

15-A.7

1888 ✓

RARE

THE CAREER

OF

MAJOR GEORGE BROADFOOT, C.B.

(GOVERNOR-GENERAL'S AGENT N.W. FRONTIER, 1844-5)

IN

AFGHANISTAN AND THE PUNJAB

COMPILED FROM HIS PAPERS AND THOSE OF

LORDS ELLENBOROUGH AND HARDINGE

By MAJOR W. BROADFOOT, R.E.

With Portrait and Maps

CSL-AS-54
AS003421



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(R)

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1888

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MAJOR GEORGE BROADFOOT, C.B.

A Recollection of 1843.



PREFACE.



THE first two paragraphs of this work briefly explain the reasons which seemed to justify its publication. In the search for original documents which the task I had proposed to myself involved, a great quantity of material was collected, consisting of original despatches, letters, notes, and diaries of persons who had either taken part in the events described, or had held high office at the time.

The natural result of examination and selection from so great a mass of matter was that, as originally compiled, the work was on too large a scale. It had to be done over again so as to reduce its dimensions by a half. Though, in this process, much that was interesting to myself and to some of my friends has disappeared, I do not doubt that the book has gained substantially.

The confidence and kindness with which records of great importance were placed at my disposal deserve grateful acknowledgment; as also do the personal interest and trouble taken by many correspondents in answering references.

The letters, &c., are as far as possible transcribed as they were written, though occasionally the retention of expressions ambiguous or inelegant has resulted. Major Broadfoot often wrote important letters under great pressure, and the supply of some verbal corrections or interpolations for the sake of



lucidity seemed absolutely necessary ; but these are few and for the most part indicated by brackets. Where there are omissions, that which is left out is either irrelevant, or likely to hurt the feelings of some survivor of the events, or of his descendants and friends. But in a work of this kind, where current errors have to be corrected, it is perhaps impossible entirely to avoid the publication of remarks which may be displeasing to some. Serious and sincere endeavour has been made to avoid this where no material injury to truth seemed to be involved ; and if this endeavour has not been always successful, I must ask my reader for kindly construction.

Transliteration of Indian names is a vexed and troublesome business. In quotations the forms used in the originals have as far as possible been preserved. In the rest of the text names are spelt according to the official system as exhibited in Hunter's 'Imperial Gazetteer of India,' only after the first appearance of a name I have dispensed with the repetition of diacritical marks.

As regards the frequent recurrence of the term 'political' in an Anglo-Indian sense, it may be as well to recall a few words of Macaulay : 'The only branch of politics about which they [the English functionaries at Fort William] much busied themselves was negotiation with the native princes. . . . We may remark that the phraseology of the Company's servants still bears the traces of this state of things. To this day they always use the word "political" as synonymous with "diplomatic."'

It will be observed that George Broadfoot's private life is scarcely noticed ; nor would the case have been materially different had the work been issued on the larger scale originally contemplated. In fact I know little of it, nor do the



papers in my possession throw much light on the subject. But it is only fair to say that in the documents quoted not a single sentence has been suppressed with the view of concealing defects in his character or conduct.

The indulgence of the reader for many faults in the composition of this book is solicited. I have tried to be accurate and to avoid offence, but am well aware that success is difficult, and perhaps not possible.

Special acknowledgment is due to the following persons for a great variety of assistance :—

To Col. Henry Yule, C.B., R.E., for help and advice which no words of mine can adequately describe. From its commencement he has taken the kindest interest in this book; he has read the manuscript of the work as originally compiled, and the proofs in its present condensed form. This was done by a man much occupied and in indifferent health; and here I beg to record my sincere gratitude for and recognition of the inestimable advantage of the corrections suggested by his reading and experience.

He has placed publisher and editor under further obligation by presenting the autotype frontispiece as a friendly contribution to the book from one who, after more than forty years, keeps a grateful and admiring remembrance of its subject. The sketch is mainly a recollection,¹ but has received some aid from imperfect materials representing Broadfoot in his younger days.

To Viscount Hardinge, for much information about Major Broadfoot; for many original letters and despatches connected with the Punjab; and for reading part of the manuscript and adding remarks which have a special value from one who was

¹ Viz. of Major Broadfoot, as he rode into Karnál, in January 1843, accompanying Lord Ellenborough from the Camp at Ferozpúr.



private secretary to the Governor-General in 1844, and throughout the first Sikh war.

To Lord Colchester, for permission to see and use a great number of letters and despatches among the late Lord Ellenborough's papers, including some written by Major Broadfoot. The information thus acquired has been of great value.

To Mr. R. N. Cust, for a memorandum on the events of the last year of Major Broadfoot's life, during which he was that officer's personal and confidential assistant. Also for the use of books, and for much general assistance and encouragement very kindly afforded.

To Gen. S. A. Abbott, for a memorandum describing events before and after the outbreak of the first Sikh war, including the battle of Firozshah; and for many other minor but most valuable aids.

To Mrs. Colin Mackenzie, for letters, books, and documents relating to Afghanistan, to her distinguished husband, and to George Broadfoot.

To Mrs. Jackson, for various letters and documents.

To Mr. E. B. Backhouse, son of the late Col. Julius B. Backhouse, C.B., Bengal Artillery, for his father's diary, kept during the first Afghan war. It contains matter 'curious and surprising.'

