

THE INDIAN MUTINY OF 1857 AND THE CAPE COLONY

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Part I: Sir George Grey (A Reassessment), Troops and Horses

The Indian Mutiny of 1857¹ was probably the most significant event in the history of British India during the 19th Century. For a brief time it was feared that the subcontinent might be lost to British rule. But this was not to be, and even as the Mutiny was being stamped out, British policy towards India reflected a determination to prevent another uprising. Symbolic of this was the replacement of East India Company rule by that of the Crown in 1858. The India Office was established and by 1866 was housed in a resplendent new building in King Charles Street, Whitehall.²

Yet, in spite of considerable alarms and excursions, no serious attempt has been made to see the Mutiny as the epicentre of an imperial earthquake whose tremors were felt in far-removed segments of the Empire. This article seeks to explore the influence of the Mutiny on the Cape Colony.³ The investigation will confirm that the events of 1857 in India affected the Cape Colony in a number of ways already recognized by some historians, but it will elaborate on them and also bring to the fore a number of developments hitherto ignored.

Part I of the article deals with the desperate race against time to supply troops and horses for India as the Mutiny threatened British rule. It also attempts to remedy some harsh criticism of Sir George Grey's role in this, as Governor of the Cape Colony, by J. Rutherford.⁴ Part II investigates how the Indian Mutiny contributed to the emergence of Black consciousness in South Africa during the 1850's and 1860's by helping to crystallize "primary resistance" during the frontier wars into a more articulated kind of response to the increasing threats of White territorial and psychological pressures in Caffraria. Whether this crystallization can be called "nationalism" at this stage is a moot point, but at least it is a staging post on the way to the

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The debate on the alternatives to the use of the word "Mutiny," initiated by Indian independence, still lingers. I prefer the conventional descriptor to "rebellion" and "revolt" in spite of my early observance of fashionable terminology in 1962. (See Donovan Williams, "Clements Robert Markham and the Introduction of the Cinchona Tree into British India, 1861," *Geographical Journal*, Vol. cxxviii, Pt. 4, Dec., 1962, p. 440).

The most comprehensive account is in Donovan Williams, *The India Office, 1858—1869*, Visveshvaranand Vedic Research Institute (Indological Series, No. 76) (Hoshiarpur, Punjab, India, 1983), Part I, Ch. 6, *passim*.

This is the first phase of a wider study which will eventually embrace all relevant parts of the British Empire.

4. *Sir George Grey, K.C.B., 1812—1898: A Study in Colonial Government* (London, 1961), Part II, Ch. 26, *passim*. In 1858 a select committee of the House of Commons reported on the supply of troops to India during the Mutiny. Even Rutherford admits to the report being "a vindictive document" which "mercilessly arraigned and condemned" Grey. (Rutherford, p. 400.) This lies outside the purview of the article.

emergence of a more recognisable Black nationalism in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Sir George Grey was Governor of the Cape Colony when the Mutiny broke out and he continued in office until 21 August 1859.⁵ Therefore he had to deal with the call from India for troops and horses. At least one historian finds no fault with his response. W.P. Morrell concludes that the Indian Mutiny gave Grey an opportunity of displaying his qualities of instant decision by immediately despatching to India the whole garrison of Cape Town and a battalion under orders for New Zealand, with a promise that more would follow. The promise was kept: the force destined for China was re-routed to India and six regiments in all were sent from the Cape. The strength of the Frontier Police was increased to 600 men which meant a cost to the Cape of £60,000 per annum. The saving to the Imperial treasures which this involved, and the reduction of the Kaffrarian vote (which always led to sniping in the House of Commons) to £20,000 no doubt caused the Imperial authorities to look kindly on purely local operations.⁶

J. Rutherford, on the other hand, is highly critical of certain aspects of Grey's work.⁷ He sees Grey's despatches of 2 and 5 November 1857, to the Colonial Secretary, Henry Labouchere, as turning points in his attitude.⁸ He is hard on Grey whom he accuses of being "willful and provocative in relation to instructions from the Colonial Office."⁹ Specifically, Rutherford believes that Grey, in his despatch of 5 November (161) 1857, was guilty of misleading Labouchere with wrong facts about the number of regiments sent to India;¹⁰ that the despatch was "full of vague imaginings and palpable evasions,"¹¹ and that his reasoning on the defence of the Eastern Frontier in relation to its needs and the needs of India was "strange."¹²

Admittedly, Grey was somewhat mercurial in nature, and prone to exaggeration, but an examination of these censures reveals that Rutherford over-reacted, and that it is possible to discern an underlying unity, even integrity, in Grey's actions as governor, strung between the need for initiative in a tight situation on two fronts (India and the Eastern Frontier) and the need to comply with instructions from the Colonial Office, inter alia, in a world where communications between various segments of government were slow.¹³

5. To return again on 4 July 1860 until 15 August 1861 when he sailed for New Zealand.

6. W.D. Morrell, *British Colonial Policy in the Mid-Victorian Age* (Oxford, 1969), p. 90.

7. J. Rutherford, *Sir George Grey K.C.B., 1812—1898: A Study in Colonial Government* (London, 1961), Preface, p.v.; Part III, Ch. 26, *passim*.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 376. The despatches in question are Grey to Labouchere (158) 2 November 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, pp. 179—182, 285—291 (CO 48/384), Cape Archives. (The CO series is on microfilm). (All GH references in this article are from the Government Archives, Cape Town.)

9. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

10. Rutherford, pp. 376—377; Grey to Labouchere, 5 November (161) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. I, pp. 185—191 (CO 48/384).

11. Rutherford, p. 377.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

13. The various components in this situation comprised: the Governor of the Cape Colony, the Colonial Office, the War Office, the Government of Bombay, the Supreme Government of India and the Board of Control (of the Home Government of the East India Company).

As the situation in India deteriorated, Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay, took the initiative to procure soldiers and horses from the Cape Colony.¹⁴ One of the characteristics of the Bombay Presidency during the mid-19th century was that it combined traditional independence from the Supreme Government in Calcutta with what could be termed "Bombay imperialism."¹⁵ For instance, Bombay had minor political ambitions in Zanzibar. While this caused strained relations with, and often considerable downright inconvenience for, the Supreme Government of India,¹⁶ the initiative displayed by Elphinstone on this occasion was beneficial to the security of India.

At the outbreak of hostilities the Bombay Government had sent four of its eight regiments to Bengal and the Punjab and "the greater part of another regiment to the Northern Western Provinces. With the prospect of the Nizam of Hyderabad's troops defecting and making inroads into the Bombay Presidency, more British troops were urgently needed. Hence the call by Elphinstone to Sir George Grey for two regiments (including artillery) for Bombay. Any additional troops should be sent direct to Calcutta."¹⁷

There is no doubt that from the start Grey was well aware of the danger posed to the *Indian Empire* by the Mutiny, as opposed to the danger to the Bombay Presidency,¹⁸ and that this stirred him to vigorous action. It was not only the despatches and private letters from India which conveyed the sense of urgency; it was also the fact that these were carried by Captain Griffith Jenkins¹⁹ of the Indian Navy who arrived at Port Elizabeth on special assignment for the Government of India as "Transport Agent" with special powers

to Charter any vessels that may be required for the conveyance of Troops to India, and to solicit in the name and on behalf of my Government the most active cooperation of the Royal Navy.²⁰

Immediately on arrival at Port Elizabeth Jenkins notified Sir George Grey of his "very urgent duty" and his instructions

to await upon Your Excellency and personally to solicit such immediate aid, as it may with due consideration to your Government and the serious difficulties existing in India be in your power to render.²¹

He pointed out that because of the "zealous support" of the Governor of Mauritius, Sir

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14. The news of the Indian Mutiny, coupled with the withdrawal of troops, horses and artillery from the Cape Colony, was crucial for Black attitudes in Caffraria. This is discussed in Part II.
 15. This traditional independence was fostered and exploited to the hilt by individualistic governors of Bombay such as Sir George Russell Clerk during his two governships.
 16. E.g., the Bombay Government's initiation of improvements to the Kurrachee Harbour works in 1863—4. See Williams, *The India Office, 1858—1869*, P. 443.
 17. Elphinstone, et al, to Grey (no. 702) 29 June 1857, GH 39/9, pp. 29—30. Also in Papers of John, 13th Lord Elphinstone, Misc. Indian Letters, June — Sept. 1857, pp. 79—85, MSS, EUR.F.87. (All MSS.EUR references in this article are from the India Office Library, 197 Blackfriars Road, London S.W., England.)
 18. What follows here is a corrective to Rutherford, p. 371. (See below.)
 19. This important emissary is not mentioned in either Rutherford, Ch. 26, or W.P. Morrell, Ch. 3.
 20. Griffith Jenkins to Grey, 3 August 1857, GH 39/9, p. 67: See also Elphinstone to Grey, 8 July, 1857, Elphinstone Papers, Misc. Indian Letters, June — Sept. 1857, p. 85, MSS. EUR.F.87.
 21. Griffith Jenkins to Grey, 3 August 1857, GH 39/9, pp. 63—64.

James Higgison, two transports of troops had been despatched from that island, thus reducing the garrison there to 200 men.²² Higgison had also helped Jenkins to charter the Royal Mail Steamship, "England", then on her way to India, and to direct her to Port Elizabeth. She required provisions. In addition, the "Madras" was standing by in Port Elizabeth ready to receive troops. He proposed to load 500 soldiers on each ship.²³

When Jenkins arrived at Port Elizabeth, Grey was apparently on the Eastern Frontier²⁴ (or at least en route from the frontier to Cape Town). In this situation it was initially Jenkins, not Grey, who set the ball rolling at the Cape to supply troops and horses to India. He immediately contacted Sir Frederick Grey, Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of "Her Majesty's Fleets at the Cape of Good Hope," requesting that he direct all transports with troops from Great Britain for China or the Colonies, "at once" to Calcutta. He pointed out that "nothing but the most pressing emergency could call forth this requisition."²⁵ In addition, Jenkins quickly alerted Sir James Jackson, Commander of Her Majesty's Forces at the Cape of Good Hope, about the

painful and critical state of affairs in India and earnestly to solicit and urge the pressing necessity for the immediate despatch of as many troops as can be spared to stay the awful state of murder and bloodshed which prevails in India and imminently threatens the stability of our Empire.²⁶

Thus by the time Sir George Grey reached Cape Town the news must have been out and the process for helping India swiftly had already been initiated.

