The Forgotten Shaheeds of Dagshai

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§ 1. The question. My family's connection with Dagshai goes back to 1935 when our cottage here was built by my grandfather, Atma Singh Sarkaria. He used to call it the "Singuffa", or the lion's cave, and all who see this cottage invariably pose the same question: why that door, seemingly to nowhere, on its first floor?

The object in this note is however a different – and an altogether more serious and important – **question:** ***why does the Dagshai of today not remember the twelve freedom fighters who made the supreme sacrifice here in 1915 ?***

There is evidence – see the extracts from publications on the Ghadr discussed in §3 below – that gives us *the names of all the twelve martyrs*, and seems conclusive about this event here in Dagshai in 1915. One would think then that these names should be as well-known as Bhagat Singh's in Dagshai, but I was unable to find a single citizen – and quite a few families have been here for three or more generations – who had even heard of this event! It seemed to be yet another case of public memory being short, and heroes forgotten very quickly. To help lift the veil of oblivion that had so undeservedly wrapped these shaheeds, I started digging into this question a few weeks ago, and this is a roughly chronological record of what I have learnt so far.

§ 2. An email from Chachaji. Until last year, I myself was ignorant about this event, though I vaguely remember having heard something like it before – maybe from my grandfather during one of the stopovers in Dagshai on our way to the plains from Simla where my father was posted in the 1950's ? – when I was quite small.

What woke me up to it was an email, dated January 18, 2006, from my Chachaji, who now lives in California. The relevant extracts follow:--

... about the Ghadr movement, I have found some factual data. One is an episode that took place in Dagshai.

On May 13, 1915, the Sikh soldiers of the 23rd Risala were being shipped from Nagaon Cantonment in UP to the war front. (I assume to Mesopotamia.) At the railway station a piece of luggage of Dafedar Wadhawa Singh fell down and a grenade kept in it exploded. When other baggage was searched more grenades were found. He and others were arrested and their links to the Ghadr Party were discovered. Some of the soldiers of the regiment, who were already at the war front, were recalled; all were arrested and a court martial was held in Dagshai. Twelve were sentenced to death and executed by a firing squad. Of the twelve, eleven were Sikhs and one a Muslim. Some others were sent to the Andaman Islands.

Now you should do research to find out the location of their execution and cremation. There are many retired army men in Chandigarh. Maybe they could tell you where or how to search the records which the British always diligently kept. Maybe some student at the university could write a thesis on the subject. …

I was not able to find much time for these questions then – or a student at the university so disposed – but now I have been able to study this problem some more.

§ 3. The evidence. The extracts [1]-[4] given below tell us that something historically very significant happened here in Dagshai in 1915.

[1] Amritsar District Gazetteer. This reference I had found very soon after I received Chachaji's email. In this computer age my first impulse had been, of course, to 'google' for some source, and it turns out that all the Sikh soldiers were from villages of Amritsar district, which has its 1976 gazetteer on-line at the following website.

http://punjabrevenue.nic.in/gaz_asr8.htm

Appendix VII of this gazetteer lists **the names of the eleven Sikh shaheeds** :--

VII. Army men of the 23rd Cavalry court-martialled at Dagshai (near Simla) and sentenced to death :

No.	**Name**	**Village**
1.	Bhag Singh	Roorhiwala
2.	Mota Singh	Do
3.	Dafedar Tara Singh	Do
4.	Wadhawa Singh	Do
5.	Inder Singh	Jeohala
6.	Inder Singh	Sahajpur
7.	Dafedar Lachhman Singh	Chuslewar
8.	Boota Singh	Kasel
9.	Gujjar Singh	Lahoke
10.	Jetha Singh	Do
11.	Budh Singh	Dhotian

As we'll see from references [3] and [4] below, there are some mistakes in this table, which probably crept in due to careless typing and proof-reading while putting the gazetteer on-line: it is Wadhawa Singh at no. 4 who was Dafedar, not Tara Singh at no. 3, also Sahajpur should be Sabajpur and village Jeohala is in fact Jeobala.

This gazetteer also proudly lists many other revolutionaries of Amritsar who were convicted by the British courts on various counts – insurrection, sedition, murder, dacoity, etc. – subsequent to the unravelling of the Ghadr of 1915. Of particular interest for Dagshai is that its appendix VI also gives us the names of **the six cavalrymen who were transported to the Andamans**:--

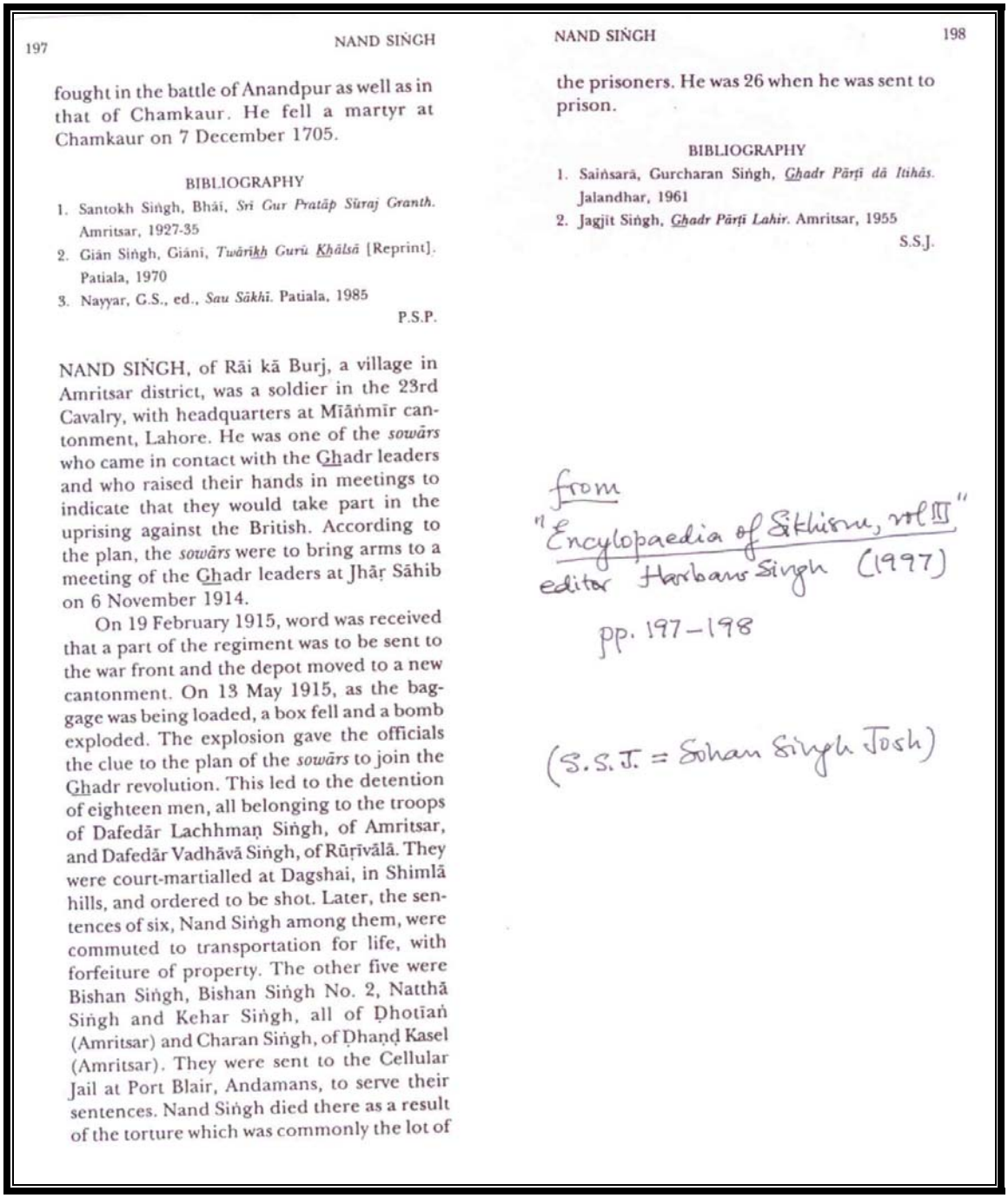
VI. Persons belonging to 23rd Cavalry, originally sentenced to death by a military court, but their sentences commuted later into transportation for life :

No.	Name	Village
1.	Bishan Singh	Sathiala
2.	Bishan Singh No.2	Do
3.	Natha Singh	Do
4.	Kehar Singh	Do
5.	Chanan Singh	Dhand Kasel
6.	Nand Singh	Rai ka Burj

As [3] and [4] will show, there is a mistake here too: nos. 1-4 were from Dhotian, not Sathiala (the native village of no. 1 in the district's Lahore Conspiracy Case list, so this seems to be a cutting-and-pasting error that was again (!) left un-corrected by the babu in-charge of the district; such blunders were rare in pre-partition gazetteers).

There is more on no. 6 of the above table, i.e., Nand Singh of Rai ka Burj, in the next reference [2], which was brought to my attention last September by Chachaji.

[2] "The Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, Volume III" (editor Harbans Singh, Punjabi University, Patiala, 1997). Looking up "Dagshai" in its cumulative index had yielded two entries, of which only the following was about the Ghadr:--



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fought in the battle of Anandpur as well as in that of Chamkaur. He fell a martyr at Chamkaur on 7 December 1705.

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3. Nayyar, G.S., ed., *Sau Sākhī*. Patiala, 1985

P.S.P.

NAND SIṄGH, of Rāi kā Burj, a village in Amritsar district, was a soldier in the 23rd Cavalry, with headquarters at Mīāṅmīr cantonment, Lahore. He was one of the *sowārs* who came in contact with the Ghadr leaders and who raised their hands in meetings to indicate that they would take part in the uprising against the British. According to the plan, the *sowārs* were to bring arms to a meeting of the Ghadr leaders at Jhāṛ Sāhib on 6 November 1914.

On 19 February 1915, word was received that a part of the regiment was to be sent to the war front and the depot moved to a new cantonment. On 13 May 1915, as the baggage was being loaded, a box fell and a bomb exploded. The explosion gave the officials the clue to the plan of the *sowārs* to join the Ghadr revolution. This led to the detention of eighteen men, all belonging to the troops of Dafedār Lachhmaṇ Siṅgh, of Amritsar, and Dafedār Vadhāvā Siṅgh, of Rūṛīvālā. They were court-martialled at Dagshai, in Shimlā hills, and ordered to be shot. Later, the sentences of six, Nand Siṅgh among them, were commuted to transportation for life, with forfeiture of property. The other five were Bishan Siṅgh, Bishan Siṅgh No. 2, Natthā Siṅgh and Kehar Siṅgh, all of Ḍhotīaṅ (Amritsar) and Charan Siṅgh, of Ḍhaṇḍ Kasel (Amritsar). They were sent to the Cellular Jail at Port Blair, Andamans, to serve their sentences. Nand Siṅgh died there as a result of the torture which was commonly the lot of

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the prisoners. He was 26 when he was sent to prison.

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2. Jagjīt Siṅgh, *Ghadr Pārṭī Lahir*. Amritsar, 1955

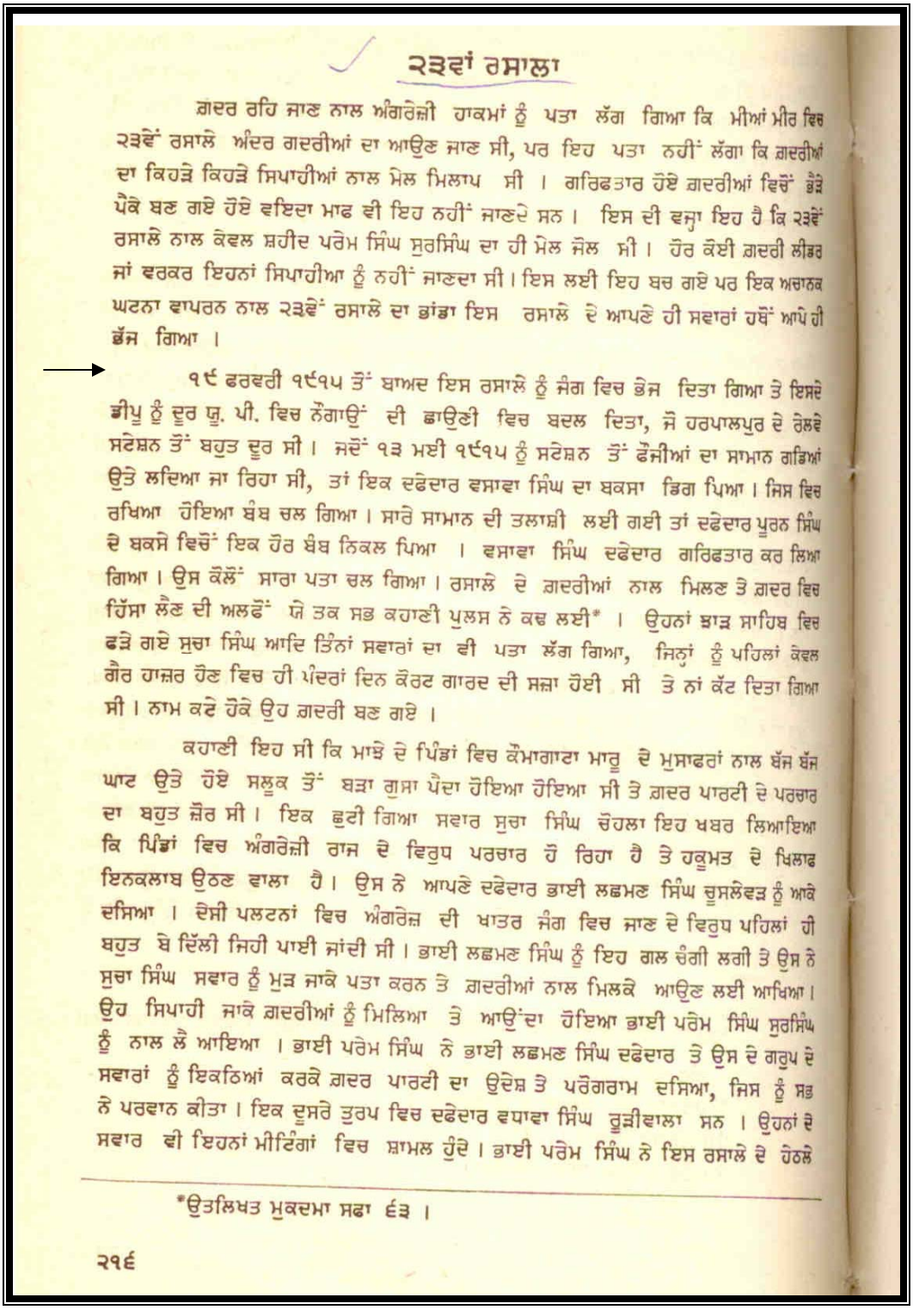
S.S.J.

from "Encyclopaedia of Sikhism, vol III" editor Harbans Singh (1997) pp. 197–198

(S.S.J. = Sohan Singh Josh)

I began now, on 27/06/2007, with S.S.J.'s sources – see [3], [4] below – both say execution was by hanging, and that Charan Singh above should in fact be Chanan Singh.

[3] "Ghadr Parti da Itihas" by Gurcharan Singh Sainsara (Jalandhar 1961). The 23rd Risala figured prominently from the beginning in the plans of the Ghadr leaders, but, *just* for the connection with Dagshai, pp. 216-218 of this book suffice:--



੨੩ਵਾਂ ਰਸਾਲਾ

ਗ਼ਦਰ ਰਹਿ ਜਾਣ ਨਾਲ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਹਾਕਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਮੀਆਂ ਮੀਰ ਵਿਚ ੨੩ਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਗਦਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਆਉਣ ਜਾਣ ਸੀ, ਪਰ ਇਹ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਾ ਕਿ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਕਿਹੜੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਲ ਮਿਲਾਪ ਸੀ । ਗਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਹੋਏ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਭੈੜੇ ਪੈਕੇ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਹੋਏ ਵਇਦਾ ਮਾਫ ਵੀ ਇਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦੇ ਸਨ । ਇਸ ਦੀ ਵਜ੍ਹਾ ਇਹ ਹੈ ਕਿ ੨੩ਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਕੇਵਲ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਰਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਮੇਲ ਜੋਲ ਸੀ । ਹੋਰ ਕੋਈ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ ਲੀਡਰ ਜਾਂ ਵਰਕਰ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆ ਨੂੰ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਣਦਾ ਸੀ। ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਹ ਬਚ ਗਏ ਪਰ ਇਕ ਅਚਾਨਕ ਘਟਨਾ ਵਾਪਰਨ ਨਾਲ ੨੩ਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦਾ ਭਾਂਡਾ ਇਸ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਹੀ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਹਥੋਂ ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਛੱਜ ਗਿਆ ।

→ ੧੯ ਫਰਵਰੀ ੧੯੧੫ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਇਸ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਜੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਭੇਜ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਇਸਦੇ ਡੀਪੂ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਰ ਯੂ. ਪੀ. ਵਿਚ ਨੌਗਾਉਂ ਦੀ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿਤਾ, ਜੋ ਹਰਪਾਲਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਹੁਤ ਦੂਰ ਸੀ । ਜਦੋਂ ੧੩ ਮਈ ੧੯੧੫ ਨੂੰ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਤੋਂ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਸਾਮਾਨ ਗਡਿਆਂ ਉਤੇ ਲਦਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ, ਤਾਂ ਇਕ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਵਸਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਾ ਬਕਸਾ ਡਿਗ ਪਿਆ । ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ਰਖਿਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਬੰਬ ਚਲ ਗਿਆ । ਸਾਰੇ ਸਾਮਾਨ ਦੀ ਤਲਾਸ਼ੀ ਲਈ ਗਈ ਤਾਂ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਪੂਰਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਬਕਸੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਬੰਬ ਨਿਕਲ ਪਿਆ । ਵਸਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਗਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ ਗਿਆ । ਉਸ ਕੋਲੋਂ ਸਾਰਾ ਪਤਾ ਚਲ ਗਿਆ । ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਣ ਤੇ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਵਿਚ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਲੈਣ ਦੀ ਅਲਫੋਂ ਯੇ ਤਕ ਸਭ ਕਹਾਣੀ ਪੁਲਸ ਨੇ ਕਢ ਲਈ* । ਉਹਨਾਂ ਝਾੜ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਵਿਚ ਫੜੇ ਗਏ ਸੁਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਆਦਿ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਵੀ ਪਤਾ ਲੱਗ ਗਿਆ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਕੇਵਲ ਗੈਰ ਹਾਜ਼ਰ ਹੋਣ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਪੰਦਰਾਂ ਦਿਨ ਕੈਰਟ ਗਾਰਦ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਹੋਈ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਨਾਂ ਕੱਟ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਸੀ । ਨਾਮ ਕਟੇ ਹੋਕੇ ਉਹ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ ਬਣ ਗਏ ।

ਕਹਾਣੀ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਮਾਝੇ ਦੇ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੌਮਾਗਾਟਾ ਮਾਰੂ ਦੇ ਮੁਸਾਫਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਬੱਜ ਬੱਜ ਘਾਟ ਉਤੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਲੂਕ ਤੋਂ ਬੜਾ ਗੁਸਾ ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੇ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਦਾ ਬਹੁਤ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਸੀ । ਇਕ ਛੁਟੀ ਗਿਆ ਸਵਾਰ ਸੁਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੋਹਲਾ ਇਹ ਖਬਰ ਲਿਆਇਆ ਕਿ ਪਿੰਡਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਰਾਜ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਪਰਚਾਰ ਹੋ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਹਕੂਮਤ ਦੇ ਖਿਲਾਫ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ ਉਠਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਹੈ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੁਸਲੇਵੜ ਨੂੰ ਆਕੇ ਦਸਿਆ । ਦੇਸੀ ਪਲਟਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ ਦੀ ਖਾਤਰ ਜੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਜਾਣ ਦੇ ਵਿਰੁਧ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਹੀ ਬਹੁਤ ਬੇ ਦਿੱਲੀ ਜਿਹੀ ਪਾਈ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ । ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਗਲ ਚੰਗੀ ਲਗੀ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਨੇ ਸੁਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਵਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਮੁੜ ਜਾਕੇ ਪਤਾ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਮਿਲਕੇ ਆਉਣ ਲਈ ਆਖਿਆ । ਉਹ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਜਾਕੇ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਤੇ ਆਉਂਦਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਰਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਲੈ ਆਇਆ । ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਤੇ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਗਰੁਪ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਇਕਠਿਆਂ ਕਰਕੇ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਉਦੇਸ਼ ਤੇ ਪਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਦਸਿਆ, ਜਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਸਭ ਨੇ ਪਰਵਾਨ ਕੀਤਾ । ਇਕ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਤੁਰਪ ਵਿਚ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਵਧਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੂੜੀਵਾਲਾ ਸਨ । ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਰ ਵੀ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਮੀਟਿੰਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੁੰਦੇ । ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਇਸ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਹੇਠਲੇ

*ਉਤਲਿਖਤ ਮੁਕਦਮਾ ਸਫਾ ੬੩ ।

ਅਫਸਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੀ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਕਰ ਲਿਆ। ਖਾਸ ਕਰ ਉਹ ੨੫ ਤੇ ੨੬ ਨਵੰਬਰ ੧੯੧੪ ਦੀਆਂ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਬੱਧੀਆਂ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਤਰੀਕਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਹਿਸਾ ਲੈਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋ ਗਏ। ਜਦ ੬ ਤਰੀਕ ਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਸਵਾਰ ਝਾੜ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਦੀ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਲਈ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਤਿਆਰ ਹੋਏ ਤਾਂ ਪਲਟਨ ਦੇ ਗਰੰਥੀ ਮੂਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਭਾਨੀ ਮਾਰ ਦਿਤੀ ਕਿ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਝਾੜ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ ਇਕਠੇ ਵੀ ਹੋਣ ਕਿ ਨਾਂ, ਐਵੇਂ ਅੰਨ੍ਹੇਵਾਹ ਨਹੀਂ ਤੁਰ ਪੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ। ਇਸ ਉਤੇ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਰੁਕ ਗਏ। ਪਰ ਸਵਾਰ ਸੁਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੋਹਲਾ, ਸਵਾਰ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਸੇਲ, ਸਵਾਰ ਚਨਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਸਵਾਰ ਸੁਰਾਇਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਦੋਬਦੀ ਚਲੇ ਗਏ। ਅਗੇ ਝਾੜ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ। ਚਨਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਤਾਂ ਮੁੜ ਆਇਆ ਪਰ ਬਾਕੀ ਤਿੰਨ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਲਭਣ ਚੜ ਪਏ, ਜੋ ਪੁਲਸ ਨੇ ਗਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਕਰ ਲਏ। ਇਹਨਾਂ ਤਿੰਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗੈਰ ਹਾਜ਼ਰੀ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਰਟ ਮਾਰਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਜ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਹੋ ਗਈਆਂ*।

ਮੀਆਂ ਮੀਰ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਦੇ ਸਦਰ ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਮਦਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਪਿੰਡ ਗਾਗਾ ਦੀ ਤਰਖਾਣੇ ਦੀ ਦੁਕਾਨ ਸੀ, ਜੋ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਸੁਨਹੇ ਪਤੇ ਤੇ ਸੁਖ ਸਾਂਦ ਪੁਛਣ ਦਸਣ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਦਿੰਦੀ।

ਇਸੇ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਇਕ ਹੋਰ ਤੁਰਪ ਵਿਚ ਮਾਦੋਕੇ ਬਰਾੜ ਤਸੀਲ ਅਜਨਾਲਾ ਦਾ ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ, ਜੋ ਸ਼ੰਘਾਈ ਤੋਂ ਆਇਆ ਸੀ, ਭਰਤੀ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਮਾਦੋਕੇ ਬਰਾੜਾਂ ਤੇ ਇਸ ਪਾਸੇ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਵਲ ਖਿਚਿਆ। ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੀ ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਰਸਿੰਘੀਏ ਨਾਲ ਜਾਣ ਪਛਾਣ ਕਰਵਾਈ। ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਚੂਸਲੇਵੜ ਬੜਾ ਸਿਆਣਾ ਸੀ। ਉਸ ਨੇ ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਬੜੀ ਵਾਰਾਂ ਆਖਿਆ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਬਰਾੜਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਤੇ ਇਤਬਾਰ ਨਹੀਂ, ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਨਾ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਕਰੇ। ਪਰ ਭਾਈ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਈ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਨਾ ਪਿਆ। ਉਹ ਬਰਾੜਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਲੱਗ ਤੇ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਪ ਦੀਆਂ ਅਲੱਗ ਮੀਟਿੰਗਾਂ ਲਾਉਂਦਾ ਰਿਹਾ। ਭਾਈ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਗਲ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਸਚੀ ਨਿਕਲੀ। ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਲਮੂਹਾਂ ਮੁਖਬਰ ਵੀ ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਆਸਰੇ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਵਿਚ ਵੜਿਆ ਤੇ ਬੰਬ ਵੀ ਏਸੇ ਤੁਰਪ ਦੇ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਦੇ ਬਕਸੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਭਿਗਕੇ ਫਟਿਆ। ਬਰਾੜਾਂ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਪ ਦੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਸਭ ਦੇ ਸਭ ਸਰਕਾਰੀ ਗਵਾਹ ਬਣ ਗਏ ਤੇ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਵਧਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਪਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੰਦੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿਤੇ।

