

LLOYD, Sir WILLIAM (1782-1857), soldier and one of the first Europeans to reach the peak of any Himalayan snow-capped mountain;

Name: William Lloyd
Date of birth: 1782
Date of death: 1857
Child: George Lloyd
Parent: Mary Lloyd
Parent: Richard Lloyd
Gender: Male
Occupation: soldier and one of the first Europeans to reach the peak of any Himalayan snow-capped mountain
Area of activity: Military; Sports and Leisure Pursuits
Author: Ioan Bowen Rees

Born 29 December 1782, eldest son of Richard Lloyd, a banker of Wrexham, Denbighshire, and his wife Mary, and great-grandson of **Thomas Lloyd** the lexicologist. He was educated in Ruthin School and then, between 1798 and 1825, he served in the army of the East India Company, attaining the rank of major in the Bengal Infantry. He was captain of the Residency Guard at Nagpur between 1806 and 1820. He gained eminence not only in battle (in 1817 he was wounded four times in the Mahratta War) but also as a cartographer. In 1822 he went on a long journey through the foothills of the Himalayas as far as Boorendo Pass (or Buan Ghati) on the western boundary of Tibet, partly in the company of the most famous pioneer in this area, Alexander Gerard (1792 - 1839) of Aberdeen and his brothers Patrick and James. After camping in the snow at the foot of the pass and spending an uncomfortable night on the pass itself, Lloyd was the only one to proceed to the western peak of Boorendo (16,880 ft.) on 13 June, and see 'an assemblage ... of all the mountains in the world'. It is doubtful whether any others but the Gerard brothers had been on a mountain as high as this before. More importantly, this was the first time for almost anyone to climb a snow peak in the Himalayas merely for the sake of doing so rather than as part of the task of surveying. Even more importantly, Lloyd forestalled the Alpine climbers of the middle of the century by leaving a live, romantic record of his experiences. 'I had longed ardently to see them, to be upon them, to know them', he said of the Himalayas, 'The very impulse brought back to me my schooldays among the purple hills of the Vale of Clwyd.' In 1840, he published two volumes in London edited by his son George which include 'The narrative of a journey from Cawnpoor to the Boorendo Pass', based on his journal, as well as shorter items by Alexander and James Gerard. A one-volume second ed. was published in 1846. After retiring, Lloyd returned to Wrexham to live on Bryn Estyn estate, to captain the Denbighshire Hussars Yeomanry and play a prominent part on behalf of the Whigs in the political and social life of the district. He received a knighthood in 1838 and was appointed hon. Lieutenant Colonel in 1854. He died 16 May 1857 and was buried in the old Llandudno churchyard - he had a residence in the town.

It is believed that GEORGE LLOYD (1815 - 1843), born 17 October 1815, was his illegitimate son of an Indian mother. George, at the age of seven, was with his father during the first weeks of the 1822 campaign but was left behind in Kotgarh. He also roamed in the Alps with his father. In addition to editing his father's work, he edited *An account of Koonawur in the Himalaya* (1841), relating all of Alexander Gerard's travels. He is said to have published a book of poems. He died 10 October 1843, near Thebes in Egypt, after an 'accident with a gun'.

Author

Dr Ioan Bowen Rees, (1929 - 1999)

Sources

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