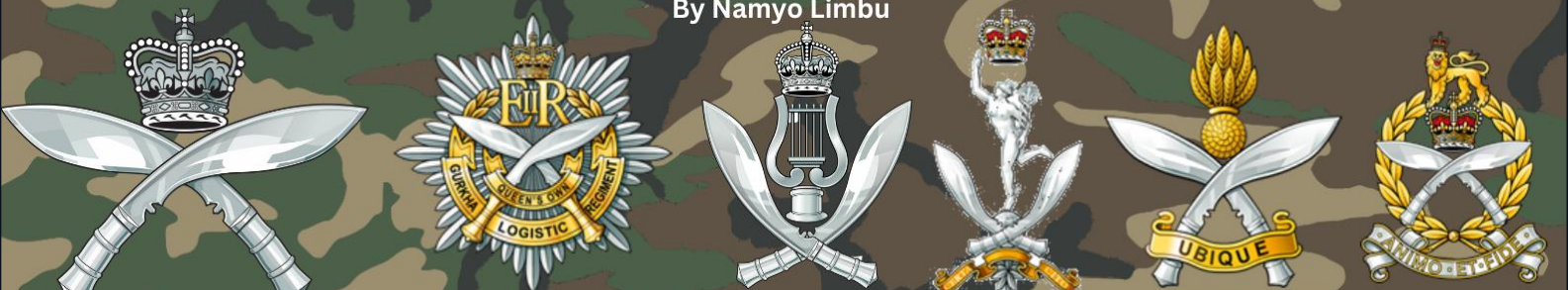




THE HEROES OF THE HIMALYAS



By Namyo Limbu



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Heroes of the Himalaya

Essay Title



A BRIEF HISTORY OF

THE GURKHAS

"BETTER TO DIE THAN BE A COWARD" - GURKHA MOTO



1816 TREATY OF SUGAULI

The Treaty of Sugauli was a treaty which was formed between the British and the Nepalese forces after the hard fought battle from the Anglo Nepal War.



1914-1918 WORLD WAR ONE

World War One was a conflict which had seen 60 Million Men serve in the war, 100,000 being Gurkhas.



1947 THE BAND OF THE BRIGADE OF GURKHAS PARTIIONED WITH THE BRITISH ARMY

The Band Of The Brigade of Gurkhas, chooses wheatear to join the British or Indian Army and chooses the British Army,

1949 CRAETION OF QUEEN'S GURKHA SIGNALS

Queen's Gurkha Signals is created after the splitting of 6 Gurkha Regiments



1940-1960MALAYAN EMERGENCY

The Malayan Emergency was a which saw the British Gurkhas go up against the Malayan Communist which resulted in a British Victory



1962-1966 BORNEO CONFRONTATION

The Borneo Confrontation was a confrontation due to Indonesian not supporting the creation of Malaysia



1994 THE FOUING OF THE ROYAL GURKHA RILFES

The Royal Gurkha Rifles was formed due to an combination of Gurkha Regiments, 2GR, 6GR, 7GR and 10GR.



1814-1816 ANGLO NEPAL WAR

The Start of the Anglo-Nepalese war begins which resulted in a British East India Company Victory



1857 THE INDIAN MUTINY

the Indian Mutiny was a uprising from the Indian soldiers against the British Rule, however the Gurkhas showed Loyalty, stayed and fought with the British.



1939-1945 WORLD WAR TWO

World was Two was a conflict which had seen more than 100 Million men used, 110,000 Being Gurkhas.

1947 INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

The Indian Nation gain Independence away from the British Empire.



1951 CREATION OF THE QUEEN'S GURKHA ENGINEERS

The Queen's Gurkha Engineers is created after the splitting of 6 Gurkha Regiments



1958 CREATION OF QUEEN'S OWN GURKHA LOGISTIC REGIMENT



1982 THE FALKLANDS WAR

The Falklands War was a war which was fought between the British and Argentine forces over the Falkland Island which resulted in a British Victory



Introduction

Nepal, a small landlocked country between India and China surrounded by the Himalayas Mountain Range towards the north, with a population of 29.9 million is the home of the Gurkhas (Zuberi and Karan, 2023).

For over the last 200 Years, the British Army has been annually holding a recruitment selection where 20,000 Men will apply yearly to become a Gurkha with the British Army only selecting two hundred to three hundred of the finest Nepalese warriors, who are ready to serve, protect and die. for a Monarchy almost 4500 Miles away from the Capital City Katmandu (Latter, 2023).

200 Years since the British Army began recruiting the Gurkhas. Gurkhas have been notoriously known as, “Loyal, Professional and Brave men.” Within the last 200 Years of the founding of the Gurkhas, the regiment has seen 26 Victoria crosses being awarded to both Soldiers and Officers in the Army (gurkha_museum,2021).

Which solidifies the fact that the Gurkha regiment are known to the world as a dangerous force within the British Army. Equipped with their silver bladed Kukri’s and their Terai hats, Gurkhas have been fighting alongside the British Army through thick and thin, fighting alongside them in numerous occasions such as, The Battle for North Africa, Battle of Monte Cassino, and The Indian mutiny. Serving alongside the British Army created an iconic and special bonding between both forces which would last for over 200 years making the Gurkhas the British oldest ally in Asia (Gurkha Welfare Trust, 2023).

With my Father Being an active serving Gurkha since 2003, alongside having both my Paternal and Maternal Grandfathers being Gurkha, war veterans from the Malayan Emergency and my Great Granddad being a Captain in the 7th Duke of Edinburgh’s own Gurkha Rifles. It had felt like a moral duty to talk about the history, significance, and importance of the Gurkhas.

What makes these men the “Most Fearless Army in the World?”, “The Best of The Best?” and “How did they play a significant role in WW2?” Sit back and read on as I delve deep into the History, Stories and Significance of the Heroes of the Himalayan Kingdom.



Figure 1: Image of the Gurkha troops passing out at Pokhara in 2017. (Latter, “Attestation Parade Pokhara”, 2017).



Figure 2: A Painting of Gurkhas during the Burma Campaign (Forces.net, 2020).



Figure 3: Image of Gurkhas during the Anglo-Nepali war (Cartwright, 2023).

The Birth Of The Kingdom Of Nepal

The Kingdom of Nepal was founded on the 25th of September 1768 by Prithvi Narayan Shah, a Gorkha King who had conquered the Kingdoms of Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur into a single Kingdom. Which would be known today as modern-day Nepal. With the Shah dynasty ruling Nepal as an absolute monarchy for most of Nepal's history. The newly founded country bordered India towards the South and China towards the North (Britannica, 2023).



Figure 4: Image of Prithvi Narayan Shah founder of Nepal

During the 19th Century the British Empire Led by King George the III of Great Britain and Of Ireland had a vast amount of land around the world, known as the British Empire. With, one-quarter of the world's land surface and one-quarter of the world population under the control of the British Empire. The British Empire was one of the greatest powers during this time and the Empire had also boasted many larger colonies such as America, Australia, Canada, Africa, and India (The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica,2018). India was nicknamed as the Jewel of the Crown to the British Empire and was instrumental into the growth and further expansion of the British Empire in the Spice, Jewel, and Textile industries (Cours, 2017).

The British's Empire eventual power in India

First landing in Surat for trade purposes under the "British East India Company", in the years of 1608 the British East Company had initially arrived with a sole purpose for trading across India. The British East Indian Company at the time were known to trade many Indian commodities such as Silk, Tea and Indian Goods which would be sent back home to the UK. When the British first arrived in India, India was under the large and dominant rule of the Mughal Empire, which had been ruling over India since 1526, building the famous "Taj Mahal" and inventing many things such as the Gunpowder, Portable Cannons, and Beautiful Carpet designs (India Today, 2019) Britannica ("East India Company | Definition, History, and Facts | Britannica Money", 2023).



Figure 5: The Official flag of the British East India Company

The Mughal Empire would stay in control of India until the eventual collapse of the Empire in 1739, due to the Persian Raiders raiding India and Ransacking Delhi. This therefore made any chance of a unified Mughal state impossible. Since there was a large power gap, the British East India Company, started to take in local Indian forces as army recruits and began to take control of land across India after the collapse of the Mughal Empire. (Britannica "Mughal Dynasty | Decline | Britannica", 2023)

However, by the Early 19th Century, the Company's army was 250,000 Men strong. Which was an armed force larger than most of the countries. The Company army would consist of British Officers with several regiments in use with many of the Company soldiers being Indian. Due to the large amount of personnel serving the British East Company Army, the East India Company began a process of transformation from a trading company into a State. The Company began to expand and colonise settlements such as Bombay (March 27th, 1668), Calcutta (On the 20th of June 1756) and Madras (During the Siege of Madras in 1759). During the years 1790 and 1802 the British East India Company began to suffer from an economic crisis. To combat the crisis which, the company was facing, the British East Company had begun to improve and extend trading routes mainly towards Tibet. In the eyes of the British East Company, Tibet was seen as a very good trading opportunity for them as Tibet was known to the world as a desired location for trade. Due to the riches of Gold, silver and Salt which were in large amounts (National Army Museum, 2023) (Singh, 2021) (Gill, "India's Trade with Tibet: Early British Attempts", 2000).

Early Tensions between The British East India Company and Nepal

However, in-order to get through the trade heaven land Of Tibet, The British East India Company had to cross through the newly found Kingdom of Nepal. When the British East India Company went to try and find a diplomatic solution with Nepal, they would quickly find that the Nepalese Government were adamant towards the idea of Not allowing the British to cross through into the soil of Nepal. Which led towards harsh negotiations about the routes (M. Singh, 2021).

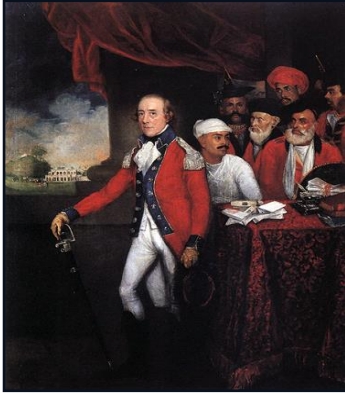


Figure 6: Image of William Kirkpatrick, British Officer who was sent to negotiate with Nepal over trade routes.

The British East India Company would try and relentlessly negotiate with Nepal, sending British Army Officers like William Kirkpatrick (In 1792) Maulvi Abdul Qader (in 1795) and William O. Knox (In 1801) whom all tried and failed to convince the Nepalese Government into allowing the East India Company to pass through Nepal. The failures of the negotiations of the routes, led towards small tensions beginning to rise between the East India Company and Nepal.

Tensions between The Kingdom of Nepal and The British East India Company would begin to worsen. When the British East India Company bought the land of the Nawab of Awadh which meant that The British East Indian Company began to edge closer and closer towards Gorakhpur. An area which was close towards Nepal. Because both powers were in very close proximity this would therefore lead towards larger border disputes between the British East India Company and Nepal suggesting that a war between the 2 powers were imminent (M. Singh, 2021).

During the British East India's company rule over India, the company had set up lots of regencies. Which were lands owned by the British but ruled by Indian locals who were loyal towards the British, with an aim to govern the land under British rules, minimise the amounts of rebellions across the land and protect the land which was owned by the British East Indian Company.



Figure 7: An image of Palpa Today, located in Tansen, Nepal

In the year 1806, The Kingdom of Nepal had sent an armed force to attack the British regency of "Rani Rajendra Laxmi" resulting in the capturing and the control of the hill county called Palpa and Butwal, which were in the control of the British Empire. After the successful invasion of the hill county of Palpa, the Nepali Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa had made his father the governor of Palpa. Bhimsen Thapa's father was known to be very defensive over the border of Nepal, which therefore would result in even more larger border disputes between the 2 Powers.

However, what tipped the scale was the occupation of the Terai land of Butwal from 1804 til 1812 by the Kingdom of Nepal. The occupation of the Terai land had signified to the British that the Nepalese were seen as a threat which led towards the British East Indian Company declaring the Anglo-Nepali war in 1814. (Team, 2023)

Something which played a significant role which resulted in the birth of the Gurkhas.

The Anglo-Nepali War

The Anglo-Nepali war (1st November 1814 to the 4th of March 1816) was a grueling war which was fought between the Gorkhali forces of Nepal and the British Forces from the British East India Company lasting for 489 days. With the plans for expansion across the North Indian Subcontinent on the line, the British East India Company, wore white trousers with red tunics, black hats and 2 white sashes across the chest created a coalition with the Native states in the Garhwal Kingdom, The Patiala State and the Kingdom of Sikkim. Which would go against, The Kingdom of Gorkha, which wore the traditional Infantry uniform called the Guruju Paltan.



Figure 8: A Painting of the Anglo-Nepalese war, with the British wearing red and the Nepalese troops wearing Black with the commander wearing yellow.

The Kingdom of Gorkha was led by the prestigious Thapa Dynasty and the Family of Amar Singh Thapa, with both forces desiring expansion. This war turned out to be a brutal battle, split into 2 main campaigns and spread across 6 areas (Makwanpurgadhi, Jitgadhi, Hariharpur Gadhi, Nalapani, Jaithak and Malon.) The British East Indian Company heavily outnumbered the Nepalese Troops with the East Indian Company having 22,000 Men with sixty Cannons in the first campaign and 17,000 Troops in the 2nd Campaign. All of which against an army of 11,000 Men ready to defend the Kingdom of Nepal.

The Battle of Nalapani

The Battle of Nalapani was the first battle during the Anglo-Nepalese war, which took place around the Nalapani Fort, near Dehradun which was placed in a siege position by the British Forces between the 31st Of October and the 30th of November. The Nepalese Fort garrison was commanded by “Captain Balbhadra Kunwar”. Who was fighting against the East Indian Company led by Major-General Robert Rollo Gillespie who was a proven commander, from his successful battles during the Battle of Java. However, on the first day of the siege he would be killed, from the fatal shot by a Nepalese sniper, with a bullet which shot the Major General through the heart.