ਇਹ ਬੰਬ ਮੈਗਜ਼ੀਨਾਂ ਉਤੇ ਕਬਜ਼ਾ ਕਰਨ ਵੇਲੇ ਵਰਤਨ ਲਈ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਤੁਰਪਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ ਸਨ, ਜੋ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਨੇ ਅਜੇ ਸੰਭਾਲਕੇ ਰਖੇ ਹੋਏ ਸਨ। ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਵਧਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੁੜੀਵਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਤੁਰਪਾਂ ਦੇ ੧੮ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਜੰਗ ਤੋਂ ਵਾਪਸ ਮੰਗਵਾਕੇ ਇਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਭਿਗਸ਼ਈ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਰਟ ਮਾਰਸ਼ਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਬਲਵੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਬਰਾੜਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੋਰ ਸਵਾਰ ਗਵਾਹ ਬਣਕੇ ਬਚ ਗਏ। ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੂਸਲੇਵੜ, ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਵਧਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੁੜੀਵਾਲਾ ਤੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਭਾਗ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਮੋਤਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਰੁੜੀਵਾਲੀਏ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀਉਬਾਲਾ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਬਾਜਪੁਰ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਬੂਟਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਸੇਲ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਗੁਜਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਹੁਕੇ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਜੋਨਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਲਹੁਕੇ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਬੁਧ ਸਿੰਘ ਢੋਟੀਆਂ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਅਬਦੁਲਾ ਨਾਅਲਬੰਦ (ਲਾਹੌਰ) ਆਦਿ, ੧੨ ਜਣਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਲਾਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ। ਢੋਟੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਸ੍ਰੀ ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੂਸਰਾ,

*ਲਾਹੌਰ ਸਾਜ਼ਿਸ਼ ਮੁਕਦਮਾ ਦੂਸਰਾ, ਸਫਾ ੫੨-੫੪।

ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨਥਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਕੇਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ; ਫੌਜ ਕਸੋਲ ਦੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਚਨਣ ਸਿੰਘ ਅਤੇ ਰਾਏਕੇ ਬੁਰਜਾਂ ਦੇ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਨੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀਆਂ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਸਜ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਹਟਾਕੇ ਕਾਲੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਉਮਰ ਕੈਦ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿਤੀਆਂ ਗਈਆਂ* ।

ਦੋ ਹੋਰ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਮੁਚਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਚੋਹਲਾ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ਸਿੰਘ ਕਸੋਲ ਨੂੰ ਦੂਸਰੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਸਾਜ਼ਿਸ਼ ਮੁਕਦਮੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਲੇਟਕੇ ਉਮਰ ਕੈਦ ਕਾਲੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਤੇ ਘਰ ਘਾਟ ਜ਼ਬਤੀ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਦਿਤੀ ਗਈ ।

ਮੇਰਠ, ਫੈਜ਼ਾਬਾਦ, ਬਨਾਰਸ ਤੇ ਹੋਰ

ਮਰਠ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਰਾਭਾ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਫੇਰ ਇਥੋਂ ਦਾ ਕੰਮ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਪਿੰਗਲੇ ਦੇ ਸਪੁਰਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ । ੧੨੯ਵੀਂ ਪਾਇਓਨੀਅਰ ਨਾਮੀ ਪ੍ਰਲਟਨ ਵਿਚ ਭਾਈ ਫੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਤੇ ਗ਼ਦਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਜਥੇਬੰਦਕ ਸੀ । ੧੨ਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਵਾਰ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਮੋਢੀ ਸੀ । ਮੇਰਠ ਫੌਜੀ ਡਵਿਜ਼ਨ ਦਾ ਹੈਡਕਵਾਟਰ ਸੀ ਤੇ ਦਿਲੀ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਉਤੇ ਬੜੀ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਫੌਜੀ ਪੋਜ਼ੀਸ਼ਨ ਰਖਦਾ ਸੀ । ਇਸ ਲਈ ਇਥੇ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਉਘਾ ਲੀਡਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਵਿਸ਼ਨੂੰ ਗਣੇਸ਼ ਪਿੰਗਲੇ ਡਿਊਟੀ ਉਤੇ ਲਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ । ਪਰ ਇਹ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਦੀ ਨਾਕਾਮੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਨਾਦਰ ਖਾਂ ਜਮਾਦਾਰ ਤੋਂ ਠੱਗੀ ਖਾ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ੨੩ ਮਾਰਚ ਨੂੰ ਦਸ ਬੰਬਾਂ ਸਮੇਤ ਫੌਜੀ ਬਾਰਕਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਗਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ । ਭਾਈ ਫੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੇ ਸਾਰੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਿਰ ਤੇ ਲੈ ਲਈ । ਨਾਦਰ ਖਾਂ ਨੇ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਦੋ ਹੋਰ ਸਵਾਰ ਫਸਾ ਦਿਤੇ । ਇਹਨਾਂ ਚਹੁੰ ਭਾਈ ਫੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ੧੨ਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਭਾਈ ਭਗਵਾਨ ਸਿੰਘ, ਭਾਈ ਈਸ਼ਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇ ਭਾਈ ਜੋਗਿੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਵਾਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਜਤੋਗ ਦੀ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਕੋਰਟ ਮਾਰਸ਼ਲ ਹੋਇਆ ਤੇ ਇਹ ਸੂਰਮੇ ੨੬ ਅਪਰੈਲ ੧੯੧੫ ਨੂੰ ਮੇਰਠ ਜੇਲ੍ਹ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਆਕੇ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਦੇਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕਰ ਦਿਤੇ ਗਏ† ।

ਯੂ. ਪੀ. ਦੀ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਫੈਜ਼ਾਬਾਦ ਵਿਚ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਹਰਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਹਵਾਲਦਾਰ, ਜੋ ਸਦਰ ਬਾਜ਼ਾਰ ਵਿਚ ਚੌਧਰੀ ਵੀ ਸੀ, ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਨਾਲ ਸਬੰਧ ਰਖਦਾ ਸੀ । ਉਹ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਛਪਤਾਂ ਸਿਪਾਹੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੰਡਦਾ ਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪੜ੍ਹਕੇ ਸੁਣਾਉਂਦਾ । ਭਾਈ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੇ ਛਾਉਣੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਕੀਤੇ ਦੌਰਿਆਂ ਸਮੇਂ ਇਹ ਗ਼ਦਰੀ ਬਣਿਆ ਸੀ । ਏਥੇ ੮ਵੀਂ ਭੂਪਾਲ ਪਲਟਨ ਸੀ, ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਹਰਨਾਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੋਂ ਗ਼ਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਦਾ ਪਰੋਗਰਾਮ ਸੁਣਦੇ ਤੇ ਇਨਕਲਾਬ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਾਮਲ ਹੋਣ ਲਈ ਤਿਆਰ ਸਨ । ਕਿਸੇ ਵਾਇਦਾ ਮਾਫ ਦੇ ਬਿਆਨ ਉਤੇ ੬ ਅਪਰੈਲ ੧੯੧੫ ਨੂੰ ਹਵਾਲਦਾਰ ਨੂੰ ਗਰਿਫਤਾਰ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਤੇ ਬਗਾਵਤ ਦਾ ਮੁਕਦਮਾ ਚਲਾਕੇ ਸੈਸ਼ਨ ਜੱਜ ਫੈਜ਼ਾਬਾਦ ਤੋਂ ੪ ਅਕਤੂਬਰ ੧੯੧੫ ਨੂੰ ਦਸ ਸਾਲ ਦੀ ਸਖਤ ਕੈਦ ਕਰਵਾ ਦਿਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਜੋ ਬਾਅਦ ਵਿਚ ਵਾਇਸਰਾਏ ਨੇ ਪੰਜ ਸਾਲ ਕਰ ਦਿਤੀ‡ ।

ਬਨਾਰਸ ਦੀ ਛਾਉਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਪਹਿਲਾਂ ਭਾਈ ਕਰਤਾਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਰਾਭਾ ਆਪ ਆਇਆ ਤੇ ਫੇਰ ਸ੍ਰੀ ਸਚਿੰਦਰ ਨਾਥ ਸਾਨਿਆਲ ਤੇ ਓਸ ਦੇ ਬਨਾਰਸੀ ਸਾਥੀ ੭ਵੀਂ ਰਾਜਪੂਤ ਰਜਮੈਂਟ ਪਾਸ ਆਉਂਦੇ

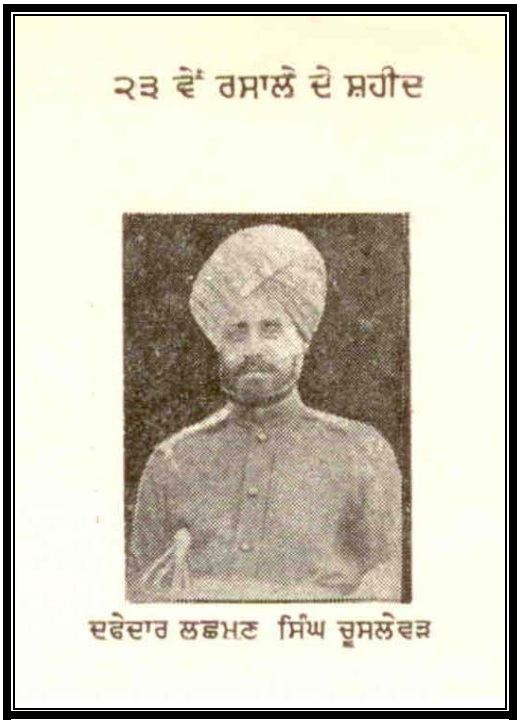
*ਹੋਮ (ਪੋਲੀਟੀਕਲ) ਓ. ਅਕਤੂਬਰ ੧੯੧੫, ਨੰ: ੬੭੧-੮੪, 'ਜਿਵੇਂ ਮੈਂ ਹਿੰਦ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਤਾ', ਸਫਾ ੨੦੩ ।

†ਉਤਲਿਖਤ ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਤੇ ਪਹਿਲਾ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਸਾਜ਼ਿਸ਼ ਮੁਕਦਮਾ ਸਫਾ ੧੧੩ ।

‡ਹੋਮ (ਪੋਲੀਟੀਕਲ) ਓ. ਅਪਰੈਲ ੧੯੧੬, ਕਾਰਵਾਈ ਨੰ: ੪੭ ।

From the above – see p. 217 bottom and p. 218 – we have now *all* the eighteen names: **the twelfth shaheed** was Abdullah Nayalband of district Lahore.

Facing p. 218 of this book are three photographs, two are reproduced below:--



I have omitted the third photograph because its caption, 'Sawar Dhian Singh', does not match any of the 18 names given, but possibly this Dhian Singh ties with the book's unexplained "aad" after twelve names on the bottom of p. 217 ?

The book does not mention the specific sources of these photos, though it seems reasonable that these could have been obtained from the sawars' regimental records, or else, from some present-day descendants in their extended families.

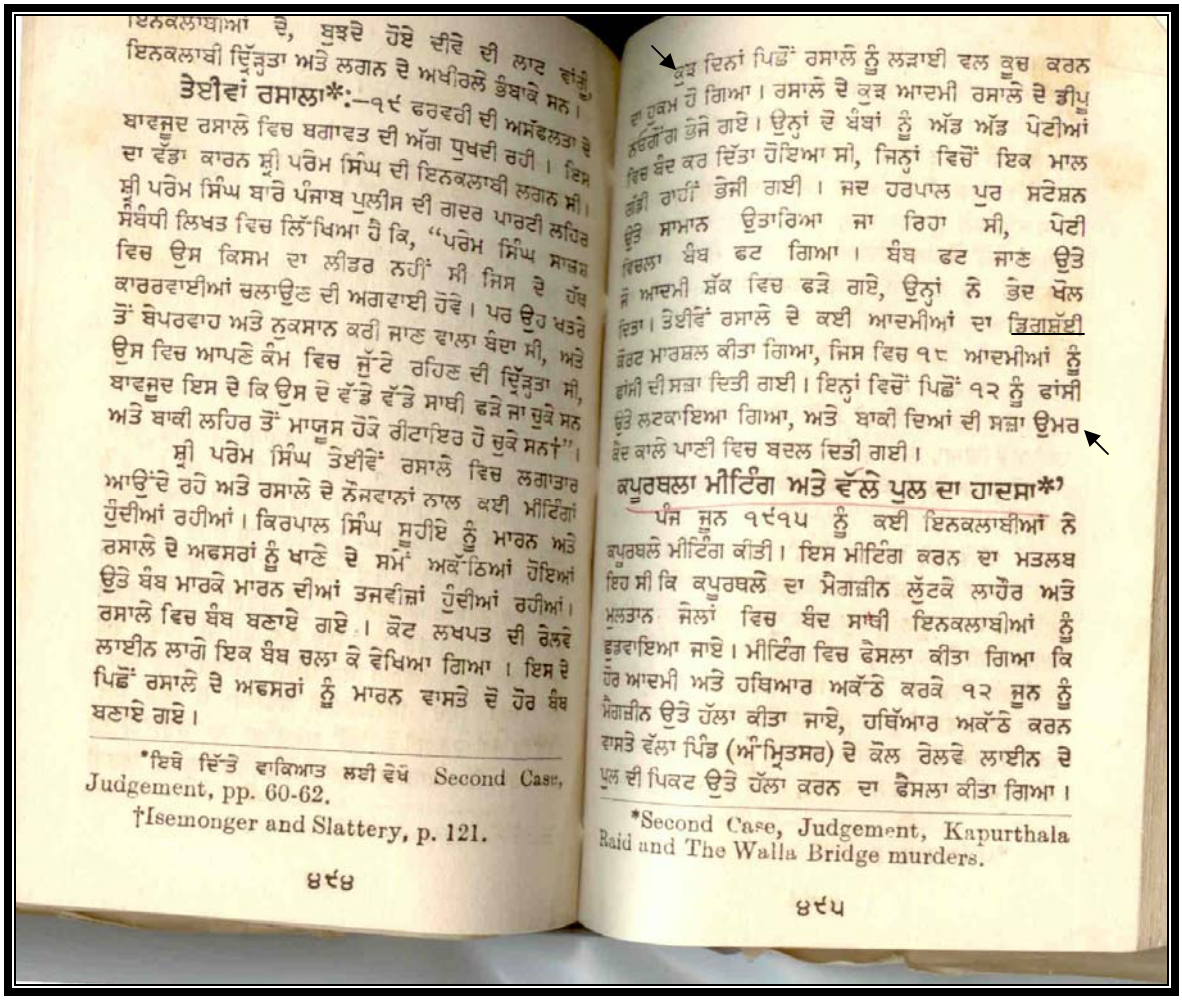
As per the above account, the Dafedar Wasawa Singh whose exploding box led to the unmasking of the plot – and who later spilled the beans and turned approver with some others – was distinct from Dafedar Wadhawa Singh (cf. Chachaji's e-mail). The latter, like all others convicted at Dagshai, was, according to this account, already on the (way to the) front. If so, the possibility arises – cf. O'Dwyer's version [5] below, who says the British knew that the 23rd was "tainted", but lacking evidence had sent suspects towards the front anyway – that the box-exploding incident was contrived between the approvers and the British to manufacture the needed evidence?

Notes

[3.i] This book is formally authored by the "Desh Bhagat Yaadgar Committee," and is no exception to the rule that books written by committees – for example, most of the text books inflicted on our school students by the N.C.E.R.T. – are less than first-rate. Luckily however, this book was written almost entirely by just one of the committee member, Gurcharan Singh Sainsara, who has done a reasonably scholarly job, but we are informed on p. 9 that his drafts were approved – it would seem for left-wing ideological 'correctness'? – at numerous meetings of the entire committee.

[3.ii] There is an amazing allegation made by this Committee against the then government of Nehru on p. 8 of this book, namely, that hundreds of pages of notes made by them for writing this book, from original documents in the National Archives of India, were confiscated by the Home Ministry on the pretext of national security ! In 1960, about a rebellion that occurred way, way back in 1915 ? The insinuation plainly is that some Congress leader of 1915 – maybe the Mahatma himself – could be exposed, by the de-classification of these secret documents, as having collaborated with the British against the Ghadrites at that time. If there is any truth in this allegation, there is an interesting story here.

[4] "Ghadar Parti Lahir" by Jagjit Singh (Taran Taran 1955). Since our concern is only with evidence that connects Dagshai with the 23rd Cavalry mutineers, just the following two pages, 494-495, of this treatise should suffice :--



ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀਆਂ ਦੇ, ਬੁਝਦੇ ਹੋਏ ਦੀਵੇ ਦੀ ਲਾਟ ਵਾਂਙੂੰ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹਤਾ ਅਤੇ ਲਗਨ ਦੇ ਅਖੀਰਲੇ ਭੰਬਾਕੇ ਸਨ।

ਤੇਈਵਾਂ ਰਸਾਲਾ*:—੧੯ ਫਰਵਰੀ ਦੀ ਅਸੱਫਲਤਾ ਦੇ ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਬਗਾਵਤ ਦੀ ਅੱਗ ਧੁਖਦੀ ਰਹੀ। ਇਸ ਦਾ ਵੱਡਾ ਕਾਰਨ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀ ਲਗਨ ਸੀ। ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਬਾਰੇ ਪੰਜਾਬ ਪੁਲੀਸ ਦੀ ਗਦਰ ਪਾਰਟੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਲਿਖਤ ਵਿਚ ਲਿੱਖਿਆ ਹੈ ਕਿ, "ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਸਾਜਸ਼ ਵਿਚ ਉਸ ਕਿਸਮ ਦਾ ਲੀਡਰ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੀ ਜਿਸ ਦੇ ਹੱਥ ਕਾਰਰਵਾਈਆਂ ਚਲਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਅਗਵਾਈ ਹੋਵੇ। ਪਰ ਉਹ ਖਤਰੇ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਪਰਵਾਹ ਅਤੇ ਨੁਕਸਾਨ ਕਰੀ ਜਾਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਬੰਦਾ ਸੀ, ਅਤੇ ਉਸ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਕੰਮ ਵਿਚ ਜੁੱਟੇ ਰਹਿਣ ਦੀ ਦ੍ਰਿੜ੍ਹਤਾ ਸੀ, ਬਾਵਜੂਦ ਇਸ ਦੇ ਕਿ ਉਸ ਦੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਸਾਥੀ ਫੜੇ ਜਾ ਚੁਕੇ ਸਨ ਅਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਲਹਿਰ ਤੋਂ ਮਾਯੂਸ ਹੋਕੇ ਰੀਟਾਇਰ ਹੋ ਚੁਕੇ ਸਨ†"।

ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਪਰੇਮ ਸਿੰਘ ਤੇਈਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਲਗਾਤਾਰ ਆਉਂਦੇ ਰਹੇ ਅਤੇ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕਈ ਮੀਟਿੰਗਾਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ੂਹੀਏ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਨ ਅਤੇ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਅਫਸਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਖਾਣੇ ਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਅਕੱਠਿਆਂ ਹੋਇਆਂ ਉਤੇ ਬੰਬ ਮਾਰਕੇ ਮਾਰਨ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਜਵੀਜ਼ਾਂ ਹੁੰਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ। ਰਸਾਲੇ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਬ ਬਣਾਏ ਗਏ। ਕੋਟ ਲਖਪਤ ਦੀ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਲਾਈਨ ਲਾਗੇ ਇਕ ਬੰਬ ਚਲਾ ਕੇ ਵੇਖਿਆ ਗਿਆ। ਇਸ ਦੇ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਅਫਸਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਦੋ ਹੋਰ ਬੰਬ ਬਣਾਏ ਗਏ।

*ਇਥੇ ਵਿੱਤੇ ਵਾਕਿਆਤ ਲਈ ਵੇਖੋ Second Case, Judgement, pp. 60-62.

†Isemonger and Slattery, p. 121.

੪੯੪

ਕੁਝ ਦਿਨਾਂ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਨੂੰ ਲੜਾਈ ਵਲ ਕੂਚ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ। ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਕੁਝ ਆਦਮੀ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਡੀਪੂ ਨਵਗੋਂਗ ਭੇਜੇ ਗਏ। ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਬੰਬਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਅੱਡ ਅੱਡ ਪੇਟੀਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਦ ਕਰ ਦਿੱਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਸੀ, ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਇਕ ਮਾਲ ਗੱਡੀ ਰਾਹੀਂ ਭੇਜੀ ਗਈ। ਜਦ ਹਰਪਾਲ ਪੁਰ ਸਟੇਸ਼ਨ ਉਤੇ ਸਾਮਾਨ ਉਤਾਰਿਆ ਜਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸੀ, ਪੇਟੀ ਵਿਚਲਾ ਬੰਬ ਫਟ ਗਿਆ। ਬੰਬ ਫਟ ਜਾਣ ਉਤੇ ਜੋ ਆਦਮੀ ਸ਼ੱਕ ਵਿਚ ਫੜੇ ਗਏ, ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਭੇਦ ਖੋਲ ਦਿਤਾ। ਤੇਈਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਕਈ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਗਸੱਈ ਗਰੇਟ ਮਾਰਸ਼ਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਜਿਸ ਵਿਚ ੧੮ ਆਦਮੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਦਿਤੀ ਗਈ। ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਪਿਛੋਂ ੧੨ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਉਤੇ ਲਟਕਾਇਆ ਗਿਆ, ਅਤੇ ਬਾਕੀ ਦਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਉਮਰ ਕੈਦ ਕਾਲੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿਤੀ ਗਈ।

ਕਪੂਰਥਲਾ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਅਤੇ ਵੱਲੇ ਪੁਲ ਦਾ ਹਾਦਸਾ*)

ਪੰਜ ਜੂਨ ੧੯੧੫ ਨੂੰ ਕਈ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੇ ਕਪੂਰਥਲੇ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਕੀਤੀ। ਇਸ ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਮਤਲਬ ਇਹ ਸੀ ਕਿ ਕਪੂਰਥਲੇ ਦਾ ਮੈਗਜ਼ੀਨ ਲੁੱਟਕੇ ਲਾਹੌਰ ਅਤੇ ਮੁਲਤਾਨ ਜੇਲਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਬੰਦ ਸਾਥੀ ਇਨਕਲਾਬੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਛੁਡਵਾਇਆ ਜਾਏ। ਮੀਟਿੰਗ ਵਿਚ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ ਕਿ ਹੋਰ ਆਦਮੀ ਅਤੇ ਹਥਿਆਰ ਅਕੱਠੇ ਕਰਕੇ ੧੨ ਜੂਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੈਗਜ਼ੀਨ ਉਤੇ ਹੱਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਜਾਏ, ਹਥਿੱਆਰ ਅਕੱਠੇ ਕਰਨ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਵੱਲਾ ਪਿੰਡ (ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ) ਦੇ ਕੋਲ ਰੇਲਵੇ ਲਾਈਨ ਦੇ ਪੁਲ ਦੀ ਪਿਕਟ ਉਤੇ ਹੱਲਾ ਕਰਨ ਦਾ ਫੈਸਲਾ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ।

*Second Case, Judgement, Kapurthala Raid and The Walla Bridge murders.

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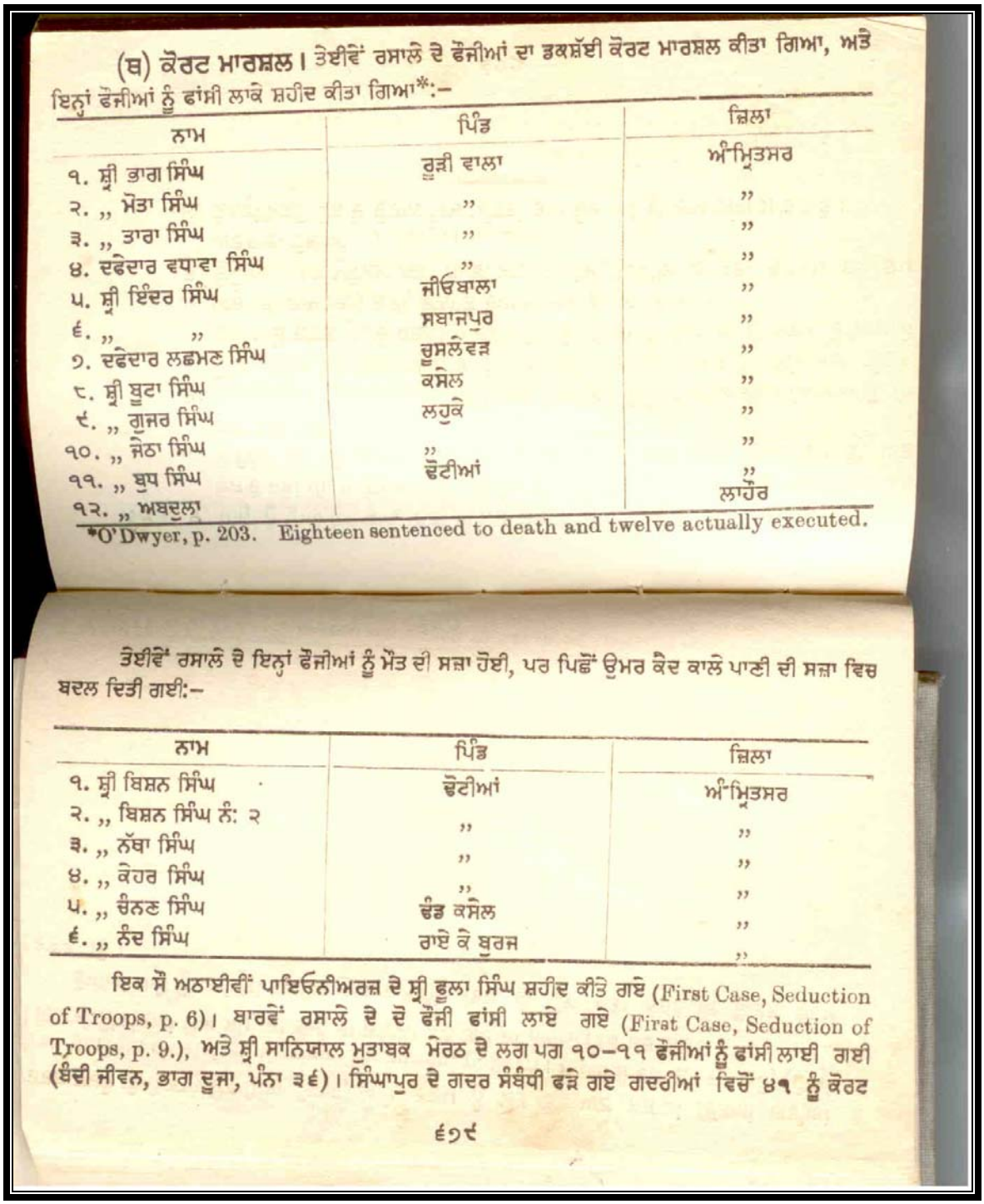
Just like [3], this earlier book also asserts that the twelve cavalrymen were *hanged, not executed by firing squad.* The names of the twelve hanged, and of the six whose sentences were commuted to life imprisonment, are given in tabular form on pp. 678-679 of this book (the footnote on p. 678 however suggests the possibility that "executed" became hanged merely because of a mis-translation from English into Punjabi) :--



(ਬ) ਕੋਰਟ ਮਾਰਸ਼ਲ। ਤੇਈਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਭਕਸ਼ੱਈ ਕੋਰਟ ਮਾਰਸ਼ਲ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ, ਅਤੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਲਾਕੇ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤਾ ਗਿਆ*:–

ਨਾਮ	ਪਿੰਡ	ਜ਼ਿਲਾ
੧. ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਭਾਗ ਸਿੰਘ	ਰੁੜੀ ਵਾਲਾ	ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
੨. ,, ਮੋਤਾ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੩. ,, ਤਾਰਾ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੪. ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਵਧਾਵਾ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੫. ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਇੰਦਰ ਸਿੰਘ	ਜੀਓਬਾਲਾ	,,
੬. ,, ,,	ਸ਼ਬਾਜਪੁਰ	,,
੭. ਦਫੇਦਾਰ ਲਛਮਣ ਸਿੰਘ	ਚੁਸਲੇਵੜ	,,
੮. ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬੂਟਾ ਸਿੰਘ	ਕਸੇਲ	,,
੯. ,, ਗੁਜਰ ਸਿੰਘ	ਲਹੁਕੇ	,,
੧੦. ,, ਜੇਠਾ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੧੧. ,, ਬੁਧ ਸਿੰਘ	ਛੋਟੀਆਂ	,,
੧੨. ,, ਅਬਦੁਲਾ		ਲਾਹੌਰ

*O'Dwyer, p. 203. Eighteen sentenced to death and twelve actually executed.

ਤੇਈਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਮੌਤ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਹੋਈ, ਪਰ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਉਮਰ ਕੈਦ ਕਾਲੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਸਜ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਬਦਲ ਦਿਤੀ ਗਈ:–

ਨਾਮ	ਪਿੰਡ	ਜ਼ਿਲਾ
੧. ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ	ਛੋਟੀਆਂ	ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ
੨. ,, ਬਿਸ਼ਨ ਸਿੰਘ ਨੰ: ੨	,,	,,
੩. ,, ਨੱਥਾ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੪. ,, ਕੇਹਰ ਸਿੰਘ	,,	,,
੫. ,, ਚੰਨਣ ਸਿੰਘ	ਢੰਡ ਕਸੇਲ	,,
੬. ,, ਨੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ	ਰਾਏ ਕੇ ਬੁਰਜ	,,

ਇਕ ਸੌ ਅਠਾਈਵੀਂ ਪਾਇਓਨੀਅਰਜ਼ ਦੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਫੂਲਾ ਸਿੰਘ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਕੀਤੇ ਗਏ (First Case, Seduction of Troops, p. 6)। ਬਾਰਵੇਂ ਰਸਾਲੇ ਦੇ ਦੋ ਫੌਜੀ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਲਾਏ ਗਏ (First Case, Seduction of Troops, p. 9.), ਅਤੇ ਸ਼੍ਰੀ ਸਾਨਿਯਾਲ ਮੁਤਾਬਕ ਮੇਰਠ ਦੇ ਲਗ ਪਗ ੧੦–੧੧ ਫੌਜੀਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਫਾਂਸੀ ਲਾਈ ਗਈ (ਬੰਦੀ ਜੀਵਨ, ਭਾਗ ਦੂਜਾ, ਪੰਨਾ ੩੬)। ਸਿੰਘਾਪੁਰ ਦੇ ਗਦਰ ਸੰਬੰਧੀ ਫੜੇ ਗਏ ਗਦਰੀਆਂ ਵਿਚੋਂ ੪੧ ਨੂੰ ਕੋਰਟ

੬੭੯

The book [3] by Gurcharan Singh does not refer to this earlier book by Jagjit Singh, but the same photo of **Lachhman Singh of Chuslewar**, again without any attribution as to source, can be found also in this book: facing p. 617.

The story on pp. 617-618 of this book about **Abdullah** – both [3] and [4] fail to give us the exact location of his native place, but put it in district Lahore – is touching. According to it, the British tried to make him state-approver, pointing out that otherwise he would go to his death hanging next to the *kaffir* Lachhman Singh. To this Abdullah replied: *"Were I to go to the gallows with Lachhman Singh, then surely will I find Paradise!"* For this story the author cites, ***Bandi Jeevan*, by S. N. Sayal**, p. 112.

I have not been able to find this book, a Punjabi translation of the reminiscences – published in 1943 in Bengali – of its author, who served a prison term in the Andamans following conviction in the Banaras Conspiracy Case. Though Sanyal was one of the Bengali revolutionaries who had worked in Punjab – notably with Kartar Singh Sarabha – it seems quite unlikely that he had met either Lachhman Singh or Abdullah during these few days, and being a civilian, it seems on the face of it almost certain that he could not have shared a military prison with these two. However, it is quite possible that Sanyal could have heard of this story later on, in the Cellular Jail, from one of the six surviving court-martialled mutineers of the 23rd, who had been in Dagshai jail with Abdullah and Lachhman Singh prior to their execution ?

A glaring lacuna remains: **the above references give *no Dagshai-specific details* about the imprisonment, court-martial, or executions of the 23rd Cavalry's rebels.** Yes, since it was wartime, this army trial of 1915 was probably in camera and very summary, as well as, obviously, very harsh towards the accused. Yet, without clinching proof of these soldiers' actual physical presence here in Dagshai at that time, the question of § 1 takes on a very different aspect. Yes, the evidence is *almost conclusive* towards a court-martial here, and in that case the death sentences handed out by this tribunal were also *probably* carried out here in Dagshai only, but – without corroborative details of the kind mentioned – we cannot put flesh on bare bones, we cannot be certain. The possibility remains that the above evidence is yet another door to nowhere …

Notes

[4.i] As per military law there is no provision of an appeal against conviction in a court-martial, only a reduction in sentence is possible after review. Actually, even the civilian Ghadrites were tried under the newly enacted "Defence of India Act", which had curtailed the usual rights of the civilian accused severely.

Each case was conducted, at least nominally, per the usual rules of procedure in civilian court; however, once convicted, the only appeal possible was for clemency; no appeal was possible against either conviction or sentence. All this is discussed, for example, in Appendix 2, pp. 643-650, of Jagjit Singh's book, where he also tells us that the public and press were barred from the courtrooms, but an official abstract of each working day's proceedings was handed out late in the evening to the waiting journalists.

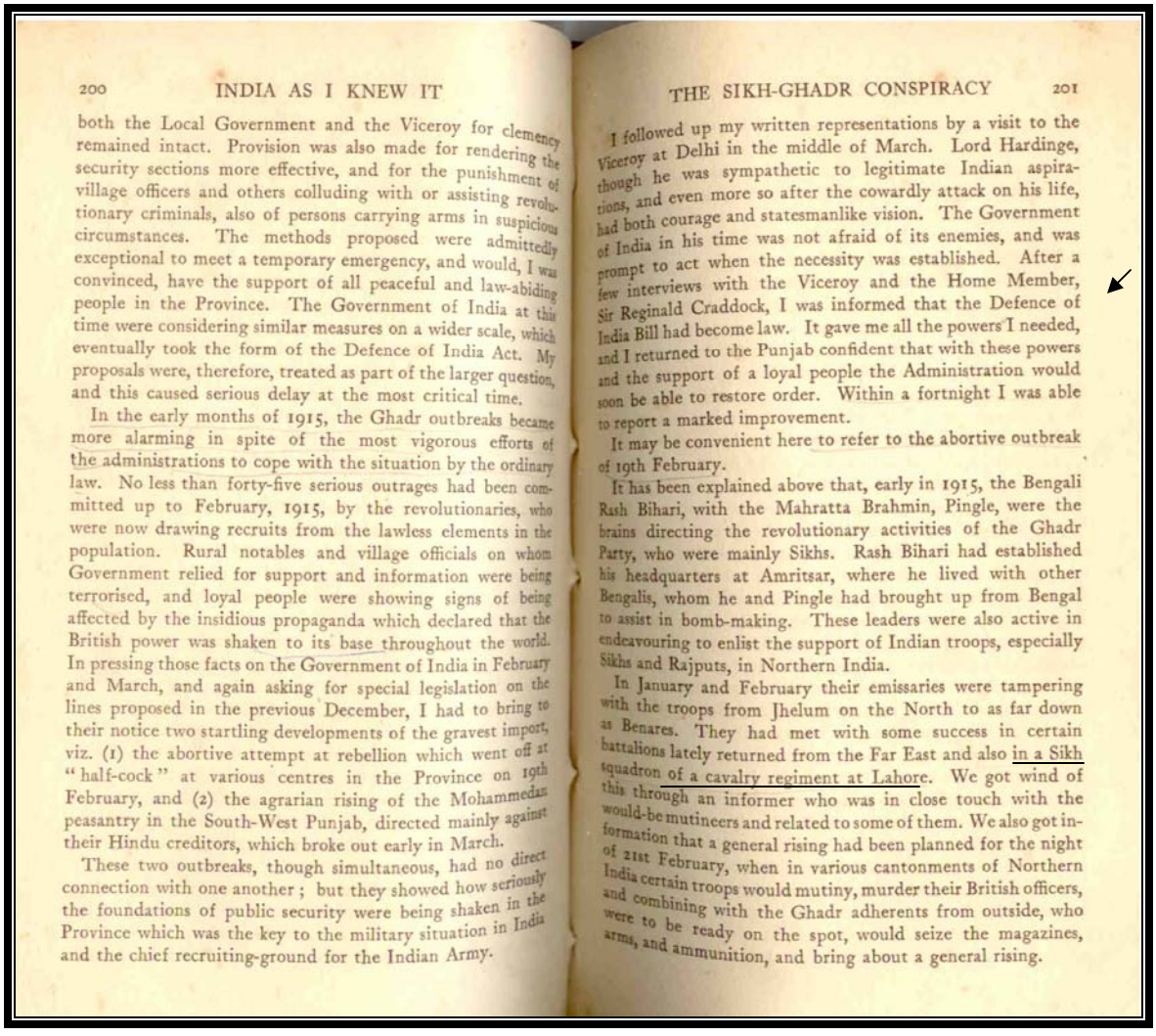
[4.ii] However, Jagjit Singh accepts – p. 644 – on the basis of personal interviews that were given by the revolutionaries returning from the Andamans after serving their prison terms, that there was mostly truth in a judge's assertion that the then Punjab Police had *not* concocted evidence to convict the accused. With rare exceptions, most interviewees admitted that they had indeed committed the acts for which they had been held legally responsible. Jagjit Singh is by no means alone in this respect: *the facts found in all histories of the Ghadr are derived largely from the judgements of the Lahore Conspiracy Cases only*.

[4.iii] It is also noteworthy that in neither [3] nor [4] is there mention of the Punjab Police of 1915 resorting to anything like "fake encounters" to suppress that rebellion. Also, the Defence of India Act, though violative of the norms of human rights, was obviously degrees better than the more draconian T.A.D.A. and P.O.T.A., which have been repeatedly used in recent times.

[4.iv] Probably you have solved by now the puzzle about Singuffa's door to nowhere? The date of its construction and the picture – the corner room is what it seems to be, a toilet – were giveaways: things have improved a lot now, and it is no longer customary to have outside ladders for safai karamcharis.

§4. Primary sources ? The extracts [3] and [4] more than suffice for the 'factual data' mentioned by Chachaji, but these books – likewise the Amritsar gazetteer [1] of 1976 – were written decades after the events of 1915. So it is necessary to check their citations. It is encouraging that Dagshai is mentioned as the site of the court-martial, and the table of the soldiers convicted is given, even in the earliest of the above references, viz., the 1955 book [4] by Jagjit Singh. Also, I was encouraged by the footnote placed by him on his table of the condemned, which suggested that it might be a simple matter to push back the provenance of this data to at least 1925.

[5] "India as I Knew It : 1885-1925" by Michael O'Dwyer, Constable, London (1925). Pages 200-203 of this book are shown below:--



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both the Local Government and the Viceroy for clemency remained intact. Provision was also made for rendering the security sections more effective, and for the punishment of village officers and others colluding with or assisting revolutionary criminals, also of persons carrying arms in suspicious circumstances. The methods proposed were admittedly exceptional to meet a temporary emergency, and would, I was convinced, have the support of all peaceful and law-abiding people in the Province. The Government of India at this time were considering similar measures on a wider scale, which eventually took the form of the Defence of India Act. My proposals were, therefore, treated as part of the larger question, and this caused serious delay at the most critical time.

In the early months of 1915, the Ghadr outbreaks became more alarming in spite of the most vigorous efforts of the administrations to cope with the situation by the ordinary law. No less than forty-five serious outrages had been committed up to February, 1915, by the revolutionaries, who were now drawing recruits from the lawless elements in the population. Rural notables and village officials on whom Government relied for support and information were being terrorised, and loyal people were showing signs of being affected by the insidious propaganda which declared that the British power was shaken to its base throughout the world. In pressing those facts on the Government of India in February and March, and again asking for special legislation on the lines proposed in the previous December, I had to bring to their notice two startling developments of the gravest import, viz. (1) the abortive attempt at rebellion which went off at "half-cock" at various centres in the Province on 19th February, and (2) the agrarian rising of the Mohammedan peasantry in the South-West Punjab, directed mainly against their Hindu creditors, which broke out early in March.

These two outbreaks, though simultaneous, had no direct connection with one another; but they showed how seriously the foundations of public security were being shaken in the Province which was the key to the military situation in India and the chief recruiting-ground for the Indian Army.

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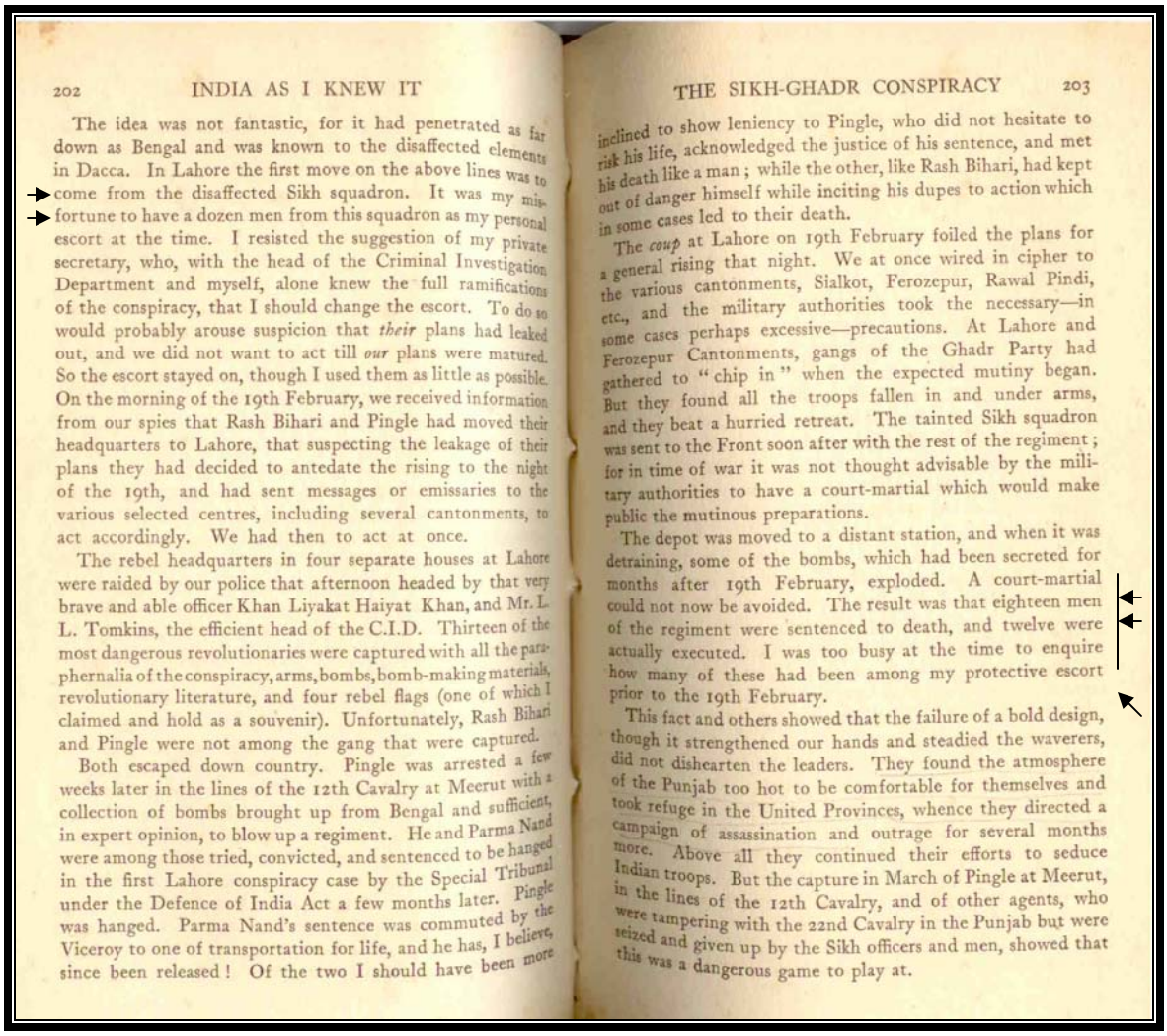
I followed up my written representations by a visit to the Viceroy at Delhi in the middle of March. Lord Hardinge, though he was sympathetic to legitimate Indian aspirations, and even more so after the cowardly attack on his life, had both courage and statesmanlike vision. The Government of India in his time was not afraid of its enemies, and was prompt to act when the necessity was established. After a few interviews with the Viceroy and the Home Member, Sir Reginald Craddock, I was informed that the Defence of India Bill had become law. It gave me all the powers I needed, and I returned to the Punjab confident that with these powers and the support of a loyal people the Administration would soon be able to restore order. Within a fortnight I was able to report a marked improvement.

It may be convenient here to refer to the abortive outbreak of 19th February.

It has been explained above that, early in 1915, the Bengali Rash Bihari, with the Mahratta Brahmin, Pingle, were the brains directing the revolutionary activities of the Ghadr Party, who were mainly Sikhs. Rash Bihari had established his headquarters at Amritsar, where he lived with other Bengalis, whom he and Pingle had brought up from Bengal to assist in bomb-making. These leaders were also active in endeavouring to enlist the support of Indian troops, especially Sikhs and Rajputs, in Northern India.

In January and February their emissaries were tampering with the troops from Jhelum on the North to as far down as Benares. They had met with some success in certain battalions lately returned from the Far East and also in a Sikh squadron of a cavalry regiment at Lahore. We got wind of this through an informer who was in close touch with the would-be mutineers and related to some of them. We also got information that a general rising had been planned for the night of 21st February, when in various cantonments of Northern India certain troops would mutiny, murder their British officers, and combining with the Ghadr adherents from outside, who were to be ready on the spot, would seize the magazines, arms, and ammunition, and bring about a general rising.



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The idea was not fantastic, for it had penetrated as far down as Bengal and was known to the disaffected elements in Dacca. In Lahore the first move on the above lines was to come from the disaffected Sikh squadron. It was my misfortune to have a dozen men from this squadron as my personal escort at the time. I resisted the suggestion of my private secretary, who, with the head of the Criminal Investigation Department and myself, alone knew the full ramifications of the conspiracy, that I should change the escort. To do so would probably arouse suspicion that *their* plans had leaked out, and we did not want to act till *our* plans were matured. So the escort stayed on, though I used them as little as possible. On the morning of the 19th February, we received information from our spies that Rash Bihari and Pingle had moved their headquarters to Lahore, that suspecting the leakage of their plans they had decided to antedate the rising to the night of the 19th, and had sent messages or emissaries to the various selected centres, including several cantonments, to act accordingly. We had then to act at once.

The rebel headquarters in four separate houses at Lahore were raided by our police that afternoon headed by that very brave and able officer Khan Liyakat Haiyat Khan, and Mr. L. L. Tomkins, the efficient head of the C.I.D. Thirteen of the most dangerous revolutionaries were captured with all the paraphernalia of the conspiracy, arms, bombs, bomb-making materials, revolutionary literature, and four rebel flags (one of which I claimed and hold as a souvenir). Unfortunately, Rash Bihari and Pingle were not among the gang that were captured.

Both escaped down country. Pingle was arrested a few weeks later in the lines of the 12th Cavalry at Meerut with a collection of bombs brought up from Bengal and sufficient, in expert opinion, to blow up a regiment. He and Parma Nand were among those tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hanged in the first Lahore conspiracy case by the Special Tribunal under the Defence of India Act a few months later. Pingle was hanged. Parma Nand's sentence was commuted by the Viceroy to one of transportation for life, and he has, I believe, since been released! Of the two I should have been more

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inclined to show leniency to Pingle, who did not hesitate to risk his life, acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and met his death like a man; while the other, like Rash Bihari, had kept out of danger himself while inciting his dupes to action which in some cases led to their death.

The *coup* at Lahore on 19th February foiled the plans for a general rising that night. We at once wired in cipher to the various cantonments, Sialkot, Ferozepur, Rawal Pindi, etc., and the military authorities took the necessary—in some cases perhaps excessive—precautions. At Lahore and Ferozepur Cantonments, gangs of the Ghadr Party had gathered to "chip in" when the expected mutiny began. But they found all the troops fallen in and under arms, and they beat a hurried retreat. The tainted Sikh squadron was sent to the Front soon after with the rest of the regiment; for in time of war it was not thought advisable by the military authorities to have a court-martial which would make public the mutinous preparations.

The depot was moved to a distant station, and when it was detraining, some of the bombs, which had been secreted for months after 19th February, exploded. A court-martial could not now be avoided. The result was that eighteen men of the regiment were sentenced to death, and twelve were actually executed. I was too busy at the time to enquire how many of these had been among my protective escort prior to the 19th February.

This fact and others showed that the failure of a bold design, though it strengthened our hands and steadied the waverers, did not dishearten the leaders. They found the atmosphere of the Punjab too hot to be comfortable for themselves and took refuge in the United Provinces, whence they directed a campaign of assassination and outrage for several months more. Above all they continued their efforts to seduce Indian troops. But the capture in March of Pingle at Meerut, in the lines of the 12th Cavalry, and of other agents, who were tampering with the 22nd Cavalry in the Punjab but were seized and given up by the Sikh officers and men, showed that this was a dangerous game to play at.

Unfortunately, though one does find on p. 203 the words, "eighteen men of the regiment were sentenced to death, and twelve were actually executed," *the name of their regiment is not mentioned, and Dagshai figures nowhere in this book.* Furthermore, its haughty author – the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab throughout the tumultous time from the return of Kartar Singh Sarabha to Jallianwala Bagh – *deigns it beneath his dignity to actually name any of the condemned soldiers.*

That the regiment's name is missing is not serious. O'Dwyer's own account, dovetailed with [6] below, shows beyond doubt that it *was* the 23rd Cavalry. Apparently, O'Dwyer – an Irishman from Tipperary who remained loyal to his masters even as his own countrymen were fighting for their independence from the British – is only

conveying that he found the disloyalty of this "disaffected Sikh squadron", which had contributed to his personal escort, so reprehensible, that he won't mention it by name.

In fact, it may be that these rebels came in for especially harsh treatment from this despot because of *their* "misfortune" of having been once in his personal escort? "I was too busy at the time to enquire how many of these had been among my protective escort prior to the 19th February" (p. 203) sounds like an alibi: so it may indeed be worthwhile to find out the names of the "dozen men" who were in O'Dwyer's escort?

More serious is that this book is of no help at all in confirming the rebels' names, or – for us – the crucial fact that the court-martial was indeed in Dagshai only.

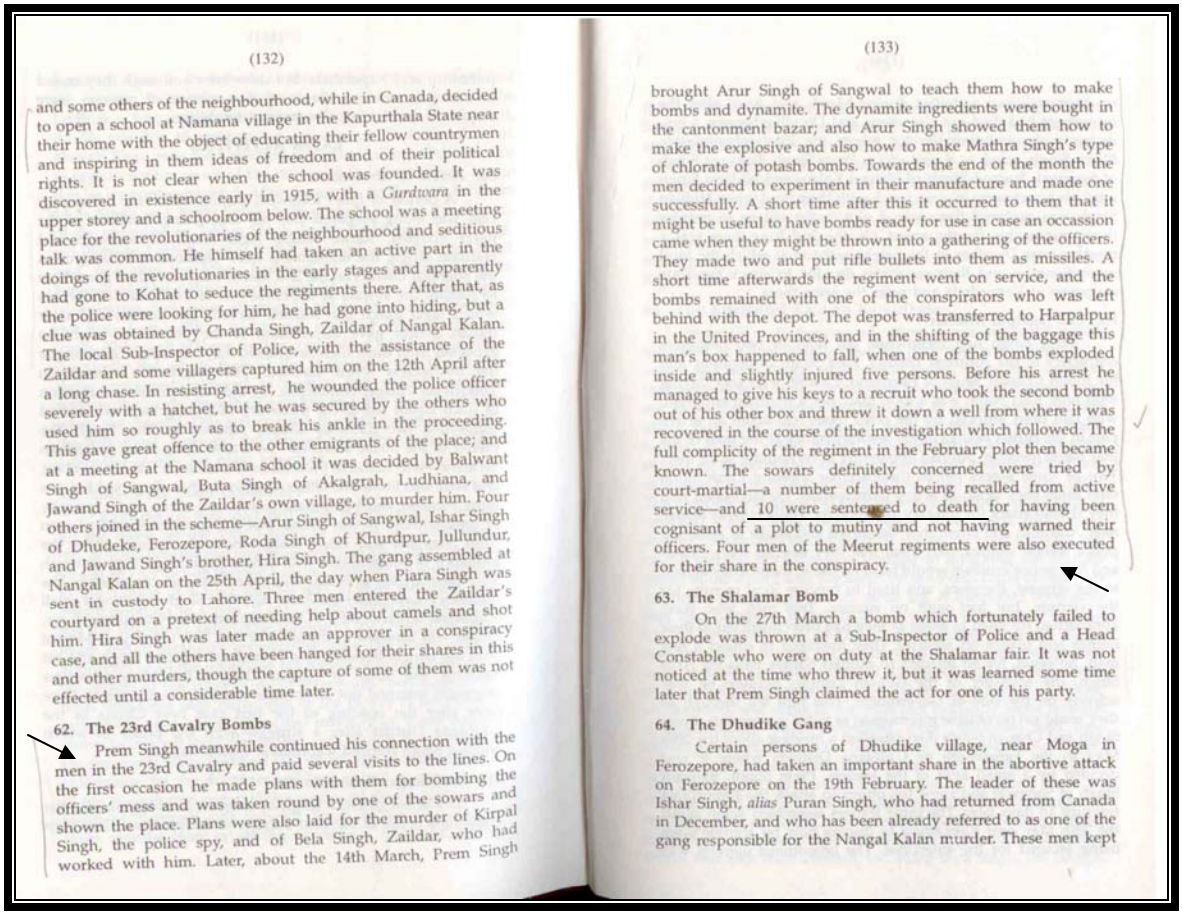
Notes

[5.i] Nevertheless, O'Dwyer's book is a valuable picture of the times as seen from the other side. At this distance, it is only amusing when we read of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh as "notorious" (p. 129), Har Dayal as "most sinister" (p. 185), Rash Behari Bose as "inciting his dupes" (p. 203), etc. However, his take (p.33) on the massacre of the 131 Akalis at Nankana Sahib in 1921, and even more so, his version – "Dyer's Action at Amritsar, 13th April" (pp. 283-285) – of the earlier 1919 massacre at Jallianwala, are anything but amusing. Brigadier Dyer had the full, and probably prior, approval of Lieutenant-Governor Michael O'Dwyer. Later, in 1940, O'Dwyer was "executed" for this by (Shaheed) Udham Singh.