To Mr. H. W. Lawrence, for letters, papers, and journals of his father, the late Sir Henry Lawrence, for letters to G. Broadfoot, &c.

To Sir Lionel and Lady Smith-Gordon, for original letters by Eldred Pottinger.

To General Sir Fred. P. Haines, K.C.B., G.C.S.I., &c., for information respecting the early part of the first Sikh war.

To the late Sir Robert Montgomery, K.C.B., G.C.S.I.;



Sir Henry Rawlinson, K.C.B.; Sir Owen Burne, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.; the late Mr. C. C. Prinsep; Mr. F. C. Danvers; Mr. C. Grey; Dr. Rost, C.I.E.; Mr. Wade; and others connected with the India Office, for a great variety of assistance most courteously given. And to their names I must add those of F. M. Lord Napier of Magdala; Lady Edwardes; Sir Alexander Cunningham, K.C.I.E., and his nephew, Mr. W. A. Cunningham; Sir J. Campbell Brown, M.D., K.C.B.; Gen. G. B. Tremereere, R.E.; General MacLagan, R.E.; Lieut.-Gen. Sir Andrew Clarke, G.C.M.G., C.B., C.I.E., R.E.; Mr. T. H. Thornton, C.S.I., D.C.L.; Major-Gen. R. Young, R.E.; Colonel Sir James Browne, K.C.S.I., R.E.; Mr. Boyd Kinnear; and last, but not least, Mr. John Murray and his partners; from whom I have received advice and information of much value.

Great numbers of letters and despatches were copied by Mrs. Broadfoot, a work spread over several years, and some by Mrs. Wood, to both of whom acknowledgment for assistance is due. In addition, Mrs. Broadfoot carefully examined both manuscript and proofs.

The names of the books chiefly consulted will be found in the following note.

W. BROADFOOT,
Major, R.E.

LAUDER, N.B.: *Sept. 1, 1888.*





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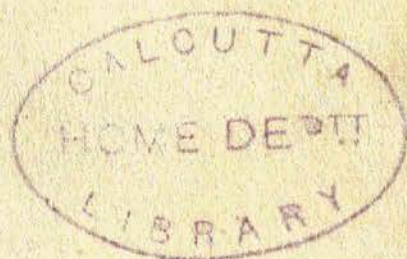
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¹ The spelling of this name is uncertain: Gardener, Gardner, and even the orientalised form Gordana, are varieties in use.



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SERVICES

OF

MAJOR GEORGE BROADFOOT, C.B.

CHAPTER I.

1807-41.

Introductory—Early years of George Broadfoot—Appointed to the Madras Army—Selected for service in Afghanistan—Chief events which preceded invasion—The Indus bridged at Sukkur—Kabul occupied—Subsequent Disturbances—Parwān Pass, death of Lient. J. S. Broadfoot—Broadfoot's Sappers—Convoy of Shah Zaman and the ladies of the Harem to Kabul—Confusion and incapacity prevalent there.

THE letters and journals of the late Major George Broadfoot, C.B., contain much of the secret or unwritten history of some of the most important and interesting events connected with our Indian Empire in its relations with Afghanistan during the first Afghan war, and with the Punjab prior to and at the beginning of the first Sikh war.

Careful study of these records appeared to establish their importance. The power and talent evident in many of the papers; the noble sentiments expressed in some of them, written when calamity was avenging the errors of a vicious system, and despondency had settled deep in the hearts of brave men; and last, but not least, the errors, the existence of which they indicate, in the accepted histories of that time, seemed to warrant their collection and publication.

The subjects referred to are the first Afghan war, 1838-42; the administration of the Tenasserim Provinces, 1843-44; and



the conduct of the policy with the Punjab, 1844–45, when the Sikhs invaded British India and war was declared.

George Broadfoot was the eldest surviving son of the Rev. William Broadfoot. He was born at Kirkwall, in the Orkney Islands, in 1807. In 1817 Mr. Broadfoot left Kirkwall and settled in London. He had no tie to the former place; his family, he used to say, came from the neighbourhood of Bradford, in Yorkshire, and a branch of them lived in Gallo-way and in the south of Lanarkshire.¹ The change to London was welcome to Mr. Broadfoot, and of advantage to his sons in the matter of education. George was sent to various day schools and was taught privately; his brothers were educated at Westminster. As two of them are mentioned in letters hereafter quoted, they may now be briefly introduced. William, born in 1810, went to India at the age of fifteen, and was appointed Ensign in the 1st European Regiment, now the 1st Battalion Royal Munster Fusiliers. James Sutherland, the youngest of the family, was born in 1816. He was appointed in 1835, from Addiscombe, to the Bengal Engineers.

At an early age George seems to have given promise of the ability and resolution for which he was afterwards distinguished. One of his masters, Mr. Hunt, spoke of him in these terms: 'Mr. Broadfoot, you are indeed happy in your son: his talents are of the highest order, and he has a spirit which no difficulty can impede. There is no difficulty to him. Set but a noble end in view, away he goes, straight to the mark, clearing every obstacle, distancing every competitor.' In character he was ardent, fearless, and impetuous; the head of his class, and the leader of his companions in their games out of school.

