

## **4<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division: An Outline History**

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This is merely a sketch; you are welcome to add details as you wish.

### **1914**

The Division is one of Kitchner's reorganized Indian Army divisions. It is called the 4<sup>th</sup> (Quetta) Division, and has the

- 1<sup>st</sup> Quetta (10<sup>th</sup>) Brigade
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Quetta (11<sup>th</sup>) Brigade
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quetta (57<sup>th</sup>) Brigade
- Karachi Brigade

The division stays in India for the duration of the war.

### **1939**

September 3 finds the division in the Deccan District of Southern Command, HQ Bolarum.



Its brigades are:

- 4th Cavalry Brigade (Bolarum)
- 10 Infantry Brigade (Jabbalpur)

The division leaves for North Africa after reorganization.

### **1940**

*GOC Major-General Beresford-Peirse*

Battle of Sidi Barrani, December 11, 1940.

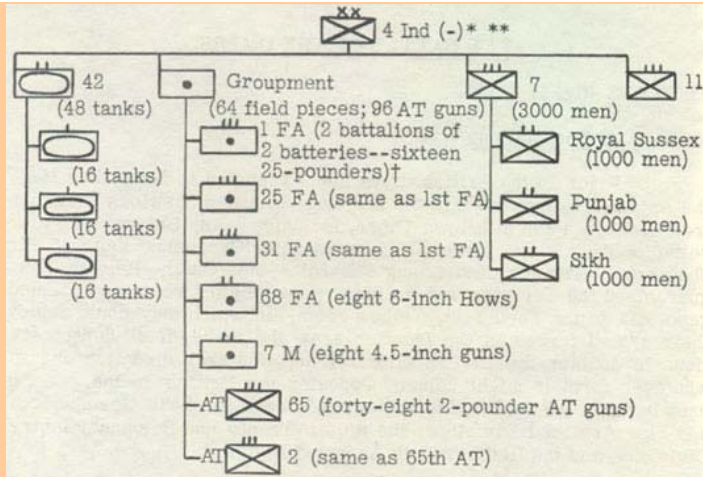
- 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade
- 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade
- 16<sup>th</sup> British Infantry Brigade

In December moves to Sudan as part of the campaign to prevent Italian forces in East Africa from threatening the Suez and Red Sea.

### **1941**

*GOC Major General Frank Messervy*





THE DIVISION ON NOVEMBER 18, 1941. THE ORBAT IS FROM A US ARMY SOURCE, WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR THE REGIMENTAL IDENTIFICATION SYMBOL USED FOR 7<sup>TH</sup> AND 11<sup>TH</sup> BRIGADES. THE DIVISION'S THIRD BRIGADE WAS DETACHED TO SYRIA AT THIS TIME. THE DIVISION WAS ABOUT TO ENGAGE IN THE BATTLE OF THE OMARS IN NORTH AFRICA. MORE DETAILS CAN BE FOUND AT [www.lonesentry.com/battleoftheomars/section1.html](http://www.lonesentry.com/battleoftheomars/section1.html)

## 1942

*GOC Major General Francis Tuker*

Battle of Alam Halfa (30th August-2nd September 1942).

Battle of El Alamein (October 23 start).



4th Division Indian troops in North Africa. "Hell-fire Pass" was the nickname for Halfaya Pass.

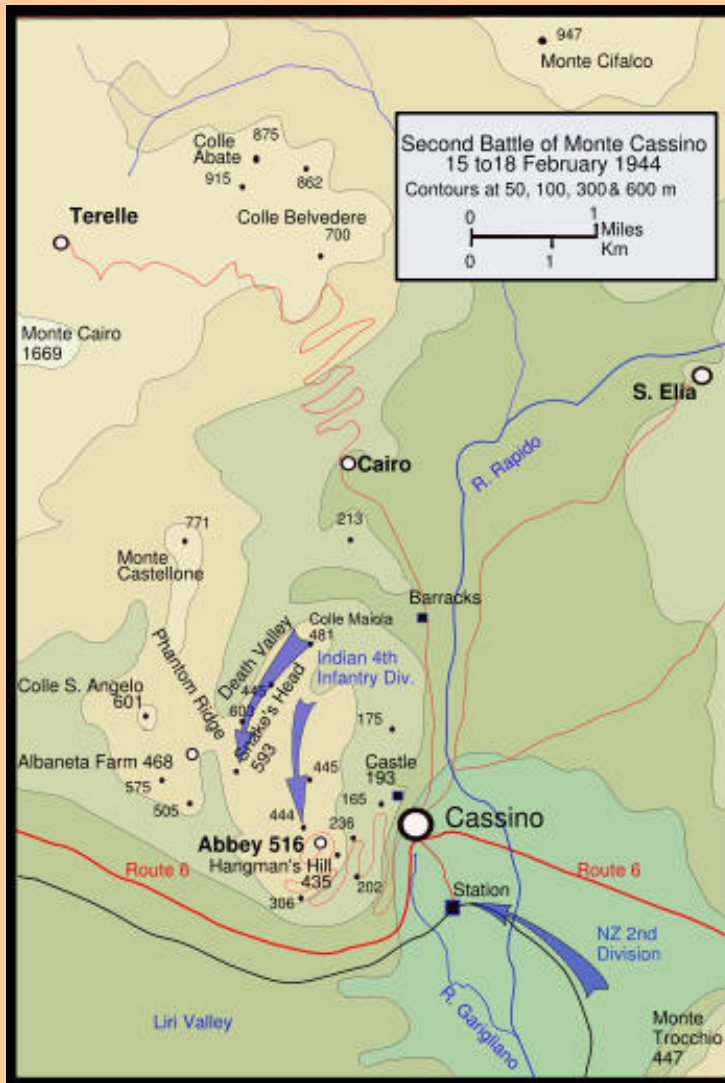
Image from [Wikipedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halfaya_Pass)

