

2020

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# BRITISH MILITARY HISTORY BIOGRAPHIES

An introduction to the Biographies of officers in the British Army and pre-partition Indian Army published on the web-site [www.BritishMilitaryHistory.co.uk](http://www.BritishMilitaryHistory.co.uk), including:

- Explanation of Terms,
- Regular Army, Militia and Territorial Army,
- Type and Status of Officers,
- Rank Structure,
- The Establishment,
- Staff and Command Courses,
- Appointments,
- Awards and Honours.

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## British Military History Biographies

This web-site contains selected biographies of some senior officers of the British Army and Indian Army who achieved some distinction, notable achievement, or senior appointment during the Second World War.

These biographies have been compiled from a variety of sources, which have then been subject to scrutiny and cross-checking. The main sources are:<sup>1</sup>

- Who was Who,
- Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,
- British Library File L/MIL/14 Indian Army Officer's Records,
- Various Army Lists from January 1930 to April 1946:  
<http://www.archive.org/search.php?query=army%20list>
- Half Year Army List published January 1942:  
<http://www.archive.org/details/armylisthalfjan1942grea>
- War Services of British Army Officers 1939-46 (Half Yearly Army List 1946),
- The London Gazette: <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/>,
- Generals.dk <http://www.generals.dk/>,
- WWII Unit Histories <http://www.unithistories.com/>,
- Companions of The Distinguished Service Order 1923 – 2010 Army Awards by Doug V. P. HEARNS, C.D.
- Various published biographies, divisional histories, regimental and unit histories owned by the author.

It has to be borne in mind that discrepancies between sources are inevitable. The period under review of 1930 to 1950 was one where handwritten, annotated documents were the main records kept on individuals, although some typewritten documents were appearing. This was before the days of the world-wide web, modern telephony, and the computer.

Errors were made in recording names and dates, and the time it took for information to reach a central records facility could be considerable. There were also differences between what was meant to happen and what actually happened. A well-known example was Lieutenant General MONTGOMERY's assumption of command of the 8<sup>th</sup> Army three days before he was supposed to. In addition, an officer may be appointed to a role on one date, but then take days or weeks to travel to take up his appointment on the ground (see biography of General Sir George GIFFARD). It does become difficult to explain however why one officer wrote in his entry in Who's Who that he commanded a division for a period of two years when his personal record makes no reference to this whatsoever.

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<sup>1</sup> A full bibliography is available on the web-site.

## Explanation of Terms

### BRITISH INDIA

The term British India is used to identify the country of India prior to it being partitioned on 15 August 1947 to form the two independent countries of India and Pakistan (the latter also partitioning in 1971 to form Pakistan, with the former East Pakistan achieving independence as Bangladesh). British India comprised the provinces under direct British rule, and the many Indian States that were nominally independent, but pledged their loyalty to the British Crown.

### THE BRITISH ARMY IN INDIA

The British Army maintained a significant presence in India, this being a legacy of the Indian Mutiny and the importance of India to the British Empire. This was by far the largest overseas deployment of British Army units (about 30% of the British Army was stationed in India in 1939). There were usually about thirty infantry battalions, a couple of cavalry regiments and about five artillery units stationed in India at any one time. These units comprised British officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers and were administered by the British Army, but for the period that they were stationed in India, they came under operational command of the Indian Army.

### INDIAN ARMY

The Indian Army was paid for and under the direction of the Indian legislative assembly, with the ultimate responsibility resting with the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, who from 1858 until August 1947 was the chief British government official and representative of the British monarch in India. The Indian Army was a separate organisation to the British Army. The language of the British Indian Army was Urdu, not English, with all officers speaking Urdu as a common language across all races, tribes and religions.

To reflect the complex nature of the arrangements, the main headquarters for the Indian Army was termed General Headquarters (G.H.Q.), The Army in India. This was both the Indian equivalent of the War Office in London in terms of the Indian Army, and also the operational headquarters for the British Army and Indian Army units deployed in India and Burma. The G.H.Q. was located in the capital city of British India, Delhi, but in the summer months the capital moved to Simla (now Shimla) in the state of Himachal Pradesh. This practice stopped in 1939.

Officers from the British Army and Indian Army filled the appointments in the G.H.Q.. Some British officers also were appointed to operational commands, such as the future Field Marshal Harold ALEXANDER, who commanded the Nowshera Brigade pre-war.

A few Indian Army officers made the opposite journey, however, only Claude AUCKINLECK held operational command of British Corps and Army formation in the Second World War, as G.O.C. IV Corps, and G.O.C.-in-C. Middle East Command.<sup>2</sup> Other Indian Army officers did command British formations during the war, such as Frank MESSERVY, but this was the exception.

## REGULAR ARMY, MILITIA and TERRITORIAL ARMY

The British and Indian Armies comprised in effect three different armies, namely:

- Regular Army,
- Militia,
- Territorial Army.

First and foremost was the Regular Army. This was the professional and full-time army in the United Kingdom and British India. Officers and men joined the army as volunteers. The officers were granted permanent commissions in the Army; the men 'signed up' for a period of service (which could be extended in appropriate cases).

The Militia comprised officers and men who had completed their service with the Regular Army, but, remained available for recall in times of emergency. The Militia was superseded by the Territorial Army and Supplementary Reserve in 1907. The Militia was resurrected with the enactment of the Military Training Act (1939) on 26 May of that year. This act called up males aged twenty and twenty-one years of age for six months army service after which they would be transferred to the Reserve. These men were known as Militiamen. There was only one batch of men called up on 3 June 1939 before the outbreak of war, with the act being supplanted by the National Service (Armed Forces) Act (1939).

The Territorial Army was formed in 1920 as the part-time army following the Great War to replace the pre-war Territorial Force, which itself had been created in 1908. The Territorial Army comprised volunteers who agreed to serve part-time in the Army as well as undertaking their normal job and living at home. The usual requirement was to attend a local Drill Hall at least once a week for training, as well as attending training weekends and a two-week long annual camp. The purpose of the Territorial Army was to avoid a costly, large standing army by allowing rapid expansion and reinforcement of the Regular Army at times of war or crisis. Officers and men received payment which was in proportion to the days they performed duty. A few officers and men from the Regular Army were attached to Territorial Army units for training and administration purposes.

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<sup>2</sup> AUCKINLECK also commanded the North Western Expeditionary Force for a brief period during the abortive campaign in Norway in April and May 1940.

The mobilisation of the Territorial Army commenced on 1 September 1939, albeit many men attended their Drill Hall only to be sent home again. The enactment of the National Service (Armed Forces) Act (1939) came into force on 3 September 1939 on the day war was declared. This allowed the introduction of conscription.