In 1825 he obtained a cadetship in the E.I. Company's service and sailed for Madras. On arrival he was posted to the 34th M.N.I. It is unnecessary to dwell long on the period during which he served with his regiment; he used the time well, acquired knowledge of the detail of regimental duty, and the reputation of being a good regimental officer and an exceptionally good linguist. Two intimate friends of those early

¹ Sir Hew or Hugo de Bradfute, of Lamington, was the head of this branch; his only daughter, Marion,

married Sir William Wallace, the Scottish hero; their daughter married Capt. Baillie.



days may here be mentioned: Colin Mackenzie,² who had been a fellow-passenger to India; and Dr. Malcolmson, surgeon of the regiment, to whom in after years he wrote many interesting letters from Afghanistan.

After seven years' service Broadfoot returned to England, and was absent from India for the unusually long period of five years. Whilst on leave he continued to study his profession; he travelled in France, Germany, and Italy, made himself acquainted with their history and forms of government, and to some extent acquired their languages. During the last year of his leave he was appointed Orderly Officer at Addiscombe College. There he studied fortification and other branches of military education, then considered unnecessary for an infantry officer. When remonstrated with for overworking, and told that his health would suffer, and that he knew his own work well enough, he replied: 'Well enough to be food for powder, or to lead a company properly into action; but to command an army, to have the lives of other men dependent on you, is another sort of affair and requires a different preparation. In India, when an emergency arises—and sooner or later it will arise—the men fit to meet it will be found out and brought to the front. When work has to be done, the fittest man will get it to do. No man can say what the work may be: to raise, organise, and command an army; to arrange a question of diplomacy; or to direct or assist in the civil administration of a province. Hence the importance of being prepared.'

It is strange to think that within the brief space of six years he was called upon to raise and command a regiment of sappers; to fortify Jalálábád as garrison engineer; to reform the civil administration of the Tenasserim Provinces; and to conduct the diplomatic relations between the Government of India and the Punjab.

On his return to India in February 1838 he was appointed to the Commissariat Department of the Madras Army, under Col. Cullen.³

² A distinguished soldier and one of the prisoners in Afghanistan. His life has lately been written by Mrs. Mackenzie, under the title *Storms and Sunshine of a Soldier's Life*.

³ Major-Gen. William Cullen, Madras Artillery, was an officer of great talent and an ardent reformer. He was educated at Woolwich, appointed in 1803 to the Artillery, and



Broadfoot soon discovered much that required reorganisation and reform. Supported by his chief, but opposed by almost all the rest of the department, he carried his point. His report was considered to have been able and exhaustive, and his services on this occasion were brought prominently to the notice of Lord Auckland, then Governor-General. Col. Cullen submitted the report to Lord Elphinstone, Governor of Madras, who wrote as follows :

August 24, 1840.

I have been much interested by Capt. Broadfoot's memoranda on the Tenasserim Provinces.

He is certainly a very able officer, and a great loss to us. I shall write to him to say that if he does not find Afghanistan quite so agreeable as he expected, that he must let me hear from him, and that if I can further his views I shall have much pleasure in so doing ; but I fear (for us) that they will not let him come back, and perhaps his abilities will be more usefully employed in that quarter than they would in a more peaceful sphere.

I shall certainly request Sir S. Whittingham's⁴ early attention to the subject of our force at Maulmein, and I shall particularly point out to him the suggestions of Capt. Broadfoot. The evils of the present system are so clearly demonstrated by him, and might prove of such incalculable injury to the Service, both in the most extended sense of the word, and in particular to the Madras Army, that I hope we shall be able to induce the Supreme Government to apply a remedy.

From some expressions of Capt. Broadfoot, I am led to believe that his report, and the very interesting appendix, have been already submitted in some shape or other by him to the Supreme Government. Can you inform me if this is the case ? If not, I should be very much inclined to lay them before the Governor-General.

Believe me &c.

ELPHINSTONE.

Before this letter was written the war in Afghanistan had commenced. William and James Broadfoot had already distinguished themselves ; it was natural, therefore, that George

after holding many offices was made Commissary-General in 1834. In 1840 he was Resident at the Court of Travancore. He retired, but did not

return to England, and died in 1862.

⁴ Sir Samford Whittingham, Commander-in-Chief, Madras.



should wish to go there. But the question arose whether he was justified in giving up an appointment in which he had done well, and going amongst comparative strangers to Afghanistan on the pay of his rank. After careful consideration, Lord Elphinstone, Col. Cullen, and Dr. Malcolmson approved of his going; nearly everybody else who was consulted, except himself, was against the step. When he got the option he determined to go, though Lord Auckland very kindly pointed out the difficulties in his way, which were such, he thought, as to hold out the prospect of a hard struggle for several years.

Before describing Broadfoot's somewhat exciting journey to Kábul, it is desirable to recount briefly the main incidents which preceded our invasion of Afghanistan.

In that country, consolidated into an empire in 1747 by Shah Ahmad, Abdáli, Shah Shuja, the legitimate successor to his throne, had been defeated and driven away by Dost Muhammad Khan, Bárakzái. The Shah, after many adventures, was a refugee in British India, and Ranjit Singh, the Maharaja of the Punjab, had seized and held Peshawar. British anxiety for the welfare of Afghanistan was first roused when there seemed to be a possibility of invasion by France and Russia combined. That danger was removed by the victories of the Duke of Wellington, but not before missions to the Punjab and to Afghanistan had been sent.

In 1837 British interest was again excited by the news that the Persians, instigated by Russia, had despatched an army to besiege Herat, and Lord Auckland sent a mission to Dost Muhammad under the conduct of Alexander Burnes.

