

The Bala Hissar of Kabul **Revealing a fortress-palace in Afghanistan**

Brigadier Bill Woodburn, a former Royal Engineer, has for many years been studying historic fortified architecture in Europe and Asia. In this paper he examines the premier fortress-palace of Afghanistan, the Bala Hissar of Kabul, with which Royal Engineers were involved in the two Anglo-Afghan wars of the nineteenth century. Drawing on European archives, particularly the resources that this Institution holds in its Museum and Library, a clear description emerges of what that fortress-palace was like before much of its structure was lost. The paper is enhanced with reconstruction drawings by Ian Templeton, an architect who also served in the Royal Engineers during his National Service.

Currently the Royal Engineers are again involved in Afghanistan; this time assisting its government and people. Although that country is rightly looking to the future, it is also trying to preserve aspects of its historic environment. To that end, this paper makes a very significant contribution towards a clearer understanding of a site of central importance in Afghan history; the Bala Hissar of Kabul.

This is a magnificent, meticulously researched, and well-presented Professional Paper which I am sure will enthral the reader. It is available from the Institution at £6.00 which includes p&p. Copies are now available. Please contact Emma Murphy, Institution Office on 01634 822035 or email a.inst@InstRE.org

David Hamilton MBE
Secretary