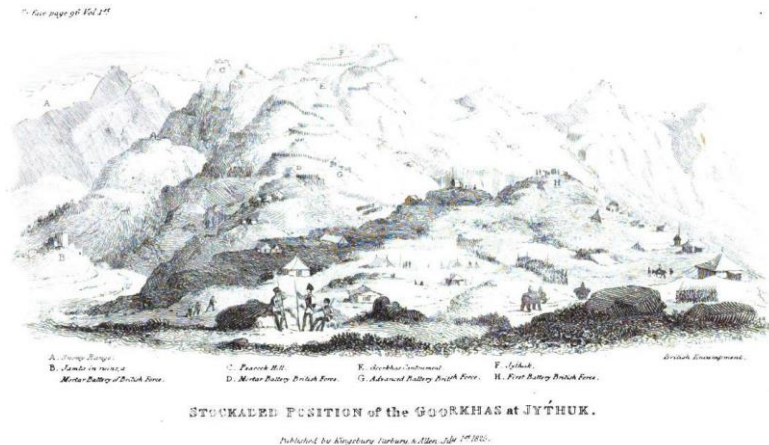
The Battle of Nalapani, was the first of many battles which showed the Nepalese bravery and resilience when facing the British force. Despite the Nepalese army being heavily outnumbered 600 to 3,500, the Nepalese would show great bravery and resistance even when the odds were heavily stacked against the Nepalese, which the British noticed. However, despite the Nepalese troops Bravery, the British siege ended up being too powerful for the Nepalese troops, and it would result in the Nepalese Troops surrendering the Land of Nalapani. Resulting in a British East Indian Company Victory (The Museum Of The Queen's Royal Hussars Churchill's Own, 2021).



Figure 9: An memorial posted created in memory of the Battle of Nalapani which had taken place.

The Battle of Jaithak

After the Successful victory from the British East India Company, during the Battle of Nalapani. 114km East from Nalapani the 53rd Division of the East India Company would go on to fight against the Nepalese forces. Even though the Battle of Nalapani had resulted in many casualties and resources, both forces would go onto to fight each other again in Jaithak.



However, in-order for the British forces to meet head on with the Nepalese troops, they would have to climb up to a height of three thousand six hundred feet above sea-ground. Despite this massive setback, General Martindell who led the East Company had already gained some success in taking some land prior and was feeling confident to take more land.

Figure 10: A Drawing of Jaithak which was where the battle of Jaithak had occurred (Bharatpedia, 2023).

The first attack which the British East India company planned would result in a failure, with the Nepalese forces successfully defending the land against the British offensive. However, the initial loss did not discourage the East India company which would result in a second attack, reaching much more success due to the successful cutting of the Nepalese water supply in their defensive fort. Even though the Company managed to cut off the water supply in the fort, the East India company could not capture the Fort because the troops were exhausted, from the high altitude, and because there was also a short amount of ammunition in stock.



The Major General of the British East Indian Company, Martin General Martindale had begun to lose hope of the battle occurring in Jaithak which would result in a withdrawal, from Jaithak. Despite the retreat, Jaithak would eventually be captured during the later stages of the war under the control of Major General Ochterlony.

Figure 11: An Image of Nepalese troops from the Kingdom Of Nepal

The Battle of Jaithak was important towards the name and respect of the Gurkhas, because during a single day of the Battle Of Jaithak, the British East India Company would lose 300 troops while the Nepalese would only lose 70 Troops. (Cartwright, 2023)

105 Days since the start of the Anglo-Nepali war 4 British Commanders had met up against the Nepalese Army, despite the Nepalese army being heavily outnumbered in-comparison towards the British East Indian

company, the Army had shown great courage, bravery and resilience, Major General Gillespie was dead, Major General Marley had deserted their position, Major General Wood did do little damage against the Nepalese troops, and Major General Martindell was very cautious with his decisions towards attacking against the Enemy.

For the first 100 Days of the Anglo-Nepali war It had seemed like the Nepalese Army was seeing the better side of the war, by being proven more effective against 4 Major Generals and winning one battle despite being heavily outnumbered. However, the unprecedented control which the Nepalese troops had during the Anglo-Nepali war would not last for much more as Major General Ochterlony was in-charge and was ready to show on full display the hard grit and grind he had which would therefore ultimately change the course of the war for good (Cartwright, 2023).



Figure 12: A portrait of Major-General Ochterlony a British General would turn the tides for the British East India Company and gain a victor against the Nepalese forces.

Further Difficulties for The Nepalese Army

Despite having some major wins against the British East India company, in the west of Nepal. The Nepalese Army was very spread apart from each other, which could lead towards a counter penetration from the British East India company, adding more burden towards the stress, an important communication link “Kumaun” located towards the far west of Nepal was defended by only 700 to 1500 men. Which posed a larger problem because it could be easily outnumbered 20 to 1 by the 22,000 Strong Army of The British East India company.



Figure 13: An Painting of Indian natives who had served in the British East Indian Company army.

Defending the area of Kumaun was extremely important for the Nepalese to keep their chances of defeating the East India Company alive because during this time, a East Indian Company 405 soldiers had begun to advance across Nepal. Leading towards the Nepalese forces being pushed back further and further towards the heartland of Nepal.

Despite the Nepalese Army reaching some success from the capturing of Captain Hearsey's men with a flanking attack through Eastern Kumaun. The Nepalese Army were still unable to fend of the powerful British offense. Due to the Nepalese forces struggling against the British forces, the Nepalese Government would eventually send a reinforcement of 4 companies to provide extra support and to also defend Kumaun. However, due to the difficulties of communications across the hills, the reinforcements did not arrive in time to provide any significant help for the Nepalese Army, which had left the situation for Nepal very dire.

The British East India company would make Quartermaster-General, Colonel Nicolls in charge of the Almora Campaign alongside recruiting an extra two thousand regular troops, to fight against a Nepalese Army fewer than one thousand.

Hasti Dal Shah was one of Nepal's most decorated ancient warriors and Commander of the Nepalese Armed Force during the Anglo Nepali War. Hasti Dal Shah and 500 Nepalese troops were sent from Almora to secure Almora's northern line of communications with Katmandu, an area which was under threat by the British's rapid advance. Whilst heading towards the North of Almora, Hasti Dal Shah and his men were caught by the British Forces and within minutes conflict broke out against the British Force.

Within the first moments of Battle, Hasti Dal Shah, would be killed by the British forces. What followed the death of Hasti Dal Shah, was a complete collapse of the Nepalese forces resulting in terrible losses for the Nepalese Army. Once the message broke to the Armed forces in Almora, the Nepalese commanders were shocked.

What followed the death of Hasti Dal Shah and the defeat in the North Almora was the eventual capture of Almora, On the 25th Of April 1815, with 2,000 British Soldiers led by Colonel Nicholls and an army of irregular soldiers led by Colonel Gardiner. With the British Artillery and soldiers demolishing through Almora, the Nepalese surrendered Almora on the 27th of April 1815. This would be the largest victory for the British during the Anglo-Nepalese war as this would also mean that they would take control of the Province of Kumaon and all the fortresses. With the Province of Kumaon falling into the hands of the British, this would mean any hope of Nepalese victory was now very minimal (Britannica, 2023).

Second Battle of Malaon and Jaithak

After the surprising collapse of Almora, the second battle of Malaon and Jaithak was fought out between the British East India Company and the Nepalese forces. During the Second Battle of Malaon and Jaithak, the Nepalese lines of communication between Central Nepal and the far west would be cut off. Which made the Nepalese chances in defeating the British very small. To make things worse, Major-General Ochterlony would summon over 10,000 Men well-equipped with heavy cannons to end the conflict in Malaon.

Kaji Amar Sign Thapa's position in Malaon Hills was heavily dependent on the city of Bilaspur for the food supplies, however due the nature of the hills, being very thin, this too had forced his men to defend in a thin line, which meant that it was only a matter of time before Major-General Ochterlony would eventually destroy Kaji Amr Sign Thapa and his men. Upon finding out that Armar Sign Thapa's men had relied on food supplies from Bilaspur, Major-General Ochterlony would cut off the food supply of the troops making it harder for Kaji Amar Sign Thapa to get a victory over the British.



Figure 14: Modern-day Bilaspur

Once Major-General Ochterlony and his men found the location of Kaji Amar Sign Thapa and his men, they would slowly begin to advance towards the Kaji Amar Sign and his men. With the advancement of Major-General Ochterlony being slow, this would allow the British pioneers time to build roads so that the heavy guns could be moved forward to support the British Attack. Making it even more difficult for the Nepalese forces to gain an victory against the British.

Ochterlony would succeed in establishing a secure position, which was not even a thousand yards from Kaji Amar Singh Thapa's main fort at Malaon. However, upon knowing at the advancement of the British, the old warrior Bhakti Thapa valiantly led an assault after assault against the British Position trying to fend of a further British approach. However, in the act of trying to defend the Nepalese Army, he too would end up losing his life during battle. But, due to his impressive courage, resilience, and bravery despite facing ultimate death, the British made the well appreciated and honorable gesture of returning his body with full military honors, as sign of respect for a soldier who was committed towards protecting his country.

However due the larger number of British troops and firepower this would mean that the British would eventually take over Ranajor Signh's fortifications soon. Both Kaji Amar Singh Thapa and Ranajor Singh Thapa were stranded and were ultimately going to get destroyed by the British, when they had received the letter from Bam Shah which had signified the hopelessness of the situation. With the situation being dire and British Guns being pointed towards both men's heads they would surrender with honor losing to the hands of the overpowered British. After the eventual surrender of Both men this too would eventually lead towards the collapse of Western Nepal on the 15th of May 1815 (New World Encyclopaedia, 2017).



Figure 15: The flag of the clan in which Amar Sign Thapa belonged to

The Second Campaign

With the Nepalese Army being defeated on the Western Front, in the Garhwal and Kumaon area. Ochterlony had finally outfoxed Bada Kaji Amar Singh Thapa. Throughout this campaign Major General Ochterlony had been the most successful British Army Officer during the war. With the successes that Ochterlony had bought towards the Anglo-Nepali war he would eventually become appointed as the “Main Operational Commander in the second offensive”, on the Bharatpur-Makawanpur-Hariharpur front with 17,000 men with many of them being Indian Sepoys.

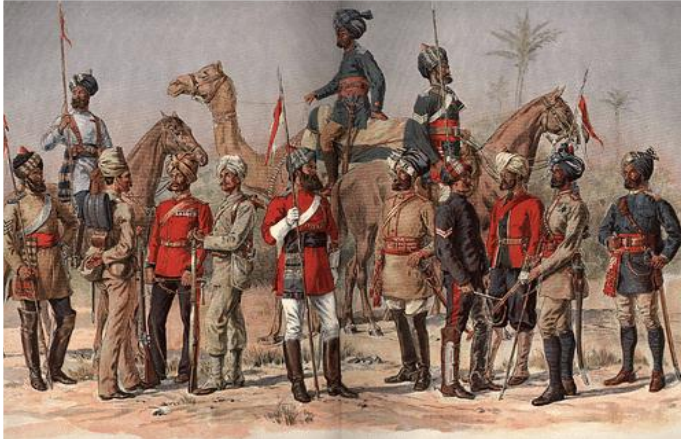


Figure 16: A painting drawn of the Indian Soldiers serving the British East India Company

With the British Feeling heavily confident that they would get the eventual win over the Nepalese armed forces, the British sent a 15-day ultimatum to Nepal to ratify a treaty on the 28th of November. However, the ultimatum which the British had demanded was very hard for the Nepalese to ratify. The Delay of the Nepalese to Ratify provided an excuse for the British to commence the Second Military campaign against the Kingdom of Nepal.

For the British East India company’s second offensive against the Nepalese forces. Major General Ochterlony decided to take a route through the mountains with a very high risk. However, if it was successful, it will be a massive reward, because the passage through the mountains would allow the British Force to directly emerge through the mountains and attack the Nepalese Rear causing the Nepalese Line to split, which would allow the British to claim the lands of Hariharpur Gadhi.

Colonel Kelly and Colonel O’Hollorah where the 2 men in-charge of the attack against the land of Hariharpur Gadhi and used the Bagmati River to reach Hariharpur Gadhi. However, with the help of Briberies taken by the Head’s of Villagers, the British now had sensitive information about the Nepalese defense positions around Hariharpur Gadhi, alongside the immense man and fire-power it would make it harder for the Nepalese to win this losing game.

The British Were able to take 3,000 men through the secret pathway towards Hariharpur Gadhi and on the 29th Of February, Colnel Kelly and Colonel O’Hollorah launched their attack on Hariharpur Gadhi from 2 different directions. The surprised entrance and size of the British forces left the Nepalese Troops shocked, but none the less a battle had begun. However, once realizing that the battle was not winnable, Kaji Rajore Singh Thapa would withdraw his troops back to Sindhuli Gadhi to join forces with Amar Sign Thapa. However, the British did not approach Sindhuli but rather retreated to Makawanpur by the end of March 1816.

The situation became very bad for Nepal and the British due to large amounts of troops lost and money lost wise this then would therefore result in a treaty between the two powers, which we called the treaty of “The Treaty of Sugauli.” (Global Security, 2023)

The Treaty of Sugauli

After 489 days of hard-fought battling between the Kingdom Of Nepal and The British East India Company, what resulted out of numerous battles and lives lost of important figures on both sides would come to be known as the Treaty Of Sugauli. Which was signed on the 4th of March 1816. Britannica (“Treaty of Sagauli | British-Nepalese History [1816]”)



Figure 17: The painting of the Treaty of Sugauli taking place

In the treaty of Sugauli there would be a new border Nepal which would be scrapped up, loosing around 105,000km² of land, the new Nepali border would be set up from the Mechi River towards the east and the Mahakali River towards the west. The British would also set up a residence in Katmandu. The Nepalese forces would also withdraw from Sikkim and also It was also during this treaty that it would become the start of a tradition called “Gorkha Recruitment” (M. Singh).

Major General Ochterlony was quick to recognize the potential of Nepalese soldiers in British Service. During the war the British were keen to use defectors from the Nepalese army and employ them as irregular forces. His confidence in their loyalty was such that in April 1815 it was formed into the first Gurkha regiment called “The Nasiri Regiment” (National Army Museum).

