

Access to the Old City of Lahore is by a number of 'Darwaazas' or gates in the *faseel* or the protective wall that surrounds the originally inhabited area. The gates were built by different rulers in the ramparts at different times, but most of the work was done during the days of Akbar, when

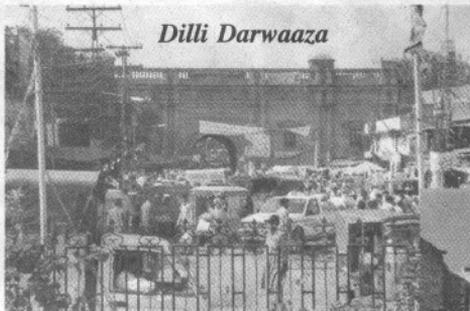
he made Lahore the capital of his Empire in the South Asian Sub-continent. That was between 1585 and 1599 or 1600. The first thing that Akbar did was to rebuild the Citadel in burnt brick and mortar, before that the Fort was made of sun-dried mud bricks. The ramparts and gateways, too, were made of burnt bricks and mortar at the same time. At the moment, there are thirteen entrances identified as thirteen gates, but there were a couple of them more whose sites are not even marked, today.

When Lahore was occupied by Ranjeet Singh in 1799, one of the first jobs that he attended to was the safety of the City. Lahore had suffered during the Triumvirate and the assaults of Ahmad Shah Abdali. Ranjeet Singh had the ramparts repaired and the security of the entrances improved. The moat around the city, too, was attended to. All the entrances had double gates. The gate in the wall of the city was protected by a walled trap outside which had a gate opening into the country. This gate was never in front of the gate in the wall but on a side and at right angles so that a rider could not gallop into the city at full speed if both the gates were open. The gates were properly policed and guarded and were locked between sunset and sunrise. Travellers arriving at night were obliged to spend the night in the various *takiyas* outside the walls.

Between some of the gates, the ramparts had raised platforms. Known as half-moon batteries, these platforms were part of the fortifications and defensive arrangements, fitted with guns to drive any attacking force away

Darwaazas

SAJID ABBAS goes round the Walled City of Lahore to look at the razed gates

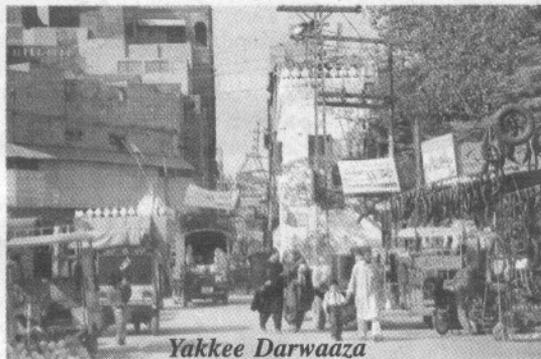


Dilli Darwaaza

in footwear is carried out in the bazaars of Mastee Darwaaza and gold and golden ornaments are traded in Suha Bazaar close to Rangmahal and approachable easily through Dilli, Shah Aalamee or any of the other Darwaazas.

Lahoree Darwaaza

The Lohaaree Darwaaza is reputed to be the oldest gate of Lahore. It is definitely a thousand years or so old when it was rebuilt by Ayyaz after it had been destroyed when Lahore was finally captured and occupied by Mahmood of Ghazni. It was the



Yakkee Darwaaza

first one to be built when Lahore was rehabilitated. It is said that it was called the Lahoree Darwaaza and the bazaar inside it, the Lahoree Mande, over a certain period the name changed. The picture was taken from a high building across the Circular Road.

Dilli Darwaaza

The largest gate of Lahore is the Dilli Darwaaza. Obviously named after Delhi in which direction it faces. Originally built by Akbar it was rebuilt with a mixture of local and European lines between 1861

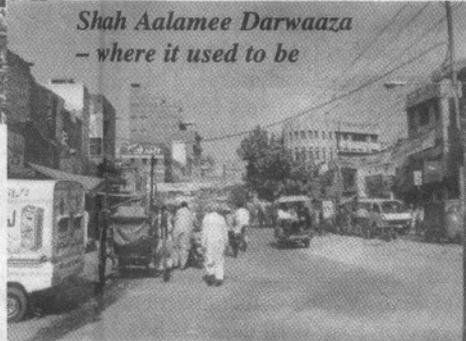
school for girls.

