

FORTY-FOUR YEARS A PUBLIC SERVANT

BY

C. A. KINCAID

C.V.O., I.C.S. (RET.)

OFFICIER DE L'INSTRUCTION PUBLIQUE
SOMETIME JUDGE OF H.M.'S HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE,
BOMBAY

AUTHOR OF

'A HISTORY OF THE MARATHA PEOPLE,' 'THE LAND OF RANJI AND DULEEP,'
'THE INDIAN HEROES,' ETC., ETC.

Edinburgh and London
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD & SONS LTD.

1934

TO
THE HONOURED MEMORY
OF MY FATHER
GENERAL WILLIAM KINCAID
THIS BOOK IS
REVERENTLY INSCRIBED

FHBN 020218-400-5

Forty-Four Years a Public Servant



Our family was a younger branch of the Kincaids of Kincaid Castle, not far from the town of Stirling. Towards the close of the reign of Edward I. the then laird, John Kincaid of that ilk, distinguished himself by capturing, at the head of a storming party, Edinburgh Castle from the English garrison. As a reward he was created hereditary constable of the stronghold, a post that he and his descendants held for several generations. He was also granted the right to bear Edinburgh Castle on his coat of arms - a right exercised by the Kincaid family to this day. He obtained yet another recompense - namely, the daughter of the then Earl of Lennox. A less remote ancestor was Thomas Kincaid, "Chirurgen apothecary" in Edinburgh about 1700 AD¹.

His younger son migrated to Northern Ireland in the reign of William III and founded the Irish branch of the family. His descendants lived at Kilcaddon in County Donegal. My great-grandfather was an officer in the East India Company's army, and in 1800 was present at the storming of Seringapatam.

My grandfather entered the Dublin firm of land agents known as Stuart & Co. He rose to be a partner, and the firm changed its name to that of Stuart & Kincaid. ...

¹ See Alexander Nisbet's 'System of Heraldry' (1722 A.D.), Vol 1, Pt. II., p. 420. "It was Thomas Kincaid who added the crest - a dexter hand, holding a chirurgen's instrument, called a bisteri proper - motto, *Incidendo sano*.

"It seems the castle represents that of Edinburgh; for these of the family were a long time constables thereof.

"I find in an old Birth-brieve, signed by several honourable persons, in favour of Mr Andrew Monteith; it is writ thus, that he was the son of Alexander Monteith of Collochburn, and his wife, Janet Kincaid, lawful daughter to David Kincaid, lineally and lawfully descended of the House of Kincaid in Sterlingshire, Chief of the name, whose predecessor for his valiant service in recovering the Castle of Edinburgh from the English in the time of Edward I was made Constable of the said castle, and his posterity enjoyed that office for many years, carrying the castle in their arms in memory thereof, to this day.

"There is an old broadsword, belonging to some of the families of the name of Kincaid, upon which were the above arms with the castle, with these words:

*'Wha will persew, I will defend
My life and honour to the end.'*

1522

which is in the custody of Mr Thomas Kincaid, eldest lawful son of Thomas Kincaid of that Ilk, gules, or on a fesse Ermine, between two nollets in chief and a castle triple towered in Base argent, massoned sable, a lozenge of the 1nt. Crest, a dexter hand holding a chirurgen's instrument, called a bisteri proper.

"Motto: *Incidendo sano*."

My father was the second son; and since my grandfather decided that the eldest son, John, should enter the firm, he sought an Indian career for my father. He approached Lord Palmerston, whose influence secured the latter a commission in the Madras Army. ...



It was the year 1852, and the Crimean War was in full swing. Directly he reached Dublin my father called on Sir Charles Napier, the conqueror of Sind and then Commander-in-Chief in Ireland. The latter was an old friend of the family, and through his influence my father obtained a captaincy in an Irish militia regiment then stationed at the Curragh. As he was only twenty he was the youngest captain in the English Army. ...



When in 1887 he retired with a high reputation he was Resident at Bhopal. On my father's retirement he naturally interested himself in the careers of his sons. My elder brother, Willie, shortly afterwards passed into Woolwich, and became in due course a Royal Engineer. I was just seventeen years old and still at Sherborne School. I was in the sixth form; but I was thoroughly dissatisfied with the progress I was making. When my father proposed to take me away and send me to Wren's to prepare for the Indian Civil Service, I was delighted. Two years' hard work at the crammer's secured me, in 1889, a post as an Indian Civil Service Probationer. ...



Towards the end of the cold weather of 1902-1903, I was invited to the installation ceremony. I did not want to go, for I did not wish to see him formally take the place of my friend Ranjitsingji, the lawful heir. Nevertheless I went, partly because the acting Agent to the Governor, Mr Quin, wished me to, and partly because I was attracted by the presence at Jamnagar of Miss Seddon, the sister of Mr Charles Norman Seddon, I.C.S., the Administrator. She was tall, charming and handsome, and her intelligence was far above the ordinary. I cannot say that I enjoyed the ceremonial. In another direction, however, I was more fortunate. I proposed to Miss Seddon while at Jamnagar and, much to my happiness, was accepted. Soon afterwards she sailed to England to arrange for her trousseau. I applied for and was granted long leave, and sailed on the 20th April

1903 from Bombay. I disembarked at Port Said, took the ferry-boat to Brindisi, and going by rail through Italy joined my father and mother at Karlsbad. ...



In March 1904 I returned to India, and was greatly pleased to find myself posted once more to Kathiawar. Colonel Kennedy was still there as Agent to the Governor, and we spent the hot weather at Porbandar, where he, as usual, made a golf course. I enjoyed two months of golf and sea-bathing. I returned early in June to Rajkot and began to set my bungalow in order to receive my future wife, who was to arrive towards the end of July.

The Astons had very kindly asked me to be married from their house. He was now Judge of the High Court and, as such, did an immense amount of good work. The previous tendency of the High Court judges had been to assume prima facie that all decisions of district judges were wrong and that all appellants were innocent. Mr Aston took the opposite and correct view - namely, that the appellant, having been found guilty by the Lower Court, must be deemed to be so until the contrary had been established. I travelled to Bombay on the 22nd July. At Ahmadabad I met my best man, Stanley Batchelor, and we both went to stay at the Astons' house on Malabar Hill. On the 23rd July my future wife arrived from England, and on the 25th we were married. ...



In October of 1905 my eldest son, Dennis, now in his turn a member of the Indian Civil Service, was born; and my father and mother, who had been to South Africa with the British Association and seen the Zambesi Falls, came to India to see their grand son. ...



In June of that year, 1909, our daughter Sheila was born, and we decided to take leave in the autumn. ...

