

## Serving the Raj: The Indian Army and the War Effort of Rawalpindi in WWI

### ABSTRACT

*The article deals with the war effort of Rawalpindi district during First World War, primarily, with the supplying of manpower to the Indian Army in which the district took lead in recruiting soldiers not only in Punjab but across India. After annexation of the Punjab military dependence on Punjab increased and the region emerged as a chief recruiting area for the Indian Army. Punjab made a great contribution during First World War. All of its districts were mobilised for generating recruits. But the Rawalpindi district distinguished itself over and above. The changed system of recruitment backed by civil administration proved helpful in recruiting campaign in the district. Recruiting activities were intensified and the district provided the maximum number of recruits. Like recruitment, the district earned prominence in Punjab in receiving the greatest number of military awards for devotion to duty and gallantry of its soldiers. The district was also rewarded with generous civil awards for active collaboration of civilians with the state in war services.*

**Keywords:** Rawalpindi, First World War, Indian Army, British *Raj*, Punjab Frontier Force, Peel Commission, Punjabi Muslims, Great Game, Kim.

The Indian Army was a strong bulwark of the British *Raj* in India, playing a significant role in the expansion and consolidation of the British rule. British colonial power gained supremacy over competing powers in India like Tipu Sultan, the Marathas, and the Sikhs not by trade and diplomatic trickery, but, in the final analysis, by armed force. The doctrine that effective armed forces were underpinning factors in the ascendancy of imperial authority soon became an essential component of Anglo-Indian ideology and remained remarkably constant in both Company and Crown phases of British rule (Sundaram, 2002, pp. 46, 47). The army as the key instrument of military power served as the arbiter of imperial authority right up to the final stages of British rule in India. In this regard, the Punjab

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played an important part in strengthening the military through its substantial contributions to military man power and was regarded as the "Sword Hand of India" (O' Dwyer, 1925, p.213). As the sword arm of the British *Raj*, the Punjab provided military assistance to the armed forces unmatched by any other province during First World War. All available resources in the Punjab were mobilised to meet wartime military requirements and, with civil-military cooperation, a successful recruiting campaign was initiated as a result of which the highest requirement of recruits was obtained in the Punjab. The leading contribution of the Punjab was not only an outcome of effective mobilisation during the war but of a long military association the province had held with the Indian army since its inclusion in the British Empire.

After the annexation of the Punjab in 1849 the recruiting patterns of the native army in India underwent substantial changes. The newly annexed region of the Punjab was viewed as a potentially rich recruiting ground for the native army for various reasons. The annexation had expanded the political and geographical stretches of the British Empire and brought the British in contact with a frontier region having a very difficult terrain and a trying climate. Regular troops found the terrain and climate of the frontier region very difficult to deal with (Heathcote, 1974, p. 27).

To respond to this newly created military situation, the British decided to recruit Punjabis for service at the frontier. Consequently, in 1849 the Board of Administration raised the Punjab Frontier Force (PFF) having soldiers from the Punjab who were better adapted to the terrain and climate at the frontier (Yong, 2005, p. 37). The representation of Punjabis in military service increased when the composition of the native army was brought under scrutiny after the native regiments of the Bengal Army had mutinied in 1857. The events of 1857, regarded by the British as "the great test of national loyalty", shaped a military thinking wherein the Bengalis, who had mutinied, were seen as "disaffected", while the Punjabis, who were sent to Delhi to suppress the rebellion, were perceived as "loyalists". The British experience of 1857 led to a major reorganisation of the Bengal Army and relocation of military alliances with those Indians who had remained loyal during the rebellion.

The homogenous nature of the Bengal Army was seen as one of the factors of the outbreak of the Mutiny and its subsequent spread through most of the regiments which included men who shared same caste and region, and, hence, the same affiliations as well. After the 1857 upheaval the Peel Commission (1859), appointed to recommend ways of increasing viability of the armed forces in India, recommended that "the Native Army should be composed of different nationalities and castes, and as a general rule mixed promiscuously through each regiment" (Yong, 2005, p.52). The recruitment of a wide variety of castes and class in the native army was,

therefore, recommended by the commission to prevent a single caste or class from galvanising into a unified force that could threaten British power again. To create "class antagonism" in the post-Mutiny Bengal Army, which was deemed necessary, the Punjabis and Gurkhas were included more in number to counterbalance the Hindustani component within the army (Rand, 2006, p.4). The recruiting balance shifted more towards other recruiting grounds, in particular, towards the Gurkhas of Nepal and the Dogras of the north-west of India, due to the changing strategic interests and military requirements of the colonial power.