That officer, already known as a traveller in Central Asia, had many qualifications which justified his selection, but he was so hampered by restrictions as to be able to make no substantial promises of aid to the Amir, whilst he was instructed to demand much from him. The Amir very naturally turned from him to Vicovich, the Russian Agent; Burnes's mission was withdrawn, and the Government of India took immediate steps to dethrone Dost Muhammad and place Shah Shuja on the Kabul throne.

What is known as the Tripartite Treaty was negotiated between the Government of India, Ranjit Singh, and Shah



Shuja, whereby the first and second parties contracted to assist the third to re-establish himself on his throne.

A large force was assembled at Karnál, and on October 1, 1838, Lord Auckland issued his manifesto, in which Durand has said⁵ 'the words "justice" and "necessity" . . . were applied in a manner for which there is fortunately no precedent in the English language,' and of which Sir H. Edwardes remarked,⁶ that 'the views and conduct of Dost Muhammad Khan were misrepresented with a hardihood which a Russian statesman might have envied.' Sir H. Fane, Commander-in-Chief in India, was to have led the British troops; but shortly before their departure news was received that the siege of Herat had been raised, and that the Persian troops with their accompanying Russian officers had retired. Though this movement was determined by British action in the Persian Gulf, yet no notice of the siege, however brief, can be made without acknowledging that the honour of the defence is due to Lieut. Eldred Pottinger, of the Bengal Artillery, who appears to have been in the city in an unofficial capacity disguised as a horse merchant. Consequent on this event the strength of the British army was reduced, and its command devolved on Sir John Keane. Sir W. Macnaghten was appointed Envoy and Minister, to the disappointment of Captains Burnes and Wade. The mischievous device of separating the supreme military from the diplomatic conduct of the campaign having been accepted, it was thought necessary to associate with the General a person of higher relative rank than that of Captain. The arrangement had practically the effect of subordinating a General commanding an army in the field to civil authority which accompanied him wherever he went. No more perfect contrivance to insure disaster could have been imagined.

The Shah with his own force accompanied the British army. Space cannot be afforded to follow minutely the movements of the troops from Ferozpur to Rohri, and thence across the Indus at Sukkur to Kandahar, Ghazni, and Kabul; but certain incidents which have been overlooked in some of the accounts of the march, or about which information from fresh sources has been collected, will be described.

⁵ *First Afghan War*, p. 81.

⁶ *Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 233.



Amongst these, one of the most serious difficulties, successfully surmounted, was to bridge the Indus and to pass the army with its stores and baggage across.

No one who has seen that river can doubt the magnitude of the task, even if every appliance which science could suggest had been at hand. But on this occasion, as on many others, the engineer was confronted with the obstacle, and left to overcome it with such means as nature had provided.

The Engineer officers with the force were Capt. Thomson, Chief Engineer; Capt. Sanders; Lieuts. Anderson, Durand, Sturt, McLeod, Pigou, and James S. Broadfoot. In a letter dated Shikarpur, February 9, 1839, the last-mentioned officer wrote :

The Engineers went on ahead to Bukkur, an island in the Indus twenty miles from here. We were on the bank of a river, 1,100⁷ yards wide, with a torrent like a mill stream; we had eight boats, and there was nothing near us but a small village; here we had to make a bridge over the river. First we seized, by great exertion, about 120 boats, then cut down lots of trees; these we made into strong beams and planks; there was no rope, but we made 500 cables out of a peculiar kind of grass which grows 100 miles from here; the anchors were made of small trees joined and loaded with half a ton of stone. Our nails were all made on the spot. We then anchored the boats in the middle of the stream, in a line across, leaving twelve feet between each; strong beams were laid across the boats, and planks nailed on these for a roadway. This is the largest military bridge which has ever been made; and as we had no towns like English ones to give us workmen and stores for the asking, you may conceive what labour we had in finishing it in eleven days.

Capt. Backhouse, of the Bengal Artillery, an able officer and intelligent observer, remarked: 'The Engineers give themselves, and with great justice, no little credit for their job: since they have here made themselves almost every article in use, with the exception of the boats.' He has further recorded with natural indignation an arrangement, for which a Brigadier-General was responsible, whereby his guns

⁷ At the island of Bukkur there are two channels said to have been 500 and 367 yards wide respectively. (*First Afghan War*, p. 122.)



were on one side of the river and their ammunition on the other!

After a narrow escape from starvation the army reached Kandahar, where the General committed the extraordinary error of leaving behind him four 18-pounder guns, the only ones with his force suitable for breaching purposes. When Ghazni was reached the want of these guns became apparent, and the position of the British force was critical in the extreme. Before it lay the fort of Ghazni, strong in itself and strongly garrisoned. On either flank, at a distance of twelve to fifteen miles, there were two forces of the enemy under Ghilzi chiefs, waiting to take advantage of any check which might occur. And, most serious of all, supplies were nearly exhausted. Here the army was indebted for its safety, and the General for his rewards and peerage, to the resource of the Engineer, Capt. G. Thomson.

He suggested two alternatives—to blow open a gate and immediately assault, an operation the success of which must always be doubtful and attended with heavy loss; or to mask the fort with a small force, and advance with the rest of the army to attack Dost Muhammad in the direction of Kabul. The latter alternative had to be abandoned for want of supplies, and the former was, as is well known, successfully carried out.

