

# **A VERY BRITISH AFFAIR? BRITISH ARMED FORCES AND THE REPRESSION OF THE ARAB REVOLT IN PALESTINE, 1936-39 (PART TWO)**

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## *Introduction*

In the first part of this article published in *JSAHR*, the author established the legal basis for British repressive actions in Palestine during the Arab revolt, 1936-39, and presented evidence that illustrated the toughness of British military operations against rebel forces in Palestine. The second part of this extended article develops the theme of British brutality in Palestine, starting with two empirical case studies that further illustrate questionable British counter-insurgency methods. It also presents a conclusion to the extended article, linking together the various debates in both parts.

## *Atrocities at al-Bassa and Halhul*

Two single incidents during the Arab revolt arguably meet the definition of an atrocity. Neither has been widely discussed, even in the Arabic-language literature, but they do appear in printed primary records and in recent TV programmes.<sup>1</sup> The British army was responsible for both incidents. These occurred at the villages of al-Bassa, in the Acre district by the Lebanon border, in September 1938, and at Halhul near Hebron in May 1939. Contemporaneous Palestinian papers such as *Filastin* [*Palestine*] make passing mention of an outrage that seems to be the one at al-Bassa, but there is nothing in *Filastin* on Halhul.<sup>2</sup> *Filastin* was closed during the al-Bassa incident, re-opening on 14 September 1938, as was *al-Difa'* [*The Defence*], after which it said nothing about al-Bassa. Outside Palestine, the Arabic press made some comment on al-Bassa,

before noting that British troops ‘ont fait plusieurs expéditions punitives dans les villages de la région’, suggesting that al-Bassa was not an isolated incident but one of a set of punishments inflicted on the Palestinians.<sup>3</sup> As already mentioned, strict British censorship during the uprising ensured that Palestinian (Arabic-language) papers were closed for long periods of time and the Palestinian Arabic press was unable to make critical comment on British military activities in the country after 1936.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, the Zionist press – such as the *Palestine Post*, *Haaretz* [*The Land*] or *Davar* [*Issue/Thing*] – has more comment on Britain’s repression of the revolt than the heavily censored Arabic-language press.

The British killed some twenty villagers at al-Bassa, most if not all in cold-blood, during an operation in which villagers were also tortured according to Arabic sources. Up to fifteen men died in Halhul, mostly elderly Palestinians (the youngest victim was thirty-five, the oldest seventy-five) who died after being left out in the sun for several days in a caged enclosure with insufficient water. Halhul villagers also claim that soldiers shot a local man at a well during the same operation – in fact, it seems that soldiers beat the victim and then left him to drown in the well.<sup>5</sup> To build up a picture of how and why these atrocities happened, and what they tell us about British methods, an outline of events prior to these atrocities is useful.

At al-Bassa, British troops claimed that they had been the victims of roadside bomb and mine attacks – what today we would call ‘IEDs.’ While this could be true, it is not clear whether these attacks were serious or sustained; nor is it apparent that the troops suffered any significant casualties before the al-Bassa incident. Thus, this general claim of prior rebel attacks might have been the justification used for a subsequent policy designed to prevent serious attacks. The British commander of the Royal Ulster Rifles (RUR), the unit in charge of the area in the autumn of 1938, informed the *mukhtars* (headmen) of all the Palestinian villages on the Lebanese

frontier that if any of his men hit a mine he would take punitive measures against the nearest village to the scene of the mine. The commander's logic was that Arab insurgents when they laid a mine always informed villagers close by, notwithstanding the fact that guerrilla groups often came from outside of Palestine and comprised Syrians and other foreigners. On the evening of 6 September 1938, an RUR armoured truck hit a mine near the village of al-Bassa, killing four RUR soldiers – Lieutenant John Anthony Law, Lance-Corporals J. Andrews and C. Kennedy, and Rifleman A. Coalter – two of whom (Andrews and Coalter) died on the 6th, with two dying from their wounds on the 7th (Kennedy) and the 9th (Law).<sup>6</sup> The blast also seriously wounded two men. An RUR officer present at the time, Desmond Woods, recalled what happened next in an oral history interview given many years later:

Now I will never forget this incident... We were at al-Malikiyya, the other frontier base and word came through about 6 o'clock in the morning that one of our patrols had been blown up and Millie Law [the dead officer] had been killed. Now Gerald Whitfeld [Lieutenant-Colonel G. H. P. Whitfeld, the battalion commander] had told these *mukhtars* that if any of this sort of thing happened he would take punitive measures against the nearest village to the scene of the mine. Well the nearest village to the scene of the mine was a place called al-Bassa and our Company C were ordered to take part in punitive measures. And I will never forget arriving at al-Bassa and seeing the Rolls Royce armoured cars of the 11th Hussars peppering Bassa with machine gun fire and this went on for about 20 minutes and then we went in and I remembered we had lighted braziers and we set the houses on fire and we burnt the village to the ground. Now Monty was our divisional commander at the time, with his headquarters at Haifa, and he happened to be

out on his balcony of his headquarters, and he saw a lot of smoke rising in the hills and he called one of his staff officers and he said 'I wonder what this smoke is in the hills there' and one of them said 'I think that must be the Royal Ulster Rifles taking punitive measures against Bassa.' Well we all thought that this was going to be the end of our commanding officer Gerald Whitfeld, because you know certainly if it happened these days it would've been. Well anyway Monty had him up and he asked him all about it and Gerald Whitfeld explained to him. He said 'Sir, I have warned the *mukhtars* in these villages that if this happened to any of my officers or men, I would take punitive measures against them and I did this and I would've lost control of the frontier if I hadn't.' Monty said 'All right but just go a wee bit easier in the future.'<sup>7</sup>

This is not the full story. Before or after destroying the village, almost certainly the latter, RUR soldiers with some attached Royal Engineers collected approximately fifty men from al-Bassa and blew some of them up in a contrived explosion under a bus. Harry Arrigonie, a British Palestine policeman at al-Bassa at the time, recalled what happened in his memoirs, with the British 'herding' about twenty men from al-Bassa 'onto a bus. Villagers who panicked and tried to escape were shot. The driver of the bus was forced to drive along the road, over a land mine buried by the soldiers. This second mine was much more powerful than the first [i.e., the rebels' mine] and it completely destroyed the bus, scattering the maimed and mutilated bodies of the men on board everywhere. The villagers were then forced to dig a pit, collect the bodies, and throw them unceremoniously into it.'<sup>8</sup> Arrigonie provides grisly photographs of the maimed bodies, taken by British Constable Ricke, present at the incident, and he claimed that the officer involved had been 'severely reprimanded.'<sup>9</sup> Recalling the same incident, a senior British