[5.ii] These flaws of perception and judgement are the corollaries of the fact that he was, like many other Irishmen in India, excessively and unquestioningly – 'my country, right or wrong' ? – loyal towards the country then oppressing his own, Ireland. Outside of this, O'Dwyer's book is at times quite enjoyable, for there are in it many – these are mostly pre-1912 – interesting anecdotes and episodes, which the author describes with charm and typical Irish wit, and often, even love.

The other references given in [4] were some pages from the judgement of the 'Second Case' – more precisely, as Jagjit Singh explains on p. 647, the "*Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case*" of 1915-16 – and the following report [6] on the Ghadr conspiracy that was published soon afterwards by two officers of the then Punjab Police. Since this account, which we shall review now, gives a very good idea of what one can and cannot expect to see in the court judgement, it would be fair to say that *with the next review, we would have essentially checked all the sources cited by Jagjit Singh.*

[6] "An Account of the *Ghadr* Conspiracy (1913-1915)" by F. C. Isemonger and J. Slattery, Superintendent Government Printing, Punjab, Lahore (1919); the extracts given below are however from a recent reprint of the original brought out by Archana Publications, Meerut, in 2001, with a foreword by V. P. Vatuk :--



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and some others of the neighbourhood, while in Canada, decided to open a school at Namana village in the Kapurthala State near their home with the object of educating their fellow countrymen and inspiring in them ideas of freedom and of their political rights. It is not clear when the school was founded. It was discovered in existence early in 1915, with a *Gurdwara* in the upper storey and a schoolroom below. The school was a meeting place for the revolutionaries of the neighbourhood and seditious talk was common. He himself had taken an active part in the doings of the revolutionaries in the early stages and apparently had gone to Kohat to seduce the regiments there. After that, as the police were looking for him, he had gone into hiding, but a clue was obtained by Chanda Singh, Zaildar of Nangal Kalan. The local Sub-Inspector of Police, with the assistance of the Zaildar and some villagers captured him on the 12th April after a long chase. In resisting arrest, he wounded the police officer severely with a hatchet, but he was secured by the others who used him so roughly as to break his ankle in the proceeding. This gave great offence to the other emigrants of the place; and at a meeting at the Namana school it was decided by Balwant Singh of Sangwal, Buta Singh of Akalgrah, Ludhiana, and Jawand Singh of the Zaildar's own village, to murder him. Four others joined in the scheme—Arur Singh of Sangwal, Ishar Singh of Dhudeke, Ferozepore, Roda Singh of Khurdpur, Jullundur, and Jawand Singh's brother, Hira Singh. The gang assembled at Nangal Kalan on the 25th April, the day when Piara Singh was sent in custody to Lahore. Three men entered the Zaildar's courtyard on a pretext of needing help about camels and shot him. Hira Singh was later made an approver in a conspiracy case, and all the others have been hanged for their shares in this and other murders, though the capture of some of them was not effected until a considerable time later.

62. The 23rd Cavalry Bombs

Prem Singh meanwhile continued his connection with the men in the 23rd Cavalry and paid several visits to the lines. On the first occasion he made plans with them for bombing the officers' mess and was taken round by one of the sowars and shown the place. Plans were also laid for the murder of Kirpal Singh, the police spy, and of Bela Singh, Zaildar, who had worked with him. Later, about the 14th March, Prem Singh

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brought Arur Singh of Sangwal to teach them how to make bombs and dynamite. The dynamite ingredients were bought in the cantonment bazar; and Arur Singh showed them how to make the explosive and also how to make Mathra Singh's type of chlorate of potash bombs. Towards the end of the month the men decided to experiment in their manufacture and made one successfully. A short time after this it occurred to them that it might be useful to have bombs ready for use in case an occassion came when they might be thrown into a gathering of the officers. They made two and put rifle bullets into them as missiles. A short time afterwards the regiment went on service, and the bombs remained with one of the conspirators who was left behind with the depot. The depot was transferred to Harpalpur in the United Provinces, and in the shifting of the baggage this man's box happened to fall, when one of the bombs exploded inside and slightly injured five persons. Before his arrest he managed to give his keys to a recruit who took the second bomb out of his other box and threw it down a well from where it was recovered in the course of the investigation which followed. The full complicity of the regiment in the February plot then became known. The sowars definitely concerned were tried by court-martial—a number of them being recalled from active service—and 10 were sentenced to death for having been cognisant of a plot to mutiny and not having warned their officers. Four men of the Meerut regiments were also executed for their share in the conspiracy.

63. The Shalamar Bomb

On the 27th March a bomb which fortunately failed to explode was thrown at a Sub-Inspector of Police and a Head Constable who were on duty at the Shalamar fair. It was not noticed at the time who threw it, but it was learned some time later that Prem Singh claimed the act for one of his party.

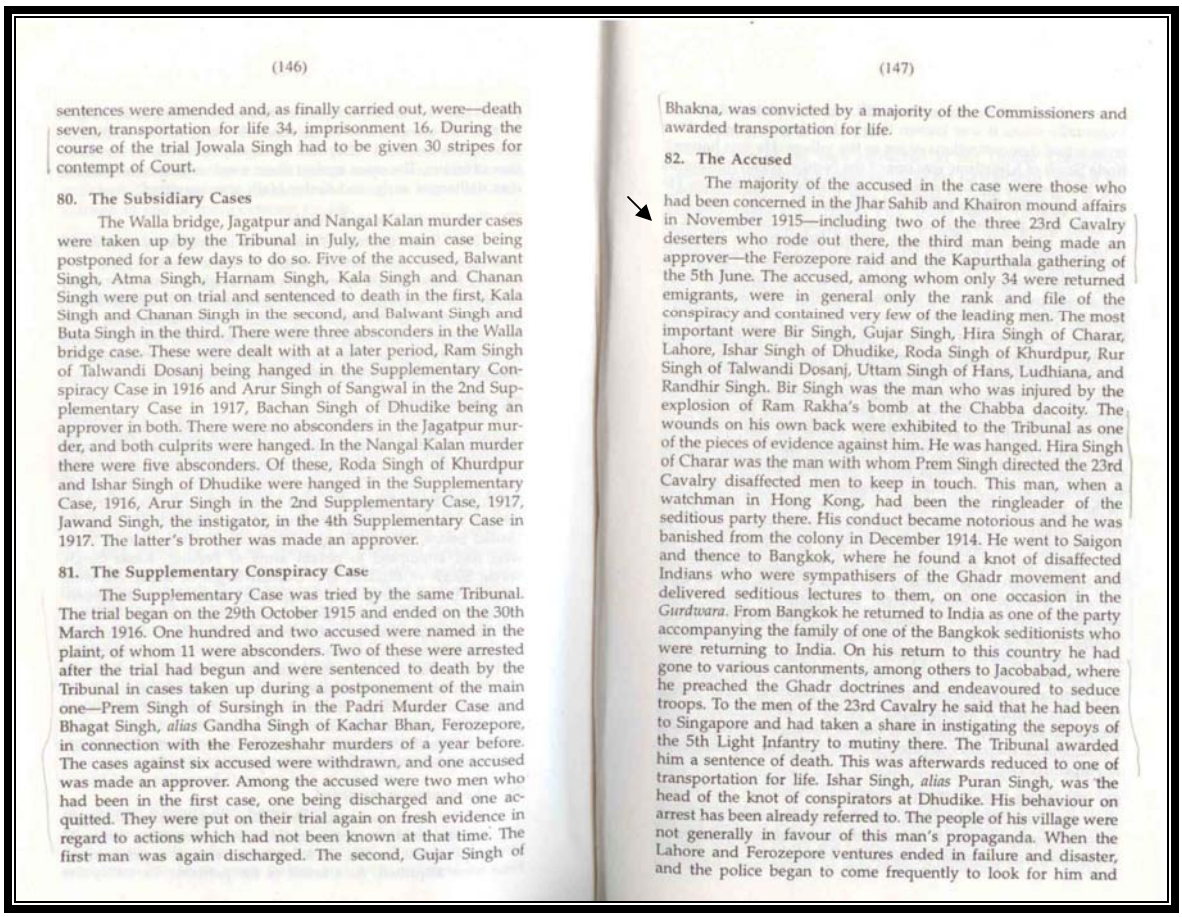
64. The Dhudike Gang

Certain persons of Dhudike village, near Moga in Ferozepore, had taken an important share in the abortive attack on Ferozepore on the 19th February. The leader of these was Ishar Singh, *alias* Puran Singh, who had returned from Canada in December, and who has been already referred to as one of the gang responsible for the Nangal Kalan murder. These men kept

This account should be compared and contrasted with that in the second and third paragraphs on the 23rd Risala in Jagjit Singh [4], pp. 494-495 (the quotation about Prem Singh's nature in the first paragraph is from p. 139 – not p. 121 – of this reprint [6]).

Unlike O'Dwyer [5], the regiment is now named, but again, *there is no mention of the place where the court-martial was held*, and neither is the list of *its* accused given (as against this, long lists of the accused of various civilan cases are given as Appendices). However some men – see below – of the 23rd Cavalry Regiment are mentioned by name on various pages of this book. The above extract also raises an unexpected difficulty: it says, *"10 were sentenced to death"*, a numerical discrepancy with the figures in [1]-[5].

A summary of the Supplementary Conspiracy Case of 1915 and its findings constitutes sections 81 and 82 of Part III of Isemonger and Slattery's book, these are given in the extract – pp. 146-148 of the reprint – reproduced next. Besides, there is also a 12-page long Appendix D, which I have not reproduced, that gives the names of all the 102 accused of this case, the sections under which they were charged, and the sentences awarded; it also gives the names of the 29 state approvers of this case. In fact *the list of* civilians *convicted that one finds in* [1], [3] *or* [4], *are simplified versions of the lists given in the appendices of Isemonger and Slattery*, and, I presume, these in turn are close replicas of the official lists of the various civilian court cases.



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sentences were amended and, as finally carried out, were—death seven, transportation for life 34, imprisonment 16. During the course of the trial Jowala Singh had to be given 30 stripes for contempt of Court.

80. The Subsidiary Cases

The Walla bridge, Jagatpur and Nangal Kalan murder cases were taken up by the Tribunal in July, the main case being postponed for a few days to do so. Five of the accused, Balwant Singh, Atma Singh, Harnam Singh, Kala Singh and Chanan Singh were put on trial and sentenced to death in the first, Kala Singh and Chanan Singh in the second, and Balwant Singh and Buta Singh in the third. There were three absconders in the Walla bridge case. These were dealt with at a later period, Ram Singh of Talwandi Dosanj being hanged in the Supplementary Conspiracy Case in 1916 and Arur Singh of Sangwal in the 2nd Supplementary Case in 1917, Bachan Singh of Dhudike being an approver in both. There were no absconders in the Jagatpur murder, and both culprits were hanged. In the Nangal Kalan murder there were five absconders. Of these, Roda Singh of Khurdpur and Ishar Singh of Dhudike were hanged in the Supplementary Case, 1916, Arur Singh in the 2nd Supplementary Case, 1917, Jawand Singh, the instigator, in the 4th Supplementary Case in 1917. The latter's brother was made an approver.

81. The Supplementary Conspiracy Case

The Supplementary Case was tried by the same Tribunal. The trial began on the 29th October 1915 and ended on the 30th March 1916. One hundred and two accused were named in the plaint, of whom 11 were absconders. Two of these were arrested after the trial had begun and were sentenced to death by the Tribunal in cases taken up during a postponement of the main one—Prem Singh of Sursingh in the Padri Murder Case and Bhagat Singh, *alias* Gandha Singh of Kachar Bhan, Ferozepore, in connection with the Ferozeshahr murders of a year before. The cases against six accused were withdrawn, and one accused was made an approver. Among the accused were two men who had been in the first case, one being discharged and one acquitted. They were put on their trial again on fresh evidence in regard to actions which had not been known at that time. The first man was again discharged. The second, Gujar Singh of

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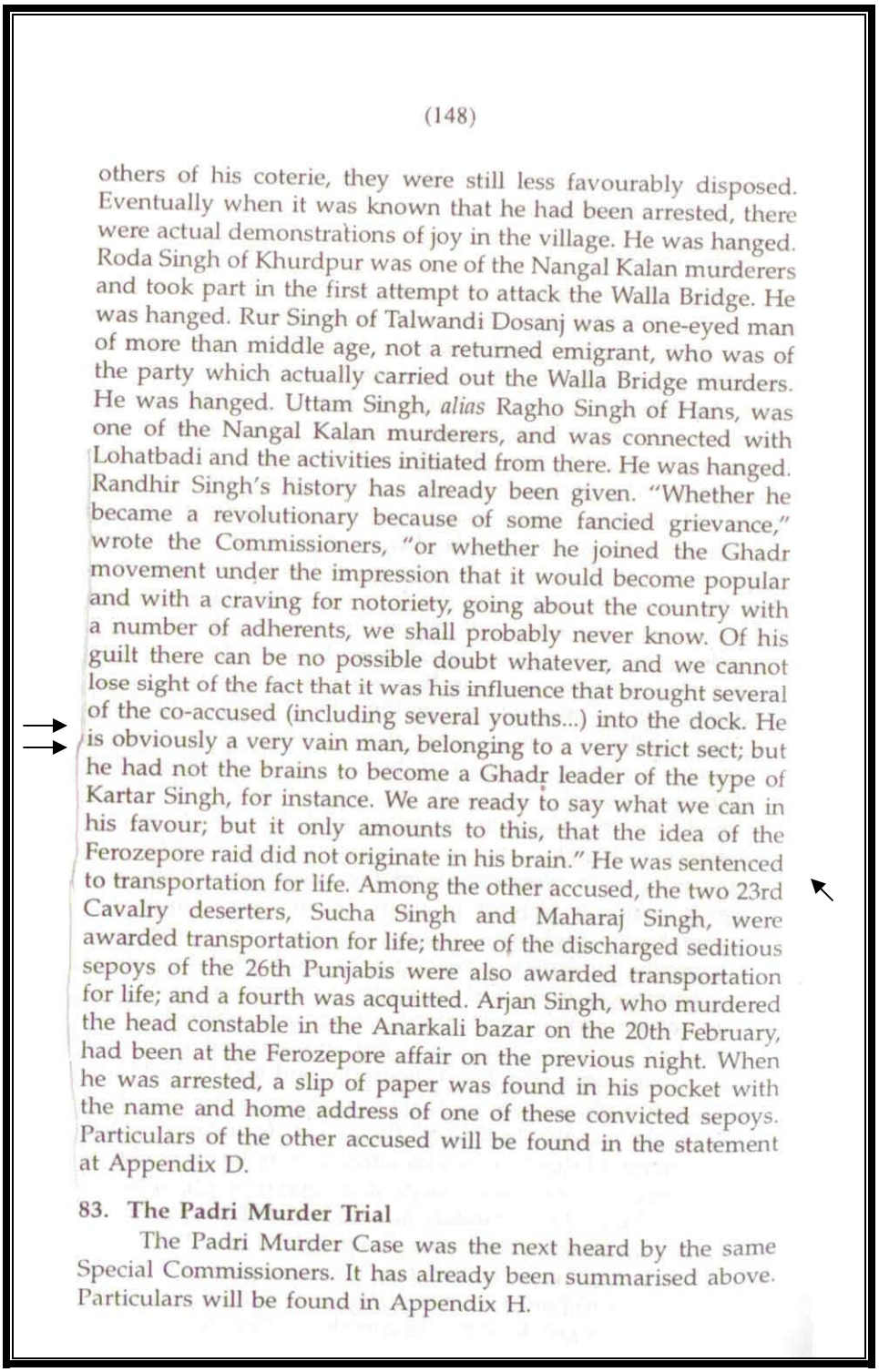
Bhakna, was convicted by a majority of the Commissioners and awarded transportation for life.

82. The Accused

The majority of the accused in the case were those who had been concerned in the Jhar Sahib and Khairon mound affairs in November 1915—including two of the three 23rd Cavalry deserters who rode out there, the third man being made an approver—the Ferozepore raid and the Kapurthala gathering of the 5th June. The accused, among whom only 34 were returned emigrants, were in general only the rank and file of the conspiracy and contained very few of the leading men. The most important were Bir Singh, Gujar Singh, Hira Singh of Charar, Lahore, Ishar Singh of Dhudike, Roda Singh of Khurdpur, Rur Singh of Talwandi Dosanj, Uttam Singh of Hans, Ludhiana, and Randhir Singh. Bir Singh was the man who was injured by the explosion of Ram Rakha's bomb at the Chabba dacoity. The wounds on his own back were exhibited to the Tribunal as one of the pieces of evidence against him. He was hanged. Hira Singh of Charar was the man with whom Prem Singh directed the 23rd Cavalry disaffected men to keep in touch. This man, when a watchman in Hong Kong, had been the ringleader of the seditious party there. His conduct became notorious and he was banished from the colony in December 1914. He went to Saigon and thence to Bangkok, where he found a knot of disaffected Indians who were sympathisers of the Ghadr movement and delivered seditious lectures to them, on one occasion in the *Gurdwara*. From Bangkok he returned to India as one of the party accompanying the family of one of the Bangkok seditionists who were returning to India. On his return to this country he had gone to various cantonments, among others to Jacobabad, where he preached the Ghadr doctrines and endeavoured to seduce troops. To the men of the 23rd Cavalry he said that he had been to Singapore and had taken a share in instigating the sepoys of the 5th Light Infantry to mutiny there. The Tribunal awarded him a sentence of death. This was afterwards reduced to one of transportation for life. Ishar Singh, *alias* Puran Singh, was the head of the knot of conspirators at Dhudike. His behaviour on arrest has been already referred to. The people of his village were not generally in favour of this man's propaganda. When the Lahore and Ferozepore ventures ended in failure and disaster, and the police began to come frequently to look for him and



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others of his coterie, they were still less favourably disposed. Eventually when it was known that he had been arrested, there were actual demonstrations of joy in the village. He was hanged. Roda Singh of Khurdpur was one of the Nangal Kalan murderers and took part in the first attempt to attack the Walla Bridge. He was hanged. Rur Singh of Talwandi Dosanj was a one-eyed man of more than middle age, not a returned emigrant, who was of the party which actually carried out the Walla Bridge murders. He was hanged. Uttam Singh, *alias* Ragho Singh of Hans, was one of the Nangal Kalan murderers, and was connected with Lohatbadi and the activities initiated from there. He was hanged. Randhir Singh's history has already been given. "Whether he became a revolutionary because of some fancied grievance," wrote the Commissioners, "or whether he joined the Ghadr movement under the impression that it would become popular and with a craving for notoriety, going about the country with a number of adherents, we shall probably never know. Of his guilt there can be no possible doubt whatever, and we cannot lose sight of the fact that it was his influence that brought several of the co-accused (including several youths...) into the dock. He is obviously a very vain man, belonging to a very strict sect; but he had not the brains to become a Ghadr leader of the type of Kartar Singh, for instance. We are ready to say what we can in his favour; but it only amounts to this, that the idea of the Ferozepore raid did not originate in his brain." He was sentenced to transportation for life. Among the other accused, the two 23rd Cavalry deserters, Sucha Singh and Maharaj Singh, were awarded transportation for life; three of the discharged seditious sepoys of the 26th Punjabis were also awarded transportation for life; and a fourth was acquitted. Arjan Singh, who murdered the head constable in the Anarkali bazar on the 20th February, had been at the Ferozepore affair on the previous night. When he was arrested, a slip of paper was found in his pocket with the name and home address of one of these convicted sepoys. Particulars of the other accused will be found in the statement at Appendix D.

83. The Padri Murder Trial

The Padri Murder Case was the next heard by the same Special Commissioners. It has already been summarised above. Particulars will be found in Appendix H.

This book, brought out by a civilian department, is not concerned with the army trials, in particular, with the court-martial that we are interested in. This court-martial is mentioned only fleetingly (Part III, no. 62, previous extract) and apparently not with the

same care as the rest of the book, only as an example of the serious consequences of a crime – 'seduction of troops' – that was allegedly committed by some of the civilian accused of the Supplementary Conspiracy Case, see pp. 147-148 above.

These were Prem Singh of Sursingh (no. 67 of Appendix D, death penalty), Hira Singh of Charar (no. 28 of Appendix D, transportation for life) and two ex-sawars of the 23rd Cavalry who had deserted early on, namely, Maharaj Singh of Kasail and Sucha Singh of Chola Kalan (nos. 52 and 82 of Appendix D, transported for life, the third ex-sawar Surain Singh of Shahbazpur, is approver no. xv in Appendix D).

Page 148 of the last extract also mentions the religious leader, **(Bhai) Randhir Singh of Narangwal** (no. 69 of Appendix D, transported for life) – who struck the tribunal as *"obviously a very vain man"* – who seems to have been convicted apparently for misleading all sorts of youth in general through his sermons! The Kartar Singh that Bhai Randhir Singh is compared unfavourably with by the tribunal – as far as brains for revolutionary kind of activities go – is of course **(Shaheed) Kartar Singh Sarabha**, who had been arrested on 2nd March, 1915 (see page 131 of this book) and already sentenced to death by hanging in the main Lahore Conspiracy Case (he is no. 39 in Appendix C of this book, that gives names of all the 82 accused and 10 approvers of this case).

Sarabha was during 1913-1914 a student of chemistry at the **University of California, Berkeley** – see page 38, also page 53 where a British spy reports, *"The students at Berkeley, California, are also believed to be almost universally tainted with Ghadr ideas."* – and was one of the thousands of Sikhs who returned from U.S.A., Canada, etc., to India in 1914-1915 to attempt this abortive revolution. However, as this exciting account by two British police officers brings home, its failure was by no means a foregone conclusion. This revolution had been timed reasonably well. But for a string of fortunate – from the British point of view – accidents, resulting mostly from the Ghadrite leaders not paying enough attention to details, the game might well have gone differently. A decisive role was played by the British spy with contacts in the 23rd Cavalry – the Kirpal Singh mentioned on p. 132 – who turned out to be very capable: he informed the British in advance of the date(s) that Rash Behari fixed for this Ghadr !

However I digress, and sweeping but unverifiable theories about great historical events are rather commonplace. After drawing a blank in [5] and [6] we must address the more basic and well-defined **question:** ***was the court-martial held at Dagshai?***

I conclude by listing the sawars of the 23rd mentioned by name in [6], for this could help in solving the above riddle. These are, their leader Lance-Dafedar Lachman Singh (pp. 82-83, 124); Balwant Singh of Barar, a returned emigrant from Shanghai, who enlisted to serve as a liaison with the Ghadrites (pp. 83, 122, 124), but facilitated more the covert work of his cousin, the spy Kirpal Singh of Barar, also back from Shanghai (pp.122-124, 132); the regimental granthi Mul Singh, who advised prudence at the wrong time (pp. 82, 106) and later very prudently became a state approver; **Sucha Singh of Chola Kalan**, *the sawar who first brought the news about the Ghadr to the regiment, who deserted later with two others, was finally arrested and convicted in the Supplementary Conspiracy Case, however, instead of being transported to the Andamans, he was amongst those sent – because of an overcrowded Cellular Jail – to the Hazaribagh Central Jail in Bihar, from where he escaped in 1918, and was at large when this book was published* (pp. 81-83, 147-148, 168); and the other deserter, Maharaj Singh of Kasail, also awarded life imprisonment in the same case (pp. 147-148).

Note

[6.i] Till the seventies or so the state printing presses provided a useful service to scholars by re-issuing government publications that had gone out of print. The binding was bad, but the price was great, and, one was assured of the one thing which matters, *the authenticity of the text*, because the reprinting was from the original typesetting. Then at some point a decision was made – maybe by some enterprising civil servant who caught the whiff of approaching liberalisation – to terminate this useful service. Since most copyrights have lapsed, reprints can be made by just about any one, and with government presses out of the way, these cheaply made reprints can sell even if unreasonably priced (however sometimes the marked price is so high even in dollars that practically no one in India will buy them). Most of the remaining and reasonably priced reprints, for example [6], appear to be brought out by individuals or organisations dedicated to keeping the memory of a particular historical figure or movement alive. It is regrettable that Dr. V. P. Vatuk, who has, according to the blurb of [6], "For decades worked with people dedicated to preserve and honor Gadar heroes' memory", did not tell its publishers that they were *not* honouring this memory adequately by bringing out such a reprint. Perhaps a reprographic process was cost-prohibitive, but the original page breaks could easily have been indicated in the margin. As such, one can only hope there are not other, more serious, departures: for example, for all I know, the numerical discrepancy – '10 sentenced to death' – may only be the contribution of Archana Publications to this mystery ?

