



GOUGH'S COLUMN

Accordingly, on the 21st December, Brigadier-General Charles Gough commenced his march from Jagdalak fort with a column composed as follows:

		Guns. Officers. Men.		
Artillery	{	Hazara Mountain Battery, Captain A. Broadfoot, R.A.	4	... ..
		2-9th Foot, Lieutenant Colonel		
Infantry	{	British (528)		
		W. Daunt . . . . .	... 17	483
	{	72nd Highlanders . . . . .	... 1	45
		2nd Gurkhas, Major A.		
		Battye . . . . .	... 6	399
		4th Gurkhas . . . . .	... 6	377
	{	Native (874)		
		Sappers . . . . .	... 3	73
		Details . . . . .	... ..	25
Total			<u>4</u> <u>33</u> <u>1,402</u>	

The following garrisons were left in the posts beyond Gandamak:

Jagdalak Fort.

		Officers. Men.	
Colonel Norman	{	10th Bengal Lancers	6 210
		2nd Gurkhas . . . . .	... 14 sick.
		24th Punjab Infantry	4 431
Total		<u>10</u> <u>655</u>	

Jagdalak Kotal.

		Guns. Officers. Men.		
Major Thackeray, V.C., R.E.	{	Hazara Mountain Battery	2	... ..
		10th Bengal Lancers . . . . .	... ..	12
		24th Punjab Infantry . . . . .	... ..	50
		Sappers and Miners . . . . .	... ..	193
		Royal Engineers	5	...
Total		<u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>252</u>		

Pezwan Kotal.

		Guns. Officers. Men.		
Lieutenant-Colonel Ball-Aston, 51st Light Infantry.	{	10th Bengal Lancers . . . . .	... ..	50
		I-A, R.H.A.	2	...
		51st Light Infantry (3 companies) . . . . .	... ..	150
		24th Punjab Infantry (1 company) . . . . .	... ..	50
		Sappers and Miners . . . . .	... 12	80
Total		<u>2</u> <u>12</u> <u>330</u>		



Having halted on the night of the 21st at Seh Baba, Gough reached Lataband post on the following day, after a very harassing march owing to the breakdown of a large number of Indian camels, of which the transport chiefly consisted. Here he was joined by the garrison under Colonel J. Hudson, 28th Punjab Infantry. On the 23rd the united force marched to the Logar River, where it was found that the bridge near Butkhak had been barricaded and shelter trenches made to defend the passage; but the position was not occupied, the enemy having abandoned their posts, and General Gough was enabled to cross without opposition, and encamped near Butkhak with his main body the same evening. On arrival, General Gough heard from native rumour that the Afghans had made a determined attack on Sherpur that morning and had been defeated with heavy loss. This intelligence was confirmed by the receipt in the evening of a letter by messenger from Sir Frederick Roberts's camp, which added the information that the enemy still remained in force in the villages and forts round Sherpur and in the Bala Hissar. The day was dull, and heliographic communication consequently impossible.

At dawn, on the 24th December, the advance was continued. A dense fog made it almost impossible to see, and a heavy fall of snow in the night rendered the road over the causeway across the marsh nearly impassable for transport animals. On reaching the Siah Sang hills General Charles Gough occupied them with infantry, and turning to the right made for the Sherpur cantonments, leaving the hills on his left. On the march it became known that the Afghans had almost entirely dispersed during the night, and General Gough's column entered Sherpur without opposition. Thus the junction between the Khyber and Kurram Divisions was accomplished; but the communication with Jagdalak was temporarily suspended owing to the abandonment of the Lataband post.

The advance of Gough's brigade was the signal for



the threatened attacks on the posts on the line of communications. On the 23rd December, at 2 p.m., a vigorous effort was made against Jagdalak Kotal by 3,000 Ghilzais, and the fighting lasted until ten at night, the enemy at one time approaching as near as 150 yards from the fort on three sides. The garrison, however, behaved with the greatest steadiness, and the enemy was successfully driven off with some loss. The casualties amongst the defenders were two sepoy killed, and Major Thackeray, v.c. (commanding), and one sepoy wounded.