Palestine police office, Raymond Cafferata, wrote to his wife, ‘You remember reading of an Arab bus blown up on the frontier road just after Paddy [a slang term for the Irish] was killed. Well the Ulsters did it – a 42 seater full of Arabs and an RE [Royal Engineers] Sgt [Sergeant] blew the mine. Since that day not a single mine has been laid on that road.’<sup>10</sup>

The atrocity at al-Bassa prompted the Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem, the Rt. Rev. G. F. Graham Brown, himself a former military man who had been battalion adjutant of the King’s Own Scottish Borderers in the First World War, to visit al-Bassa and then call upon B. L. Montgomery, the divisional commander for northern Palestine. Keith-Roach, the senior colonial official, recounted the encounter between the bishop and the general: ‘He had a long interview with Montgomery and came back absolutely bewildered. To every question, he said, Monty had but one reply: “I shall shoot them.” “The man is blood mad,” the bishop moaned across my office table.’<sup>11</sup>

A letter in Arabic of 8 September 1938 giving the Palestinian side of events extends the atrocity to include premeditated torture. The letter dates the rebel mine explosion to 22.30 hrs on 6 September, following which, on the morning of 7 September, soldiers came to al-Bassa. They shot four people in the streets, in cafes and in the homes of the village, after which the soldiers searched and looted the village, before gathering and beating inhabitants with sticks and rifle butts. The British then took one hundred villagers to a nearby military base – Camp Number One – where the British commander selected four men (the letter lists their names) who were tortured in front of the rest of the group. The four men were undressed and made to kneel barefoot on cacti and thorns, specially prepared for the occasion. Eight soldiers then told off the four men and two per Arab detainee set about beating them ‘without pity’ in front of the group. Pieces of flesh ‘flew from their bodies’ and the victims fainted, after which an army doctor came and

checked their pulses. Of course, harshly whipping villagers was not new, the British having done the same thing to the *fellahin* during the Egyptian revolt in 1919, photographing the effects.<sup>12</sup> Interestingly, when the British tried lashing Zionist insurgents who were in jail on robbery charges in 1946, they met with articulate resistance, Jewish fighters replying by kidnapping and lashing four British officers; the British then pragmatically stopped using this method of punishment. Meanwhile, at al-Bassa, the army then took the group of villagers to another base – Camp Number Two – while soldiers destroyed the village of al-Bassa. All of this happened on the morning of 7 September, with the army withdrawing at 13.00 hrs on the same day.<sup>13</sup> While this letter does not mention the villagers blown up on the bus, another letter of 20 September 1938 refers to the British and Jewish police blowing up arrested suspects in this fashion along the Lebanese border, the British sending back to the villages the mangled bits of bodies or quickly burying them.<sup>14</sup> Thus, it seems that the army destroyed the village on the 7 September, returning some days later with engineers and some police officers to kill more villagers in one or more mine explosions under vehicles filled with local Arabs.

An 11th Hussar NCO present at al-Bassa remembered how he and his men had ‘flattened’ the village – ‘blew the lot’ – before referring to a similar incident near Nablus where the 11th Hussars after suffering casualties destroyed another village.<sup>15</sup> There are other cryptic comments scattered through the records from British officers to their destroying and burning villages but the vague references to what happened and the reticence of British officers fully to record what they were doing hampers further research. The Rt. Rev. W. H. Stewart, the Anglican Archdeacon of Jerusalem and, from 1938, Hon. Chaplain to the Palestine Police and so no enemy of the force, wrote of dark deeds in rural areas of Palestine, concluding, however, that while his evidence was ‘absolutely trustworthy, is second hand and not such that I can produce.’<sup>16</sup>

The second major incident was at Halhul in May 1939. Located on the road between Hebron and Bethlehem, the British believed that Halhul was sympathetic to the rebels. The Black Watch Regiment surrounded and took over the village in May 1939. What followed was an attempt to get villagers to hand over rifles, a recurring British demand during village searches, by setting up two wired cages. One was a 'good' cage in which there was plenty of water, food and shelter from the sun, and one was a 'bad' cage in which men were left in the open in the intense heat with between half and one pint of water per day. In an interview with a BBC 'Timewatch' team working on a 1991 programme on the Arab revolt – what it called 'the first intifada' – the commanding officer of the Black Watch emphasised the voluntary nature of the action; villagers could escape the heat simply by handing over a rifle, after which they would be moved to the 'good' cage. What he does not make clear is what the villagers were to do if they did not have a rifle.<sup>17</sup>

Again, a closer examination of the sources paints a less rosy picture of the events at Halhul. Keith-Roach, in a private letter, wrote that only a half pint of water was distributed, and he does not refer to a 'good' cage. Instead, after the military high command had given the commander of the Black Watch the green light, soldiers rounded up all the men of the village,

.... instructed that they be kept there [in an open cage] and he gave them half a pint of water per diem. I saw the original order. The weather was very hot for it was summer. According to Indian Army Medical standards, four pints of water a day is the minimum that a man can live upon exposed to hot weather. After 48 hours treatment most of the men were very ill and eleven old and enfeebled ones died. I was instructed that no civil inquest should be held. Finally, the High Commissioner, MacMichael, decided

compensation should be paid, and my Assistant and I assessed the damage at the highest rate allowed by the law, and paid out over three thousand pounds to the bereft families.<sup>18</sup>

The British doctor, Forster, talks of two cages, one for the men and one for the women, and makes no mention of an option to escape the cages. They were there just for punishment. ‘We may yet teach Hitler something new about the conduct of concentration camps’ was Forster’s acerbic conclusion.<sup>19</sup> An Arab whose father died at Halhul claimed that between eleven and fourteen men died after two weeks in the sun with no food and water, one at a village well where ‘soldiers kept pushing him and he was killed.’<sup>20</sup> The same man recalled electric generators/floodlights/heaters running all night to increase the detainees’ privations, some being so hungry that they ate dirt. A woman from Halhul noted that ten men died, two at the well incident, the British only releasing the men after the villagers produced forty old Turkish rifles, and that this was after eight days’ captivity. The same woman also recalled the night-time lights, and how the soldiers beat them and threw away food that the women brought for their captive menfolk. ‘Without guns those men will never be released,’ one British official (‘local British ruler’) told her.<sup>21</sup> Other Arab accounts talk of the use of ‘cages’ for three days ‘at least’ in military operations in other villages.<sup>22</sup>

In correspondence surrounding a Thames TV programme on Palestine,<sup>23</sup> both Geoffrey Morton (formerly of the Palestine police) and Sir Thomas Scrivener (a former Assistant District Commissioner in Palestine) challenged the idea that villagers were denied water in village searches, with Morton questioning the ‘senile old’ peasant that Thames TV had ‘dragged in’ to recount his tale. It is not clear if these relate to Halhul or are more general comment but Thames TV’s reply is interesting:

The problems of the oral tradition (confusing hearsay with personal experience) made us doubt it, too, and the sequence was cut when our Zionist adviser told us that these stories originated as black propaganda in Nazi Germany. One of my colleagues, however, undertook a personal search in the Public Record Office and found the original papers. As soon as this incident took place, Government House informed the Secretary of State that people had died during an arms search. The Secretary of State asked for full details because of the danger of Nazi propaganda, and payments of £2,000 were made to the bereaved families.<sup>24</sup>

The reference to compensation suggests that this could be a reference to the Halhul incident of May 1939.