There was a predictable consonance of opinion between Grey and Elphinstone about the need to sustain the impression that British authority in India was strong. According to Elphinstone the delay in suppressing the Mutiny had to be viewed with apprehension:

[I]t is destroying the idea of our superiority and invincibility upon which far more than upon our material strength, our power in this country rests [;] it is reviving hopes which our hitherto almost constant success had well nigh extinguished and it may lead to a multitude of partial outbreaks and insurrection which it will be very difficult to deal with.²⁷

Grey was initially supplied with enough information by Griffith and Elphinstone to realize that the *Indian Empire*, rather than the Bombay Presidency, was in danger. Elphinstone had made all this clear in his private letter to Grey of 29 June 1857.²⁸

I do not wish ... to lead you to suppose that I am in the least alarmed for the safety of this [Bombay] Presidency — The seeds of mischief exist here as well as elsewhere, and in the present state of affairs, they may well spring up — but by carefully watching the places where they are most likely to appear I

22. *Ibid.*, p. 64.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 65–67.

24. Griffith Jenkins to Sir Frederick Grey, K.C.B., Rear-Admiral and Commander-in-Chief of Her Majesty's Fleets at the Cape of Good Hope, GH 39/9, p. 72.

25. Jenkins to Sir Frederick Grey, 3 August 1857, *ibid.*, p. 72.

26. Jenkins to Jackson, 3 August 1857, *ibid.*, pp. 68–69.

27. Elphinstone to Grey, "Private", 29 June 1857, Bombay, GH 39/9, pp. 14–15. Compare Grey's view of Empire, printed in Rutherford, pp. 373–374.

28. Elphinstone to Grey, 29 June 1857, "Private", Bombay, GH 39/9.



Wm. Pitt Rivers
Pitt Rivers

hope that we shall be able to keep things quiet until the restoration of our power in the North of India acts as a general sedative.²⁹

Therefore Rutherford is wrong in stating that: "Elphinstone said that the Bombay presidency was in danger, but Grey believed that the Indian Empire was in jeopardy."³⁰

At this stage of the proceedings (during August, 1857) Grey did not seem to have any fears that the Eastern Frontier might prove troublesome. He anticipated "at least two or three years perfect tranquility" and believed that all that was required was "the show of a sufficient force, which will give me ample time to have uniformed Regiments fully trained." The frontier posts could be manned by "nearly worn out soldiers who would be quite unfit for duty in India." These would be invalids recovering at the Cape where there were facilities for 2000 men. He encouraged the Home Government to send more invalids for this purpose. Meanwhile the frontier could be defended actively, if necessary, by an augmented Mounted Border Police and the Cape Corps.³¹ He had earlier also suggested that reinforcements from England should be "young and untrained men" who could release the seasoned men at the Cape for India.³²

Having done much and offered advice, Grey was surprized during September, on receiving his first official communication from Lord Canning, Governor-General of India, that there was no mention of the Mutiny nor any request for aid from the Cape Colony; only a request for 150 horses. This disturbed Grey who hastily informed Labouchere that

in my anxiety to promote H.M. Service, and the security of her Indian Possessions, *I may have gone too far, and I shall now be cautious what other steps I take until further instructions reach me*, but, in the mean time, I confidently rely upon H.M. Government supporting me in what I have already done.³³

From this time onwards the supply of horses loomed large on Grey's horizon, and he had to rob Peter to pay Paul as requests came from different quarters. On 27 October 1857 he wrote a lengthy private letter to Elphinstone describing how he was stripping the Field Batteries and the Cape Corps, and making additional purchases in an effort to supply 1 000 horses to Calcutta on orders from the Board of Control. Of these he nevertheless despatched 280 to Bombay on a request from Captain Shiwell for horses for that presidency. He did so deliberately because, as he put it to Elphinstone: "you are the last man who ought to be left in a difficulty yourself."³⁴

It is obvious that at this point Grey had responded handsomely on his own initiative in supplying some troops and horses but was already of a mind — and rightly so in view of the Government of India's apparent lack of expressed need — not to send additional troops which might not be required. The Colonial Office sent a number of despatches with instructions for the supply of troops, dated 29 June, 14 July, 1 August and 26 August, 1857, with Labouchere also calling privately on Grey to send as many

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–23. (My emphasis.)

30. Rutherford, p. 371.

31. *Ibid.*, pp. 153–154.

32. Grey to Labouchere, 27 August (134) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, p. 153.

33. Grey to Labouchere, Cape Town, 22 September (14) 1857, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, pp. 158–159, 24 September (144) 1857, *ibid.*, pp. 160–161. (My emphasis.)

34. Grey to Elphinstone, 27 October 1857, MSS.EUR. F.87, Box 9. See also 9 November 1857 on the good progress being made in assembling horses for both Calcutta and Bombay.

troops as possible,³⁵ but asking for at least ten regiments (including one destined for Ceylon).³⁶ Rutherford is scathing of Grey's reaction to these increased demands which culminated in his despatch to Labouchere of 5 November (161) 1857. Rutherford sees this despatch as "full of vague imaginings and palpable evasions." As previously mentioned, he accuses Grey of inaccurately reporting the number of regiments he had sent to India; of changing his stance on the amount of troops required to defend the Eastern Frontier; of conjuring up imaginary revolutions in Ceylon and Mauritius to retain troops at the Cape rather than meet the increased demands of the Colonial Office:

His philosophy of Empire suddenly became inverted; the capacity of the outlying parts to act independently in an emergency, which in August he had praised as proof of its vitality, now became a danger that threatened its disruption. And by a crowning piece of illogic, he had the effrontery to conclude that by disobedience he would act most in accordance with the Government's wishes.