Meanwhile the news of the attack had reached both Gandamak and Jagdalak Fort. From the former place Brigadier-General Arbuthnot sent orders to Colonel Ball-Acton to proceed from Pezwan with 400 men to Thackeray's relief; while Colonel Norman marched at daybreak from Jagdalak and reached the post on the kotal without opposition, the enemy having dispersed. Here a heliogram was received announcing Colonel Ball-Acton's approach, and Colonel Norman accordingly started to meet him, taking Major Thackeray, who was sent to Safed Sang for treatment. On his return to the kotal, after carrying out this service, Colonel Norman was intercepted by Asmatulla Khan with about 800 men, who gave some annoyance to the column, but was soon compelled to retire with some loss. This had the effect of clearing the line for the time, and a convoy passing from Pezwan to Jagdalak on the 25th was not molested; but the skirmish having shown that Asmatulla was still out, Colonel Norman considered that the garrison of his outposts should be strengthened, that at least 800 infantry were required to hold Jagdalak and the kotal, and that the two guns should be at the latter place. Should the kotal be lost, he would have to retire, leaving his tents behind.

On the evening of the 24th one of the posts at Dalangai, near Choragali, was attacked and several *jazailchis*, cart-drivers, and doolie-bearers killed, and others very badly wounded. It was not known who



had committed this outrage, but they were believed to be either Shinwaris or Khugianis. An attempt was made to follow up the enemy, but without success. Another post at a *ziarat* near the Choragali Pass was also attacked, but the marauders were driven off by the garrison.

During these events the forward movement of troops all up the line from Peshawar had been proceeding steadily. A wing of the 45th Sikhs marched from Gandamak to Pezwan, the head-quarters of the 22nd Punjab Infantry had reached Rozabad, the 3rd Bengal Cavalry was at Jalalabad, part of the 8th Bengal Infantry and two guns of D-A, Royal Horse Artillery, at Dakka, while the remainder of the last-named battery and part of the 1-25th King's Own Borderers had arrived at Landi Kotal.

On the 29th December an attack was made on Jagdalak camp by a large force of Ghilzais under Asmatulla Khan, accompanied by Muhammad Hasan Khan, late Governor of Jalalabad, and Faiz Muhammad Khan, formerly commandant of Ali Masjid. The attack was resisted with energy by the small garrison of Jagdalak, and the arrival at 4 p.m. of Colonel Ball-Acton with reinforcements consisting of 4 guns 11-9, Royal Artillery, 3 companies of the 51st, and 6 companies of the 45th Rattray's Sikhs soon completed the dispersion of the enemy. In this affair Lieutenant I. D. Wright, Royal Artillery, was killed by a musket-shot as the guns were being laid. The enemy were said to have suffered heavily.

On the same day (29th December) Lieutenant-Colonel A. R. D. Mackenzie, 3rd Bengal Cavalry, set out from Jalalabad to Barikao, whence on the 30th he marched through Shershai against a cluster of villages, named Banda, Khadi and Roghani, which were supposed to be sheltering some of the Shinwari perpetrators of the outrage near Ali Boghan on the 24th. His column was composed of 1 troop of the Carabiniers, 3 troops 3rd Bengal Cavalry, 2 guns C-3, Royal Artillery,



2 companies 1-12th Foot, 70 rifles 27th Punjab Infantry, and 20 Madras Sappers. After a difficult march of 12 miles, the valley in which the villages lie was reached and the place completely surrounded. The chiefs were then summoned, and ten of them having been taken as hostages, the column returned to Barikao without opposition or further incident.

During the week every exertion was made to strengthen the posts on the line of communications. Telegraphic communication with Jagdalak was re-established; and, in spite of rumours of proposed attacks at various points, it appeared that the gatherings of tribesmen had dispersed, and the year closed quietly.¹

¹ For composition, distribution, and strength on the 31st December, see Appendices XIV. and XV.

CHAPTER XI

THE MOVEMENTS OF THE KANDAHAR FIELD FORCE FROM SEPTEMBER, 1879, TO MARCH, 1880; AND THE MARCH OF THE GHAZNI FORCE UNDER SIR DONALD STEWART FROM KANDAHAR TO NORTH AFGHANISTAN.

THE news of the outbreak at Kabul and of the massacre there of the British Resident and his escort reached the Field Force in Southern Afghanistan when the troops were in process of withdrawal from Kandahar to Peshin in accordance with the Treaty of Gandamak (Chapter V.). The head-quarters were still at Kandahar, but the remainder of the troops were distributed at various places along the line, as follows:

At Kandahar.

