



AN ARTIST THROUGH A LENS

*Six years of patient hard work lies behind
Henry Dallal's beautiful tribute in
photographs and words to the
Household Cavalry*

Henry Dallal is a remarkable man – mountaineer, landscape photographer, polo player in the Hindu Kush but, more than anything, an artist.

His art is expressed not with a brush, but through the lens of a camera. Persian by birth, he moved to England permanently from Colorado nearly a decade ago but climbing and photography have taken him to virtually every corner of the globe. He has photographed the Apaches of North America, the Laps in Norway, the people and dramatically diverse landscapes of Alaska, Ethiopia, Thailand, India and Pakistan.

Dallal's art is epitomised most recently in *Pageantry & Performance*, the breathtaking result of six years spent recording, meticulously, life in the Household Cavalry.

Founded by King Charles II in 1660, the Household Cavalry now comprises two regiments – the Life Guards and the Blues and Royals, themselves formed in 1969 from an amalgamation of the Royal Horse Guards (the Blues) and Royal Dragoons, both of whom, incidentally, have a long, and most distinguished polo history.

Providing close protection to the Sovereign through mounted escort, the

Household Cavalry play an essential role in every state occasion – the Opening of Parliament, the Queen's Birthday Parade, State Visits among them – and last year took a special part in the Golden Jubilee Celebrations, not least during the spectacular 'All the Queen's Horses' at the Royal Windsor Horse Show. Most appropriately, Henry Dallal was commissioned to photograph Her Majesty for the cover of the Golden Jubilee commemorative publication, also entitled *All the Queen's Horses*.

To Londoners and visitors alike the Household Cavalry are also a vital ingredient of everyday life in the capital, and it is the routine, as well as the royal, way of life that Henry Dallal has captured so magically.

Routine includes the dawn Watering Order, an exercise dating back to the days of cavalry in the field, when at sunrise horses were ridden from camp to a watering hole for a drink. To Dallal, experiencing it during a visit to London, 'the images and sounds that I saw that morning ignited a spark of fascination, one that still glows inside me even after six years of photography'.

As a comprehensive record of regimental life, *Pageantry & Performance* must be unsurpassed. For example, apart



Remembering the victims of the Hyde Park bombing



The Queen's Life Guard



A state occasion at Windsor Castle



Protection for the Sovereign



A the State Opening of Parliament

from a Trooper who would know that there are ninety-three separate items of brass work to be polished before a soldier goes on duty; or that it takes four tins of polish to get new jack boots to the standard required on parade? Dallal's attention to photographic detail makes this as worthy a subject as the most colourful procession.

From the State Opening of Parliament to Christmas at Hyde Park Barracks, Dallal offers an intimate insight into the life of the Household Cavalry. Nor does he forget that regimental life is not all ceremonial. The Household Cavalry are very much part of a superb fighting force known as the British Army, and images on manoeuvres are rightly included in the book.

As RCM Mark Kitching, Household Cavalry, commented: "Most people don't realise that we have an armoured reconnaissance as well as a ceremonial regiment, and that they're entwined. Everyone in our regiment can perform operational duties one moment, and ceremonial duties the next. We don't just

look good – we're fighters too."

Paganry & Performance pays tribute to those men – and horses – in every sense.

It was his six years association with Hyde Park Barracks, and the forging of many friendships among all ranks, that brought Henry Dallal to play polo on one of the most celebrated, and primitive, polo grounds in the world – in the Shandur Pass, 11,000ft above sea level in the Hindu Kush of what is now Pakistan.

Dallal was invited by Major General Sir Evelyn Webb-Carter, then Major General Commanding the Household Division, to accompany a small expedition on horseback following in the footsteps of Colonel James Kelly, who had crossed the Shandur Pass with the Chitral relief expedition of 1895, a memorable episode in the 'Great Game'.

It is, of course, from Chitral and Gilgit that the best tribal polo players journey every June to take place in a spectacular tournament. Now, the names of Henry Dallal and Evelyn Webb-Carter can be added to the list of those who





Early morning rehearsal for the State Opening of Parliament

have played on the highest polo ground in the world.

Dallal has also followed, again with Sir Evelyn photographically, in the footsteps of General Sir Robert Napier's punitive expedition to Abyssinia, now Ethiopia, in 1867 and has plans to retrace those of T.E. Lawrence in Jordan, suitably another polo-playing nation.

Amazing as it may seem, Dallal has never received a lesson in photography in his life. "When I started climbing, many years ago, I realised that a camera was an essential piece of equipment," he says. "The make is not important – one can have the fanciest camera possible, and still not know how to take good photographs with it."

There is no doubt that photographers of the stamp of Henry Dallal are, like great artists in other fields, born and not made. The fact that no publisher showed interest in *Pageantry & Performance*, and that Dallal created and published it himself, proves not only the short-sightedness of certain publishers but the energy and enthusiasm for the subject of the Household Cavalry that drives Dallal.

It will be an energy apparent to visitors enjoying this year's Windsor Festival – to take place from 18-28 September.



Henry Dallal in action

On Friday, 19 September, Henry Dallal will be projecting the images of *Pageantry & Performance* onto the walls of Lower Ward, Windsor Castle. The kaleidoscopic audiovisual show, images accompanied by sounds and music, will be a highlight of the festival but, as Dallal says modestly, 'I am my own cameraman and project director – the real stars are the Household Cavalry'.

They could not have become so

through the hands of anyone better – and his work will also be on exhibition at the Windsor Guildhall throughout the festival.

*Pageantry & Performance
The Household Cavalry
in a Celebration of Pictures
by Henry Dallal, £45*

ISBN 0 954408306

E-Mail – hdallal@btinternet.com

Tel – +44 (0)20 7225 0707