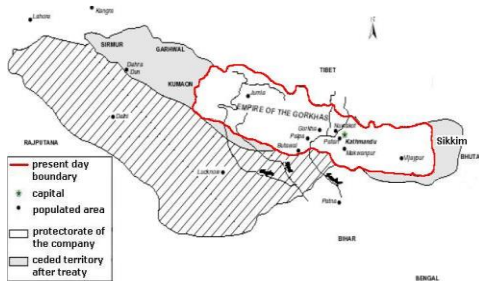


Figure 18: The drawing of the land lost from Nepal during the Sugauli treaty.

The Regiment would be renamed to, “The 1st King George’s own Gurkha Rifles”. More Gurkha regiments would also begin to have their names changed such as the “Sirmoor battalion” which would be changed into, “The 2nd King Edward VII’s own Gurkha Rifles” and finally the Kumaon Battalion would also be changed into, “The 3rd Queen Alexandra’s Own Gurkha Rifles.”

Thus, after the long 489 of Bloodshed, Land loss and Battles, the Gurkhas were born. Britannica (“Treaty of Sagauli | British-Nepalese History [1816]”, 2019)



Figure 19: The Logo of the 1st King George’s own Gurkha Rifles



Figure 20: The Logo of the 2nd King Edward VII’s own Gurkha Rifles



Figure 21: The Logo of the 3rd Queen Alexandra’s Own Gurkha Rifles

Who are the Gurkhas?

Gurkha is from the word “Gorkhali” which were troops who were traditionally from the Hilly people of Nepal. For over 200 Years the Gurkhas forces have been trained to defend and die for the British Empire, serving the British Army; wearing the midnight black uniforms, highland Brogues, Kilmarnock Pillbox hats and the Iconic bladed Kukris. Gurkhas have served and defended for the British Army in numerous battles like the First and Second World War, Malayan Emergency and Sikh Wars. For years the Gurkhas have been known as Loyal, Professionalism and Bravery soldiers who are ready to defend and die for the Army. (BBC, 2010)



Figure 22: The Flag of the British Indian Army, where the Gurkha would serve from the years 1857 to 1947

After the Anglo-Nepalese War, the British Armed Forces began to recruit Gurkhas in a yearly intake which would start in Early November and end in December, with an aim to recruit 200 to 300 of the finest Nepalese Warriors, who would eventually be split into the 3 Gurkha Regiments. The 1st King George’s own Gurkha Rifles, 2nd King Edward VII’s Own Gurkha Rifles and the 3rd Queen Alexandra’s Own Gurkha Rifles.

During the Years 1857 to 1947, the British Empire had a vast number of colonies including India, and since India and Nepal were very close in distance the British Army had been sending the new Gurkha recruits to serve in the British Indian Army. This had remained a tradition for a long time until 1947, when India split from The British Empire leaving the future of the Gurkhas at risk.



Figure 23: The logo of the 10th Princess Own Gurkha Rifles

However, it would be agreed under the British-India-Nepal deal that the Indian army would receive 6 Gurkha regiments, which were the 1st King George V’s own Gurkha Rifles, 3rd Queen Alexandra’s own Gurkha Rifles, 4th Prince of Wales’s own Gurkha rifles, 5th Royal Gurkha Rifles, 8th Gurkha Rifles and the 9th Gurkha Rifles and the British would keep 4 regiments, The 2nd King Edward VIII’s Own Gurkha Rifles, 6th Queen Elizabeth’s Own Gurkha Rifle, 7th Duke of Edinburgh’s own Gurkha Rifles and the 10th Princess Mary’s own Gurkha Rifles. (Latter, “The Partition of India and Transfer to the British Army”, 2013)



Figure 24: Logo of the 7th Duke Of Edinburgh’s Own Gurkha Rifles



Figure 25: Logo of the 6th Queen Elizabeth’s Own Gurkha Rifles



Figure 26: Logo of the 2nd King Edward VIII’s Own Gurkha Rifles

How to become a Gurkha?

Becoming a Gurkha, for the British Army is no easy task. Becoming a Gurkha is a dream many young Nepalese boys dream of, with 10,000 men yearly testing their luck to become a Gurkha with the hopes of being a Gurkha and to be known to their village as a “Lauhre”, which is a prestigious title in Nepal, which many young men wanted. However, to become a Gurkha, you needed to pass through the rigorous and challenging tests, exercises, and medical check, which were created to allow the British Army to recruit the most physically fit and bright soldiers, in Nepal.

Phase 1: Regional Selection

Upon Joining the Army in the months of September, recruits must head towards their regional bases, Dharan in the east and Pokhara towards the west of Nepal. It is during this phase where documents, passports and medical reports are checked. After all of that is checked and completed this would therefore officially make you a candidate to join the army. During regional selection basic fitness tests are conducted, such as an 800m race, pull up test and sit up test. Once recruits complete the basic fitness tests, they then will take tests such as English and Math's.



Figure 27: A birds eye view of Dharan Nepal

However, if any recruits fail to complete the test from the regional selection, then you will be sent towards the “Chautari tent”, where you will be sent home. Once surviving this set of tests, you have been chosen and deemed as the best in your region and will be invited back for selection in January, for another selection round in Pokhara known as the Final selection.



Figure 28: Image of Gurkhas Passing out Latter (“Attesation Parade Pokhara with CGS”, 2018).

Phase 2: Final Selection Pokhara

During the Final selection round in Pokhara, which takes place in January, the best soldiers from the West-side of Nepal and the East-side of the Nepal meet in Pokhara, it is here where the British Army must make a final choice on who will be chosen to become part of the British Army. Basic fitness tests are yet again carried examined such as the “2km run, Jerrycan carry, Mid-thigh pull and the Medicine ball throw.”



The most important part of the Gurkha selection takes place here in Pokhara for the final selection, the Doko Race. The Doko race is a race where recruits carry a grass basket over their head and carry 25kg over their heads and run it up a 5km hill. However, if the recruits do not complete the Doko race in 46 Minutes, they will be sent home.



Figure 29: An image of the Doko race which is a race that consist of candidates carrying 25kg up a 5km hill.

A day after the Doko race the fate of the soldiers is eventually decided, where the dreams come true for these young men.

Once the men find out they are in the army where they receive a bag load of new army clothes which they will use when they are in the UK army, it is also here where newly recruited soldiers receive a buzz cut hair and tailor-made trousers ready for the army.

After soldiers receive their uniform, the first photo of the young men, joining the army will also be taken and sent home to the soldiers' families in Nepal. Once the photos are taken,

newly recruited soldiers immediately begin to prepare to get ready for the intake parade which will happen in 2 weeks' time, in front of the army officers and their families, after parade, the soldiers will parade, then they will be taking a flight to England where basic training begins as a new soldier of the British Army.

Phase 3: Training in Britain

Upon landing in England, the new Gurkha recruits take a 4-hour bus journey from London Heathrow Airport to Catterick Garrison, where they will spend the next 9 Months in a training course, where the soldiers will have, English language, military skills, instruction on western customs and behavior and regimental culture.



Figure 30: Image of Gurkha Soldiers passing out from Catterick.

Soldiers will also stay in Dorm accommodation during the duration of the 9-month training. After the 9 months training, they will pass out from Catterick and move onto their new regiments, where they are given hats of the regiments in which they will move into. (Forces News, 2020)

What makes Gurkhas special and why are they valued in the Army?

Gurkhas have been serving alongside the British Army, for more than 200 years, and within those 200 years they have created a reputation of fierce, friendliness and formidability. On numerous occasions the Gurkhas' loyalty has been supporting the British Army in many campaigns, such as helping the British during the Indian Mutiny. The Gurkhas showed significant loyalty towards the British Army during the Indian Mutiny, for an example during the siege of Delhi, the Gurkhas had shown immense bravery against the Indian rebellions during the battle. The gallantry shown by the Gurkhas had gained the respect of the Officers and Soldiers of the 60th Kings Royal Rifle Corps, which resulted in the Gurkhas' privates being called 'Rifle man' and the change of the Gurkhas' regiments.



Figure 31: An image of the Gurkha forces during World War II

Gurkhas would not only serve the British Army in India but also during both world wars. At times when the British Army were low on troop numbers, The Brigade of the Gurkhas was always able to expand the number of soldiers it had needed, to support the British Army. Gurkhas are also proven warriors on the battlefield. With the Gurkhas' Officers and Soldiers receiving a total of 26 Victoria Crosses, Gurkha forces always fought towards the end and had never ever dared to surrender when in battle.

Once WW2 had ended the Gurkhas too would also be involved in the Falkland's war. The Gurkhas would once again show their professionalism and loyalty with Prince Harry stating, "When you are with the Gurkhas, I think there's no safer place to be, really". Another thing which makes Gurkhas such a formidable force is their bravery. The Gurkhas believe bravery is one of the important things that a soldier needed when joining the British Army with the famous motto, "Better to die than be a coward."

When supporting the British Army, the Gurkhas never shy down to battle, they stare death right in the eyes, with Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw of the Indian Army saying that "If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he either lying or is a Gurkha."



Figure 33: An image of the Young Prince Harry with the Gurkhas



Figure 32: An image of the Gurkha forces serving in the Falklands War (1982)

Importance of the Gurkhas During WW2

WW2 was a war which was fought between the years 1939 to 1945 and was the largest war ever fought with more than 100 million soldiers, which was between the UK, USSR and USA against the Nazi Germany, Japan and Italy, costing the lives of 35 to 60 million people. The British Empire was in its strongest peak with the Empire controlling 25% of the World's population and 30% of the land mass. So once World War 2 had started around 8.8 million men came to support the British Army and their efforts, with more than 110,000 being Gurkha troops.



Figure 34: Painting of the Gurkhas at Hangman Hill during the Battle of Monte Cassino

During this time, the Gurkha recruitment for the British Army was a tradition which had been going on for nearly a century, with more and more young men willing to risk their lives for the British Monarch, during the long 6 years war, 110,000 Gurkhas served in 40 Battalions in the African Western Deserts of Egypt also in the European countries of Italy and Greece, alongside serving the Asian theater in Malaya, Singapore and Burma, with 30,000 Gurkhas being killed or wounded. So how significant was the aid of the Gurkha forces? What did they do? Did it play a significant role in the eventual victory in WW2? Read on...



Figure 35: An image of the 4th Gurkha Soldier Kit inspection (Pacific Paratrooper, 2018).

The Battle for North Africa 1940-1943

North Africa was an unusual but important place which the British forces needed to defend. Thus, a large garrison of British and Commonwealth troops including the 7th Gurkha Rifles, were based in Egypt with a goal to defend the Suez Canal and Protect the British Oil supplies from the Persian Gulf. However, if the British forces lost the garrison, it would also mean the loss of oil supplies, something the British Army in-order to supply the 8.8 million strong army.



Figure 36: Images of Gurkhas during the fall of Tobruk (1942)

On the 11th of June 1940, Italy's Fascist dictator, Benito Mussolini, declared war on Britain and France, joining the Nazi and Japanese powers against Britain and France. Upon declaring war on The French and British, the Italian empire wanted to expand their lands in Africa, which therefore resulted in an attack from Italian Libya to Egypt on the 13th of September 1940.

The advancement of the Italian force was halted for the army to make a series of camps around the small town of Sidi Barrani.

Once the British had found the location of the camps set up by the Italian troops, General Sir Archibald Wavell's Western Desert forces of around 36,000 attacked the Italians in months of December 1940, with the support of the Lieutenant-General Richard O'Connor and his mobile armored force they would eventually outflank the Italians at Beda Fomm and chase them 840km back to Libya, with the offensive ending at El Agheila on the 7th Of February 1941 with the destruction of nine Italian division and the eventual capture of 130,000 Men, with the British Forces being victorious.

After the crushing chase-down and victory from the British Forces in Egypt, Hitler knew that he needed to support the Italian troops so he would send Major-General Erwin Rommel and his men, to help the Italians in the war against the British Forces. Despite the support from the Nazi forces, the British army still had won victories over the Italians.

Despite the victories which the British Forces were gaining throughout the North African campaign. The conditions in the deserts were tough and brutal, water supplies were non-existent and the water rations only allowed the soldiers, 2.25 liters of water for Drinking, washing, and shaving, with the rest of the 2.25 Liters used for cooking and topping up vehicle radiators.

Alongside the struggles for water there was also a lot of struggles in the desert, because of the low visibility. The low visibility was caused from the frequent dust and sandstorms across the desert, making it challenging for the Allies and Axis powers in the desert.

When Rommel was first sent into the desert, he began to make observations to allow him to understand the terrain and solution. Rommel was always frequently described as a "Daring and imaginative commander", with many daring plans occurring it had begun to break the British which posed a large problem.



Figure 37: A Picture of General Sir Archibald, who oversaw the successful offensive at El Agheila

Rommel's offensive and fall

With the strength and support that Rommel and the Nazi's had, he would attack the 3rd Armored Brigade on the 24th of March 1941. The attack was a massive advantage for the Nazi's as the British Forces were weakened by the transferring of troops to Greece and East Africa", since a lot of troops were repositioned to Greece and East Africa, it had allowed Rommel to push back the British to the Egyptian frontier, in the process leaving the 9th Australian Division and the 2nd Battalion of the 7th Gurkha Rifles captured in Tobruk. The Australia forces and Gurkha forces would hold back for two attacks, but it would eventually collapse. After the loss of Tobruk, General Wavell was replaced by Sir Claude Auchinleck as Commander In Chief of the Middle East.



Figure 38: An image of Tobruk during the Siege of Tobruk

Despite the massive set back of losing Tobruk and being heavily pushed back by Rommel and the Nazi's, on the 18th of November 1941 Auchinleck launched Operation Crusader, however luck would be on the British's side because the Germans Tank units had outrun their fuel supplies. This therefore meant that a German offensive was be delayed halted allowing the British to push back the German forces.

Tobruk would be free on the 7th of December, which left Rommel with no choice but to retreat towards El Agheila once again.

With this success, the Western Desert Force, new commander in Lieutenant-General Neil Ritchie, failing to fix the problems in the desert front, such as the over-extended line. In January 1942, Rommel would successfully be advancing beyond Benghazi. The attack would be halted between the months of February to May due to the heavy fortifications of mines by the British, which ran from Gazala to the north and Bir Hacheim to the South.