19th Bengal Lancers.	|	2-60th Rifles.
11-11, Royal Artillery.	|	15th Sikhs.

At Abdul Rahman.

6-11, Royal Artillery.	|	59th Foot (wing).
	|	3rd Gurkhas (wing).

At Mandi Hissar.

25th Punjab Infantry.

At Chaman.

2nd Punjab Cavalry.	|	G-4, Royal Artillery.
	|	29th Bombay Infantry.

At Arambi Karez.

A-B, Royal Horse Artillery.		D-2, Royal Artillery.
	|	59th Foot.

On the Kakar Lora.

1st Punjab Cavalry.

At Khushdil Khan Kala.

3rd Sind Horse.		2nd Sikhs.
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On the 5th September telegraphic orders were despatched by the Quartermaster-General in India to



Sir Donald Stewart, commanding the Field Force, for all troops north of Peshin to move back to Kandahar. Every effort was at once made to prepare the force for renewed service; the transport was carefully overhauled; the troops themselves were medically inspected, and those unfit for field service were sent back to Quetta, where a base hospital was established; commissariat yards were re-opened, and orders issued for the purchase of wood, grain, and *bhusa*; telegraph stores which had started for Peshin were sent back to Kandahar; and arrangements were made to keep all bell-tent equipage in readiness for a sudden move on Kabul.

The 15th Sikhs, who had on the previous day vacated the citadel of Kandahar, re-occupied it on the 5th with the consent and at the personal request of the Governor; the 60th Rifles moved from camp on the 7th September and re-occupied the barracks, which they had vacated preparatory to commencing their march to Peshin; on the 8th the head-quarters of the 2nd Infantry Brigade returned to the capital, and within ten days the whole of the Field Force was re-assembled.

Sir Donald Stewart now (13th September) proposed that D-2, Royal Artillery, should return to India, while a wing of the 59th Foot, the 1st Punjab Cavalry, and a company of the 2nd Sikhs were to be located at Gulistan Karez, and orders were given for hutting to be pushed forward at that place.

On the 16th September the Commander-in-Chief informed the Government of India that he considered it desirable that a demonstration should be made in some strength from Kandahar towards Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and that he had therefore instructed Sir Donald Stewart, in anticipation of the sanction of Government, to direct a movement of the sort to be carried out in such strength as he might consider desirable; that he had impressed on Sir Donald at the same time, that the presence of some heavy guns, which were ready to move, would add to the effect of the operations, and



would induce the belief that these troops were to advance on Kabul.

This reconnaissance was not to proceed further than Naorak, the second march beyond Kalat-i-Ghilzai. The 2nd Infantry Brigade, under Brigadier-General R. J. Hughes, with five field guns and two heavy guns, was detailed for the movement, and the Governor of Kalat-i-Ghilzai was requested to arrange for supplies and postal communications as far as Pul-i-Sang.

On the 23rd September the brigade marched from Kandahar, 1,418 strong, with 1,286 followers, composed of the following corps :

Cavalry.

2nd Punjab Cavalry, Colonel T. G. Kennedy.

Artillery.

G-4, Royal Artillery, Major Sir J. W. Campbell, Bart.

6-11, Royal Artillery, Major J. A. Tillard.

11-11, Royal Artillery, Major N. H. Harris.

British Infantry.

59th Foot, Lieutenant-Colonel J. Lawson.

Native Infantry.

3rd Gurkhas, Colonel A. Paterson.

29th Bombay Infantry, Lieutenant-Colonel O. V. Tanner.

Brigadier-General R. J. Hughes reached Khel-i-Akhund on the 26th and Kalat-i-Ghilzai on the 30th September without experiencing any opposition. At the latter place it soon became evident that the power of the governor to make arrangements for supplies was small, as the headmen of the Hotak and Tokhi clans of the Ghilzais declined to bring in anything unless they dealt directly with the British Commissariat officer.

