169/22401 2/3 Gurkha Rifles, 1945.

Table 2: Strength returns of the Jodhpur Sardar in 1945	
Date	Jodhpur Sardar
06/01	932
20/01	938
03/02	926
17/02	943
03/03	956
17/03	954
31/03	955
14/04	850
28/04	821
15/05	944
19/05	994
02/06	996
16/06	1,014
30/06	1,022
07/07	1,020
14/07	1,019

Source: WO 169/22447 Jodhpur Sardar, 1945.

Table 3: Strength returns of the 4/10 Baluch in 1945	
Date	4/10 Baluch
13/01	784
27/01	796
10/02	788
24/02	761
10/03	842
24/03	829
07/04	806
21/04	805
05/05	836
19/05	913
02/06	894
30/06	903
14/07	848
28/07	851
13/08	849
25/08	859
08/09	861
22/09	890
06/10	830
20/10	822
10/11	827
17/11	821

Source: WO 169/22380 4/10 Baluch, 1945.

Table 4: Strength returns of the 3/5 M.L.I. in 1945	
Date	3/5 M.L.I.
06/01	861
20/01	855
03/02	841
17/02	811
07/04	870
21/04	851
05/05	896
19/05	911
02/06	923
16/06	917
30/06	914
14/07	836
28/07	849
04/08	860
18/08	888
01/09	907
15/09	946
29/09	911
06/10	996
21/10	988

Source: WO 169/22367 3/5 Mahratta Light Infantry

APPENDIX 18: AVERAGE STRENGTHS OF THE BRITISH AND INDIAN
INFANTRY BATTALIONS OF THE 10TH INDIAN DIVISION IN 1944 & 1945

Table 1: Average strength of the battalions of 10 th Indian Division in 1944	
Unit	Average Strength
1 DLI	702
8 Manchester	771
1 Kings' Own	740
3/1 Punjab	834
1/2 Punjab	843
4/11 Sikh	805
Nabha Akal	851
3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles	867
2/3 Gurkha	861
Jodhpur Sardar	991
4/10 Baluch	855
3/5 M.L.I.	842

Source: Figures are rounded up to a whole number. Averages are obtained from the strength returns provided for each battalion in Appendix 16.

Table 2: Average strength of the battalions of 10 th Indian Division in 1945	
Unit	Average Strength
1 DLI	739
1 Kings' Own	756
3/1 Punjab	871
1/2 Punjab	831
4/11 Sikh	795
Nabha Akal	790
3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles	886
2/3 Gurkha	880
Jodhpur Sardar	956
4/10 Baluch	838
3/5 M.L.I.	892

Source: Figures are rounded up to a whole number. Averages are obtained from the strength returns provided for each battalion in Appendix 17.

APPENDIX 19: BATTLE CASUALTES SUFFERED BY THE 4TH, 8TH AND 10TH

INDIAN DIVISIONS IN THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN OF THE SECOND WORLD

WAR

Table 1: Battle Casualties in Italy 3 September 1943 – 11 May 1944								
	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total	
Indian Unit	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR
4 th Division	22	311	79	1,127	8	146	109	1,584
8 th Division	24	411	72	1,172	9	185	105	1,768
10 th Division	-	2	-	13	-	-	-	15

Source: CAB 106/451 Italy: Operations of British, Indian and Dominion forces 1943 Sept.3-1945 May 2, part IV, 02E papers (i) disbandments and conversion of personnel of other arms to infantry; (ii) work of "X" RTD re-allocation centre; (iii) statistics, p. 55.

Table 2: Battle Casualties in Italy 12 May 1944 – 25 August 1944								
	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total	
Indian Unit	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR
4 th Division	9	111	24	295	4	88	37	494
8 th Division	11	196	44	645	3	45	58	886
10 th Division	10	116	29	466	1	42	40	624

Source: CAB 106/451 Italy: Operations of British, Indian and Dominion forces 1943 Sept.3-1945 May 2, part IV, 02E papers (i) disbandments and conversion of personnel of other arms to infantry; (ii) work of "X" RTD re-allocation centre; (iii) statistics, p. 59.

