

2020

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A CONCISE HISTORY OF:

EASTERN COMMAND, INDIA (HISTORY & PERSONNEL)

A concise history of Eastern Command, India, (later designated Eastern Army), between 1930 and 1947. In additions, details of the key appointments held in that command during that period.
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A Concise History of Eastern Command, India.

Version: 1_2

This edition dated: 24 September 2020

ISBN: Not yet allocated.

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Published privately by: The Author – Publishing as:
www.BritishMilitaryHistory.co.uk

Eastern Command, India

Eastern Command was a pre-war formation, one of the four command areas that comprised the Army in India. It covered the north-central, and north-eastern provinces of British India, and several Princely states. These included:

- Delhi Province;
- Rohtak and Gurgaon Districts;
- Dujana and Pataudi States of the Punjab;
- Bawat (Nabha);
- The United Provinces;
- The United Provinces States;
- Rajputana (less States of Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Sirohi, Danta, Palanpur, Banswara, Partabgarh, Duniyarpur, Shahpura, Eushalgarh, Nimbahera (Tonk));
- The combined Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand Agency of Central India;
- Piplon (Bhopal);
- Gwalior State (less detached Districts in Southern Command);
- Bihar;
- Orissa;
- Eastern States Agency (less fifteen small States);
- Bengal;
- Bengal States;
- Assam;
- Manipur State.

It was a Lieutenant General or General's appointment, with a full staff of personnel at Command Headquarters, which were located at Naini Tai. It comprised the:

- Meerut District (3rd Indian Division),
- Lucknow District,
- Presidency & Assam District.

With the outbreak of war with Japan on 8 December 1941, there were few changes to Eastern Command. As the Japanese Army advanced up through Burma, it was necessary to change the status of the command to an operational command tasked with defending the eastern frontier of India, therefore, it was redesignated as the Eastern Army on 13 April 1942, with its headquarters located at Ranchi.

The Presidency and Assam District was used to form the basis of the new Headquarters, XV Indian Corps, and formed the Assam Division. The Meerut and Lucknow Districts transferred to the newly formed Central Command. On 21 April 1942, the Eastern Army had under command:

- Assam Division (Jorhat);
 - 1st Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 9th Anti-Aircraft Brigade;
- IV Corps: (Ranchi) (Lieutenant General N. M. S. IRWIN):
 - 70th Infantry Division (Ranchi);
 - 14th Infantry Brigade;
 - 23rd Infantry Brigade;
 - 23rd Indian Infantry Division (Ranchi);
 - 37th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 123rd Indian Infantry Brigade;
- XV Indian Corps: (Barrackpore) (Lieutenant General Sir Noel BERESFORD-PEIRSE)
 - 14th Indian Infantry Division (Comilla);
 - 47th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 49th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - Garrison Troops;
 - 26th Indian Infantry Division;
 - 4th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 71st Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 109th Indian Infantry Brigade (Akyab);
 - 1st Anti-Aircraft Brigade;
 - 36th Indian Infantry Brigade (Kharagpur).

The Assam Division was temporary formation created from elements of Headquarters, Presidency and Assam District. A short time later the 1st Indian Infantry Brigade transferred to the command of the 23rd Indian Division, and the Assam Division disbanded. The XV Indian Corps was newly created from Headquarters, Presidency and Assam District, and had its headquarters based at Calcutta and then Barrackpore. In August 1942, three new Lines of Communication Areas were formed in the Eastern Army to relieve the operational corps of the responsibility for internal security and other non-operational commitments.

- 101 Lines of Communication Area – H.Q. Patna then Ranchi;
 - 151st Sub-Area – Ranchi;
 - 152nd Sub-Area – Dinapore;
 - 153rd Sub-Area – Parbatipur and Cuttack
- 202 Lines of Communication Area – H.Q. Dimapur;
- 303 Lines of Communication Area – H.Q. Calcutta;
- 404 Lines of Communication Area – H.Q. Chittagong.

On 15 October 1943, the process began to split the Headquarters Eastern Army to form the new Headquarters 14th Army and Eastern Command. A new Army Group was created, with the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Eastern Army being appointed to command the new 11th Army Group; which was formed in Delhi on 16 October and then moved to Barrackpore. When the Eastern Army split to form 14th Army and Eastern Command on 22 October 1943, 101 Lines of Communication Area and 303 Lines of Communication Area came under Eastern Command; with 202 Lines of Communication Area and 404 Lines of Communication Area coming under command of 14th Army. 201 Lines of Communication Area had been formed on 22 October 1943 under Eastern Command. This covered the coastal area and had its headquarters located at Kharagpur. It was redesignated as the 351 Sub-Area in March 1943.

