

## Burke + Norfolk

### Photographs from the War in Afghanistan

by John Burke

and Simon Norfolk

*John Burke (1843?-1900) was the first ever photographer to make pictures in Afghanistan. He accompanied British forces during the invasion that became the Second Anglo-Afghan War from 1878-1880 producing a small number of albums of prints for sale to the general public. These were sold through his studios in Rawalpindi, Peshawar and the summertime mountain retreat of Muree in a region which is now Pakistan but at the time was the borderlands of British Imperial India.*

PL: You photographed extensively in Afghanistan in 2001<sup>i</sup>, why did you decide in 2010 to return there? Why didn't you go sooner?

SN: The prosecution of the war makes me furious and I wanted to go back there, but I couldn't find the right 'vehicle.' I didn't want to just go back and reshoot the places I had seen in 2001; that would have been an empty exercise ('In 2001 its a crater, in 2011 its all tidied up!) and a false and shallow idea of progress too. I didn't want to go back without a format. So when Brian Liddy, a curator at the National Media Museum in Bradford<sup>ii</sup> first showed me one of the Burke albums, I immediately saw a cycle of imperial history right there. Imperialism is what interests and enrages me more than anything else. Today's war should more properly be called the Fourth Anglo-Afghan War. <sup>iii</sup>

Unsurprisingly, the British military out there know almost nothing about the history of Britain's multiple, pointless and cruel wars in Afghanistan, whereas the Afghans know all about it, and they are very proud of that knowledge. They know the names of the generals and the brutalities they enacted; the victories and the defeats. This lack of a historical perspective on the part of the West allows them to blunder back for the fourth time thinking that you can turn Afghans into western liberal democrats and feminists by bombing them.

PL: What is it about Burke as a photographer that you identified with??

SN: Lots of Victorian photography leaves me cold; I'm afraid I struggle with the restrained, solid nature of it all. Burke's work seems more lyrical, more emotional somehow. Burke is a more complete as a photographer too; he's great at landscapes, groups, single figures, military encampments, reportage, and even news events. It's

unusual to see such a range of subjects and to be and good at all of them. It's the completeness of what he does that's so interesting.

PL: A colonial encounter seen in a rounded way. Did you find a way to understand Burke through the photographs themselves?

SN: Burke is an enigma; working with him was like looking for a man amongst shadows. He left no diaries or records, unlike other Imperial photographers from the same generation. There are no photographs of him. In a couple of sketches we see him from behind, but never his face; that has to be more than just reticence, surely? After he died, he left his business to his son, but it quickly folded and all the negative plates were lost. I think that tells us that his business revolved purely around him and his gregarious personality. All we have today are some prints scattered around and these amazing albums, brought home from the colonies in steamer trunks by soldiers and bureaucrats. The more research I did, the more questions opened up. I felt I needed to go to Afghanistan to walk in his shoes as it were; to ask 'what would Burke photograph today?' I'm presenting the work as an artistic partnership, in the fullest sense of the term, except that Burke is dead.

PL: Your work from 2001 could be seen as exploring the aftermath of the conflicts that have been waged over Afghanistan over the years, but this new work seems to have a different character. It's not so much about the destruction of a city as the emergence of a new, fragmented and fractured one, where these forces of the security state and the warlords are building these incredible edifices on the rubble, whilst the inhabitants of the city struggle to survive. How did you reflect that in your approach to photographing the city this time?

SN: Well my 2001 book was informed by romantic paintings of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, with their golden light of progress. Then, despite the destruction, there seemed to be the beginning of some kind of opportunity, a better future perhaps; rational, perfectible. A liminal moment at the close of one thing and the beginning of something new. To use the golden kiss of the dawn light seemed the right approach at the time. Now it seems completely inappropriate: my emotional response now is much more mixed; more uncertain. In 2010/11 I preferred to shoot in pre-dawn or post-sunset light, using that blue palette as a way of venting my disappointment and disillusionment with what has happened.

PL: But this wasn't really a strict re-photographic project like, for example, Mark Klett's<sup>iv</sup> work?

