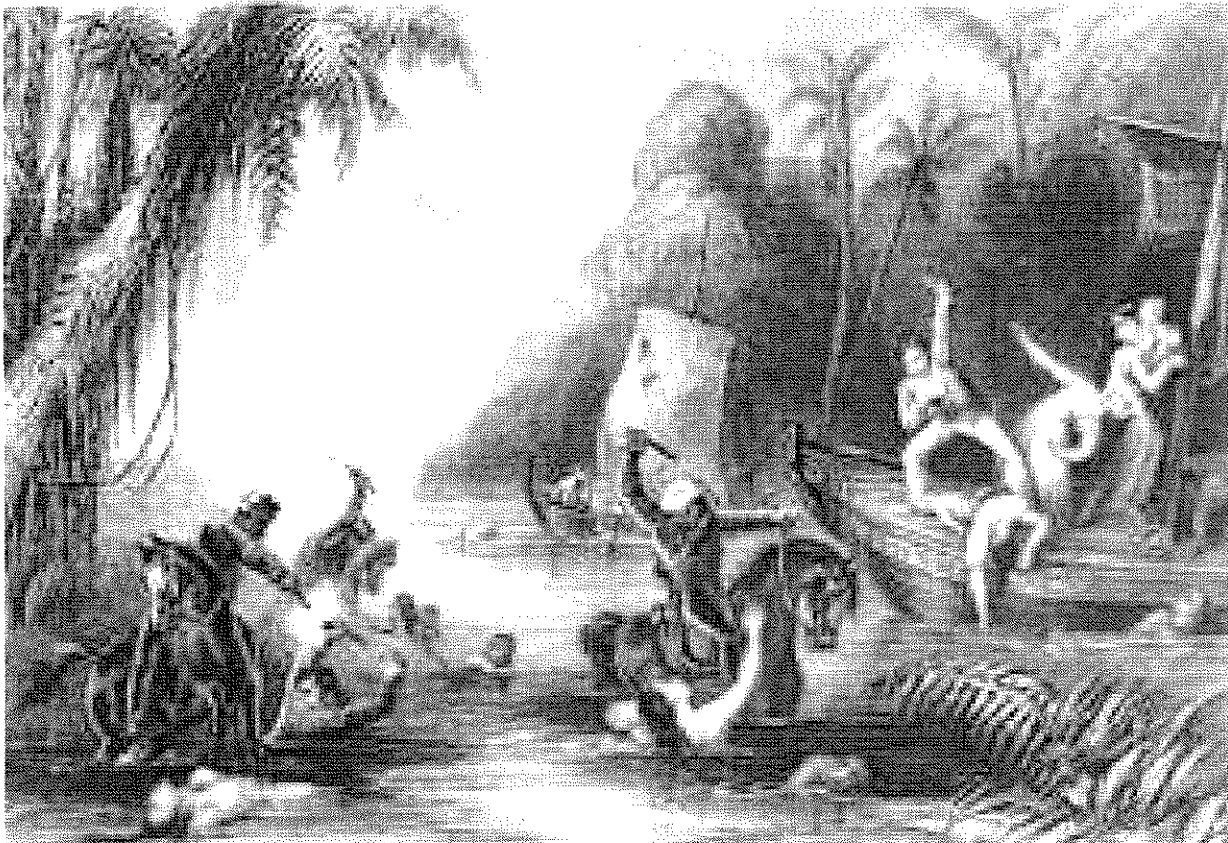


## The Sepoy Mutiny (1857-1858)

For 150 years the British East India Company ruled India through an army of native soldiers, known as Sepoys, commanded by British officers. The Sepoys were treated very well and given more rights than other Indians. They were even given the opportunity to travel throughout the world with the British army and navy. By the 1850's, the Sepoys were so trusted and valued that they were awarded with state-of-the-art firearms called Enfield rifles. Enfield rifles utilized the newest technology in bullet design and materials, giving the rifle increased range and accuracy. Bullet and powder were contained in a paper cartridge, which was heavily greased to keep the powder dry. Loading the rifle required biting off the end of the greased cartridge to expose the gunpowder. Indians from lower castes, angered that their countrymen would fight along side the British, soon began a rumor that the grease contained fat from pigs and cows, meaning that biting the cartridge was conveniently a sacrilege to both Hindus and Muslims. The Sepoys immediately demanded the guns be returned and refused to use them again. When the British offered to look into the situation, as the guns were very costly, the enraged Sepoys mutinied.



Sepoys massacred British soldiers and their families at Cawnpore, hacking them to death even after they had surrendered. Men, women and even children were slaughtered. The British soon rallied and crushed the revolt. By 1858, power over India was passed from the British East India Company to Great Britain directly.

1. Describe the scene in the photo above.
2. Construct a play-by-play account of the Sepoy Mutiny. (you will be responsible to teach this information to your partner)