The military organisation of the British Indian Army was revisited as the threat perceptions by the military officials underwent changes by the last quarter of the nineteenth century. From 1880 onwards the function of the army as a "defence force" to counter external aggression came more into focus than the task for maintaining the army for internal security only.

British fears of a Russian invasion of the Indian empire through northern Afghanistan escalated as Russia expanded across Central Asia giving birth to the wide-spread delusion of a "Great Game" with the Russian empire (A delusion no doubt but a delusion shared by many and immortalised in no small part by a fictive Irish orphan of Lahore named Kimbal O'Hara: 'Well is the Game called great! I was four days a scullion at Quetta, waiting on the wife of the man whose book I stole. And that was part of the Great Game! From the South - God knows how far - came up the Mahratta, playing the Great Game in fear of his life. Now I shall go far and far into the North playing the Great Game. Truly, it runs like a shuttle throughout all Hind.'" Kipling, Rudyard, *Kim*. 1901, Ch. 12) and the need to enhance the efficiency of the native army to take on a European power. The two prominent among military officials who organised the native army on the principles of fighting efficiency were Lord Frederick Roberts and Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener. Lord Frederick Roberts, as Commander-in-Chief of the Bengal Army (1885-93), carried out a major reorientation in recruiting practices in which men of the more "warlike and hardy races" substituted the "unwarlike" men of the Bengal, Madras and Bombay Armies. In this regard, the Punjab was viewed as the main recruiting ground for troops with the best martial qualities as noted in the findings of Eden Commission (1879). As a result, the recruitment of the Sikhs, Punjabi Muslims, and certain classes of Pashtoons from Punjab increased, besides an increase in the strength of Gurkhas and Dogras (Roberts, 1901, p.534). Under Lord Roberts homogenous regiments were reintroduced and replaced by mixed regiments, as recommended by Peel Commission, to facilitate enlistment of a large number of "northern races" especially of the north-west for their proximity to military and strategic theatres in which the imperial power was engaged and also due to their familiarity with such terrain and climates.

Lord Horatio Herbert Kitchener (1850-1916) (He was 1. Earl Kitchener, KG (Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter), KP (Knight of the Order of Saint Patrick), GCB (Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath), OM (Order of Merit), GCSI (Knight Grand Commander of the Star of India), GCMG (Knight Grand Cross of the Order of St. Michael and St. George), GCIE (Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire), ADC (Aide de Camp to the monarch; with rope aiguillette, and PC (Member of the Privy Council), during his tenure as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army (1902-1909), had organised the army in order to meet external aggression rather than internal threat to the imperial order. He believed that the maintenance of internal security was a means to an end and that the main function of the army should be to defend India's north-western frontier from the menacing advance of Russia (It is ironical that Lord Kitchener died while on a secret mission to Russia when on 5 June 1916 the heavy cruiser *HMS Hampshire* on which he was travelling struck a German sea mine west of Orkney and sank within fifteen minutes killing all but twelve of its 737 passengers). The unified Indian Army formed in 1895 with the amalgamation of three presidency armies and divided into four regional commands (the Punjab, Bengal, Madras, and Bombay), was reorganised into formations likely to take the field during war. For this purpose, in 1907 nine divisions of the army were combined into two armies; five constituted in the "Northern Army" and four in the "Southern Army" (Arthur, 2007, p.141). Like Lord Roberts, Lord Kitchener looked to the best fighting material believed to be found in the north and west of India, especially to the Punjab and frontier region to strengthen India's defence for countering the Russian threat. To improve the fighting efficiency of the army he was concerned to eliminate the units raised from "non-martial" population and to substitute them with regiments recruited from "martial" population. Accordingly, fourteen Madras regiments were reconstituted into nine Punjab and five Gurkha regiments (as cited in Yong, 2002, p.34).

