



# Challenge in Chitral

The remarkable story of the relief of the Chitral garrison, 1895

Michael Dudding

The relentless advance of Russia into Central Asia in the 19th century was considered a threat to the security of British rule in India. The passes over the mountain ranges of the North-west Frontier and Hindu Kush, however, were not under British control. Agents were appointed in key areas to monitor what was going on to the north. One such area was Chitral in what is now the far north of Pakistan.

The death, in August 1892, of a strong ruler of Chitral led to a turbulent period as various relatives sought power. In early 1895 the British Agent in Chitral, and a small escort, found themselves besieged as a result of these politics. A relief column was despatched from Gilgit to the east, and a larger relief expedition was mounted from Nowshera to the south. The rugged terrain, the weather and the logistical issues involved all presented huge problems. Treachery and intrigue also played a part. But seven weeks later the hungry and weary defenders of Chitral Fort were finally relieved.

This book sets out the background to the events in Chitral, the stories of the two relieving forces and the subsequent political ramifications in London and Calcutta.

**Copies of this book can be purchased from the author for £13.50 (including packing and postage). Please complete the order form below by post or e-mail.**



To: Michael Dudding                      OR      mjd451@gmail.com  
153 Rosendale Road  
West Dulwich  
London SE21 8HE

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