The Territorial Army was not disbanded or merged with the Regular Army with the outbreak of the Second World War. The letter 'T' was removed from their uniforms, but, the Territorial Army continued to exist. In answering a Parliamentary question, the Secretary of State for War, Mr HORE-BELISHA stated:

*I am glad to have the opportunity of dispelling a misconception. The Territorial Army did not end at the outbreak of war. On the contrary, in accordance with the intention announced some years ago, all expansion since the war has been based on the Territorial Army. Men who, since the outbreak of war, have volunteered for service for the duration of the war have been enlisted into the Territorial Army, while every man called up for military service under the National Service (Armed Forces) Act 1939, has been deemed to have enlisted in the Territorial Army. Thus, the Territorial Army does exist, but, in the operational necessities of war, the whole of the Forces must constitute one Army in which each individual is placed where his attainments are of greatest use to the nation. For this reason and to avoid obvious outward distinction in the field, it was decided to suspend, during war, the wearing of the letter 'T'.*

## Types and Status of Officers

There were various types of officers within the British Army and British Indian Army, with each type having a different status.

### BRITISH ARMY

#### KING'S COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

All British Army officers who received regular commissions were known as King's Commissioned Officers (K.C.O's.) and enjoyed the full privileges of being an army officer in the armed forces of the British Empire. The majority had attended private schools, many of which such as Wellington College, Winchester and Eton prepared candidates through the Officers Training Corps for life in the British Army. Prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, all British Army officer cadets (known as Gentlemen Cadets) destined for the infantry, tank or cavalry regiments, were trained at the Royal Military College at Sandhurst.

Gentlemen Cadets who had been accepted for the Royal Regiment of Artillery or the Corps of Royal Engineers received their basic training at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich; otherwise known as 'The Shop'. On completion of their basic training, each Gentleman Cadet received their commission from the Monarch, and were posted to their regiment. Officers in the Corps of Royal Engineers generally went to Cambridge University to complete a degree prior to being posted to a unit. The service numbers of King's Commissioned Officers were four, five or six figure numbers issued consecutively.

## EMERGENCY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

With the outbreak of the Second World War, both the British expanded greatly. To cater for this expansion, a new category of officers came into being. Emergency Commissions were given to British officers in both the British and Indian Armies.

In the United Kingdom, these potential officers were trained at Officer Cadet Training Units (O.C.T.U's.). Their service numbers are prefixed as EC xxxx. From 1943 onwards, the vast majority of officers commanding platoons and companies in infantry battalions, tank and cavalry regiments were emergency commissioned officers. Within four years, some rose to command battalions and regiments, and their leadership was vital to the successful outcome of the war from the viewpoint of the British Army. At the end of the war, Emergency Commissioned officers were either released from military service or had to apply for a permanent commission in the Regular Army or Territorial Army.

## INDIAN ARMY

The situation in the Indian Army was slightly more complicated; there being four types of Regular Indian Army officers. These were:

- King's Commissioned Officers (British officers in the Indian Army);
- King's Indian Commissioned Officers (Indian officers in the Indian Army);
- Indian Commissioned Officers (Indian officers in the Indian Army);
- Viceroy's Commissioned Officers (Indian officers in the Indian Army).

## KING'S COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

The Indian Army comprised British officers who joined the Indian Army as opposed to the British Army, and Indian officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers. The usual procedure was for the top twenty graduates from the Royal Military College to be offered commissions in the Indian Army, joining what was known as the Unattached List. They would then travel to India, serve with a British Army unit for twelve months and then be allocated to an Indian Army regiment.

After the Great War, some officers transferred from either the Regular British Army, or Territorial Force (or in at least one case the Australian Armed Forces) into the Indian Army.

British Officers who trained at Sandhurst and then joined the Indian Army were known as King's Commissioned Officers (K.C.O's.). Their Indian Army numbers were in the series – IA/xxx or AI/xxx or xxx/AI. (Example ADDAMS-WILLIAMS IA/573 with STRAY AI/573). They had full authority over British officers and Indian officers and men. There were usually only about sixteen British officers in an Indian infantry battalion, compared with twenty-five Viceroy Commissioned Officers. An average British infantry battalion during this period had thirty-one officers.

## KING'S INDIAN COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

It was during the Great War that Indians were commissioned into the Indian Army for the first time. A Temporary School for Indian Cadets was established at Daly College, Indore. The first intake of forty-two cadets arrived in June 1918, and they included Kodandera Madappa CARIAPPA (IA/967), later to become Field Marshal and the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army. They were due to complete their training in December 1918, but with the end of the war, it was extended until December 1919. Thirty-nine cadets were granted temporary commissions on successfully completing their training, and then on 9 September 1922, thirty-three were granted permanent commissions with effect from 17 July 1920. This date was chosen to make these officers junior to British officers who were commissioned after them, because the course at Sandhurst was longer than the one at Daly College. In addition to those commissioned officers who had attended the Daly College, nine Indians who had served with the Imperial Cadets Corps during the war were also granted commissions.

Daly Cadet College was closed after the Great War, and then Indians who sought commissions in the Indian Army were to be trained at Sandhurst. The first five Indians arrived at Sandhurst in January 1919, but two died and one was withdrawn prior to commissioning. Of the remaining two, Syed Iskander Ali Mirza and Iqbal Ali Beg, both passed out on 16 July 1920, but neither stayed in the Army for long. The quota for Indians to join Sandhurst was limited to ten cadets every six months, and of these, several did not complete their training. This led to the opening in February 1922 of the Prince of Wales's Royal Indian Military College at Dehra Dun which was intended to prepare suitable boys for entry into Sandhurst. This was not straightforward, however, as boys had to pay to attend this college, the cost being 5,000 rupees for the sons of military officers and 10,000 rupees for others.

Likewise, there was a cost in attending Sandhurst, 7,000 rupees for sons of military officers and 11,000 rupees for others, although with other expenses, about 20,000 rupees would be required to attend Sandhurst. These costs placed severe restrictions on the background and nature of the boys who could apply.

Applicants also had to be interviewed locally, take a written examination, then an interview with the Commander-in-Chief of India Command, and finally, an interview with the Viceroy no less. The last Indian cadets to train at Sandhurst passed out on 1 February 1934.

Indian Officers who trained at Sandhurst and then joined the Indian Army were known as King's Commissioned Indian Officers (K.C.I.O's.). These officers had the same status as their British counterparts, and could command British and Indian soldiers. Their service numbers were the same as K.C.O's: AI/xxx or xxx/AI.

