NORTHERN COMMAND INDIA
(HISTORY & PERSONNEL)

A short history of Northern Command, India, between 1930 and 1947 and details of the key appointments held in Northern Command during that period.

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A Concise History of Northern Command (History & Personnel)

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Northern Command, India

Northern Command in India was a pre-war formation, with its headquarters located at Rawalpindi. It comprised the:

- Peshawar District;
- Kohat District;
- Rawalpindi District;
- Lahore District;
- Waziristan District.

On 21 April 1942, it was redesignated as the North Western Army. The Lahore District transferred to the newly formed Central Command, and the Rawalpindi District was absorbed by the Army Headquarters.

In November 1945, it reverted to the title of Northern Command and the Rawalpindi District was reformed. When Central Command was disbanded circa June 1946, the Lahore Area and Sind Brigade came under command. On 15 August 1947, with the partition of British India, Headquarters Northern Command formed the new Headquarters, Pakistan Army.
1 October 2020

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

6th June 1936 – 5th June 1940
6th June 1940 – January 1942
Lieutenant General Alan Fleming HARTLEY, C.B., D.S.O., Indian Army, i.d.c., p.s.c.
21st January 1942 – 20th April 1942
Lieutenant General Cyril Dupre NOYES, C.B., C.I.E., M.C., Indian Army, i.d.c., p.s.c.

General Officer Commanding, North Western Army

21st April 1942 – 23rd April 1943
Lieutenant General Cyril Dupre NOYES, C.B., C.I.E., M.C., Indian Army, i.d.c., p.s.c.¹
24 April 1943 – 20 August 1943
21st August 1943 – 31st May 1945
Lieutenant General Henry FINNIS, C.B., M.C., Indian Army,²
1st June 1945 – 22nd October 1945
Lieutenant General Cecil Wotton TOOVEY, C.B., C.B.E., M.C.*

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

22nd October 1945 – May 1946
28th May 1946 – 14th October 1946 (officiating)
Lieutenant General Douglas David GRACEY, C.B., C.B.E., M.C.*
15th October 1946 – 15th August 1947
Lieutenant General Sir Frank MESSERVY, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.

¹ Created K.C.S.I. on 1 January 1943 and retired on 24 October 1943.
 Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)
1st August 1939 – July 1940
Brigadier (Temporary) John Fullerton EVETTS, C.B.E., M.C., p.s.c.
27th July 1940 – 1942
Brigadier (Acting) Cyril Maton Periam DURNFORD, C.I.E., Indian Army, i.d.c., p.s.c.
15th October 1941 – 18th October 1943
19 October 1943 – 10 August 1944
Brigadier (Temporary) John Steventon BALLENTINE, I.A.C., p.s.c.
11th August 1944 – late 1946
Brigadier (Acting) Maurice Scott BENDLE, 6 Lancers, p.s.c.
Late 1946 – August 1947
Brigadier (Temporary) Frank McCALLUM, O.B.E., M.C., 9th G.R., p.s.c.

Major General i/c Administration
(Deputy Adjutant & Quarter-Master-General) – (D.A.Q.M.G.)
3rd May 1938 – 20th April 1940
Major General George de la Poer BERESFORD, C.B., M.C., Indian Army, p.s.c.
21st April 1940 – 14th May 1941
Major General Roland Debenham INSKIP, C.B., C.I.E., D.S.O., M.C., Special Unemployed List, Indian Army, i.d.c., p.s.c.
15th May 1941 – 14th May 1944
Major General John Fagan Henslowe NUGENT, C.B., D.S.O., Indian Army, p.s.c.
15th May 1944 – 21st October 1945
22nd October 1945 – 1947
Major General (Acting) Francis James WALSH, R.I.A.S.C., p.s.c.³
1947 – 15th August 1947
Major General (Temporary) Thomas SCOTT, C.B., Indian Army, p.s.c.

Assistant Adjutant General
30th September 1937 – 1941
Colonel N. G. R. COATS, Indian Army, p.s.c.
15th May 1941 – 1943
Lieutenant Colonel H. SHUKER, 1st Punjab R.
29th October 1942 – 1945
Brigadier (Temporary) E. R. S. DODS, M.C., Indian Army, p.s.c.
25th June 1943 – 1945
Lieutenant Colonel W. S. FURNESS, M.C., Indian Army

³ Awarded the C.B.E. on 15 November 1945.
7th March 1944 – 1945
Colonel (Temporary) J. A. LOWES, A.E.C.

**Assistant Quarter-Master-General(s)**

4th June 1940 – 7th January 1943
Colonel (Acting) Herbert HANNA, O.B.E., Indian Army, p.s.c.

1st April 1941 – 1945
Colonel R. J. WILKINSON, O.B.E. Retired Indian Army

26th June 1941 – 22nd August 1942
Brigadier (Temporary) Arthur Blair GIbson, 13th F.F.Rif, p.s.c.