A further advance of the brigade to Ghazni was discussed, but the idea was abandoned in consequence of the lack of transport and supplies. The limit of the reconnaissance was, however, extended to Ab-i-Tazi, one march beyond Naorak. Accordingly an advance force, consisting of two guns each from G-4 and 11-11

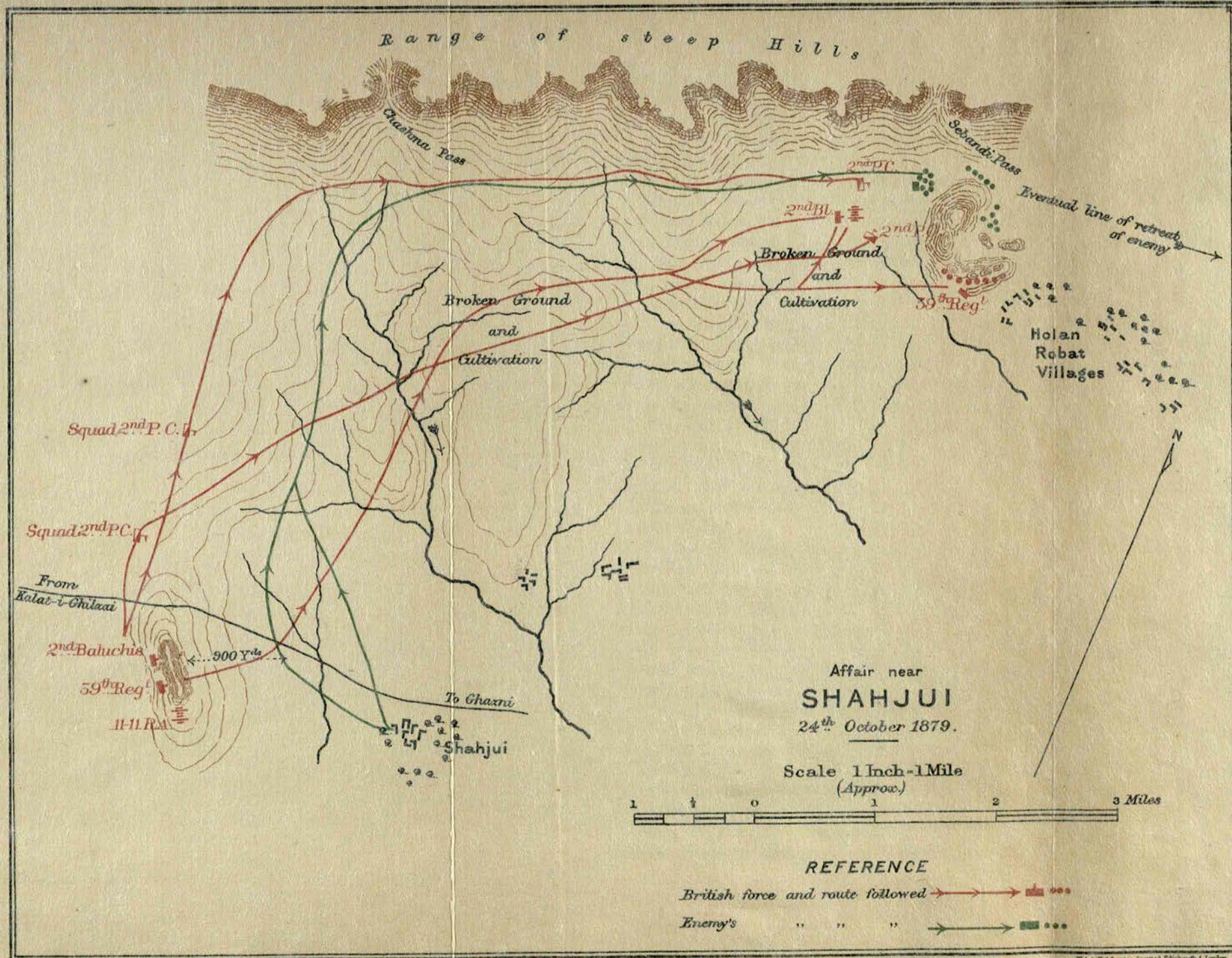


332 CO-OPERATION WITH GHILZAIS

Batteries, and detachments of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, 59th Foot, 3rd Gurkhas, and 29th Bombay Infantry, marched from Kalat-i-Ghilzai under Brigadier-General Hughes, and arrived at Naorak on the 9th October and at Tazi on the following day. Here a halt of several days was made, which was occupied with reconnaissance work. The supplies of the neighbourhood were already beginning to run short, when rumours became rife of the assembling at Aghao Jan and Martaza Kala, under the leadership of Sahib Jan, the son of a Taraki Ghilzai malik of influence, of a body of men to attack the troops at Tazi. On this the Brigadier determined to move forward to Shahjui, where he was informed that the Ghilzais were gathering, being induced to adopt this course by the increasing scarcity of supplies round Tazi and by the consideration that an advance would be more advisable than a retirement.