## 1943

Italy.

**1944**

Second Cassino [*GOC Brig. Harry Dimoline*]



Plan of attack: 2nd Cassino February 15-18, 1944

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Cassino2nd\\_en.svg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Cassino2nd_en.svg)

Third Cassino [*GOC Maj.-Gen Alexander Galloway*]

Fourth Cassino; advance to the Gothic Line [*Maj.-Gen. Alan Holworthy*]

Division moves to Greece.

**1945**

Greece [*Maj.-Gen. Charles Boucher*]

Returns to India, after fighting in nine campaigns and suffering 25,000 casualties

## 1947

The division's station at independence is unclear. It forms the nucleus of the Punjab Boundary Force (Major-General T.W. Rees) on July 17, 1947, with HQ at Lahore. PBF becomes operational August 1, 1947, but is disbanded September 1 because of its ineffectiveness in controlling the riots breaking out in consequence of Partition. PBF has a maximum strength of 50,000.

The PBF had approximately 15 Indian and 10 Pakistani battalions.

- 5 Infantry Brigade
- 11 Infantry Brigade
- 14 Parachute Brigade (went to Pakistan)
- 43 Lorry Brigade (ex 1 Armed Div)
- 114 Infantry Brigade

Also attached:

- 50 Parachute Brigade (ex 2 Abn Div)
- 77 Parachute Brigade (ex 2 Abn Div)
- 123 Infantry Brigade

Division moves to Jullunder after PBF disbanded.

Note In v.2.0 January, 2006 we incorrectly stated that the division was inactivated and 1947 and reactivated in 1948. The division retained its identity when it became part of the Punjab Boundary Force.

2 Airborne Division was given to Indian at Partition but immediately disbanded. Its three brigades were retained. 14 Air Landing Brigade went to Pakistan after the dissolution of the PBF. When next the number was used in India, it was for the newly raised 14 (I) Armored Brigade.

## 1948

Now at Ambala as reserve for Western Command (Major General Thimmaya). It is companion to 1st Armored Division with which, in the event of war, it will launch an offensive into the heart of West Punjab. 1st Division was then based at Jullunder-Kapurthala.

Its brigades are at:

- Jullunder

- Ambala
- Kasauli-Dagshai-Solan

## 1960

The division moves to NEFA starting in 1959 after the China border is handed over to the Army. This elite strike division has already become the butt of jokes. of the Army because its division commander has been using it to build barracks and such, and garnering much praise from the civilians leaders for "saving" money.

North East Frontier Agency.

- 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade - Tezu/Walong
- 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade - Kameng Frontier Division; Bomdila-Tawang
- 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade – Nagaland

## 1962 [October]

- 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade – Walong, October 31<sup>st</sup>, then to Bomdila
- 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade – Tawang
- 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade – Walong, replaces 5<sup>th</sup> Brigade in November, passes to newly-raising 2<sup>nd</sup> Division], then to 5th Mountain Division which takes over Kameng FD.

In 1962 the GOC is Major General Nirinjan Prashad. In November, Maj.-Gen. A.S. Pathania takes over as division commander.

7<sup>th</sup> Brigade is destroyed at the Namkachu, suffering the heaviest losses of any brigade in the Army's history. By now 5 other brigades have reinforced the division, which disintegrates at the Battles of Sela and Bomdila.