## INDIAN COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

The Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun commenced training its first cadets on 1 October 1932 and was formally opened by the Commander-in-Chief Field Marshal CHETWODE on 10 December that year. The first commandant was Brigadier L. P. COLLINS, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.. Forty vacancies existed on each entry, fifteen from the Army, fifteen from open competition and ten from Indian States Forces.

The first course included Sam Hormusji Framji Jamshedji MANEKSHAW, later to become Commander-in-Chief and India's only second Field Marshal, Smith DUN (IC/3) who became Commander-in-Chief of Burma and Mohammed Musa who became Commander-in-Chief of Pakistan. The first group of twenty-two passed out on 22 December 1934, but they were not commissioned until 1 February 1935 because of the need to maintain seniority of those passing out from Sandhurst. Thereafter, there was an intake every six months with eighteen months training for infantry cadets, and an additional six months in the Woolwich Wing for those destined for the engineers, artillery and signals.

These officers who passed out from the I.M.A. at Dehra Dun were known as Indian Commissioned Officers (I.C.O's.). They held the same ranks as K.C.O's. (eg, Lieutenant, Captain, etc.), but received less pay and allowances than British officers or K.C.I.O's.. The differential in pay was a continued source of resentment for the I.C.O's., as was the issue that they had no power of command over British officers. There were also problems because at one stage, I.C.O's. were seen as a replacement for Viceroy Commissioned Officers and were placed in command of platoons, whereas British officers in the Indian Army and K.C.I.O's. were seen as company officers. I.C.O's. had service numbers with the prefix of IC xxxx.

In February 1923, the Legislative Assembly decided to commence a process of 'Indianisation' of the Indian Army. The original proposals were to allow this process to occur naturally over time, which meant that it would have taken until 1967 for all Indian Army units to have Indian officers at all ranks.



This was unacceptable, so a decision was taken to select two cavalry regiments and six infantry battalions to which all Indian Commissioned Officers would be posted. Once these units had Indian officers throughout, another group of units were to be selected for Indianisation.

The first eight units were:

- 7<sup>th</sup> Light Cavalry;
- 16<sup>th</sup> Light Cavalry;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 1<sup>st</sup> Punjab Regiment;
- 5<sup>th</sup> Bn. 5<sup>th</sup> Mahratta Light Infantry;
- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. 7<sup>th</sup> Rajput Regiment;
- 1<sup>st</sup> Bn. 14<sup>th</sup> Punjab Regiment;
- 4<sup>th</sup> Bn. 19<sup>th</sup> Hyderabad Regiment;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Bn. 1<sup>st</sup> Madras Pioneers.

By the commencement of the Second World War, only one field company in the Sappers and Miners had become fully Indianised.

### VICEROY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS<sup>3</sup>

The Indian Army differed to the British Army in that it did not have warrant officers (although there were Company Havildar Majors), but, instead had Viceroy Commissioned Officers (V.C.O's.). These were serving soldiers who were deemed to have appropriate service and ability to be promoted and awarded a commission. There were three ranks of V.C.O's., namely:

- Jemadar,
- Subadar,<sup>4</sup>
- Subadar Major.

In Cavalry regiments, the V.C.O's. were known as:

- Jemadar,
- Risaldar,
- Risaldar Major.

The Jemadar wore one star, the Subadar/Risaldar two stars, and the Subadar Major/Risaldar Major wore a crown.<sup>5</sup> The V.C.O's. commanded platoons or troops and held the appointments of Head Clerk and Quartermaster (the Adjutant was usually a K.C.O. or K.C.I.O.).

<sup>3</sup> The term 'Indian Officer' was used up until 1935, when the term Viceroy Commissioned Officer came into use.

<sup>4</sup> The rank of Subadar is also spelt in many documents as Subedar, however, the Indian Army List uses the spelling of Subadar with an 'a' so this has been adopted by this web-site.

<sup>5</sup> Between 1941 and 1945, a Subadar Major wore three small crowns, one above the other, but, this was widely unpopular with the officers concerned.

The Subadar Major, or Risaldar Major, was a very important figure in any Indian unit, second only to the commanding officer in terms of influence within that unit. They were the adviser to the commanding officer on all matters relating to Indian soldiers and had a similar standing to Regimental Sergeant Majors in British units. Both the current Indian Army and Pakistan Army retain this distinction in their use of Junior Commissioned Officers.

## EMERGENCY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

With the outbreak of the Second World War, both the British and Indian Armies expanded greatly, the Indian Army becoming the largest volunteer army ever raised with some two and half million men under arms. To cater for this expansion, new categories of officers came into being. Emergency Commissions were given to British officers in the Indian Army. In the case of the potential officers designated to serve in Indian units, they were posted from the United Kingdom as Private soldiers, often straight from school, then trained at Officer Cadet Training Units (O.C.T.U's.) in India. After completing their training, they received their Emergency Commissions and were posted to Indian regiments. Their service numbers are prefixed as EC xxxx.

An example of this process is described by John SHIPSTER in his book 'Mist on the Rice Fields'. In 1940, he left Marlborough School at the age of eighteen and enlisted in The Royal Scots (The Royal Regiment). He joined a scheme where schoolboys in public (fee paying) schools could be commissioned in the Indian Army, provided they had a good school record, and the recommendation of their headmaster. The voyage from Glasgow to Bombay took nearly eight weeks, with a stop at Freetown, followed by a three-day stopover at Durban.

On arrival in Bombay, the officer cadets travelled the six-hundred miles to Bangalore by train. The city of Bangalore lay in the state of Mysore, about three-thousand feet about sea level. It was also the home of the largest military cantonment in southern India. There were about six-hundred officer cadets in training at Bangalore. Their training lasted about six months, and on successful completion of the course the cadets were commissioned into the regiments and corps of the Indian Army. SHIPSTER was posted to the 7<sup>th</sup> Bn. 2<sup>nd</sup> Punjab Regiment which was based in Meerut and he served in the Arakan.

At the end of the war, the Emergency Commissioned officers were either released from military service or had to apply for a permanent commission in the Regular Army.

## INDIAN EMERGENCY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

Indians were also recruited, trained and then granted Emergency Commissions in the Indian Army. Their service numbers are prefixed as IEC xxxx. At the end of the war, they were either released from military service or had to apply for a permanent commission in the Indian Army.

## RESERVE OF OFFICERS and INDIAN REGULAR RESERVE of OFFICERS

When officers who had held a Regular commission in either the British Army or Indian Army retired, they would join the Reserve of Officers of Indian Regular Reserve of Officers (I.R.R.O.). There were circumstances in which an officer would not join the Reserve:

- If they had reached the age limit for liability for recall,
- Misconduct,
- Mental or physical unfitness for recall.