Accordingly, at 1.30 a.m. on the 24th October, Colonel Kennedy, commanding the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, accompanied by Ahmad Jan, an influential Tokhi Ghilzai chief, marched from camp with 150 sabres of his own regiment, 2 guns of 11-11 Mountain Battery, 80 rifles of the 59th Foot, and 100 rifles of the 29th Bombay Infantry. The Brigadier intended to follow in support with the remainder of his force, namely, 1½ squadrons 2nd Punjab Cavalry, 2 guns G-4, Royal Artillery, 1 gun 11-11, Royal Artillery, one company 59th Foot, and 4 companies 3rd Gurkhas.

Shortly before daylight, and at about the tenth mile from camp, Ahmad Jan pointed out a fire some distance in advance, saying that it was the watch fire of the enemy's picquet on the road. The country on either side was too rough for troops to move over in the dark; and knowing from a previous reconnaissance that the village was still 2 miles distant, Colonel Kennedy directed Captain J. H. Broome, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, to advance with his squadron, 65 sabres strong, and a few rifles of the 2nd Baluchis (29th Bombay Infantry) and, under cover of a volley from the latter, to drive in





the picquet. He was then to push on with his own men to Shahjui, and observe the movements of such of the enemy as might be present at that place.

Captain Broome surprised the picquet, killing five men and capturing three ponies. A few men, however, escaped to Shahjui and gave the alarm.

Captain Broome then advanced rapidly along the road, and seized an isolated mound in the plain before the village. By this time it was beginning to get light, and the enemy, in number about 200 horse and 700 foot, came streaming out towards the mound. But Colonel Kennedy and the remainder of the troops were near at hand; on seeing them the Ghilzais halted irresolutely about half a mile off, and the guns and 59th having opened fire, the enemy declined battle and moved off towards the left. The troops followed and a running fight began, which was continued for about 6 miles over a difficult country. The guns opened fire occasionally on groups driven together by the cavalry, and the latter now and then dismounted and used their carbines; but the infantry could not get within range, and the enemy's horse declined altogether to be tempted into a combat.

At last the enemy reached a high hillock surrounded by broken ground. The summit had been the site of an old fort, and the ruins of an outwork still existed at the foot of the rising. Here the Ghilzais halted, those on foot planting two standards on the top of the hillock, while the horsemen retired behind it. Thereupon Colonel Kennedy ordered the 59th, under Captain E. H. Sartorius, to seize the outwork and to work round the foot of the hill until the horsemen were under his fire. At the same time the guns prepared to open fire, supported by the 2nd Baluchis.

Captain Sartorius was soon in possession of the ruins at the foot of the hillock, and, moving round it, got within sight of the enemy's horse at the very moment that two shells, intended for the top of the hillock, dropped among them. Shifting their ground,



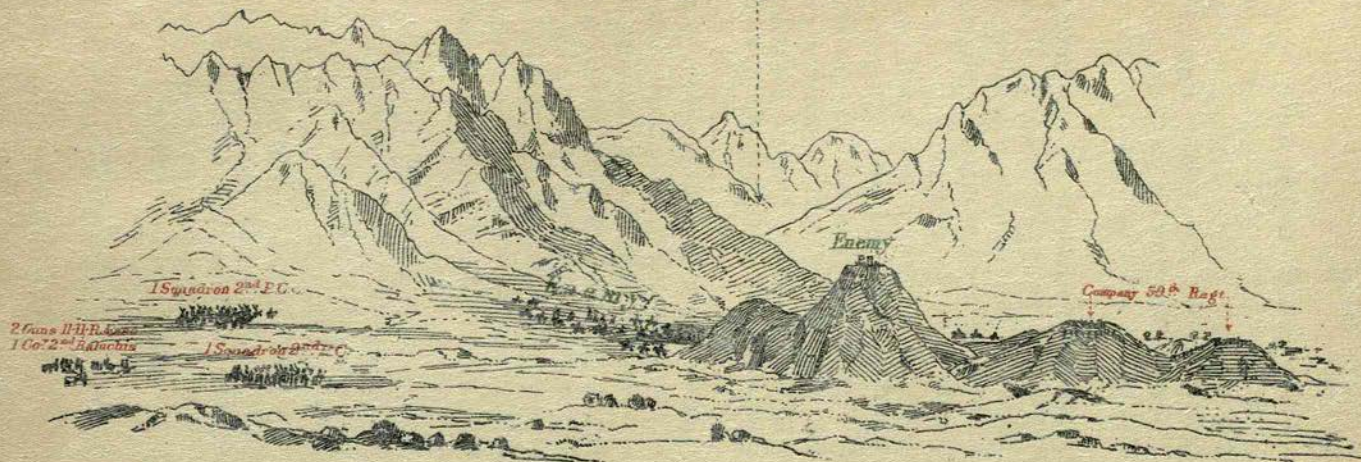
the Ghilzai horsemen came in view of the squadron under Captain Broome, who, having a troop dismounted, gave them a volley, and again mounting, retired slowly. Somewhat unexpectedly the Ghilzais at once dashed after him, led by Sahib Jan in person. Major F. Lance with another squadron of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry was, however, in readiness, and charged the enemy in flank. At the same time Captain Broome wheeled about and met the enemy in front. A spirited hand-to-hand combat ensued, in which the Ghilzais were overthrown and driven off the field, losing their standard, and leaving their leader and fifteen men dead on the ground. Sher Jan, brother to Sahib Jan, was among the wounded.