- 48<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade (ex-17<sup>th</sup> Division)
- 62<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade (ex-20<sup>th</sup> Division, Ramgarh, Bihar)
- 65<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade (ex-Southern Command, Secunderabad)
- 67<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade
- 82<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Brigade (ex-Southern Command, Jodhpur)

The division loses its reputation as the Army's best. While it performs well in 1965 and 1971 and removes the tarnish of 1962, it is never to achieve its former reputation from World War II.



Subadar Joginder Singh, PVC; 1 Sikhs. Killed in action October 23, 1962 at Tongpen La, Tawang Sector, NEFA. He joined the army in 1936 at age 15.

#### **1963-64**

Division is rebuilt at Ambala as a mountain formation. Area of responsibility: Himachal Pradesh. 5<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Brigades remain in NEFA to be absorbed by newly raised divisions.

- 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade (Ambala) (original brigade)
- 33<sup>rd</sup> Brigade (Sugar Sector) (new raising)
- 62<sup>nd</sup> Brigade (Kasauli-Dagshai-Solan)(ex-20 Division)

#### **1965**

Battle of Khem Karan, where the division makes amends for 1962 with its staunch defense against Pakistan 1<sup>st</sup> Armored and 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Divisions.

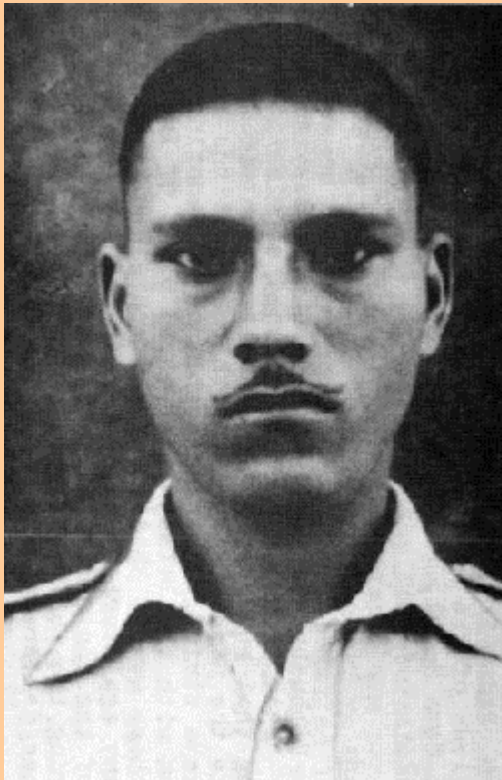
*GOC Major General Gurbaksh Singh*

- 7<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade
- 62<sup>nd</sup> Mountain Brigade



33<sup>rd</sup> Mountain Brigade remains in Sugar Sector to guard against potential Chinese threats. It is eventually replaced by 41<sup>st</sup> (Independent) Mountain Brigade, previously a reserve for XV Corps. 41st Brigade had, during the war, been sent to Chaamb to reinforce 10th Division.

39th Division picks up 33rd Brigade. This division moves to Yol-Dharamsala-Bakloh-Dalhousie-Palampur-Alhilal from Jhansi-Babina-Talbehat.] The brigade's place in Sugar Sector is taken by a new raising, 51st (Independent) Parachute Brigade



COMH Abdul Hamid, PVC; 4 Grenadiers. Killed in action at the Battle of Khem Karan on September 10, 1965. He joined the army at age 21, in 1956.

<http://faculty.winthrop.edu/haynese/india/medals/PVC/PVC09.html>

## 1970

By this time India is confident a whole division is not needed for the Himachal Pradesh sector. The division again becomes an AHQ reserve, but its nominal attachment is HQ I Corps. Oddly, its integral tank regiment is taken away now that it is designated for plains service.

## 1971



Leaves control of I Corps for attachment to II Corps in Eastern Command; serves in the Bangladesh campaign.

*GOC Major-General M.S. Barar*

- 7<sup>th</sup> Mountain Brigade
- 41<sup>st</sup> Mountain Brigade
- 62<sup>nd</sup> Mountain Brigade

It is preparing to move west with HQ II Corps for the continuation of the war as planned, but a general ceasefire comes into effect and the division returns to I Corps

### **1972**

First assigned to Jhansi-Babina, then settles down in Allahabad-Faizabad-Lucknow-Kanpur under I Corps, where it remains to this day. Is converted to an infantry division.

### **1984-1987**

Two deployments to the Punjab: Operation Blue Star and Punjab Counter Insurgency.

### **1987-1989**

IPKF Sri Lanka.

### **2002**

Operation Parakram.

During various times the division comes under XI, III, and XVI Corps and is a major player in the Parakram deception plan.

### **2003**

In 2003 it returns to its home stations.



