

BANDA AND KIRWEE BOOTY

While legally all goods captured during a war belong to the state, it was traditional that the spoils of war were shared among the soldiers responsible for the capture. In 1858, during the wars in India one booty taken was so huge that the division of it resulted in a nine year case before the British Admiralty Court.

During the Indian Mutiny the Central India Campaign a huge booty was captured by the Saugor and Nerbudda field force. Under Major-General George Cornish Whitlock these field forces were sent to Bundelkund to achieve the relief of various towns in the region. A force of 7000 outside Banda were defeated and they entered the town and were able to take a large amount of loot from the palace. General Whitlock then marched on nearby Kirwee and the town surrendered as well. There was a large amount of money and jewels from the palace there as well.

The other Generals serving the same campaign recommended that due to the huge difference in the value of their separate booty captured that they be combined and shared equally among the officers and men who had claimed to have a role to play in related actions. The problem was the disparity in the amounts. General Rose's booty was £49,000 and General Robert's was £18,200 while General Whitlock's was estimated to be £700,000. Needless to say the men serving under General Whitlock were not in favour of combining and the matter was referred to the Admiralty Court.

By the time the Judgement was released in March 1867 the case had cost £60,000. Most of the claims of the other officers were disallowed. The payments made were:

Lord Clyde	£60,000
General Whitlock	£12,000
a Captain	£600
a Lieutenant	£325/£375 (dep on service length)
a Sergeant	£100
a Private	£50

There were subsequent payments made to the Privates that raised their portion to about £75

To put this in perspective in today's money values, the original estimate of £700,000 is over £30,000,000 and General Whitlock's £12,000 portion would be over £500,000

The British Regiments comprising the Madras Column (or the Saugor and Nerbudda field force) who were eligible for the prize money:

12th Lancers (left wing)
43rd Regiment of Foot
6 Coy/14th Brigade Royal Artillery (later G Battery/14th Brigade)
Native Regiments: TBC

6th Madras Light Cavalry
7th Madras Light Cavalry
3rd Madras (European) Infantry
1st Regiment of Madras Native Infantry
19th Regiment of Madras Native Infantry
50th Regiment of Madras Native Infantry
2 companies of Sappers
Hyderabad Green Horse (2nd Cavalry Hyderabad Contingent?)

In the British Archives is the 1862 document by Major-General Whitlock KCB giving his account of the events at Banda and Kirwee and making clear his claim on the prize money.

Major-General Sir George Cornish Whitlock is part of the WHITLOCK22 family. He was born December 3 1798 at Ottery St. Mary, Devon. He died January 30, 1868 in Exmouth, Devon only a few months after the Admiralty case was settled and payments were made of the Banda & Kirwee prize money.

His descendant Penny Mills is in the process of photographing and downloading copies of the Journal of the General's son George Frederick Tod Whitlock (1827-1900) that details the career of his father and his family.

SOURCES: X7694, R3902