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SOUTHERN COMMAND, INDIA HISTORY & PERSONNEL

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

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The History and Personnel of Southern Command, India.

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Southern Command, India

Southern Command was one of the four pre-war commands in India. Its Headquarters were located at Poona, and comprised the:

- Bombay District (based at Bombay),
- Deccan District (based at Bolarum),
- Madras District (based at Bangalore).

The Headquarters Deccan District also formed the embryonic Headquarters of the 4th Indian Infantry Division, designated for deployment overseas in event of the outbreak of war. In addition, the Poona (Independent) Brigade Area was located in Southern Command.

On 28 April 1942, following the entry of Japan into the war, and the threat of invasion of southern India, Southern Command was redesignated as the Southern Army to reflect a more operational focus for the Command. At the same time, the Districts were redesignated as Line of Communication (LoC) Areas. The revised arrangements were:

- Madras District
 - 105 Line of Communication Area (Bangalore)
 - 160 Sub Area (Bangalore)
 - 161 Sub Area (Cochin)
 - 162 Sub Area (Trinchinopoly)
 - 163 Sub Area (Coimbatore)
 - 164 Sub Area (Madras Port and Fortress)
- Deccan District
 - 106 Line of Communication Area (Bolarum)
- Bombay District
 - 107 Line of Communication Area (Bombay Province)
 - 165 Sub Area (Deolali)
 - 166 Sub Area (Poona)
 - 167 Sub Area (Bombay Port)
 - 168 Sub Area (Vizagapatam)

105 and 106 Line of Communication (L.o.C.) Areas were formed in October 1942 coinciding with the formation of XXXIII Indian Corps, which assumed command of the newly formed 19th Indian Infantry Division, 25th Indian Infantry Division and 251st Indian Tank Brigade. XXXIII Corps was the operational formation within Southern Army in the event of Japanese invasion. It is likely that 107 L.o.C. Area was also formed in October 1942.¹ The Poona Independent Brigade Area became the 166 Sub-Area of 107 LoC Area.

¹ Loyalty and Honour Part III gives a date of February 1943 for the formation of 107 LoC Area from Bombay District. However, 108 LoC Area is also shown as being formed in February 1943, with 165 and 166 Sub Areas transferring from 107 LoC Area, which is illogical if 107 LoC Area was formed on the same date as 108 LoC Area, hence the assumption is 107 LoC Area was formed as the same time as 106 LoC Area.

108 L.o.C. Area was formed in February 1943 from the Bombay Port and Fortress Area. The Poona Independent Brigade Area became the 110 L.o.C. Area in May 1944, and the 106 L.o.C. Area was downgraded to become the 172 Sub-Area within the new 110 L.o.C. Area. The 107 L.o.C. Area was merged with the 108 L.o.C. Area. A new Line of Communication Areas were created, the 109 L.o.C. Area covering Bangalore. The new structure from May 1944 until the end of the war was:

- 105 Line of Communication Area (Madras),
- 108 Line of Communication Area (Bombay Province, Port and Fortress),
- 109 Line of Communication Area (Bangalore),
- 110 Line of Communication Area (Poona).

In November 1945, Southern Army reverted to the title of Southern Command. The four Line of Communications Areas were redesignated as three Areas consistent with the previous three Districts. These were:

- Bombay District (based at Bombay),
- Deccan District (based at Kamptee),
- Madras District (based at Bangalore).

This situation continued until the partition of India on 15 August 1947 and the creation of the new Indian Army.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

12th October 1937 – 9th March 1941

General Sir Edward Spencer BRIND, K.C.B., K.B.E., C.M.G., D.S.O., *p.s.c.*

10th March 1941 – 15th October 1941

Lieutenant General Thomas Sheriden RIDDELL-WEBSTER, C.B., D.S.O., *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*

16th October 1941 – 10th April 1942

General Arthur Brodie HAIG, C.B., M.C.* , Indian Army, *i.d.c.*, *p.s.c.*²

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Southern Army

11th April 1942 – 16th May 1942

17th May 1942 – 9th June 1942 (Acting)

Lieutenant General (Acting) Frederick Vavasour Broome WITTS, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

10th June 1942 – 31st March 1945

Lieutenant General Sir Noel Monson De La Poer BERESFORD-PEIRSE, K.B.E., C.B., D.S.O.