The changes made in the organisation of the native army over a period of time led to a shift in recruiting strategies in favour of Punjab and it became the most favoured province for the Indian Army. Because of its continued relevance to the successive phases of army reforms recruitment from Punjab increased considerably. The recruiting practices followed from 1880 onwards sought to enlist soldiers on the basis of doctrine of "martial races" and, in consequence, recruitment came to be concentrated on "fighting classes" especially from north-west of India who were thought to be better equipped for fighting the enemy across the north-west frontier. The Punjab replaced Madras, Bombay and north-central India as the main recruiting centres for the army within a brief period of time and, by the end of the nineteenth century, half of combatants in the native army were from

Punjab (Yong, 2005, pp. 32-33). As the military reliance on Punjab increased, the size of the Bombay and Madras armies gradually decreased. Between 1862 and 1914, the number of infantry battalions raised in Punjab increased from 28 to 57; and Gurkha battalions had risen fourfold i.e. from 5 to 20 (Omissi, 1994, p.11). In contrast, battalions in Madras Army were reduced from 40 to 11, and in Bombay Army 30 battalions were reduced to 18 over the same period (Cohen, 1971, p. 44). The close military association of the Punjab with the Indian Army proved advantageous to the colonial power when the province showed tremendous response to military requirements of the British during First World War.

When the war broke out, military authorities looked primarily to the Punjab for supply of military manpower while the demand for it became urgent. The Punjab was found ready and willing for fulfilment of wartime military needs of the British Empire. A splendid response from the Punjab was a direct result of the efforts on part of military and civil administration which utilised all methods viable for mobilising war resources of the province. The Punjab stood out in its contribution of manpower in the whole of India by providing 349,688 fighting men out of total 737,867 combatants recruited during the war. (*Recruiting in India Before and During the War of 1914-1918* IOR: L/MIL/17/5/2152, 1919, p. 66) It also made noteworthy monetary contributions to war funds, charities and other war loans which amounted to Rs. 9, 24, 84,537 (Leigh, 1922, pp. 79-81). Referring to Punjab's supply of manpower, H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, speaking in Rawalpindi on 16 February 1921, said,

The achievement of the Punjab was indeed remarkable. Even before the War the Punjab had a name familiar in the military annals of the Empire. But during the War she became a household word on account of the number of men from the Punjab who joined the colours, but also on account of the splendid fighting qualities they displayed in many a campaign (O' Dwyer, 1925, p.215).

For the purpose of supply of recruits, mobilisation activities were carried out throughout the Punjab and all of its districts were engaged in mobilisation process to meet wartime needs. As a result, the Rawalpindi district stood first in recruiting, not only in the Punjab but in the whole of India (Johnston, n.d., p. 1). According to official recruiting figures presented in the local War History of the district, 23,629 men were enlisted during the war (Johnston, n.d., p. 3). The district started a recruiting campaign during the war with distinctive advantage over other districts as it already had military connections with the army.

The military association of the district with the army goes back to the time of British involvement in the Punjab which played a significant role in

shaping British estimate of the military value of the people of the district. For example, Raja Hayatullah Khan of the Gakkhar clan of Rawalpindi district sided with the British and fought in Hazara and Multan in 1848-49 (Griffin, 1940, p. 286). Later, the Gakkhars again in 1857 proved their military fervour and stood alongside the British by raising local levies to maintain order in their respective localities (Yong, 2005, p.61). The loyalty and fervour of certain castes and clans of the district caught attention of the British and they found military service opened for them. The castes and clans such as Gakkhars, Janjuas, Awans, and a few Rajput tribes, identified as "martial races" and broadly classified as "Punjabi Muslims" by military officials, became the favoured recruits from the Rawalpindi district. In the case of the Punjabi Muslims, a clear bias was shown in favour of castes and clans with high social-standing and who were once politically dominant aristocracy of the tract. For the purpose of recruiting warlike classes among "Punjabi Muslims" the recruiting centre was established at Rawalpindi (Wikeley, 1915, p. 125), and a recruiting officer was appointed there with a view to enlist the recruits discovered by recruiting parties sent out by regiments. As a standard of requirement, the recruits were examined on the basis of physical suitability i.e. the recruit had to be between sixteen and nineteen years in age, with a minimum height requirement of five feet eight inches, a chest measurement of thirty-four inches (Yong, 2005, p.74), and free from such defects as varicose veins, knock-knees, or bad flat-feet (Wikeley, 1915, p. 127). If they fulfilled these requirements, they were then subjected to a rigorous medical examination. Those who ultimately passed through this stringent selection process were deemed successful and, hence, enlisted for the service.

