

CATALOGUE
OF THE
BHURI SINGH MUSEUM
AT
CHAMBA.

(CHAMBA STATE, PANJAB.)

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PREFACE.

My explorations carried on in Chamba State since the summer of 1902 led to the discovery of a large number of Sanskrit inscriptions both on stone and metal. It soon became apparent that special measures were required for the preservation of these ancient documents, most of which possess great interest for local history, and it was His Highness Sir Bhuri Singh, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., who first suggested that a Museum would be the best means for preserving those relics of the past.

In 1908 one of the public buildings suitably situated on the *Chaugān* was set apart for the purpose, and I devoted part of the summer of that year to arranging, labelling and cataloguing the exhibits. Several inscribed stones which, owing to their position, were in danger of being damaged or lost, had already been collected in previous years in the course of my tours, which covered nearly the whole of the State. To these were now added a number of ancient title-deeds engraved on copperplates which the owners consented to place in the State Museum on loan. A third branch was formed by important State papers including some beautifully written Persian *Sanads* addressed to the Rājās of Chambā by the Durānī kings of Kābul. The personal interest taken in the matter by His Highness the Rājā, as well as by the State officials, made it possible to enlarge on the original scheme of a purely epigraphical collection, and to add other sections pertaining to local art and industry. His Highness presented to the Museum a large number of ancient Indian pictures representing partly historical and partly mythological subjects. At the same time Captain Sri Kanth Baratru, whom the Rājā had wisely placed in charge of the new institution, brought together a valuable collection of ancient armour and embroideries, including some fine specimens of the well-known Chambā *rūmāls* which he generously gave to the Museum on loan. Some interesting specimens of ancient wood-carvings I had been fortunate enough to rescue from the State *Kōthī* at Brahmor after its collapse in the earthquake of the 4th April, 1905.

On the 14th September, 1908, the State Museum was opened by Mr. R. E. Younghusband, C.S.I., Commissioner of Lahore, in the presence of a large assembly of European visitors and State officials. On his proposal it was decided that the Museum should be named after Rājā Bhuri Singh who had both initiated the project and lent his support to carry it into effect.

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present time the noble Rājpūt houses of the Punjab Highlands follow the ancient custom of worshipping the sword and other weapons on the Dasahra festival.*

For the information contained in this section of my catalogue, I am largely indebted to the assistance of Captain R. St. L. Gillespie, R.E. The indigenous names of the various weapons have been supplied by Captain Sri Kunth Baratru.

G. 1. Rājpūt padded helmet lined with brocade (*kimkhāb*) and decorated with brass studs. It was presented to Rājā Charhat Singh by Wazīr Indar, son of Wazīr Natthu, together with Nos. G. 2-4, and all are the property of His Highness the Rājā.

G. 2. Velvet padded sur-coat decorated with brass studs. See above under G. 1.

G. 3. Corslet consisting of four plates of inlaid steel (*kuftgarī*).† It is fastened with leather straps and lined with velvet. See above under G. 1.

Similar cuirasses in four pieces from Rājputānā in the Tower of London collection are described as "four mirrors" (*chār āñā*).

G. 4. Two brassets (*hathēli*) of steel inlaid with gold (*kuftgarī*). They are lined with velvet and provided with velvet cuffs. See above under G. 1.

G. 5. Double-handed two-edged sword (*khandā dudhārā* from Sanskrit *khadga dvidhāra*), with inlaid hilt (*kabza*) and blade of damascened steel and scabbard of velvet-clad pinewood.

G. 6. Persian scimitar with a hilt of inlaid steel and ivory, and leather scabbard. On the blade is an inscription in Persian : *Zañāñ'āml Añfahāñi* "Sword made in Isfahān."

G. 7-8. Two broad-ended curved hill-swords (*dhenkaru*) with plain steel hilts. They were obtained by Rājā Shyām Singh from a Nēpāli blacksmith.

G. 9. Straight sword (*sakīlā*) with steel hilt and scabbard of leather-clad wood. The blade was broken and has been brazed in the middle. A popular adage says *Sakīlā phir akīlā*, "Who has a *sakīlā* can go alone."