One of the survivors of the cages at Halhul recounted to Forster, the Hebron doctor, the events of May 1939:

On my return this morning I found man had been admitted suffering from the effects of his internment at Halhul. He is a Hebron man who had the misfortune to be caught in the round up. He has not suffered permanently and is not seriously ill. The point is that he strikes me as being a quiet and reliable witness. He denies the lurid stories that were set forth in the two [Arab] petitions you showed me this morning, and says that apart from one man who was drowned in a well only the ten men we know of died from exposure. The death of this man in the well was bad enough, but again he says the horrible story told in the petition is not true. The man was suffering badly from thirst and in order to get

a drink he told a false story of a rifle hidden in a well. He was let down into the well and drank his fill, but on being hauled up empty handed he was struck with the butts of rifles. He had a knife and managed to cut the cord on which he depended, fell back into the well and was drowned. My patient said the first few days were terrible, and the allowance of water was pitifully small. He says that he and others did in fact drink their own urine. During the latter part of his internment – he was there twelve days in all – things were somewhat better. As is usual with the oriental petitioner, these folk seem to spoil their case with exaggeration and falsehood. In this present case surely the unvarnished truth was terrible enough.<sup>25</sup>

#### *Other atrocities*

There are other references to similar excesses in the primary sources. Forster mentions a ‘worse’ atrocity at the village of Bayt Rima, another example of the tangential comments to other incidents for which there is some corroborating evidence: ‘Apparently the military authorities declare that they have issued strict instructions against “frightfulness.” I don’t know if this makes things better or worse. Ballard [a military officer in Hebron] says a man at Beit [Bayt] Rima died after a beating by an officer. “He’s a known sadist” is the explanation.’<sup>26</sup> The Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem wrote of ‘serious charges’ against soldiers in operations at Bayt Rima and Michmash, following which the Bishop protested to senior officers.<sup>27</sup> The Anglican Mission in Jerusalem listed twenty-two villages and towns in which troops inflicted single or multiple outrages, sometimes over a period of many months.<sup>28</sup> In 1977, a local man (and, likely, a rebel), Qasim al-Rimawi, claimed that three villagers were tortured to death by troops at Bayt Rima during a thirteen-day search involving 2,000 troops.<sup>29</sup> In November 1938, the army also set up fake

executions for villagers in Halhul in the hope of getting them to hand over weapons, as a major recalled with 'enormous pride' in a conversation with Forster.<sup>30</sup> There is a reference in the regimental journal of the RUR to 'severe reprisals' following the death of soldier in a landmine attack on the 'Yirka track' (Yirka/Yarka, a Druze village about six miles south-east of Acre) in February 1939.<sup>31</sup> 'The Royal Ulster Rifles treated the Arabs very firmly indeed but by Jove it paid dividends but of course you can't do those sorts of things today,' was how one RUR officer put it.<sup>32</sup>

After a soldier was blown up by a mine near the village of Kafr Yasif in February 1939, soldiers burnt down seventy houses, blew up forty more and, reportedly, then told nine villagers from the neighbouring village of Kuwaykat to run after which the soldiers gunned them down.<sup>33</sup> 'I do not think the circumstances differ from those with which we are familiar,' noted a local Anglican Chaplain.<sup>34</sup> Under pressure from the Anglican clergy, the army provided some relief to the homeless villagers, the Anglican Chaplain in Haifa concluding:

On the whole I cannot help wondering at the way the Arabs trust us and believe us and believe that in the end we will try and do what is right. Some of the villages which have recently been hardly [sic] hit seem to go as far as possible in making allowances.

Sometimes they appear to accept the severest treatment as the inevitable result of acts of violence by the gangs, even though they themselves are not responsible. And they do not hold the government responsible for actions taken by the military authorities, though we know that the government can't disclaim responsibility. The people at Kafr Yasif were very eager to point out that the troops who destroyed their houses were not English but Irish.<sup>35</sup>

Following the reprisal attack on Kafr Yasif, local Arabs gathered outside the German Consulate shouting ‘We want Hitler – We want Mussolini.’<sup>36</sup>

Arab sources make claims of police assassination squads abducting and killing villagers,<sup>37</sup> the RAF’s use of ‘incendiary bombs’ on villages near Bad al-Wad west of Jerusalem resulting in ‘burnt’ bodies, artillery firing on villages at night ‘sowing fear among the hearts of women and children,’ women being attacked by soldiers, bias in favour of the Jews, and desecration of mosques and Korans.<sup>38</sup> Arab leaders complained to Wauchope, the High Commissioner, that police and soldiers were ‘desecrating mosques, stealing personal property, destroying Korans and beating people up.’<sup>39</sup> In retaliation, Palestinians targeted officials, often those who were especially brutal or pro-Zionist, one early victim being the British police inspector, Alan Sigrist, ‘sentenced to death’ by local Jerusalemites, and shot along with his guard by two assassins in his car on 12 June 1936 outside St Stephen’s Gate by the Old City in Jerusalem.<sup>40</sup> Notorious for his savage truncheon-wielding attacks on Arabs, including beating up the staff of the *al-Difa* ‘newspaper office in May 1936, Sigrist launched indiscriminate assaults on Arab passers-by, including a well-dressed District Officer who refused to pick up nails left by rebels hoping to puncture tyres.<sup>41</sup> After Sigrist’s shooting, British soldiers captured and, allegedly, maltreated one of his wounded attackers, kicking and beating him with rifle butts in the back of a truck, after which he died.<sup>42</sup> Another high-profile victim was Lewis Andrews, Assistant District Commissioner in Galilee, shot leaving church on 26 September 1937, accused of supporting Zionism; on 24 August 1938, a gunman shot dead British acting Assistant District Commissioner W. S. S. Moffat, ‘known for his bad behaviour.’<sup>43</sup>