SN: No, I wasn't interested in replicating old cameras and lenses or finding precise fields of view. I was interested to see the kind of ground that Burke covered, how did he get to where he took his pictures. Research to understand the man, more than to directly copy his photographs.

PL: How so?

SN: History books, maps and the 'terrain tilt' feature in Google Earth to work out the mountain ranges in his pictures then track back to where his camera must have been. That kind of thing.

PL: Burke really seems to really understand the topography of a scene in a very photographic way. In his series of the fortress and encampment at Ali Musjid you can

clearly see that he has worked the terrain, climbing to vantage points all around the valley to create a complete picture .

SN: Yes, Burke never shoots from halfway up any hill. My fixer and I would joke that we always had to slog right to the top of the mountain to get to the vantage point that Burke shot from. Burke never compromised, although he was using heavy cameras that would have needed transporting on pack animals. There's a story that Samuel Bourne, the Raj's most famous photographer, travelled with a train of 35 mules!

PL: He was working with glass plates and the wet collodion process, which in the digital age it's easy to forget how difficult fieldwork must have been for him. Each plate was ten inches by twelve and had to be coated individually with the wet chemicals before each exposure, then exposed and processed before it dried and cracked. Yet the quality of the prints is breathtaking, the level of detail in them is extraordinary, and they have this beautiful creamy consistency. How were your experiments with the process?

SN: Although I use a wood and brass camera much like Burke's, shooting on collodion was a non-starter for me because it is a highly explosive chemical. I never would have been allowed on any military bases with it or even been allowed to import it into Afghanistan in the first place. But the collodion process is fascinating. Because it's an orthochromatic not a panchromatic medium<sup>vi</sup> it only makes pictures from the red light in the spectrum. Blue objects, like skies come out white; anything with a lot of red comes out dark. This would just be a curiosity except that with ortho film, Afghans (who have a lot of red in their skin pigment) appear very dark, almost African; whilst most Englishmen come out very, very pale. The racial difference is really exaggerated. If the English have kept in the shade, they photograph with angelic, lit-from-the-inside faces. If they've been out in the sun, they photograph like ruddy-faced farmers. Its a side-effect of the scientific process but one that was exploited by most colonial photographers keen to display the gulf between the lily-skinned sons of the Empire and the wild and blackened tribesmen of the mountains.

I've used digital means to replicate this orthochromatic response; making the portrait prints in the book only using the red parts of the negatives or digital files.

PL: ...and the printing? There is something really exciting and seductive about albumen prints. The original images have this inky quality; deep, purple blacks and creamy yellow highlights. Burke must have had an almost industrial level of manufacture in Muree, each print was so labour intensive: coating and drying papers and exposing the prints under glass in sunlight to create the image. Burke was a real perfectionist; the prints are all really consistent across all the albums, even those that are in albums years apart. Did you learn anything from modern photographers who are working with the albumen process, or did you really have to go back to Burke to understand it?

SN: Most modern practitioners using albumen seem to be bearded and brown-fingered men, antiquing their pictures with sepia tones and visible brush marks so as to show 'the process.' Burke however was after the greatest clarity; any visible technique would have been professionally insulting. And reaching that kind of quality is really hard. In order to experiment with this I built an albumen darkroom in my studio. Albumen is a barrier layer made from egg whites that creates a perfectly smooth printing surface. It accepts the photochemical and barriers it from reacting with the

paper. The process is vaguely comical; with all the whipping of eggs and salt, it's more like making omelettes than photographs. I'm afraid in 4 months I only made one decent print; it's really hard to get good results. It's not just a question of volume but also of consistency, especially if you are making prints for albums and panoramas as Burke did. I just don't have Burke's apothecary's training.

PL: The albums themselves are gorgeous objects, especially the later ones that were printed some 20 years after the Second Afghan War itself, they have these beautiful hand drawn embellishments to the pages. Whole albums on various phases of the war cost 230 rupees, which was about half the monthly salary of a colonial official, so it was a very expensive investment; most of them seem to have ended up either in the private libraries of the leading commanders, like General Roberts, or the Viceroy, Lord Lytton who gave an album to the Queen; or in regimental museums where presumably the unit itself ordered the work to commemorate their actions.