However, since there was a lack of progression made another fresh offensive would be created which reached larger success, which resulted in Tobruk being captured with 2 weeks. Which forced the British to retreat to Egypt.

However, with the constant back and forth being fought out between the two forces, the final battle would be decided in the 2nd Battle of El Alamein in October, which would result in a British Victory against the Axis powers, with the help of the 8th Army attacking through the lines and pushing the axis powers, capturing Tobruk and Benghazi and even advancing as far as Tunisia. With the victory in the Western Desert, the Gurkha forces would have a new deployment in their hand, which was towards the south of Europe in "The Liberation of Italy". (Gurkha Museum,2020)

The Liberation of Italy

The Liberation of Italy was a campaign which the Ally powers used between July 1943 to May 1945, with the British Army, Gurkha Forces and United States all being involved with the aim to make Italy surrender, and also get the Allies in a better position to attack Nazi Germany and end the war, with an overall strength of 1.3 Allied troops, the Allied forces had a larger advantage in comparison to the 590,000 Axis troops in Italy. After the Victory in North Africa the Gurkha troops too would be deployed into Italy from 1943 to 1945. The 43rd Gurkha Lorried Brigade was one of the largest Gurkha Brigades, containing the 2nd Battalions of the 6th, 8th, and 10th Gurkha Rifles, with the 4th, 8th, and 10th Indian Infantry Division which would be used for the liberation of Italy.



The liberation of Italy began, with the Invasion of Sicily which commenced on the 9th Of July 1943, with landings at the Gulf of Gela, with the US Seventh Army, 1st Canadian Infantry Division and the 1st Canadian Armored Brigade.

Figure 39: A photo Of American Tanks through Sicily

Led by Lieutenant General George Smith Patton alongside the British Eighth Army, led by General Bernard Montgomery. With the manpower being largely favorable towards the allies' powers, they began to move north of Italy, heading towards Rome.

Forces of the British Eighth Army, under Montgomery, landed in the South of Italy on the 3rd September 1943, in Baytown, upon hearing about the landing of the British Army, the new Italian Government, agreed to an armistice with the allies, which would end up being publicly announced 5 days later. Despite the new Italian Government signing an armistice, the Nazi Germans could not afford the Allies edging closer and closer towards the German land. Without the assistance of the Italian Army the Nazi's had to defend and attack the on-coming troops of the allied forces.



Figure 40: Image of Local Children on top of the Sherman Tank in Italy.

The Battle of Monte Cassino

On the 17th January 1944, the allied forces slowly began to edge closer and closer towards Rome, ending up 144km in a rocky mountain called Monte Cassino, however when reaching Monte Cassino, the allied forces had realized there was a strong German force, in a line formation called “Winter Lines” which was a military tactic preventing the allies from reaching Rome. However, in-order to reach Rome and defeat the Nazi’s the Allied forces needed to break the Gustav lines created by the Nazi soldiers, and attack through the line. Something which would take 4 battles to overcome. Which lasted around 4 Months and 1 day.

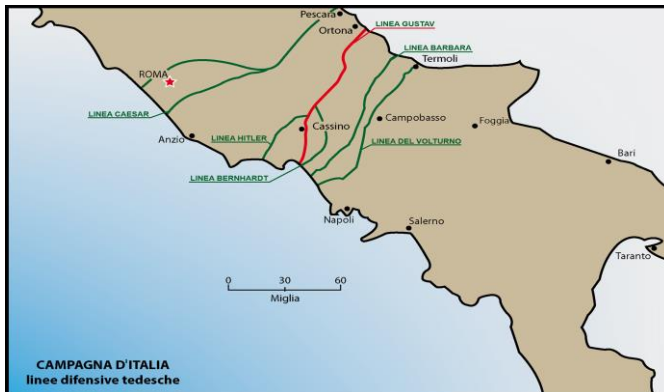


Figure 41: A drawing of the Gustav lines in Italy

First Battle

In July 1943, the US 7th Army and the British 8th Army, including the Gurkhas forces, landed in Sicily, then in September the allied troops landed on Salerno edging closer towards the heartlands of Rome. However, despite successfully landing in Both Sicily and Salerno, the Germans became aware of this and had retreated back into Monte Cassino and the Gustav Line, a line which had gone through the east and west side of Italy which was filled with German defenses, gaining a stronger fortified position over the Allied powers. Due to the Germans retreating into the Gustav Line, it had meant that they allied forces needed to break through the line to carry on the advancement towards Rome.

The Allies had decided that they would attack through the Liri valley because it was the only place where they could deploy the tanks to support the Infantry men alongside the fact that if they had broken through the Liri Valley the allies could advance towards the Casilina Highway which led towards Rome.

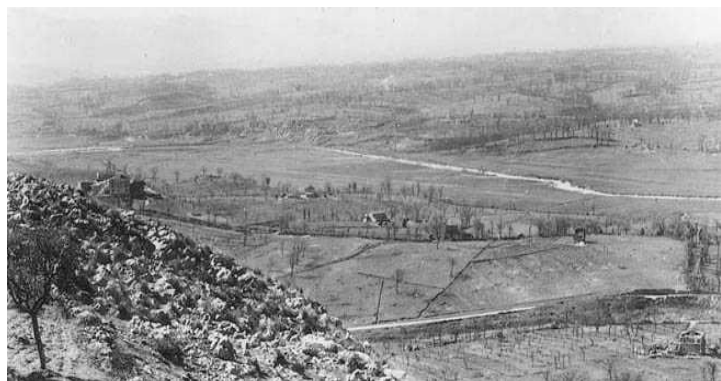


Figure 42: An image of the Liri battle before Operation Diadem

The allies had the advantage heading towards the battle with 250,000 Men and 900 Artillery weapons, against the Germans with 140,000 men and 196 Artillery weapons.

The battle for Monte Cassino would start with the US 34th Division attempting to capture the town of Monte Cassino on the 1st of February. The Americans captured the largest hill, called Point 593 which overlooked Monte Cassino and gave the Americans an advantage however it would be short lived since the Germans would send parts of the 1st Parachute Division and parts of the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division to capture the hill. Meanwhile in the small town of Cassino, the battle became a more house to house combat between the two forces, with the tanks being useless due to the small streets. During the battle for Cassino the soldiers opted to use grenades to destroy fortified buildings.

The allies plan would come crashing down, on the night of February 6th when the Germans recaptured and secured Point 593, meaning that the US Army had failed three missions. On the 11th of February, the Americans would try one more assault with the remaining 738 Men, later resulting in surrender due to the lack of sleep, cold and warm food which they did not receive.



Figure 43: Image as the Monastery near Monte Cassino

Second Battle for Monte Cassino (Operation Avenger)

Due to the American being withdrawn from Monte Cassino, the allies would send the British 78th Infantry Division, The New Zealand 2nd Division and the Indian 4th Division which contained a force of Gurkha troops, to attack the small town of Monte Cassino. However, Major General Tucker of the 4th Indian Division's idea to outflank the Germans was rejected.

Since Tucker's idea to outflank the Germans was rejected, he requested for the destruction of the monastery near Monte Casino with the use of Ariel bombing because the allies' troops believed that there were artillery observers inside the Monasteries which therefore made Tucker believe that the monastery should be blown up. However General Clark and Major-General Gruenther both disagreed with the destruction since it was a monastery since it was a destruction of history something that General Eisenhower would not tolerate.

Alongside the fact that Ariel observers showed that there was no German presence, both General pointed out that a destroyed building would become an advantage for the Germans. It was then at that moment the commander in chief of the allied forces in Italy, General Harold Alexander would go on to agree with the bombing plans of the Monastery.

However Major General Tucker would become seriously ill and would be replaced by Brigadier Harry Dimoline, as acting commander of the 4th Indian Division. On the Morning of February 15th, the planes would fly over the Monastery and decimate the area. On the very same night the 1st Battalion of the Royal Sussex Regiment would slowly attack the German positions, upon being very close towards the Germans, they would open fire and destroy the Regiment killing 34 men.



Figure 44: An image of Monte Cassino destroyed.

With the first night being a crushing defeat the very next the day the Allies would use a battalion number of troops to fire at Hill 575 which was supplying Hill 593, but this attack too would also result in a large failure with around half of the battalions' troops dead. Despite the 2 failed attacks, Lieutenant General Frayberg order a 3-battalion strike with, the 4th Battalion of the 6th Rajputana Regiment, The 1st Battalion of the 9th Gurkha Regiment and 1st Battalion of the 2nd Gurkha Regiment being used to attack the Germans, with a goal that Hill 593, Hill 444 or the Monastery would fall, into the hands of the allies.

Then on midnight, the 3 Battalions would attempt to try and push their way forward but due the large number of strengths they could not make any progress.

Whilst the Indian 4th Division were struggling to get through the defenses of the Germans fortified hills, the 28th Māori Battalion were finding some success, when they had captured the Cassino Railway station but due to not having the tank support the German Divisions too would eventually push the Māori Battalion back. With any progression made by the 4th Indian Division and Māori battalion being a failure, The second battle would end.

Third Battle for Monte Cassino

In the days after the second battle for Monte Cassino, the Germans would eventually capture the whole area of Cassino, alongside bringing the more paratroopers to defend the area. With the number of the paratroopers now being 2,500. The Germans too had also begun to create several fortifications around the area which they had controlled, turning the monastery into a deadly fortress with ammunition, mortars and machine guns across the area.

Despite losing both battles for Monte Cassino, General Harold Alexander ordered for the Third attack for Monte Cassino, with an attack towards the town and from the rear. The attack from the allies would commence with a large-scale bombing over the city lasting around 210 Minutes, with large success, half of the paratroopers in the town were killed and 4 of the 5 assault guns too were also destroyed in the bombings. After the bombs had been dropped the 25th and 26th Battalion of the 2nd New Zealand Division would attack the town, but due to the heavy rainfall the progress was very minimal.

The only real success that the Allies had was when the D company of the 25 Battalion took over the medieval fort of castle hill, which was one of the objectives complete. The following day, the 1st Royal Essex battalion would arrive and secure the hill. Then on March 16th The Gurkhas would arrive and would begin their journey towards Hangman's hill but would stop once they came under fire from the monastery but during the night the Gurkha C and D company would begin to search for alternative routes towards the hill to reduce the amount of soldiers lost. Gurkha D company would be put heavily under fire by the Germans who caught them, and the Gurkha C company would go missing entirely, however the Gurkha C company would be found again the next day, on Hangman's hill.



Figure 45: Painting of the Gurkhas in Hangman Hill

The very next day the Germans would counter-attack against the Gurkha troops, with a brief hand to hand combat being fought out the Germans would retreat with 18 wounded and nondead. Then on the 19th of March, 200 Men from the 2nd Battalion of the 4th Parachute Regiment attacked Castle Hill which resulted in all officers inside the Castle Hill being killed or injured.

Meanwhile in the town of Cassino, the fighting had continued with the allied forces taking 66% of the town it was still far from over and the battle for Cassino had still not been won yet due to the town not being fully taken over and the monastery not being taken.

However more success would come when on the 17th of March the 26th Battalion captured the Botanical Gardens, railway station and the Colosseum. In response to the capturing of these buildings the Germans response with an attack on the 18th of March with 62 Germans coming up against a force of 200 New Zealand troops and 12 Sherman tanks of the USA which resulted in the German retreating. Hangman's hill would also be retreated on March 24th. With a casualty of 2,100 Killed or wounded compared to the Germans 320 Killed and 114 wounded it was a costly battle which did not see much progress occur.

Fourth Battle of Monte Cassino (Operation Diadem)

In preparation for the fourth battle of Monte Cassino, all offensive plans were cancelled and not a single troop had crossed over the Gustav line. For the fourth battle the battle plan was created by General John Harding. Upon studying the fatal mistakes which the allies made in the past, General Harding's new plan was to have an attack which had spanned across the whole front, with attacks on both flanks and a central attack which was through the Liri Valley, similar towards the first battle. However, despite having similar plans to the initial battle, the armed forces for the fourth battle had more troops involved. With the beach of Anzio being secured, it had allowed new fresher troops to be sent into the front replacing the tired and sickened soldiers with the whole process taking a month. With Americans, Indians, New Zealanders, British, Gurkhas, Algerian, Moroccans and Canadians all taking part in the Fourth battle.

The operation would begin on May the 11th with an artillery barrage from 1,600 Guns, after the barrage the Infantry attack would follow suit, the Americans had failed to make any real progress due to being attacked by a machine guns. However, in the North the Poles had reached more success in capturing Point 569 alongside reaching the slopes of Point 593 the Germans would then respond with a counterattack of the 1st and 2nd battalions which would result in the recapturing of the hill. The Polish would suffer 3,000 Casualties and would eventually retreat towards their starting position.



Figure 46: An image taken of Polish Soldiers during World War II

Towards the central part of the battle, the 13th Corps began the construction of bridges over the Rapido river making significant progress along the way, once the bridge was made, a Gurkha battalion crossed the bridge to take the Village of Sant'Angelo which was covered in machine-guns and artillery fire. On the attack towards Sant'Angelo the Gurkhas would come up against large minefields, barbed wires, and heavily fortified buildings.

However, luck would strike on the 13th of May, when the Gustav line began to break. The Gurkhas from the 8th India division with a support unit of tanks would eventually complete their objective and capture the village of Sant'Angelo. With the capturing of Sant'Angelo, the Canadian Tanks would cross the Rapido and through the Bridge. Even more success was coming through the left side of the allied front, with Castleforte being captured by the Algerians with the support of the 1st Motorized division. Alongside the successful capturing of Castleforte, the Moroccans forces too would reach success with the capturing of Monte Maio, which caused heavy losses for the Germans. The Heavy losses from the Germans too would allow the Americans to take full advantage of the weakened and demoralized soldiers and began to press through the Gustav Line

Despite having success in the other areas of the Front, the British Had made no progress at Monte Cassino, with most of the Germans able to fight off against the British attack. Alongside the British not making any progress, the Polish forces too had not made any real progress, with a constant gain and loss of the 3 hills being repeated over and over again. Although the British and Poles where not making any significant progression during the Battle, the Liri Valley would eventually become captured, with the Germans in the monastery realizing that the battle was pointless the Germans remaining forces where ordered to retreat away from the Monastery on the 18th May, the Monastery was captured by the Poles for good. At 1015hr the Polish flag would be raised over the ruins and a bugler would play St. Mary's call to announce the end of the victory. With allied forces having around 55,000 Troops either killed or wounded it was a significant larger loss in comparison to the 25,000 Killed or wounded German troops.