An officer was not placed on the reserve in a rank higher than that which they held or were granted on retirement. The age limits for service in the Reserve were:

- Lieutenant – 45 years,
- Captain or Major – 50 years,
- Quarter-Master – 52 years,
- Lieutenant Colonel – 55 years,
- Colonel – 60 years,
- Major General – 67 years,
- Lieutenant General or above – 67 years.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, several officers were recalled from the Reserve or volunteered for service. Most were appointed in 1939 and 1940 to specialist posts, as base or garrison commanders, or employed at the War Office or Home Commands on the staff. As the war progressed, many of these officers reached the age limit and retired to be replaced by Emergency Commission officers. By 1943, the number of officers on the Reserve actively employed had reduced significantly. In the Indian Army, some officers in the I.R.R.O. were employed until late in the war, an example being Major General BERESFORD.

## Rank Structure

The ranks within the British Army and British Indian Army fell into two categories, Regimental, and Commands and Staff.

### Regimental ranks

- Second Lieutenant,
- Lieutenant,
- Captain,
- Major,
- Lieutenant Colonel.

### Command and Staff ranks

- Colonel,
- Brigadier,
- Major General,
- Lieutenant General,
- General,
- Field Marshal.

The title of Brigadier-General existed as an appointment until 1 January 1921, when it was abolished. An appointment of Colonel-Commandant existed from 1922 until 1928. From 1 June 1928 onwards, Colonels who were assumed senior staff officer roles, or command of a Regular Army brigade, were appointed to the rank of Temporary Brigadier. This was not a formal rank with associated pay and allowances, but an appointment that reflected extra responsibility and enhanced Colonel's pay. The War Office introduced by Royal Warrant the rank of Brigadier with effect from 1 November 1947. The first forty-nine Colonels promoted to the new rank of Brigadier were listed in the London Gazette of 23 March 1948, with their promotions being backdated to 1 November 1947.

During peacetime, promotion was slow and based on seniority. On commissioning into the British or Indian Army, an officer would hold the rank of Second Lieutenant. On completion of two years' service to the required standard, an officer would be promoted Lieutenant. Captain would usually take a further six years to achieve. Advancement to Major took place after a usual period of eighteen years' service. Promotion to Lieutenant Colonel was based on seniority and favourable reports from senior officers and was usually reached after twenty-six- or twenty-seven-years' service. On promotion to Lieutenant Colonel, an officer would serve a period in Regimental command. On completion of that period, unless promotion to a staff rank was forthcoming, the officer would retire.

As promotion was based only on vacancies, some officers never rose above the rank of Captain; in fact, this occurred in about 50% of all cases. A British Army infantry regiment with two Regular Army battalions had two Lieutenant Colonels, eight Majors, fourteen Captains and thirty-four Subalterns (Lieutenants and Second Lieutenants), which demonstrates the pyramid an officer had to climb, not aided by the fact a Lieutenant Colonel could stay in post for up to four years before completing their period of Regimental command.

Due to the slowness in promotion, the system of awarding Brevets was in use between the wars. Brevets were awarded to the ranks of Major, Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel. Brevets were awarded twice yearly, but during the Great War were also awarded for acts of bravery or sustained leadership. An officer awarded a Brevet was promoted in terms of the Army List, but not on the Regimental List. They were allowed to wear the rank of the Brevet and earned seniority on the Army List but were paid and undertook responsibilities of their Regimental rank.

For example, a Brevet Lieutenant Colonel and Major would command a company whilst serving with their regiment, however if they were appointed to a staff post, would hold the responsibility of the Brevet rank.

On 28 July 1938, the Minister of State for War, Mr HORE-BELISHA made a statement to the House of Commons bringing about radical changes to the system of promotion in the British Army. The age limits for retirement were reduced as follows:

Generals and Lieutenant Generals	67 years reduced to 60 years
Major Generals	62 years reduced to 57 years
Colonels	57 years reduced to 55 years
Lieutenant Colonels	55 years reduced to 50 years
Majors	50 years reduced to 47 years

The method of promotion by vacancy was abolished. Every Subaltern was now guaranteed to reach the rank of Captain in eight years from commissioning, and then Major in a further nine years. This gave at least ten years' service in the rank of Major before compulsory retirement. Beyond the rank of Major, promotion was based upon selection to fill a specific appointment. The system of brevet promotions was abolished, and the period of tenure for both command and staff roles was reduced from four years to three. There was also an increase in pay and allowances for officers, which was no doubt popular at the time. The effect of these changes was an increased budget of £360,000 per year, and about two-thousand officers received a promotion with effect from 1 August 1938, which led them to being known as 'Bank Holiday Majors' as this date was a Bank Holiday in England.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, the expansion of both the British Army and Indian Army meant a large increase in the number of officers required. This expansion also required more flexibility in the promotion system for officers. The general rules that applied in peacetime in terms of substantive promotions also applied during the war.

A new system of acting, temporary and war substantive promotion was introduced on 3 September 1939 with the outbreak of war. The rapid expansion of the Army required rapid promotions to fulfil new appointments. If an officer holding a substantive rank needed to be promoted to fulfil a new role, they would be promoted on an acting basis. The period of acting promotion varied according to the rank; for Lieutenant Colonels it was three months (either as continuous service or on aggregate), for Brigadiers it was six months, and for Major Generals and above it was twelve months.

After holding the senior rank on an acting basis for the required period of time, the promotion was made Temporary. A temporary promotion had no time limit and remained in being as long as the individual concerned held an appointment that justified that higher rank.

The outbreak of war also required the creation of War Substantive ranks, in other words, the rank was held substantively for the duration of the war. When an officer was promoted to a higher rank on a Temporary basis, if they did not hold the rank one lower already on a substantive basis, they were granted that rank as a War Substantive rank. If an officer relinquished an appointment that carried a higher rank, they lost any Temporary rank that went with that appointment, and reverted to their Substantive or War Substantive rank, whichever was the higher. For example, an officer holding the substantive rank of Major who was promoted to the rank of Temporary Colonel was also promoted to the War Substantive rank of Lieutenant Colonel at the same time. If he lost the rank of Temporary Colonel, he reverted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, not Major. Officers who held Acting, Temporary and War Substantive ranks wore the badges of their higher rank.

In diaries and written accounts, the rank is usually shown without the distinction between Acting, Temporary, War Substantive or Substantive being mentioned. It was, however, important in terms of seniority and pay for the individuals concerned. This system led to some interesting combinations, for example, a Major General commanding a division who held the substantive rank of Major, but was a War Substantive Lieutenant Colonel, Temporary Colonel, Temporary Brigadier and Acting Major General.