Not only military potential of various castes and clans proved crucial in their recruitment but the general economic conditions of the district also made military service a favoured line of work for the recruits. The economic condition, very different from that of wealthy canal and central Punjab districts, was such that it offered a very favourable soil for recruiting. The average holding in the Rawalpindi district was only four acres which made the prospective for agricultural growth very limited. The agricultural hardships pushed the rural men to find a reliable source of income that was not certain from land. Under such economic pressures the relative profitability of military service over agricultural output in the district urged its men to enlist into the army for their economic survival. The district had a considerable number of men in the army before the outbreak of First World War. Out of the four *tehsils* of the district namely Rawalpindi, Murree, Gujar Khan and Kahuta, military service was very common in the latter two i.e. Gujar Khan and Kahuta. This was also true of the Karor, Chajna and Charehan *zails* of Murree *tehsil* that proved the best recruiting grounds. The two remaining *zails* of the Murree *tehsil* viz. Tret and Dewal, chiefly

inhabited by Dhonds who were prosperous, lay behind in enlistment. The Rawalpindi *tehsil* had not the military connections of the others when the war broke out but provided a fairly large number of recruits during the war, and when this is considered its efforts must be held most credible. The table below shows the pre-war men in the army from the Rawalpindi district by *tehsils* against the male populace of each *tehsil*, and also the efforts of each *tehsil* in raising men during First World War.

Table 1: Recruitment in the Indian Army from the Rawalpindi District before and during First World War

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<i>Tehsil</i>	Male Populace	Pre-war Men in the Army	Recruiting Figures during War	Total of col. 3 & col. 4	Percentage of col. 4 on col. 2	Percentage of col. 5 and col. 2
Kahuta	45,826	4,284	5,471	9,755	12	21
Murree	28,164	2,009	3,028	5,037	10	18
Gujar Khan	76,022	3,918	7,909	11,826	10	16
Rawalpindi (excluding Cantts. and City)	85,113	2,452	7,222	9,674	8	11

Source: *The History of the Great War: Rawalpindi District*, 4. India Office Records: NEG 5545.

A leading contribution from the Rawalpindi district to military manpower during First World War was made achievable due to the efforts of the military authorities reinforced by civil official or by local-organisations of public-spirited inhabitants to popularize recruiting. During the early years of war, recruiting consisted partly of "direct enlistment" (whereby a young whose family was associated with certain regiment could present himself as a recruit at the regimental centre) and partly of "class recruiting" (in which the recruiting officers posted at cantonments enrolled recruits of a particular class deemed as "martial"). This system of recruitment worked well enough between 1914 and 1916 in obtaining the required number of recruits. But as the demand for manpower rose, mobilisation activities were intensified for the task of popularising military service among those who hitherto had no connection with it, and increasing its desirability for those who were already part of it. For this purpose, in 1917 the recruiting organisation was changed from "class" system to "territorial" system in which civil administration was directly associated with the military in the task of

providing men for the army. With territorial system of recruitment in operation the base of recruitment was widened and the castes and classes that had hitherto been little recruited found the doors of military service wide open for them. The Sikhs and Hindus who were not sought-after recruits in Rawalpindi under the system of "class" recruitment, which favoured recruitment of Muslims from Rawalpindi, were enlisted without ambivalence. As a result, out of a male population of 8,289 Sikhs, 616 or 7 per cent, and out of male population of 7,678 Hindus 267 or 3 per cent were enlisted during the war (Johnston, n.d., p. 13).