15th April 1945 – October 1945

Lieutenant General Rob McGregor MacDonald LOCKHART, C.B., C.I.E., M.C.

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief

November 1945 – 19th June 1947

Lieutenant General Rob McGregor MacDonald LOCKHART, C.B., C.I.E., M.C.

19th June 1947 – 4th July 1947

Lieutenant General Roland RICHARDSON?

5th July 1947 – May 1948

Lieutenant General Eric Norman GODDARD, C.B., C.I.E., C.B.E., M.V.O., M.C.

May 1948 – 14th January 1953

Lieutenant General Maharaj Kumar Shri RAJENDRA SINHJI, D.S.O.

² Promoted General in 1942 and created K.C.B. in the same year.

Brigadier General Staff – (B.G.S.)

19th February 1938 – 25th December 1940

Brigadier (Temporary) G. B. HOWELL, M.V.O., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

26th December 1940 – 1941

Brigadier (Acting) A. B. GIBSON, 13 F.F.Rif, *p.s.c.*

21st March 1942 – 1945

Brigadier (Acting 21/04/42) Thomas Byrnard TRAPPES-LOMAX, S. Gds, *p.s.c.*

9th April 1945 – 1946

Brigadier Edmund Robertson PAGE, O.B.E., 19th Hy'bad R., *p.s.c.*

Colonel General Staff

30th April 1944 – 1945

Colonel (Acting) C. W. PICKEN, O.B.E., I.A.C., *p.s.c.*

Major General in charge of Administration

27th August 1938 – 26th December 1940

[Major General Thomas Arthur Atkinson WILSON, C.B., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*](#)

20th January 1941 – 24th February 1942

Major General (Acting) Charles Reginald Cambridge LANE, C.B., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

25th February 1942 – 19th March 1942

[Major General Thomas Arthur Atkinson WILSON, C.B., Retired Pay, Indian Regular Reserve of Officers](#)

20th March 1942 – 15th July 1945

Major General (Acting) Francis Robert Roy BUCHER, O.B.E., M.C., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*³

16th July 1945 – 14th November 1945

Major General Gordon West HOGDEN, C.B., O.B.E., Indian Army

15th November 1945 – 1948

Major General (Temporary) Arthur Hugh Jay SNELLING, C.B., C.B.E., Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

³ Awarded the C.B. on 1 January 1945 in the New Year's Honours List.

Assistant Adjutant-General

9th January 1943 – 30th August 1943

Major (Temporary) F. ATKINSON, R. Norfolk R

1st September 1943 – 1944

Brigadier (Acting) F. ATKINSON, R. Norfolk R

7th May 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel G. N. WILKINSON, R. Garh Rif

6th October 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel D. BARKER, 2 Punjab R.

Brigadier (A)

1st May 1944 – 17th May 1945

Brigadier (Acting) James Gordon ELLIOTT, Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

17th May 1945 – 1946

Brigadier (Temporary) W. T. STEPHENSON, R.A.C., *p.s.c.*

Assistant Quarter-Master-General

8th November 1938 – 14th October 1940

Colonel E. B. COSTIN, D.S.O., *p.s.c.*

15th October 1940 – 1941/2

Colonel (Acting) J. C. GAIN, M.C., 1 Punjab R, *p.s.c.*

30th August 1941 – 1943

Colonel K. J. LEE, M.C.

13th June 1942 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel (Acting) H. N. PIROUET, Unattached List, Indian Army

25th March 1943 – 1944

Lieutenant Colonel (Temporary) J. W. RAWLINS, Northampton R.