## The Establishment

Both the Regular British Army and Regular Indian Army had an agreed number of officers within each rank that was funded by the Army Council. This was known as the Establishment, also known as the Active List.

The highest rank in the Army, Field Marshal, had no establishment. Field Marshals did not retire and remained on the Active List until their death. There were eleven Field Marshals in the British Army in June 1937, of whom one was the current Chief of the Imperial General Staff and six were former Chiefs of the Imperial General Staff. The other four were The Duke of Connaught and Strathearn, The Duke of Windsor, the Emperor of Japan and King Alfonso XIII of Spain.

The British Army had nine substantive Generals and nineteen Lieutenant Generals, and the Indian Army had three Generals and three Lieutenant Generals. Both ranks held the same group of appointments, so that in effect a General was a senior Lieutenant General and not a separate rank.

In the British Army the appointments of Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, Master-General of the Ordnance, and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Scottish Command, Northern Command, Western Command, Eastern Command, Southern Command and Aldershot Command were all either General's or Lieutenant General's appointments.

In the Indian Army, the Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, Master-General of the Ordnance, and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Northern Command, Western Command, Eastern Command and Southern Command were General's and Lieutenant General's appointments. Three of the appointments in the Indian Army establishment were held by officers on the British establishment.

In addition to the above appointments, the Military Secretary to the Secretary of State for War was a Lieutenant General as was the Director-General of the Territorial Army (a new appointment), and there were only two overseas appointments, namely General Officer Commanding British Troops in Egypt, and General Officer Commanding British Troops in Palestine and Trans-jordan, the former long standing and the latter coming into being in September 1936.

There were three governorships of United Kingdom dependencies that were usually held by senior Army officers (Generals or Lieutenant Generals), namely the Governors and Commanders-in-Chief of Bermuda, Gibraltar and Malta. The Lieutenant of the Tower of London was a Lieutenant General on half pay. One General and three Lieutenant Generals in the British Army were without appointments and on half pay, as was one in the Indian Army.

In 1937, in the British Army there were eight-six Major Generals, of which eight were with the Royal Army Medical Corps on a separate establishment, four were supernumerary and six were without appointments on half pay. The Indian Army had an Establishment of twenty-one Major Generals, and seven Major Generals on the Establishment of the Indian Medical Service. There were four-hundred and seventy-two Colonels on the British Army Establishment in June 1937, and one-hundred and sixteen on the Indian Army Establishment on the same date.

## Officer Selection and Training

Following the end of the Great War, the British Army reduced in size to return to a peacetime establishment. The country had suffered during the Great War, although its losses had not been as severe as those of France and Germany.

For those officers who had served during the war on an emergency, war service, commission, demobilisation commenced soon after the end of hostilities. The Territorial Army reverted to a peacetime role, with its officers and men released from Army service. At the outbreak of the Great War on the 4<sup>th</sup> August 1914, the strength of the Regular Army was 247,432. However, about one third of these soldiers (about 82,000) were stationed in India, and there was a large garrison of twenty infantry battalions and three cavalry regiments in Ireland.

The Militia, including the reservists who were under a liability for recall or had joined the Special Reserve, numbered about 210,000 men. Lastly, the Territorial Army numbered about 280,000 men in total.<sup>6</sup> During the war, such were the losses amongst the establishment of the Regular British Army, that some other ranks were able to sign on for Regular Army terms of duty, and some officers from the Territorial Army, Special Reserve or holding Emergency Commissions were granted commissions in the Regular Army or Indian Army.

During the Great War, the number of men under arms in the British Army grew to about 5.6 million, although not all of them served at the same time.<sup>7</sup> The size of the British Armed Forces reduced quickly from 4.58 million in 1918, to 1.6 million the following year and 597,000 in 1920.<sup>8</sup> In 1922, there was further retrenchment in the size of the British Army through two main factors:

1. The formation of the Irish Free State;
2. U.K. Government austerity (otherwise known as the 'Geddes Axe').

The Irish Free State (Saorstát Éireann) came into being in 1922 with the status of a dominion under the crown of King George V. This led to the disbandment of the five infantry regiments in the British Army that recruited from Southern Ireland, namely:

- The Connaught Rangers,
- The Prince of Wales's Leinster Regiment (Royal Canadians),
- The Royal Dublin Fusiliers,
- The Royal Irish Regiment,
- The Royal Munster Fusiliers.

British officers in these regiments had to either accept redundancy or apply for a transfer to another regiment or corps. The 'Geddes Axe' is a name applied to the period of extreme austerity introduced by the Conservative Government following the war to address the U.K.'s massive debt. The government reduced defence spending by 42% in one year, which resulted in a reduction in size of the Regular Army. Those regiments that had four Regular Army battalions had to disband two battalions, these being:

- The Royal Fusiliers (City of London Regiment),
- The King's Royal Rifle Corps,
- The Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge's Own),
- The Worcestershire Regiment,
- The Rifle Brigade (Prince Consort's Own).

In addition, some cavalry regiments were required to merge, the Royal Tank Regiment was reduced in strength, as was the Royal Artillery.

<sup>6</sup> See: [CORRIGAN Gordon, \*Mud, Blood and Poppycock\* \(London, Cassel, 2003\), p.40](#)

<sup>7</sup> See: <http://www.1914-1918.net/faq.htm>

<sup>8</sup> See: [http://www.ukpublicspending.co.uk/downchart\\_ukgs.php?chart=30-total&year=1900\\_2011&units=p&state=UK](http://www.ukpublicspending.co.uk/downchart_ukgs.php?chart=30-total&year=1900_2011&units=p&state=UK)



The British Army still faced several commitments overseas and at home. There was the British Army of the Rhine to garrison Germany. British troops were sent to North Russia to fight alongside the White Russians against the Bolshevik revolution from 1918 until 1920, and the Third Afghan War broke out in 1919 on the North West Frontier of India. There was a large commitment to Ireland, where the fight for independence had commenced in 1916.

Potential officers of the British Army were trained at one of two establishments, the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, or, the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich. The latter trained officer cadets for the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, with the former training all other officer cadets. Following the Great War, there was a shortage of candidates for a commission. In the early 1920's, six-hundred and fifty officers were required each year to replace wastage, but in 1922 only four-hundred and seventy-four were granted.