Table 3: Battle Casualties in Italy 26 August 1944 – 8 April 1945								
	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total	
Indian Unit	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR
4 th Division ¹	8	79	14	227	1	17	23	323
8 th Division	11	116	18	298	3	64	32	478
10 th Division	13	111	33	407	3	63	49	581

Source: CAB 106/451 Italy: Operations of British, Indian and Dominion forces 1943 Sept.3-1945 May 2, part IV, 02E papers (i) disbandments and conversion of personnel of other arms to infantry; (ii) work of "X" RTD re-allocation centre; (iii) statistics, p. 63.

Table 4: Battle Casualties in Italy 9 April 1945 – 2 May 1945								
	Killed		Wounded		Missing		Total	
Indian Unit	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR	Officers	OR
8 th Division	2	23	10	124	-	-	12	147
10 th Division	1	18	7	49	-	-	8	67

Source: CAB 106/451 Italy: Operations of British, Indian and Dominion forces 1943 Sept.3-1945 May 2, part IV, 02E papers (i) disbandments and conversion of personnel of other arms to infantry; (ii) work of "X" RTD re-allocation centre; (iii) statistics, p. 67.

¹ Only shows casualties suffered in Italy, not those following the division's move to Greece in October 1944.

**APPENDIX 20: ORDER OF BATTLE OF 10TH INDIAN DIVISION IN ITALY, LATE
MARCH 1944**

G.O.C. Major-General Denys Reid, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

<i>10th Indian Infantry Brigade (Brigadier T. N. Smith, O.B.E.)</i>	1/2 Punjabis 4/10 Baluch Regiment 2/4 Gurkha Rifles
<i>20th Indian Infantry Brigade, (Brigadier J. B. McDonald, O.B.E.)</i>	8th Manchester Regiment 3/5 Mahratta Light Infantry 2/3 Gurkha Rifles
<i>25th Indian Infantry Brigade (Brigadier Eustace Arderne, D.S.O.)</i>	1st King's Own Regiment 3/1 Punjab Regiment 3/18 Royal Garhwal Rifles
<i>Reconnaissance Regiment</i>	Skinner's Horse
<i>Machine Gun Battalion</i>	1st Royal Northumberland Fusiliers
<i>Artillery</i>	68th, 97th, and 154th Field Regiments R.A. 13th Anti-Tank Regiment R.A. 30th Light AA Regiment R.A.
<i>Engineers</i>	5th, 10th and 61st Field Companies Sappers and Miners 41st Field Park Company
<i>Medical Services</i>	14th, 21st and 30th Field Ambulances 14th Field Hygiene Section