His actions bear a more favourable construction than his words, but even so his conduct was willful and provocative. Shorn of its arithmetical errors and rhetorical extravagances, his despatch in effect said that Lord Canning knew better than the War Office what troops India needed, that Grey knew best what the Cape could spare, and that if the British Government would simply confine itself to sending out young regiments as replacements, he would see that Canning and Elphinstone got all the veteran regiments they wanted. The local authorities could handle the situation better than the Horse Guards.³⁷

To embark on a detailed defence of Grey would stretch this section of the article to inordinate lengths because refutation of Rutherford requires virtually a sentence by sentence approach. Hence I will set out some general principles which can be discerned in Grey's work, and encourage the reader to consider them as an aid to understanding his reactions. Some detailed analysis of certain aspects will be provided by way of illustration.

Firstly, I have already pointed out that by September Grey saw no good reason to send more troops since the Government of India had not asked for any and Bombay had asked for only two regiments which had been sent. Given this, surely Grey was entitled to assume that Lord Canning *did* know better than the War Office what troops India needed.²⁹ And, indeed, if Canning had made a wrong decision, then Grey was right in divining it and sending adequate troops, in the circumstances.³⁹ On 11th November 1857 Grey wrote to Labouchere that the latest mail from India (up to 13th October) indicated

that we had helped the Indian Government just in the way and at the time in which help was required, and urgently pressing upon me that horses are, at the present moment, their Chief want in India. I propose, therefore, to continue to direct every effort at the present moment to procuring and shipping horses.⁴⁰

He pointed out that until two "young" relief regiments arrived at the Cape, "no more

35. The instructions are summarized in Rutherford, p. 376.

36. *Ibid.*

37. *Ibid.*, p. 378.

38. On 8 October, 1857 Lord Canning reported to the Home Government that Delhi had been entered. See Michael Maclagan, *Clemency Canning* (London, 1962), p. 129.

39. Cf. W.L. and L. Rees, *The Life and Times of Sir George Grey, K.C.B.* (London, 1892), p. 252.

40. Grey to Labouchere, 11 November (162) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, pp. 191–192. The matter of horses is dealt with below.

troops can go on from here to India, nor, indeed, are they at this moment required there."⁴¹

Secondly, as far as the Cape Eastern Frontier was concerned, why should Grey *not* have known best what troops the Cape could spare? The local authorities *could* conceivably handle the situation better than the War Office because they were on the spot. Rutherford sees Grey's assessment of the situation on the frontier as dramatized because the tension of the Indian Mutiny induced a degree of apprehension which tragically "marred his plans for the reconstruction of Kaffir society."⁴² But the history of the Eastern Frontier is a long and equally undistinguished one of wrong assessments and sudden surprizes, and Grey was presumably no different from some of his predecessors. Indeed, Rutherford contradicts himself when analyzing Grey's reactions. At one point he makes light of "Fadana's gang" which, after beginning to plunder in the Queenstown and Albert districts in July 1857, was easily polished off by Walter Currie's commando, and is critical of Grey according a gravity to the situation which apparently it did not deserve.⁴³ Yet later he says that "Peace was endangered by disorders beyond the border ... Fadana ... began plundering ... he was reinforced by Gcalekas from Krelis' ... So long as this sort of marauding continued, there was some risk of a Kaffir war and Grey could not reinforce India as freely as he wished."⁴⁴ If Rutherford, as historian, finds it difficult to be consistent, can Grey be faulted?

Here was the essence of the matter. The demands of both the Indian Mutiny and the Eastern Frontier called for on-the-spot decisions. Grey's despatch of 2 November (158) 1857 demonstrates an incisive touch. It details precisely what was expected of him and what had been done. His despatch of 5 November (161) 1857 does not contradict despatch no. 158 nor give the impression, as Rutherford alleges, that he had already despatched five of the ten regiments available.⁴⁵ Rutherford's description of the disposition of regiments overlooks the elementary fact that Grey's despatch no. 161 says:

I cannot yet with any safety send away instantly a very large addition to the Regiments, which have already gone, *or are now under orders* as noted in the margin — such a movement might yet encourage the Kaffir tribes which continue to disperse and break up, but every measure, consistent with safety, is taken to hurry their dispersion — such as continually reducing the number of Kaffirs on public works, who in a country deprived of troops would prove a very formidable body; pressing on the trials of the captive chiefs; removing large parties of Kaffirs to the Western Districts, etc., etc., and I will, without unnecessary delay, continue to have other regiments sent on to India, or elsewhere, as I think that this can be safely done, and I shall, ultimately, if necessary, do this to an extent even larger than you have ordered ...⁴⁶

In the margin of the despatch Grey lists the 89th, 95th, 13th, 80th and 6th regiments. In a private letter to Elphinstone, dated 9 November 1857, Grey states that the 89th, 95th and 13th regiments had already gone, and that the 80th would sail "in a few days." Two of the remaining regiments, probably the 60th and the 6th, would be sent to Point de Galle (Ceylon) "in about a fortnight."⁴⁷ In fact, of these remaining regiments, the 80th departed in three batches from 14 November to 4 December,

41. *Ibid.*

42. Rutherford, p. 365.

43. *Ibid.*, p. 365.