15th April 1942 – 1945
Lieutenant Colonel H. D. WHITTICK, I.A.C., p.s.c.

4th April 1943 – 10th August 1944
Lieutenant Colonel M. S. BENDLE, I.A.C., p.s.c.

27th January 1944 – 1945
Lieutenant Colonel M. P. P. REEVE, 13th F. F. Rif, p.s.c.

**Brigadier Royal Artillery – (B.R.A.)**

15th April 1938 – 21st April 1941
Brigadier (Temporary) James Noel THOMSON, D.S.O., M.C., i.d.c., p.s.c.

10th May 1941 – 10th August 1941
Brigadier (Acting) Godfrey de Vere WELCHMAN, O.B.E., M.C., R.A., g.

11th August 1941 – 31st December 1942

1st January 1943 – 18th April 1944
Brigadier (Temporary) John Hugh Bates BIRBECK, R.A.

19th April 1944 – 1946
Brigadier (Temporary) G. HORSFIELD, R.A.

**Chief Engineer – (C.Eng.)**

1st August 1939 – 1941
Brigadier (Temporary) Horace Eckford ROOME, M.C.

29th December 1941 – 1944
Brigadier (Acting) E. W. PERT, M.C.

13th March 1945 – 1946
Brigadier (Temporary) Cyril Gordon MARTIN, V.C., C.B.E., D.S.O.

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4 Retired on 22 August 1942 on grounds of ill-health.

5 Promoted Acting Major General on 21 November 1941.
Deputy Chief Engineers
30th July 1939 – 22nd April 1941
Colonel Cyril Gordon MARTIN, V.C., C.B.E., D.S.O.
1st December 1940 – 2nd April 1942
Colonel (Acting) G. R. GILPIN, M.C., R.E.
23rd April 1941 – 1942
Colonel (Acting) W. F. HASTED, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C., R.E.
25th August 1942 – 1944
Brigadier (Acting) G. R. GILPIN, C.B.E., M.C., R.E.
25th March 1945 – 1946
Colonel (Acting) J. W. D. MALLINS, M.C., Employed List.

Commander, Royal Signals – (C.R.Sigs)
26th June 1939 – January 1940
Colonel Ralph E. VYVYAN, M.B.E., M.C. 16/01/41 Acting Brigadier.
16th January 1941 – 28 April 1942
Colonel William Tuxford HOWE, O.B.E.
29th April 1942 – 1942
Lieutenant Colonel H. R. FIRTH, R. Signals
27th October 1943 – 1946
Brigadier (Acting) R. T. WILLIAMS, R. Signals
1947 – 15th August 1947
Brigadier (Temporary) John Frankland CHARLESWORTH, O.B.E.
Deputy Director of Supplies and Transport
1938 – 1940
Brigadier G. E. TOYNBEE
26th December 1940 – March 1943
18th March 1943 – 26th February 1944
Brigadier (Temporary) George William Clement HICKIE, C.B.E., Indian Army
27th February 1944 – 26th October 1945
Brigadier (Temporary) John Henry SYKES, Indian Army
27th October 1945 – 1947
Brigadier (Temporary) George William Clement HICKIE, C.B.E., Indian Army

Deputy Director of Medical Services – (D.D.M.S.)
9th February 1937 – 11th March 1940
6th May 1940 – 12th July 1941
Major General Archibald Campbell MUNRO, M.D., Indian Medical Service, K.H.P.
4th September 1941 – 1945
Major General Heerajee J. M. CURSETJEE, D.S.O., M.B., Indian Medical Service, K.H.S.
12th July 1945 – 1946
Deputy Director of Ordnance Services – (D.D.O.S.)
1938 – 1940
Colonel F. H. TOUNSEND
17th April 1940 – 1942/3
Colonel H. G. HAYES.
2nd June 1942 – 16th April 1944
Colonel F. S. CLARKE, Indian Army

Brigadier, Indian Army Ordnance Corps
17th April 1944 – 1946
Brigadier (Acting) H. PATERSON, O.B.E., I.A.O.C.

Assistant Director of Ordnance Services
17th April 1944 – 1945
Colonel F. S. CLARKE, Indian Army

Chief Ordnance Mechanical Engineer
11 April 1939 – 1941
Colonel R. J. WILKINSON, O.B.E., Retired, Indian Army
1st April 1941 – 28th April 1942
Colonel William HESKETH, I.A.O.C.
29th April 1942 – 1943
1st May 1943 – 1944

Brigadier Indian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers
17th April 1944 – 10th April 1945
11th April 1945 – 1947
Deputy Director of Veterinary Services
1938 – 1940
Colonel I. O. ANDREWS
18th January 1940 – 1943
Colonel E. G. TURNER, D.S.O.
18th January 1944 – 1946
Colonel G. F. STEVENSON, O.B.E., R.A.V.C.
Sources:

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