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The Cross of Sacrifice
Imphal War Cemetery
With the poppy wreaths laid in memory of
Major Hugh WALKER and Major 'Sandy' LAMBERT

A CONCISE BIOGRAPHY OF:

MAJOR GENERAL D. STUART

A concise biography of Major General Douglas STUART, C.B., C.I.E., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*; an officer in the Canadian Army between 1915 and 1917; and then an officer in the British Indian Army from 1917 until 1948. He is most noted for his role in the Bengal famine of 1943.

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A Concise Biography of Major General D. STUART V3_1

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Major General Douglas STUART, C.B., C.I.E., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*



Photograph courtesy of Glenys STUART

Introduction

Major General Douglas STUART, C.B., C.I.E., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*, was an officer in the British Indian Army from 1917 until 1948. He served in the Great War with the Canadian Armed Forces, before transferring to the Indian Army. During the Second World War, he served as a battalion commander, Brigadier General Staff, and divisional commander. It was his role in the Bengal famine relief operation as an area commander that was the most significant aspect of his career.

Family Background

Douglas STUART was born in Carlton, Nottinghamshire on Friday, 20 July 1894.¹ His father was Charles STUART, who in the 1901 Census is shown as being forty-nine years' of age, and working as a Canteen Manager for the Army in Colchester Garrison, Essex. He is shown as being born in Westerham, Kent. His wife was Sarah STUART, who was a forty-one-year old mother of three in 1901. She had been born in the East Indies, otherwise known as British India. Charles William STUART was a member of the British Indian Army, and on 11 August 1882, he became a Freemason, joining the Bangalore Lodge. At the time, he was a Troop Serjeant Major.

Charles and Sarah's eldest child was their daughter, Gladys, who was also born in India, and being sixteen years' of age in 1901, was a pupil in an Army School. Robert STUART, the eldest son, was born in India, and was thirteen in 1901. He was also a pupil at school. Douglas was just six years old in 1901, and is shown as a pupil in an Army school. Sarah Agnes STUART died in 1903, aged forty-three years, in Westhampnett, Sussex. This parish is close to the city of Chichester in West Sussex. Charles William STUART died on 22 November 1933 in Littlehampton.

Douglas was educated at Rosendale, Littlehampton, and then Oundle School in Leicestershire. In 1911, aged sixteen years, he was living with an aunt, Margaret STUART, aged sixty-eight years, and Agnes Margaret STUART, aged twenty-eight years, at 23, Victoria Terrace, Bayford Road, Littlehampton, Sussex. Douglas was employed as a solicitor's clerk, and his cousin Agnes as a Post Office Clerk.

Douglas clearly was frustrated with his lifestyle, so decided to emigrate to Canada. On 13 March 1912, he boarded the 'Royal Edward', of the Royal Canadian Northern Steamships Limited, in Bristol Docks, to sail for Port Huron in Michigan, U.S.A.. On his arrival at Michigan, he crossed the border into Canada on 20 July 1912, and he enlisted in the Royal North-West Mounted Police, later to become the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (R.C.M.P.).

¹ There are some discrepancies about Douglas STUART's date of birth. Family records, which are supported by www.Ancestry.co.uk give his date of birth as 20 July 1894. When he joined the Canadian Army in 1915, he gave his date of birth as 20 July 1890. His British Indian Army personnel file held by the British Library gives a date of birth of 24 July 1894 (also used in the Army List). STUART was aged twenty-one years in 1915, so had no apparent reason to falsify his date of birth, unless having given a false date of birth to enlist in the R.N.W.M.P., he had to continue that falsehood.

He was formally engaged with effect from 26 July 1912, with the service number 5403. He served with the 29th Light Horse at Regina Town Station, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert, and reached the rank of Sergeant by the time of his resignation after three years' service in 1915.

On 6 May 1915, STUART enlisted in the Canadian Army and resigned from the R.C.M.P. on 20 July in the same year. He was formally attested on 20 July 1915 (his twenty-first birthday – but see below), and joined the 65th Overseas Battalion of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. On his attestation paper, he gave his father's address as Westerham, Kent.

First World War

STUART was commissioned in the Central Ontario Regiment, and travelled with his regiment to France and Belgium in July 1915. Between 5 June 1916 and 9 October 1917, he was the Commandant of the Canadian Forces School of Physical Training and Battlefield Fitness in France, with the rank of Acting Captain until 1 January 1917 when he was promoted Captain in the Canadian Armed Forces.