44. *Ibid.*, p. 383.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 377.

46. Grey to Labouchere, 5 November (161) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol 1, p. 188. (My emphasis.)

47. Grey to Elphinstone, Government House, Cape Town, 9 November 1857, MSS.EUR.F.87, Box 9.

1857, and the 6th in two batches, on 24 and 25 December, 1857.⁴⁸

In addition to this, Rutherford does not stress the fact that Grey had taken appropriate action from the start. On 9 August 1857 Grey informed Labouchere that the steamboat "Cleopatra," with a detachment of the 23rd Fusiliers bound for China, had been redirected to Calcutta.⁴⁹ Equally, by 19 August 1857 209 men of the Royal Artillery had been despatched⁵⁰. The embarkation of the 80th Regiment gave trouble, but 500 men of the 13th Regiment would embark instead by 28 August.⁵¹

As for the need to defend the Eastern Frontier, Rutherford seems to take this rather lightly on the basis of Grey's wrong interpretation of the situation.⁵² I have already pointed out Rutherford's own inconsistency in judgement with regard to Fadana. Fadana was only one aspect of an uneasy frontier where the Cattle Killing of 1856 1857 gave no assurance that the decimated Blacks would not give further trouble. Fadana's outbreak of July 1857 - a month before the crucial despatches arrived from India - was one of a series of events which kept the frontier situation in an uneasy state until the flight of Kreli's people across the Bashee River on 15-16 February, 1858.⁵³ Rutherford himself writes: "Peace was endangered by disorders beyond the border, and Grey could not rest satisfied till he had brought Kreli to book as the instigator of the mischief."⁵⁴ On December 1857, 16 days before the last of the promised troops were embarked (the 6th Regiment) Grey was apprehensive about Umhala's activities. He informed Labouchere that:

I have no doubt that Umhala and some of the chiefs, whose plans were defended in the first instance - have continued to retain many of their young men within our Frontier, and in their immediate neighbourhood - ready to take advantage of any opportunity, which might offer itself, and that, encouraged by the news from India, and the reduction of the Force in this country - they think they now see some chance of success.⁵⁵

And there were also incipient difficulties in the two republics. In Grey's view, if they and the native tribes were to come to blows, "we shall be compelled to maintain a large Military Force on the [Eastern] Frontier, to preserve the Colony from the hordes of semicivilized or barbarous tribes who will be driven into it in the disturbances which will take place."⁵⁶ Therefore, in view of the fact that Grey had already done all that had been asked of him by the Supreme Government of India as far as the supply of troops was concerned, the continuing difficulties on the Eastern Frontier, albeit somewhat exaggerated in retrospect, were reason enough to balk at sending more troops to India, thereby creating a threatening situation.

Rutherford's extracts from Grey's despatch of 5 November (161) 1857⁵⁷ omits Grey's explanation that a *permanent* reduction of troops, without some replacements, might lay the Cape Colony and Natal open to danger from the Blacks. Grey stressed

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48. GH 39/5, pp. 973-974. These returns were probably compiled by the Military Secretary. The one on p. 973 is more detailed than that on p. 974. Rutherford does not mention volume GH 39/5 in his bibliography (p. 687).
49. Grey to Labouchere, 9 Aug. (116) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, p. 133.
50. Grey to Labouchere, 19 August (118) 1857, *ibid.*, p. 135.
51. Grey to Labouchere, 25 August (131) 1857, *ibid.*, p. 151. The trouble continued until 24 November 1857 (GH 39/5, pp. 973-974).
52. Cf. Rutherford, pp. 365, 376, 378, 389.
53. Rutherford, pp. 383-389.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 383.
55. Grey to Labouchere, 9 December (196) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, pp. 228-229.
56. Grey to Labouchere, 1 Dec (178) 1857, *ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 210.
57. Rutherford, pp. 376-377.

that the contribution he had made to India had been possible because of the temporary lull in frontier affairs, after Fadana had been dealt with in July 1857; in the long-term he needed sufficient forces on the frontier. This makes at least some of Grey's apparent contradictions and inconsistencies understandable.

Certainly, Lord Canning was aware of Grey's predicament. On 30 April 1858, in an appreciative letter which thanked Grey for his help, he observed:

I fear that in supplying the urgent wants of this Government, you will have reduced the force in your Colony below what you may consider advisable; and for the present, I will not ask you to reinforce us with the additional requirements which you mention ...⁵⁸

Canning made this point again on 6 June 1858:

I know by recent letter from England that the reinforcements which you were counting upon when you wrote to me in February, and which were to be the condition of your sparing more Regiments for India, will not have reached you. I doubt even whether they have been despatched to you.