SN: And that precious beauty is enhanced by knowing the albums are so rare. There may be more, but so far, you and I have only found eleven or twelve albums in the world. We have no way of knowing how many were made.<sup>vii</sup>

PL: But we do know the albums themselves were provided by Marion & Co of Soho Square, London. Marion clearly were a major supplier of the Indian photographic market, as their albums were used by Samuel Bourne and others to present their work also. It seems likely that the albums were shipped out en masse to India and then were distributed to the individual photographers. However, Burke's relationship with Marion was more direct, in that they also represented his work for sale in the UK as well.

SN: Yes, and it seems that the Indian photographers were well connected with international technological developments through trade magazines like the British Journal of Photography. So within 6 months of an article about a new technical innovation being written about, Burke is offering it in his studio.

PL: There was a real culture of competition between the photographers out in India, almost like World Press Photo today; they all went off to Kashmir to shoot 'award-winning' pictures. Burke won several medals in the most prestigious competition, that of The Bengal Photographic Society, where he maintained a long rivalry with competitors like Samuel Bourne and Charles Shepherd.

Burke was also working for The Graphic newspaper in London, and it seems that Frederic 26,000rs, who was The Graphic's war artist, copied directly from Burke's plates and sent the drawings back to London. By the standards of the day, they arrive very quickly - maybe six to eight weeks between Burke photographing an event and the etching being published in The Graphic.

SN: A great example is when in May 1879 Burke photographed the meeting of Major Cavagnari<sup>viii</sup> with the newly inaugurated Emir of Afghanistan, Yakub Khan at Gandamak. This meeting established that Cavagnari would be allowed to establish an Embassy with a small staff in Kabul itself - British victory seemed complete. Burke photographed the signing of the Treaty, and made portraits of the Emir. The event was widely reported back in Britain as 'The End of the War in Afghanistan<sup>ix</sup>'. On June 7<sup>th</sup>, The Graphic reproduced seven of Burke's images and on July 12<sup>th</sup> they printed a pair of engravings of Burke photographing the Amir on the front cover of the magazine

itself, a rare distinction for any photographer. Is this the first time a photojournalist appeared on the front cover of a magazine?

PL: These drawings offer a wonderful insight into Burke's working methods; he is shown dressed in a pith helmet, long riding boots and a quasi-military uniform. His assistants, both Indian, are exposing the plate and preparing the next one, whilst he directs operations from beside the camera. The Emir is dressed up in a fabulous uniform like something from Dictators 'R Us, taking a great interest in the photographic process itself which must have seemed magical in those days. The second drawing shows him, with Cavagnari and the Emir observing, washing and fixing the negative in the open air. The drawing also shows the portable darkroom that Burke used: a very large, tripod-mounted box.

SN; And of course when Cavagnari is killed a few months later after the British residency in Kabul is attacked, The Graphic again prints the engraving taken from Burke's picture as the last image of him. This killing becomes the pretext for the British to march on Kabul and to re-establish hegemony. Cruel reprisals follow and the war begins to resemble a brutal quagmire.

PL: What's really fascinating about Victorian newspapers like The Graphic and The Illustrated London News is how modern they look. They have lots of cool white space; they use full-page drawings on the cover; fold-out panoramas: all sorts of visual techniques to engage the viewer. In fact, you could argue that the war artists like Villiers and William Simpson<sup>x</sup> of the Illustrated are the first real 'photojournalists', even though they are not using cameras. Their compositions are very photographic, their cropping and framing, their use of almost telephoto-like foreshortening. They led globe-trotting lives, moving from one conflict to the next like 19<sup>th</sup> century McCullens or Nachtweys. Simpson starts out in the Crimea, where his paintings are much more famous and commercially successful than Roger Fenton's photographs, then goes on to witness the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune, before arriving in Afghanistan. Interestingly, it seems that artists were able to deal with more uncomfortable subject matter than the photographers. Simpson sketches the execution by firing squad of a suspected Muslim extremist, and the mass funeral of officers of the 10<sup>th</sup> Hussars killed in a drowning accident.