18 days after the end of Monte Cassino Rome would be captured (WW2 Epic Battles, 2020)

The Malayan Campaign 8th December 1941-15th February 1942

On the 8th of December 1941, the Japanese troops would make a rough sea landing towards the island of Malaya which was known as British Malaya. Once the Japanese made landings in Malaya it would start a 2 Month conflict resulting in a massive disaster for the allies, with events such as the Fall of Singapore and the fall of Malaya which caused the destruction of the British Empire's influence across the far east of Asia.

During WW2, German and Italian forces were affecting the allies in the African and European theater of the war, however in the Asian-Pacific theater the Japanese forces began to quickly advance through the Asia-Pacific Theater. With their aims to expand their sphere of influence across Asia, Japan became a massive threat for Allied forces, by 1941, the Japanese Empire had taken, Korea (1910), Taiwan (1895) and various parts of mainland China (1931) which was a growing threat for the British. Because the British had many colonies in Asia such as India, Singapore, and Malaya.



Figure 47: Images of British Soldiers in Singapore

With fears of Japanese colonization growing worse and worse, a large Naval base would be created in Singapore with the goal which was that it would be able to get rid of any Japanese invasion. However, as the war would prolong, the battleships which were proposed to be in Singapore were taken elsewhere which had left the colonies of Singapore and Malaya at a very high risk of invasion from the Japanese forces.

Tensions began to grow even further when in July 1941 the Japanese forces had taken Vichy France's colony of Indochina (Modern day Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam) which made the British very uneasy since the new Japanese colony Indochina, possessed a large Naval and Air base located towards the South which stared directly towards British Malaya, which meant that an Invasion on Singapore, Dutch East Indies and Malaya were imminent. But to relieve tensions, on the 25th of October, the British Empire would send Admiral Sir Tom Philips, alongside his eastern Fleet which consisted of the newly made HMS Prince of Wales, HMS Express and HMS Electra to intimidate the Japanese forces, which would arrive in Late November.

Despite bringing in Naval forces to scare of the Japanese forces it would fail. With the plans to attack Hong Kong, Burma, Malaya, East Indies, and Philippines all on the 8th of December, which would solidify the Japanese strength in Asia.



Figure 48: Image of the newly created Prince of Wales

On the 8th of December the Admiral Sir Tom Philips would get the news that Pearl Harbor was bombed, and that hostile Japanese Troops were entering into the North of Malaya which signified that the British was now at war with the Japanese Empire.

The Sinking of HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Electra

The Prince of Wales was one of the newest Battleships which was in service for the Royal British Navy, which had set sail to Singapore alongside 3 other ships. At 1am on the night of 9th of December, the HMS Prince of Wales, HMS Repulse and Destroyers which would be known as Force Z would set off on a voyage North. By 1:30PM around the North of Malaya, force Z was spotted by a Japanese Submarine which would signal the position of the convoy. Once the message was sent a squadron of planes at Indochina were preparing to destroy Force Z. By 4:30PM the HMS Prince of Wales would spot more reconnaissance planes flying over force Z which had signified that the Japanese forces knew where they were.

Due to their position being caught, it meant that Force Z would be forced to turn around and flee for its safety. The journey back to Singapore was 500 Miles, however when turning around to return to Singapore, a Japanese Submarine found the location of Force Z, allowing the Japanese Planes to get ready to attack Force Z.



Figure 49: Image of HMS Electra

With call of Japanese forces arriving at Kuantan, Force Z would head towards Kuantan to only find that there was nothing but “complete peace”, to make things even worse the Japanese Submarine would yet again spot the location of Force Z.

After finding out there was no Japanese force in Kuantan, the Fleet would move south towards Singapore, without asking for Air Support which would cost the fleet dearly. At 11AM, 8 Japanese Bombers had appeared out of the Horizon which promptly meant that Force Z would use their anti-air battle guns against the Japanese Planes which had no real use, resulting in the damage of the HMS Repulses port hanger. After that attack 9 torpedo planes would follow suit in pairs and threes to confuse Force Z resulting in larger damages.

At 11:42AM the Japanese Torpedo would strike gold when the 2 torpedoes smashed into the HMS Prince of Wales, which left a serious injury towards the boat. The steering and engine rooms were severely destroyed which put the ship into a continuous turn which was made worse when at 12:10 AM the men on board the ship had claimed that the ship was no longer in use. By this time there was a constant wave of Japanese planes flying over the area now with a mission to destroy Force Z.

At 12:33AM HMS Repulse one of the oldest ships in the Royal Navy would end up being sunk shortly after 13:20 HMS Prince of Wales would sink, after only 325 Days into Service.

The losses of 2 Capital Ships in the HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse was a massive failure which had resulted in the loss of the most significant battle ships.



Figure 50: Image of HMS Repulse

The Plan to Defend Malaya

With the fall of the 2 most important battleships in the HMS Prince of Wales and the HMS Repulse, plans for a defence of Malaya were beginning to be drawn up. Lieutenant General Arthur Percival was the General Commanding Officer in Malaya and he had estimated that the army would need 48 Battalions of men to defend Malaya successfully, however by the time December had rolled around there was only 30 Battalions available which were from the 8th Australian Division, 11th Indian Division, 9th Indian Division, Reserves and Malayan Reserves.

Most of the forces which arrived at Malaya were part of commonwealth troops which had not trained together and were not prepared for the Jungle Warfare which Malaya had. Many of the Indian soldiers in Malaya were new recruits which were prepared for desert warfare, not Jungle warfare. To make things worse the British had a lack of communication, Armour and Understanding of the terrain which they were fighting in.



Figure 51: British Troops training in Malaya 1941

However, on the 8th of December, Lieutenant General Tomoyuki Yamashita, was commanding officer of the 25th Army made landings with the 5th and 18th Division on the coast and the Imperial Guards through the north of Siam (Thailand). The 25th Army had more experience in the battle of war, most of the army served in the Chinese war, they were trained for the conditions of Malaya and were motorised armoured. Alongside being supported by the aircraft of the 3rd Airborne Division with the Japanese Navy.

Both sides believed that the battle for the air over the Northern Malaya would play an important part for the outcome of the battle, which would lead towards the RAF building bases on the northeast of the peninsula, which was made to extend the range over the sea as far as possible. It was estimated by the troops in Malaya that a force of 566 Aircraft would be needed, however the headquarters in London disagreed at the amount of the aircraft which they needed, they had suggested that they would only need 336 aircraft, 200 short of the original estimation. However, in December 1941 only 215 Aircraft would be sent towards Malaya, which was almost of half of the original estimate and 121 Aircraft short of the number of aircraft which London had suggested.

The Indian 3rd Corps which consisted of the 9th and 11th Division of 30,000 were given the task to defend Northern Malaya from the impending Japanese attack. The 8th Australian Division were given the task to defend the state of Johore against Japanese Landings with 2 more brigades being stationed in Singapore. There were 5 Brigades sent to defend the Malaya, with 4 of the Brigades being sent to the Northern Frontline, the strongest Unit was the 11th Division. The 11th Division was in the north-west to defend Malaya's northern boarder with Siam, with 3 units of the 26th Gurkha Brigade, 15th Indian Brigade and 6th Indian Brigade ready to defend Malaya. Alongside the 11th Indian Division defending the northern boarders in east coast of Malaya, the 9th Indian Division was given the role to protect airfields at Kota Bharu and Kuantan. However, it had only 2 Brigades with no reserve troops available, with neither the 9th nor 11th division being in a position to support each other if any failures did occur.

On the night of the 4th of December, a Japanese Convoy of 19 ships would set off on there journey to attack Malaya, however on the 6th of December an Australian reconnaissance plane would report that the fleet were moving towards the south of cape, Cambodia. This would then leave a massive decision to fall into the hands of the British Officers, with the plans being to use operation Matador, a plan which included the invasion of Thailand. In-order to capture key ports of Singapore and Pattani to prevent any successful Japanese invasion, if the ports where successfully taken then it would leave the Japanese with no other choice but collect there

supply from Bangkok which would affect the Japanese Invasion of Malaya, due to Bangkok being a much longer distance.

However, it would take a long for time for operation Matador to be conducted by the Commander in Chief of the far east Brooke-Popham. Brooke-Popham was very hesitant to conduct operation Matador because the operation meant the British forces would have to invade a neutral Siam, making the British forces look like the aggressors in the war. Which would make the US less likely to support them. With the Indian III Corps in-charge of conducting operation Matador it would alter towards the highest level. But since it had taken a long time for the operation to be given the sign to attack, it had made the operation more and more unlikely due to the fact that the operation needed to cover a lot of land before reaching the 2 key ports.

With the British officers waiting for news of a Japanese attack, they would receive news that Japanese forces had made landings at the beach of Kota Bahru on the Northeast coast of Malaya. The invasion of Malaya would commence with an attack from the 23rd Infantry Brigade of the 18th Division led by Major General Hiroshi Takumi. Upon arriving at the beach, the invaders were quickly met by fierce resistance from the 8th Indian Brigade under the commander of Brigadier Berthold Key.

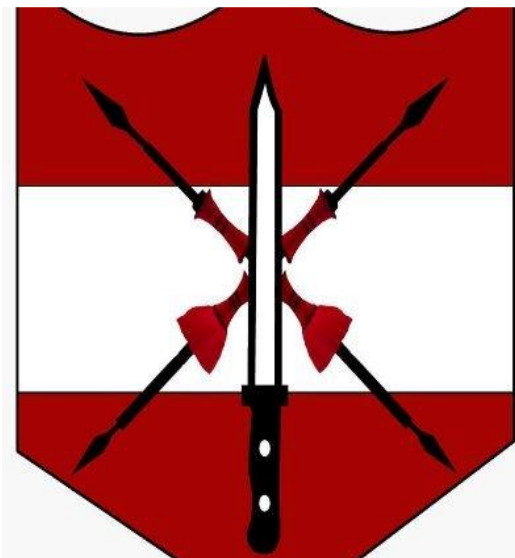


Figure 52: The Logo of the Indian III Corps

A single Indian Battalion would be dug of 10 Miles across the beach defending the beach from the Japanese invasion which made the Japanese forces loose heavy casualties during the 1st wave of the Japanese forces in the beaches. However, at 1am the Japanese would gain a foot hold after intense fighting in the beaches. With the Japanese forces making successful landings at the beach, the foothold would be located around 2 Miles from the RAF Airfield. At the 2AM the RAF would begin to make their attack against the Japanese force, with the pilots attempting to make a successful bombings over the 3 Ships transport which had carried Takumi's men, which resulted in 2 ships being damaged and a third one being sunk which was a small victory that the RAF had won over the Japanese forces.

However, after 4 hours of intense fighting at 3:45AM the Indian forces had lost the beach to the wave of the Japanese attacks which meant that the airfield was already under threat of being captured by the Japanese. Within moments the Indian forces were ordered to form a counterattack from the north and the south, to prevent a further advancement of the Japanese troops, despite the formation of a counterattack the Japanese troops had slowly began to get an advantage against the defending Indian troops. At 7pm the position to defend the beach was now lost, with Indian Troops retreating back to Kota Bharu. By the end of the day the 8th Indian Brigade had been forced back further, and a Japanese foothold in the east of Malaya had been successfully formed, which had resulted in 320 Killed and 528 Wounded from the Japanese side and 68 Killed and 360 Wounded from the British.

After the loss of Kota Bharu, General Sir Lewis Heath commander of the Third Indian Corps had asked for a retreat which would mean that the Japanese would gain substantial amounts of land. With the idea that the 8th Indian brigade would be closer towards a network of troops in the south and west which was better than being isolated in the east.

On the 8th of December 1941, the commander in chief of the British Empire's armed forces in Malaya, Air Chair Marshall sir Robert Brook-Popham would go on to inform Lieutenant General Lewis Heath, that Operation Matador would be cancelled, which left the 11th Division no choice but to retreat south towards Jitra.

Despite Operation Matador did not happen, Operation Krohcol was still going to take place, which was a plan which involved the British Forces moving into Siam to capture the area called the ledge. It would not be a successful invasion as the Japanese forces would beat the British towards the ledge and begin to push the British back to the Malaya border.

Things were not going much better for the British forces in the northern parts of Malaya. Laycol was a mechanised delaying force which was being sent to drive across the border, which would commence on the 8th of December. Laycol would hold a position 10 Miles into Thailand by dusk on the 9th of December. However, an armoured Japanese Column would attempt to arrive in the dark, which resulted in the Laycol halting the attack, but the Japanese truck and tanks would stop moving, because an infantry force would arrive and began to aggressively attack the Laycol forces. The aggressive attack from the Japanese left the British troops with no choice but to retreat all the way back towards Jitra.



Figure 53: Image of British Malaya, where the Japanese Invaded

Battle of Jitra

Since, the Operation Matador had not taken place the use of the ports of Singora and Pattani in Siam would allow the Japanese 5th Division to arrive at shore safety. With the 42nd Infantry regiment heading to Kroh, while the 11th and 41st Regiment headed towards the south, with the support of a battalion of tanks and a battalion of artillery, where the British troops were at large speed. With the Japanese forces rapidly heading towards the south, the 11th Indian Division began to make fortification at Jitra to make it harder for any successful Japanese advancement to take place, a battalion of Punjabi forces would be sent to try and slow down the rapid Japanese offensive by building fortification at the Village of Changlun.



Figure 54: Logo of the 11th Indian Division

While the troops were digging in to defend the RAF, the RAF base itself was attempting to desert the base due to bombing which had destroyed the area on the 9th of December. General Murray-Lyon was not aware of what was happening with the desertification of the RAF base and was not alerted about the desertification of the base. The General would not be alerted about the desertification until soldiers had reported fire from the grounds of the Base, because it would be found out that the RAF troops began to destroy the base, in fears of a Japanese attack.