### *Treatment of women*

Regarding troops' behaviour toward Palestinian women, there are some complaints of soldiers molesting women, usually the claim that they touched women's breasts: 'the wife of Asfur ['Asfur] Shihadeh of Bir Zeit [Bir Zayt] while on her way to the village spring for water was stopped by a soldier who proceeded to search her and feel her breasts....On the same day, July 6th, 5 women of Bir Zeit [Bir Zayt] were fetching water from the spring to the north of the village. The troops rushed, searched them and shamelessly handled their breasts and bodies in spite of their cries and protests.'<sup>44</sup> Similarly, there is an account of an attempted assault by troops who 'attempted to attack the honour of the wife of Issa ['Isa] Rabah but she refused and yelled for help and consequently was rescued from the claws of the civilised troops by her village women neighbours.'<sup>45</sup> Again, 'In another case the soldiers went in and found an unmarried girl in bed they forcibly took off her vest played with her breasts and tried to assault her but her shrieks attracted the neighbours and this was prevented.'<sup>46</sup> At a search at Tulkarm, soldiers made women line up in front of them and bare their breasts to prove that they were not men.'<sup>47</sup> There was also an accusation of an assault against a girl, directed at British troops: 'Sophiye Ibrahim Hamoud [Hamud] aged 12, raped by the army. She received a dangerous wound on her head which broke the skull.'<sup>48</sup> Finally, there was a serious sexual assault allegation but this was against three Arab policemen, not British soldiers: 'They beat me with their rifle butts – laid me on the ground. One sat on my chest and kept my mouth shut, etc., while another assaulted me – then the men changed places; all three had me in turn.'<sup>49</sup>

The issue of sexual violence is opaque and bears further examination, but, in general, the Arabs complained about British physical force, not sexual assault against women. It seems that sexual violence was not a serious issue, and some of the allegations might have resulted from

soldiers' clumsy attempts to search frightened women. Servicemen shot dead stone-throwing women, but they were careful to avoid sexual offence – as were the Israelis after 1948 who, again, used inherited British repressive methods against the Palestinians.<sup>50</sup> When it came to searching local women, female 'wardresses' attached to British units were deployed to search women villagers down to their 'private parts.'<sup>51</sup> On another occasion, an army officer complained of police 'mismanagement' in failing to bring along a female 'searcher' on an operation, suggesting that female searchers were used in the field.<sup>52</sup> There were, however, very few female police searchers, some Arab/Armenian, some Jewish, for the whole of Palestine, so outside the major towns women should not have been searched unless a woman searcher was present, impracticable in fast-moving operations. The British used Jewish and Armenian women as searchers – 'no British woman would lower herself to do it' – but, for example, in October 1938 in Jerusalem they had just two Arab women for this task, one at the Jaffa Gate and one at the Damascus Gate.<sup>53</sup> In June 1936, when the British wanted to search women escaping the destruction of old Jaffa, they sent seven women from the prison service in Jerusalem down to Jaffa for the job, commandeering a local building especially for the purpose.<sup>54</sup> The British police claimed that the Arab rebels hid their 'stuff' with Palestinian women, the Arabs countering that hidden goods were simply valuables or money that they did not want stolen by servicemen.<sup>55</sup>

### *Regimental differences*

Nor did the British army act as one, regiments behaving differently on operations. Arab propaganda played on the fact that Scottish regiments were especially unpleasant. One Arab leaflet, written into (clumsy) English for distribution to soldiers, made clear the link between abuses and Scottish troops deployed to Palestine:

One can never imagine inhuman deeds than bombing up the houses over their inhabitants of innocent ladies and children, of robbing passengers, then shooting them, of ruining whole villages and scattering their inhabitants to die of cold and thirst; and of obliterating the ladies of those killed persons in order that they might terrify the peaceful citizens. These savage actions are mostly committed by 'ROYAL SCOTCH REGIMENTS,' in so many places of Palestine; and hundreds of photographs are kept for future generations to behold these actions of 'ROYAL SCOTCH REGIMENTS.'<sup>56</sup>

This is corroborated by police officer Burr who noted that Scottish regiments were the 'worst offenders' when it came to causing trouble, and 'if an Arab sees anybody in a kilt they run a mile. In the trouble last year they used the bayonet on the slightest excuse.'<sup>57</sup> The Arabs were aware of regimental differences, with Arab students in London in May 1939 protesting specifically against Black Watch soldiers following the Halhul outrage.<sup>58</sup> Following the death of two Black Watch soldiers by the Jaffa Gate in Jerusalem on 5 November 1937, General Archibald Wavell remarked on the restraint shown by the Black Watch on a subsequent operation against Silwan, the village south of the city blamed for the attack, although he admitted that a suspect died 'falling over a cliff.'<sup>59</sup> Officially, after tracker dogs led the authorities to the village, one villager ended up hospital after falling off a cliff, while soldiers shot dead one man and wounded another. Then the authorities sealed the village forbidding villagers to leave without a permit, made all males report every evening to the police and made the village pay for a twenty-man police post.<sup>60</sup> Yet, the private diary of a North Staffordshire Regiment officer tells a different tale, recording how Black Watch men beat to death twelve Arabs in Silwan with rifle

butts after the death of their comrades.<sup>61</sup> Palestine policemen recalled that Scottish regiments were especially tough when it came to dealing with the Arabs, and several later counter-insurgency excesses after 1945 – at Batang Kali village in Malaya in 1948 (Scots Guards), the Aden ‘Crater’ in 1967 (Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders) and the Falls Road in 1970 (Black Watch) – involved Scottish regiments.<sup>62</sup>

Of course, the most serious single incident in Northern Ireland during the ‘Troubles’ was the ‘Bloody Sunday’ shooting in 1972 of twenty-seven civilians by the non-territorially based Parachute Regiment, suggesting that territorial/regional approaches to soldiers’ behaviour and unit performance are not that useful. Thus, in Palestine, while Black Watch (Scottish) troops were involved in actions at Halhul and Silwan, other Scottish regiments behaved properly, as Forster noted concerning the change in the Hebron garrison from the Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders to the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), ‘a far less aristocratic affair [and disbanded in the 1960s] but worth about six times their predecessors. Soon after their arrival a village patrol was ambushed and a truck blown up by a land mine....The Cameronians bore no malice and for the rest of their stay became very popular with the people. Gilmour [Captain G. H. Gilmour, the officer at the ambush] encouraged his men to go, in properly conducted parties, to look at the suq and the mosque.’<sup>63</sup> Moreover, English county regiments could also act very robustly.<sup>64</sup> While certain regiments recruited heavily from certain regions, these differences were fundamentally regimental and not regional, and were a function of the internal dynamics and leadership within different regiments. All of the servicemen in Palestine were regular volunteers, so there was continuity at the grass-roots level, especially as the different regiments drew recruits from broadly similar socio-economic backgrounds who then experienced a shared training and soldiering regimen. But regiments were not the same, some had weaker or tougher leadership

cadres and command structures, and different traditions of soldiering, and so brutality was more or less likely to occur when men went on operations against guerrillas.<sup>65</sup>