Yakkee Darwaaza

There are two more gates in the eastern wall of the city, one to the north of the Dilli Darwaaza and the other to its south, the Yakkee

Shah Aalamee Darwaaza

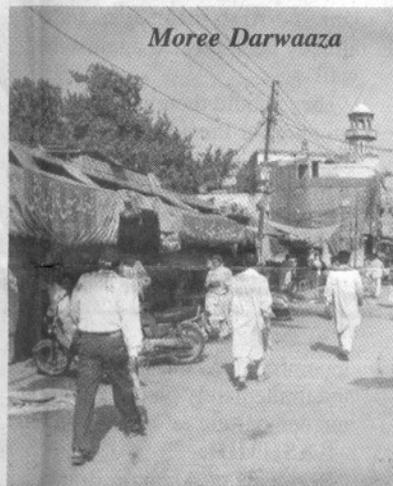
— where it used to be



Darwaaza and the Akbaree Darwaaza respectively. The Yakkee was originally called the Zaki Darwaaza, after Peer Zaki, a saintly person who fell while defending the gate during an attack by the Mongols. As the legend goes, the body of the pious man kept on fighting for some moments even after his head was severed. His body and head are, therefore, buried in two different places close to each other, one where the gate was and the other a few paces away.

Akbaree Darwaaza

The gate south of the Dilli Darwaaza is the Akbaree Darwaaza, built by Akbar along with the Mande inside, which is the centre of the trade in Victuals.



Moree Darwaaza

sunrise. Travellers arriving at night were obliged to spend the night in the various *takiyas* outside the walls.

Between some of the gates, the ramparts had raised platforms. Known as half-moon batteries, these platforms were part of the fortifications and defensive arrangements, fitted with guns to drive any attacking force away before it could approach near enough to scale the walls. All this arrangement was dismantled by the English when they occupied Lahore in 1849. One of the first jobs that the Lahore Municipal Committee did was to demolish the old gates and build them anew but of a different design and architecture. Besides, that was part of the scheme to de-fortify Lahore, for, the outer walls of all the gates and the half-moon batteries, too, were demolished. Gradually, the ramparts, too, were allowed to vanish. All the old Darwaazas in the City Walls were demolished, some were rebuilt which we see today, that is, the Dilli, Lohaaree, Bhaatee, Kashmiri and Sheranwala, others were never. Nevertheless, there is one gate in the Wall where the original architecture is retained, it is the original Roshanaee, without of course the protective extension.

The gates have been named after either the Rulers or persons or places they face towards or the people who used to live there. Life behind the gates has its own charm. All the gates have precincts attached to them

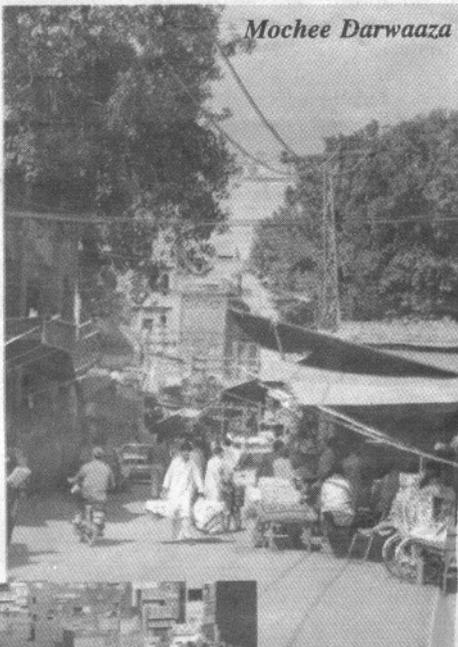
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Dilli Darwaaza