On the Early mornings of the 10th of December, the reconnaissance regiment of the Japanese 5th division, under the command on Lieutenant Colonel Shizuo would meet up against the Punjabi Battalion which was north of Changlun. Lieutenant Colonel Shizuo force comprised of tanks, artillery and motorised infantry quickly pushed the Indians towards the heart of Changlun, where the Punjabi battalion would harshly defend the area for the rest of the day.

The Commander of the 15th Indian Infantry Brigade, Brigadier Garret asked for reinforcements to defend against the Japanese advancement. In the response to the call from reinforcement a Gurkha Battalion would be sent to take the position at Asun, which was halfway between Changlun and the Jitra line.

After the dawn of the next day, Colonel Saeki would renew his attack and eventually force the Punjabis to retreat. However, whilst the Indians were retreating, they would be overrun by the Japanese, due to the Indians not expecting the Japanese to attack them at such as aggressive and rapid pace. The rapid advancement of the Japanese forces would be halted when an anti-tank rifle knocked out the leading vehicle, of the Japanese forces but due to failures of destroying the bridge towards Asun, the Japanese would advance further.

With the Bridge being failed to be destroyed the Japanese forces could march on and take on the Gurkha forces, who were inexperienced to fight in jungle-warfare. Due to not being trained to fight in Jungle-warefare and also not being able to fight against Tanks the Gurkha forces which would result in a large loss of around 500 Casualties and the loss of anti-tank weapons and batteries.

After defeating the Gurkhas, the Japanese would carry on advancing towards the Jitra line in such rapid succession that the Anti Tanks ditch was not ready to be used. A small attack from the Japanese troops would be stopped at around 8:30PM with a more powerful attack which came through in the morning which had resulted in a serious wedge between the 1st Leicester and the 2nd and 9th Jats. Gurkha Battalions would once again be used to support the 2nd and 9th Jats. With the support of heavy machine guns and artillery the British and Indians troops were able to prevent a Japanese Breakthrough by this time Major General David Murray Lyon realised that there was no point in defending the Jitra line and he had requested for another retreat towards the south of Malaya towards Gurun.

However, the Idea of retreat was not accepted by the Commander in the east, but in the afternoon the fighting between the Japanese and British would get worse as more Japanese battalions would be sent to penetrate the British Defence line. Things would get worse as a line would begin to get split between the 1st Leicester and Jats which made retreat even more difficult, again General Murray-Lyon had requested to be able to retreat. Which would be granted at 9PM. At 9PM in the Dark the British were now forced to retreat in a poor order, which had resulted, in large congestion and some battalions not being aware of the retreat. Eventually at 4:30 in the morning the retreat from Jitra would be successful resulting in a Japanese victory.

Further Troubles for the British

The troops of the 15th Indian Brigade went from around 2,400 troops to six hundred men and the 28th Battalion of the 1st Gurkha were completely wiped out.

After the retreat of the British forces, being barely successful, they would arrive Gurun, which was a position that was the best for defending Malaya from the Japanese army. Upon arriving in Gurun, the British forces would spend days trying to create an effective number of defensives ready to repel any Japanese impending attack. 2 Days after the British had arrived in Gurun the Japanese forces would arrive, attacking straight down the road in an attack similar to Jitra. The first assault towards Gurun was repelled with the Japanese losing lots troops, but the small victor would be overturned as during the night a second attack would drive a strong Japanese force all the way towards the Head Quarters of the 6th Brigade, which resulted in the destruction of the Headquarters and a forced retreat.

Dislodged from their position the 11th Division began to retreat repeatedly leaving RAF Butterworth and the island of Penang Isolated towards the Japanese force. The isolation of Penang Island would result in the death of 5,000 Civilians, the island would be occupied on the 19th of December. Which meant that the Japanese had dominated over the Air war, in Malaya. The retreating of the 11th division had become chase by the Japanese troops. It was at this point that the once strong 11th Division was now crippled with a small number of soldiers and low amount of morale. Due to the failures of the 11th Division, on the 23rd Major General David Murray-Lyon would be sacked, and they would be replaced by Brigadier Archibald Paris who was leading the 12th Brigade. More changes would happen to the senior commanders as Commander-in-chief, in the far east Air Chief Marshal, Robert Brooke-Popham too would also be replaced by a unified allied command for the whole of Southeast Asia.

By Christmas the British had retreated furthermore towards Kampar, where there was a large number of hills and mountains present which meant that the empire could not be flanked from the East. The Japanese would arrive, to fight up against a more resistant Japanese Force. The Japanese would choose to attack two battalions north of the village of Sahum which was a failure, as the the Gurkhas would redeem themselves in fierce hand to hand to combat against the Japanese attackers, resulting in a retreat from the Japanese. The same story would be repeated as the 6th and 15th Brigade would fiercely resist an attack supported by the British Artillery which had held a perfect position in the mountains.



Figure 55: A drawing of Kukri which is a traditional Knife used by the Gurkha's.

The Japanese force would attempt to heavily break down the defences of British Army in the west coast of Kampar, the position of the British would be in trouble as the Japanese forces began to make landings around the Perak River and the Bernam River. The 12th Brigade would be immediately moved to face up against the Japanese forces, but the forces were outnumbered, and they were pushed back. Due to the 11th Division being attacked from all sides the Division would move south and once again retreat, this time in a more successful manner. Similarly, towards the East coast

the Japanese forces would defeat the 22nd Indian Brigade at Kuantan on the 3rd Of January, with the capturing of the town and another airbase.

With the rapid advancement of the Japanese on the west coast, the British were starting to make another retreat towards the most southern state of Malaya in Johore, in-order to secure, the key city of Kuala Lumpur. With the plan to defend Kuala Lumpur, to the death until more reinforcements arrived however this would a be a plan which did not as well as it was intended. The General of the Japanese 25th Army Tomoyuki Yamashita, wanted a quick victory over the British and knew the British were weakened. Tomoyuki Yamashita would begin to push his forces towards the south as fast as possible, the Japanese infantry forces would use Bicycles to keep up with the armoured vehicles.

The Rapid progression towards the south would be halted on the 5th of January, when the Japanese forces would meet up against a British force which was dug up into defensive positions in slim river. The 12th Brigade and the 28th Brigade were deployed into the area to with anti-tank guns, the troops were well prepared, but they were also tired with low morale because they had retreating for 180 Miles within the last 3 weeks.

With the rapid success of the Malaya, it meant that the capturing of Singapore was a reality. In-order to defend Singapore reinforcements were starting to arrive to improve its defences. With 45th Indian Brigade and then the 44th Indian Brigade and the British 18th division later in January. On the 5th of January the Japanese tank division would be able breakthrough the first line of defences by the 19th Hyderabad's and the 5th and 2nd Punjabs. At 7AM the Japanese would destroy the 2nd Argyll Battalion. In a last ditch attempt the British tried to destroy Trolak Bridge which had failed massively, which meant that the road towards the South was completely open, the Japanese tanks steamed ahead leaving the infantry troops behind.

Within minutes the Japanese tanks would sweep away the 1st and 2nd Gurkhas, and the 28th Brigade and began to head further south where they would only be stopped by the 155th field artillery regiment, which used its 25-Pounders guns to stop the tanks. With the whole of 12th Brigade being wiped out and two thirds of 28th Brigade being wiped out which made the chances of a retreat very minimal. By the 20th Of January the Japanese tanks had now swept across the majority of Malaysia and had made the chances of the British holding onto the mainland very minimal. Soon realising that the Japanese forces would capture the whole of Malaysia the British troops tried to get the British forces out of Malaysia and towards Singapore.



Figure 56: An image of a Japanese tank sweeping through Malaya

The decisive battle of Singapore

On the 31st of January with the last of fighting force of the British Army, the remaining forces had retreated across the Bridge and the defence for Singapore had begun. The major set back while defending Singapore was that it had no fortifications to be able to defend, the area which had made the defence for Singapore very unlikely to succeed. However, with the idea of retreating Singapore being shut down with Churchill claim "No thought of surrender until protected fighting among the ruins of Singapore city." The British had 70,000 troops which were able to defend Singapore with 13 British Battalions, 6 Australian Battalions, 2 Malay Battalions, 3 Battalions from the strait settlements Volunteer force and 17 Indian battalions.

At 8:30PM on the 8th of February, Australian watch men had spotted landing craft emerging out of the dark with the Japanese forces would attempt to cross the river into the North-west side of Singapore which was met by the firing of the Australian Artillery guns firing bullets down on the boats. The conditions in Singapore were not ideal as the terrain was a mess with the island being largely a swampy area, it made defending the island a mess. By midnight the Japanese would capture a foothold of the island.

Once the Japanese gained a larger victory they would begin to sweep through the island on the 9th of December the entire left side of East Singapore would be taken and the Imperial Guards Division would make landings towards the shore, within days the Japanese forces would begin to sweep across Singapore and had managed to ask the British for a surrender. When the Japanese edged towards the walls of Singapore City, on the 14th of February the ships had left leaving 3,000 refugees. By the 14th of February, the water supply of the allied troops was now cut.

Realising it was a losing game, General Percival and his chief of staff would travel to meet with General Yamashita at Bukit Timah to agree for an unconditional surrender.

At 8:30PM the allied troops laid down their arms and Singapore had fallen (Histograph Extra,2022).



Figure 57: An image of the British Forces surrendering to the Japanese after the fall of Singapore

The Burma Campaign 14th December 1941-13th September 1945

1942-1943

The Japanese offensive was linked towards the capture of Rangoon, the capital city and an area with a large seaport. If the Japanese had taken the city of Rangoon, it would allow the Japanese forces to build upon their vast amount of captured colonies collect such as British Malaya and Dutch East Indies. The Japanese 15th Army began to move into Northern Thailand which would allow the Japanese to form a surprise attack against the Burma, which was under the British Rule.

Upon hearing about the Japanese advancement, large numbers of Indians, Anglo-Indians and Anglo-Burmese began to flee Burma, because it was around this point that 130,000 Civilians were taken hostage, around 600,000 People would flee Burma by the Autumn of 1942. The Japanese would successfully attack over the Kawkariek pass and capture the port of Moulmein, after defeating stiff resistance.

Japanese would begin to advance northwards outflanking British defensive Positions. The Troops of the 17th Indian Infantry Division would attempt to retreat over the Sittaung river, but the Japanese would reach the bridge before and demolish the bridge on the 22nd of February, which would result in the Japanese forces capturing the troops of the 17th Indian Infantry Division.



Figure 58: An image of Rangoon, the old Capital of Burma during World War 2

The loss of two brigades of the 17th Indian Division had meant that Rangoon could not be defended, General Archibald Wavell, the commander-in-chief of the American-British-Dutch-Australian Command, had still ordered Rangoon to be held as he was expecting plenty of reinforcements from the Middle East, with some troops arriving from the middle east it would not be enough, as the Commander of the Burma Army, General Harold Alexander, ordered the city to be evacuated on the 7th of March.

On the eastern part of the front in Burma, the Battle of Yunnan-Burma Road was commencing, with the Chinese 200th Division holding up the Japanese for a good battle. On the arrival of the motorised troops of the Japanese 56th Division would easily shatter the Chinese army, the Japanese would advance east into the Karenni states and northwards towards the shan states and capture Lashio, whilst outflanking the allied defensive lines and isolating the Chinese armies at Yunnan. The total loss of the allied defensive lines had meant that the Allies had to retreat once again towards India.

Japanese advancement into India

Once Rangoon had fell on March 1942, the allies had begun to fall into a constant retreat, with the allies being in a constant retreat it would result in the allies heading closer and closer towards India. With the Japanese reaching closer towards the allies, the allies began to face rebellions from the local Burmese population. Leaving the allies with no choice but to evacuate away from Burma.

The retreat from Burma was conducted through the difficulties of the Burma Climate, when the British troops had begun to evacuate away from Burma, monsoon season was around the corner, which meant that the retreat to India would be even more difficult.

Alongside the poor weather conditions, the main road which the British forces would use were filled with refugees, stragglers, and the wounded people, which made retreat harder. The Burma Corps had managed to reach Imphal, in Indian. Before the monsoon season in May 1942, with the consequence of the lost of most of their equipment and transport. Once the British had made a successful retreat out of Burma, the lack of communication had meant that none of the Chinese forces had known about the retreat. Upon realising that the British had made a retreat away from Burma the Chinese forces too would also make their successful retreat towards India.

Upon losing Burma due the British Retreat, the Arakan Campaign was formed which had a mission to regain Burma back into the hands of the British. The advancement for the return of Araken would begin with the 14th Indian Division, advancing towards the south and towards Burma. The Indian 14th Division would come up against, the Miyawaki Force, which was two battalions of the 33rd Japanese Division which was a mounted artillery battalion and supporting arms. However, the advancement would achieve success on the 22nd of December when the Indian Division would capture the area in which the Japanese were defending.

Upon successfully taking the area of the Japanese, the advancement would reach a long stall between the 7th and 9th of January 1943, the 47th Indian Infantry Brigade would attack a narrow front between sea of the Mayu Range, however due to the large and strong fortifications held, the Indian forces could not over come the bunker and would slowly retreat away from the position. Upon reaching fierce resistance from the Bunker, The Major General of the 14th Indian Division Lloyd would ask for tanks to help attack the bunkers which were held by the Japanese.

With the approval of the tank support, on the 1st of February the 55th Indian Infatry Brigade supported by eight valentine tanks would attack the position of the bunker, which would lead towards a massive disaster. The tanks which were meant to be used against the Japanese became a larger burden for the British forces as the Tanks began to get stuck in ditches. To make things worse the Japanese forces too would also successfully knock out the tanks, which resulted in a loss for the British.



Figure 59: Valentine Tank

After the defeat to the bunker held by a fierce force of Japanese troops, the British would attempt to have one last attack against the Japanese forces. On the 10th of March Lieutenant General Slim began to order for the situation in Arakan in which the report had claimed that "The 14th Indian Division was unable to control the front", furthermore adding that Morale was low in some units. This reporting however did not change the minds of the British Senior officers, who would go ahead to plan out their next assault in the same region of Donbaik.