1st January 1944 – 1945

Colonel (Temporary) B. J. AMIES, Indian Army, *p.s.c.*

Assistant Quarter-Master-General (M)

13th March 1942 – 30th July 1942

Colonel Geoffrey Ernest Warren, D.S.O., M.C., *p.s.c.*

Brigadier (Q)

7th September 1943 – 20th March 1945

Brigadier Edmund Robertson PAGE, O.B.E., 19th Hy'bad R., *p.s.c.*

21st March 1945 – 1947

Brigadier (Temporary) D. S. E. McNEILL, O.B.E., Poona Horse, *p.s.c.*

Brigadier Royal Artillery – (B.R.A.)

1937 – 22nd September 1939

Brigadier (Temporary) Noel Monson de la Poer BERESFORD-PEIRSE

23rd September 1939 – June 1940

Brigadier (Temporary) Arthur Bowen Van STRAUBENZEE, D.S.O., M.C.

15th August 1940 – 18th March 1941

[Brigadier \(Acting\) Meade Edward DENNIS, M.C., R.A.](#)

19th March 1941 – 8th April 1943

Brigadier (Acting) Derek Jarrett STEEVENS, M.C., R.A., *p.s.c.*

9th April 1943 – 10th February 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) Godfrey De Vere WELCHMAN, D.S.O., O.B.E., R.A., *g.*

10th March 1944 – 30th September 1944

Brigadier John Howard FROWEN, D.S.O., O.B.E.

1 October 1944 – 1946

[Brigadier \(Temporary\) John Milne MacNICOLL, G.](#)

1946 – 1947

Brigadier (Temporary) Claude GOULDER, C.B.E, D.S.O., M.C.

Brigadier Anti-Aircraft

25th July 1942 – 1st June 1945

Brigadier (Acting) Alexander James Deas RONALD, R.A.

Chief Engineer – (C.Eng.)

9th July 1939 – 2nd May 1942

Brigadier (Temporary) Cecil Vivian Staveley JACKSON, C.B.E.

22nd February 1943 – 1943

Brigadier (Temporary) A. MASON, M.C., R.E.

1943 – 13th March 1944

Brigadier William Freke HASTED, C.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.

14th March 1944 – 31st January 1945

Brigadier (Acting) Edward Valentine BOWRA, O.B.E., R.E.

1st February 1945 – 1946

Brigadier Herbert Eric HORSFIELD, C.B.E., M.C.**

1946 – 15 August 1947 (Partition)

Brigadier (Temporary) John Francis Dawe STEEDMAN, C.B.E., M.C.⁴

Deputy Chief Engineer

14th November 1940 – 1941

Colonel (Acting) J. SPOTTISWOODE, M.C., R.E.

11th June 1941 – 1942

Colonel (Acting) E. V. BOWRA, O.B.E., R.E.

13th November 1941 – 1943

Colonel (Temporary) J. E. GRAHAM, R.E.

28th January 1943 – 1944

Colonel (Temporary) E. A. CRANE, M.C., R.E.

1st May 1943 – 1944

Colonel (Acting) G. LACEY, C.I.E., Indian Army

7th June 1943 – 1944

Colonel (Temporary) G. H. H. LEE, R.E.

16th February 1944 – 1945

Colonel (Acting) C. D. REED, R.E.

Director of Works

1st August 1945 – 1946

Brigadier W. D. ROBERTSON, D.S.O.

⁴ Promoted to the rank of Acting Major General

Chief Signal Officer – (C.S.O.)1938 – 1939

Colonel G. L. G. POLLARD,

1938 – 24th November 1940

Colonel L. G. PHILLIPS, C.B.E., M.C.

25 November 1940 – 27 October 1941[Lieutenant Colonel Henry Raywood FIRTH, R. Signals.](#)28 October 1941 – 20 April 1942*Vacant*21st April 1942 – 1945

Brigadier (Acting) G. TAYLEUR

4 April 1945 – 14 August 1947[Brigadier \(Acting\) Charles Henry Irwin AKEHURST, O.B.E., R. Signals, p.s.c.](#)**Deputy Chief Signal Officer**1st June 1943 – 1944

Colonel (Acting) D. W. BURRIDGE, R. Signals.

Director of Survey1st January 1943 – 1943

Colonel (Acting) J. B. P. ANGWIN, M.B.E., R.E.