And I have not heard that the causes of uneasiness upon your frontier have passed away. I therefore shall not be surprized to find that you cannot send me any more help ...⁵⁹

Finally, Grey's argument for not depleting the Cape of troops because, hypothetically, there might be a call for help in Ceylon or Mauritius, does not merit Rutherford's description of "vague imaginings."⁶⁰ After all, in 1848 the Kandyan rebellion in Ceylon had involved an outnumbered British force which had to be re-enforced with troops from Madras and Columbo before it was put down.⁶¹ As for Mauritius, Rutherford seems to have forgotten that Griffith Jenkins had informed Grey that the garrison there had been reduced to a mere 200 men.⁶²

But when all was said and done, Grey's inconsistencies, inaccuracies, wrong judgements, and even, perhaps, deliberate emphasis, or lack of it, for effect, were underpinned by his eagerness to help India and protect the Cape Colony, and all the parts of the Empire, at all costs. His admiration for and belief in the Empire demanded it. His statement to Labouchere on the nature of Empire and the loyalty it engendered⁶³ is deserving of more prominence than it has received in the annals of the British Empire. There is no question that Grey acted quickly and competently in providing troops and making contingency plans for the Eastern Frontier. As early as 18 September, 1857, the Presidency of Madras, on behalf of the Government of India, thanked him for his prompt action in supplying troops.⁶⁴ He received commendations for this from the Queen, Labouchere, Canning, the Governor and Council of Bombay and the East India Company.⁶⁵ And finally one cannot ignore the content and tone of

58. Canning to Grey, 30 April 1858, GH 39/9, pp. 193–194.

59. Canning to Grey, 6 June 1858, *ibid.*, pp. 203–204.

60. Rutherford, p. 377.

61. Lennox A. Mills, *Ceylon under British Rule 1795–1932: With an account of the East India Company's Embassies to Kandy 1762–1795* (London, 1964), pp. 180–186. Initially the rebels were estimated to number 60,000 of whom 20,000 were armed with muskets. There were only 680 British troops (p. 183). It should also be noted that on 14 July 1857 Labouchere asked Grey to send a regiment to Ceylon to replace the troops which had been drafted to Calcutta (Grey to Labouchere, 3 Oct. (146) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, p. 164.)

62. Griffith Jenkins to Grey, 3 August 1857, GH 39/9, p. 64. (My emphasis.)

63. Grey to Labouchere, 7 August (115) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, pp. 131–132, quoted in Rutherford, pp. 373–374, under CO 48/383.

64. E. Maltby to Col. Sec. Cape Town, 18 September, 1857, encl. in des. no. 200, 16 Dec. 1857, GH 28/72.

65. These are summarized by Rutherford, pp. 372–376. See also M. Maclagan, *Clemency Canning* (London, 1962), pp. 130, 170, for Canning's recognition of Grey's supply of troops.

Lord Elphinstone's letter to him of 29 June 1859, when the dust of the Mutiny had settled. It is evidence enough that Grey had done well:

I shall never forget the way in which you responded to our call for assistance in the time of our utmost need — As I believe I was the first to communicate our wants to you and to ask for help, I hope I may be allowed to express my thanks for the ready and generous manner in which that appeal was met.⁶⁶

He was not alone in this. Canning had expressed his thanks on a number of occasions, and, at the last, informed Grey that he had conveyed to the Court of Directors "an earnest acknowledgement of the prompt and valuable help rendered to the Government of India by you in our present difficulties."⁶⁷

Before the Mutiny the Cape was not a supplier of horses for India.⁶⁸ There were several reasons for this. Probably the main one was the system of obtaining horses by contract, which was "expensive, and failed in the supply,"⁶⁹ and by purchasing horses direct from the breeders and owners at the lowest price, which was adequate for "moderate demand without limit as to time."⁷⁰ Another reason seems to have been an inordinately picky attitude in India, coupled with some administrative problems, and inexperience on the part of authorities in Bengal.⁷¹ There was also some anti-Boer prejudice on the part of the Indian administration.⁷² The third reason appears to have been a certain lack of enterprise on the part of the local farmers.⁷³

But all this was swept aside with the outbreak of the Mutiny, with its seemingly insatiable demand for remounts (i.e. horses for the cavalry). As William Hope, the Auditor-General, put it:

From the great success which has attended the present sudden and most pressing demand upon the colony for horses, it is to be hoped that the question is for ever settled as to the capabilities of the Cape to supply the Indian army to a very large extent with the description of horse which all authorities in India unite in considering so well adapted for the service.⁷⁴

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66. Elphinstone to Grey, Bombay, 29 June 1859, Misc. Indian Letters, 27 April 1859 to 13 December 1859, p. 48, MSS.EUR.F.87.
67. Canning to Grey, 30 April 1858, GH 39/9, pp. 195—196.
68. For useful information on the background to horses in the Cape Colony see: "Notes on the Horse-Sickness of 1854—55," (Cory Library for Historical Research, Rhodes University); Thomas Maclear, "Horse-Sickness in South Africa," *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol. 1, No. 2, Feb. 1957, pp. 65—78; T.B. Bayley, *Notes on the horse-sickness at the Cape of Good Hope, in 1854—1855; compiled by permission of His Excellency the Governor, from official documents by T.B. Bayley* (Cape Town, Saul Solomon, 1856). On the subject of the usefulness of horses for India see "Cape Horses for India", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol. IV, No. 19, July 1958, pp. 129—138; *Papers relating to the Purchase of Horses at the Cape of Good Hope, for Cavalry and Artillery, for Service in the Colony, or in India* (hereinafter *Papers relating to the Purchase of Horses*); Cape of Good Hope, G3-'58; *Additional Papers relating to the Supply of Remount Horses for the Army in India* (hereinafter *Additional Papers*), Cape of Good Hope, G L3-'58.
69. Opinion of William Hope, Auditor General, Cape Colony, *Additional Papers*, p. 4. The initial expense was increased by freight charges.
70. *Ibid.*
71. "Cape Horses for India", *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol. IV, No. 19, July, 1858, pp. 3ff.
72. *Additional Papers*, p. 10.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 5.
74. *Ibid.*