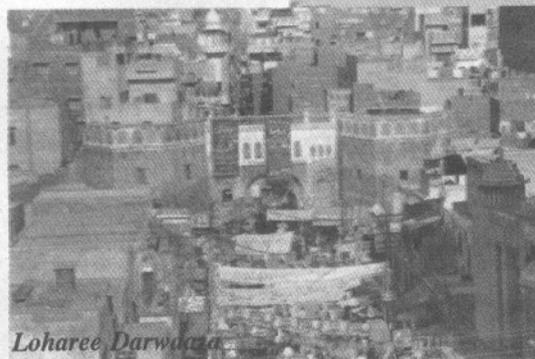
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Akbari Darwaaza



Mochee Darwaaza



Loharee Darwaaza

where a large variety of business and other human activity goes on and the life in the city thrives on that. For example, trade in corn, grain and other victuals goes on in the Akbari Mandee in the Akbaree Darwaaza precinct, while business

There are rooms on the left and right. The place has served as the meeting place of the first Municipal Committee, the Court of the Honorary Magistrate, a Police Station and a lockup. It now houses a reading room and a

gate was rebuilt on completely different lines in the late nineteenth century and the precinct renamed the Aitchison Gunj after Charles Aitchison the then Lt. Governor of Punjab. It stood for almost a century, when it was pulled down in 1911 to widen the access to the city about a quarter of a century ago.

Mochee Darwaaza

The next gate to the Akbaree Darwaaza is the Mochee Darwaaza, on the northern side of the City. The gate is said to have been named after

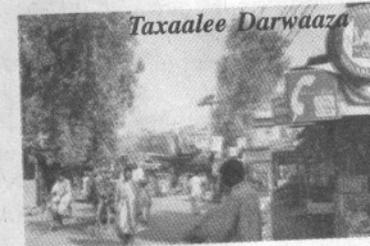


Bhaatee Darwaaza

rotee Ram the gate keeper in the days of Akbar. Over the course of time the name distorted to Mochee. The precinct behind Mochee Darwaaza happens to be, perhaps, the most colourful of the localities of the City. Rudyard Kipling is said to frequent this place often, for, he was said to be a regular visitor to the Qizilbash residence where the Nawab lived till the early twentieth century before moving to the Empress Road.

Shah Aalamee Darwaaza

The next gate in the southern wall was the Shah Aalamee Darwaaza, named after Shah Aalam, the son and successor of Aurangzeb. The precinct behind this darwaaza was perhaps the richest in the days of the Moghuls, viceroys and prime ministers lived