The changes in the system of recruitment also led to greater involvement of civil administration in the process of recruitment. The civilians of influence, both officials and non-officials, were involved in recruiting to assist military recruiting officer in raising men for the army. In the Rawalpindi district a War League was established with Deputy Commissioner as its President and a few leading officials and a large number of non-officials were appointed as members who worked in close cooperation for stimulating recruitment. The district-wide recruiting activities were started which brought in function the entire revenue administration of the district, from *tehsildar* (collector of revenue) down to the *lambardars* (the village headman), for mobilisation. Among the officials who rendered valuable services in providing manpower, M. Mohammad Zaman Khan, M.B.E., Revenue Assistant, Rawalpindi district, Sardar Hari Singh, *tehsildar* of Rawalpindi, Bawa Arjan Singh, *tehsildar* of Gujar Khan, L. Ladla Ram, Naib-*tehsildar* of Kahuta were noticeable. The most conspicuous, however, was Tehsildar S. Mehtab Singh, an efficient and tactful government servant who held charge of the biggest *tehsil* of the Rawalpindi district, the headquarters of the largest military stations in India where the demands for the army were very great. He worked hard and indefatigably in raising men and it was in his time that about 5,000 recruits were enlisted from Rawalpindi *tehsil* (Johnston, n.d., p. 19).

An important feature in generating manpower was utilising the capacity of the non-officials which proved instrumental in recruiting work. The local notables comprising rural notables, chieftains of clans, and religious leaders who exercised considerable influence in their respective localities played an important role in mobilisation. By virtue of their local influence and superior social and economic positions the local notables motivated people in their localities to enlist and supplied a considerable number of recruits. Among non-officials, Chowdhry Sukh Singh and Chowdhry Narain Singh from Gujar Khan; Chowdhry Ishra Singh, Chowdhry Attar Singh, and L. Ram Chand Suri of Rawalpindi; and Bhai Lal Singh, Mahajan of Kahuta, helped the government to the best of their abilities for supply of recruits during the war (Johnston, n.d., pp. 29-30). The local notables actively took part in recruiting activities by opening



recruiting agencies in their localities which served as a viable mechanism for bringing in of recruits. In this regard, R. B. S. Boota Singh, C.I.E., O.P.E., of Rawalpindi rendered valuable services during the war by supplying a great number of recruits through recruiting agencies. At first, he opened a recruiting agency at his headquarters Rawalpindi on 12<sup>th</sup> May, 1915, and immediately launched similar agencies at Peshawar, Lahore and Delhi which provided thousands of recruits. It was estimated that he supplied 11,842 recruits of which 2,385 were supplied through the Rawalpindi agency (Johnston, n.d., p. 22). It was, however, thought advisable to stop these agencies as many people began a regular trade in recruiting i.e. the "purchase" of recruits by paying money to the individual recruit or his family by private individuals (O' Dwyer, 1925, p. 220). As a result, the agency at Rawalpindi was closed in the beginning of the year 1918.

The support local influential gave to the government in mobilisation ensured a steady supply of recruits during the war. Several of the notables associated themselves with local committees organised under the tutelage of the government to serve as an important connection between the district administration and the local population. In Rawalpindi, Rai Sahib L. Gobind Ram Sethi served the British cause of mobilising the war resources in the district through various committees. During the last years of the war he assisted the government by working as Honorary Secretary of District War League Committee, District Publicity Committee, Imperial Indian Relief Fund Committee, and Sir Michael O' Dwyer Memorial Local Committee, to coordinate recruitment and fund raising in the district. The local notables accompanied recruiting officers on tours to recruiting areas and carried out recruitment propaganda to enhance the public appeal for military service. K. B. Qazi Siraj-ud-Din Ahmed of Rawalpindi rendered most valuable service in this respect and gave up his practice as a barrister at the commencement of the war to fully devote his energy and enthusiasm to war efforts. He carried out extensive propaganda in favour of recruiting for the army by means of pamphlets and posters, and by the publication of a periodical devoted to recruiting and other war works. He was either closely identified with or originated every scheme and move to popularise recruiting, and constituted himself as the "advertisement agent" disseminating the benefits of military service among the male population. The phenomenal success of recruiting in Rawalpindi Division, Kashmir and Poonch, in which over 40,000 recruits were obtained in 2½ years, was to a great extent attributable to his work (Johnston, n.d., p. 25). His efforts during the war were acknowledged by the grant of the title of Khan Bahadur, five rectangles of land, a Recruiting Badge, a War Services Badge, a Viceregal *sanad* (proclamation), and various other *sanads* (decrees) and *khillats* (robes of honour) (Johnston, n.d., p. 26).