This curious lack of evidence about the court-martial became, if anything, still more acute, when I stumbled on the following scholarly article, which is available on-line at www.csas.ed.ac.uk/papers.php, and whose title clearly promises us so much.

[7] ***"The Anatomy of Dissent in the Military of Colonial India During the First and Second World Wars,"*** **by Gajendra Singh,** Edinburgh Papers in South Asian Studies, no. 20 (2006), 45 pp.

This paper is completely silent about the said court-martial! And this, *not* because it is, by any means, confined to dissent on the war-front. It has many paragraphs about dissent in Punjab during the Ghadr, and both [5] and [6] are amongst its references. One would think, considering the topic being researched, that the author would have jumped at the lead provided by the mention of the court-martial of the 23rd Cavalry squadron in both [5] and [6]. Indeed, considering the number of soldiers executed or awarded life imprisonment, this case might be one of the most serious instances of "collective dissent" – to the anatomy of which about half of this paper is devoted, the remaining half dissects "individual dissent" – during the First World War.

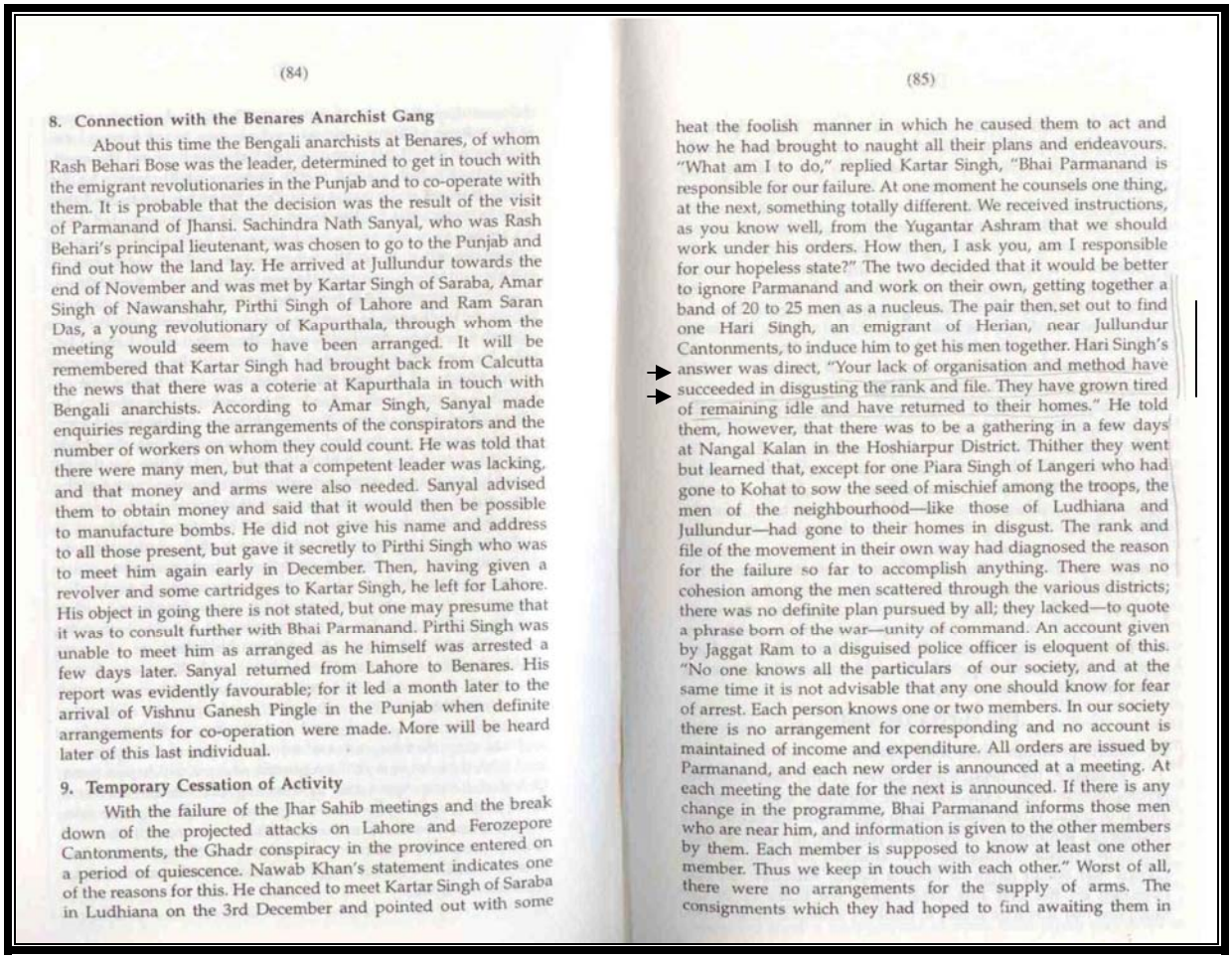
What makes this silence positively deafening is that this paper has also the following quotation from Isemonger and Slattery [6] on p. 26 :

"Your lack of organization and method have succeeded in disgusting the rank-and-file. They have grown tired of remaining idle and have returned home."

And, the footnote (no.114) that embellishes it informs us that the above words were spoken by Lance-Dafadar Lachman Singh to Nawab Khan and Kartar Singh Sarabha. Assuming that this is true, it is truly baffling why this work, on individual and collective dissent in the military of colonial India, should fail to mention a court-martial – mentioned in the book cited ! – in which the same Lachman Singh, along with many other fellow cavalrymen, was later condemned to death ?

The reprint [6] of Isemonger of Slattery that I am using has also the same quotation (on page 85, not page 105 as the aforementioned footnote 114 tells us) but it says the words were spoken, according to Nawab Singh's statement, which Isemonger

and Slattery are discussing in "9. Temporary Cessation of Activity" of Part III of [6], *not* by the Lance-Dafadar or any other soldier, but by one *civilian* named Hari Singh of Herian, a fellow-emigrant back home in India for the Ghadr, and – see pp. 84-85 of [6] reproduced below – all the disgusted people returning home are also civilans :--



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8. Connection with the Benares Anarchist Gang

About this time the Bengali anarchists at Benares, of whom Rash Behari Bose was the leader, determined to get in touch with the emigrant revolutionaries in the Punjab and to co-operate with them. It is probable that the decision was the result of the visit of Parmanand of Jhansi. Sachindra Nath Sanyal, who was Rash Behari's principal lieutenant, was chosen to go to the Punjab and find out how the land lay. He arrived at Jullundur towards the end of November and was met by Kartar Singh of Saraba, Amar Singh of Nawanshahr, Pirthi Singh of Lahore and Ram Saran Das, a young revolutionary of Kapurthala, through whom the meeting would seem to have been arranged. It will be remembered that Kartar Singh had brought back from Calcutta the news that there was a coterie at Kapurthala in touch with Bengali anarchists. According to Amar Singh, Sanyal made enquiries regarding the arrangements of the conspirators and the number of workers on whom they could count. He was told that there were many men, but that a competent leader was lacking, and that money and arms were also needed. Sanyal advised them to obtain money and said that it would then be possible to manufacture bombs. He did not give his name and address to all those present, but gave it secretly to Pirthi Singh who was to meet him again early in December. Then, having given a revolver and some cartridges to Kartar Singh, he left for Lahore. His object in going there is not stated, but one may presume that it was to consult further with Bhai Parmanand. Pirthi Singh was unable to meet him as arranged as he himself was arrested a few days later. Sanyal returned from Lahore to Benares. His report was evidently favourable; for it led a month later to the arrival of Vishnu Ganesh Pingle in the Punjab when definite arrangements for co-operation were made. More will be heard later of this last individual.

9. Temporary Cessation of Activity

With the failure of the Jhar Sahib meetings and the break down of the projected attacks on Lahore and Ferozepore Cantonments, the Ghadr conspiracy in the province entered on a period of quiescence. Nawab Khan's statement indicates one of the reasons for this. He chanced to meet Kartar Singh of Saraba in Ludhiana on the 3rd December and pointed out with some

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heat the foolish manner in which he caused them to act and how he had brought to naught all their plans and endeavours. "What am I to do," replied Kartar Singh, "Bhai Parmanand is responsible for our failure. At one moment he counsels one thing, at the next, something totally different. We received instructions, as you know well, from the Yugantar Ashram that we should work under his orders. How then, I ask you, am I responsible for our hopeless state?" The two decided that it would be better to ignore Parmanand and work on their own, getting together a band of 20 to 25 men as a nucleus. The pair then set out to find one Hari Singh, an emigrant of Herian, near Jullundur Cantonments, to induce him to get his men together. Hari Singh's answer was direct, "Your lack of organisation and method have succeeded in disgusting the rank and file. They have grown tired of remaining idle and have returned to their homes." He told them, however, that there was to be a gathering in a few days at Nangal Kalan in the Hoshiarpur District. Thither they went but learned that, except for one Piara Singh of Langeri who had gone to Kohat to sow the seed of mischief among the troops, the men of the neighbourhood—like those of Ludhiana and Jullundur—had gone to their homes in disgust. The rank and file of the movement in their own way had diagnosed the reason for the failure so far to accomplish anything. There was no cohesion among the men scattered through the various districts; there was no definite plan pursued by all; they lacked—to quote a phrase born of the war—unity of command. An account given by Jaggat Ram to a disguised police officer is eloquent of this. "No one knows all the particulars of our society, and at the same time it is not advisable that any one should know for fear of arrest. Each person knows one or two members. In our society there is no arrangement for corresponding and no account is maintained of income and expenditure. All orders are issued by Parmanand, and each new order is announced at a meeting. At each meeting the date for the next is announced. If there is any change in the programme, Bhai Parmanand informs those men who are near him, and information is given to the other members by them. Each member is supposed to know at least one other member. Thus we keep in touch with each other." Worst of all, there were no arrangements for the supply of arms. The consignments which they had hoped to find awaiting them in

It seems that Gajendra Singh is using a version of Isemonger-Slattery which is different not only from my [6], but also from the version(s) used by Gurcharan Singh [3] or Jagjit Singh [4]: the page numbers cited in [3] or [4], respectively [7], correspond to bigger, respectively smaller, page numbers of [6]. But is there a version so *materially different* from mine that (i) it puts the above quotation in the mouth of Lance-Dafedar Lachman Singh and has disgusted soldiers, instead of civilians, returning to their homes (= barracks?), and (ii) it fails to mention a subsequent court-martial in which the very same Lachman Singh along with some other cavalrymen was condemned to death ?

Could be – stranger things have happened ! – but it seems more likely to me that Gajendra Singh has made, let us say, a **Freudian slip ?** For a possible answer to what could have led to it, I have reproduced next pp. 25-26 from his paper [7]:--

> Sikhs were reading, was taken away. It is written that it is far better for the community that loses its sacred places to die. …The only remedy, is [for] …the troops to mutiny.[108]

Indeed, even when the message was delivered unabridged, it could be interpreted in different ways that were shaped by *sipahis'* prior understanding of the issue, as was the case with the apocryphal language used to convey pan-Islamist messages;

> Habibullah then told Battya Sahib this parcel of lies …[that] Ahmed Yar Khan read out an address in which he stated that for a Mahomedan to fight against a Turk would be the mark of an infidel, and that all those killed in fighting against the Turks would not go to Paradise. This was all false, for the lecture was really to the effect that the Mahomedans who drink wine and committed fornication and did other things forbidden by Islam, would die the death of unbelievers.[109]

As a result, not only was there a different understanding of Ghadrite and Khilafatist propaganda by soldiers, but only the partial co-option of these revolutionary messages in the mutinies that soldiers were willing to commit.

This was certainly the case with the dissent that took place among Sikh *sipahis* between November 1914 and March 1915, because whilst educated Ghadrites may have sought to turn any instances of insubordination into a wider pan-Indian revolt that would lead to the spiritual and moral upliftment of all oppressed peoples[110], those Sikh soldiers that were mobilized by the movement came to hold different goals. This is evident from the testimony of Sunder Singh, 'an old cavalry man', during the Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case[111], for he claimed to have joined an insurgent attack on the Ferozepur armoury because of his anger at the demolition of part of the Rikabganj Gurdwara in New Delhi in 1913, the police firings at Budge Budge in November 1914, and his loftier desire to revive the ailing Sikh *Panth*;

> A Sikh was hailed as a patriot by the Motherland and as a hero by the world abroad. But Oh-shame! Now Sikh has become a nickname for tiller at home; a synonym for labourer or Kooli [sic.] in the coasts of both the Pacific and Atlantic. …Therefore, Awake, Oh

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[108] Anon. Sikh, California, USA, to Sepoy, 82 Punjabis, Nowshera, NWFP; Isemonger and Slattery, 'Ghadr Conspiracy Report', p.36-37

[109] Abdul Alim, Signal Troop, Sialkot Cavalry Brigade, France, to Risaldar Farzand Ali Khan, 6 Cavalry Depot, Sialkot, Punjab, (not dated), *CIM, 1915-1916*, Part 5, p.716

[110] *'As Krishna said to Arjun in the Gita: "Come to me and I will absolve you from your sins", so the Ghadr party says in these hard times: "Oh sons of India…come to me, serve me, listen to my teaching…light up my country with my flame. I am the goddess who protects weak persons, brings together those who have long been separated, effaces injustice, removes famine and plague…and makes a waste country a happy place. My followers will grant the boon of faith, knowledge and happiness to Bharat. Come to me.'*
Lala Har Dayal, 'Nia Zamana' ('New Era'); Isemonger and Slattery, 'Ghadr Conspiracy Report', p.45-46

[111] *ibid*, p.124

Khalsa, Arise, Oh Khalsa, and never again shall we be fallen. Liberate BHARAT MATA from the clutches of MALECH FARENGIS.

SAT SRI AKAL.[112]

Moreover, it was this divergence in ideology between *sepoys* and the Ghadr Party that resulted in *sowars* of the 28 Cavalry being quite willing to cut telegraph wires, create 'chlorate of potash' bombs, and to plan for the assassination of their officers in November 1914[113], but to be unwilling to mutiny before there was evidence of insurrection in the Sikh villages of Punjab. In fact, because such a religious uprising never took place, when Ghadr agents, in the form of Nawab Khan and Kartar Singh Sarabha, made contact with the regiment again in January 1915, they were told in no uncertain terms, that,

> Your lack of organization and method have succeeded in disgusting the rank-and-file. They have grown tired of remaining idle and have returned to their homes.[114]

Instead it was only in the aftermath of the First World War, and in the blue *pagris* and *cholas* of the Akali Dal, that Sikh soldiers were willing to leave their 'homes' again. For in the Akali agitation for the control of Sikh gurdwaras, not only did military pensioners and discharged soldiers form over a third of the Akali *jathas* in Ludhiana district, one in seven of those from Jullunder and one in ten of all Akalis in Amritsar[115], but former soldiers completed the fusion between Ghadrite radicalism and Sikhism in the armed creed of the Babbar Akalis;

> …the land of five rivers is replete with Sikh Gurdwaras so that it is practically a vast Sikh Gurdwara. So long as the Punjab does not come under the political control of the Sikhs, neither the Sikh community can be relieved of the anxiety about its religion nor can peace be maintained in this country.[116]

Therefore, the integration of a Ghadrite message with Sikhism, resulted in Sikh soldiers being willing to undertake mutiny only when it was Sikhism that was endangered.

Whilst there were no revolutionaries visiting regimental lines during the inculcation of pan-Islamist sentiment, the result of Khilafatist propaganda was nonetheless similar to that of the Ghadr movement. In contrast to the work done by the

[112] 'Khalsa Pamphlet', posted at Highgate, London, 17 September 1910 to 21 October 1910; N. Singh and K. Singh, *Struggle for Free Hindustan*, p.317-318
[113] Ironmonger and Slattery, 'Ghadr Conspiracy Report', p.100-103, and 154
[114] Lance-Dafadar Lachman Singh to Nawab Khan and Kartar Singh Sarabha; *ibid*, p.105
[115] 240 discharged soldiers and military pensioners out a total of 672 known Akalis in Ludhiana, 148 out of 916 in Jullunder, 152 out of 1,363 in Amritsar; R.K. Mazumdar, *The Indian Army and the Making of Punjab*, p.229
[116] 'Babbar Sher', Amritsar, 30 September 1923; 'Extract from the weekly report of the Director, Intelligence Bureau, Home Dept., Govt. of India, 17 October 1923'; *Sikh Activities in India, 1923*, Public and Judicial Papers, OIOC, British Library, IOR/L/PJ/12/170, p.4

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It seems from the above that the author gives great importance to the disconnect between the returning emigrants' leftist ideas, and the more traditional ones of the Sikh troops they were attempting to subvert. Undoubtedly, these ideological differences contributed to the Ghadr's failure, and all books acknowledge this, though opinion as to

importance varies. However, it is a bit too much when a historian cites (in this case, a 'quotation' of a Lance-Dafedar) and omits to cite (this same Lance-Dafedar's court-martial) from the very same book, only according to whether it suits, or does not suit, his theory. And, certainly, the line *has* been crossed, when his obsession with his pet theory makes him unconsciously (?) replace an inconvenient civilian, who actually spoke those quoted words, with a soldier who never spoke them.

Notes

[7.i] By giving page reproductions from some references I hope I have minimized my own contribution to the possible multiplication of error. The reader has the original conveniently before him, while he might have been loathe to check it if I had merely appended a citation. However, this works only for statements of the type 'X is *in* Y', no technology seems available for reinforcing statements of the type 'X is *not in* Y', where Y is long with no index. And, even page reproductions would be quite impracticable for someone painting a broader picture than the, admittedly very narrow, problem that we are focussed on. For example, were William Dalrymple's brilliant book, "The Last Mughal" (Penguin/Viking 2006), to contain page reproductions of even one-third of his references, its considerable length would multiply by at least ten. But then, an important question arises: *how are these scholarly books or papers, with hundreds of citations, refereed for accuracy?* We have seen inaccuracies in practically each and every one of the references we reviewed above, but surely, even the most conscientious of referees cannot be expected to analyse hundreds of citations. However, because accuracy is so important, some serious effort should be made, for example, a detailed analysis of a small but statistically significant sample of the citations, should help a lot.

[7.ii] It is true that error has a way of creeping into even the most careful of works, and even the greatest of mathematicians have made non-trivial mistakes. Yet, *precision is important in all disciplines*. It is needed as a mathematician chips away at error through counterexample and proof to arrive at a beautiful truth, it is needed as a sculptor chips away material from a block to arrive at a beautiful form. However, *there is more to a discipline than precision*. Just as poetry is more than precise metre, mathematics is more than logical precision. To quote from an address of Marston Morse (see his "Collected Papers" Vol. 2, World Scientific, 1987, p.1010): "The speakers were not hostile to mathematics; mathematics was even emphasized, but frequently for erroneous or insufficient reasons. One of the contributors writes … 'pure mathematics with its unparalled precision' … Yet, who wants to be precise except on occasion ? To give play to the imagination, to create and form ideas, to have a mastery of language and logic, to have that freedom that comes from recognition of dogma, and the open acceptance or rejection of an axiom at will, to recognize how much one does not know, or can not know; these things are all in mathematics."

[7.iii] In India the common perception of mathematics is, in fact, ludicrous. Most school students think of it as a subject in which *no logic* (!) is needed, only some methods – like finding h.c.f. – have to be memorized, the crucial thing being to practise these ad nauseum, preferably in a reputed tuition academy, till the high level of speed and numerical accuracy required to ace the all-important exams – set by people who themselves have the same ludicrous perception of mathematics – have been attained. Verily is the tail wagging the dog! To my eyes, what is passing for it here in India, is about as close to mathematics as my saying chan-chen-chin-chow-chuw is close to speaking Chinese. An intelligent non-mathematical person, who enjoys doing crossword puzzles or Sudokus, is closer to being a mathematician than the majority of the M.Sc.'s, and even some of the Ph.D.'s, in "mathematics" that Indian universities are producing. These latter have no inkling of what logical precision – let alone the finer things that Morse told us are also to be found in mathematics – means, and can not think out on their own even one problem from the International Mathematical Olympiad (a test for gifted school students) even if given all the time in the world for it. Nevertheless, most tuition academies are run by such individuals only.

[7.iv] Similarly, accuracy about facts is only one part, but a *key* part, of being a historian. In the West, even historical minutae have been lovingly preserved, for example, in the public library of Lille, I once saw what seemed to be no more than a local gossip column – which lord's daughter was engaged to which baron's son, etc. – for the time preceeding the Battle of Hastings in 1066 A.D. In India, facts about even relatively very recent events are quite blurred, so the energy of its historians should be spent more on bringing these blurred facts into focus, rather than theorizing from thin air. As Dalrymple, op. cit., pp. 13-14, points out – with just a wee bit of poetic license – "For a time when ten thousand dissertations … have ingeniously theorized about orientalism and colonialism … all invariably given titles with obscure meaning – *Gendering the Colonial Paradigm, Constructing the Imagined Other, Othering the Imagined Construction,* …. not one PhD has ever been written from the Mutiny Papers." These unused Mutiny Papers were conveniently there all the time, in the National Archives of India, "in a magnificent Lutyens-period building bang in the centre of India's capital city. Using the Mutiny Papers and properly harvesting their riches as a source for 1857 felt at times as strange and exciting – and indeed as unlikely – as going to Paris and discovering, unused on the shelves of the Bibliotheque Nationale, the entire records of the French Revolution." One can't help feeling that the full answer to our little mystery is also probably lying around, neglected, in these or some other well-known archives ?

[7.v] This lost opportunity (failure to use these and other easily available archives) on the part of Delhi's historians – maybe the younger ones on its campuses were 'too busy' preparing for the exam into babudom? – means that Dalrymple is probably the first writer who has truly brought home the *extent* of the massacres committed by the British in Delhi after the city was retaken in 1857. These rival in numbers, and perhaps surpass in cold-bloodedness, those committed before in Delhi by Nadir Shah – see p.391 of Dalrymple for his comparison – and Tamer Lane.

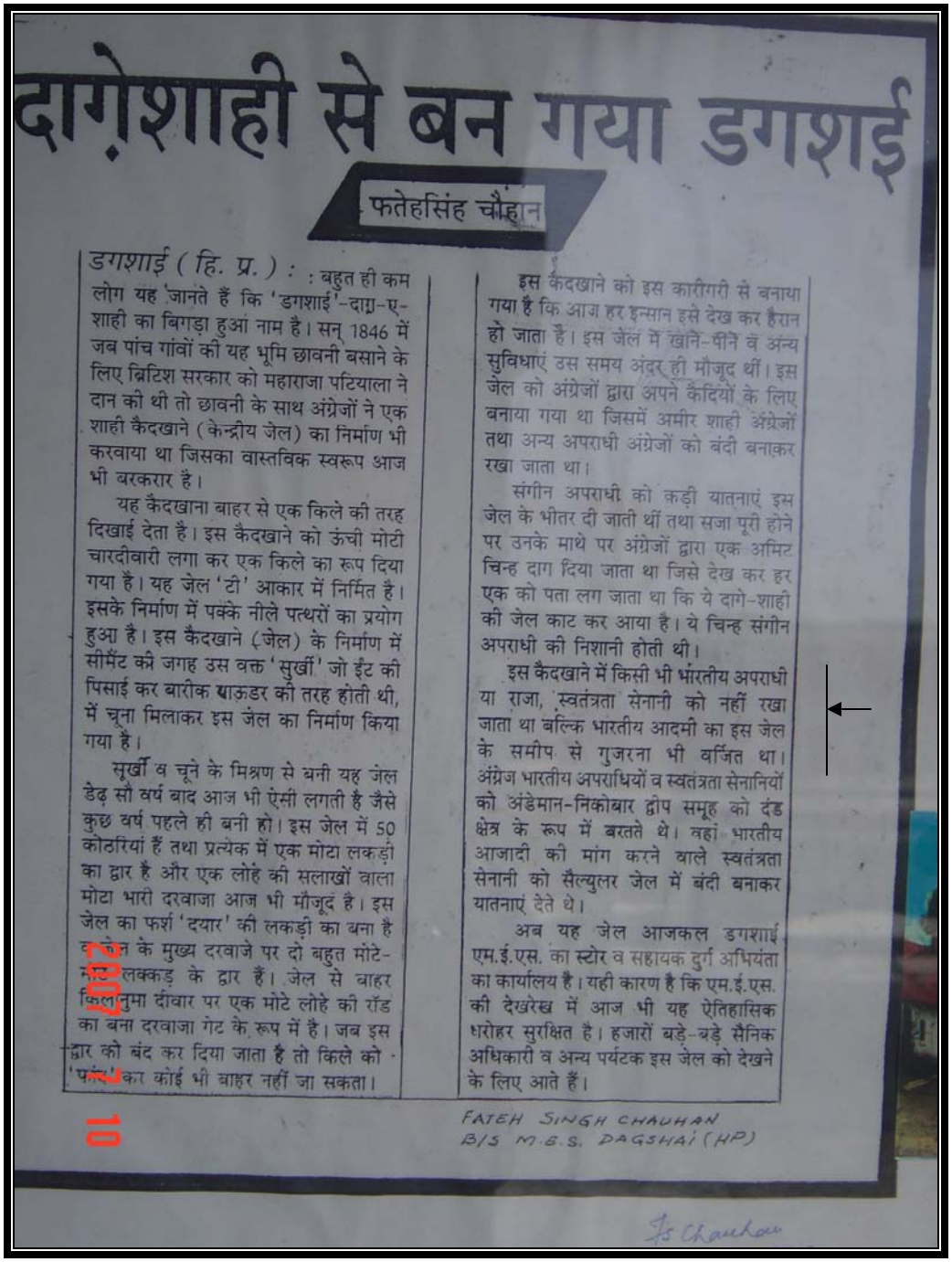
[7.vi] I have dealt only with honest errors in all of the above. These are almost inevitable, and not even the best, and the most sincere, of researchers is immune from them. There is a world of difference – and every researcher worth the name can easily spot this difference – between this, and *inherently shoddy, insincere, deceptive, or even fraudulent work.* The state of Indian academia being what it is – the remarks made in note [7.iii] above about the current quality of our M.Sc.'s and Ph.D.'s generalize to all disciplines – work of this kind is, unfortunately, more the rule than an exception in all our universities.