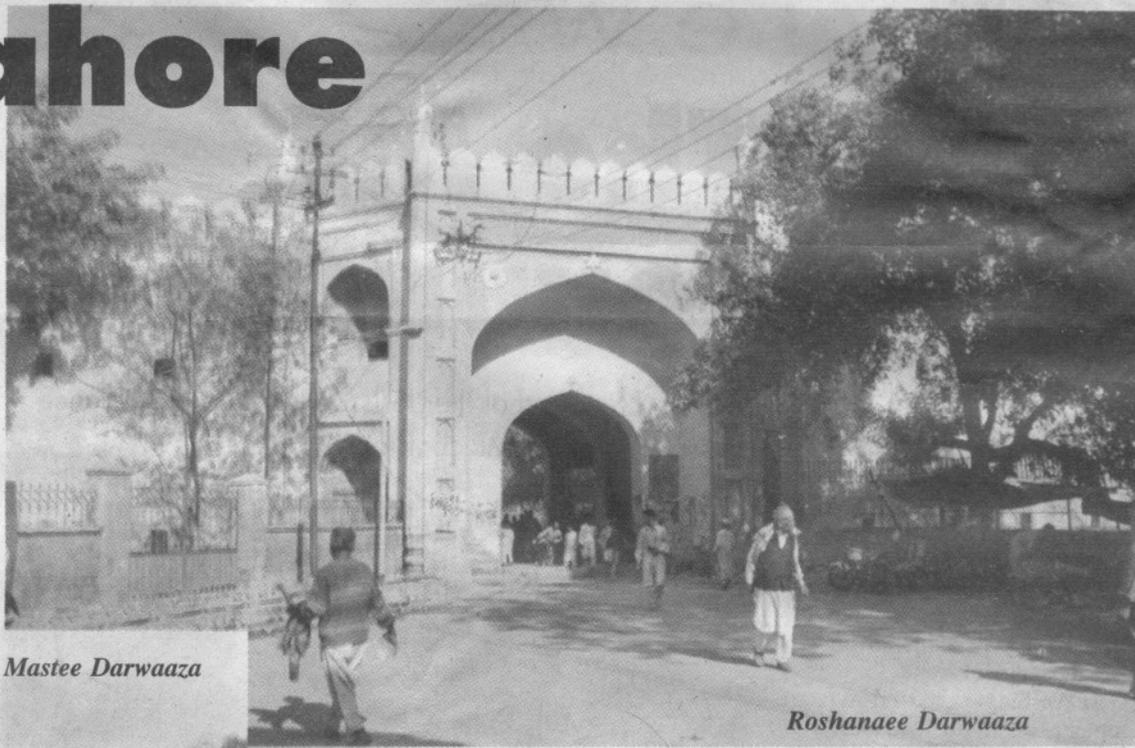
Taxaalee Darwaaza

as of Lahore

to look at the surviving

24.11.02 Lahore Nation

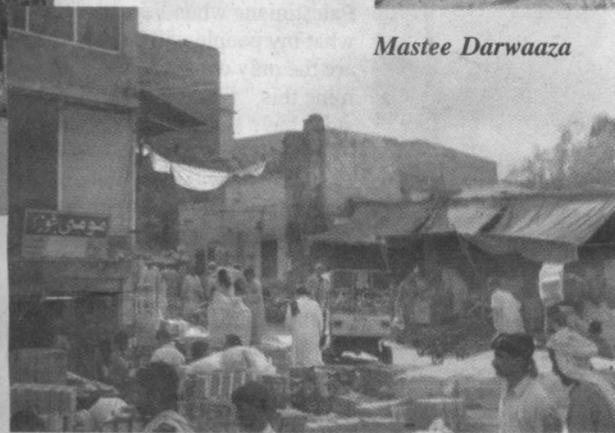
here. Nevertheless, it suffered a great calamity at the time of Independence when it was put to torch by the intriguing and fleeing Hindus to deny property falling in the hands of Muslims and to put the blame on them for the catastrophe. The gate wall pulled down when Shah Aalamee was rehabilitated



Mastee Darwaaza

Roshanaee Darwaaza

Lions representing Sheranwala Gate



and rebuilt after the Great Fire. Today it is one of the busiest centres of trade of the City. The picture was taken from almost where the gate used to be.

Moree Darwaaza

Next to the Shah Aalamee Darwaaza is the Lohaaree and beyond that the Moree Darwaaza, reputed to be the smallest of the gates of old Lahore, besides, a drain too to drain the sewage of the city, out. The later contention is not

Bhatee Darwaaza

The last Darwaaza in the southern wall is the Bhattee Darwaaza, named after the Bhaats, the tribe which lived here and the only other to be rebuilt in the southern wall. In the precinct behind were the old ministerial and diplomatic quarters of the Moghul and Sikh days. Allama Iqbal lived here almost a hundred years ago as did other well known personalities. There are two museums there, the Fakirkhana which houses the collection of the Fakir Family and the other the Relics of the Holy Prophet^(pbuh) and his Blessed Family.

Taxaalee Darwaaza

Beyond Bhaatee Darwaaza one has to turn northwards along the western wall of the City which has only one Darwaaza, the Taxaalee, named after the taksaal or the mint that was located there. The western wall had two half-moon batteries, too, for the defence of the City. The location one sees in the picture is almost the same where the gate used to be.

