

## Major General Cecil Wotton TOOVEY, C.B., C.B.E., M.C.\*

Cecil Wotton TOOVEY was born on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 1891. He joined the Inns of Court Officer Training Corps as a Private, from which he was commissioned in the 9<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Middlesex Regiment (Territorial Force) as a Second Lieutenant on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1913. With the outbreak of the war, TOOVEY was mobilised and joined his regiment on active service. On the 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1915, TOOVEY was seconded from the Middlesex Regiment on probation to the Indian Army in the rank of Lieutenant. His secondment from the 1<sup>st</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion The Middlesex Regiment to the 82<sup>nd</sup> Punjabis was confirmed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1917, but he remained on probation. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in the Middlesex Regiment on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1917.

TOOVEY continued to serve with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Punjabis during the war, being promoted to the rank of Acting Captain on the 9<sup>th</sup> January 1918 as a company commander. His appointment to the Indian Army was confirmed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1918. On the 8<sup>th</sup> December 1919, he was made the second-in-command of the 82<sup>nd</sup> Punjabis as an Acting Major. He relinquished this role on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1920, losing his acting rank and reverting to the rank of Captain.

TOOVEY was awarded the Military Cross on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 1920. His citation reads *'for gallantry on the 21st December 1919, at Pialosina camp, on Black Hill Ridge. When in command of the battalion, which was driven off the ridge, by the enemy, he gallantly organised and led a counter attack under heavy fire though himself wounded. He displayed conspicuous coolness and set a fine example to his command.'* On the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1923, his promotion to the rank of Captain in the Indian Army was confirmed and ante-dated to the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1919.

His next role was as a Deputy Assistant Adjutant General at General Headquarters, India, which he took up on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1927. He relinquished that role on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 1929, and on the same day was appointed Brigade Major. Later that year on the 1<sup>st</sup> July 1929, he was awarded the Brevet to the rank of Major. He relinquished the role of Brigade Major on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 1931. He returned to regimental duties, and on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 1932 he was awarded a Bar to the Military Cross for gallantry on the North West Frontier. He returned to staff duties as a General Staff Officer 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade at the War Office in London on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1933. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> May that year, he was promoted to the rank of Major. He received his Brevet to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1935, and then on the 6<sup>th</sup> January 1937, he was appointed a General Staff Officer 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade at the War Office.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> January 1937 and at the age of forty-five years, TOOVEY was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and assumed command of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Bn. 1<sup>st</sup> Punjab Regiment. Two years later, he was promoted to the rank of Colonel on the 27<sup>th</sup> April 1939 and assumed the role as Assistant Adjutant General at G.H.Q. India. He left that role on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1940, and moved to the Middle East, where he became the Indian Army Liaison Officer at Middle East Command as a General Staff Officer 1<sup>st</sup> Grade. During the following year, he was the Commanding Officer, Lines of Communication Eritrea. This role probably came into being in late April 1941 as the two Indian divisions drove the Italian forces back from their defensive positions at Keren. TOOVEY was probably promoted to the rank of Acting Brigadier at this time as he was awarded the Commander of the Order of the British Empire (C.B.E.) on the 30<sup>th</sup> December 1941 for services in the Middle East as an Acting Brigadier.

TOOVEY did not stay in Eritrea for long, being recalled to India to assume the post as Deputy Adjutant General at G.H.Q. India on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 1941. He was promoted to the rank of Acting Major General at the same time.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> October 1942 after twelve months in the acting rank, he was promoted Temporary Major General. He was made a Companion of the Order of the Bath (C.B.) on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1943, and promoted substantively to Major General on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1943.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> November 1943, now aged fifty-two years and with thirty years Army service, TOOVEY was appointed General Officer Commanding Rawalpindi District. This was a static command in India's North Western Army, covering part of the North West Frontier. On the 1<sup>st</sup> June 1945, TOOVEY was given command of the North Western Army, with the rank of Acting Lieutenant General. TOOVEY was not in post for long, being replaced by General Sir Richard O'CONNOR on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1945 who had been relieved of command by Field Marshal MONTGOMERY and sent out to India. The North Western Army was redesignated back to the title of Northern Command in November 1945. TOOVEY reverted to command of the Rawalpindi District and the rank of Major General on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

TOOVEY remained in command of the Rawalpindi District until the 15<sup>th</sup> April 1946. He retired from the Indian Army on the 8<sup>th</sup> January 1947 at the age of fifty-five years and with thirty-four years service. He died in 1954.