On 24 November 1917, STUART resigned his commission with the Central Ontario Regiment, and the next day, he transferred to the Indian Army as a Temporary Lieutenant on probation. He was commissioned in the 2nd Bn. 112th Infantry as a Lieutenant on 12 January 1918. This battalion was formed in Nasirabad, British India, on 8 July 1917. It comprised two companies of Jats, one company of Punjabi Mussalmans, and one company of Gujars. As with many of the war raised battalions in the British Indian Army, the 2nd/112th struggled with inexperienced officers, both British and Indian, and a large proportion of new recruits to the Army.

The battalion was posted to the Bannu Brigade, on the North-West Frontier, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel A. H. COKE. Lieutenant STUART joined the battalion on 16 January 1918, as a company commander. At the time, the only other British officer appears to have been the second-in-command, Major J. V. M. BISCOE, who had joined the battalion on 1 July 1917. A Lieutenant A. V. CARTER, M.C., M.M. joined on 1 April 1918, with Captain H. V. BUDGEN transferring from 1st/112th Infantry on 16 May 1918, the same date as Lieutenant J. J. O'BRIEN joined as the fifth company commander. Between April and June 1918, STUART served as the Adjutant for his battalion. STUART, CARTER and O'BRIEN were all officers on probation with the British Indian Army. There were twelve company officers, all Lieutenants or Second Lieutenants, either on probation with the Indian Army or members of the Indian Army Reserve of Officers. It is not surprising that the first inspection of the battalion by the Brigade Commander raised issues that required addressing. Brigadier General BRUCE observed:

I have seen a certain amount of this unit's work in all branches: at the present time it is quite unfit for service, but all ranks are working hard. The great trouble is lack of experienced officers: at present the drill and manoeuvre are deplorable.

The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of Northern Command added:

This battalion is in a very backward state as regards general efficiency. Except in bombing and bayonet fighting it is below the mark in all branches of training. It is not fit at present for service on the North-West Frontier, and I doubt if it will be fit for overseas service by the autumn. I have recommended that it should be sent to a station with better training facilities than Bannu.

Lieutenant Colonel Gregory Day McCORMICK became the commanding officer with effect from 29 October 1918, but the hard work by all the officers, including Lieutenant STUART was beginning to pay off. At the next inspection, it was recognised that an immense amount of work had been done, with the credit due to the officers. There was still more to do, but the battalion was declared 'Fit for Service'. This was a tremendous achievement for the officers.

One of the problems the officers had to face was the deaths of over one-hundred men of the battalion in October and November 1918 from the Spanish Flu epidemic. Lieutenant STUART left the battalion in January 1919. In January 1920, the battalion was stationed at Dhond, and later Bushire. It disbanded in May 1922 as part of the retrenchment of the Indian Army post-war.

Inter-War Career

In January 1919, STUART was appointed a Staff Captain with the Bannu Brigade on the North West Frontier. In May 1919, his role became that of a General Staff Officer, 3rd Grade (G.S.O. 3) with the Bannu Frontier Force, which on 1 August 1919 was redesignated as the 67th Indian Infantry Brigade (Bannu Frontier Force). He transferred to become the G.S.O. 3 of another formation on the North West Frontier in October 1919, joining the Derajat Column of the Waziristan Frontier Force. On 6 May 1920, having served on the frontier for three years, he was posted to Army Headquarters at its summer base of Simla.

STUART was promoted to the rank of Captain on 25 June 1920 (ante-dated to 18 April 1920). He was Mentioned in Despatches on 10 June 1921, for his services in Waziristan as a Temporary Captain attached to the 2nd Bn. 112th Infantry. In November 1920, STUART became a company commander with the 103rd Mahratta Light Infantry. In April 1922, he was appointed the Adjutant for his regiment, which in the 1922 reorganisation of the Indian Army was now titled as the 1st Bn. 5th Mahratta Light Infantry. His Indian Army number was IA/750.

He transferred from his battalion to become a Staff Captain in the Poona District on 13 September 1925. After a year in that post, he changed roles to become the Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master General of Southern Command, which was based in Poona as well. This appointment was short lived, for on 11 November 1926, he reverted to his role as Staff Captain in Poona District. On 23 November 1928, STUART left Poona District and travelled to the United Kingdom.