Deputy Director of Supplies and Transport – (D.D.S.T.)20th January 1939 – 1941

Colonel V. C. CASSIDY, O.B.E., Indian Army

2nd October 1941 – 1942

Brigadier (Acting) H. A. COURTENAY, D.F.C., Indian Army

6th August 1942 – 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) T. F. J. EALES, C.B.E., R.I.A.S.C.

19th May 1944 – 14 October 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) T. M. DUNCAN

14 October 1944 – 14 October 1945

Brigadier (Temporary) Denis Victor BLACK, M.C.,

15th October 1945 – late 1946[Brigadier \(Temporary\) John Stephen Osborne ELLISON, C.B.E., Indian Army](#)

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

6 November 1937 – 12 October 1941

Major General Alexander Donald FRASER, D.S.O.*, M.C., M.B., K.H.S.

13th October 1941 – 1943

Major General Gordon WILSON, C.B.E., M.C., M.B., K.H.S.

1st June 1944 – 11th April 1945

Major General (Acting) Henry Charles Dean RANKIN, O.B.E., M.B., V.H.S.⁵

12th April 1945 - 1946

Major General Stanley ARNOTT, C.B.E, D.S.O.

Deputy Director Medical Services

4th October 1942 – 1945

Colonel (Acting) W. P. LAPPIN, M.B., Indian Medical Service

Consultant Physician

26th January 1943 – 1945

Brigadier (Local 05/08/44) J. D. S. CAMERON, M.D., F.R.C.P., R.A.M.C. (T.A.)

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

1st February 1939 – 1942

Colonel (Brevet) E. S. F. HARVEY, Indian Army

Brigadier, Indian Army Ordnance Corps

27th March 1943 – 1st January 1944

Brigadier (Temporary) Brian PENNEFATHER-EVANS, O.B.E., M.C., I.A.O.C.

2nd January 1944 – 30th March 1945

Brigadier (Acting) Frederick William STEVENS, Indian Army

1st April 1945 – 1946

Brigadier (Temporary) Brian PENNEFATHER-EVANS, O.B.E., M.C., I.A.O.C.

⁵ Awarded the C.I.E. on the 12th June 1943 for period as Deputy Director of Medical Services.

Chief Ordnance Mechanical Engineer

1st April 1939 – 11th January 1941

Lieutenant Colonel Alfred Travers Fairtlough SMITH, M.C., I.O.A.C.

12th January 1941 – 20th April 1942

Colonel Alexander Gunn DUNLOP, I.A.O.C.

21st April 1942 – 6th November 1942

Brigadier (Acting) Gervase Mignon Borlase COOKE, O.B.E., Indian Army

Deputy Director of Ordnance Services (E)

7th November 1942 – 3rd April 1943

Brigadier (Acting) Gervase Mignon Borlase COOKE, O.B.E., Indian Army

4th April 1943 – 30th April 1943

Lieutenant Colonel (Acting) Roger Francis WORTHINGTON, I.A.O.C.

Brigadier, Indian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

1st May 1943 – 21st June 1943

Lieutenant Colonel (Acting) Roger Francis WORTHINGTON, I.A.O.C.

22nd June 1943 – 31st October 1945

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

1st November 1945 – 1947

Brigadier Gordon Drummond YOUNG, O.B.E., M.C.

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Available on-line at:

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Available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylisthalfjan1941grea>

The Quarterly Army List April 1941

Available on-line at:

<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistapr1941grea>

<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistapr21941grea>

The Quarterly Army List July 1941

Available on-line at:

<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjul1941grea>

<http://www.archive.org/details/armylist1941grea>

The Quarterly Army List October 1941

Available on-line at:

<http://www.archive.org/details/armylistoct1941gre>

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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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The Quarterly Army List April 1942 Parts I and II

Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistapr1942grea>
Part II available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistapr21942grea>

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Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjul1942grea>
Part II available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjul21942grea>

The Quarterly Army List October 1942

Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistoct1942grea>
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Part I available on-line at:

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Part II available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjanpart21945grea>
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Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjulpart11945grea>

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Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistjanpart11946grea>

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Part I available on-line at: <http://www.archive.org/details/armylistaprpart11946grea>

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