The recruiting campaign owed its success also to the people of considerable religious influence among the Muslims and non-Muslims who extended collaboration to the government for its war efforts. Of special value among the Sikhs religious leaders were the services of Baba Sir Gurbakhsh Singh Bedi of Kallar, Rawalpindi, who was the spiritual head of the Pothwar Sikhs and a direct descendant of Guru Nanakji. He made lengthy and arduous tours in Poonch State and the Pothwar despite his frail health and with the help of his great spiritual influence a very fair number of the Sikhs of Poonch State and Rawalpindi came forward to enlist. He supplied a large proportion of recruits for the Brahmin Special Companies (Names of soldiers of Brahmin special companies are also immortalised in the white sandstone of the Men in Gate memorial to the 56,896 British and Commonwealth soldiers whose bodies were never recovered from the battlefields of the murderous "Ypres Salient" (pronounced "Wipers Salient" at the time by British and Commonwealth troops)) and many Muslim recruits for other units. In recognition of his valuable war services he was rewarded with the honour of knighthood, a Recruiting Badge, a Sword of Honour, a *khillat* (robe of honour) and various *sanads* (proclamations of honour) (Johnston, n.d., p. 24). His younger brother Baba Ujagar Singh Bedi, Honorary Magistrate of Rawalpindi, was also helpful in procuring recruits which included both Sikhs and Muslims.

The Muslim *pīrs* (spiritual leaders) extended assistance to the government in recruiting activities as well and motivated their *murīds* or disciples to enlist in the army. The *pīrī-murīdī* relationship, wherein a *murid* (disciple) takes an oath of allegiance to his *pīr* (spiritual master) to achieve access to the latter's spiritual charisma, proved advantageous for the *pīrs* in obtaining recruits among their followers. A prominent example was of *Pīr* Muhammad Nasir-ur-din and *Pīr* Nazir Ahmed of Mohra in Murree *tehsil* who took active part in recruiting campaign and propagated pro-war propaganda among their followers (Johnston, n.d., p. 26).

Not only the basis of recruitment was expanded through territorial system and the influence of local notables was utilised but the Government of India considered inducements indispensable to keep the families willing to continue sending their able-bodied men to the army during the war. From 1 January 1917 onward, free rations, instead of a rather inadequate messing allowance, were granted to all Indian ranks, and substantial additions were made to pay and pensions besides special war allowances sanctioned for all ranks. Later in the same year, for increased recruitment a bonus of Rs. 50 was given to every combatant recruit on enlistment (O' Dwyer, 1925, p. 222). The monetary rewards were certainly a powerful incentive for recruitment. These rewards offered temptations to would-be recruits and their families to overcome hesitation to enlist in the army during wartime. The rewards and incentives complemented the efforts of

the military officials and the civilians, both officials and non-officials, in the supply of recruits to the Indian Army. Due to the aforementioned efforts and measures consistently carried out in the recruiting process a considerable number of recruits were procured in the district during the war.

In addition to the supply of recruits, the district also made a notable contribution in money. In the total sum of two War Loans it achieved sixth place among twenty-nine districts of the Punjab, thereby surprising even its most hopeful admirers. To the two War Loans the district subscribed a sum of total Rs. 39, 20, 513 (Leigh, 1922, p. 81). To the first War Loan, mainly subscribed by the agricultural classes but also by some of the wealthiest of the commercial classes, the district of Rawalpindi subscribed a total of Rs. 21,66,613. To the second War Loan in which the middle class of the tradesman invested, the district subscribed Rs. 17,53,900 in total. The district proved itself no less willing to give than it was to lend. The total of the district contribution to various funds charitable and otherwise opened during the war amounted to Rs. 212,653 (Leigh, 1922, p. 79). The table below provides the detail of the cash contribution by the Rawalpindi district to war funds and charities.