But that brings me, of course, to this gaping hole in the middle of it all that Burke does. He doesn't photograph the fighting itself or the results of it.

SN: Yes, there is this lacuna at the heart of the work. What I was fascinated by is not just what Burke does photograph, but more significantly what he does not photograph and why.

PL: Exactly, unlike say Matthew Brady or Felice Beato<sup>xi</sup>, nowhere in Burke's work do we see the aftermath of the fighting. Although he makes that photograph of the Sherpur Cantonment<sup>xii</sup> in Kabul on the eve of the massive Afghan attack on the British forces in late 1879, he doesn't photograph the results of the battle itself. Burke made no mention of the fighting in the caption to these images in his sale catalogue of 1880. When he does photograph the aftermath, it is as neatly arranged rows of captured canons and other military materiel.

SN: Well I think that half of this is explained by the commercial realities of what he is doing. Photography at this time was a very expensive process, and only done by

officers or the odd Maharaja as a hobby. Burke has to carry all the glass plates, chemicals and other paraphernalia with him, so every plate is precious. These trips are a colossal financial risk for him, so he has to make a return on his investment. Burke doesn't expose a plate in these circumstances because he's damned if he's going to waste a plate on something he can't sell.

PL: But then again, whilst they would find pictures of dead Englishmen tasteless, wouldn't an English audience want to buy pictures of dead, conquered Afghans as war trophies?

SN: You could be right but I said it was only half an answer. I think the rest lies in Burke's origins

PL: But he is also friends with the soldiers, he has been living with them and photographing them for many years before they go together to Afghanistan. He asks to be attached to Cavagnari's staff for example, and requests an assignment from the military, although he is turned down<sup>xiii</sup>. Do you think that that might partly explain why he ignores the brutalities of the conflict?

SN: Yes, this is the other half of the shadow. You can't understand Burke's work without grasping the precariousness of his position. As a boy he leaves County Wicklow for India with his father, never to return. This is shortly after The Famine and there's no mention of any other family. Did the rest of the family die? His father, also called John, joins the Royal Artillery in India, and then John (the son) gets a job as a military apothecary and thereby learns some chemistry skills. His father dies within a few years of arriving in India, as so many colonialists did. John is taken under the wing of another Catholic Irishman, William Baker; a photographer whose studio has a considerable reputation. Within a couple of years Burke is married to Baker's sister, a few years later the studio is called 'Baker and Burke,' and a few years after that, Baker retires and the business is Burke's. A short while later he adopts the moniker of 'John Burke, Photo Artiste.' We start to get an idea through all this that John Burke is something of an unstoppable force of nature. During the war John's first wife dies, possibly as a result of illness carried back from Afghanistan. After the Afghan War, with all the fame and fortune that Burke acquired there, he continues his meteoric social climb. He remarries very well, into a bourgeois, Protestant family and gains entry into the very heart of colonial society in Muree. In 1885 his rise is so high that he is received at a private reception for the Viceroy – a privilege almost unequalled. All in all, this was an extraordinary journey for a country boy.

PL: Yes, the boy does well, an Irish immigrant from a poor background, he ends up racing horses and playing cricket with the elite of colonial society.

SN: Well he seems to have been a charming scoundrel. I've come to like him a lot; he's taught me so much, but I have to admit, I think he was a bit of a bastard. He was a friend to all the soldiers and the pen-pushers who made up the colonial elite and the client base for his business. And he's friendly with the ladies too - he has a trail of illegitimate children. But this is to get too far ahead of ourselves. One has to remember that Imperial India had, if anything, even more rigid social separations than England. Everyone had a place defined upon their race and class and although Burke would have been seen by the British as 'white' at least; as an Irishman, as a Catholic and as a tradesman he was right at the very bottom of the Imperial hierarchy.