Source: *The Tiger Triumphs, Chapter Four* (HMSO, 1946) accessed at

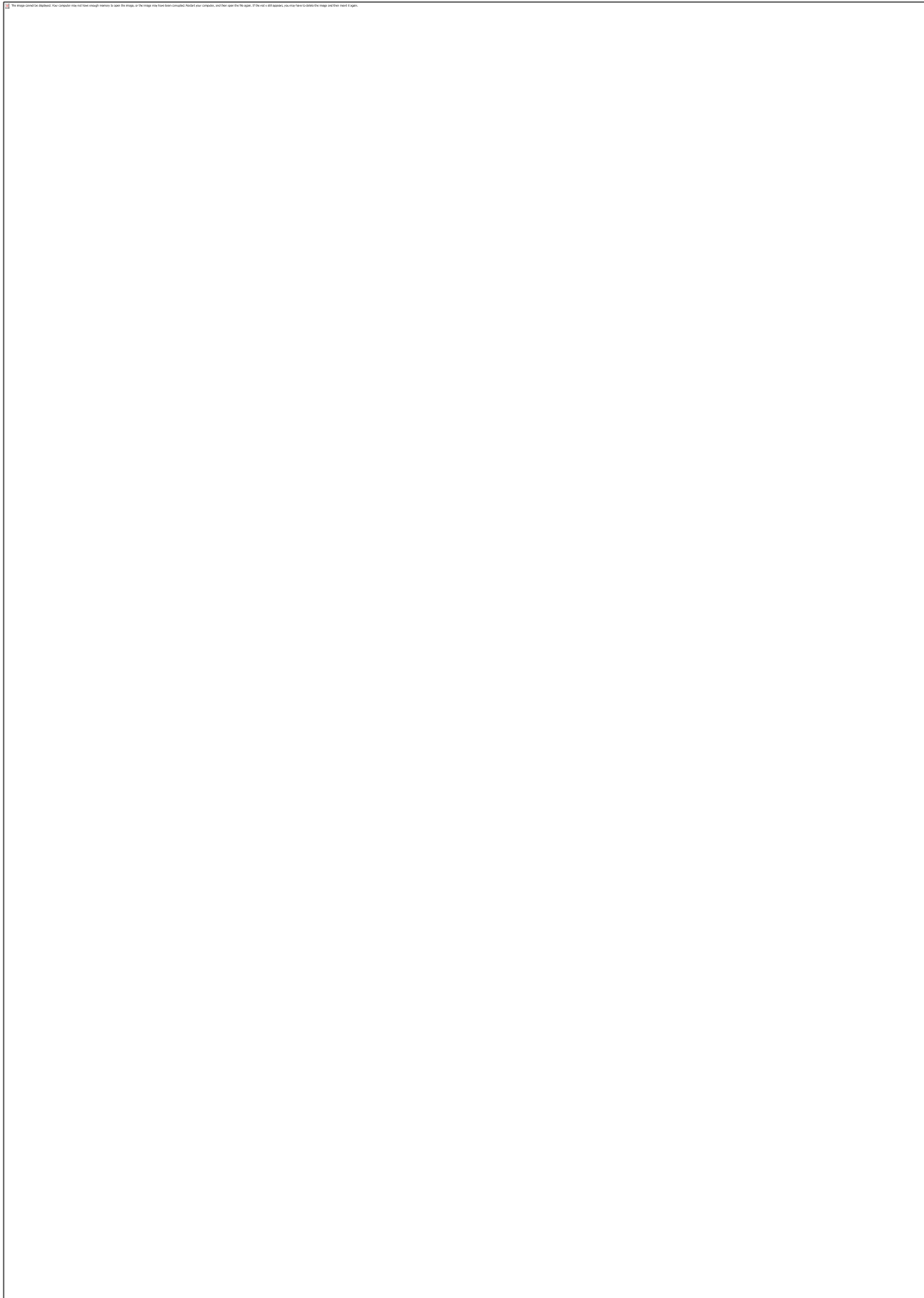
<http://www.ourstory.info/library/4-ww2/Tiger/triumphs02.html>