§5. Quo vadis? Clearly its omission in [7] is unimportant, the court-martial almost certainly happened; and, it is equally clear that, *the one and only satisfactory way of putting the issue to rest is to obtain the court-martial's record.* So I emailed this request to some likely places. Only an archivist from the British Library has replied so far (11/07/07): he did a brief search on my behalf through the India Office Records, and feels a more thorough search will yield the desired information. The National Archives of India in Delhi did not reply, but I've found some very helpful people, including a cousin of mine who used to be a full Colonel in the army before he quit to run a model farm. These friends are even now looking through the National, as well as the Army, Archives in Delhi, so I am hopeful that we'll soon have this 'smoking gun'.

In the meantime, I have – with my wife as an (occasionally reluctant) research assistant – continued my investigations in Dagshai. I've still not found a native who is aware of this event of 1915. The principals of its two public schools assured me that their libraries had nothing other than text books, etc., and both felt that their students had neither time nor taste for any outside reading (I was hoping that one of these libraries might have some old tome from around 1915 with maybe some local Dagshai gossip or information). One of these gentlemen has taught history for long in his school but confessed disarmingly that his knowledge of local history did not go beyond the well-worn 'Daag-e-shahi to Dagshai' story about the town's name. This old story is told in an article – see [8] below -- from a newspaper that is posted in front of Dagshai prison.

Note [8.i]. The Punjab Gazetteer, Simla District, 1888-89, p.29 has this about Dagshai's origin: "This small district, consisting of the five villages named Dabbi, Bughtiala, Dagshai, Chunaweg and Jawug, was transferred to the British Government without compensation in 1847, by the Maharaja of Patiala, for the purpose of a cantonment. The whole of the lands attached to the abovenamed villages have been included within the limits of the cantonment." Thus, *one of the original villages was also named Dagshai.* Accordingly, in the version of this story now on the web, it was not the British, but an unspecified eighteenth century 'Mughal', who initiated this habit of tattooing the prisoners foreheads indelibly with the royal stigma, the Daag-e-Shahi. The entire Simla hills was under the Gurkhas for about five years till – see, e.g., B.D.Sanwal, "Nepal and the East India Company", Asia Publishing (1965) – the Battle of Malaon (1815), in which David Ochterlony, with some help from the Patiala forces, finally managed to beat Amar Singh Thapa. The Gurkhas were forced to cede their conquests to the British, who returned most of the hill kingdoms to their erstwhile rajas, except in those cases where the raja had actively aided the Gurkhas. Some or all of these rajas territories were given in gratitude to their battlefield ally, the Maharaja of Patiala. After some decades the British had second thoughts, they decided to build the cantonments of Simla, Dagshai, etc., and, for this purpose, they got the requisite land back from the Maharaja of Patiala, who continued however to hold very substantial tracts of the Simla hills till at least 1947.

[8] A newspaper article posted in Dagshai prison, by Fateh Singh Chauhan. Though its history is shaky, the layout and construction of this Central Jail are fairly well described in this article (if only some unfortunate partition walls could be removed, and the place cleared of clutter, this jail can still be restored, with a minimum of cost, from the godown it has become, to a rough approximation of its original):--



दागेशाही से बन गया डगशई

फतेहसिंह चौहान

डगशाई (हि. प्र.) : : बहुत ही कम लोग यह जानते हैं कि 'डगशाई'-दाग़-ए-शाही का बिगड़ा हुआ नाम है। सन् 1846 में जब पांच गांवों की यह भूमि छावनी बसाने के लिए ब्रिटिश सरकार को महाराजा पटियाला ने दान की थी तो छावनी के साथ अंग्रेजों ने एक शाही कैदखाने (केन्द्रीय जेल) का निर्माण भी करवाया था जिसका वास्तविक स्वरूप आज भी बरकरार है।

यह कैदखाना बाहर से एक किले की तरह दिखाई देता है। इस कैदखाने को ऊंची मोटी चारदीवारी लगा कर एक किले का रूप दिया गया है। यह जेल 'टी' आकार में निर्मित है। इसके निर्माण में पक्के नीले पत्थरों का प्रयोग हुआ है। इस कैदखाने (जेल) के निर्माण में सीमैंट की जगह उस वक्त 'सुर्खी' जो ईंट की पिसाई कर बारीक बाऊडर की तरह होती थी, में चूना मिलाकर इस जेल का निर्माण किया गया है।

सूर्खी व चूने के मिश्रण से बनी यह जेल डेढ़ सौ वर्ष बाद आज भी ऐसी लगती है जैसे कुछ वर्ष पहले ही बनी हो। इस जेल में 50 कोठरियां हैं तथा प्रत्येक में एक मोटा लकड़ी का द्वार है और एक लोहे की सलाखों वाला मोटा भारी दरवाजा आज भी मौजूद है। इस जेल का फर्श 'दयार' की लकड़ी का बना है इस जेल के मुख्य दरवाजे पर दो बहुत मोटे-मोटे लक्कड़ के द्वार हैं। जेल से बाहर किलानुमा दीवार पर एक मोटे लोहे की रॉड का बना दरवाजा गेट के रूप में है। जब इस द्वार को बंद कर दिया जाता है तो किले को 'पार' कर कोई भी बाहर नहीं जा सकता।

इस कैदखाने को इस कारीगरी से बनाया गया है कि आज हर इन्सान इसे देख कर हैरान हो जाता है। इस जेल में खाने-पीने व अन्य सुविधाएं उस समय अंदर ही मौजूद थीं। इस जेल को अंग्रेजों द्वारा अपने कैदियों के लिए बनाया गया था जिसमें अमीर शाही अंग्रेजों तथा अन्य अपराधी अंग्रेजों को बंदी बनाकर रखा जाता था।

संगीन अपराधी को कड़ी यातनाएं इस जेल के भीतर दी जाती थीं तथा सजा पूरी होने पर उनके माथे पर अंग्रेजों द्वारा एक अमिट चिन्ह दाग दिया जाता था जिसे देख कर हर एक को पता लग जाता था कि ये दागे-शाही की जेल काट कर आया है। ये चिन्ह संगीन अपराधी की निशानी होती थी।

इस कैदखाने में किसी भी भारतीय अपराधी या राजा, स्वतंत्रता सेनानी को नहीं रखा जाता था बल्कि भारतीय आदमी का इस जेल के समीप से गुजरना भी वर्जित था। अंग्रेज भारतीय अपराधियों व स्वतंत्रता सेनानियों को अंडेमान-निकोबार द्वीप समूह को दंड क्षेत्र के रूप में बरतते थे। वहां भारतीय आजादी की मांग करने वाले स्वतंत्रता सेनानी को सैल्युलर जेल में बंदी बनाकर यातनाएं देते थे।

अब यह जेल आजकल डगशाई एम.ई.एस. का स्टोर व सहायक दुर्ग अभियंता का कार्यालय है। यही कारण है कि एम.ई.एस. की देखरेख में आज भी यह ऐतिहासिक धरोहर सुरक्षित है। हजारों बड़े-बड़े सैनिक अधिकारी व अन्य पर्यटक इस जेल को देखने के लिए आते हैं।

FATEH SINGH CHAUHAN
B/S M.E.S. DAGSHAI (HP)

If the 1915 *court-martial of the* 23rd *Cavalry was indeed in Dagshai, then Lance-Dafedar Lachman Singh and his seventeen followers must have been kept (most probably) in the cells of this prison only.* However, in the above extract, Chauhan avers that this prison was meant, and had been used, exclusively for British prisoners only. Most other citizens of Dagshai also subscribe to this view, and quite a few locals shall tell you that, till quite late into the 1900's, non-whites other than regimental menials and domestics were not even allowed by the British to come above the Cart Road.

Anyway, here is a picture showing five of this prison's fifty cells :--

At website http://coad.neuf.fr/donohoe.htm, which has much of interest for Dagshai, you can read how some Gurkha soldiers of the Nasiri regiment, then stationed at Sabathu, Kasauli, and Jutogh, who revolted during 1857, *were* brought to this prison only, *and* executed in Dagshai. This would of course imply that Chauhan's satement is

incorrect, however it is probably true for the time period 1917-47, and the most famous of this prison's prisoners, whom we discuss next, were certainly white.

Connaught Rangers. Even as Lieutenant-Governor O'Dwyer was extolling the British barbarity in Jallianwala Bagh, many of his countrymen were fighting for the independence of Ireland. The news from back home, about British barbarity against some of these guerilla fighters, ignited in 1920 a mutiny in this Irish regiment, that spread quickly from Jalandhar to other cantonments. Two mutineers were killed, and the remaining arrested, and put in Dagshai prison; later, fourteen were sentenced to death, though eventually only one, the firebrand James Daly, was executed, here in Dagshai prison, by firing squad (one prisoner John Miranda had died during imprisonment).

A truly staggering – especially as compared to the pathetic paucity of available information regarding the 23rd Cavalry's mutineers – amount of information is available about these Irish rebels. Clearly, **Ireland has preserved the memory of its heroes, and India has not.** One finds from the internet even trivia about their court-martial – for example, that a famous British actor's father was one of the judges – and about their stay here in Dagshai prison, and the exact wording of the execution order for Daly, details about his execution, also we learn that first his body was interred in an unsanctified grave near the prison, much later in 1970 exhumed and properly reburied as hero in Ireland. Since this is all so easily available, there is no point in my repeating it. Here are two of the numerous websites that have something to say about this Irish mutiny in India:--

http://www.factbug.org/cgi-bin/a.cgi?a=975969

http://www.tipperary-central.com/forumcgi-bin/prntopic.cgi?cid=262&fid=488&tid=760

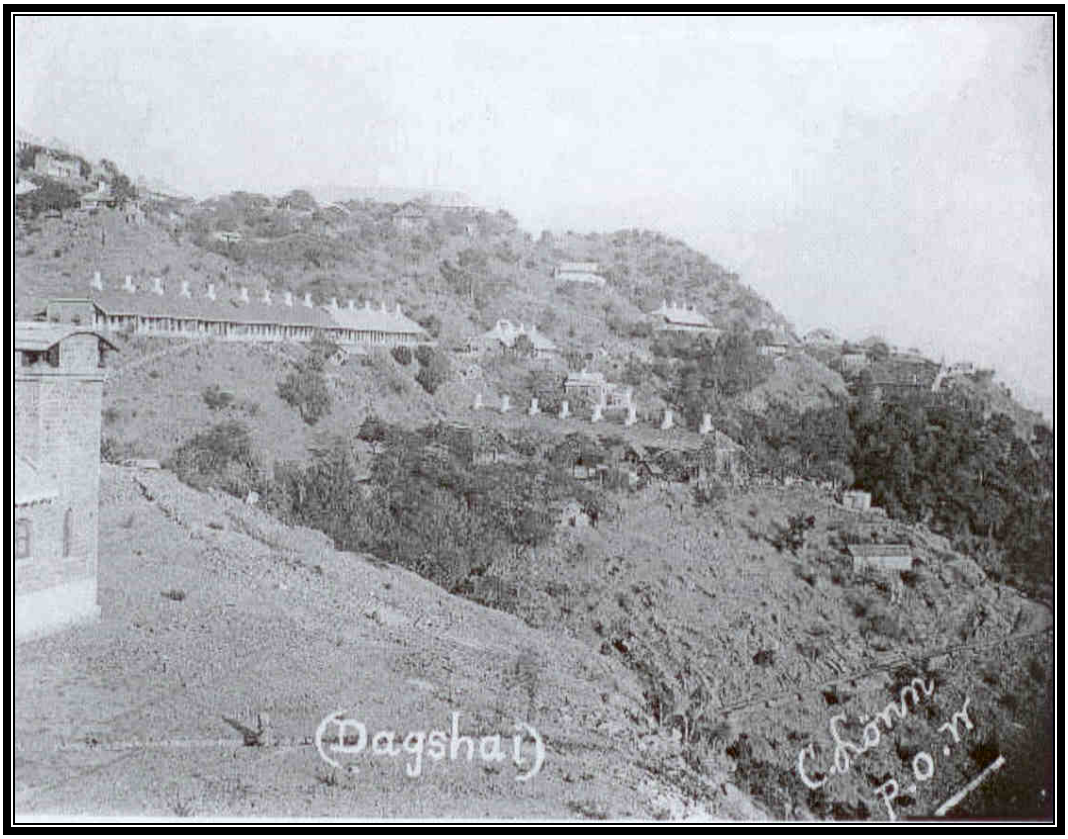
Browsing through this material I have found so far only one possible clue to our riddle: an Irish prisoner reminisces that a large number of Indian prisoners had died in Dagshai prison in 1916 – were these of the 23rd Cavalry ? – and that after this, Dagshai prison had remained empty till the Irish came. Another item of interest was that the Irish court-martial was in the *Gymnasium*. Though I have not pinpointed this building as yet, it is probably a part of the Army Public School now. Could it be, then, that the1915

court-martial of Lachman Singh and others was also in this building? We learnt during our last visit that *a film crew from Ireland had shot in Dagshai Prison scenes for a documentary movie – complete with actors playing the roles of Daly and the other mutineers – last year.* I need to check out this movie, also find the teacher of A.P.S. (our helpful guide had forgotten the name) who was their liaison, and who, according to our guide, is writing *a book on this prison?* Lets hope that he, at least, is aware of the court-martial of the 23rd Cav, otherwise his book will skip it! That Daly was executed by firing squad, and that this prison has no gallows in it, does *not* imply that the soldiers of the 23rd were executed by firing squad. The Gurkha mutineers of 1857 could have been hanged elsewhere – cf. p. 200 of Dalrymple's "The Last Mughal," a British hero of 1857 recommends that Indians be put to death only by hanging to save gunpowder – likewise, our 12 shaheeds of 1915, but this 'elsewhere' may well be in Dagshai only.

Dagshai Gallows? The helpful commanding officer of the Gurkha regiment now in Dagshai assured me that the town had one, see picture below. It is a modest affair, and with no scaffold or pit to see now – nothing but the stuff of an N.C.O. – it is hard to recognise it as a gallows. However the cabins near it – see next picture – do seem a bit like death-row. Anyway, it is located before the unused church, as one descends from the C.O.'s office towards Charing Cross, and to Gurkhas it has always been **Phansighar**:-

The website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Connaught_Rangers will give you the glorious battle record of "The Devil's Own", i.e., the Connaught Rangers. (Likewise, the 23rd Cavalry was a crack fighting unit with a proud battle record by 1915, that was why it was in the Lieutenant-Governor's escort.) Amongst the famous battles these Irish 'devils' fought were some in South Africa during the Anglo-Boer War of 1899-1902. Hardly any local knows, but Dagshai has a fascinating connection with this war. Many Boers were interned as prisoners of war at various places in India during this time. Of these, about 290 were in Dagshai cantonment. **A Boer prisoner of war, C. Lönn, took the next photograph of Dagshai – so it is well over a hundred years old!** (This photograph and information I had downloaded some years ago, the pages bear the title *Anglo-Boer War Photo's* (sic), however the website seems obsolete now and email bounces back from the given eaddress daniru@anglo-boer.co.za.. Nevertheless, it should still be possible to double check, because there are on the internet many websites run by Boer afficiandos of this war.) Even our expert M.E.S. guides were hard put to place the scene precisely in present-day Dagshai, for things have changed. For example, those helpful rows of chimneys that one sees in the picture were knocked out some time ago, at least from most A.P.S. rooftops, because of excessive rain coming through them and bothering this school's students. Anyway, one thing is pretty clear from the picture, the conditions of confinement for these P.O.W.'s were pretty laid-back in comparison. It is

very unlikely that the mutineers of the 23rd Cavalry – who had been charged with capital crimes – were imprisoned anywhere else but in Dagshai Prison, because no other building in this town seems equally suitable from the point of view of security.



It seems that the most likely place, where 'the smoking gun' shall be found, is the Army Archives, but light could be shed also by the contemporary municipal records of Dagshai. I remember reading in some historical novel – was it Mandeep Rai's charming, "In the Shadows of the Pines", UBS (1996) ? – a description of a ballroom scene in Dagshai, with a reading room near the Officer's Mess. However, the commanding officer assured me that no library existed now, and that he had no idea where all the old books and papers could have gone. A phone-call from him to the superintendent of the very old **Dagshai Military Hospital** – *its records of 1915 ought to have something of interest about the court-martialled cavalrymen* – elicited the reply that their medical records did not go further back than 1947. So, did the British just pack their 'diligently kept' town records and take them back to Britain?

If so, they did Dagshai a favour. We are, to put it mildly, notorious at preserving records. Barely a week after someone has been cremated, one can see a raddiwala carting away the late lamented's papers and books, other of course, than his check-book, pass-book, and so on. As an example of this propensity of ours, you might also like to have a look at *the rock next to the Dagshai C.O.'s office, where some imbecile, in a fit of misplaced patriotic fervour, obliterated* (only the barest signs remain now) *the beautifully engraved insignias of all the British regiments that were posted in Dagshai before 1947.* This criminal defacement was done many years ago – the C.O. himself painfully pointed it out to me again – I myself had seen this first about 10 years ago.

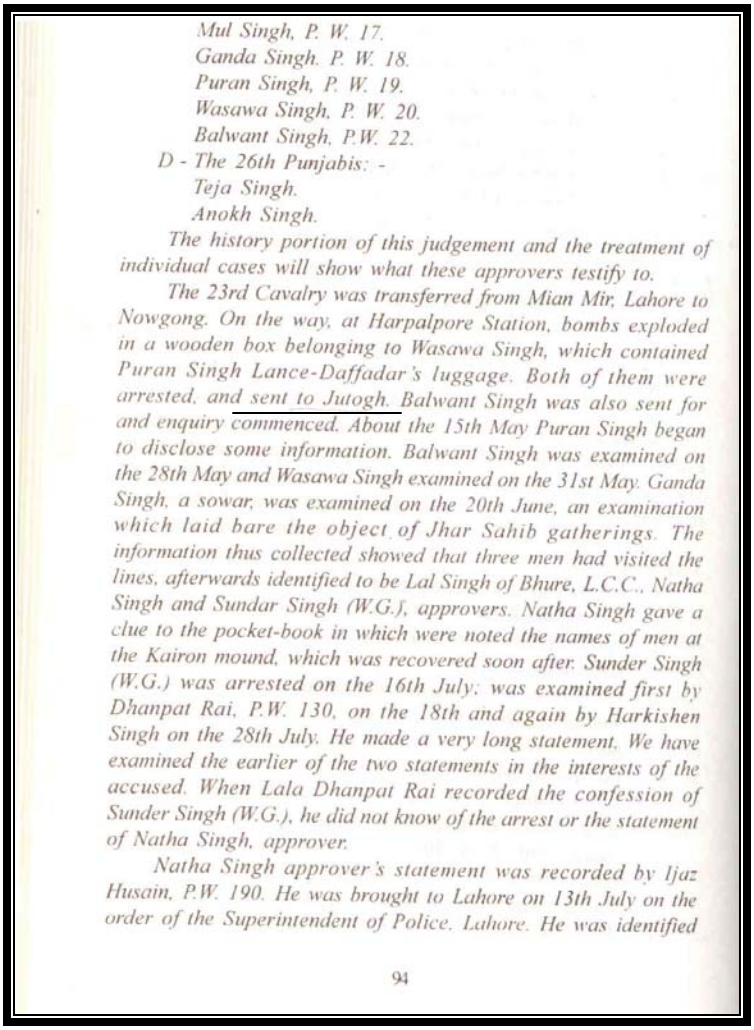
One of the school principals was sure the old records of Dagshai cantonment are now in Kasauli – or maybe Dehra Dun, he later qualified – and the way to go was to make a formal request for what I wanted to the Station Officer, Kasauli. I'll probably try that on my next trip, because, besides this problem, I am also interested in some others for which these town archives are probably better than the national ones in Delhi.

The reader must have realized by now that **the problem that I am considering is in fact trivial**, more exactly that, it *should* be trivial in a well-functioning democracy. Any citizen of the U.S. can obtain authentic information about fifty-year old courts-martial by writing a simple email to the Department of Defense. Yet here, poor Jagjit Singh, a scholar toiling on a treatise on an important freedom movement, was unable (apparently) to obtain such information in 1955, ditto Gurcharan Singh Sainsara and his "Desh Bhagat Yaadgar Committee" (with Members of Parliament in it) in 1961, down the line to us so far in the year of the lord, 2007. Anyway, as I waited eagerly for one of my 'Paul Drakes' to come up with this 'smoking gun' from Delhi, I decided that I should check *directly* – we have already checked this indirectly through the 1919 police report [6] by Isemonger and Slattery – on what the 1916 judgement of the Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case had to say about this court-martial of 1915.

With some help from Dinesh Khurana, I located (the on-line and card catalogues assign it quite different numbers) the following book in the university library.

[9] "War Against King Emperor (Ghadr of 1914-15) A Verdict by Special Tribunal," editors Malwinder Jit Singh, Harinder Singh, Bhai Sahib Randhir Singh Trust Ludhiana (2001).

I had hoped, from the title and the publisher's name, to find in this book the full 1916 judgement of the Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case. However this is not so. But long extracts *are* given, which are in italics and interleaved with longer extracts from the 1915 judgement of the Lahore Conspiracy Case. These extracts apparently suffice for us, for they seem to contain all the allusions that this tribunal had to make regarding the 23rd Cavalry's mutineers. As surmised before, their court-martial was mentioned only incidentally in this 1916 judgement, because some soldiers of the 23rd Cavalry, namely, the first five below, were state approvers in this civilian case:--



Mul Singh, P. W. 17.
Ganda Singh, P. W. 18.
Puran Singh, P. W. 19.
Wasawa Singh, P. W. 20.
Balwant Singh, P.W. 22.
D - The 26th Punjabis: -
Teja Singh.
Anokh Singh.

The history portion of this judgement and the treatment of individual cases will show what these approvers testify to.

The 23rd Cavalry was transferred from Mian Mir, Lahore to Nowgong. On the way, at Harpalpore Station, bombs exploded in a wooden box belonging to Wasawa Singh, which contained Puran Singh Lance-Daffadar's luggage. Both of them were arrested, and sent to Jutogh. Balwant Singh was also sent for and enquiry commenced. About the 15th May Puran Singh began to disclose some information. Balwant Singh was examined on the 28th May and Wasawa Singh examined on the 31st May. Ganda Singh, a sowar, was examined on the 20th June, an examination which laid bare the object of Jhar Sahib gatherings. The information thus collected showed that three men had visited the lines, afterwards identified to be Lal Singh of Bhure, L.C.C., Natha Singh and Sundar Singh (W.G.), approvers. Natha Singh gave a clue to the pocket-book in which were noted the names of men at the Kairon mound, which was recovered soon after. Sunder Singh (W.G.) was arrested on the 16th July; was examined first by Dhanpat Rai, P.W. 130, on the 18th and again by Harkishen Singh on the 28th July. He made a very long statement. We have examined the earlier of the two statements in the interests of the accused. When Lala Dhanpat Rai recorded the confession of Sunder Singh (W.G.), he did not know of the arrest or the statement of Natha Singh, approver.

Natha Singh approver's statement was recorded by Ijaz Husain, P.W. 190. He was brought to Lahore on 13th July on the order of the Superintendent of Police, Lahore. He was identified

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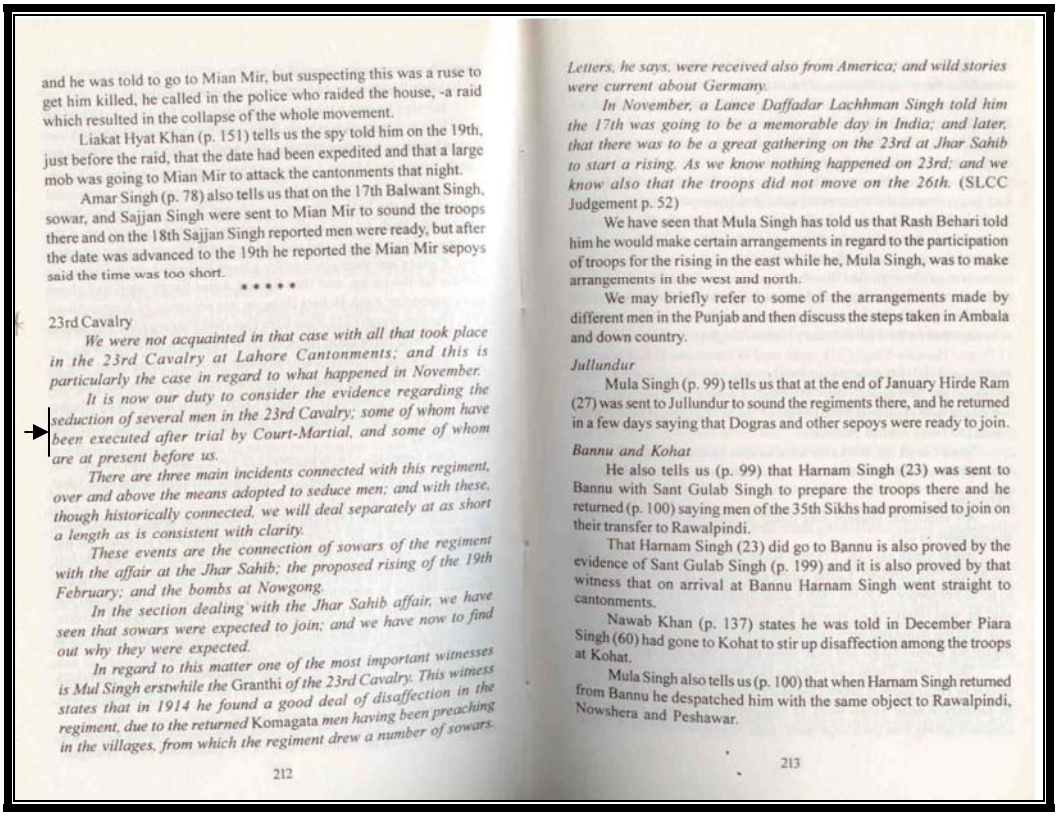
We do obtain from the above – which is from *"Part II Law Points 14. Approver's Testimony"* of the 1916 judgement – one new bit of information: *after the box-exploding incident, the two approvers involved in it were sent to* ***Jutogh Cantonment***, next to Simla, so we are not too far from Dagshai now! Subsequently Balwant Singh (who was already cooperating) was also sent to Jutogh, presumably with policemen, to aid the army interrogators in the 'enquiry' there; the imprecise 'about the 15th May' shows that this was outside the judicial ambit. As against this, precise dates are given on which four approvers were 'examined' subsequently for this civilian case, but it is unclear if the three approvers who were in Jutogh were also brought to Lahore for this purpose.