He had successfully passed the entrance examination to attend the Staff Course, and had been allocated a place at the Staff College at Camberley, as one of two officers of the British Indian Army who undertook their course in the U.K. as opposed to India. This was to his credit, as the Staff Course was a prestigious achievement, and the British Indian Army ensured that only its most highly thought of officers were sent to Camberley. Captain STUART's course commenced on 21 January 1929, and lasted two years. He had sailed from Bombay to London in April 1928, aboard the 'Ranpura' travelling Second Class. He gave his address in the U.K. as the village of Middleton (or Middleton-on-Sea), Bognor Regis in Sussex. It is likely that he enjoyed a period of leave in the U.K. before starting his course at Camberley.

On the completion of his Staff Course, Captain STUART returned to India, and on 1 March 1931, he re-joined his battalion at Calcutta as Quarter-Master. He was detached to undertake the role as Staff Officer to 'ChitForce' at Chittagong on 25 November 1931, to deal with some insurrection amongst the local population. STUART left ChitForce on 28 February 1932. A couple of months later, on 17 April 1932, he was appointed the General Staff Officer 2nd Grade of the Lucknow District. He was awarded the decoration as an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.) in the New Year's Honours List on 2 January 1933 for his work in the Lucknow District. It was notable for a staff officer to be recognised as such. STUART was promoted to the rank of Brevet Major on 2 January and substantive Major on 18 April 1934. He left the Lucknow District on 30 September of that year. The reason that STUART left the Lucknow District was that he had been appointed an Exchange Officer with the Australian Army. He arrived in Australia on 4 October 1934, and was immediately appointed Brigade Major of the 8th Australian Infantry Brigade. Once again, the status of Major STUART can be gauged from his secondment to the Australian Army. Institutions such as the British Indian Army were very aware of their reputation and image, so would have ensured one of their most promising officers was given this posting.

Major STUART transferred to become the General Staff Officer Training, at the Headquarters of the Australian Military Forces on 15 January 1936. Having served in Australia for two and half years, STUART left that country on 9 March 1937 to return to India. He was now a Brevet Lieutenant Colonel, having been promoted to that rank on 1 July 1936. A return to regimental duties followed for STUART. On 14 February 1938, he became the second-in-command of the 4th Bn. 19th Hyderabad Regiment stationed in Secunderabad. He was the officiating commanding officer of the 12th (Secunderabad) Infantry Brigade between 10 and 30 December 1938.

He became the officiating commanding officer again of the 4th Bn. 19th Hyderabad Regiment on 17 June 1939, before becoming the commanding officer in his own right on 29 July 1939. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel on the same date. His battalion was serving in India as part of the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade. The 12th Indian Infantry Brigade was a peacetime brigade under the command of the Deccan District. This District also functioned as the embryonic 4th Indian Division if times of war or crisis required the mobilisation of Indian troops to serve overseas. As such, it was seen as one of the most sought after postings in the British Indian Army.

In August 1939, the brigade was mobilised under the terms of an Indian Army plan called 'Force Emu', and ordered to deploy to Singapore. Brigadier (Temporary) Archibald Charles Melville PARIS, M.C., *p.s.c.*, a British officer, commanded the brigade group, which comprised:

- 2nd Bn. The Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders (Princess Louise's);
- 5th Bn. 2nd Punjab Regiment;
- 4th Bn. 19th Hyderabad Regiment;
- 22nd Indian Mountain Regiment, Indian Artillery;
- 15th Field Company, Queen Victoria's Own Madras Sappers and Miners;
- 12th Indian Brigade Signals Section, Indian Corps of Signals;
- 16th Supply Issue Section, Royal Indian Army Service Corps;
- 31st General Purpose Transport Company, Royal Indian Army Service Corps;
- 2nd Motor Transport Section, Royal Indian Army Service Corps;
- 18th Field Ambulance, Indian Medical Service;
- 5th Field Hygiene Section, Indian Medical Service;
- No. 3 Mobile Workshop Section, Indian Army Ordnance Corps;
- No. 9 Mobile Workshop Section, Indian Army Ordnance Corps;
- No. 25 Mobile Workshop Section, Indian Army Ordnance Corps;
- No. 29 Mobile Workshop Section, Indian Army Ordnance Corps.