G. 10-11. Two sabres (*tulwār*) with steel hilt and scabbard of velvet-clad pinewood.

G. 12. Small curved knife with damascened blade, horn hilt and velvet-scabbard.

G. 13. Sword-stick (*quptī*) with crystal handle (*dastī*) and sheath of painted cane with a brass knob.

G. 14. Rājpūt dagger (*kañār*) with ornamental blade and leather silver-pointed sheath.

G. 15. Afghān knife with ivory hilt and scabbard of *papier maché*.

G. 16. Knife (*chhuri*) with silver hilt in the shape of a lion's head inlaid with three stones (one missing), and brocade-clad wooden scabbard.

G. 17. Dagger (*khañjar*) with gilt iron hilt and wooden sheath.

G. 18-19. Two caps of chain mail.

G. 20. Coat and cap of chain mail.

G. 21. Round shield (*dhāl*) of tortoise shell decorated with six steel bosses.

G. 22. Round shield of rhinoceros hide decorated with four bosses of gilt copper.

* Kalhana refers to this "worship of the weapons" (Sanskrit *astrapūjā*) in the *Rājatarangini* VII, 246; Dr. Stein's translation, Vol. I., p. 289.

† *Kuftgarī* work is made in Kōtli (Siālkōt District). It is said, however, that the specimens in the Museum collection were made locally in Rājā Charhat Singh's time.

G. 23. Round shield of rhinoceros hide decorated with crescent and four bosses of silvered iron.

G. 24. Round shield of rhinoceros hide decorated with four bosses of gilt copper.

G. 25. Battle-axe of inlaid (*kufigarī*) steel with lacquered wooden handle. Hammer-head decorated with a sun.

G. 26-27. Two battle-axes (*tabar*).

G. 28. One battle-axe (*thekaru*).

G. 29-30. Two axes (*gandalhā*) formerly employed by the people of Trēhtā in bear hunts and still used by the Gaddis to kill goats.

G. 31-32. Two battle-axes (*gandāsā*) still used at festivals in Pāngl.

G. 33. Clubmace (*gurz*) of iron with steel top.

G. 34. Small mace (*gurju*) probably used as a knob-kerrie.

G. 35. Two-pointed lance (*neza, barchī*) with handle in centre, used by cavalry.

G. 36-38. Three bows (*kamān*).

G. 39. Bow of painted wood (*nimcha*).

G. 40. Arrow (*līr*) used in war.

G. 41. Arrow (*tukkā*) used for practice.

G. 42. Arrow (*lēs*).

G. 43. Quiver (*tarkas*) of *papier maché* containing nine arrows.

G. 44. Priming horn (*rinjak*) with ivory *makara* head.

G. 45. Flint-lock pistol with inlaid but-end and muzzle. It bears the following inscription in Nāgarī characters :

याते गौति यथे सभू लोक ताते जस होइ
इहां खर्ग मो आनंद यो जसवंतो होइ
श्री राजाधिराज चतुर सिंह स्येद ग्रज्ज विशेषरियं च धार

" Whosoever studies good policy, he will attain fame

" Here and in heaven he will have joy and fame."

" This excellent weapon belongs to the illustrious Rājādhīrājā Chārhat Singh " (the last words are unintelligible).

It was made by order of Rājā Chārhat Singh (1808—1844).

G. 46. Flint-lock pistol with superposed double barrel. Lock defective.

G. 47. Flint-lock pistol with double barrel, marked " Manton."

G. 48. Flint-lock pistol with single damascened barrel and hinged ramrod. Figure of lion and brass decoration.

G. 49. Small flint-lock blunderbus (*sherbachhā* literally " tigercub ") with decorated steel barrel and wide muzzle.

G. 50. Two flint-lock blunderbusses (*karabīn*) with inlaid steel barrels and bell-mouthed muzzles. At the accession of Rājā Shyām Singh (A.D. 1873) these weapons were still used for firing a salute. (On their use cf. Vigne, *Travels*, vol. i, p. 184).

G. 51. Jingal (*baghū*).