With the end of the war, the Eastern Command was reorganised onto a peacetime establishment. The 101 L.o.C. Area became the Bihar and Orissa Area, and the 303 L.o.C. Area became the Bengal and Assam Area. Central Command was disbanded in September 1946, and two Areas were transferred back to Eastern Command. After September 1946, Eastern Command comprised four Areas:

- United Provinces Area (formerly the Lucknow District) – H.Q. Lucknow;
- Bihar and Orissa Area – H.Q. Dinapore;
- Bengal and Assam Area – H.Q. Calcutta;
- Delhi and East Punjab Area (replaced the Delhi District) – H.Q. Delhi.

This was the situation when British India partitioned on 15 August 1947, and Eastern Command became part of the new Indian Army. Shortly after partition, the Delhi and East Punjab Area was raised to Command status.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

1st April 1936 – 1st April 1940

General Sir Harry Beucamp Douglas BAIRD, K.C.B., C.M.G, C.I.E., D.S.O., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

1st July 1940 – 13th April 1942

Lieutenant General Charles Noel Frank BROAD, C.B., D.S.O., Col Commd't R.T.R., *p.s.c.*¹

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Army

13th April 1942 – 29th July 1942

General Sir Charles Noel Frank BROAD, K.C.B., D.S.O., Col Commd't R.T.R, *p.s.c.*

29th July 1942 – 21st May 1943 (6th August 1943)

Lieutenant General (Temporary) Noel Macintosh Stuart IRWIN, C.B., D.S.O.** , M.C., *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*

21st May 1943 – 15th October 1943

General Sir George GIFFARD, G.C.B., D.S.O., *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*²

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command

16th October 1943 – 31st December 1944

Lieutenant General Ashton Gerald Oswald Mosely MAYNE, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., Indian Army, *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*³

1st January 1945 – 20th October 1945

Lieutenant General Sir Richard Nugent O'CONNOR, K.C.B., D.S.O.* , M.C.⁴

20th October 1945 – 20th January 1946

Lieutenant General Sir Arthur Francis SMITH, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O., M.C.

21st January 1946 – 3rd August 1946

Lieutenant General (Acting) Sir Francis Ivan Simms TUKER, K.C.I.E., C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

4th August 1946 – 13th January 1947 (Officiating)

Lieutenant General (Acting) Francis Robert Roy BUCHER, C.B., O.B.E., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

13th February 1947 – 18th March 1947 (Officiating)

Major General (Temporary) Robert Philip Lancaster RANKING, C.B., C.B.E., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

19th March 1947 – 14th August 1947

Lieutenant General Francis Ivan Simms TUKER, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.

¹ Promoted General in 1937 and created K.C.B. in 1941.

² Assumed command of 11th Army Group on the 16th October 1943.

³ Promoted General on the 1st January 1944 and created K.C.B. and knighted on 8th June 1944.

⁴ Promoted General on the 17th April 1945.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Eastern Command, Indian Army

15th August 1947 – 20th November 1947

Lieutenant General Francis Ivan Simms TUKER, C.B., D.S.O., O.B.E.

21st November 1947 – 20th January 1948

Lieutenant General Kodandera Madappa CARIAPPA, O.B.E.

21st January 1948 – 14th April 1948

Lieutenant General Maharaj Kumar Shri RAJENDRASINHJI, D.S.O.

15th April 1948 – February 1953

Lieutenant General Thakur Narthu SINGH

Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)

6th February 1938 – 1940

Brigadier (Temporary) Arthur Victor Trocke WAKELY, D.S.O., M.C.

1st October 1940 – 18th May 1941

[Brigadier \(Acting\) Douglas STUART, O.B.E., Indian Army, p.s.c.](#)

19th May 1941 – 1942

Brigadier (Acting) C. H. BOUCHER, D.S.O., 3 G.R., p.s.c.

25th January 1943 – 31st March 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) Edward Temple Leigh GURDON, M.C., p.s.c.

21st March 1943 – 1944

Brigadier (Temporary 15/12/41) S. F. IRWIN, Indian Army, p.s.c.

2nd November 1943 – 26th June 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) Reginald George PRICE, R.A., p.s.c.

27th June 1944 – 1946

Brigadier (Temporary 18/12/41) Francis Edmund Charles HUGHES, 4 G.R., p.s.c.

23rd June 1946 – 1947

Brigadier (Acting) T. L. BINNEY, Cameronians, p.s.c.

Colonel (A)

30th June 1944 – June 1945

Colonel (Acting) D. D. H. JOHNSTON, 7 Rajput R.

6th June 1945 – 1947

Colonel W. W. BRINDLEY, M.B.E.

Major General i/c Administration (Deputy Adjutant and Quarter-Master-General)

17th March 1938 – 26th December 1940

Major General John Stuart MARSHALL, C.B., D.S.O.*, O.B.E., Indian Army

27th December 1940 – 11th May 1942

Major General John Stuart MARSHALL, C.B., D.S.O.*, O.B.E., Indian Regular Reserve of Officers (I.R.R.O.)

