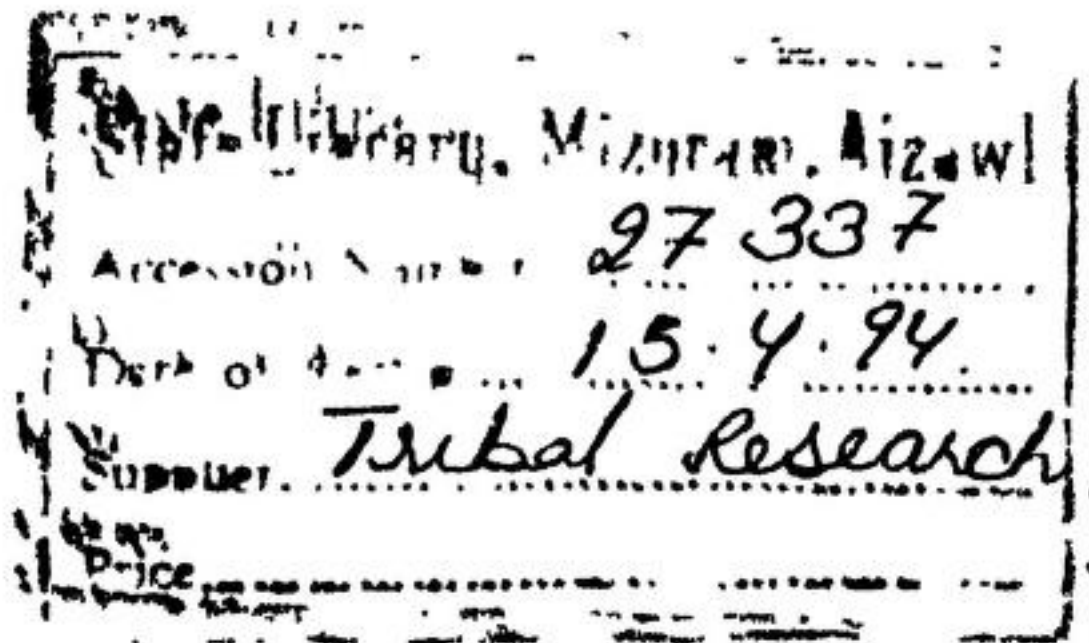


HISTORY OF THE ASSAM RIFLES

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"LOCAL HISTORY OF POONA AND ITS BATTLEFIELDS"
"HISTORY OF UPPER ASSAM AND UPPER
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who after intermittent firing from the surrounding jungle attacked the village in which the Column had established itself, causing casualties to the extent of 1 sepoy killed and Captain Brownrigg and a few men wounded. The attack was beaten off and the village with its granaries was destroyed, its cattle also being confiscated.

A small force of the 2/2nd Goorkhas and the Chittagon F.P. under Major Begbie then moved eastwards and punished with slight opposition the villages of Lungliena and Nikama for their raid on the Pakumi Rani, after which the whole force proceeded against Thanrura's village also for punishment. In this affair at Nikama's village Jemadar Mallo Rai, of the S.V.M.P., was "mentioned" for gallantry in capturing single-handed two armed Lushais who were firing, though he at the moment happened to be without a revolver. This being accomplished, Colonel Skinner selected a site near by for the location of the permanent post in the north Lushai hills. Work on this was commenced at once, and when completed and rationed the force withdrew to Silchar and India, leaving a garrison of 200 rifles of the Surma Valley Military Police Battalion at Aijal, as the new post had been christened, and 50 at Changsil on the Dalesari river, the furthest point to which boats from Silchar could reach with supplies.

While the Northern Column was employed thus General Tregear's main force had advanced from Lung Loh eastwards, a road being cut across the Bolpui range down into the Mat and Koladyne valleys, after which came the ascent of the Darjow Klang (5700 feet). These valleys were full of bird and wild animal life; but work, denseness of the forests, and very few officers with sporting guns made shikar impossible. The beautiful Polipecton or peacock pheasant is found here, jungle fowl abound in swarms, though only heard and but rarely seen, the greater hornbill with its enormous beak and handsome black and white plumage, and many other varieties of bird life. The

author remembers while the stockaded post at Lung Leh was in course of construction a two-horned rhinoceros, a couple of tigers, and a Malayan sun bear were shot on different occasions by men of the escort to wood-cutting parties in the valley below. While the Bombay Pioneers were at road work some way up the Darjow Klang with their rifles piled along the narrow track, a great disturbance was heard above them, and suddenly a large rhino burst out of the jungle, charged down the path, scattering men and rifles, and before anything could be done had disappeared far down the hill.

On an open spur of the Darjow Klang in helio communication with Lung Leh and commanding extensive views over a sea of hills away to the Tao Peak in the Chin country, a strong defensive post for 200 rifles was now constructed. While this work was in progress a small flying Column of 60 rifles 2/2nd Goorkhas and 25 of the Chittagong Frontier Police under Captain L. M. Hall, 2nd Goorkhas, with whom went Captain J. Shakespeare (now Assistant Political Officer to the force) and Lieut. Bythell, R.E., started off for Haka in early March 1890 to link with General Penn Symonds' troops, and to assist in recovering the heads and loot carried off in the raid on Stewart's camp.

A rapid and most arduous march with few coolies, the sepoy's carrying their own loads in addition to arms, equipment, and ammunition, and Tao village was reached, a few miles beyond the upper Koladyne river (or the "Boinu," as it is called here), which forms the boundary between the Chin hills and Lushai districts. Here they were joined by a small Column of the Burma force under Captain Rundall and Lieut. Stevenson, who, it was learnt, had passed the previous night in Paona's village, ignorant of the fact that that Chief held Stewart's head and some of the loot, and Rundall had received his submission. At Hmunlipi village, on a stern message being sent next day, the Chief duly sent in Stewart's head or what remained of it, together with two other heads and certain articles carried off by