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A CONCISE HISTORY OF:

I BURMA CORPS (HISTORY & PERSONNEL)

A concise history of I Burma Corps, a higher level formation of the British Army in existence from March until May 1942. In addition, known details of the key appointments held during that period are included.

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I Burma Corps

The Corps was formed on 13 March 1942, to take command of the:

- 1st Burma Infantry Division;
- 17th Indian Infantry Division;
- 7th Armoured Brigade.

The corps came under the command of the Army in Burma, led by General Sir Harold ALEXANDER. He had arrived in Burma some eight days previously to replace Lieutenant General HUTTON. It was agreed for Chinese forces to enter Burma to assist in the defence of the country against the Japanese, so it was necessary to have a corps level formation to command and control the British formations deployed in Burma, separate to the command structure for the Chinese forces.

I Burma Corps maintained command of the three British formations in Burma throughout the retreat from the Japanese advance. The Corps and its constituent units entered India and or about the 20th May 1942. It was decided to retain some elements of the former Army in Burma, but the Headquarters I Burma Corps disbanded with effect from the 15th June 1942.

Corps Commander

19 March 1942 – 20 May 1942

Lieutenant General (Acting) William Joseph SLIM, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*

Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)

13 March 1942 – 20 May 1942

Brigadier (Acting) Henry Lowrie DAVIES, D.S.O., M.C.

Assistant Adjutant and Quarter-Master-General – (A.A. & Q.M.G.)

13th March 1942 – 20th May 1942

Lieutenant Colonel (Acting) Francis Cortland SIMPSON, 17th Dogra Regiment, *p.s.c.*

Corps Commander, Royal Artillery – (C.C.R.A.)

13th March 1942 – 20th May 1942

Brigadier Godfrey de Vere WELCHMAN, D.S.O.

Chief Engineer – (C.Eng.)

13th March 1942 – 17th May 1942

Lieutenant Colonel Walter John WILSON, Royal Engineers¹

Chief Signal Officer – (C.S.O.)

Deputy Director of Supplies and Transport – (D.D.S.T.)

Deputy Director of Medical Services – (D.D.M.S.)

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services – (D.D.O.S.)

Chief Ordnance Mechanical Engineer – (C.O.M.E.)

¹ WILSON died on 17 May 1942 on arrival in India, in part due to exhaustion arising from the events in Burma. He was forty-four years of age. He is buried in Grave 3.C.7. of the Imphal War Cemetery.

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