The process whereby the Cape met the needs of India was initiated by a letter dated 29 July 1857 from Sir Henry Somerset, Commander-in-Chief in India, who asked Sir James Jackson, Commander-in-Chief, Cape Town, to purchase 500 horses for the use of the Government of India.⁷⁵ He stressed the urgency of the matter "for at this season of the year but few can be obtained for Light Field Batteries, and scarcely any for Horse Artillery and Dragoons".⁷⁶ Accordingly the horses required primarily for Horse Artillery and Dragoons should therefore be "from fourteen hands 2½ inches in length to 15-1, stout yet active horses of fair blood and from 5 to 8 years old." He expressed concern about the passage to India:

To obviate the chance of disappointment from a want of proper or sufficient means of transport from the Cape to Bombay, the Governor in Council proposes to despatch three of the horse transports lately returned from the Gulf of Persia ready fitted with stalls, provided with water tanks, and carrying from Bombay a number of Horse Keepers and a supply of Screwed grass.⁷⁷

On 7 September 1857 Somerset introduced Captain W. Stewell, Deputy Assistant Quarter-Master General of the Bombay Army who arrived to superintend all arrangements connected with the embarkation of the horses concerned. Only two ships, capable of embarking 380 horses, accompanied him, and Somerset called on Jackson for help in obtaining more transports.⁷⁸

In London the Court of Directors of the East India Company⁷⁹ had moved fast. As early as 1 August 1857 the *Illustrated London News* printed the following notice to shipping interests:

Freight for Horses from the Cape of Good Hope for India — Notice is hereby given to shipowners, colliers, and exporters of coal to the Cape of Good Hope, and others trading with that Colony and with India, that the Governor and Commander in Chief of the Cape of Good Hope has authority to purchase such horses suited to cavalry purposes as may be procurable to the extent of 1000 horses, provided tonnage can be obtained for their conveyance to India. The Court of Directors of the East Indian Company therefore notify to the shipping interest in the United Kingdom that freight of that description may probably be in demand at the Cape of Good Hope.

By the time the first despatch from the Secretary to State for the Colonies (dated 5 August 1857) on the matter of purchasing horses for India reached Grey (on 24 September 1857) the latter had already set the wheels in motion.⁸⁰ But this early need for horses was not easily met. Meanwhile the Mutiny continued and in October 1857 Lord Canning informed Grey that:

There is nothing which we want so urgently as horses. I hardly hope that you will be able to fill the Himalaya (she will carry 400) in addition to the other vessels which have been sent from Calcutta and Bombay without some delay — notwithstanding the large order sent by the Home Government; but I am certain that you will do the very best that can be done; and I think it advisable to leave entirely to you to fix the time at which the vessel, full or not full, shall leave the Cape for Calcutta. This will depend so much upon the prospects of obtaining a greater or less supply of horses that the question will be settled much more satisfactorily by your orders than by me.⁸¹

75. Somerset to Jackson, 29 July (1106) 1857, GH 39/9, p. 53.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 54.

77. *Ibid.*, p. 55.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 57–58.

79. The Court of Directors and the Board of Control constituted the Home Government of India. See above, footnote 13.

80. Grey to Labouchere, 24 September (144) 1857, GH 23/27, Vol. 1, pp. 160–161.

81. Canning to Grey, Calcutta, 8 October 1857, GH 39/9, pp. 120–123.

On 4 November 1857 Shewell presented his credentials to the Military Secretary to the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope. These were by way of letters from the Quarter-Master General of the Bombay Army. Shewell decided to send a shipment of 500 horses to Bombay, notwithstanding the fact that some might think that Calcutta's need was greater.⁸²

On 5 December 1857 Canning once again raised the matter of horses in a private letter to Grey. If the "Simmom", bound for Calcutta, could not be filled with troops, as many horses as possible should be sent.⁸³ On the same date he spoke of "our present dearth of cavalry."⁸⁴

Shewell's decision that horses should be sent to Bombay rather than Calcutta was confirmed by Lord Elphinstone when on 31 December 1857 he raised the "important" matter of horses with Grey. In Bombay there were four regiments of "English Cavalry", a troop of Horse Artillery, "and I think five or six batteries of Foot Artillery to provide with horses." He pointed out that many of these would not remain in the Presidency, "but they must all be horsed here." Bombay had already bought "upwards of 1500 horses" but required 3900! With the 500 horses from the Cape Colony, more than half of what were required had been acquired. Bombay had sent to Australia and the Swan River Colony for 1200 and the remainder, it was hoped, would be acquired in India or the Persian Gulf.⁸⁵