MAP 1: ITALY



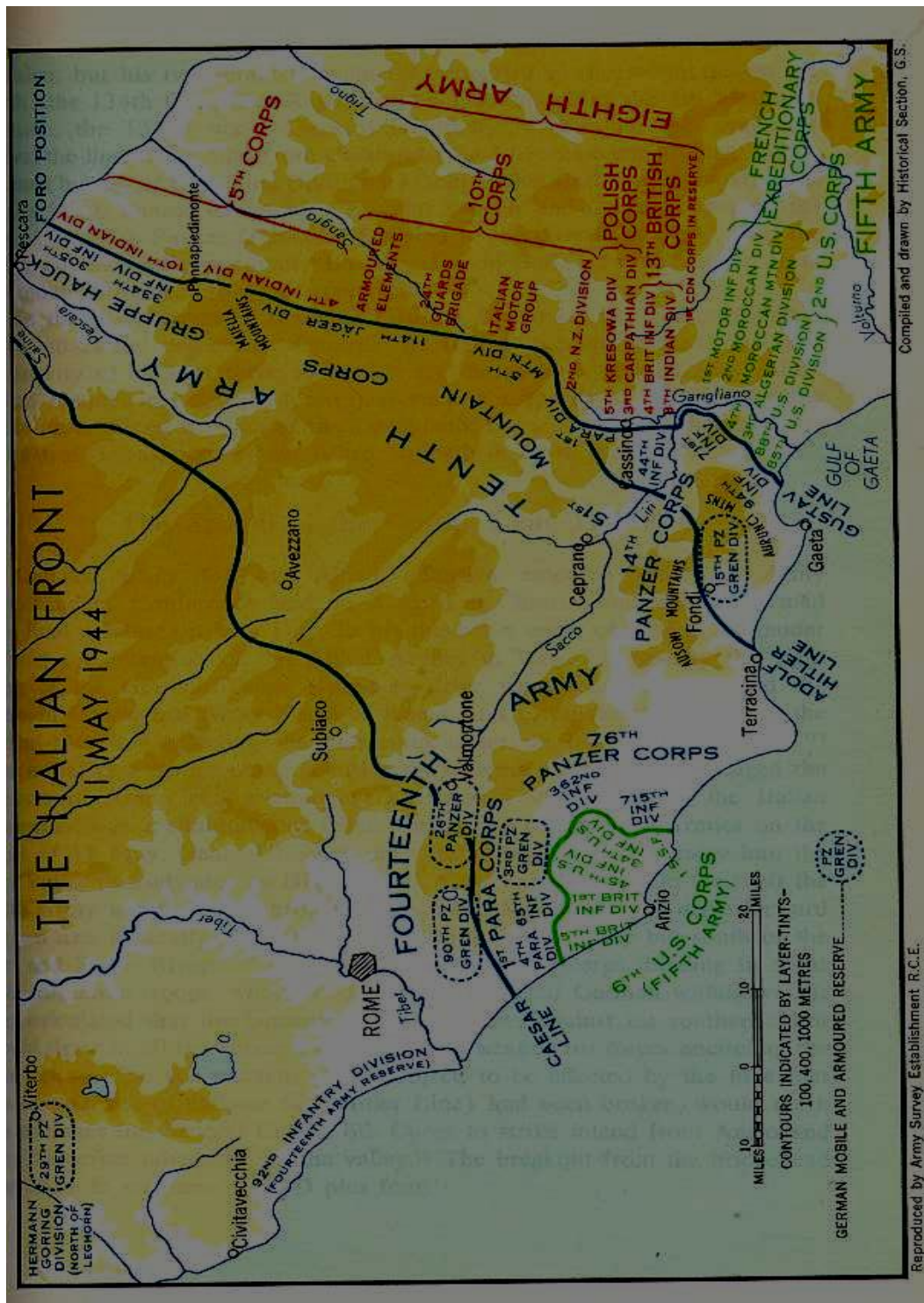
Source: <http://cushman.com/Maps/MapItalyB.jpg>