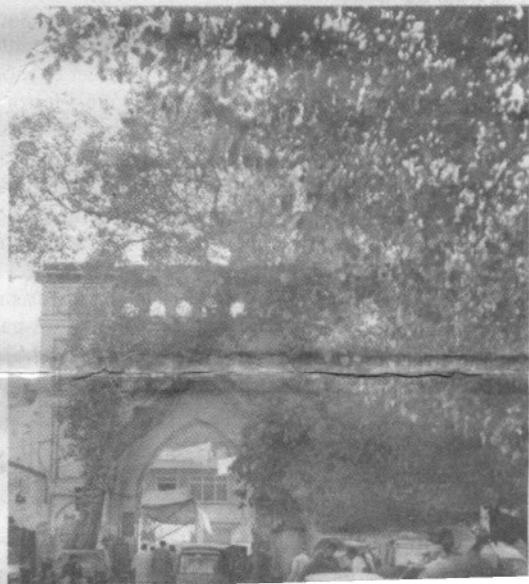
Mastee Darwaaza

One has to go round the

through it led to the ferry on the Budhdha Ravi in the olden days.

Roshanaee Darwaaza

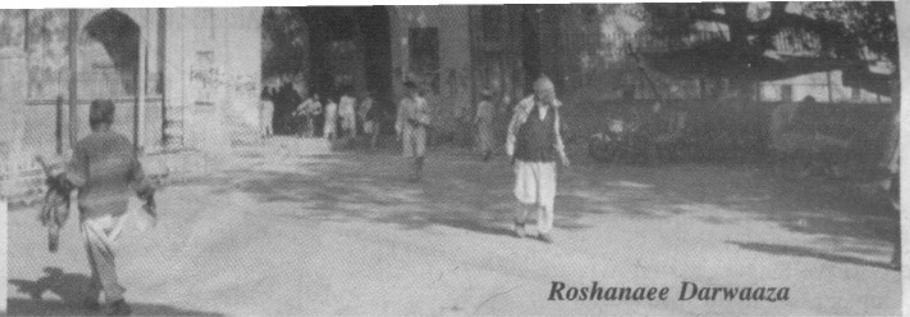
This is a short account of the twelve gates of Lahore. The thirteenth is the Roshanaee Darwaaza between the Badshahi Masjid and the Fort along the Hazooree Bagh. However, it was the one opposite it in the northern wall of the Hazooree Bagh which was reputed to be the actual



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Mastee Darwaaza

One has to go round the Badshahi Mosque next to see the gates in the northern wall. The first gate that one sees is the Mastee Darwaaza. Named as Masjidee Darwaaza, after the Jamey Masjid of Maryam Zamaani. The name was, perhaps, distorted to Maseetee and then Mastee. The place is the home of the largest footwear market of the country, today.

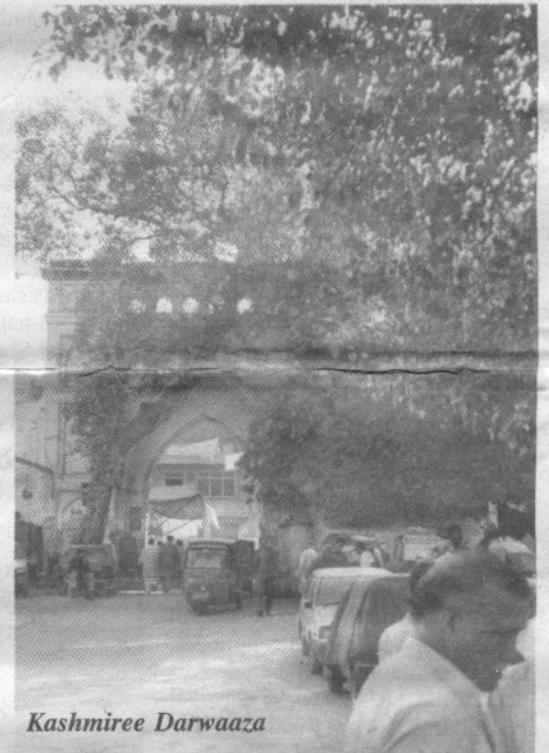
Kashmiree, Sheranwala gate & lions here

Next are the Kashmeeree and Sheranwala Darwaazas. Both are standing after being rebuilt. The Sheranwala was named after two lions kept there by Ranjeet Singh. Before that it was known as Khizree Darwaaza, for, the path

through it led to the ferry on the Budhdha Ravi in the olden days.

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Kashmiree Darwaaza

Sheranwala Darwaaza