With the next assault date against Donbaik looming, closer and closer, Lieutenant General Irwin had lost faith in the planning Lieutenant General Lloyd, and his staff so he would begin to divert the troops of the 71st Indian

Brigade towards Mayu Valley and ordered the 6th British Brigade to make the attack on narrow front, the attack would begin on the 18th March, with the 55th Japanese Division defending the area. However, the British 6th brigade too was also unable to defeat, the Japanese.

1944

After the defeat to the hands of the Japanese, the allied forces could not afford to lose against the Japanese forces. On October 1943, the Chinese 38th Division under the Chinese army, began to advance from an area called Ledo towards Shinbuiyang; with the American engineers and Indian Labourers extending the Ledo road. The Japanese would be made aware of the Chinese forces and had met with them in Chindwin to stop a further advancement, however, with the support of the USA Marauders they were able to outflank the Japanese by going through the Jungle. The use of outflanking the Japanese through the Jungle was something which the allies would go on to learn and use throughout the war, with the use of the Jungle warfare now mastered the allies began to reach some success against the Japanese.



Figure 60: The Logo of Merrill's Marauders

The Japanese were forced to be driven back, however since the Japanese had retreated away, the allies' forces had found a track which the Japanese used to supply the retreating 18th Division, since they had a newfound track, the allies would use it to further improve the construction of the pathway. However, despite the successful victory, in Chindwin the Japanese would gain victories against the 111th Brigade and the Chindits forces, Soldiers from the British Empire troops who conducted guerrilla-style operations in Burma during the WW2.

The Japanese would plan out their attacks in Operation U-Go offensive, which was launched in March 1944, in North-east Indian regions of Manipur and the Naga hills, alongside operation the Ha Go offensive, meant to be a successful offensive resulted in a failure.

The Ha Go offensive would commence on the 5th of February, the 55th Japanese Division invaded the lines of the Indian XV Corps with an Aim to overrun and destroy the Indian Divisional headquarters. Upon the invasion of the Indian XV Corps the Japanese forces would find out that they had their supply lines cut off from them which began to make the Japanese starve severely forcing a Japanese withdrawal.

1 month after the failures in the Operation Ha Go, Operation U Go would still go ahead. ON the 6th of March 1944, the operation would officially commence. The Battle of Imphal would commence, which would last between the 8th of March and the 3rd of July. Located in Manipur, Imphal with its perfect landscape of a hilly outside and a flat inside made it perfect for warfare which the British could not afford to lose to the hands of the Japanese.

The Battle of Imphal would take place across main sectors. The Japanese would strike first with the attack from the 15th division from the north, which would eventually be broken by the 5th Indian Division and M3 Lee tanks recaptured an important hill at Nungshigum, which was where the airstrip at Imphal, on the 13th of April. At start of May, General of Slim and sconnne had the plan to start a counter-offensive plan against the Japanese 15th Division north of Imphal, however the plan would be slow. To make things worse for the British monsoon season was around the corner, which had reduced the movements extremely hard, rations and ammunitions levels were also noticeably short. However, despite all the setbacks the Japanese forces were at the low end of their morale, with ration shortages being quite common.

Due to the low amounts of rations given, the Japanese Lieutenant-General Santo had warned Commander in chief of the battle of Imphal Lieutenant-General Mutaguchi that the division would need to withdraw from Kohima at the end of May. Lieutenant-General Mutaguchi was outraged by the idea of a Japanese retreat, however with the troops starving and in poor conditions, the commanding officer of the troops in Kohima Lieutenant-General Santo began to order a retreat for the safety of the starving soldiers. To make things worse

for the Japanese forces, the commander of the 15th Division, Lieutenant-General Masafumi Yamauchi's ill health had begun to decline at a significant rate was sent away to a hospital for his health to improve.

Despite the setbacks the Japanese had faced, they would go on to renew their attacks, with the 33rd Division making repeated attacks at the south of Imphal, however despite the fighting which the Japanese had shown, the amount of casualties which the Japanese took from the battle and diseases around the terrain, left the Japanese 33rd Division so weak they were not able to make any progress. By the end of July, the Imphal operation had failed, and the Japanese would retreat.

The Plan to Capture Rangoon

The Japanese forces would continue to retreat away from the British forces, into Burma. The southern and northern front of the capturing of Burma, the Japanese forces had managed to keep the Allies at bay, resulting in the allies both retreating away. However on the Central front the allies would managed to gain much more success, the Indian 20th Division, Indian 268th Brigade, 254th Indian Tank brigade and the British 2nd Division had cleared the positions where the Japanese were held and they would begin to advance towards Meiktila.

After reaching more success the Indian forces would begin to advance further into Burma and towards Rangoon. However, upon advancing towards Rangoon, the allies would meet the Japanese 28th Army, which resulted in the 4th Corps of the Indian Division, including the 5th, 17th and 19th Indian divisions attacking down the Sittoung River valley. The Japanese forces knew they had to defend Rangoon with a lot of ferocity and might.

Some of the Units of the Japanese 15th Army were given some time to reorganise their structure in the Shan states, due to fact that they were being covered by the 56th Japanese division. Once organised the 15th army were ordered to block a road in town of Toungoo which was close towards Rangoon. Upon reaching Toungoo, the Japanese forces would come up against the 19th Indian Division which would capture the town and began to once again drive the Japanese forces back towards the east resulting in another defeat for the Japanese. The Indian forces would continue to advance towards Rangoon, however 64km north of Rangoon in the city of Pegu the Indian forces would come up against a newly formed a new army of troops from the navy and Japanese citizens of Rangoon which were called the Japanese 105 Independent Mixed Brigade.

In a desperate attempt to stop the Indian forces from capturing Rangoon, it would be reported that the newly founded army would use improvised anti-tank mines, bombs and suicide attacks and pole charges to prevent and hinder the advancement of the 17th Indian Division.

Monsoon season would arrive, and the on the 1st of May a Gurkha parachute battalion would be dropped with an aim to clear Japanese Coastal defence batteries in the Rangoon River, once the Gurkhas had cleared the area, the very next day the 26th Indian Division would land and take over Rangoon. Once Rangoon was fully captured, Rangoon would be ransacked from looting and lawlessness.



Figure 61: Gurkha Parachute Battalion in action during the Burma Campaigns.

The Last of the Japanese troops in Burma

Once the Gurkhas searched Rangoon for any Japanese forces, it would be found out that there were no Japanese troops remaining, which was seen as a large victory for the allies, the Ransacking of Rangoon. Following the victories at Rangoon, the Japanese were beginning to lose a grip in Burma. The only area which the Japanese now had in control was, the province of Tenasserim. Alongside that the 28th Japanese Army too had been withdrawn from Arakan and the 105th Independent Mixed Brigade were isolated in a range of jungle-covered hills.

With the Japanese army at a small amount of strength they would attack the British on the 3rd of July at the British Position of the "Sittang Bend" and on the 10th of July the Army would attack against the British against which resulted in the 89th Indian Brigade. However, with the Japanese army in Burma barely holding onto Burma, further struggles would come as when on the 17th of July, British had captured the Plans of the Japanese from the killings of a Japanese Officer. Which would result in the break-out of the Japanese dearly with the half of the 28th Army dead and, the Unit of the 105th Independent Mixed Brigade Wiped out.

Later on the 7th of August 1945, the allies would eventually gain control of Burma. (History Hit, 2022)



Figure 62: Image of the British Troops in the recapturing of Burma

Heroes of the Brigade of The Gurkhas

Sergeant Dip Prasad Pun (2010)

Diprasad Pun, was born in 1979, and was born into a family with a grandfather, Tul Bahadur Pun, receiving the Victoria cross for his service in 1944. Joining the army, as part of the Royal Gurkha Rifles, on the night of 17th September 2010, Dip Prasad Pun would single-handedly take on 12 to 30 Taliban fights in his patrol base near Baji in Helmand Province.



Figure 63: An image of the Helmand Province

It was a September evening in the Helmand Province of Afghanistan, and Dip Prasad Pun was on a duty at a two-story outpost. When in the distance, Dip Prasad Pun heard some noises and decided to go check, when going to check on the noise, he had found two rebellions attempting to lay and IED, bomb, nearby the road. Dip prasad Pun had realised that he was surrounded and massively out numbered by the Taliban forces. Dip prasad pun did not have much care about his own life and said, “Before they kill me, I have got to kill some of them”. What happened next, was something worthy of conspicuous gallantry.

Dip Prasad Pun addressed his commander on one of the radio, and lighted and launched a grenade towards the enemy. Then, Sergeant Pun, single-handedly took on the Taliban forces in his position. Sergeant Pun took on the enemy head-on as he moved around his position to prevent being attacked from three sides. After an intense battle, including the death of 3 Taliban members, the rest of the force fled for their own safety, with all of this combat being held in the dark.

Because of Dip Prasad Pun’s bravery when facing the force of the Taliban’s, he had saved the lives of three comrades and prevented their station from being overrun preventing serious threats being done. Sergeant Pun was not aware of how many Taliban members he took on but states the “I thought there might have been around 20 to 30, but later locals told me it was probably about 15. The firing went on continually for about 17 minutes” and also claims “At first I was a bit scared, and I thought definitely they are going to kill me. But as soon as I started firing, that feeling went away”.

On the day of the 17th September, Sergeant Dip Prasad Pun, took on 15 Taliban members and defeated them all by himself, alongside the fact that he defeated the Taliban force, Sergeant Pun had also saved the lives of his Comrades alongside preventing his Base from being overrun, and for this immense bravery shown in the face of battle, Sergeant Pun was awards the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (Stilwell, 2019).



Figure 64: An image of Conspicuous Gallantry



Figure 65: An image of Sergeant Dip Prasad Pun with the Medal of Conspicuous Gallantry

Captain Ram Bahadur Limbu 1965

Captain Ram Bahadur Limbu was born in the small village called Chyangthapu in the east of Nepal in 1939. Joining the army in 1957, he would go onto serve the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles during the Borneo Confrontation. His brave actions during the Borneo Confrontation, in saving his comrades during battle had earned him the Victoria Cross.

It was the year 1963 and Ram Bahadur Limbu was promoted to the rank of Lance-Corporal. With the Malayan Emergency coming towards an end another new conflict was on the verge of breaking out near Brunei which would be come to be known as the Borneo Confrontation, against the Indonesian military forces.

Ram Bahadur Limbu was part of the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifles, which had received orders to take a position 5,000 Yards within Indonesian Territory at Bau, with the goal to attack a strong force of Indonesian soldiers who were positioned on a steep hill. However, in order to reach the Indonesian Force, the Gurkhas needed to get through a narrow ridge. Ram Bahadur's company took the lead towards reaching the enemy and killing its sentry, which allowed them to gain an advantage for any further attack. However, with the small success of the Gurkha forces, the enemies had now been aware that there was an attack from the Gurkhas, which led towards heavy fire onto the trench where the Gurkhas and Ram Bahadur Limbu were located.



Figure 67: An image of Ram Bahadur Limbu with his son once he was awarded with the Victoria Cross

Ram Bahadur Limbu had realised that he could not continue to support the platoon and left the trench to reposition himself and the firing squad a few yards further ahead, putting his and his firing team's lives at risk. The noises of gunfire and explosives had made communication between his group and the platoon commander almost impossible making it hard for Ram Bahadur Limbu and his firing team. However, the two remaining men of the fire team, Rifleman Kharka Bahadur Limbu and Bijuli Parsad Rai, had become seriously wounded from the fighting and were at the risk of death. Within seconds, Limbu would spend 3 minutes crawling under heavy and accurate machine gun fire, until he was almost able to reach the nearest wounded men from the fighting.

However, Limbu would then soon realise that only a quick rush would allow him to save the lives of the 2 wounded soldiers. So, within an instance Lance Corporal Ram Bahadur Limbu, rushed forward and managed to reach the first wounded man and carried him back to safety, then without a second to think, he would then return to rescue the 2nd wounded soldiers. After rescuing the lives of two soldiers he would return into the fire squad and would go onto to kill four more enemy soldiers as they escaped.

For his bravery and willingness to risk his lives to save his wounded soldiers, on the 21st of November 1965 Lance Corporal Ram Bahadur Limbu was awarded with the highest British honour the Victoria Cross. (Gurkha Museum, 2021)



Figure 66: Logo of the 10th Princess Mary's Own Gurkha Rifle, the Regiment in which Captain Ram Bahadur Limbu served in



Figure 68: An image of Ram Bahadur Limbu with his Victoria Cross

Lachhiman Gurung 1945

Born in a small village in Nepal in 1917, One of the Gurkhas most decorated and famous soldiers, Lachhiman Gurung was a Gurkha warrior who had served and fought for the British Army during World War 2. Lachhiman Gurung would go onto to prove his bravery, against the Japanese forces I 1945, which resulted in a lost finger and eye.



Figure 69: Image of young Lachhiman Gurung in service

Gurung was stationed at the most forward position of his platoon on a small hill, with two other men who had the role to defend the camp in case of an on-coming Japanese offensive. However, on the night of the 13th May, Lachhiman Gurung would face the ultimate test of bravery when 200 Japanese Infantry men began to advance through the jungle and towards the British Camp.

Whilst on duty Lachhiman Gurung, and his men would face off against 200 Japanese Troops, at the start Grenades began to land into the trench which Gurung was in but managed to throw the grenades back, with the first one being hurled back by Gurung, then followed by the second one but on the third one when going to reach for the grenade the grenade exploded in Gurung's hand, which left him blinded in one eye alongside a shattered arm broken fingers. Without any help in sight besides his other 2 riflemen he was up against the force of 200 Japanese men.

However, despite long sight, Gurung fought on, with his weak hand, Gurung began to fire and reload his bolt-action rifle against the wave of Japanese attacks with Gurung shouting "Come and fight a Gurkha!", the intense fighting would last for another 4 hours.

After an intense 4 hours of fighting, Gurung and his men killed 87 Japanese troops, 37 being Gurungs confirmed kills. After his intense fight against the Japanese force Gurung would be sent to a hospital, where it would be clear that Gurung had indeed lost an eye, and use of his right hand.