There were various reasons identified for depressing recruitment, with one of the main factors being the cost. Officer cadets were required to pay for their education at Sandhurst, in a similar manner to a boarding school. In 1913, the cost was £150 per cadet, a not inconsiderable sum for most families.<sup>9</sup> There were a few scholarships available, but in most cases, a family member or friend had to pay the fees to enable a cadet to attend. Another factor was the poor pay of junior Army officers, who earned about £150 per annum post war. In consequence, many had to supplement their income to pay for mess bills, uniform, horses, and other expenses. Some did so by writing or generating income, while others relied on family support.

Entry to Sandhurst or Woolwich was by means of a competitive examination, with the minimum age of entry being seventeen and half years.<sup>10</sup> Most of the independent, fee paying, public schools in the United Kingdom had an Army Class, where boys that intended to apply for the entrance examination were given additional and specific teaching to assist them in passing the examination. In addition, these schools had companies or detachments of the Officers Training Corps, a forerunner of today's Army Cadets. Boys were encouraged to join the O.T.C. at their school, where they learnt drill and rifle shooting and could gain promotion within their company or detachment. Contingents of the Senior Division were based at all the universities in the U.K., with Contingents of the Junior Division being located at public schools and some state grammar schools. The largest unit in the Senior Division by some degree, was Cambridge University. This was because this is where officers of the Royal Engineers went to study for their degrees after being commissioned.

The largest O.T.C. unit in the Junior Division was at Eton College, which had five companies of infantry under the command of a Lieutenant Colonel. Wellington College in Berkshire, which catered specifically for the sons of serving or retired Army officers, had three companies and two platoons of infantry.

<sup>9</sup> See: **ROSTRON Peter** *The Military Life and Times of General Sir Miles DEMPSEY* (Barnsley, Pen & Sword

<sup>10</sup> This was increased to eighteen years of age in the early 1920's.

Other large contingents of at least two companies could be found at Ampleforth College in Yorkshire; Bedford School; Blundell's School in Tiverton; Bradfield College near Reading; Brighton College; Bromsgrove School; Canford School, Wimborne; Charterhouse School near Guildford; Cheltenham College; Christ's Hospital School, West Horsham; City of London School; Clifton College, Bristol; Dulwich College, London; Eastbourne College; Epsom College; Felsted School, Essex; Glasgow Academy; Haileybury College in Hertfordshire (three companies); Harrow School (three companies); Highgate School, London; Imperial Service College, Windsor; Lancing College; Malvern College (three companies); Marlborough College (four companies); Merchant Taylor's School in Northwood, Middlesex; Mill Hill School, London; Oundle School, Leicestershire; Radley College, Oxfordshire; Repton School, Derbyshire; Rossall School, Fleetwood, Lancashire; Rugby School (three companies); St. Edward's School, Oxford; St. Paul's School, Hammersmith, London; Sedburgh School in North Yorkshire; Sherborne School in Dorset; Shrewsbury School (three companies); Stowe School at Buckingham; Tonbridge School in Kent (three companies); Uppingham School; Winchester College (three companies); and finally Wrekin College at Wellington, Shropshire.

It follows that the schools with the larger contingents of the Officers Training Corps both attracted those boys with an interest in a career in the Army and provided the larger numbers who gained entry to Sandhurst and Woolwich. In 1923, a committee under Lord HALDANE examined how to improve the recruitment of Army officers. Their conclusions were to widen recruitment from state schools (including grammar schools) and to promote more university graduates to join (there were only seventeen successful graduate applicants in 1922).

Once admitted to Sandhurst or Woolwich, the Gentleman Cadet studied for two years a syllabus comprising military organisation, administration, accounting, hygiene, military law and infantry platoon tactics. However, there was a particular focus on drill, and physical training. Sports were a significant part of the life of an Officer Cadet, with horsemanship being a prized and respected skill. Both establishments ran a hunt, which were seen to be at the top of the social structure.

On the successful completion of their initial training, an Officer Cadet received the King's (or Queen's) Commission into the British Army. The commissioning ceremonies were large, formal occasions, usually attended by a senior member of the Royal Family and senior Army officers. On being commissioned, the career path of an officer varied according to the Arm or Service into which he had been commissioned. From Sandhurst, an infantry officer would usually spend nine months at the Regimental Depot and then three months at the Small Arms School at Hythe before joining an operational battalion. Officers of the Royal Corps of Signals (post 1922) attended the School of Signals at Catterick for seventeen months of specialist training. Those who joined cavalry regiments had further training, as did those in the Royal Tank Corps (R.T.C.) who spent seven months at the R.T.C. Depot at Bovington in Dorset.

## Officer's Career Path

Having completed their initial training, the young infantry officer would join one of the two battalions in his regiment. Those in the cavalry would join their regiment, the officers in the Royal Tank Corp a battalion or company in the R.T.C., the Royal Artillery officer an artillery regiment, the Royal Engineers a company, and the others relevant units within their corps.

The officer would now hold the rank of Second Lieutenant. To progress to the rank of Lieutenant, they had to pass an examination and be adjudged suitable to complete their probation and be promoted. Most did so two years after being commissioned, although some took a year longer. They commenced their careers as a platoon or troop commander, learning the requirements of an Army officer. A lot depended on the character of the commanding officer, so some officers received more training, encouragement, and support than others.

Within a typical infantry regiment of the period, there were two Lieutenant Colonels (who commanded each of the two battalions in that regiment), eight Majors, fourteen Captains and thirty-four subalterns (Lieutenants and Second Lieutenants). Promotion to the rank of Captain and Major was conditional on passing the required examinations, and then waiting for a vacancy. The examinations tested the candidates for the next rank up, with about one-hundred and fifty officers failing annually between the wars. Usually promotion up to and including the rank of Major took place based upon seniority, which is why the Army List was so important to an individual officer, as it listed all Army officers according to their seniority. In 1932, the average officer was thirty-two years of age and had thirteen years' service on being promoted to the rank of Captain and was aged thirty-nine years and with nineteen years of service before reaching the rank of Major.

Officers deemed to have the potential to reach the rank of Lieutenant Colonel or above were appointed to the role of Adjutant, a key role in any infantry battalion or artillery, cavalry, or tank regiment. An Adjutant (who usually held the rank of Captain) was the commanding officer's senior staff officer. He was responsible to the commanding officer for the organization, administration, and discipline of the battalion. In the field, he was also the battalion operations officer, responsible for drafting daily orders and the writing of the battalion war diary.

His operational functions were

- To record the Commanding Officers verbal orders and in writing,
- To implement the Commanding Officers orders, plans and policies,
- To organise the battalion office.

In this last function, the serjeant clerk and two clerks assisted the Adjutant. When the commanding officer attended order groups at brigade headquarters or held his own order groups the adjutant would usually attend. The Adjutant would often accompany the commanding officer on visits, meetings and conferences.