### *Extra-judicial executions*

On occasion, servicemen took the law into their own hands, not least as they did not appreciate that the judicial system supported their work in the field against the rebels as, while military courts with no jury did sentence to death Arabs brought before them, they also acquitted suspects or handed out lesser sentences. For instance, of eighty-two persons tried in the period from 20 May to 31 July 1938, the courts acquitted thirty-six, found one not guilty due to insanity and the average length of sentence was three and a half years. The British handed out nineteen death sentences, of which they commuted seven.<sup>66</sup> One British military prosecutor recalled how a judge acquitted a sniper caught with a rifle and ammunition on a legal technicality, and that Jewish evidence would never be sufficient to convict an Arab: ‘The Arab Bar appreciate the impartiality of the military prosecutors.’<sup>67</sup> On the other hand, a policeman relating the trial of a Jewish rebel in the 1940s, described military justice as akin to ‘kangaroo courts.’<sup>68</sup>

The perceived leniency of the courts might help to explain the numbers of Arab suspects shot while ‘trying to escape,’ a recurring phrase in police files and which policeman Burr admits were assassinations by colleagues who were tired of the legal system and so ‘shot out of hand’ suspects.<sup>69</sup> Briance confessed to his mother of colleagues shooting on the spot an arrested rebel.<sup>70</sup> Troops also shot captives, including the Palestinian suspected of assassinating acting Assistant District Commissioner Moffat in August 1938 in his office in Jenin. The British quickly apprehending the assassin after the murder – he was, apparently, a blond hunchback and so rather visible – after which he was shot trying to escape, despite his disability and being

surrounded by fit, young British soldiers.<sup>71</sup> Then again, the Arabs nicknamed Moffat's assassin, 'Muhammad,' 'gazelle' because he was so swift.<sup>72</sup>

### *Conclusion*

By late 1938, once the Munich crisis had passed, the British had deployed two full-strength divisions to Palestine. The British government was keen to resolve the Palestine revolt before war broke out with Germany and so allowed these forces to increase the tempo of their operations. 'The military command in Palestine and the High Commissioner were able to do more or less as they liked' because of the threat from Germany, recalled one officer in Palestine at the time.<sup>73</sup> With such a large deployment, some level of human rights abuse was inevitable, especially as successful counter-insurgency demanded some degree of brutality. This article has uncovered evidence of blatant torture – and recognised as such at the time – but most of what it describes is premeditated, systematic, officially sanctioned brutality in the form of collective punishments and reprisals directed primarily at property not people. There are fewer instances of unpremeditated and extreme 'wild' reactive rank-and-file brutality. These could reflect soldiers' anger at a guerrilla attack – notably if rebels killed or wounded a comrade in an attack – and a subsequent desire for revenge. Unofficial torture and brutality were illegal then and now – *pace* the arguments of those such as Alan Dershowitz legitimising the use of torture against terrorist suspects.<sup>74</sup> The officially directed brutality was legal at the time, leaving aside the moral outrage that such action would now provoke. Britain's concern to follow the law – modified as necessary – meant that her actions were usually within the law.

While some incidents such as al-Bassa meet the dictionary definition of an atrocity, these outrages were not the systematic excesses that one would expect to see in a police state in which

service personnel could act without ‘moral reference.’ In her charged attack on British imperialism, Elkins described Kenya in the 1950s as ‘Britain’s Gulag,’ not a phrase that is readily applicable to Palestine in the 1930s, at least not with the records currently available.<sup>75</sup> Army actions at Halhul and al-Bassa saw the deaths of around thirty-five people, tragic, wrong and illegal, but in a three-year insurgency evidence that restraint and ‘moral reference’ rather than unalloyed wickedness guided military operations. Having said this, other outrages similar to those at al-Bassa and Halhul undoubtedly occurred – this article has touched on some of them – although the numbers of dead in each incident were small. Cumulatively, however, these boost the figure of thirty-five dead to something much greater, especially if one considers the recurring incidence of single or several Arabs shot dead while running from troops, although troops were legally empowered to shoot ‘suspects’ who were running away following a verbal challenge.

The question is partly how one measures the severity of excesses, partly what one looks for in the archival material. Wilson, the British teacher in the village of Bir Zayt, noted that the British soldiers whom she met on a daily basis behaved very correctly towards both herself and the local Palestinian community.<sup>76</sup> Of course, that Bir Zayt was a Christian Arab village in which there were female British teachers could also explain the troops’ gentler behaviour, but when soldiers detained some local Arabs and took them into captivity in Ramallah prison, they did little to them beyond making them mend some buildings. The Arabs’ main complaint to Wilson was that the better-educated ones resented their gaolers leaving them in a cell with ordinary peasants. The extent of British military violence towards the suspects was to manhandle them through the door into the basement cell in which the soldiers detained them. Once released, their soldier gaolers gave the local men cigarettes and then a lift home.<sup>77</sup> The villagers were ‘not specially indignant, taking it rather as part of life’s general unpleasantness. “Turkish soldiers

before 1918,” they said, “English soldiers now. All soldiers are alike.”<sup>78</sup> Forster, typically very critical of the British army, also commented on positive changes in British behaviour in Hebron – ‘military thieving has stopped’ – showing that there was no consistent pattern of abuse.<sup>79</sup>

Local Arab women came to see Miss Hulbert, one of Wilson’s Bir Zayt teaching colleagues, crying and complaining about the British detaining their menfolk for road repairs: ““They are beating them! The soldiers are beating our men!” “Beating!” exclaimed Miss Hulbert. “How do you mean – like this?” giving an energetic pantomime of two-handed whacking with a stick. “Oh no no!” replied the women. “Only like this” – demonstrating the mildest of pats and pushes; obviously no more than would be necessary to show the men where to go or what to do – not surprising when soldiers and villagers cannot speak each other’s language.’<sup>80</sup> Whom are we to believe? Both Forster and Wilson are credible witnesses, both spoke some Arabic and both were sympathetic to the Palestinians amongst whom they lived. Similarly, the account above from ‘Abd al-Hamid Shuman’s son regarding his father’s maltreatment at al-Mazra ‘a detention camp is not supported by one of Shuman’s fellow detainees, ‘Abd al-Hamid Sa’ih, who remembered calling in take-away food, jogging, sun-beds, educational classes, and a prison governor’s ‘humane gesture...worthy of praise and I thank him for this.’<sup>81</sup>

British troops acted correctly and with humanity. ‘If we wounded a terrorist or anything like that well I mean he was usually looked after as well as one of our own chaps. I don’t think there was any great sort of animosity,’ or, ‘British soldiery were very bad at brutality; we used it half-heartedly or even not at all.’<sup>82</sup> The Arab revolt raises methodological issues when faced with masses of primary evidence pointing in opposite directions. Soldiers’ memories of the conflict vary greatly, acts of great kindness sitting oddly alongside brutality towards vulnerable people, sometimes in the same soldier’s record, all evidence of the peculiar experience of soldiering and

the later process of memory and historical record. Similarly, Arabic accounts are not consistent and do seem, at times, exaggerated. Perhaps the issue is whether one is looking to support or deprecate the British army, its counter-insurgency methods and imperial rule generally.