PL: Do you think that his social climbing has something to do with why he doesn't photograph the consequences of the conflict?

SN: When Burke applies to the military for an official commission to photograph the war, we have to see the refusal by the military staff in this light. But John Burke is not a man to be deterred by a mere Colonel. He has built his business by photographing these soldiers at work and at play; at the Country Club and at medal parades and he knows many of them personally. Despite the Colonel's refusal, he goes off to war anyway, but at massive financial risk. And personal risk too – you have to remember that the First Anglo Afghan War ended with the total destruction of the English army and all of its camp followers, 16,500 in all, butchered in the passes between Kabul and Jalalabad by Afghan fighters in the winter of 1842.

Burke's refusal to make certain pictures which might portray the British in bad light has to be seen in terms of this precariousness. He is reliant upon the military to let him join convoys through the passes and to provide escorts on photographic excursions around Kabul; although subjugated it was, like it was for me, a dangerous place to walk around. Yet he is conscious that the English look down their noses at him.

PL: Elizabeth Edwards talks about the performative, theatrical nature of photography, and how the actions within the frame of the photograph form a kind of symbolic environment where the 'truth' of history can be expressed.<sup>xiv</sup> This idea seems to apply particularly well to Burke's group portraits, they seem very casual, yet very constructed at the same time. There is the wonderful image of the 51<sup>st</sup> Light Infantry officers, all draped on a rocky hillside, where half of them have 'gone native' and are dressed in beautiful Afghan coats, and then the images where the British officers are hidden away in the middle of the Indian units they fought with. There is a sense of this mixing together of the colonial military, where the British and their enemies have this kind of mutual respect for each other. These group portraits seem to be at the heart of Burke's endeavour.

SN: Amazingly, we almost have the makings of an anthropological experiment. Whilst Burke is making his best work, another photographer arrives in Afghanistan, this time in Kandahar. Named Benjamin Simpson, he is a doctor with the British Army and a more accurate mirror of the Empire's values. He photographs many of the same motifs as Burke but the difference is startling<sup>xv</sup>. When he photographs group portraits, the sitters look downcast and oppressed and in one of his group portraits of Englishmen and Afghans, the typical racial hierarchies are ruthlessly enforced; the Afghans are standing, the English are sitting; and the dog is sitting too!

You must remember that Burke has had no formal visual training whatsoever. Apart from what he saw as woodcuts and lithographs in magazines and the occasional pictures seen when attending competition awards, everything he learnt about photography he got from William Baker; who also didn't occupy the core of Imperial society, nor (and I'm just guessing here again) share its core values: racism, superiority, hierarchy. There's an Oscar Hammerstein lyric that goes: *'You've got to be taught/ before it's too late./ Before you are 6 or 7 or 8./ To hate all the people/ Your relatives hate./ You've got to be carefully taught.'* I honestly think Burke may have missed out on this colonialist education growing up at the edge of English society in a remote border-town far from the Imperial heart and his photography is a world better

for it. Why else do his sitters, even the 'Slaves from Kafiristan' <sup>xvi</sup> peer out of his portraits with confidence? Many of his sitters have arrived wearing their finest robes; they haven't been collared in the bazaar and prodded into posing with the help of a constable or two. This seems to shine out of the pictures and it's this generosity that sets apart Burke's work for me.

PL: Yes, he photographs the various social groups of Kabul with great respect, highlighting how there was a real intellectual culture there at the time. What made you want to recreate this approach.

SN: I'd never tried to make group portraits before and there are few modern reference points. Almost no one today shoots group portraits – I wonder why? I decided to follow Burke's lead and make a portrait of the city by making portraits of the citizens of the city. In his time Kabul consisted of just Afghans and a few British soldiers. Today the city has been almost completely internationalised by NGOs; returning émigrés; fast-buck contractors and (the paymasters of them all) the foreign embassies and ISAF. Afghans are set to one side, the 'Internationals' are the decision makers in this town now – the Ministries rubber-stamp decisions made in the US Embassy which is now a small city in its own right. Did you know the Embassy is building its own Sheraton?