The court-martial is mentioned, amongst the extracts from the 1916 judgement that are in [9], apparently only once, on page 212, which is from *"Part III The History Of The Conspiracy And War, C- The Revolutionists in India – Outline of Proceedings in India, III. Activities of the Revolutionists , (4) Seduction of Troops"*. From this page we glean another small but important bit of information: *by the date this judgement was delivered, that is, before March 30, 1916, the shaheeds had already been executed* :--



and he was told to go to Mian Mir, but suspecting this was a ruse to get him killed, he called in the police who raided the house, -a raid which resulted in the collapse of the whole movement.

Liakat Hyat Khan (p. 151) tells us the spy told him on the 19th, just before the raid, that the date had been expedited and that a large mob was going to Mian Mir to attack the cantonments that night.

Amar Singh (p. 78) also tells us that on the 17th Balwant Singh, sowar, and Sajjan Singh were sent to Mian Mir to sound the troops there and on the 18th Sajjan Singh reported men were ready, but after the date was advanced to the 19th he reported the Mian Mir sepoys said the time was too short.

* * * * *

23rd Cavalry

We were not acquainted in that case with all that took place in the 23rd Cavalry at Lahore Cantonments; and this is particularly the case in regard to what happened in November.

It is now our duty to consider the evidence regarding the seduction of several men in the 23rd Cavalry; some of whom have been executed after trial by Court-Martial, and some of whom are at present before us.

There are three main incidents connected with this regiment, over and above the means adopted to seduce men; and with these, though historically connected, we will deal separately at as short a length as is consistent with clarity.

These events are the connection of sowars of the regiment with the affair at the Jhar Sahib; the proposed rising of the 19th February; and the bombs at Nowgong.

In the section dealing with the Jhar Sahib affair, we have seen that sowars were expected to join; and we have now to find out why they were expected.

In regard to this matter one of the most important witnesses is Mul Singh erstwhile the Granthi *of the 23rd Cavalry. This witness states that in 1914 he found a good deal of disaffection in the regiment, due to the returned* Komagata *men having been preaching in the villages, from which the regiment drew a number of sowars.*

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Letters, he says, were received also from America; and wild stories were current about Germany.

In November, a Lance Daffadar Lachhman Singh told him the 17th was going to be a memorable day in India; and later, that there was to be a great gathering on the 23rd at Jhar Sahib to start a rising. As we know nothing happened on 23rd; and we know also that the troops did not move on the 26th. (SLCC Judgement p. 52)

We have seen that Mula Singh has told us that Rash Behari told him he would make certain arrangements in regard to the participation of troops for the rising in the east while he, Mula Singh, was to make arrangements in the west and north.

We may briefly refer to some of the arrangements made by different men in the Punjab and then discuss the steps taken in Ambala and down country.

Jullundur

Mula Singh (p. 99) tells us that at the end of January Hirde Ram (27) was sent to Jullundur to sound the regiments there, and he returned in a few days saying that Dogras and other sepoys were ready to join.

Bannu and Kohat

He also tells us (p. 99) that Harnam Singh (23) was sent to Bannu with Sant Gulab Singh to prepare the troops there and he returned (p. 100) saying men of the 35th Sikhs had promised to join on their transfer to Rawalpindi.

That Harnam Singh (23) did go to Bannu is also proved by the evidence of Sant Gulab Singh (p. 199) and it is also proved by that witness that on arrival at Bannu Harnam Singh went straight to cantonments.

Nawab Khan (p. 137) states he was told in December Piara Singh (60) had gone to Kohat to stir up disaffection among the troops at Kohat.

Mula Singh also tells us (p. 100) that when Harnam Singh returned from Bannu he despatched him with the same object to Rawalpindi, Nowshera and Peshawar.

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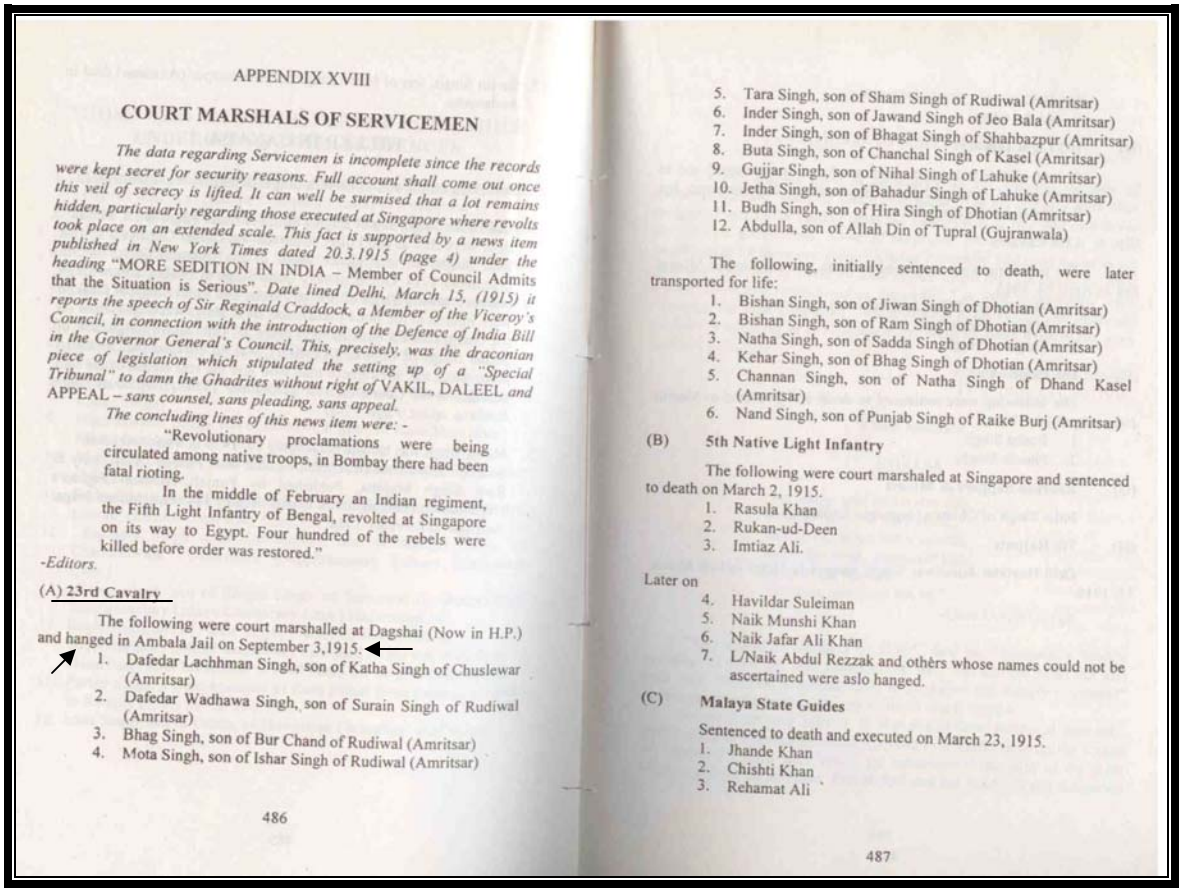
Like Isemonger and Slattery (1919) and O'Dwyer (1925) after it, this judgement of 1916 was silent about where the court-martial took place. On the other hand, like Jagjit Singh (1955) and Gurcharan Singh Sainsara (1961) before them – these two are not cited in this book – the editors of [9] again tell us, in **Appendix XVIII, Court Marshals** (sic) **of Servicemen**, (A) 23rd Cavalry, pp. 486-487, that the court-martial was in Dagshai, and give us the same list of the 18 convicted soldiers:--



APPENDIX XVIII

COURT MARSHALS OF SERVICEMEN

The data regarding Servicemen is incomplete since the records were kept secret for security reasons. Full account shall come out once this veil of secrecy is lifted. It can well be surmised that a lot remains hidden, particularly regarding those executed at Singapore where revolts took place on an extended scale. This fact is supported by a news item published in New York Times dated 20.3.1915 (page 4) under the heading "MORE SEDITION IN INDIA – Member of Council Admits that the Situation is Serious". *Date lined Delhi, March 15, (1915) it reports the speech of Sir Reginald Craddock, a Member of the Viceroy's Council, in connection with the introduction of the Defence of India Bill in the Governor General's Council. This, precisely, was the draconian piece of legislation which stipulated the setting up of a "Special Tribunal" to damn the Ghadrites without right of* VAKIL, DALEEL *and* APPEAL *– sans counsel, sans pleading, sans appeal.*

The concluding lines of this news item were: -

"Revolutionary proclamations were being circulated among native troops, in Bombay there had been fatal rioting.

In the middle of February an Indian regiment, the Fifth Light Infantry of Bengal, revolted at Singapore on its way to Egypt. Four hundred of the rebels were killed before order was restored."

-Editors.

(A) **23rd Cavalry**

The following were court marshalled at Dagshai (Now in H.P.) and hanged in Ambala Jail on September 3,1915.

1. Dafedar Lachhman Singh, son of Katha Singh of Chuslewar (Amritsar)
2. Dafedar Wadhawa Singh, son of Surain Singh of Rudiwal (Amritsar)
3. Bhag Singh, son of Bur Chand of Rudiwal (Amritsar)
4. Mota Singh, son of Ishar Singh of Rudiwal (Amritsar)

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5. Tara Singh, son of Sham Singh of Rudiwal (Amritsar)
6. Inder Singh, son of Jawand Singh of Jeo Bala (Amritsar)
7. Inder Singh, son of Bhagat Singh of Shahbazpur (Amritsar)
8. Buta Singh, son of Chanchal Singh of Kasel (Amritsar)
9. Gujjar Singh, son of Nihal Singh of Lahuke (Amritsar)
10. Jetha Singh, son of Bahadur Singh of Lahuke (Amritsar)
11. Budh Singh, son of Hira Singh of Dhotian (Amritsar)
12. Abdulla, son of Allah Din of Tupral (Gujranwala)

The following, initially sentenced to death, were later transported for life:

1. Bishan Singh, son of Jiwan Singh of Dhotian (Amritsar)
2. Bishan Singh, son of Ram Singh of Dhotian (Amritsar)
3. Natha Singh, son of Sadda Singh of Dhotian (Amritsar)
4. Kehar Singh, son of Bhag Singh of Dhotian (Amritsar)
5. Channan Singh, son of Natha Singh of Dhand Kasel (Amritsar)
6. Nand Singh, son of Punjab Singh of Raike Burj (Amritsar)

(B) **5th Native Light Infantry**

The following were court marshaled at Singapore and sentenced to death on March 2, 1915.

1. Rasula Khan
2. Rukan-ud-Deen
3. Imtiaz Ali.

Later on

4. Havildar Suleiman
5. Naik Munshi Khan
6. Naik Jafar Ali Khan
7. L/Naik Abdul Rezzak and othèrs whose names could not be ascertained were aslo hanged.

(C) **Malaya State Guides**

Sentenced to death and executed on March 23, 1915.

1. Jhande Khan
2. Chishti Khan
3. Rehamat Ali

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However there is a more official air to the data – the father's name is given in each case – this time, and we are told that Abdulla was from a village in district Gujranwala, not Lahore; but what caught my eye right away was the assertion that the twelve were **'hanged in Ambala Jail on September 3, 1915'**! Now here, at last, was a clear-cut assertion that I could verify, more conveniently so, because a family friend is a high-ranking police officer in Haryana, and indeed, he is already on the job as I write this. Note also that *the introductory material of Appendix XVIII is clearly by the two editors, but they are silent about the authorship of the data which follows it.* I looked

through the book, and the best guess I could make is: *Bhai Nahar Singh?* This because there are, on page xv of the Foreword, contributed by Kharak Singh, these words: *"The Editors have based their account largely on the material collected by Bhai Nahar Singh, the well-known historiographer, from the archives of the Central Government in New Delhi. It is unfortunate that he expired before the material could see the light of the day."* And, even earlier, on page x, a publisher's note informs us that Bhai Nahar Singh was unable to continue his work because of old age, so had *"handed over all the material collected by him to the present editors Prof. Malwinder Jit Singh and Prof. Harinder Singh,"* who had now brought his work to fruition. So there was still hope! *It was possible that in this posthumous material of Bhai Nahar Sahib there were exact archival references for the data of 'Appendix XVIII'?* If so, it could be of great help in getting also the complete records of the court-martial. Clearly, I needed now to get in contact with the editors, who alone could answer the questions that I have just posed.

Notes

[9.i] It is incumbent on any writer to give, for the facts claimed by him, exact and specific references. Yet, this elementary tenet of scholarship has been ignored once again. Also, it is imperative for a scholar to acknowledge previous work. This too is unfortunately not the case. We found the names of the eighteen, and the statement that the court-martial was in Dagshai, even in the 1955 book [4] of Jagjit Singh. Yet, with the single exception of [2], all subsequent mentions did not acknowledge the existence of this well-known treatise. However, it must also be said that Jagjit Singh himself did not leave us – he passed away in 1997 – at least not in this treatise, enough clues as to what his own sources were: we have reviewed all his citations, and found in none any mention of Dagshai or a list of the eighteen. It seems the historians of the Ghadr are making the same mistake their heroes made, not paying attention to details.

[9.ii] I hasten to add that these are my heroes too—that is why I am engaged in writing this—for the *passion* they brought to their cause, and indeed, passion is to be found in everything worthwhile that has ever been done, from great music to great mathematics (unfortunately, being an 'in' word, it is also found these days in the mouths of many who show not the slightest symptom of passion). I prefer history written by insiders – it is so much more fun! – but I tend, for better or for worse, to measure their declared passion for their cause by the amount of effort I can discern in their finished work.

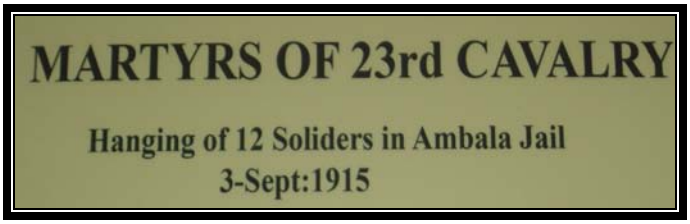
[9.iii] That "a lot remains hidden" (about the unrest in the army) one can almost sense already in Isemonger and Slattery [6] in the *ease* with which the Ghadrites 'seduced' troops. Apparently only a *fait acomplii*, viz., the disclosure of the court martial of the 23rd Cavalry during the Supplementary Lahore Conspiracy Case, had prompted a mention of this particular event in Isemonger and Slattery [6] and O'Dwyer [5] ? Otherwise, the British seemed intent on keeping a lid on things. That is understandable from *their* point of view – witness the similar efforts being made by India's two main political parties to keep a similar lid on Delhi, 1984, and Gujarat, 2002 – *but why were all the post-1947 governments interested in keeping these old skeletons of the British Raj in the closet?* There seems no logic to "… the records were kept secret for security reasons. Full account shall come out once this veil of secrecy is lifted," but then, there is not much logic to most things in India's babudom. It seems that, from Jagjit Singh onwards, these historians have been dependent on 'leaks' from sources that cannot be disclosed

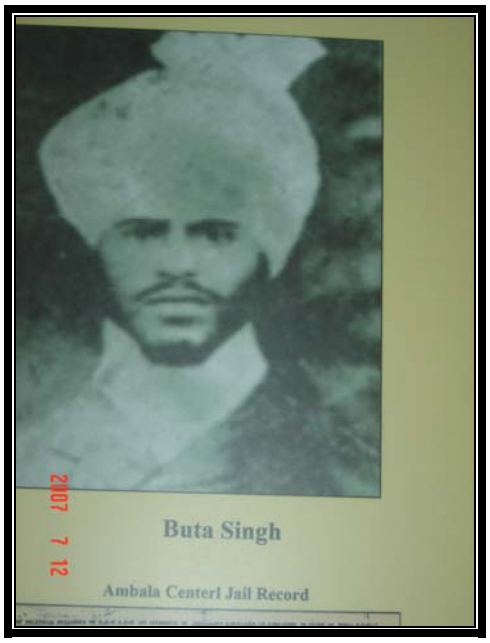
because they work under these hidebound secrecy rules? I don't think RTI can be of much help either unless one is demanding clear-cut information – like, 'did these hangings take place in Ambala Jail on September 3, 1915?' – but by then the historical problem is well-nigh solved. Assuming that this checks out, felicitations are due to Bhai Nahar Singh, or whosoever, who obtained this information first.

[9.iv] I have also a quibble with the repeated use of 'na vakeel, na daleel, na appeal' by the editors. This catchy slogan, of the next generation of revolutionaries, no doubt reflects correctly the vindictive spirit often displayed by the judges, but the book itself tells us that the defence did have some 'vakeels' and did make some 'daleels': some lawyers are named on p. 7, both the judgements weigh a number of objections raised by them (but almost always the ruling is adverse), and from p. 531 we learn that there were over a hundred witnesses for the defence. Only the third part of the slogan was literally true: no appeal was possible against conviction or sentence (one could only appeal for clemency).

§ 6. A lucky break. Back home on 06/07/07 with [9] from the library, I'd started leafing through it, for all on the 23rd Cav, and soon was at Appendix XVIII, and realized I needed at get at its source. Then I had a lucky break! I saw that one of the editors of [9], a grandson of Bhai Randhir Singh, was known to me. With help again from Dinesh – he found me Professor Harinder Singh's email – I had soon sent a request for this source, mentioning that the only guess I could make was Bhai Nahar Singh? Professor Harinder Singh's net was not working, so he replied only on 11/06/07, referring me to his co-editor for information about the 23rd Cav and Bhai Nahar Singh's papers, and gave me his telephone. Next morning I called, asking if I could come see him for Bhai Nahar Singh's papers and information on the court-martial. *Professor Malwinder Jit Singh told me that much had happened since* [9] *was published: he had now everything on the court-martial!* I suppressed the twinge of disappointment – nobody likes being 'scooped,' not even a johnny-come-lately who started two weeks ago – and congratulated him, asking him if I could come over and see? He said that that was not possible for at least three weeks, because he was recovering from surgery and not meeting anyone. I wished him a speedy recovery, requesting him to let me know when I could come, and some desultory conversation followed. Sensing perhaps some skepticism creeping back into my disappointment, he then reassured me that he wanted to share whatever he had with everyone, he was not one of those who kept things hidden, and that, indeed, some time ago he had put up an exhibit on these shaheeds with **a certificate from Ambala Central Jail that the twelve had been hanged there on September 3, 1915**, all I needed to do was go to Sector 17 and see it! I congratulated him once again, and told him that I'll do just that.

[10] "Soldier Martyrs : 1914-1947, Martyrs of 23rd Cavalry, Hanging of 12 Soliders (sic) **in Ambala Jail, 3-Sept : 1915," exhibit at National Gallery of Portraits, Sector 17, Chandigarh.** It has three portraits, the ones we have already shown of Sawar Inder Singh and Lance-Dafadar Lachhman Singh, and that of Sawar Buta Singh.

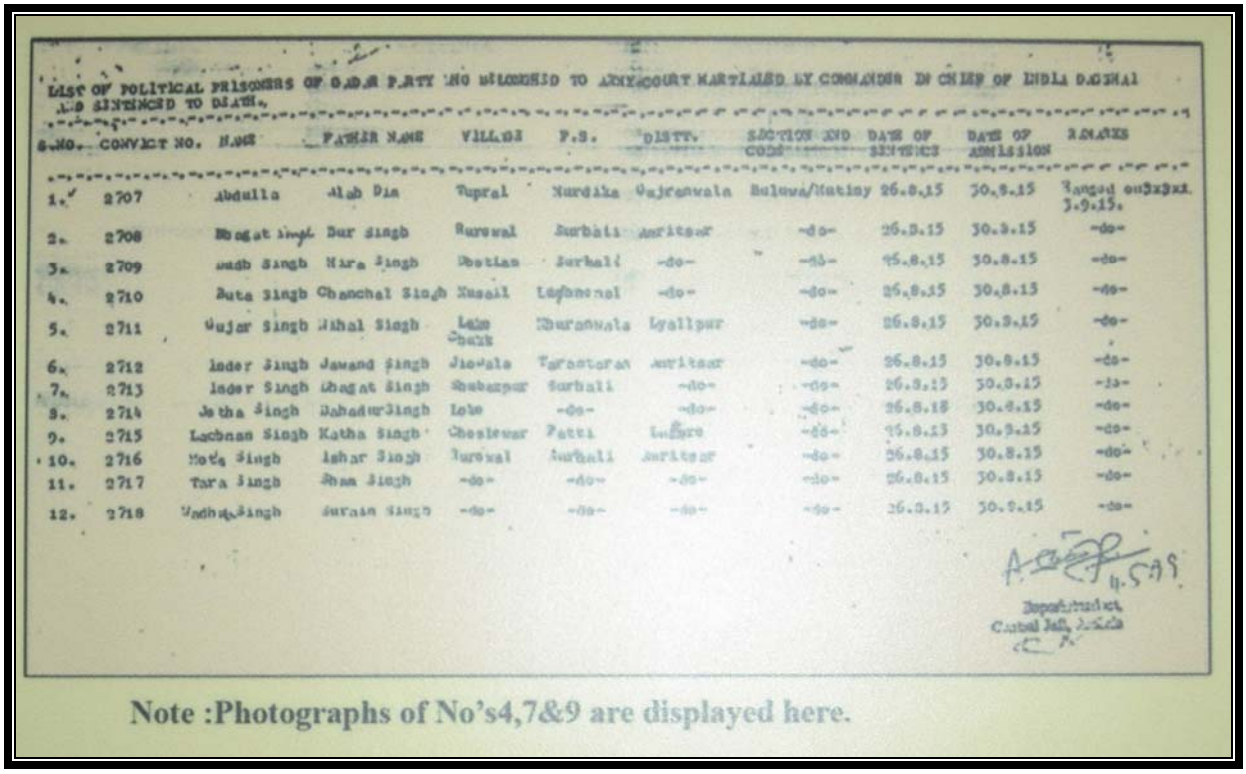




[10a] "Ambala Centerl (sic) **Jail Record."** This is placed, in the gallery exhibit, immediately below the above portrait, and is reproduced on the next page.

Two words in its top line are unclear to me, but when I replaced these two words by 'belonging', it read, "LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS OF GADAR PARTY BELONGING TO ARMY, COURT MARTIALED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF INDIA DAGSHAI, AND SENTENCED TO DEATH." The twelve shaheeds are alphabetically listed, and we find from this chilling hangman's document that, **all twelve were sentenced to death on 26th August 1915 at Dagshai for the crime of Mutiny, brought to Ambala Central Jail on the 30th August, and hanged there on the 3rd September, 1915.** Professor Malwinder

Jit Singh has been as good as his word, this is great! But, *shouldn't due priority be given, I thought in admiration, to the scholar who had got to this old jail record first?* The certification bears the date 04/05/1999, so maybe it was Bhai Nahar Singh, or maybe he had already passed on the baton to the editors of [9]; also, below [10a] was written in rather loud letters "(Courtesy: Mahavir Singh Mann & Mrs. Rajwanti Mann, Haryana Archives)"; are these Manns claiming this priority then, or mere custodianship? *My admiration was based on the fact that I could not figure out how this scholar had made the inspired guess that the soldiers had been hanged in Ambala, and not in Dagshai itself, or anywhere else* (we saw that Dagshai had possibly a gallows, and probably there were nearer ones in the same army jurisdiction, then why a civilian jail).



LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS OF G.D.R PARTY WHO BELONGED TO ARMY COURT MARTIALED BY COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF INDIA DAGSHAI AND SENTENCED TO DEATH.

S.NO.	CONVICT NO.	NAME	FATHER NAME	VILLAGE	P.S.	DISTT.	SECTION AND CODE	DATE OF SENTENCE	DATE OF ADMISSION	REMARKS
1.	2707	Abdulla	Alah Din	Tupral	Nurdika	Gujranwala	Bulowa/Matiny	26.8.15	30.8.15	Hanged on 3.9.15.
2.	2708	Bhagat Singh	Dur Singh	Rurewal	Surhali	Amritsar	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
3.	2709	Sadh Singh	Hira Singh	Dhotian	Surhali	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
4.	2710	Suta Singh	Chanchal Singh	Kusail	Lopoke	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
5.	2711	Gujar Singh	Jihal Singh	Lalu Chak	Churanwala	Lyallpur	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
6.	2712	Inder Singh	Jawand Singh	Jiowala	Tarastaran	Amritsar	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
7.	2713	Inder Singh	Bhagat Singh	Shahanpur	Surhali	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
8.	2714	Jetha Singh	Bahadur Singh	Lohe	-do-	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
9.	2715	Lachman Singh	Katha Singh	Chesiwar	Patti	Lahore	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
10.	2716	Mota Singh	Ishar Singh	Rurewal	Surhali	Amritsar	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
11.	2717	Tara Singh	Bhan Singh	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-
12.	2718	Wadhawa Singh	Narain Singh	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	26.8.15	30.8.15	-do-

Superintendent
Central Jail, Ambala

Note :Photographs of No's4,7&9 are displayed here.

This puzzlement disappeared to a large extent with the last line of the next item.

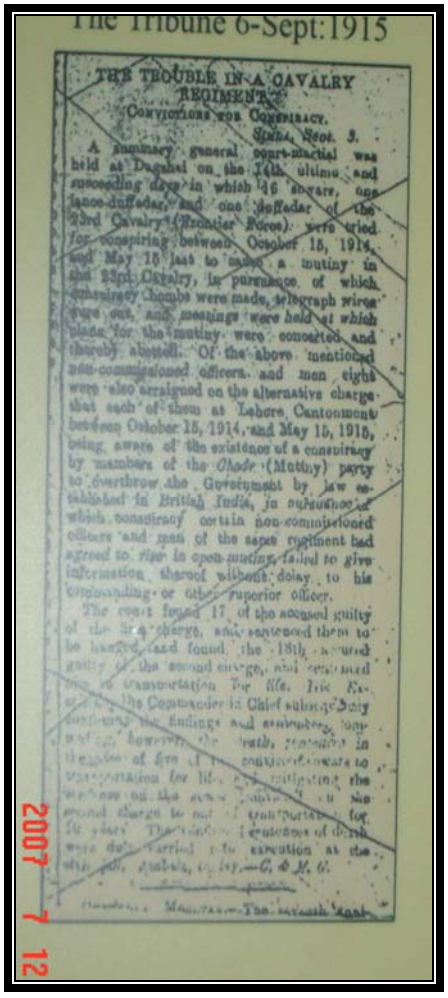
[10b] "The Tribune 6-Sept: 1915." In the exhibit this newspaper cutting was below the right-most portrait (Lachhman Singh) under an intermediate item (which reminds one of Isemonger-Slattery). My reading of this news item is given next – two words of the last line I could not make out at all – followed by its photo.