The main body of the enemy now dispersed in all directions over a country so much enclosed that pursuit was impracticable. A few men, however, still clung to the hillock, and Captain Sartorius was ordered to take it. The summit could only be gained by one narrow zig-zag path, up which Captain Sartorius slowly climbed, followed by fifteen of his men. The remainder kept down the fire of the defenders. Only seven of the enemy remained on the hillock, and these sprang up and threw themselves on the first of the assailants that gained the top. They were all killed after a desperate struggle, in which a private of the 59th was cut down, and Captain Sartorius wounded on both hands. This officer afterwards received the Victoria Cross for his gallant conduct on the occasion.

Fifty-six dead bodies of the enemy were counted in all, so that their total loss was certainly considerable. Among the troops one man of the 59th Foot was killed and one officer wounded. The 2nd Punjab Cavalry also had one man killed and no less than twenty-seven wounded, all in the combat with the enemy's horse. In this mêlée Captain Broome, after cutting down two of the enemy, had his horse killed under him, and received a sword cut on the head. Two native officers were also wounded. The two squadrons had four horses



Sabandi Pass



J. F. Irwin, Lieut.
59th. Regt.

Affair near Shaljuji 24th October 1879.

London, John Murray.

W. & A. X. Johnston, Limited, Edinburgh & London.



killed and twelve horses wounded, all by the sword or lance.

Colonel Kennedy's detachment rejoined the remainder of the brigade at Shahjui the same day, and the force encamped there; the neighbouring villagers brought in supplies freely; water was plentiful and the grazing for camels found to be abundant.

The political and military advantages of this affair were decidedly good; the threatened attack of the enemy, whose numbers had been daily increasing, was forestalled, and the additional prestige of taking the initiative was also secured.

On the 26th October the return march was begun, and the brigade arrived at Kandahar on the 8th November after leaving at Kalat-i-Ghilzai a garrison composed of 1 squadron of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry, 2 guns each of G-4 and 11-11, Royal Artillery, 2 companies 59th Foot, and the 29th Bombay Infantry (2nd Baluchis). By the beginning of December all these troops were huttet, and supplies were being freely brought into Kalat-i-Ghilzai.

During the past weeks the work of laying down a line of rail towards Sibi had been pushed forward. Jacobabad was reached at the beginning of November, and the line was to be completed to Mittri by the end of January, 1880. It was not yet decided whether it should be continued through the Bolan Pass and Quetta, or by the Harnai Pass to Peshin.

Towards the latter part of November Sir Richard Temple, Governor of Bombay, paid a visit to Kandahar, travelling by the Gwajha Pass and Dara ravine, which route he recommended for the extension of the railway to Kandahar.