PL: Good grief! Antony Fontenot and Ajmal Maiwandi talk about the rise of a 'thug aesthetic,' of 'warlord kitsch' in Kabul, <sup>xvii</sup> vulgar private palaces built by gangsters that look like space-age Greek temples. How else have things changed since you were there in 2001?

SN: Yes, in Latin American they call it 'Narcotecture.'

The situation in Afghanistan is especially sad now. The Americans are desperate to leave and are virtually throwing money out of helicopters as they rush for the exits before the next Presidential election cycle can begin. Something like \$400 billion has been spent <sup>xviii</sup>. The Americans need to cement into power that small (lavishly upholstered) section of society they have anointed with the task of presiding after they depart; and keeping them there long enough to not make the departure look embarrassingly precipitate. To that end two kinds of cities are being built and I've prepared the project as a kind of Tale of Two Cities with the citizens in the centre. But these two kinds of cities are twisted and bastardised. In the traditional city, like Kabul, the economy is an extraordinary shape. No end of money is being thrown at the security state – money can't be spent fast enough on barracks, helicopter training programmes, police stations, secret police battalions and torture centres. The city is littered with blast walls, closed roads and road blocks and one is reminded of how few examples there are in history of these kinds of states being built and then rolling themselves back when the emergency rescinds. Below this in the economy there is a huge cavity; where one would expect to see 'normal' economic activity – factories, jobs, hospitals, bridges etc – this is almost completely absent. Who would invest in these things when nobody knows if the Taliban will be back in government in a few years? But the very bottom of the economy is prospering: land theft, drug money and embezzlement from military and government contracts is leaking billions into the bottom of the economy. What isn't exported to Dubai or Zurich is spent on the 'poppy' palaces you mention. Often on stolen land, surrounded by high walls and often occupied by Internationals paying \$20,000/month rents; these are simply the most ostentatious and tasteless display of Kabul's twisted makeup.

The second kind of new bastardised cities being created are the mega bases being built by the military, like Camp Leatherneck/Camp Bastion and Kandahar Air Base. If 'camp' makes them sound temporary and dinky then you're very wrong; the former is home to 26,000 US marines; the latter (the biggest NATO airbase in the world,) has a busier airport than London Gatwick and both of them are pouring concrete and laying asphalt like they have plans for long after the 2014 'deadline.' A Tale of Two cities then, both of them sick and untenable.

PL: But the parallels with Burke are amazing. The architecture of occupation: these bizarre self-sufficient outposts so artificial and at odds with the indigenous architecture and the landscape: in your pictures and Burke's.

SN: Well, I didn't go out thinking today I need to take a picture high up of a camp on the left with a dark mountain to the right etc. But the colonial tenets of the wars in 1878 and 2011 are the same so there are bound to be similarities.

PL: Form follows function?

SN: The war in 1878 was based on false intelligence about how popular our presence would be; all our money was pitched on corrupt politicians who were less popular than they promised; lies about the efficacy of our military technologies and methods – and all this driven along by colonial politicians in the grip of an ideology that was more important than reality. Does any of this sound familiar?

PL: And history repeats.

SN: I'm very much afraid so.