By the end of the revolt, Palestinian villagers were referring to the guerrillas not as *mujahidin* in a holy war but as rebels (*thuwwar*).<sup>83</sup> While grossly unfair, the targeting of non-combatants worked, the British suppressing the revolt by 1939, leaving them free to deploy their troops for the coming war in Europe. Britain directed operations against the Palestinian Muslim population along with the rebel bands that the army hunted down, when it could find them and bring them to battle. As with later successful counter-insurgency campaigns such as Malaya in the 1950s, British forces discriminated in Palestine, targeting the Muslim community while working with or treating leniently friendly groups in Palestine such as the *Yishuv* – the pre-1948 Jewish community in Palestine – and, arguably, the Druzes and the Christian Palestinians, the latter a sensitive subject that deserves more examination. Support for the *Yishuv* during the revolt is beyond the remit of this article, but Britain's recruitment of thousands of extra Jewish supernumerary police – 14,411 according to one source – was one sign of her recognition of the relative value of the different communities in Palestine.<sup>84</sup> When inflicting reprisals and instituting collective fines, the British treated the Jews softly, avoiding, for instance, house demolition of Jewish homes in Tiberias following the death of an Arab in a land mine attack.<sup>85</sup>

After 1936 in Palestine, the British established a systematic, systemic, officially sanctioned policy of destruction, punishment, reprisal and brutality that fractured and impoverished the Palestinian population. Most of this repression was legal to the letter of the military law and the emergency regulations in force in Palestine after 1936. The army maintained that destruction was not its primary aim during operations even when this was its operational

method, suggesting that soldiers knew that such actions were questionable morally if not legally – servicemen also had orders banning photographing of demolitions.<sup>86</sup> The authorities (re)constructed the law to give soldiers' actions legality. The British had to balance what was lawful, what was morally right, and what worked, and these were not compatible. The regulations in force after 1936 made, as a pro-Arab British resident of Haifa wrote, 'lawful things which otherwise would be unlawful.'<sup>87</sup> Lawlessness *was* the law. Servicemen were guided by a legal system that meant that they could accept the premises of their government that allowed for brutal actions, and they could do so with all the energy of good bureaucrats obeying orders.

Looking at the Arab revolt as a whole, extreme acts of personal abuse were probably not systematic, and almost certainly not systemic. Admittedly, the British high command tolerated the less blatant abuses committed by its men in the field, but senior officers based in Haifa and Jerusalem were sensitive to charges of abuse, politically if not morally, and so it was junior officers in the field who were intimately involved in any excesses. The Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem put it succinctly, writing how outrages 'are not officially sanctioned although they have not been officially regretted.'<sup>88</sup> Whether there was an unwritten code from on high sanctioning grass-roots level gross abuse is unproved, and probably impossible to prove, precisely because those involved were unwilling to leave a written record of such orders. For the Anglican Bishop, those in the 'highest positions of authority' deplored the deaths of innocent civilians, suggesting that civil and military forces acted as a brake on counter-rebel operations.<sup>89</sup> Britain's forces of repression were not united, with the army, for instance, working with the *Shai*, the Zionist intelligence branch, handing it Arab material to translate, sidelining the colonial administration that opposed army 'methods' that were outside 'usual police activities.'<sup>90</sup>

Britain lost control of Palestine in the late 1930s during the Arab revolt. Faced with similar disturbances, other imperial powers responded much more harshly than the British did in Palestine, as even a cursory glance at other twentieth-century counter-insurgency campaigns shows, whether it is the Spanish in the Rif mountains, the Germans in Africa before the Great War and during the Second World War, the Japanese in China, the Italians in Libya, the French in Algeria, the Americans in Vietnam, the Portuguese in Africa or the Soviets in Afghanistan. These actions included systemic, boundless violence, large-scale massacres of civilians and POWs, forced starvation, overt racism, gross torture, sexual violence and rape, the removal of legal process, the use of chemical and biological weapons against civilians, ethnic cleansing, extermination camps and genocide. This does not excuse British abuses in Palestine but it provides some comparative context. Put simply, in Palestine the British were often brutal but they were rarely atrocious. Perhaps this is the best that can be said for the British ‘way’ in repressing the Arab insurgency in Palestine: it was, relatively speaking, humane and restrained – the awfulness was less awful – when compared to the methods used by other colonial and neo-colonial powers operating in similar circumstances, an achievement, of sorts.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Palestine: The First Intifada' (BBC: Timewatch, 27 Mar. 1991); T. Segev, *One Palestine, Complete* (New York, 2000), pp. 421-22; 'Palestine: Promises and Rebellion' (London: Thames TV, three parts, 1977-78).

<sup>2</sup> *Filastin*, 15 September 1938.

<sup>3</sup> *al-Nahal [The Day]* (Beirut), 9 September 1938, 5; *L'Orient* (Beirut), 9 September 1938 (quotation from *L'Orient*).

<sup>4</sup> See M. Kabha, *The Palestinian Press as Shaper of Public Opinion, 1929-1939: Writing Up a Storm* (London and Portland, 2007), pp. 227ff.

<sup>5</sup> 'Palestine: The First Intifada' (BBC: Timewatch, 27 Mar. 1991); Allegations of Ill-treatment of Arabs by British Crown Forces in Palestine (translated from the Arabic by Frances Newton, 19 June 1939) in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 65, File 5, p. 145, M[iddle] E[ast] C[entre, St. Antony's College Oxford]; 'Palestine: Promises and Rebellion' (Thames TV, three parts, 1977-78).

<sup>6</sup> Dates confirmed by the men's headstones in the Ramle British war cemetery, Israel. See also *Palestine Post*, 11 Sept. 1938, p.1. *Filastin*, 15 Sept. 1938; Harry Arrigonie, *British Colonialism: 30 Years Serving Democracy or Hypocrisy* (Bideford, 1998), pp. 35-6.

<sup>7</sup> Desmond Woods, 23846, I[mperial] W[ar] M[useum] S[ound] A[rchive].

<sup>8</sup> Arrigonie, *British Colonialism*, pp. 35-6.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>10</sup> Letter, Cafferata to Wife, 22 Oct. 1938, Cafferata papers, in possession of Mr John Robertson.

<sup>11</sup> E. Keith-Roach, *Pasha of Jerusalem: Memoirs of a District Commissioner under the British Mandate* (London, 1994), pp. 194-5.

