

An inexpensive haircut (1944)

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In 1944 in Assam (NE India) I realised one day that my hair was longer than I had thought – and we had no barber in my Troop, so I asked my Orderly Fateh Baz to see if he could find a local barber who would come to my headquarters and cut my hair. A day or two later a little man arrived and cut my hair. He was too reticent to accept money from me so I got Fateh Baz to negotiate a price for me. After much bartering etc. Fateh Baz said to me “He wants four annas, Sahib” (about four pence). “Four annas”, I said, “He has walked several miles to get here. Give him a rupee (equal to 16 annas). Fateh Baz was a good man; he did not argue with me. I watched them bandying words as he showed the barber on his way. Then he came back to me and said “The man is very satisfied with his fee, Sahib – and here are your 12 annas change”.