



A JEWEL IN THE CROWN

In Praise of

His Royal Highness The Prince Of Wales

By

Colonel Harinder Singh Attari

Direct descendant of The Legendary
General Sardar Sham Singh Attari

It was on Thursday, 24th April, 2008 at a Reception to celebrate the festival of Vaisakhi and to honour members of the Sikh Brigades held at St James's Palace at London, that I first met His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. It was a

magnificent sight to watch as the door to the throne room opened to the tune of two Sikh youth playing the Bhangra beat; that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales was ushered, in a most dignified manner. What I saw was a man full of grace, good manners, ingrained



with courtesy and dignity, that which begets liking and an inclination to love one another at the first sight. I now realize, that greater the man, the greater is the flow of courtesy. There was an aura of 'Character' all around him, when he talked, when he walked and even when he stood still. Character cannot be developed in ease and quite. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved. Men are indeed what their mothers made them. How true is the Spanish proverb, 'Every Cask Smells of the wine it contains.' To sum up my first impression about the Prince, I will give a twist to, 'Veni, Vidi, Vici, and say, 'He came, He saw, and He conquered.'

When I shook hand with the Royal Highness The Prince of Wales, I instantly got strong vibrations of love and affection and was reminded of what

Emerson, the American Poet and essayist had said, "I hate the giving of the hand unless the whole man accompanies it". After exchange of greetings, I did make a mention about 'Kohinoor' after all, this jewel had gone from the family of



Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the Emperor of Punjab, the family we are closely related, to which the Prince said 'but everybody wants it back' but I said, we are proud of the fact that you have preserved it. Had this not happened, it would have by now exchanged many more hands.



**THE MAGNIFICENT
WARRIOR**



**GENERAL SHAM SINGH ATTARIWALA
FELL MARTYR DURING THE BATTLE OF SABRAON
PUNJAB – INDIA
10TH FEB – 1846**

The British recognized the Bravery displayed by the General and dispatched his body in a most dignified manner on elephant back to his native place Attari, Dist. Amritsar, Punjab, India keeping in with the true traditions of the British Army.

Presented to

Their Royal Highnesses

The Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall at the time of Vaisakhi Reception held at St. James Palace at London on Thursday, 24 April 2008, by Colonel & Mrs. Harinder Singh Attari.

And then, as I presented a framed picture of the Magnificent Warrior, General Sham Singh Attariwala, and stood face to face, a look at the pupil of his eye revealed

his character, for as they say, 'the eyes indicate the antiquity of the soul', and I am a firm believer of the saying, 'When the character's right, looks are a great delight.' It was indeed a delightful experience of my life.



Then I made Royal Highness The Prince of Wales to read the lines inscribed below the picture of my forefather General Sham Singh Attariwala, who fell martyr during the Battle of Sabraon, fighting against the British on 10th Feb. 1846. It is stated that 'The British recognized the bravery displayed by the General and dispatched his body in a most dignified manner on elephant back to his native place Attari, Distt, Amritsar, Punjab, India keeping in with the true traditions of the British Army.' This was so mentioned in the handwritten dispatches signed by Van Gough. How true it is what an English writer, compiler Thomas Fuller has written, 'Praise from an enemy imply real merit.'

To this I have received a reply and a letter of thanks from the Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, where in it is stated, "Their Royal Highnesses were deeply touched that you thought of them in this

way". That shows true character of the Royal family and the British nation.

To conclude the event, there was a presentation of the famous Punjabi folk dance 'Bhangra'. It was a most striking, spectacular presentation, full of splendor, vigor and glory and I must pay my full tributes to the organizers the way the whole event was conducted with utmost care, reflecting the best of everything. During the Bhangra Dance presentation His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales did mention about his interest in having an ADC from amongst the people of Punjab, to which I said that we will get not one but five, as the Late Maharaja Bhupindar Singh of Patiala, grand father of Capt. Amarinder Singh, former Chief Minister of Punjab, always had five ADC's. One of them was my father Late Major Mohinder Singh, popularly known as Raja Sahib of Attari. I also mentioned that when Maharaja Bhupindar Singh visited London, Her majesty Queen Victoria gave the title of 'Farzende-Khas, Daulte-Englishtan' meaning 'Son of



the British Empire' to the Maharaja.

His Royal Highness's The Prince of Wales love for tradition is admirable and I have strong belief that this is one factor which really strengthens the nation and as it is said 'the subjects love is the king's best guard.' So come what may, the words spoken by King Farouk of Egypt in 1950, 'In a few years there will be only five Kings in the world - The King of England and Four Kings in a pack of cards', have a deep underlying meaning.

If you go by the words spoken by the British Diplomat David Ormsby in 1962, it may well be that the Britain will be honoured by the historians more for the way she disposed of an Empire than for the way in which she acquired it. Lastly to conclude, I reckon His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to be truly 'A JEWEL IN THE CROWN' and not the Kohinoor.