The result of the capture was decisive. Dost Muhammad could not persuade his army to face the British, so great was the impression caused by the capture of Ghazni, and the road to Kabul was clear. That city was occupied without further opposition, and on August 7, 1839, Shah Shuja was seated on the throne.

The army of occupation was reduced in numbers, part of it having been sent back to India. What remained, instead of being concentrated in one or two important places, was scattered in small bodies over a vast extent of country. Our administration, though nominally that of Shah Shuja, was unpopular, and disturbances arose in various directions. The rising among the Ghilzis may be here mentioned, as James Broadfoot accompanied the force sent under Capt. Outram to restore order. He surveyed a great deal of the Ghilzi country, and after the expedition was over accompanied, in disguise, a



caravan of Lohani merchants from Ghazni to Dera Ismail Khan by the Gomal route. His reports⁸ on the journeys and tribes received high commendation from Lord Auckland; and up to the present time (1888) they form the principal basis of our information regarding that part of Afghanistan and its inhabitants.

William Broadfoot was on detachment duty at Bámián, Saighán, and Bálgáh, the latter being the farthest point in the direction of the Oxus ever occupied by our troops. He made a road from Bámián across many passes, including the Palu and Dandan Shikan ('tooth-breaking'), which was then intended to be a commercial route from Kabul to Khulum.

He was also at this time (1840) desired to raise a corps of Hazara pioneers, and succeeded in enlisting some men. Those formed the nucleus of the corps which was afterwards commanded by Capt. George Broadfoot, and known as 'Broadfoot's Sappers.'

Dost Muhammad, after wandering as far as Bokhara and suffering many vicissitudes of fortune, having got together some followers, raised his standard at Khulum. He was defeated in an endeavour to penetrate towards Bamian, and made his way into what is known as the Kohistan of Kabul. Sir Robert Sale with a small force was sent to intercept him if possible, and prevent his return beyond the Hindu Kush. Sale sent on the cavalry to prevent Dost Muhammad escaping by the Parwán Pass, and the latter, seeing his retreat threatened, determined, with a small body of sixty or eighty Afghans, to cut his way through. Capt. Fraser, who commanded the two squadrons of the 2nd Bengal Cavalry, ordered them to charge, but the men wavered and fled in spite of the most earnest exhortations of their officers. What happened cannot be known with absolute accuracy. The officers of the cavalry, accompanied by Dr. Lord and James Broadfoot, but deserted by their men, charged the Afghans who were advancing under Dost Muhammad. Of six officers who thus charged, three—Dr. Lord, Lieut. J. S. Broadfoot, and Cornet Crispin—were killed; and two—Captains Fraser and Ponsonby—were desperately wounded.⁹ James Broadfoot was badly mounted; he was

⁸ See Supplementary Papers, R. G. S., vol. i, part iii. 1885.

⁹ Cornet Moffat appears to have escaped unhurt.



seen trying to prevent the flight of the cavalry, and it was believed for some time that he was killed by our own men.

This does not appear to have been the case, for afterwards an Afghan, Jan Fishan Khan,¹ who was present, reported that when our cavalry fled, he saw Capt. Fraser in front and James Broadfoot on the flank. When Fraser was wounded, he saw James cut his way through the Afghans to a great distance, when all at once the engineer cap, by which he had hitherto kept him in view, disappeared in the midst of a group of Afghans, and, said Jan Fishan, 'having no more hope, I, too, turned and rode away.'

This happened on November 2, 1840; next day Dost Muhammad rode in to Kabul with one companion and gave himself up to the Envoy. Macnaghten returned his sword to the Amir, and made suitable arrangements for the custody of so brave and important a prisoner.

Yet this event did not help to tranquillise the country.

The Shah was discontented because he possessed the shadow only of power, the substance being in the hands of the Envoy. The English Government were dissatisfied, because they thought the administration in Afghanistan not altogether prudent; and they presented to Lord Auckland the alternatives of either maintaining our position in sufficient force and at whatever sacrifice might be entailed, or of abandoning the country and confessing failure.

The choice of either alternative was evaded by the Government of India on the plea that the circumstances of the case were altered by the surrender of Dost Muhammad.

Occupation of the country was continued with a diminished army. The immediate result was an apparent increase in hostility on the part of the people in more than one locality. Such was the state of affairs when Capt. George Broadfoot was appointed to Shah Shuja's force; he was ordered to raise

¹ Jān Fishān ('devoted' or 'life-sacrificing') was the title given to Saiyid Muhammad Khan, Chief of Paghman, on account of his gallantry. His wife appears to have deserved the title as well as Jan Fishan himself. Lady Sale has recorded that when the

insurrection broke out in Kabul, Jan Fishan urged his wife to fly for safety to Paghman; but she replied: 'I will not leave you; if you fall, we die together; if you are victorious, we will rejoice together.' Jan Fishan said this answer was worth a lakh of rupees.



a regiment of sappers, and proceeded to Delhi and towards the N.W. Frontier for that purpose.

He was accompanied by Colin Mackenzie, to whose sister-in-law, Mrs. Bayley, he wrote the following letter descriptive of the journey :

Delhi: October 10, 1840.