The officers seen as having the most potential were appointed to the role of Adjutant in a Regular Army unit, but others were appointed to the role of Adjutant in a Territorial Army unit. If they were Lieutenants, they would be promoted to the rank of Temporary Captain, but still received the pay and allowances of a Lieutenant.

The Selection Board of the Army selected a few officers for accelerated promotion, and appointed officers to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Often this required an officer to transfer regiments, and in a few cases, Arms or Corps. The President of the Selection Board was the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, the professional head of the Army. The other members were:

- The Adjutant-General to the Forces,
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Aldershot Command,
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command,
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command,
- The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Southern Command.

The secretary to the board was the Military Secretary to the Secretary of State, with the assistant secretary being the Deputy Military Secretary. The files in respect of the officers presented to the Selection Board were anonymised, although it is likely that lobbying for preferred candidates took place and some could be identified by the nature of their career to date.

## Staff and Command Courses

### THE STAFF COURSE

Within the British Army and British Indian Army during this period, officers seconded by regiments and corps to the Staff undertook all the planning, organisation, and administration of the army. The Staff divided into three main sections: the General Staff (dealing with military operations, intelligence, training and staff duties), the Adjutant-General's Branch (dealing with personnel matters) and the Quarter-Master-General's Branch (dealing with the provision and supply of materiel). There were some other staff roles such as military secretariat, judge advocate general and with the Master General of the Ordnance.

To train selected officers for staff duties, both the British Army and British Indian Army opened staff colleges, the British Army Staff College being located at Camberley, Berkshire, and the Indian Army Staff College at Quetta. In order for an officer to gain entry to one of the two staff colleges, his commanding officer had to recommend him, and he had to pass an entrance examination. The competition for the places at a Staff College was stiff. One officer described a view probably held by many when he said *'I had to get p.s.c. or my chances of advancement are nil'*. Immediately after the Great War, places at a Staff College were allocated by nomination.

Many officers had held staff appointments during the war successfully but had not passed the staff course. They were prioritised for courses after the war. In 1921, examinations were introduced, that covered political, economic, historical, and strategic imperial issues. In the mid 1920's, there were between six and seven-hundred applicants, meaning there were nine applicants for every place. The candidates achieving top marks were awarded a competitive place, with a few others allocated on the basis of nomination by the Army Council. The Army Council would examine the officer's personal file, which was anonymised for the process. In 1926, there were four-hundred and forty entrants for the examination, competing for twenty-two places at Camberley for British Army officers, with ten places available for nominated officers. Twelve places by competition were available to officers from the Indian Army, Dominions and the Royal Air Force, with six available by nomination. Plans were discussed to increase the number of candidates at the Staff Colleges, but limited accommodation at both locations prevented this.

The Staff Course at both Camberley and Quetta lasted two years, with each college having a Junior and Senior Division. The course was geared towards the staff requirements of the inter-war Army, equipping the students to undertake staff roles within the Army, so much was based upon learning Army regulations, situational appreciations, operational orders, loading tables and some tactical awareness. On the successful completion of the course, an officer had the letters *p.s.c.* placed after his entry in the Army List, this being seen as a prized achievement and as a passport to promotion to the rank Lieutenant Colonel and possibly beyond. Usually within the next twelve months, a successful officer was posted to a staff role (e.g., Staff Captain, Brigade Major or General Staff Officer) for a period of up to four years, although they may change staff roles within that period.

The commandant of the Staff College at Camberley was a Major General, with two Colonels as Chief Instructors. There were fourteen instructors, all of whom held the rank of Lieutenant Colonel (either substantive, brevet or local) and a Wing Commander from the Royal Air Force. There was also an Adjutant appointed. The students were usually Captains or Majors in the Army, with about eight to ten years' service in the Army. Usually about fifty students came from the British Army, ten from the Indian Army, two from Canadian Forces, two from Australian Army, one from the South African Army and two from the Royal Air Force.

The Indian Staff College was established at Quetta in 1907, having opened at Deolali near Bombay on 1 April 1905. The first course at Quetta commenced on 1 June 1907. At the end of the Great War, the commandant was a Major General, with two Colonels as Chief Instructors. There were eight instructors in the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, and an Adjutant. There were usually about thirty-two students, ten from the British Army, one each from the Australian Army, Canadian Army and Royal Air Force; the rest came from the Indian Army.

During the Second World War, the staff course continued, but reduced to five and half months in duration. The syllabus was a condensed version of the pre-war one, but with a few modifications taking account the experience of the war. Usually ninety students attended each course, being selected by nomination without the requirement to pass an examination.

With the outbreak of the Second World War, and the build of forces in the Middle East, it was decided to open an additional staff college in the Middle East. This was opened at Haifa on 15 February 1940 as the Middle East Staff School. The first commandant was Brigadier 'Sandy' GALLOWAY and all the instructors were Army personnel. Initially, one R.A.F. officer attended three of the first five courses, but, in January 1942 a separate R.A.F. Wing was opened. The R.A.F. Wing operated on a separate basis, but there were still joint lectures between Army and R.A.F. personnel. By June 1943, the establishment had been renamed as the Middle East Staff College, and it remained as such until it was closed on 5 October 1946 on completion of the sixteenth course.

## THE IMPERIAL DEFENCE COLLEGE

Opened in 1927, the Imperial Defence College provided for the higher education of senior officers from the Royal Navy, the Army and Royal Air Force in terms of strategic war and political studies. In addition to which, some senior civil servants and senior officers from the dominions also attended each course. The duration of the course was one year, and covered general principles of defence, organisation for war, issues of imperial defence, strategy and international relations. The Chiefs of Staff would allocate the students projects to complete during their course. Successful students had the initials *i.d.c.* added to their entry in the Army List.

The Imperial Defence College was located at Buckingham Gate in London. It closed during the Second World War, reopening in 1946 under the command of General 'Bill' SLIM at Seaford House, Belgrave Square, London. Seaford House was requisitioned on 13 June 1940 from Lord Howard de WALDEN as headquarters for the Assistance Board. On the night of 14/15 October 1940, the building suffered some damage from bombing and the Assistance Board were evacuated. The house was de-requisitioned on 26 March 1941 and remained unoccupied until 19 November 1942. It was then again requisitioned, and was occupied as offices by the Air Ministry, from 30 March 1943 until March 1945. The Directing Staff of the Imperial Defence College moved into Seaford House on 11 March 1946, with the first post-war course starting on 2 April 1946. The syllabus remained the same, but with the addition of overseas tours and visits to industry added in 1948.