Table 2: Cash Contribution by the Rawalpindi District during First World War

S.No.	War Funds and Charities	Contribution in Rupees
1	Punjab Aeroplane Fund	50,343
2	Imperial Indian Relief Fund	34,381
3	Hospital, Ambulance and Red Cross Funds	1,21,069
4	Comfort Funds	1,700
5	Other Funds (Prince of Wales' Fund, the Silver Wedding Fund, and various foreign relief funds)	5,160
		Rs. 212,653 Total Contribution

Source: M. S. Leigh, *Punjab and the War* (Lahore: Government Printing Press, 1922), 79. India Office Records: V/27/281/31.

The Rawalpindi district, like wartime recruitment, also distinguished itself greatly in receiving awards for its conspicuous war services from other districts of the Punjab. In the measure of devotion to duty, the soldiers of Rawalpindi district received most military awards for displaying the great skills and gallantry in the battlefield. The soldiers for distribution of military awards were selected for showing a high level of heroism in varying circumstances of difficulty and danger in the battlefield. They distinguished themselves for their disregard of personal danger or pain when rescuing a comrade or an officer; their readiness to face the fire of the superior numbers at close range; and their persistence to stick to their position in the

field till death. The information of the military awards won by the Rawalpindi district is provided in the table below.

Table 3: Distribution of Military Awards in the Rawalpindi District during First World War

S. No.	Military Awards	Number
1	Victoria Cross	1
2	Military Cross	3
3	Order of British India 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	1
4	Order of British India 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	10
5	Indian Order of Merit 1 <sup>st</sup> Class	1
6	Indian Order of Merit 2 <sup>nd</sup> Class	26
7	Bar to the Indian Distinguished Service Medal	1
8	Medal to the Indian Distinguished Service Medal	93
9	Indian Meritorious Service Medal	90
10	Miscellaneous Rewards and Special Promotions	3
11	Foreign Decorations	13
		242 Total Number

Source: Leigh, M. S. *Punjab and the War* (Lahore: Government Printing Press, 1922), 128-29. India Office Records: V/27/281/31.

Not only the services of the distinguishing recruits were appreciated but the services rendered by the leading civilians, both officials and non-officials, who had served as recruiting agents in their localities during the war, were also acknowledged. Their efforts in recruiting and in the collection of money and material were recognised by the Punjab government which rewarded them with a whole range of civil awards for their assistance. Civil awards rewarded to individuals of Rawalpindi district for meritorious services included: 18 Titles, 6 Swords of Honour, 5 seats in Divisional Darbar and 1 seat in Provincial Darbar, 1750 rupees of Jagirs, 138 squares of land in land grants (one square was equal to 27.7 acres), and 25 Recruiting Badges (Leigh, 1922, pp. 167-69). A more powerful reward for the Rawalpindi district which stood pre-eminent in all India in recruiting was a generous remission of its land revenue. The village communities that had provided a fairly large portion of their male population during the war were awarded with generous remissions of land revenue. The Rawalpindi district was reassessed for land revenue during the war and the Punjab government, in deciding on the amount of the assessment and its terms, granted remissions of land revenue to the value of Rs. 24,000 in 164 villages for five years (Johnston, n.d., p. 18).

In a nutshell, this study suggests that the tremendous war services of Rawalpindi district particularly in supplying the majority of recruits was a direct result of the combined efforts of military officials and civil administration. The state being well aware of the outreach of civil

administration in every echelon of society sought its involvement in stimulating recruitment in the district. The need for increased recruitment led to a change in system of recruitment during the war in which both the military and civil authorities worked in close cooperation for enlistment. Under the new system of recruitment, enlistment into the army was not a task of military authorities only but the position and influence of notable individuals of the district was effectively utilised as well for wartime recruitment. Civilians of local influence, both officials and non-officials, participated in recruiting campaigns either by opening up recruiting agencies or by associating themselves with local committees leading in war efforts. They were helpful not only in recruiting but in extending monetary contributions also. By extending assistance to the state for British war efforts, notable individuals of the district functioned as military collaborators on whose support the state relied greatly during the war. The district of Rawalpindi, consequently, took the lead in recruiting in the Punjab and, in return for its conspicuous contribution to military manpower, was rewarded with the greatest number of military rewards received in the Punjab. Not only the military potential of the district was held in high esteem by military officials but the civil government also appreciated the war efforts of the district by generous rewards to individuals and villages for demonstrating their indispensable support during the war.

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