For his Bravery and service for the British Army, when facing an army of 200 Japanese men in December 1945, Lachhiman Gurung would receive the Victoria Cross in India where he would go on to serve the Indian Army in 1947 and eventually finishing his Army career in the new founded Indian Army (Shiffer, 2021).



Figure 70: Image of Lachhiman Gurung with his medals after his service (The Victoria Cross is placed on the left)



Figure 71: An image of Lachhiman Gurung with his medals Including the Victoria Cross, The Burma Star and the Queen Elizabeth Coronation Medal

Bhanbhagta Gurung 1945

Bhanbhagata Gurung, was born in 1921, the small village of Phalbu in the Gorkha District, serving in WW2 as a rifleman in the 3rd Battalion of the 2nd Gurkha Rifles in Burma. However, on the 5th of March 1945, Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung, would come across a fierce resistance of the Japanese forces where Rifleman's Gurungs bravery needed to be on full display.



Figure 72: Image of Bhanbhagta Gurung during his service in the Army.

Bhanbhagata Gurung and a company of 2nd Gurkha Rifles, attacked the enemy position of the Japanese troops. The sections began to advance, towards the Japanese troops and dashes towards an enemy foxhole and killed the Japanese troops with their bayonets. However, despite the victories in the first foxhole, the troops were still bringing fire on the area which Rifleman Gurung and the company was in. However, despite all the weapons being fired Rifleman Gurung would charge alone towards the Japanese with a Bayonet and grenade.

Rifleman Gurung single-handedly attacked four enemy foxholes, upon his solo charge towards the enemy Gurung was being continuous fired at point-blank range with machine guns being fired from the bunker. Rifleman Gurung would charge again for the fifth time, alone which much more success partially blinding two Japanese soldiers with a smoke bomb and eventually killing both soldiers with Kukri. Despite killing two Japanese Soldiers, there was still one Japanese soldier remaining which was still firing on a machine gun and holding a key position. Upon

finding out the position of the final Japanese soldier remaining, Rifleman Gurung would crawl into the bunker and kill the final Japanese Enemy.

For this act of bravery, courage and resilience shown against a strong force of Japanese troops clearing out 5 enemy positions by himself. On the June 5th 1945 Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung of the 3rd Battalion of the 2nd Gurkha rifles was received with the highest British Honor, the Victoria cross(Gurkha Museum "Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung VC", 2021).



Figure 73: Image of Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung with his Victoria Cross on the left Gurkha Museum ("Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung VC", 2021).



Figure 74: An image of Rifleman Bhanbhagta Gurung posing with his medals

Gurkha Forces Today

207 Years after, the Anglo-Nepali war to this day the British Army still recruits Gurkhas from all corners of Nepal. With there being around 4,000 Active serving Gurkhas today, Gurkhas are still being renowned to the world as “The Bravest of brave.” Being split into 6 Regiments, Rifles, Signals, Engineers, Logistical, Staff personnel and support and The Band, with each have a purpose to serve in the British Army. Upon Finishing basic training in Catterick, the new Gurkhas would be assigned to these 6 Regiments where they will most likely finish their careers.

Royal Gurkha Rifles

The Royal Gurkha Rifles are the infantry men of the feared and finest Brigade of Gurkhas, with the Royal Gurkha Rifles containing a mix of Nepalese Soldiers and British Officers, they are known as professional, fighting dominance and fear which they cause during battle. The Royal Gurkha Rifles consist of two battalions, one being based in Brunei and one in Shorncliffe alongside two additional companies in the Falkland’s and Coriano with 2 and 4 RANGER Battalions.



The Royal Gurkha Rifles are an infantry unit, which is the most important part of the Army, used for peacekeeping, combat operations and deployments across the world (Afghanistan, Estonia, and Brunei). The Infantry units are very important for the British Army. The Royal Gurkhas are trained hard to be ready for any challenge which they face, ready to work alongside allies in any climate, from the desert to the Jungle and ready to protect the nation and its people either home or overseas Latter (“The Royal Gurkha Rifles”, 2014)



Figure 75: Image of a Royal Gurkha Rifle squadron in Afghanistan



Figure 76: Image of the Royal Gurkha Rifles with the Truncheon Ceremonial Staff, presented by Queen Victoria



Figure 77: Image of the 2nd Battalion Royal Gurkha Rifles

Queen's Gurkha Engineers

Gurkhas had initially become Sappers in October 1948 when the 67th Field Squadron of the Royal Engineers was formed at Kluang, in Malaya. The newfound squadron formed from Gurkha Infantryman who were attached towards the Royal Engineers. However Later in the same year both Squadrons would move to Hong Kong. The New Regimental Headquarters of the 50th Field Engineer Regiment of the Royal Engineers was formed in Hong Kong in June 1951. Eventually they would move to Malaya as the 17th Gurkha Divisional Engineers to support the British Army during the Malayan Emergency.



Figure 78: Logo of Queen's Gurkha Engineers

The regiment was based at Sungei Besi near Kuala Lumpur from 1955 to 1961, then became part of the Brigade of the Gurkhas in 1955, and by the Royal Warrant in September 1955 it changed its name to the "The Gurkha Engineers" and during Queen Elizabeth the II's Jubilee the regiment would get a name change to "Queen's Gurkha Engineers. However Today there are two squadrons (69 and 70 Gurkha Field Squadrons) which are important for the British Army because they take part in key operations tasks around the world Latter ("Queen's Gurkha Engineers", 2014)



Figure 79: Image of The Queen's Gurkha Engineers providing the Queen's Guard at Windsor Guard between the 18th of February to the 12th of April 2019 (Army, 2019).

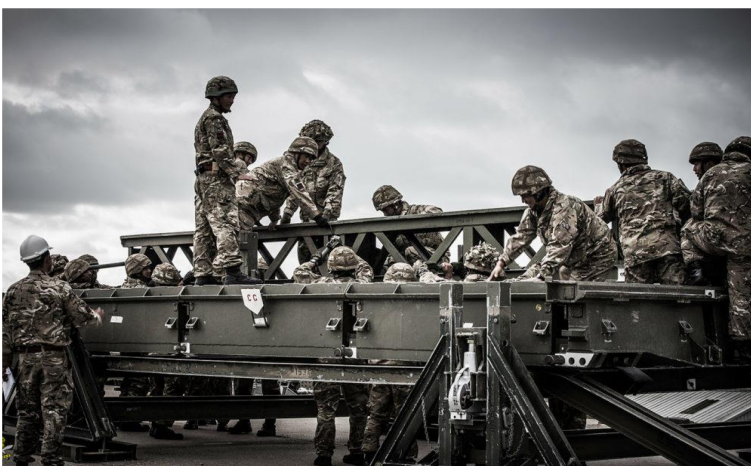


Figure 80: Image of the Queen's Gurkha Engineer troops creating a bridge. Latter ("Queen's Gurkha Engineers", 2014).

Queen's Gurkha Signals



Figure 81: Image of the Queen's Gurkha Signals Flag

The Queen's Gurkha signals is a regular unit which is part of the Royal Corps of the Signals, which is one of the combat support arms of the British Army, alongside the Gurkha Rifles, Engineers Regiment, Logistic Regiment, Band Regiment and Staff and Personnel support regiment, they form as part of the Brigade of the Gurkhas. The Queen Gurkha Signals had formed during the Malayan Emergency to support the 17th Gurkha division during their war efforts in Malaya. Today there are 6 Regiments, 3 in Stafford and one in Perham Down, Bulford and Bramcote alongside Signal troops in Brunei and Nepal ("Queen's Gurkha Signals", 2014).

Queen's Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support



Figure 82: Image of The Gurkha SPS (Staff and Personnel Support logo)

The newest regiment towards The Brigade of the Gurkhas, was the creation of the Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support which was from on the 30th of June 2011, with it changing its name from Gurkha Clerks. The aim of the Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support is they must provide specialist Human Resources, Personnel and Business Administration, Finance, Accounting, and ICT support to the Brigade of the Gurkhas including the wider army, during peacetime and in field operations. The Gurkha Staff and Personnel support are the first to serve alongside and administer every unit in the Brigade of Gurkha working day in and out latter ("Gurkha Staff and Personnel Support", 2014)

The Band of the Brigade of the Gurkha



Figure 83: Logo of the band of the Gurkha Brigade

The band Of the Brigade of the Gurkhas was raised in November 1859 which was part of the Indian Army Gurkha Regiment called the Sirmoor rifle regiment, which initially contained 16 Bandsmen and one leader called a "Naik" which would go on to become a part of the Regiments life. The Band would go on to play and entertain in the bases in the Northeast of Delhi. In the year 1886, a new battalion the 2nd Battalion was formed which therefore would allow 16 Bandsmen and a leader "Naik" joining the other original band to create a large band. However, when India gained independent in 1947, the Gurkha Regiments began to choose their new pathways to either join the British Army or the Indian Army.

With the 2nd Battalion, now called the 2nd Goorkhas, choosing the British Army they would set sail for Britain. However, they had no bandsmen in the 2nd Goorkhas as they choose the stay in India. But in the years 1949 the band was allowed to operate again with 56 recruits commencing training.

To this day, The Band of the Brigade of the Gurkhas, plays their music across all continents ranging from the USA, Switzerland, Salisbury, and France latter ("The Band of the Brigade of Gurkhas", 2014).

Conclusion

The year was 1816, the treaty of Sugiali was signed and the recruitment of the Gurkha forces would begin, which sent 200 to 300 of the finest Nepalese warriors to serve for the British Army. Initially serving in India under the British India Army, these Gurkhas troops would prove to their British counter parts that they were “Loyal”, “Brave” and “Fierce” in times of battle and “Gentle”, “Amusing” and “Funny” when not in battle. 207 Years on since Gurkha Recruitment began the Gurkhas have been know towards the world as a formidable force, fighting for the British against, the Japanese, Italian and Argentine forces. With their Kukri blades, Terai hats and a small stature these Gurkha forces would go on to receive battle honors in Mandalay, over hundreds of Gallantry awards and 13 Victorian Crosses won by Nepalese native Gurkhas. Known to the British army, as loyal, Professional and Braver the Gurkhas still serve and are deployed alongside British forces, from deployments like peacekeeping and Deployments to Afghanistan.



Figure 84: Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth The II with the Royal Gurkha Rifle's Truncheon.

Once enemies, during the Anglo-Nepali war the pure respect which both sides had for each other would eventually culminate into one of the greatest bonding between the British Army and the Nepalese Gurkha troops, with the Gurkhas remaining loyal and supporting the British Army wherever, it is one of the most important and Unique relationship in the Army which the British and Nepalese forces can never ever loose.

207 years after the Anglo-Nepalese war, the Gurkhas would eventually serve for the British army, with more than 110,000 Gurkhas serving in 40 Battalions in WW2, in the campaigns of the Western Dessert, Italy,

Greece, Malaysia, Singapore and Burma, with 30,000 Soldiers being either killed or wounded in the combat. Whilst the Gurkhas served alongside the British Armed forces the Gurkhas would go on to show the world that they were the most fearless fighting army in the world, with 10 Native Gurkhas winning the Victoria Cross, for remarkable acts of Bravery during the war it furthermore shows the importance of the Gurkha forces during WW2 alongside showing that the Gurkhas were truly ready to serve and protect a monarchy 4500 Miles away from Katmandu. With the loyalty, bravery and professionalism which these Gurkhas showed it would result in a forever cherished relationship between the Gurkhas and British Army, which truly showed the world that the Gurkha forces were the “The Bravest of the Brave.”



Figure 85: Of Image of King Charles The III and Prince Harry with the Gurkhas

Photo Gallery



Figure 86: An image of My Paternal Grandfather Rifleman Dhan Bahadur Limbu receives his medal for his service during the Malayan Emergency



Figure 87: An image of My Paternal Grandfather posing with his medals for the Gurkha Welfare Trust



Figure 88: An image of My Maternal Grandfather and his Brother-in-law during the Malayan Emergency



Figure 89: An image of My Maternal Grandfather Rifleman Sher Bahadur Limbu receiving his medal for his service during the Malayan Emergency



Figure 90: An image of My Maternal Grandfather and his Brother-in-law during remembrance Sunday.



Figure 91: An Image of My Paternal Grandfather and his fire-team during the Malayan Emergency.



Figure 92: An image of my Paternal Grandfather in Active Service

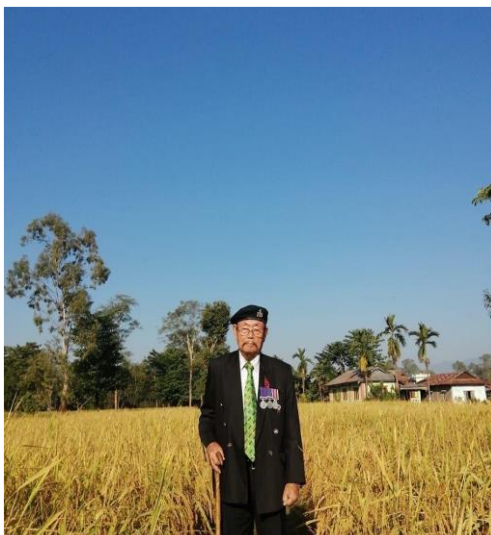


Figure 93: An image of my Paternal Grandfather in his home village in Jhapa



Figure 94: An image of My Maternal Grandfather holding a rifle during service.

Photo Gallery



Figure 95: An image of My Dad wearing his uniform as part of Queens Gurkha Signals



Figure 96: An image of My Dad once he had joined to become a Gurkha



Figure 97: An image of My Dad during an training exercise



Figure 98: An image of My Dad outside of Buckingham Palace



Figure 99: An image of My Dad touring the United Kingdom, the photo was taken in Edinburgh.



Figure 100: An image of My Dad outside of House guards Palace, London



Figure 101: An image of my Older Cousin Sandeep in basic training in Catterick



Figure 102: An image of my uncle winning the Prince Of Wales Trophy

Photo Gallery



Figure 103: Image of My Great-Grand Captain Rukman Limbu MBE, who had served in Malaya and received his MBE title in 1952.

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