Each of the three services provided the Commandant on rotation, who held the rank of Vice-Admiral, Lieutenant General or Air Marshal. The three directing staff were a Royal Navy Captain, a Brigadier from the Army and a Group Captain from the Royal Air Force. The Army usually provided nine or ten students per course, all of the rank of Lieutenant Colonel or Colonel, two of whom came from the Indian Army (pre-partition), with one from Canada and one from Australia.

Many of the officers who achieved the highest ranks in the British Army attended the Imperial Defence College, including Generals WEYMSS, and SCOONES, and Lieutenant Generals VICKERS and GAMMELL (1938 course), Field Marshal SLIM, General CUNNINGHAM, Lieutenant Generals SCOBIE, SELBY and DURNFORD (1937 course).

In 1971, the Imperial Defence College became the Royal College of Defence Studies.

## Appointments

The British Army and Indian Army both linked the rank of an officer with the appointment held by that officer. The command appointments and the ranks that usually held them are shown in Table 1 and those for staff appointments are shown in Table 2.

**Table 1 – Command Appointments and Ranks**

	<b>British Army</b>	<b>Indian Army</b>
<b>Platoon/Troop</b>	Lieutenant	Lieutenant, Jemadar or Subadar
<b>Company/Squadron/Battery</b>	Major or Captain	Major, Captain or Subadar
<b>Battalion/Regiment</b>	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel
<b>Sub Area</b>	Brigadier or Colonel	Brigadier or Colonel
<b>Brigade</b>	Brigadier	Brigadier
<b>Area/District</b>	Major General or Brigadier	Major General or Brigadier
<b>Division</b>	Major General	Major General
<b>Corps</b>	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General
<b>Army</b>	Lieutenant General or General	Lieutenant General
<b>Command</b>	Lieutenant General or General	Lieutenant General or General
<b>Army Group</b>	General or Field Marshal	General
<b>Commander in Chief</b>	General or Field Marshal	General

Table 2 – Staff Appointments and Ranks

	British Army	Indian Army
<b>Aide-de-Camp</b>	Lieutenant	Lieutenant or Jemadar
<b>General Staff Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade, Staff Captain.</b>	Captain or Lieutenant.	Captain or Lieutenant
<b>General Staff Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade, Deputy Assistant Adjutant General Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master-General</b>	Major Captain	Major Captain
<b>General Staff Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. Assistant Adjutant &amp; Quarter-Master-General</b>	Colonel Lieutenant Colonel	Colonel Lieutenant Colonel
<b>Deputy Director, Brigadier General Staff, Deputy Adjutant &amp; Quarter-Master-General</b>	Brigadier Colonel	Brigadier Colonel
<b>Director</b>	Major General Brigadier	Major General Brigadier
<b>Director-General Adjutant-General Quarter-Master-General Master General of the Ordnance</b>	Lieutenant General General	Lieutenant General General



## Awards and Honours

There were two main types of awards in use in the British and Indian Armies during the 1930's, 1940's and 1950's: gallantry awards and honours.

The first type of awards are gallantry medals, the main ones for officers being the Victoria Cross, Distinguished Service Order and Military Cross. The Victoria Cross (V.C.) was instituted in 1854 as the foremost gallantry award for any member of the armed services who performed a supreme act of gallantry in the presence of the enemy. It was usually awarded for one act or a series of actions within a very short timescale. It can be awarded posthumously. An officer awarded the V.C. will always have that award shown first in order of precedence of the awards (including honours) he has been granted.

The Distinguished Service Order (D.S.O.) was instituted 1886 to reward junior officers in the Army for distinguished service or acts of gallantry against the enemy. By this period, the granting of the award had modified to become generally awarded to officers for acts of leadership during active operations or during a battle. It could be awarded for a single act, but was more usually awarded for sustained leadership over a period of a few days to a month or more. The most common ranks that received the D.S.O. were Lieutenant Colonels and Majors, i.e., battalion and company commanders. There were instances, however, of officers of the rank of Lieutenant General to Lieutenant being granted this award. It could not be awarded posthumously.

The Military Cross was instituted in 1914 for acts of gallantry in the presence of the enemy for warrant and junior officers (i.e., of the rank of Captain and below) who did not qualify for the V.C. or D.S.O.. It was usually awarded for single acts of gallantry or a series of actions undertaken within a short period of time. It could not be awarded posthumously.

If any recipient of the three gallantry awards, the V.C., D.S.O. or M.C. performed another act or series of acts that warranted the granting of the same award, a Bar to that award would be given. The most Bars granted to an individual currently known is three, meaning they were in effect granted the award of four occasions.

The British and Indian Armies also awarded Campaign medals. Details of the campaigns for which medals were awarded, any clasps that designated the specific campaigns or operations, and the qualifications of service required can be found at the Veterans Agency web-site at:

[http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/F094AB02-070D-4D93-A15C-EDA1694A1591/0/Medals Booklet.pdf](http://www.mod.uk/NR/rdonlyres/F094AB02-070D-4D93-A15C-EDA1694A1591/0/Medals%20Booklet.pdf)

More specific information on campaign medals can be found in the excellent book by Peter DUCKERS, *British Campaign Medals 1914 – 2000*, which was published by Shire Publications in 2001.

The honours system of the United Kingdom was (and still is to a degree) based on seniority and status, and this applied to the British and Indian Armies during this period from 1930 to 1950. It was usual for officers below the rank of Brigadier to be made a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) or an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) if they had performed some notable duty or appointment. Brigadiers were usually made a Commander of The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (C.B.E.) on completing at least twelve months in the rank. A substantive Major General was usually made a Companion of The Most Honourable Order of the Bath (C.B.), with Lieutenant Generals being knighted as Knight Commanders of the Order of the British Empire (K.B.E.) or Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath (K.C.B.). Generals usually were created Knights Grand Cross of the Order of the British Empire (G.B.E.) or Knights Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath (G.C.B.).

Some awards were made on the basis of a notable victory in a battle or for a campaign, an example being the creation of K.B.E.s for the three corps commanders (CHRISTISON, SCOONES and STOPFORD) in Burma for defeating the Japanese invasion of early 1944; SLIM being the army commander was created a K.C.B.. Most honours however were awarded in the New Year's Honours List published on 1 January in each year and His Majesty's Birthday Honours List published in early June each year.

The Indian government could recommend to His Majesty the award of one of two Indian honours, the junior being The Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire founded in 1878 and the more senior being The Most Exalted Order of the Star of India founded in 1861. They had similar grades to the Order of the Bath, so the lowest rank in each honour was the Companion of the Order of the British Empire (C.I.E.) or Companion of the Star of India (C.S.I.).

Some officers received awards from other nations, the most common being the United States, France, the Netherlands, Norway and Greece.