- i Simon Norfolk '*Afghanistan: chronotopia*,' (Dewi Lewis, Stockport, 2002)
- ii An astonishingly underused resource. See <http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/Collection/Photography.aspx>
- iii [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First\\_Anglo-Afghan\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Anglo-Afghan_War)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second\\_Anglo-Afghan\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Anglo-Afghan_War)  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third\\_Anglo-Afghan\\_War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Anglo-Afghan_War)
- iv The Rephotographic Project was led by Mark Klett and involved a team of photographers returning to the exact locations where 19th century practitioners like Timothy O'Sullivan and William Henry Jackson had worked as part of their topographic survey of the American West. Klett and his colleagues sought to exactly recreate the camera positions, lenses, and times of day that the earlier photographers used, in order to create modern day views of the same locations that could be directly compared to the originals. Klett returned again in 1997 to the same locations to update the project. Mark Klett, et al.. '*Third View: Second Sights: A Rephotographic Survey of the American West*,' (Santa Fe, Museum of New Mexico Press, 1990) and [http://www.onlinenevada.org/rephotographic\\_survey\\_projects](http://www.onlinenevada.org/rephotographic_survey_projects)
- v. A small but key engagement in the early part of the Second Anglo Afghan War. See Omar Khan, '*From Kashmir to Kabul*,' (Mapin, Ahmedabad, 2002) pp 100-101.
- vi <http://www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/Collection/~media/Files/NMeM/PDF/Collections/Photography/AlternativePhotographicProcesses.ashx>
- vii Tracing the albums is difficult; private collectors are very discrete and Burke's obscurity means that even public collections have never digitised his work. There are many single prints in existence, often pages taken from albums, and there are complete albums in the following collections: The National Media Museum (Bradford, UK); The Wilson Centre for Photography (London, UK); The British Library (London, UK); The Getty Research Centre (Los Angeles, USA); The National Army Museum (London, UK); The Royal Collection (Windsor Castle, UK). A definitive database of all the Burke pictures from the Afghan War is available through [www.simonnorfolk.com](http://www.simonnorfolk.com)
- viii Major, later Sir Pierre Louis Napoleon Cavagnari KCB, CSI, became the British envoy to Kabul in 1879, the equivalent of an ambassador. Born in France to Irish and Italian parents he nevertheless rose through the British Imperial establishment to become Deputy Commissioner in Peshawar and chief negotiator at the Treaty of Gandamak. Appointed almost because of his arrogance and aggression towards the Afghans, within four months of his appointment he was murdered in an attack on the British Residency on Sept 3<sup>rd</sup> 1879.
- ix *The Graphic*, July 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> 1879
- x William Simpson, '*The Autobiography of William Simpson, (Crimean Simpson)*,' (InfoDial, Prenton, UK) 2007. <http://www.victorianweb.org/painting/simpson/bio.html>
- xi Beato made photographs in the aftermath of the Indian Mutiny in 1858 and the Opium Wars in China in 1860 that included bodies. There is evidence to suggest that Beato stage-managed these situations, possibly even arranging for skeletons to be disinterred and laid out for him to photograph. Note however that Beato did not photograph the dead from either the British or French forces, only those of the Indians and the Chinese. An eyewitness to Beato's activities after the fall of the Taku Forts wrote:  
  
"I walked round the ramparts on the West side. They were thickly strewn with dead - in the North-West angle thirteen were lying in one group around a gun. Signor Beato was there in great excitement, characterising the group as 'beautiful' and begging that it might not be interfered with until perpetuated by his photographic apparatus, which was done a few minutes afterwards." Dr. D.F. Rennie: '*British Arms in North China and Japan*' (Shanghai, 1863 p.112)
- xii This volume, p108
- xiii Khan, *ibid*, p112-115
- xiv Elizabeth Edwards, '*Negotiating Spaces: Some Photographic Incidents In The Western Pacific, 1883-1884*,' in Joan Schwartz and James Ryan. eds '*Picturing Place: Photography and the Geographical Imagination*,' London, (I.B. Tauris, London. 2003)
- xv It's difficult to give a concise way of finding this material on the British Library website, as the following instructions will illustrate! Start with the BL website:

<http://www.bl.uk>

From main page, unclick all the checkboxes except 'online gallery'.

Enter 'Benjamin Simpson Afghanistan' in search box and run search. This will bring up individual links to images. Or you can try

<http://tinyurl.com/675jxk3>

xvi Khan, *ibid*, p126

xvii Anthony Fontenot and Ajmal Maiwandi, '*Capital of Chaos; The New Kabul of Warlords and Infidels*,' in '*Evil Paradises: Dreamworlds of Neoliberalism*' ed. Mike Davies and Daniel Bertrand Monk (New Press, New York 2007)

xviii This is as of May 2011.

<http://costofwar.com/en/>