Second World War

The declaration of war by the U.K. and France against Germany on 3 September 1939 made little practical difference to the men of the 12th Indian Infantry Brigade. The brigade was stationed in Singapore, under the direct command of Malaya Command. The opportunities for training were limited, and the hope was maintained that Japan would limit its military expansionist strategy, and that the war would not affect Malaya. This had been the case during the First World War, when Japan was an ally of the U.K., but tensions were higher in Asia with the war between Japan and China continuing.

Lieutenant Colonel STUART's battalion was destined to remain in Malaya, to be captured when Singapore capitulated on 15 February 1941. Many of the men he had served with and knew well were to die, or spend four and half years in Japanese captivity. Fortunately for him personally, Lieutenant Colonel STUART left Singapore on 6 February 1940 to return to India. On his arrival in India, he took up the appointment of Commandant of the Senior Officers' School at Belgaum (graded as a General Staff Officer 1st Grade). The Senior Officers' School had been scaled down at the outbreak of the Second World War, however, it continued to operate delivering courses for prospective company and battalion commanders. Whilst he was in post, STUART was promoted to the rank of Acting Colonel on 16 March 1940, and then Temporary Colonel on 16 September 1940.

With this being a period of significant expansion in the Indian Army, many officers were not able to stay in any one post for long, and this was the case for STUART. He was promoted to the rank of Acting Brigadier on 1 October 1940, on being appointed the Brigadier General Staff of Eastern Command, India. During his tenure, STUART was promoted to the rank of Temporary Brigadier on 1 April 1941, and the substantive rank of Colonel with effect from 26 December 1940 (his seniority dating from 1 July 1939); although his promotion was not published in the London Gazette until 11 July 1941.

Eastern Command was a pre-war formation, one of the four command areas that comprised the Army in India. It covered the north-central, and north-eastern provinces of British India, and several Princely states. These included:

- Delhi Province;
- Rohtak and Gurgaon Districts;
- Dujana and Pataudi States of the Punjab;
- Bawat (Nabha);
- The United Provinces;
- The United Provinces States;
- Rajputana (less States of Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Sirohi, Danta, Palanpur, Banswara, Partabgarh, Dunyarpur, Shahpura, Eushalgarh, Nimbahera (Tonk);
- The combined Bundelkhand and Baghelkhand Agency of Central India;
- Piplon (Bhopal);
- Gwalior State (less detached Districts in Southern Command);
- Bihar;
- Orissa;
- Eastern States Agency (less fifteen small States);
- Bengal;
- Bengal States;
- Assam;
- Manipur State.

It was a Lieutenant General or General's appointment, with a full staff of personnel at Command Headquarters, which were located at Naini Tai. It comprised the:

- Meerut District (3rd Indian Division);
- Lucknow District;
- Presidency & Assam District.

With the outbreak of war with Japan on 8 December 1941, there were few changes to Eastern Command. As the Japanese Army advanced up through Burma, it was necessary to change the status of the command to an operational command, tasked with defending the eastern frontier of India, therefore, it was redesignated as the Eastern Army on 13 April 1942, with its headquarters located at Ranchi.

The Presidency and Assam District was used to form the basis of the new Headquarters, XV Indian Corps, and formed the Assam Division. The Meerut and Lucknow Districts transferred to the newly formed Central Command. On 21 April 1942, the Eastern Army had under command:

- Assam Division (Jorhat);
 - 1st Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 9th Anti-Aircraft Brigade;
- IV Corps: (Ranchi) (Lieutenant General N. M. S. IRWIN):
 - 70th Infantry Division (Ranchi);
 - 14th Infantry Brigade;
 - 23rd Infantry Brigade;
 - 23rd Indian Infantry Division (Ranchi);
 - 37th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 123rd Indian Infantry Brigade;
- XV Indian Corps: (Barrackpore) (Lieutenant General Sir Noel BERESFORD-PEIRSE)
 - 14th Indian Infantry Division (Comilla);
 - 47th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 49th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - Garrison Troops;
 - 26th Indian Infantry Division;
 - 4th Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 71st Indian Infantry Brigade;
 - 109th Indian Infantry Brigade (Akyab);
 - 1st Anti-Aircraft Brigade;
 - 36th Indian Infantry Brigade (Kharagpur).