This call was followed by a letter dated 21 January 1858 from the Military Department of the Government of Bombay to the Cape Colonial Secretary in which it was pointed out that there was little hope of obtaining help from the Australian Colonies, and, as the number of horses to hand was insufficient, three hundred more, at least, were needed.⁸⁶ By April 1858, however, Canning thanked Grey for his assistance in sending horses, observing that "we are now fairly well off in this respect."⁸⁷

The total number of horses shipped to India from the Cape Colony during the period 12 August 1857 to 12 October 1857 was 4,014, with 360 awaiting shipment on two vessels due to depart soon. The horses were embarked at Table Bay, Simon's Bay, East London and Algoa Bay (Port Elizabeth) with the greater majority leaving from Table Bay and Algoa Bay.⁸⁸ Between 12 August 1857 and 17 February 1858, 3,577 horses had been shipped to Calcutta and 1,652 to Bombay.⁸⁹

The Remount Agency had done its work very well. On 18 April 1859 the Bombay Government informed the Cape Government that the number of horses in that presidency was so large that no further supplies from the Cape were required.⁹⁰ Accord-

82. Shewell to Military Secretary, Cape of Good Hope, 4 November 1857, *ibid.*, pp. 234–236.

83. Canning to Grey, 5 December 1857, *ibid.*, pp. 140–142.

84. Canning to Grey, 5 December 1857, *ibid.*, p. 145.

85. Elphinstone to Grey, 31 December, 1857, *ibid.*, pp. 150–151.

86. Secretary to Government of Bombay, Military Department, to Colonial Secretary, Cape of Good Hope, 21 January (586) 1858, *ibid.*, pp. 165–166.

87. Canning to Grey, 30 April 1858, *ibid.*, p. 195.

88. Statement Showing the number of Horses bought and Shipped at the Cape of Good Hope for India up to date, October 22, 1858, GH 36/3.

89. Recapitulation of Horses shipped from the Cape of Good Hope from 12 August 1857 to the 17 February 1859, *ibid.*

90. W.F. Marriott, Acting Sec., Military Dept., Bombay Government, to Col. Sec., Cape of Good Hope, No. 2481, 18 April 1859, *ibid.*

Return showing the dates of departure and strength of the various Regiments despatched from this Colony to India between the 11th August 1857 and 26th October 1858

Regiment	Strength		Date of departure
	off ^{rs}	Men	
Royal Artillery	8	199	12 th August 1857
89 th Regiment	33	769	{ 15 th } August { 16 th }
95 th "		728	{ 17 th August - " { 13 th September - "
13 th "	35	837	{ 30 th August - " { 20 th September - " { 6 th November - "
80 th "		837	{ 14 th November - " { 20 th November - " { 24 th November - "
6 th "		769	{ 24 th November - " { 25 th December - "
73 rd "	33	769	11 th March 1858
60 th "	24	830	{ 6 th April - " { 25 th September - "
Royal Artillery	5	192	24 th September - "
31 st Regiment		835	12 th October - "
Seaman Regiment	30	1028	{ 24 th September - " { 11 th October - " { 18 th October - " { 20 th October - "
Total	296	7788	

dingly Major (later Lieut.-Col.) Apperley, who was in charge of the Remount Agency, stopped the export of horses to Bombay.⁹¹ The last shipment of horses was completed on 23 November 1859 and the establishment of the Remount Agency was to be reduced.⁹² By March 1860 the Remount Agency had been "broken up."⁹³

Major Apperley is one of the unsung heroes of the Indian Mutiny whose expertise enabled horses to be transported to India efficiently and without undue delay. Before arriving at the Cape he had much experience as superintendent of the largest stud in Bengal. His sharp eye caught more than one potential cause of disaster at sea because of inadequate arrangements within certain transports. Consequently the casualties were only two per cent of the first 1,500 horses sent on the first ten ships.⁹⁴ He was acknowledged as the right man in the right place.⁹⁵

It was to Apperley's advantage that the Mutiny created a situation in which the demand for horses overrode the previous reservations of sometimes prejudiced Indian officials. This matter having been settled, the observations of William Hope, the Auditor-General, on 4 December 1857 are significant:

The Cape may be regarded as the connecting point between England and India, and the present the turning of the tide in the affairs of India. If in this crisis proper advantages are taken of the position of the Cape, as a depot for troops, as a source from which to draw horses, and other supplies, India may be vastly benefitted, and may be independent of other and foreign eastern countries to remount her cavalry and artillery, as well as calling out the resources of this colony, to the advantage of both countries and governments.⁹⁶

To be continued.

91. Apperley to Maj. Travers, Mil. Sec., Govt. House, No. 240, 12 July 1859, *ibid.*

92. Apperley to Maj. Francis, Mil. Sec., No. 267, 24 November 1859, *ibid.*

93. Apperley to Maj. Francis, Mil. Sec., No. 283, March 1860, *ibid.*

94. T.B. Bayley, "Cape Horses for Indian Remounts," *Cape Monthly Magazine*, Vol. IV, No. 21, Sept. 1858, pp. 131—132.

95. Anonymous, "Cape Horses for India," *ibid.*, No. 19, July, 1858, p. 10.

96. *Papers Relating to the Purchase of Horses*, p. 6.