My dear Mrs. Bayley,—I had the great pleasure of receiving your letter of September 7, with its inclosure for Colin, just as we were leaving Agra, and fully intended to have answered it immediately on our arrival here, but I found it necessary the very first day, to move into my tents at the lines of the Sappers, away both from city and cantonments, and ever since I have been, from sunrise till dark, literally surrounded by a mob. At length, however, affairs are getting *en train* to a certain extent, and from them to you I turn with something of the feelings of the weary knight of old passing from a wilderness, and seeing before him a fair garden and the bower of some beauty without peer. Being, however, but a modern *preux chevalier*, I must be allowed to commence my address to the fair ladye with a *scolding*, most unknighly and yet well deserved, for your letter to me is little less than an apology for writing at all ; or, as you are pleased to term it, *troubling* me. Now, it is clear you take me for a downright monster, a Caliban, and under this afflicting belief I shall continue till you tell me the contrary under your own hand, and prove it by a letter containing more than an *apology*, however prettily written.

Colin and I have not lived together here, so I do not know whether you have found him a punctual correspondent or not. But he has, no doubt, told you how we left, or rather *sent on*, our servants and baggage from Allyghur, and went ourselves by Agra ; how we were delighted with the Taj, the Moti Musjid, and all the other beauties there ; how we went round by Futtehpore Sikri, Bhurt-pore, Deeg, and Gobardhun to Muttra ; how we hunted as we went, and how the cheetas were more successful than Colin and his friend ; how Colin lost himself in a jungle, and was hunted for with elephants and torches ; how we were objects of great curiosity throughout, for I had been recognised as having served three years with the native chiefs in Afghanistan and Turkistan before our armies went there ; how I had been a prisoner in Candahar (or some other city) and professed Islam ; how it was useless to deny it, as I had been recognised in Futtehpore and Bhurt-pore by some who remember me a Musalman ! How Colin (with indignation he heard it) was, *if not my son, a very young warrior* setting out under my auspices ; how the English up there, being an



désespoir, Government were sending every one up who knew those countries.

At Muttra we passed part of a day with Col. Pattle, and a few hours at Allyghur with Mr. and Mrs. Neave. On arriving here we found Mr. Metcalfe had left, and I fear [we] deprived Mrs. Metcalfe of her night's rest by taking possession of the house after she had retired for the night. Next day we moved; Colin, from his nice sense of decorum, to the house of a namesake and kinsman of the 64th Regiment; I, from necessity, to the tent from which I write. Of the lions of Delhi, I can say nothing, having seen none of them, nor paid a single visit, but official ones. But Colin saw them all, and two days ago went off dawd to Loodhiana, and is doubtless now adorning the harem of our master the Shah. He rode out to Sonapat, and had two falls, without serious injury to himself, but with much to his horse. He was foolish enough to gallop over unknown ground by moonlight, which, though beautiful, is as deceitful as other beauties are said to be by poets. He is very much better than when I wrote, but still far from well. It is a very great matter for him to have escaped the journey to Goruckpore. I am sure it would have killed him; even without it I was at one time very apprehensive about him. I hope very shortly to set out for Loodhiana, where I shall rejoin him.

I have begun a letter to Bayley, which I shall finish to-day or to-morrow. In the mean time give him and all your circle my very best regards, and believe me, my dear Mrs. Bayley,

Most sincerely yours,

G. BROADFOOT.

I shall look with impatience for an answer to this.

Capt. Broadfoot succeeded in recruiting the number of Hindustanis and Gúrkhas he required, and these with the Hazaras, raised near Bamian by William Broadfoot, formed the Shah's regiment of sappers. At first, when offered the command by Lord Auckland, he declined on the score of being unwilling to supersede his own brother. His Lordship, however, took no notice of the refusal, and after some time sent him orders about details which concerned the regiment *to the command of which he had been appointed*.

Further objection was, of course, impossible. It was also ascertained that, prior to the arrangement here described, Lord Auckland had decided, in ignorance of W. Broadfoot's claims to the command, to appoint him second in command, a

position which he considered suitable to his subaltern rank. His Lordship, with kind intentions, thought that it would be more agreeable to William Broadfoot to be superseded by his brother than by some stranger, and hence his refusal to consent to George's resignation. As a matter of fact the supersession never took place, for William Broadfoot received a political appointment under Sir Alexander Burnes, and George remained commander of the regiment. No men in it were more devoted to their leader than those raised by William in Hazara.

The regiment is thus referred to by Marshman in the *Life of Havelock* : ²

They were instructed in all the duties of entrenching and siege operations, and were encouraged to become superior light troops. In their ranks were not only Hindostanees of every province, but Ghorkas, and men from Cabul, Peshawar, Eusofzye, and Hazara. Many of the men thus enlisted were desperate and intractable characters, but they were soon moulded by the talent of their chief into daring, skilful, and obedient soldiers. Capt. Broadfoot was on his side like a father to these men, in attention to their real wants, while he exacted from them the most implicit obedience to his orders, and punished their faults with a severity which many would have deemed ferocious.

When Capt. Broadfoot was about to start for Kabul, he was desired to take charge of and protect the families and attendants of Shahs Shuja and Zaman. This was a most complicated and undesirable addition to his cares, consisting as it did of the blind Shah Zaman and of some 600 ladies of the zenanas with numerous attendants. These, together with a large amount of treasure and baggage, he had to escort through the Punjab, then in a very disturbed state, with its troops for the most part in open mutiny.

It is to be regretted that want of space makes it unadvisable to print Capt. Broadfoot's reports of this journey *in extenso*, for they are of great interest and testify to his sound judgment, decision of character, and capacity for command. The latter quality, indeed, seemed to rise exactly in proportion to the difficulties and dangers which he was called on to face.