The Assam Division was a temporary formation created from elements of Headquarters, Presidency and Assam District. A short time later the 1st Indian Infantry Brigade transferred to the command of the 23rd Indian Division, and the Assam Division disbanded. The XV Indian Corps was newly created from Headquarters, Presidency and Assam District, and had its headquarters based at Calcutta and then Barrackpore.

The role of Brigadier General Staff (B.G.S.) was to act as the Chief of Staff to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief in respect of all operational and personnel issues. The Deputy Adjutant and Quarter-Master-General worked alongside the B.G.S. with responsibility for all armaments, stores, supplies and transport. The Japanese invasion of Burma, and their rapid advance through this country towards India no doubt created a heavy workload for Brigadier STUART. In May 1941, the survivors of Burma Corps reached India, imposing great demands on the Eastern Army placing it in the front line. With them came thousands of refugees, so the Eastern Army had responsibility for trying to house and feed them. In addition, the Eastern Army had to prepare defences in case the Japanese continued their advance into India.

In recognition of his hard work and dedication, Brigadier STUART was made a Companion of the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire (C.I.E.) on 1 January 1943, for his service as the Brigadier General Staff in Eastern Command and Eastern Army. This was an unusual award, and a tribute to his efficiency and effectiveness as B.G.S..

The 19th Indian Infantry Division had been raised in October 1941, and was based in southern India to guard against the threat of invasion by the Japanese. The divisional commander was Major General Geoffry SCOONES, however, on 1 August 1942 he was promoted to the rank of Acting Lieutenant General to assume command of IV Corps.² STUART was selected to replace SCOONES, so was promoted to the rank of Acting Major General on 1 August, to assume command of the division. The 19th Indian Division was part of XXXIII Indian Corps, and was engaged on training and counter invasion duties.

As the Indian Army began to prepare to go onto the offensive, the process of choosing the commanders to lead these divisions into active service was refined. By mid-1943, STUART was forty-eight years' of age, but had no recent operational experience in command of a brigade, or division, on the battlefield. Major General 'Pete' REES had recently returned to India, having been sacked as General Officer Commanding 10th Indian Infantry Division in Egypt. Initially, REES was unemployed, but being four years younger than STUART, and with operational experience as both a brigade and divisional commander, REES was chosen to replace STUART in command of the 19th Indian Division. Clearly, the sacking of REES was not held against him, and within the Indian Army, there appears to have been a feeling that both REES and MESSERVY (who had also been sacked about the same time) were unlucky, rather than incompetent.

STUART had been absent from the division between 26 April and 7 May 1943 attending a course, and returned to hand over command of the division to REES on 19 July 1943. STUART seems to have then either taken leave, or been unemployed himself for a period. His opening came when Major General Charles LANE was posted from command of 303 Line of Communication Area at Calcutta, to the new Headquarters of South East Asia Command. STUART was selected to replace LANE, and took up his appointment on or about 3 November 1943.³ He was promoted Temporary Major General on 16 November 1943 whilst in command of this area.⁴

² There is frequent confusion over the correct spelling of the first name of SCOONES. He appears on the Army List as Geoffry, on his marriage certificate, in *Who's Who*, and on his entry in the National Probate Calendar. The use of Geoffry appears to be an assumption by various writers.

³ This date may not be correct as even his Personal Record appears to have inconsistencies in the date he left command of the 19th Indian Division, and the date he assumed command of the 303 Line of Communication Area. This seems to have caused confusion in the Military Secretariat, as he clearly had a break in service as an Acting Major General of three months and sixteen days. Unfortunately, the same problem is found in the records of his successor in command of the 19th Indian Division, Major General T. W. REES.

⁴ This date is confirmed by several sources, and STUART was definitely in command of 303 Line of Communication Area on or by this date.

This was a very stressful time for those soldiers and civil servants in Bengal, as the area was suffering a drought, and consequently a famine was fast developing. The causes of the famine, which claimed as many as three-million lives, were founded on the problems resulting from a war economy in this country where agriculture was the major activity. War induced inflation gained ground, which benefitted some sections of Indian society, in particular, the industrialists. The urban middle class found that although they gained by an increase in income, this was insufficient to meet the rise in the cost of living. Although basic staples, such as rice, wheat and pulses, did not increase in cost significantly, the cost of butter rose by 42%, potatoes by 37%, sugar by 28% and milk by 18%. An average family had to spend 99% more on food stuffs, and the expenditure on food rose to over 50% of most family's income.