<sup>12</sup> See the files and photographs in FO 3715-3722, the National Archives, London.

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<sup>13</sup> Letter from Acre about the English Soldiers' Atrocities in the Village of al-Bassa, 8 Sept. 1938 in Akram Zua'ytir, *Watha'iq al-Haraka al-Wataniyya al-Filastiniyya, 1918-39: Min Awraq Akram Zua'ytir* [*Documents of the Palestinian National Movement, 1918-39: From the Papers of Akram Zua'ytir*] (Beirut, 1979), pp. 503-04.

<sup>14</sup> A Letter from the Fighter Arrested, Subhi al-Khadra, 20 Sept. 1938 in *ibid.*, pp. 505-06.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Tinson, 15255, IWMSA.

<sup>16</sup> Letter, Stewart to J. G. Matthew, 9 June 1936, J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 61, File 1, MEC.

<sup>17</sup> 'Palestine: The First Intifada' (BBC: Timewatch, 27 Mar. 1991).

<sup>18</sup> Typed two-page document by Edward Keith-Roach, untitled or dated, at the end of which is added pencilled comment, Keith-Roach papers, in possession of Mrs Christabel Ames-Lewis.

<sup>19</sup> Diary, 13 May 1939, Forster papers, GB 165-0109, p. 119, MEC.

<sup>20</sup> Account Translated from Arabic of Hassan el-Quader, Thames TV Papers, GB 165-0282, Box II, File 5, MEC. This is a jumbled file and there is ambiguity about whether this witness is from Halhul.

<sup>21</sup> Account Translated from Arabic of Woman Resident of Halhul, Thames TV Papers, GB 165-0282, Box II: File 5, pp. 16-18, MEC.

<sup>22</sup> Account Translated from Arabic of Unnamed Arab Villager, Thames TV Papers, GB 165-0282, Box II: File 4, p. 12, MEC.

<sup>23</sup> 'Palestine: Promises and Rebellion' (Thames TV, three parts, 1977-78).

<sup>24</sup> Letter, Nigel Maslin to Sir Thomas Scrivener, 29 Aug. 1978, Thames TV Material (not on open access), Lever Arch File: British Letters S-T, I[mperial] W[ar] M[useum] F[ilm] A[rchive].

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<sup>25</sup> Forster [unsigned] to Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem [Graham Brown], Confidential, Not to be Quoted or Referred to in Public, 25 May 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>26</sup> Diary, 14 May 1939, Forster papers, GB 165-0109, pp. 119-20, MEC.

<sup>27</sup> Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem to Miss Trevelyan, 29 May 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>28</sup> J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 66, Files 1-2, MEC.

<sup>29</sup> Qasim al-Rimawi, Amman, 19 Sept. 1977, Thames TV Material (not on open access), Lever Arch file: Nigel Maslin, IWMFA.

<sup>30</sup> Diary, 5 Nov. 1938, Forster papers, GB 165-0109, p. 93, MEC.

<sup>31</sup> *Quis Separabit: The Regimental Journal of the Royal Ulster Rifles* 10/1 (May 1939), p. 28.

<sup>32</sup> Woods, 23846, IWMSA.

<sup>33</sup> Anglican Chaplain [signature illegible], Haifa, to Bishop [Graham Brown], 28 Feb. 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC. See also T. Swedenburg, *Memories of Revolt: The 1936-39 Rebellion and the Palestinian National Past* (Minneapolis, 1995), p. 108.

<sup>34</sup> Anglican Chaplain [signature illegible], Haifa, to Bishop [Graham Brown], 28 Feb. 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> British sources claim that the executions were false – shots fired wide to give villagers the impression that they had executed someone and so force them to divulge information: G. Morton, *Just the Job: Some Experiences of a Colonial Policeman* (London, 1957), p. 104; Frank Proctor, 16801, IWMSA.

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<sup>38</sup> Atallah Bey to Dr Tannous, 1 March 1939, P361/5, I[srael] S[tate] A[rchive]; Letter from the Amman Ladies' Committee, 28 July 1936, RG65 P3221/18, ISA; 1 Aug. 1936 entry, RG65 P3221/18, ISA; 8 Aug. 1936 entry, RG65 P3221/18, ISA; 19 Aug. 1936 entry, RG65 P3221/18, ISA; 5 Sept. 1936 entry, RG65 P3221/18, ISA; Thomas Mayer, 'Egypt and the 1936 Arab Revolt in Palestine,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 19/2 (1984), p. 277; A. W. A. A. Rahman, 'British Policy Towards the Arab Revolt in Palestine, 1936-39' (London: Doctoral Dissertation, 1971), p. 148.

<sup>39</sup> C. Smith 'Two Revolts in Palestine: An Examination of the British Response to Arab and Jewish Rebellion, 1936-48' (Cambridge: DPhil, 1989), p. 26.

<sup>40</sup> *Haaretz* [*The Land*], 14 June 1936.

<sup>41</sup> al-Sakakini, *Kadha Ana Ya Duniya*, pages covering 13 June 1936; Abu Gharbiyah, *Fi Khidamm al-nidal*, pp. 72ff; *al-Sirat al-Mustakim* [*The Right Path*] (Jaffa), 1 June 1936.

<sup>42</sup> Khalil al-Sakakini, *Kadha Ana Ya Duniya* [*Such Am I, Oh World!*] [1955] (Beirut, 1982), pages covering 13 June 1936; Bahjat Abu Gharbiyah, *Fi Khidamm al-nidal al-'arabi al-filastini: mudhakkarat al-munadil Bahjat Abu Gharbiyah* [*In the Midst of the Struggle for the Arab Palestinian Cause: The Memoirs of Freedom-Fighter Bahjat Abu Gharbiyah*] (Beirut, 1993), pp. 72ff.

<sup>43</sup> Zua'ytir, *Al-Harakah al-Wataniyah*, p. 438. *Haaretz*, 25-26 Aug. 1938; *Davar* [*Thing/Issue*], 25 Aug. 1938.

<sup>44</sup> Points 7-8 in President of Bir Zeit Council in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 66, File 1, MEC.

<sup>45</sup> S.O.S. From Halhool, The Martyr Village [stamped 22 May 1939] in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 66, File 1, MEC.

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<sup>46</sup> Report by Frances Newton dated 27 June 1938 on Search in Balad esh Sheikh of 24 June 1938 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 65, File 3, MEC.

<sup>47</sup> Segev, *One Palestine*, p. 421.

<sup>48</sup> Allegations of Ill-treatment of Arabs by British Crown Forces in Palestine (translated from the Arabic by Frances Newton, 19 June 1939) in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 65, File 5, p. 144, MEC.