² Edit. 1870, p. 87.



The Lahore Darbar deputed three officers of position, Sardār Shām Singh of Atāri, Rai Kesri Singh, and Col. Chet Singh, to accompany the convoy and afford assistance. They further sent an escort of picked troops from the Sikh army; but these, infected by the spirit of mutiny then abroad, were a source of danger rather than of protection.

Mr. Clerk,³ the Political Agent for Punjab affairs, in the end of April 1841 expressed anxiety for the safety of the convoy consequent on the disaffection prevailing at Peshawar; he also thus described an instance of the mischievous consequences of the example of successful mutiny: 'A mutiny which lately occurred in the Sappers and Goorkhas under Capt. Broadfoot's command assumed the same features which have marked the commencement of most of the mutinies of late among the Sikh battalions. They turned out armed and demanded two months' pay. They spoke, and were inclined to conduct themselves, most resolutely. But they were met with still greater resolution by Capt. Broadfoot and their other European officers. The ringleaders were flogged on the spot, and the detachment fell in and returned to obedience.'

Capt. Mackeson, Political Officer at Peshawar, wrote to Broadfoot to inform him of the mutiny there, and of the occupation of the road by four mutinous battalions. He added that Avitabile⁴ had reported that they meant to attack the convoy, and begged that Broadfoot would halt and await relief unless Sham Singh would be responsible for his safety.

Broadfoot replied that, having all along foreseen the probability of attack, he had taken precautions, and that therefore

³ Now Sir George R. Clerk, G.C.S.I., K.C.B.

⁴ Gen. Avitabile, an officer in Ranjit Singh's service, was Governor of Peshawar and Yusufzai. His hospitality to our officers who passed through Peshawar was unbounded. He is thus described by Sir Herbert Edwardes: 'With the intrigue and cunning of an Asiatic, the broader wisdom and self-dependence of a European, and the remorselessness of one who professed to own no God, Avita-

bile, backed by a powerful Sikh force, was soon master of the valley, and to this day is spoken of by the Afghan population with the admiration of a troop of jackals for a tiger. To do him justice, though he stuck at nothing that would serve his ends, he did much good.' (*Life of Sir H. Lawrence*, vol. i. p. 292.) The Afghans had the same respect for George Broadfoot; they called him the 'black-coated infidel,' who was at Jalalabad as Avitabile was at Peshawar.



Avitabile's declaration supplied no reason for fresh preparation or for increased anxiety on his account.

As to Sham Singh and the other officers being responsible for the safety of the convoy, he fairly laughed at the idea. He pointed out that, owing to their zeal and good faith, the chiefs had incurred grave risk from the Sikh troops, and that the knowledge that he (Broadfoot) would protect them had hitherto saved them from violence, if not from death.

He further declined to halt and wait for succour, and said he hoped he was not improperly confident in believing that he would repulse any attack the Sikhs might make. He was aware that the utmost caution was required to avoid disaster, but added, 'It is, however, safer than standing still, and as far as any military operation is certain of successful issue I consider this to be so; for if we do not get on quietly, and cannot force the passage, we shall, I doubt not, hold our own till you send us assistance.'

He accordingly marched forward, and at last came on the mutineers with guns commanding the road, at a place called Saidu, beyond Attock, on the Indus. The position was decidedly critical—the mutineers from Peshawar, with their guns, in front, and his Sikh escort, equally dangerous and ready for plunder, in rear. He met the crisis boldly—marched the convoy and his own men across the river, and broke the bridge before the Sikh escort could cross. Thus he insured freedom from attack on the rear, and could concentrate his energies on the danger in front.

The following letters to Col. Cullen and Dr. Malcolmson contain accounts of this interesting journey :

Camp, Peshawar : May 21, 1841.

My dear Colonel,—It has been for a long time my intention to write to you, but you will believe that to conduct a large convoy, with a very feeble escort, across the Punjab at such a period, required every moment I could spare to obtain the requisite information of what was going on amidst the scene of confusion, in order to provide for ourselves. I forget whether I ever replied to your letter containing a most flattering notice of me by Lord Elphinstone. I think I did; but if not, may I beg you to express to his Lordship my deep sense of his uniform kindness? Indeed, the indulgent way



I was always treated makes me often regret that I could not carry my old masters with me into the new world I am now entering.

I was long detained at Loodhiana and Ferozpoore by being nominated to take charge of the royal families of Cabool on their way to their native country. There is the old blind Shah Zeman, a host of shahzadas, and a huge number of ladies of all ranks and ages. It was a duty I could not well decline, there being no other officer of the Shah's service present, though it was easy to see it was one pretty sure to be troublesome and thankless. To complicate matters, the Punjab was verging towards anarchy when we started, and daily got into greater confusion as we advanced. The mutinous troops were moving in all directions towards Lahore, and occasionally crossed our path. They had already murdered or expelled their officers before starting, and were governed by punchayets⁵ elected by universal suffrage. They were suspicious of our intentions, and from the first have been averse to our troops having a passage through their territory. We were sometimes in danger of collision with them, but by one way or other got clear through till we had crossed the Attock. Then four battalions in a state of mutiny and six guns were before us, encamped so as to command the only road we could go by. Every effort was made to make them move, but in vain. They said if we proceeded at all we must go by that road, they being under arms and standing to their guns. Letters from the Court, orders from Gen. Avitabile, and the entreaties and menaces of the Vakeels with me were ineffectual to get them to go one march off the road. The report was through the country that they intended to plunder the kafila, and Gen. Avitabile declared to the Political Agent here, he could not answer for their intentions towards us. So the Political Agent sent for a brigade of our troops. I went to the mutinous camp, or at least to within 800 yards or so, and had an interview with them. The hostility of their proceeding was pointed out, but in vain. At length they formally declared the brigade, or 50,000 men, might come, they also were soldiers and would fight. They said we might consider them enemies or friends as we pleased; they were ready for us. We parted with a formal declaration that, having refused to abandon their menacing position, even for a few hours, and it being impossible for us to advance, but by putting the kafila in their power, that they must be looked on as enemies of the three Governments.⁶ The chief of the Lahore Vakeels was with me and shared in all this.