The people in the lowest socio-economic classes suffered greatly, as their lives were precarious already. The wives of soldiers wrote about the lack of food, and how they had pawned family valuables, and obtained mortgages to survive. Some Indian commentators place the direct cause of the famine as the inability of poor Indians to obtain food, even though there was not necessarily a dearth in the availability of food. In other words, the food was there, but the poor could not afford to buy it.

Other factors that exacerbated the crisis included the 'denial' policy, that meant that many fishing boats were destroyed in case they could have been of use to the Japanese, thereby actually depriving many fishermen of their livelihoods. There was an element of producers and traders hoarding stocks of food, partially in the hope that the commodity would increase in value, and thus bring in greater profits. Lastly, a significant factor was the inefficiency of local government in procuring and distributing food to various districts, and the reluctance of the Indian Government, and the British Government, to recognise the problem and institute a famine works programme. The loss of Burma to the Japanese meant the loss of a major rice producer in South-East Asia, with the imports of substitute foodstuffs constrained by the competing demands of a total war economy pursued by the British Government. Lord WAVELL, the Viceroy of India, made requests to the British Government for the export to India of additional food-grains, but the Prime Minister, Winston CHURCHILL, refused to divert shipping to this task. By this date, the Allies had invaded the Italian mainland, with Italy agreeing to an armistice, with the focus of the Allies now on the invasion of France, and the opening of a second front as demanded by the leader of the U.S.S.R., Josef STALIN. The Americans were making headway, albeit slowly in their Pacific campaign, with the Japanese still encamped on the Burma – India border. CHURCHILL told Leo AMERY, the Secretary of State for India that he hated the Indian people, stating: *"They are a beastly people with a beastly religion,"* and later said, *"We cannot afford to send ships merely as a gesture of goodwill."*

The reality was that many people suffered cruelly, as one traveller noted:

*We could see hundreds of men, women and children of all ages on the sides of the roads, crying for alms. The sight of those naked and half-naked wretches reduced to skeletons was too strong even for the most strong-hearted persons. They were begging from all indiscriminately, and even soldiers of other nationalities took pity on them and gave them alms. These wretches had left their villages and were moving towards the towns and cities in crowds.*⁵

The Commander-in-Chief of the Army in India, General AUCHINLECK, spoke with the Viceroy, and, having received approval of his plans, implemented arrangements for military aid in relief of famine distress in Bengal. A new plan was approved on 1 November, with Major General A. V. T. WAKELY appointed as the Director of Movements, Civil Supplies; working directly under the government of Bengal. His role was focused on the organisation of food supplies to the civilian population of the State of Bengal.

Alongside this organisation, Major General STUART was responsible for internal security and public order in his role as General Officer Commanding 303 Lines of Communication Area. He reported to the Commander-in-Chief of Eastern Command, Lieutenant General Mosley MAYNE, who was appointed the Supreme Military Liaison Officer between the government of Bengal and military authorities. STUART's command was reinforced by:

- One motorised brigade;
- Five infantry battalions;
- One Indian General Hospital;
- Two field ambulances;
- One Casualty Clearing Station.

Troops undertook a reconnaissance of towns and villages across Bengal, and then troops distributed food supplies to the worst affected areas. It was reported that within a fortnight, military aid was producing results, and the supplies being distributed from Calcutta had doubled. Sadly, despite these efforts, many Indians died – men, women and children. The exact number will never be known, but it is estimated to be at least two million. Due to the combination of the famine, the religious tensions present in Bengal, and the independence movement within India, riots broke out in Calcutta. STUART had to deploy troops onto the streets of Calcutta in order to restore peace.