12th May 1942 – 6th December 1942

Major General (Acting) Eric Boyd COSTIN, D.S.O., *p.s.c.*

17th December 1942 – 15th October 1943

Major General (Acting) Eric Norman GODDARD, C.B.E., M.V.O., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

24th October 1943 – July 1945

Major General (Acting) Frank Hollamby SKINNER, O.B.E.

11 July 1945 – 1947

Major General (Acting) John Steventon BALLENTINE, Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

Brigadiers (Administration)

1st February 1943 – 23rd October 1943

Brigadier (Acting) Harold Cecil LATHAM, 7 Rajput R., *p.s.c.*

Jan 1943 – 16 March 1945

[Brigadier \(Temporary\) Geoffrey PIGOT, M.C.*, Indian Army, *p.s.c.*](#)

Brigadier (Q)

11 August 1944 – 9 June 1945

Brigadier (Temporary) John Steventon BALLENTINE, I.A.C., *p.s.c.*

21st July 1945 – 1947

Brigadier (Acting) John Evison GORDON, O.B.E., Probyn's Horse

Assistant Adjutant-General

1st March 1941 – 1943

Colonel M. V. McCALMONT, M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

21st February 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel E. M. KOCH, 19th Hyderabad R., *p.s.c.*

2nd May 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel C. I. F. MAYNARD, I.R.R.O.

1st October 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel (Temporary) H. G. M. EVANS, Queen's R.

21st February 1944 – 1945

Lieutenant Colonel R. W. A. WALLACE, 19th Hy'bad R., *p.s.c.*

Assistant Quarter-Master-General

1938 – 14th September 1940

Colonel A. D. MAGNEY, Indian Army

19th September 1940 – 15th July 1941

Colonel A. B. CLARABUT, R.I.A.S.C.

16th July 1941 – 12th July 1942

Colonel Robert Philip Lancaster RANKING, M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

13th July 1942 – 31st January 1943

Lieutenant Colonel Harold Cecil LATHAM, 7 Rajput R., *p.s.c.*

8th July 1943 – 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) L. W. WOOD, O.B.E., 16th Punjab R., *p.s.c.*

Brigadier Royal Artillery – (B.R.A.)

25th October 1939 – 26th April 1941

Brigadier (Temporary) Harold PRICE-WILLIAMS, D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.*

27th April 1941 – July 1942

Brigadier (Temporary) A. D. MacPHERSON, D.S.O., M.C.

31st July 1942 – 30th September 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) Geoffrey Ernest Warren FRANKLYN, D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.*

1st October 1943 – 22nd January 1946

Brigadier (Temporary) Basil Charles TRAPPES-LOMAX, M.C.

Brigadier Air Defence

16th May 1942 – 4th March 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) John Dallas EDGE, M.C., R.A.

7th February 1943 – 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) Donald William BANNISTER, R.A.

Chief Engineer – (C.Eng.)

1938 – 22nd December 1939

Brigadier W. E. KIDNER,

23rd December 1939 – November 1942

Brigadier (Temporary) Edward Lionel FARLEY, M.C.

December 1942 – 14th October 1943

Brigadier Herbert Eric HORSFIELD, M.C.**

15th October 1943 – 1946

Brigadier (Temporary) Charles Copley SWIFT, O.B.E., M.C.

Deputy Chief Engineer

12th November 1940 – 1942

Colonel (Acting) C. G. CARDEW, R.E.

20th July 1942 – 1945

Colonel (Acting 20/04/42) A. E. STEVENS, R.E.

19th November 1942 – 1943

Colonel (Acting) C. C. DUCHENSE, O.B.E., M.C., B.A., R.E.

3rd April 1944 – 1945

Colonel (Temporary) G. W. MARSHALL, R.E.

Deputy Chief Engineer (Works)

6 March 1943 – 13 March 1944

Colonel (Temporary) Edward Valentine BOWRA, O.B.E., R.E.

Deputy Director of Survey

15th March 1942 – 1944

Colonel (Acting 03/01/42) G. BOMFORD, R.E.

Chief Signal Officer – (C.S.O.)

1 April 1939 – 29 February 1940

Colonel William Tuxford HOWE, O.B.E.

(Also Chief Signal Officer, Western Independent District)

1 March 1940 – 15 January 1941

Colonel William Tuxford HOWE, O.B.E.

16th January 1941 – 29th October 1942

Colonel (Acting) Henry Noel BROWN, R. Signals

23rd October 1942 – 16th October 1943

Brigadier (Acting) William Oswald BOWEN, O.B.E., A.M.I.E.E., R. Signals

17th November 1943 – 28th July 1944

(During this period, it appears Brigadier BOWEN held both appointments as Chief Signal Officer of 14th Army and Eastern Command).