MAP 2: INDIAN BATTLEFIELDS IN ITALY



Source: <http://www.ourstory.info/library/4-ww2/Tiger/maps/map1.jpg>

MAP 3: THE ITALIAN FRONT MAY 1944

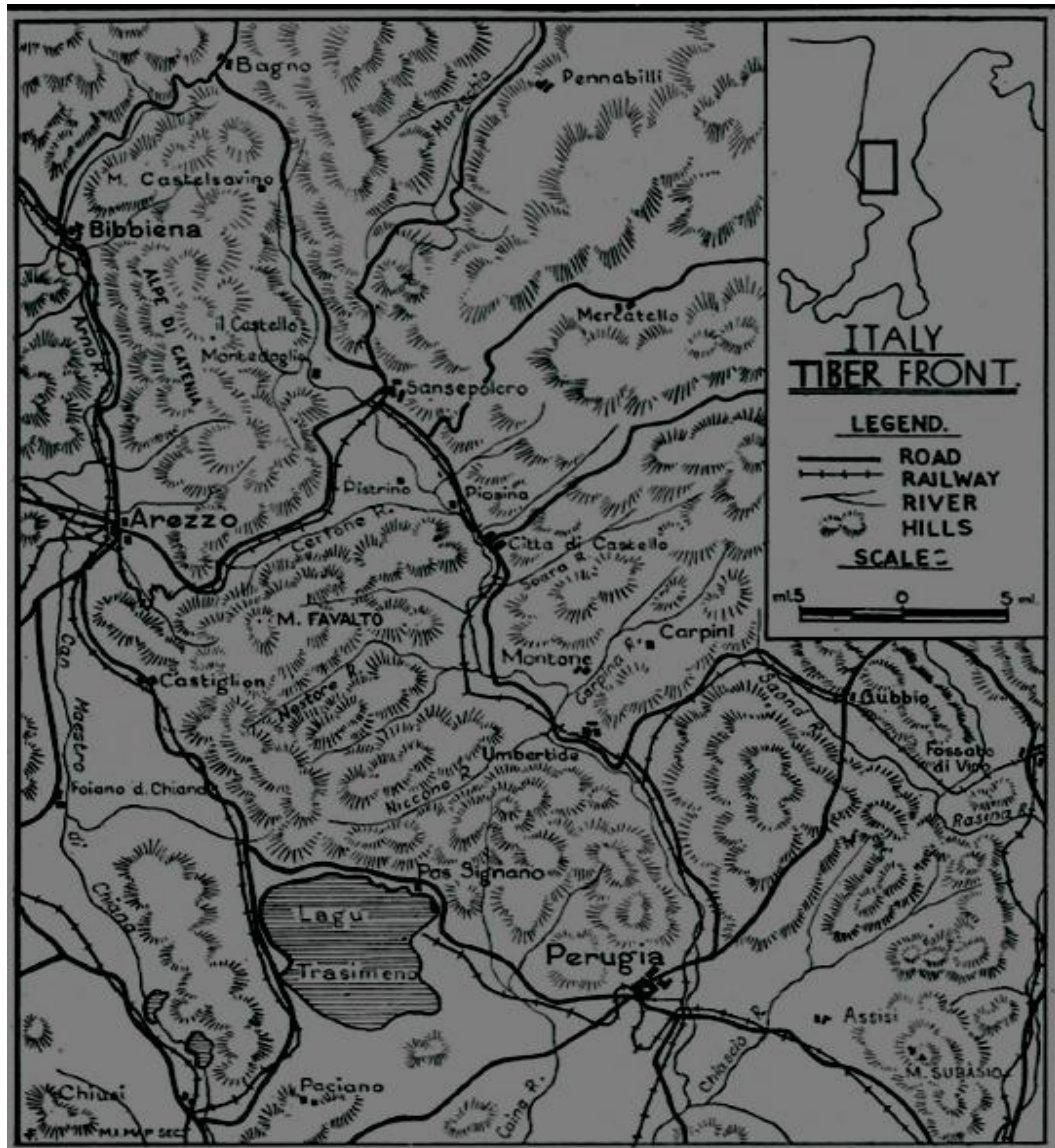