<sup>49</sup> Report on Visit to Azzun, 12 May 1938 and Azzun, 16 May 1938 [account of assault on ‘Ayeshi bint Hasan al-Faji, wife of ‘Abd Fattah el Jammal, aged about 16-18] both in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 66, File 1, MEC. Quote from 16 May report, p. 1.

<sup>50</sup> C. G. T. Dean, *The Loyal Regiment (North Lancashire) 1919-53* (Preston, 1955), p. 66.

<sup>51</sup> Report by Frances Newton dated 27 June 1938 on Search in Balad esh Sheikh of 24 June 1938 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 65, File 3, MEC.

<sup>52</sup> Diary, 19 Oct. 1937, Major White, Relating to Service in Palestine, 1974-04-24-8, N[ational] A[rmy] M[useum].

<sup>53</sup> J. M. Thompson (Government Welfare Inspector) to Archdeacon, 23 Oct. 1938 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 61, File 4, MEC.

<sup>54</sup> *al-Difa* ‘ [*The Defence*], 18-19 June 1936.

<sup>55</sup> Quote from Diary, Wilson papers, GB 165-0302, MEC, p. 12. See also Interview, Ted Horne (formerly Palestine police), Barton-on-Sea, 9 Sept. 2006; R. Courtney, *Palestine Policeman* (London, 1939), p. 88; Diary, Wilson papers, GB 165-0302, MEC, pp. 12-13.

<sup>56</sup> Addressed to British Regiments in Palestine. Arab Revolutionary Council, Southern Syria, Palestine, signed Aref Abdul Razik, Commander-in-Chief of the Arab Forces in Palestine, 19 Nov. 1938, 41/94, Haganah Archive, Tel Aviv. See also Diary, Wilson papers, GB 165-0302,

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MEC, p. 12; Letter, Briance to Mother, n.d. [Aug. 1936], Briance papers, in possession of Mrs Prunella Briance; Courtney, *Palestine Policeman*, p. 88.

<sup>57</sup> Letter, Burr to Parents, n.d [27 May 1937], Burr papers, 88/8/12, I[mperial] W[ar] M[useum] D[ocuments].

<sup>58</sup> Mary Trevelyan, Warden, The Student Movement House, London to Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, 23 May 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>59</sup> J. Connell, *Wavell: Scholar and Soldier. To June 1941* (London, 1964), p. 194. See also E. and A. Linklater, *The Black Watch* (London, 1977), p. 175.

<sup>60</sup> *Haaretz*, 7-8 Nov. 1937.

<sup>61</sup> Diary, 7 Nov. 1937, Major White, Relating to Service in Palestine, 1974-04-24-8, NAM.

<sup>62</sup> Interview, Ted Horne (formerly Palestine Police), Barton-on-Sea, 9 September 2006. For Batang Kali, A. Short, *The Communist Insurrection in Malaya, 1948-1960* (London, 1975), pp. 167-69.

<sup>63</sup> Diary, Oct. 1936, Forster papers, GB 165-0109, pp. 1-2, MEC.

<sup>64</sup> Interview, Ted Horne (formerly Palestine Police), Barton-on-Sea, 9 Sept. 2006; Letter, Burr to Parents, n.d. [late 1937], Burr papers, 88/8/1, IWMD.

<sup>65</sup> See D. French *Military Identities: The Regimental System, the British Army, and the British People c.1870-2000* (Oxford, 2005).

<sup>66</sup> Appendix. Analysis of Cases tried by Military Courts, Palestine, 20 May-31 July 1938, Haining papers, Despatches, GB 165-0131, MEC; and the other court statistics in the same file.

<sup>67</sup> Col A. Ingham-Brokke, 13 Oct. 1976, Thames TV Material (not on open access), Lever Arch file: Nigel Maslin, IWMFA.

<sup>68</sup> Jack Denley, Thames TV Papers, GB 165-0282, Box I, File 20, p. 17, MEC.

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<sup>69</sup> Letter, Burr to Parents, 19 Dec. 1937, Burr papers, 88/8/1, IWMD.

<sup>70</sup> Letter, Briance to Mother, 14 May 1938, Briance papers, in possession of Mrs Prunella Briance.

<sup>71</sup> Telegram to Secretary of State, n.d., S25/22762, CZA; *Haaretz*, 26 Aug. 1936.

<sup>72</sup> Zua‘ytir, *Al-Harakah al-Wataniyah*, p. 438.

<sup>73</sup> Maj-Gen Bredin, Thames TV Papers, GB 165-0282, Box I, File 22, pp. 5-6, MEC.

<sup>74</sup> A. Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works* (London, 2002), p. 144.

<sup>75</sup> C. Elkins, *Britain’s Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (London, 2005). See also D. Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: The Dirty War in Kenya and the End of Empire* (New York, 2005).

<sup>76</sup> Diary, Wilson papers, GB 165-0302, MEC.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 27-31.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 32.

<sup>79</sup> Diary, 14 Nov. 1938, Forster papers, GB 165-0109, p. 95, MEC.

<sup>80</sup> Diary, Wilson papers, GB 165-0302, p. 27, MEC.

<sup>81</sup> Shayk Abdul Hamid Sayih, *Filastin; la Salat Tahta al-Hirab: Mudhakkarat al-Shaykh ‘Abd al-Hamid al-Sa‘ih* [*Palestine; No Prayer Under Bayonets: The Memoirs of Shaykh Abdul Hamid Sayih*] (Beirut, 1994), pp. 44-48.

<sup>82</sup> Maj-Gen H. E. N. Bredin, 4550, p. 11, IWMSA; Gen Sir John Hackett, 4527, p. 50, IWMSA.

<sup>83</sup> Keith-Roach, *Pasha of Jerusalem*, p. 202.

<sup>84</sup> A. Lefen, *Ha-Shai: Shorasheha Shel Kehilat ha-Modi’in ha-Israelit* [*The Roots of the Israeli Intelligence Community*] (Tel Aviv, 1997), p. 273.

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<sup>85</sup> Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem to Miss Trevelyan, 23 June 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>86</sup> Report dated 5 May 1939, 10 page, in *ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>87</sup> Frances Newton to Mrs Erskine, Secretary of Arab Centre in London, 5 April 1938 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 65, File 4, MEC.

<sup>88</sup> Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem to Miss Trevelyan, 23 June 1939 in J & E Mission papers, GB 165-0161, Box 62, File 1, MEC.

<sup>89</sup> Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem to Miss Trevelyan, 29 May 1939 in *ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> Y. Slutsky (ed.), *Sefer Toldot ha-Haganah* [*Book of the History of the Haganah*] vol. 2, part 2, *Me-Haganah le-ma'avak* [*From Defence to Struggle*] (Tel Aviv, 1963), p. 991; Lefen, *Ha-Shai*, pp. 44ff.