29th July 1944 – January 1945

Brigadier (Acting) William Douglas McGREGOR, O.B.E., R. Signals.

January 1945 – 11th September 1945

Brigadier (Temporary) John Frankland CHARLESWORTH, O.B.E.

12th September 1945 – 1947

Brigadier Mervyn Vincent SMELT

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

15th September 1937 – 1941

Colonel S. M. COOKSON, Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

16th April 1941 – 23rd October 1943

Brigadier (Acting) John Le Clerc FOWLE, Indian Army

Brigadier R.I.A.S.C.

24th October 1943 – 27th July 1945

Brigadier (Acting) Edward Charles Thomas MITCHLEY, O.B.E., Indian Army

28th July 1945 – 1947

Brigadier (Acting) G. PLOMER, O.B.E., R.I.A.S.C.

Deputy Director of Supplies and Transport

16th April 1943 – 1944

Colonel (Acting) L. N. DOUGLAS, R.I.A.S.C.

13th July 1944 – 1945

Colonel (Temporary) E. G. PERRY, M.B.E., R.I.A.S.C.

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

27th March 1937 – 26th March 1941

Major General Ian MacPherson MacRAE, C.B., C.I.E., O.B.E., M.B., Indian Medical Service.

27th March 1941 – 4th December 1942

Major General A. A. C. MacNEILL, M.B., Indian Medical Service, K.H.S.

5th December 1942 – 16th October 1943

Major General (Acting) Treffry Owen THOMPSON, C.B.E., M.D.

3rd December 1943 – 17th January 1944

Major General (Acting) Victor Jorge Perez, O.B.E., M.D., R.A.M.C.

18th January 1944 – 1946

Major General (Acting) Neil CANTLIE, M.C., M.B., F.C.R.S.

Assistant Director of Ordnance Services (O) – (A.D.O.S.)

1938 – 1940

Colonel F. P. J. WILLIAMS, I.A.O.C.

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

4th April 1940 – 2nd June 1942

Colonel F. S. CLARKE, Indian Army

6th September 1941 – 1st January 1944

Colonel (Acting) Frederick William STEVENS, I.A.O.C.⁵

Brigadier, Indian Army Ordnance Corps

1st May 1943 – 14th October 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) Herbert Edwin Abrahall MORRIS, O.B.E., Indian Army

15th October 1943 – 13th November 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) Harold Goldsmid HAYES, Indian Army

14th November 1943 – 1946

Brigadier (Acting) Cecil Herbert SPEER

19th October 1944 – 1946

Brigadier (Acting) S. W. HAYLOCK, O.B.E., I.A.O.C., *p.s.c.*

⁵ Promoted Acting Colonel on 91 April 1941 prior to taking up appointment.

Chief Ordnance Mechanical Engineer

16th May 1940 – 15th May 1941

Colonel Harold Henry BERRIDGE, M.I.Mech.E., M.I.A.E., Indian Army

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services (E)

16th May 1941 – 30th April 1943

Brigadier (Acting) Harold Henry BERRIDGE, M.I.Mech.E., M.I.A.E., Indian Army⁶

Brigadier Indian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

1st May 1943 – 21st June 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) Harold Henry BERRIDGE, M.I.Mech.E., M.I.A.E., Indian Army

22nd June 1943 – 12th October 1943

Brigadier (Acting) Alexander Gunn DUNLOP, I.A.O.C.

13th October 1943 – 10th April 1945

Brigadier (Acting) Robert Charles HERRON, O.B.E., I.E.M.E.

11th April 1945 – 28th October 1945

Brigadier (Temporary) William Auchinleck STACK, O.B.E., M.I.Mech.E., R.E.M.E.

29th October 1945 – 1947

Brigadier Neil Paterson TOWNLEY, C.B.E.

Deputy Director of Veterinary Services

11th March 1940 – 1942

Lieutenant Colonel F. B. HAYES, O.B.E., R.A.V.C.

2nd June 1942 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel S. O'DONEL, M.C., R.A.V.C.

⁶ Between July and November 1941, BERRIDGE reverted to the rank of Colonel whilst holding this appointment. He was promoted to the rank of Temporary Brigadier on 11 March 1942.

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The Quarterly Army List July 1941

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The Quarterly Army List October 1941

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The Half Yearly Army List for the period ending 31st December 1941

Available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylisthalfjan1942grea>

The Quarterly Army List January 1942

Available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjan1942grea>

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Part I on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjulpart11943grea><http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjulpart121943grea>Part II on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjulpart21943grea><http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjulpart221943grea>

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<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjanpart121946grea>
Part II available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjanpart21946grea>
<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjanpart221946grea>

The Quarterly Army List April 1946 Parts I and II

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