Source: <http://cusermen.com/Maps/MapGustav.jpg>

AUGUST 1944

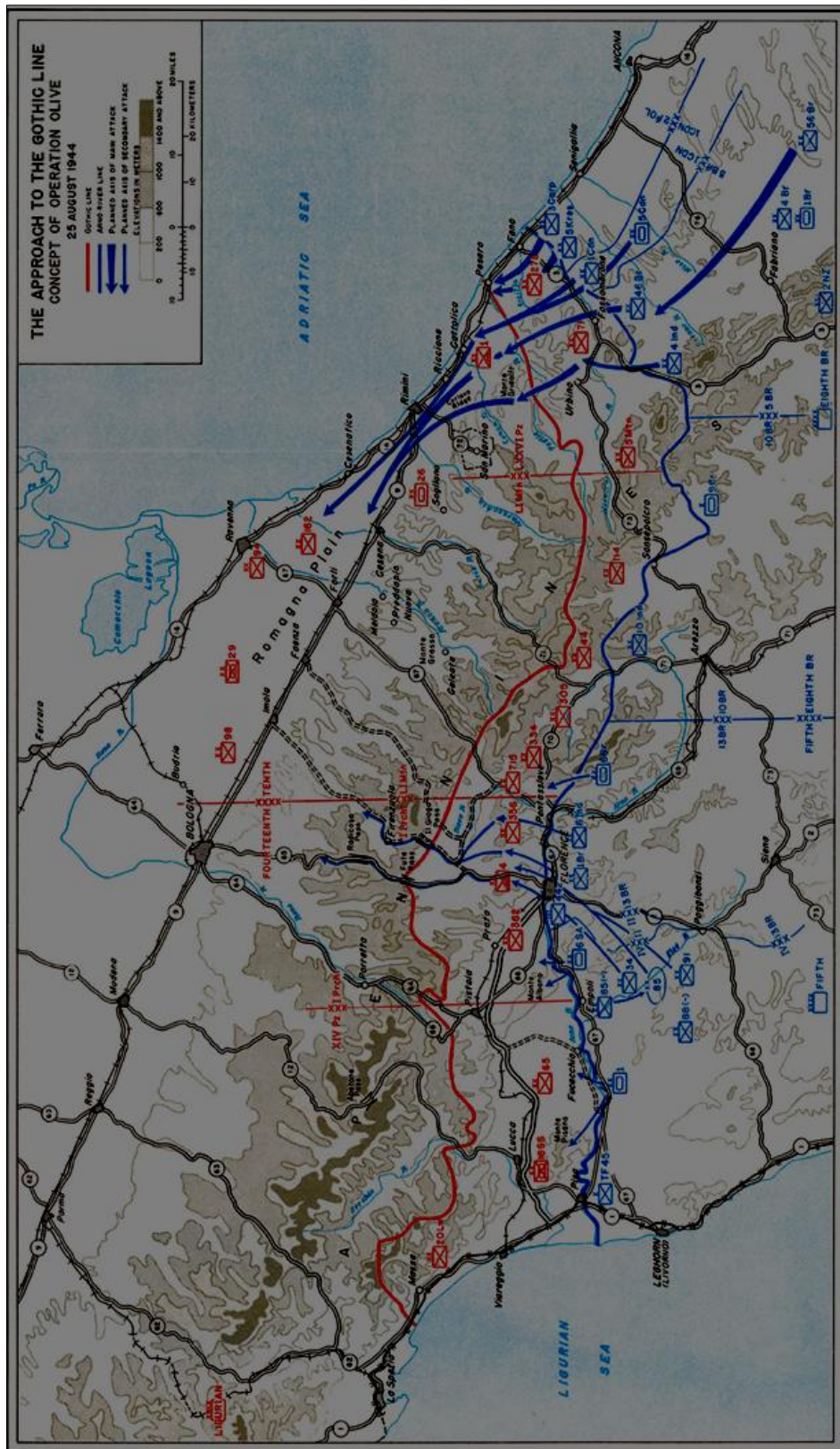
Cassino-14.html

MAP 5: THE TIBER VALLEY



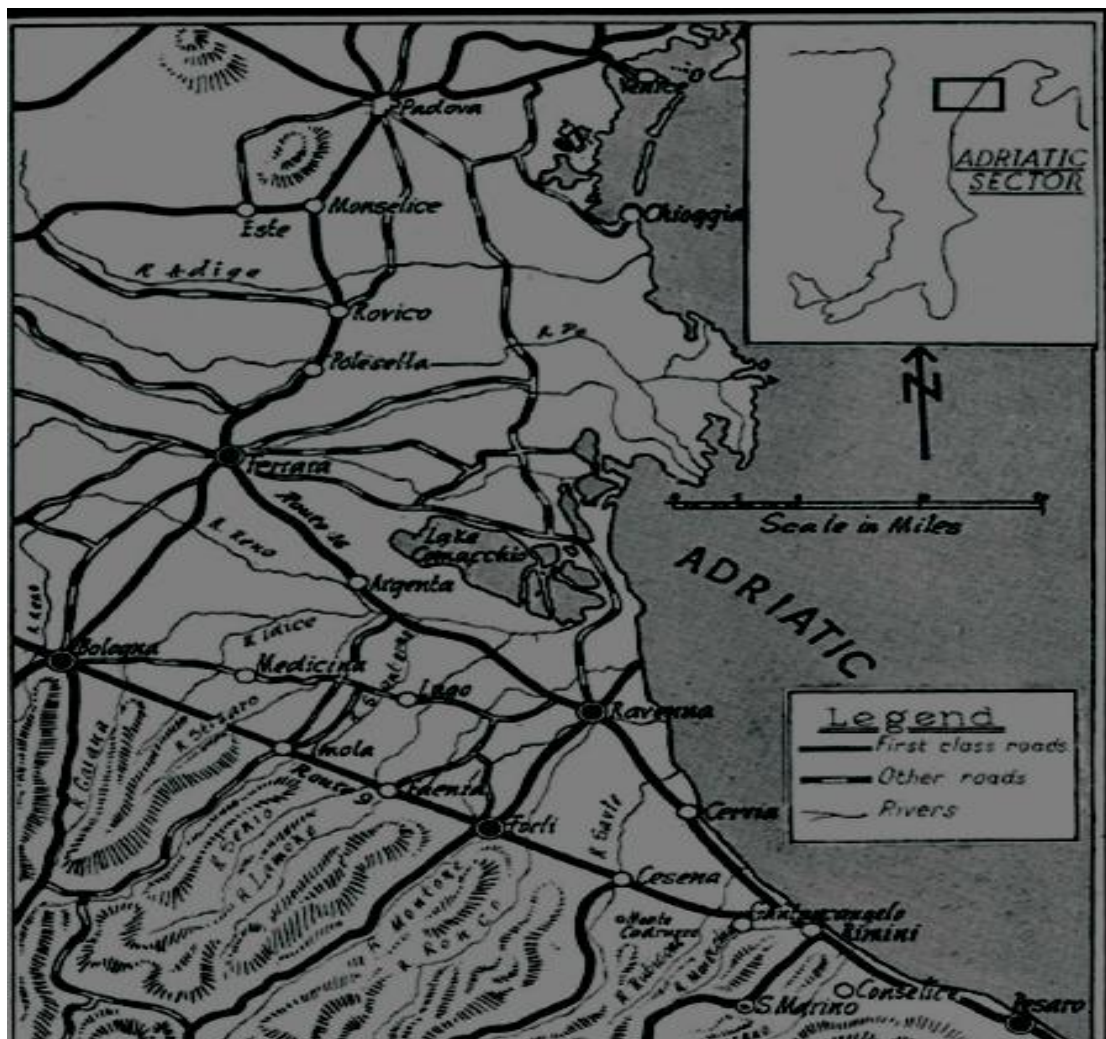
Source: *Tehran to Trieste: The Story of the 10th Indian Division*, p. 12. Accessed at: <http://archive.org/stream/TeheranToTrieste-TheStoryOfThe10thIndianDivision#page/n0/mode/1up>