⁵ *Panchayat*, a committee of five members, one of whom is president and has a casting vote; afterwards used to designate any representative

committee.

⁶ British India, Punjab, and Shah Shuja's Government.



They were warned no longer to venture near our camp, or even to approach the hills where we were, or try to enter the pass leading to Attock. They despised us too much to heed the warning, and a gang of the punchayet went to our camp and stayed beyond the time allowed for them to consider. I met them among the hills and made them prisoners. This prevented us from being in future inundated by them. For two days we thus remained with almost seven miles between us; they demanding the prisoners, with menaces of attack; and we refusing, though offering to hand them over to the Sikh Vakeels if they would leave the road, removing some of their guns as an evidence of sincerity. They several times got under arms, and once even advanced a short distance in our direction; but this last time their hearts failed, and they accepted the terms just before rejected, went back to their camp in haste, and crossed a gun to the other side of the river; dreading, no doubt, the approach of the brigade, and feeling they had not power even to force our position. I released the prisoners, and the mutineers began to loiter in crossing, so that I could not march that day; but in the night, moved, it is said, by a report of our brigade approaching, most of them bolted across the river in great haste, and next day we passed on, and are now safe here.

It was necessary to be always on the look-out among these people, and consequently the work was heavy for officers and men. Poor Orr, who acted as our quartermaster, has been fairly worked into a rather severe fit of illness, but, I am glad to say, is now nearly well again. He is an active, intelligent, and high-spirited young officer. Some more of our number are ailing. The officers are all from Madras, and are very fine young men. My own health stood well till these last few days, in fact till the *work* was pretty well over. The position I was in was one of extreme delicacy; there was seldom time to deliberate, and scarcely a measure could be adopted, or a word said or written, without incurring the censure of one party or another. Some blame me as rash in not calling for assistance, and in making the punchayet prisoners; and obstinate in not surrendering them when menaced with an attack. Others again swear there was no danger at all, and the Political Agent here seems to think he cleared away the mutineers by a civil letter, to which they returned a civil answer (I suspect Brigadier Shelton⁷ is the real Simon Pure). The fear of his brigade did the work. However, here we are safely through the Punjab without a shot being fired; a consummation few expected till it has occurred.

⁷ Shelton's brigade was to march from Jalalabad to relieve the kafila, if necessary.



In the mean time, whether I get credit or obloquy, I look back on the whole transaction without seeing many errors in the course I followed. That, however, is but poor evidence of their not being many and great.

The journey through the Punjab has given me a very high opinion of old Runjeet Singh. Here is this large army utterly disorganised, turned into a lawless multitude, going to their homes when they please, but generally crowding to the capital. The people chiefly Mahomedans, hating the Sikhs, but recently conquered, with the families of their old chiefs among them, yet afraid to rebel. Old Runjeet's constant success, or speedy recovery from defeat, and the vigour as well as justice of his rule, have produced an impression of the stability and resources of his Sirkar,⁸ something like that prevailing in our territories regarding the Company. The end, however, is fast approaching, and next cold weather will probably see extinguished the last vestige of Indian independence.

Camp near Cabool: July 8, 1841.

My dear Malcolmson,—As you must be beginning, like all my friends, to think me negligent in not writing, I send this merely to say that I am recovering from smallpox, and am still very weak. I was seized with it at Peshawur, and it first showed itself *outwardly* at Jumrood or Futtehghurh, the frontier post of the Sikhs. There the garrison seemed disposed to molest us, or rather, actually seized a lot of property and made an attempt at a search of the Begums' palkees.⁹ The excitement cured me for the moment, and I made them disgorge by threatening to resort to force, and proceeding to preparations. Avitabile, however, sent a soft letter to them (I had treated them as thieves), and thinking he and our Political Agent *funked*, they seized cattle next day, and even came (the Killadar,¹ or rather two of the punchayet dragging him) to my tent with intent to be insolent.

I had again to rouse up; they got frightened, and gave me Avitabile's letter to read, which I threw in their faces, saying no letters could make thieves honest men, and if in ten minutes all was not given up I should no longer treat them as soldiers. This impudence had the effect, for impudence it was, seeing they had a fort with 3 guns, and 1,000 men nominally (probably 700 or 800), and I had not 500 firelocks, and no guns; but next day, when we were safe across the frontier, I sank so much that I did not expect to weather the disease; the reaction of the disputes with these fellows

⁸ Government.

⁹ Palankins.

¹ Officer in charge of the fort.