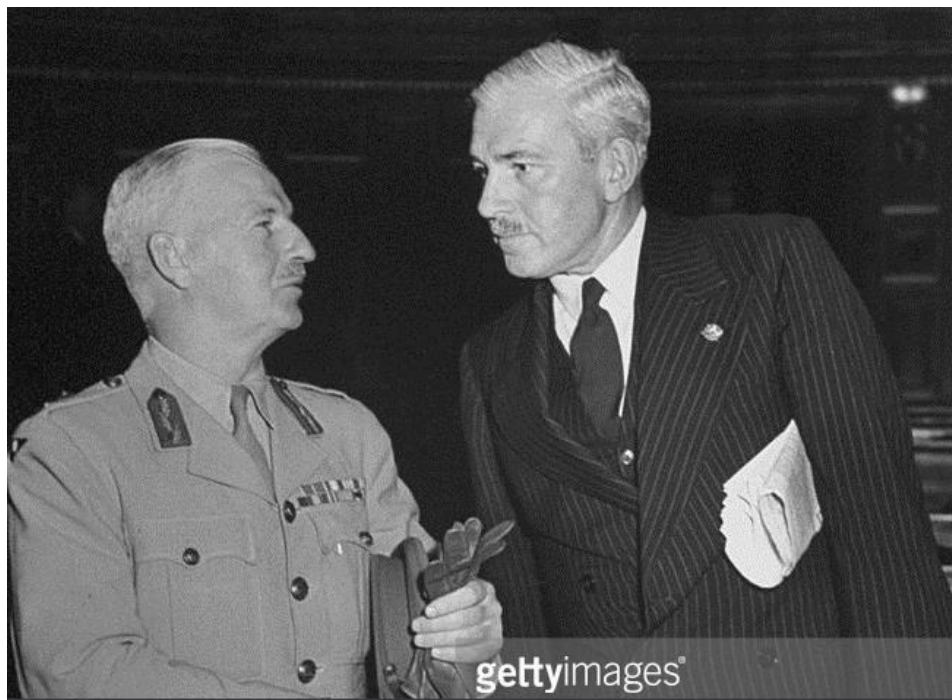
⁵ RAGHAVAN, Srinath *India's War – The Making of Modern South East Asia 1939 – 1945* (U.K., Allan Lane, 2016) p.350

STUART was assessed by General MAYNE (his commanding officer) in his personal record as having *'good character, sound judgement, wisdom and ability during the riots in Calcutta'*. General AUCHINLECK, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army in India, endorsed his report with the words, *'A most enthusiastic and zealous officer'*.⁶

Post War Career

In November 1945, with the end of hostilities, the Army in India began moving from a war-footing to a peacetime one. The 303 Lines of Communication Area was redesignated as the Bengal and Assam Area in that month. STUART was appointed the head of the Indian Military Mission to the Allied Control Commission in Berlin on 20 December 1945. He was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (C.B.) in the New Year's Honours List on 1 January 1946.

He relinquished command of the Bengal and Assam Area on 15 January, handing over to Major General Roy BUCHER. STUART travelled to Berlin with the military mission, and was stationed in Germany for eighteen months. On 9 August 1947, the Indian Military Mission closed down, and STUART was released from Berlin to return to India.



Major General STUART (on right in suit) with an Australian officer, at the Paris Peace Conference in August 1946.

Courtesy of: Getty Images

⁶ It appears that the context of the use of the word 'zealous' by AUCHINLECK is towards efficiency and effectiveness, rather than being over-officious.

British India partitioned to form the new countries of India and Pakistan on 15 August 1947, with both new governments keen to appoint their own countrymen to posts in the respective armies. Some British officers were retained for various periods, but many were now redundant. STUART received his letter on 17 September 1947, advising him that he was to be compulsorily retired due to the partition of India, and the disbandment of the British Indian Army.

He was granted leave, with the formal date of his retirement being 13 January 1948. He was granted the rank of Honorary Major General, his substantive rank being Colonel. After his retirement, he was awarded the United States Legion of Honor, Degree of Commander on 29 January 1949. This was a result of his leadership of the Indian Military Mission to Germany. STUART was only fifty-three years of age, so was admitted to the Regular Army Reserve of Officers, on 15 May 1948; being granted the rank of Local Major General to undertake a special appointment. He completed this appointment the following year and retired fully.

Post Retirement and Family

Douglas STUART married Hilda Muriel GIBBS on 16 June 1916, and they had two children: a daughter Jean Elizabeth born on 6 March 1920, and a son John Angus born on 16 September 1925. On leaving India, they moved to Comforts Farm, Hurst Green, Oxted, Surrey, in England. Major General Douglas STUART, C.B, C.I.E., O.B.E., *p.s.c.*, died on 9 May 1955 aged sixty years. He left an estate of £14,515 2s 8d.

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