

GEN CARIAPPA BECOMES EASTERN ARMY COMMANDER

NEW DELHI, Nov. 21 :- Lieut.-General Sir Francis Taker, KCIE, CB, DSO, OBE, G.O.C-in-C, Eastern Command, has left the Indian Army after a distinguished career and his place has been taken by the seniormost Indian officer of the Indian Army, Major-General K.M. Cariappa, OBE, who has been promoted to the rank of Lieut-General. Lt.-Gen. Cariappa who was until recently Chief of General Staff, Indian Army, is the first Indian officer to become an Army Commander (as General-Officers-Commanding-in-Chief are informally called).

Commissioned 27 years ago, General Cariappa served in the Rajput Regiment. He has had varied experience of staff work and command. He took part in North-West Frontier operations before World War II and also served in Burma.

In 1945 he was appointed a Member of the Indian Army Reorganisation Committee. On the conclusion of this Committee's work he took over command of the Bannu Frontier Brigade Group, an appointment he held until the end of the year when he proceeded to England as one of the first two Indian students at the Imperial Defence College. He was called back from the U.K. to sit as a member on the Army Sub Committee of the Armed Forces Reconstitution Committee.

Lieut.-General Cariappa belongs to Coorg in Southern India and is 47 years of age.

Lieut.-General Sir Francis Taker is best known as the Commander of the famous 4th Indian ("Red Eagles") Division in the North African campaign. Under his brilliant leadership the Division fought in the battle of El Alamein and took a leading part in the subsequent assaults on German positions at Wadi Akarit, Garci (south of Enfidaville) and Medjez el Bab. Confronted with strong enemy position on serried ridges along the coastal approaches to Tunis, General Taker suggested the attack on the enemy's weaker flank at Medjez el Bab. General Taker's plan was accepted and the 4th Indian

Division to launch the attack which ended in the liberation of Paris.

Later General Tucker took the 4th Indian Division to Italy but just before the battle for Cassino, in which the Division fought heroically, he fell ill.

For a short while in 1945 he was G.O.C., Ceylon Army Command, and later commanded 4th Corps in Burma and was responsible for the annihilation of the remnants of the Japanese Armies caught in the Pegu Yomas.

In January 1946 General Tucker was appointed G.O.C-in-C, Eastern Command.

General Tucker's early service was with the 2nd Gurkha Rifles. He comes from near Falmouth, Cornwall. Soldiering is not his sole interest - he paints, sketches, writes poetry, is interested in history, science and philosophy and is a keen student and prolific writer on military affairs, a subject in which he has shown himself an advanced thinker.

Throughout the Indian War he is affectionately known as "Gertie", a nickname given by his wife, Mrs. Tucker.

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