THE TROUBLE IN A CAVALRY REGIMENT

CONVICTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY,

SIMLA, Sept 5 (?). A summary general court-martial was held at Dagshai on the 14th ultimo and succeeding days in which 16 sowars, one lance-duffedar, and one daffadar, of the 23rd Cavalry (Frontier Force) were tried for conspiring between October 15, 1914, and May 15 last to make a mutiny in the 23rd Cavalry, in pursuance of which conspiracy bombs were made, telegraph wires were cut, and meetings were held at which plans for the mutiny were concerted and thereby abetted. Of the above mentioned non-commissioned officers and men eight were also arraigned on the alternative charge that each of them at Lahore Cantonment between October 15, 1914, and May 15, 1915, being aware of the existence of a conspiracy by members of the Ghadr (Mutiny) party to overthrow the Government by law established in British India, in pursuance of which conspiracy certain non-commissioned officers and men of the same regiment had agreed to rise in open mutiny, failed to give information thereof without delay to his commanding or other superior officer.

The court found 17 of the accused guilty of the first charge, and sentenced them to be hanged, and found the 18th accused guilty of the second charge, and sentenced him to transportation for life. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief confirmed the findings and sentences, commuting however the death sentences in the case of five of the convicted sowars to transportation for life, and mitigating the sentence in the case of the sowar convicted on the second charge to that of transportation for 10 years. The confirmed sentences of death were duly carried into execution at the (??) jail, Ambala, (??) – C, & M.G.


The Tribune 6-Sept:1915

THE TROUBLE IN A CAVALRY REGIMENT.

CONVICTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY.

SIMLA, Sept. 5.

A summary general court-martial was held at Dagshai on the 14th ultimo and succeeding days in which 16 sowars, one lance-duffedar, and one daffadar of the 23rd Cavalry (Frontier Force) were tried for conspiring between October 15, 1914, and May 15 last to make a mutiny in the 23rd Cavalry, in pursuance of which conspiracy bombs were made, telegraph wires were cut, and meetings were held at which plans for the mutiny were concerted and thereby abetted. Of the above mentioned non-commissioned officers and men eight were also arraigned on the alternative charge that each of them at Lahore Cantonment between October 15, 1914, and May 15, 1915, being aware of the existence of a conspiracy by members of the Ghadr (Mutiny) party to overthrow the Government by law established in British India, in pursuance of which conspiracy certain non-commissioned officers and men of the same regiment had agreed to rise in open mutiny, failed to give information thereof without delay to his commanding or other superior officer.

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This newspaper cutting I find simply amazing, for here is the area's most prominent newspaper, publicly reporting the twelve executions in Ambala just two days later, with some details about the preceding court-martial at Dagshai!! This takes all the mystery out of our unknown scholar wanting to see the Ambala Jail execution register, that's what *anyone* would like to do after reading this news item.

It also informs us that **the court-martial at Dagshai began on the 14th August, 1915**. So the eighteen were in this town, probably in Dagshai Prison, before this date, but *when exactly the eighteen were brought to Dagshai we still don't know*. It is likely this was well after 15th May, because that was when one approver from the box-exploding incident started talking in Jutogh, and the eighteen who were on (their way to) the war front, had to be arrested and brought to these hills. Perhaps first to Jutogh, for that would be more convenient for the Simla based interrogators, or directly to Dagshai Prison for security reasons (if so, the "kaffir" story of Sanyal pertains to this prison only).

As per this news item, **one sawar was sentenced to life by the court-martial, and on review by the C-in-C, his sentence was reduced to 10 years,** the other 17 sentences being as we have been reading thus far. Thus we have here *a material difference from what we found in the previously reviewed items*. Even Appendix XVIII of [9]! But I have a feeling in this case it is a slip, Bhai Nahar Singh had to have this news item – for this is the most natural explanation of his wanting to see the hangman's register of Ambala Jail – and that he and/or the editors of [9] overlooked this fact given in their news cutting, probably because of its bad quality.

It seems clear to me that, *if Jagjit Singh* [4] *or Gurcharan Singh Sainsara* [3] *had read this news item of 1915, they too would have made a beeline for the Ambala Jail to get the hangman's record*. (This would have been well within the resources of the "Desh Bhagat Yaadgar Committee." These days this organization has a website and much more, but the email I sent – to obtain sources of the data in [3] about 23rd Cav – bounced back. A similar query to the Deputy Commissioner, Amritsar, regarding the data in the 1976 Amritsar Gazetteer [1], has reached him, but remains unanswered.) *At the very least, they would have then put in their books, some or all of the extra information that one gets by*

merely reading this news item, viz., the date on which the court-martial at Dagshai began, the fact that the executions were in Ambala, the date by which they had been carried out, and that one of the sawars had received a lesser sentence.

Thus it seems true that, **the treatises [3] and [4] on the Ghadr of 1914-15 were written without their authors having bothered to read through the contemporary files of the most prominent newspaper of this region!** This is a bit too much. It is akin, in the modern context, to someone wanting to write, say, "The Fake Encounters of 1990-91," without reading the relevant news items for that year. Yes, Gurcharan Singh Sainsara [3], does include the 'Tribune' of Lahore in his list of references at the end, but clearly he – or even his "Desh Bhagat Yaadgar Committee" as a whole – did not read all the relevant news items from it.

Considering how carelessly even the 'Tribunes' of 1915 were used, should we presume that the archives in Delhi have been used any more carefully? Yes, contacts are essential in India – otherwise even academics ignore requests for information – and there may even be a veil of secrecy, but one can't help feeling that, if someone had really set his heart to it, he would have found by now something as innocuous as the records of a 1915 court-martial. Anyway, I am putting this to the test, so let's see if my 'Paul Drakes', who are still very much at it in Delhi, will help ferret out this record.

Talking about archives, there *is* a citation of [3] that we have still to check, and it *is* to the National Archives of India: using p. 286, the footnote [*] on p. 214 – see the extract I reproduced – seems to say: *"Proceedings of the Home Department (Political and/or Police) October 1915, nos. 671-84, 'India as I Knew It, p. 203'."* The positioning of the asterisk at paragraph-end leaves us in doubt as to exactly which of the statement(s) made in it were based on these references; the latter half of the footnote, i.e., p. 203 of O'Dwyer [5], only gave us a mention of the court-martial and the number of soldiers sentenced to death or life; let us wait and see what exactly the first half will give.

Notes

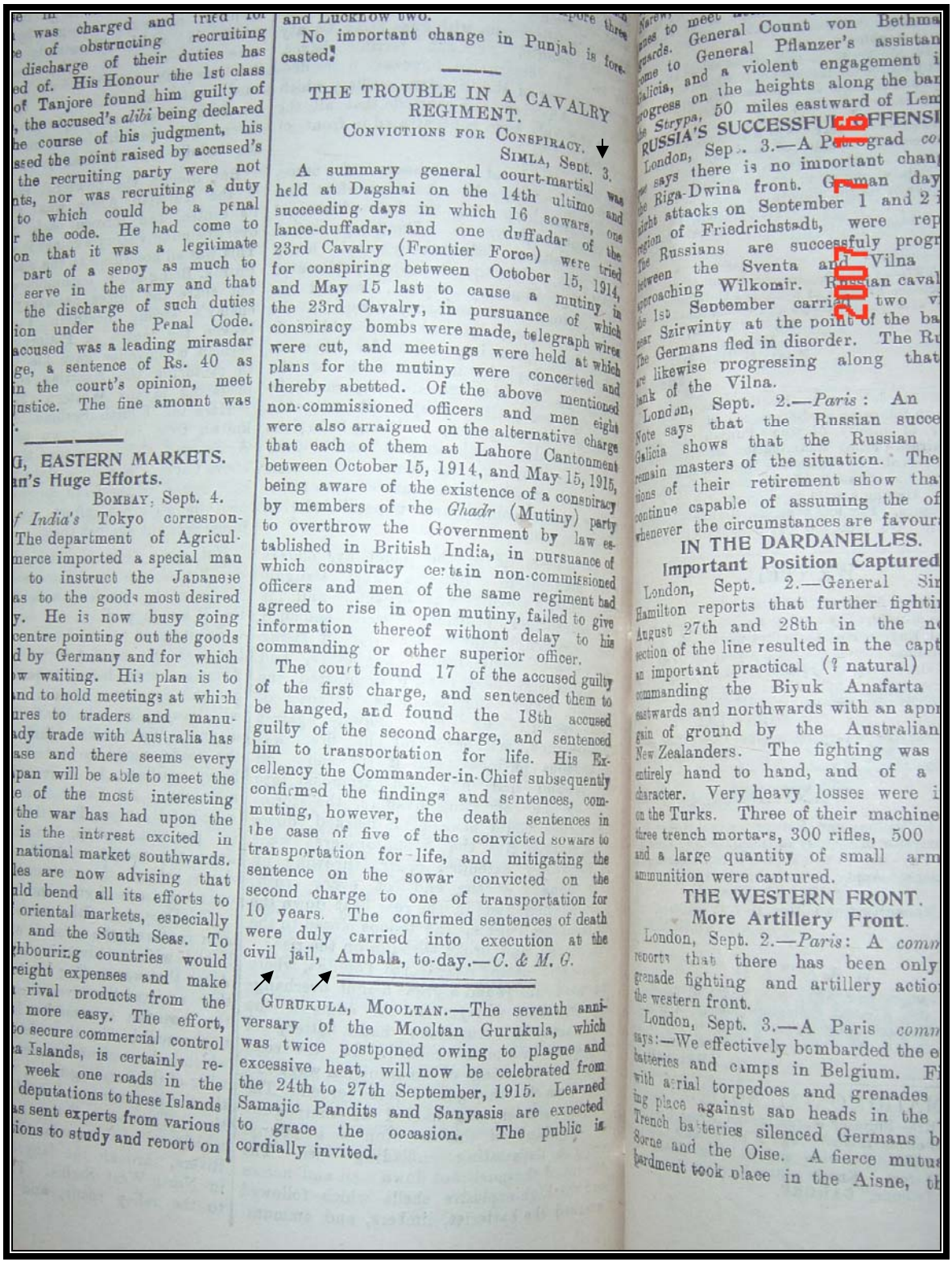
[10.i] *Why were these army convicts hanged in a civilian jail* (Ambala Jail was a civilian jail even in 1915)? This is not clear to me at all. Perhaps only the judgement of the court-martial will explain this

legal/administrative point, but *why was a more legible copy of the hangman's order not used in the exhibit?* The two doubtful words of its top line can be important, for it seems these condemned soldiers were no longer being treated quite as army responsibility. Prof. Malwinder Jit Singh told me on the phone that Dagshai was then in Ambala district – I presume he has verified this – but why should civilian districts matter to the army, its jurisdictions are demarcated differently? Certainly, it was *not* the army's practice to sentence all soldiers to death *only* by hanging, and that too in the nearest civilian jail with gallows. Five years on, James Daly was treated quite differently, he was executed by the army in Dagshai itself by firing squad. Was it by any chance the case that the British Indian Army – so many years after 1857 – was still saving on powder by putting all its non-white mutineers to death only by hanging? Even when this saving was more than offset by the expense of sending them all the way to Ambala from Dagshai?

[10.ii] Again, *why was a more legible copy of the all-important newspaper cutting from the 'Tribune' not used in the exhibit?* It seems from the above photograph that it had been lying wrinkled in somebody's (maybe Bhai Nahar Singh's?) private papers for years, before it was smoothed out, photocopied, and put up as this exhibit. Lots of words were blurred, and there seems even to be some mild over-writing in the end. No wonder, the important fact that one sawar had received a lesser sentence was not observed: I myself had to spend quite some time staring at the enhancement that I had made on the computer screen from the digital picture I took before this became clear to me. Yet, as my reading given above shows, I could still not make out two possibly important words in the end, and am not certain of its dateline. On top of it, it is frustrating that the gallery personnel do not even keep a magnifying glass, that an interested visitor like me can borrow to (try to) read such minute exhibits.

[10.iii] As against this, the names of the functionaries of the Haryana state archives, which loaned one of these barely legible exhibits, are announced in letters of a size you can't miss. Nice people I am sure, but I would have liked also to know *the primary source(s) of the three photographs?* Were these from personnel records in the Army archives, or loaned by some descendants? Or again, the exact reference of the, presumably no longer secret, *'official enquiry report on conspiracy in the 23rd Cavalry'* (from which some Isemonger-Slattery type of generalities are quoted)? And why, pray, does this national gallery not amend those *spelling howlers* on its panels that even a schoolchild would be ashamed of? Or, send someone over to the local 'Tribune' building to fetch a better copy of that news item?

We are faced here with a problem, for **a news cutting from "The Tribune 6-Sept: 1915" is quite impossible!** The point being that – as an easy 'date to day-of-the-week' calendar calculation will show you – it was a Monday on September 6, 1915; but Sabbath was a fairly serious matter in the British India of 1915 – even the presses of the 'Tribune' did not roll on Sundays – so **there was no 'Tribune' on Mondays.** Apparently, like me above, the possessors of the old and barely legible newspaper cutting had misread its dateline as "SIMLA, Sept 5" and jumped to the wrong conclusion that, much like nowadays, it must have appeared in the 'Tribune' of the next day. ***Actually, this news item appeared in the Sunday 'Tribune' of September 5, 1915, and its dateline is* "SIMLA, Sept 3",** ***that is, the very day on which our twelve shaheeds were hanged in Ambala Central Jail.*** Thanks to a word put in yesterday (16/07/07) to the 'Records Section' by an editor of the 'Tribune' who is known to me, I was able to obtain quickly a perfectly legible digital picture of this news item that is shown next.



was charged and tried
of obstructing recruiting
discharge of their duties has
ed of. His Honour the 1st class
of Tanjore found him guilty of
, the accused's *alibi* being declared
he course of his judgment, his
ssed the point raised by accused's
the recruiting party were not
nts, nor was recruiting a duty
to which could be a penal
r the code. He had come to
on that it was a legitimate
part of a sepoy as much to
serve in the army and that
the discharge of such duties
ion under the Penal Code.
accused was a leading mirasdar
ge, a sentence of Rs. 40 as
in the court's opinion, meet
justice. The fine amount was

G, EASTERN MARKETS.
an's Huge Efforts.

BOMBAY, Sept. 4.

f India's Tokyo correspon-
The department of Agricul-
merce imported a special man
to instruct the Japanese
as to the goods most desired
y. He is now busy going
centre pointing out the goods
d by Germany and for which
w waiting. His plan is to
nd to hold meetings at which
ures to traders and manu-
dy trade with Australia has
ase and there seems every
pan will be able to meet the
e of the most interesting
the war has had upon the
is the interest excited in
national market southwards.
les are now advising that
ld bend all its efforts to
oriental markets, especially
and the South Seas. To
hbouring countries would
reight expenses and make
rival products from the
more easy. The effort,
o secure commercial control
a Islands, is certainly re-
week one roads in the
deputations to these Islands
s sent experts from various
ions to study and report on

and Lucknow two.

No important change in Punjab is fore-
casted.

THE TROUBLE IN A CAVALRY REGIMENT.

CONVICTIONS FOR CONSPIRACY.

SIMLA, Sept. 3.

A summary general court-martial was held at Dagshai on the 14th ultimo and succeeding days in which 16 sowars, one lance-duffadar, and one duffadar of the 23rd Cavalry (Frontier Force) were tried for conspiring between October 15, 1914, and May 15 last to cause a mutiny in the 23rd Cavalry, in pursuance of which conspiracy bombs were made, telegraph wires were cut, and meetings were held at which plans for the mutiny were concerted and thereby abetted. Of the above mentioned non-commissioned officers and men eight were also arraigned on the alternative charge that each of them at Lahore Cantonment between October 15, 1914, and May 15, 1915, being aware of the existence of a conspiracy by members of the *Ghadr* (Mutiny) party to overthrow the Government by law established in British India, in pursuance of which conspiracy certain non-commissioned officers and men of the same regiment had agreed to rise in open mutiny, failed to give information thereof without delay to his commanding or other superior officer.

The court found 17 of the accused guilty of the first charge, and sentenced them to be hanged, and found the 18th accused guilty of the second charge, and sentenced him to transportation for life. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief subsequently confirmed the findings and sentences, commuting, however, the death sentences in the case of five of the convicted sowars to transportation for life, and mitigating the sentence on the sowar convicted on the second charge to one of transportation for 10 years. The confirmed sentences of death were duly carried into execution at the civil jail, Ambala, to-day.—*C. & M. G.*

GURUKULA, MOOLTAN.—The seventh anniversary of the Mooltan Gurukula, which was twice postponed owing to plague and excessive heat, will now be celebrated from the 24th to 27th September, 1915. Learned Samajic Pandits and Sanyasis are expected to grace the occasion. The public is cordially invited.

ses to meet
wards. General Count von Bethma
come to General Pflanzer's assistan
alicia, and a violent engagement i
ogress on the heights along the ba
the Strypa, 50 miles eastward of Le
RUSSIA'S SUCCESSFUL OFFENSI
London, Sep. 3.—A Petrograd co
says there is no important chan
the Riga-Dwina front. German day
ght attacks on September 1 and 2
gion of Friedrichstadt, were rep
The Russians are successfuly progr
tween the Sventa and Vilna
proaching Wilkomir. Russian caval
the 1st September carried two v
ear Szirwinty at the point of the ba
The Germans fled in disorder. The Ru
are likewise progressing along that
nk of the Vilna.

London, Sept. 2.—*Paris*: An
Note says that the Russian succe
Galicia shows that the Russian
remain masters of the situation. The
tions of their retirement show tha
continue capable of assuming the of
whenever the circumstances are favour

IN THE DARDANELLES.
Important Position Captured

London, Sept. 2.—General Sir
Hamilton reports that further fighti
August 27th and 28th in the n
section of the line resulted in the capt
an important practical (? natural)
commanding the Biyuk Anafarta
eastwards and northwards with an appr
gain of ground by the Australian
New Zealanders. The fighting was
entirely hand to hand, and of a
character. Very heavy losses were i
on the Turks. Three of their machine
three trench mortars, 300 rifles, 500
and a large quantity of small arm
ammunition were captured.

THE WESTERN FRONT.
More Artillery Front.

London, Sept. 2.—*Paris*: A *comm*
reports that there has been only
grenade fighting and artillery actio
the western front.

London, Sept. 3.—A Paris *comm*
says:—We effectively bombarded the e
batteries and camps in Belgium. F
with aerial torpedoes and grenades
ing place against sap heads in the
Trench batteries silenced Germans b
Somme and the Oise. A fierce mutu
bardment took place in the Aisne, th

In particular, the previously doubtful concluding words of the news item, are now perfectly clear: **"… at the civil jail, Ambala, to-day."**

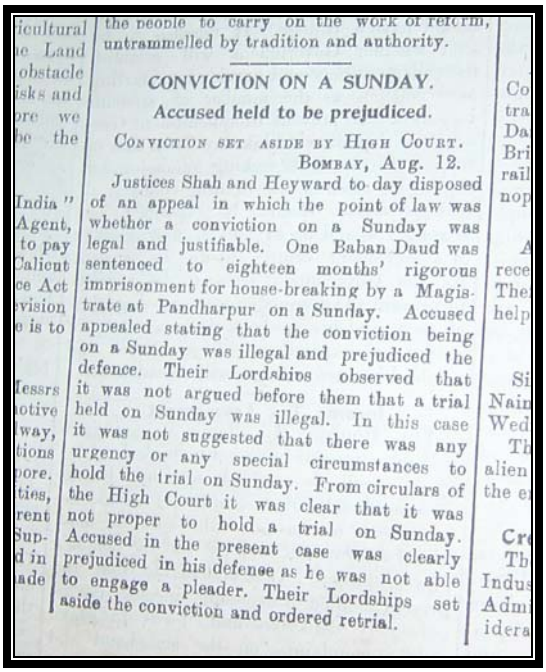
A war was going on, unpleasant news about the army were severely rationed by the Civil and Military Gazette (that's what C. & M. G. denotes), but someone powerful in Simla who could order this official news agency about – I think O'Dwyer himself – had decided nevertheless that the exemplary punishment meted out to the former cavalrymen in his personal escort, who had dared to be disloyal to his King-Emperor, should be made public as soon as it had been administered to them in Ambala Central Jail? One can imagine an aide of his, anxiously awaiting that telephone call from Ambala, and as soon as death's knell rang, sending his prepared script over the wire. Fanciful? Maybe. But I for one would not mind perusing the daily diary and official log of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab for that terrible Friday, the 3rd of September, 1915.

"At the civil jail, Ambala, to-day." So much lies hidden behind these few words. Twelve hangings in a single day, and now 92 years on, this is all that we have, from a news item that the historians of this rebellion forgot to read. The city in which they were hanged has forgotten them entirely, ditto the hamlet in the hills where they were sentenced to death by a wrathful tribunal. Were they hanged one by one, or all at once twelve in a row, or maybe, three at a time à la Rajguru, Bhagat Singh and Sukhdev much later? Were the bewailing parents – the hangman's register gives the father's name as Chanchal Singh, we don't know the mother's – of dashing Sawar Buta Singh there in Ambala that day, and if so, were they allowed to take his body and cremate it properly after Ardas in a Gurdwara? Was grieving Alah Din from village Tapral in Gujranwala, the father of Nalband Abdulla (what did he look like), who had now indeed found his cherished "bahisht" hanging next to that "kaffir", his charismatic leader Lance-Duffedar Lachhman Singh, in Ambala too on that black Friday ? And what about this Lachhman Singh of Chuslewar – his Army record should tell us the undoubted gallantry that he must have displayed in the previous battles of the Frontier Force – what had drawn him, and his cavalry squadron, to the attention of O'Dwyer – himself a lover of horses – and how had the two interacted for the time he was in the latter's escort, what was so special in him that his sawars were prepared to ride with him into the jaws of death, and did? Of course, much has been irretrievably lost, but I have a feeling that a lot can still be painstakingly reconstructed if historians set their mind to it.

[10.iv] A 'fictional historical movie' – i.e., something as mindless as 'Mangal Pandey' or 'Shaheed Udham Singh' – would of course be dead easy to make on Chuslewar and his men, but that is not at all what I am talking about. I am thinking more on the lines of how the Irish have gathered and preserved data on James Daly and the other Irish mutineers who were housed in Dagshai Prison five years later. Something like that will require significantly more effort than a Bollywood movie, but is, to my mind, a much more worthwhile thing to do, if these heroes of 1915 are to be properly honoured.

[10.v] I also browsed through the 'Tribunes' of the three preceding, and the one succeeding, weeks. In the issue of August 21, 1915, I found two mentions of the 23rd Cavalry court-martial, one specified that the court-martial had started on August 14 and will take some days to complete. Since we learn nothing extra from these news items I have not reproduced their photos here.

[10.vi] Let me conclude this journal for now – I'll resume after my 'Paul Drakes' have found me enough new material to review – by reminding you how the calendar calculation can be made. Yesterday was July 16, 2007. The alleged date of the 'Tribune' news cutting was September 6, 1915. One needs (24+31+30+31) more days from this to get to the next year 1916; the next 91years have (91 x 365) + 23 days because there are 23 intervening leap years; this brings us to the beginning of 2007, of which yesterday was the (31+28+31+30+31+30+16)th day. But I knew that yesterday was Monday. So to prove that September 16, 1915 was also a Monday, I need to show that the sum of these three numbers, i.e., (24+31+30+31) + (91 x 365) + 23 + (31+28+31+30+31+30+16) is divisible by 7. This is straightforward, and can be speeded up a lot if we note that multiples of 7 can be 'thrown out' at any time, these are called *calculations mod* 7. For example 91 = 0 mod 7 because 91 is a multiple of 7. Likewise the first term (24+31+30+31) = (3+3+2+3) = 11 = 4 mod 7. The third, i.e., 23 = 2 mod 7, and the last (31+28+31+30+31+30+16) = (3+0+3+2+3+2+2) = 15 = 1 mod 7. So the sum of all the four terms is 4+0+2+1 = 7 = 0 mod 7. *q.e.d.* So such sums are pretty simple as long as one remembers the definition of a 'leap year': these are years which are divisible by 4, except that, for years divisible by 100, we insist on divisibility by 400. So *2000 was a leap year* – one of the 23 in the above calculation – *but 1900, 1800 and 1700 were* not *leap years, then 1600 was.* All this pertains of course only to the usual (post-1582 Gregorian) calendar; some pretty serious historical goof-ups can, and have, been made while switching between different calendars. For your amusement (there was much else in these old 'Tribunes' that was quite interesting too) here is *a news item from the 'Tribune' of August 15, 1915, showing how seriously the Christian Sabbath was observed in British India then:--*



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the people to carry on the work of reform, untrammelled by tradition and authority.

CONVICTION ON A SUNDAY.

Accused held to be prejudiced.

CONVICTION SET ASIDE BY HIGH COURT.

BOMBAY, Aug. 12.

Justices Shah and Heyward to-day disposed of an appeal in which the point of law was whether a conviction on a Sunday was legal and justifiable. One Baban Daud was sentenced to eighteen months' rigorous imprisonment for house-breaking by a Magistrate at Pandharpur on a Sunday. Accused appealed stating that the conviction being on a Sunday was illegal and prejudiced the defence. Their Lordships observed that it was not argued before them that a trial held on Sunday was illegal. In this case it was not suggested that there was any urgency or any special circumstances to hold the trial on Sunday. From circulars of the High Court it was clear that it was not proper to hold a trial on Sunday. Accused in the present case was clearly prejudiced in his defense as he was not able to engage a pleader. Their Lordships set aside the conviction and ordered retrial.

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