MAP 6: THE ITALIAN FRONT ON 25 AUGUST 1944



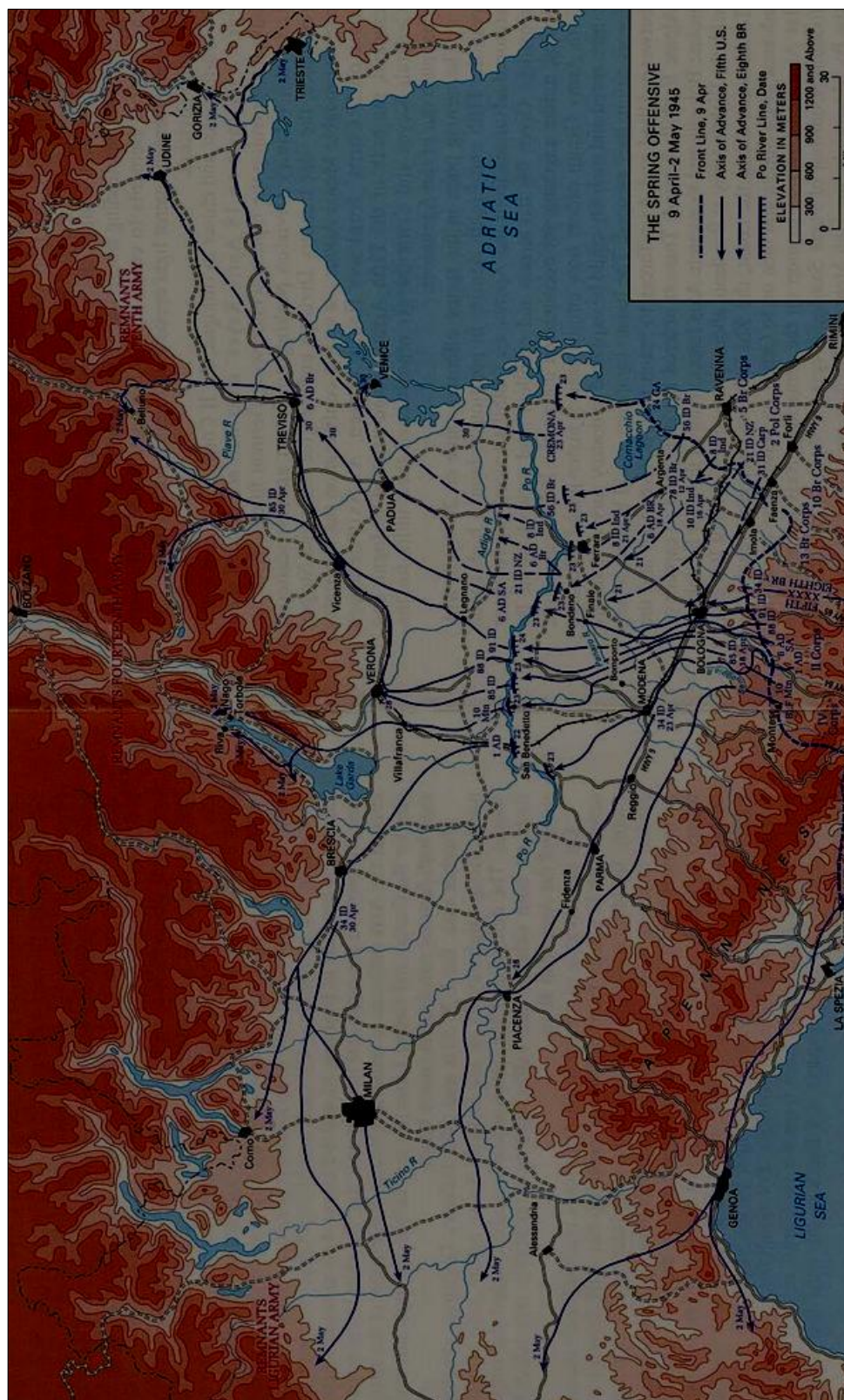
Source: <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-MTO-Cassino/maps/USA-MTO-Cassino-X.jpg>

MAP 7: ADRIATIC SECTOR ZONE OF OPERATIONS FOR 10TH INDIAN
DIVISION



Source: *Tehran to Trieste: The Story of the 10th Indian Division*, p. 28. Accessed at: <http://archive.org/stream/TeheranToTrieste-TheStoryOfThe10thIndianDivision#page/n0/mode/1up>

MAP 8: THE ALLIED SPRING OFFENSIVE IN ITALY 9 APRIL – 2 MAY 1945



Source: <http://custermen.com/Maps/ArmyMap6.jpg>

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CAB 66/34/39 – Memorandum on India's War Effort by Leo Amery, 1 March 1943.

WO 169/14782 – 10 Indian Division: 'G' 1943 Jan.- June, Aug.- Dec

WO 169/14783 – 10 Indian Division: 'AQ', 1943.

WO 169/14841 – 10 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943.

WO 169/14857 – 20 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943.

WO 169/14869 – 25 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1943.

WO 169/15599 – Reinforcement Camps: 16 Rft. Camp, 1943.

WO 169/16281 – 1 Durham Light Infantry, 01 January 1944 – 31 March 1944.

WO 169/16293 – 1 King's Own Royal Regiment (Lancaster), 01 - 28 February 1944

WO 169/16303 – 8 Manchester Regiment, January 1944.

WO 169/18727 – O2E Adv Ind CMF, 01 February – 31 December 1944.

WO 169/18768 – M.I.12 Ind. Censor Sec, 1944.

WO 169/18813 – 10 Indian Division: G.S., 01 January 1944 - 31 July 1944.

WO 169/18814 – 10 Indian Division: G.S., August 1944.

WO 169/18815 – 10 Indian Division G.S., October 1944.

WO 169/18816 – 10 Indian Division: A.Q., 1944.

WO 169/18856 – 10 Indian Infantry Brigade: H.Q., 1944.

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