

24/06/21. The link to Captain Suresh Sharma's website is broken, but here is what he had drawn upon from my email to him of September 8, 2008 :-

"Yes, Dr J S Sarkaria joined the army shortly after outbreak of the Second World War. He was a Captain in the I.M.S.(Indian Medical Service) and was in the front-lines during the entire Burma campaign. His field hospital was once virtually bombed out of existence by the Japanese, with very heavy casualties, and he was mentioned in despatches for his bravery under fire. Sometime after the end of the war he joined P.C.M.S. (Punjab Civil Medical Service), and post-1947 his first posting was in Palampur. He served subsequently in a number of stations: Amritsar, Rewari, Simla, Sirsa, Ludhiana, Simla again, Bhatinda, Nangal, etc., etc.

When he sought premature retirement he had been Medical Superintendent of Rajindra Hospital, Patiala for 2-3 years. Previous to that he had served in Chandigarh as Assistant Director of Health Services and Drug Controller at Chandigarh for some years.

He had obtained M.S. (Master in Surgery) early on in his service, when he was posted in remote Rewari, a feat in itself because (at least at that time) this degree was very demanding even for people posted in medical colleges. My father was acclaimed as a brilliant surgeon and had a fantastic amount of energy and drive.

Single-handedly he converted -- through donations that he sought from the public directly -- the ramshackled and run-down civil hospital in the desert town of Sirsa to a really good facility. This was during the Chief Ministership of Kairon. We (I was about 11-12 then) as children still remember how impressed Kairon was when he came there for an opening ceremony. It is a great pity we now have very very few (even then they were rare) government officers with this kind of dedication and drive.

The biographic details of my father that are directly relevant to the Panchkula cactus garden pertain to the years after he took retirement from P.C.M.S. Quite a lot about these is in his book on this garden, that I've already told you about. The book can be accessed via my website: http://www.geocities.com/sarkaria_2000,"

and moved in 2009 to this website, viz., www.kssarkaria.org