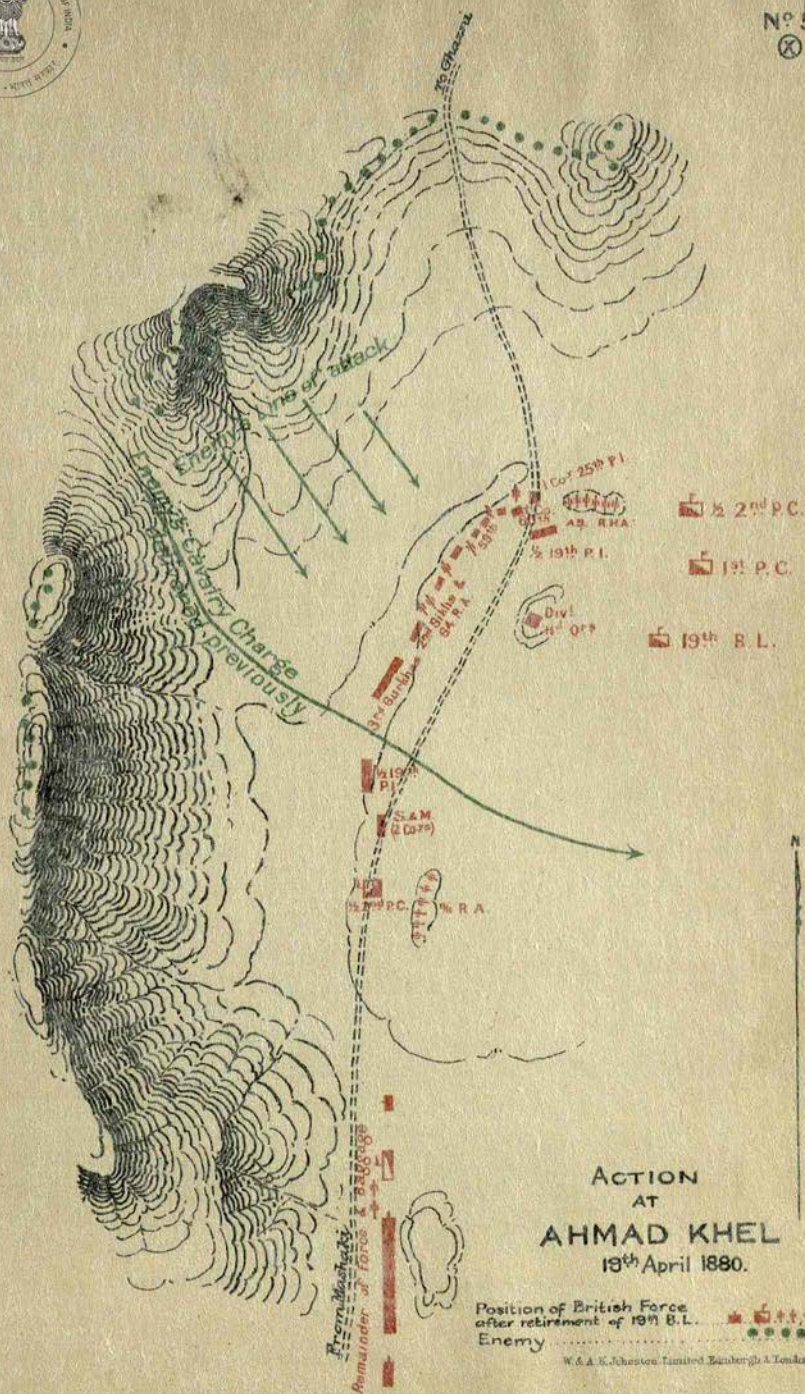
The month of December was occupied in correspondence between Lieutenant-General Stewart and the Commander-in-Chief on the one hand, and the Government of India on the other, regarding the further movements from Kandahar and the relief of the Bengal troops in the South Afghanistan Field



Force. The Commander-in-Chief was especially insistent on the importance of Brigadier-General Phayre's brigade being moved forward immediately to Quetta and Peshin in order to set free the 19th Punjab Infantry, 2nd Sikhs, and 3rd Sind Horse, who would then advance to Kandahar. This he considered necessary in view of the rising of the tribesmen around Kabul, an example which might at any moment be followed by Western Afghanistan. Accordingly, on the 23rd December the Viceroy sanctioned the advance of the reserve brigade (General Phayre's) to Quetta and Peshin, the brigade held in readiness under Brigadier-General Burrows being moved up to take their places in the lower Bolan.

Correspondence at the same time continued on the subject of an advance of all the Bengal troops, under Lieutenant-General Stewart, from Kandahar in the spring through Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and Ghazni to Kabul; and on the 10th January the Lieutenant-General was asked to state fully for the Commander-in-Chief's information his views and proposals with regard to his projected advance; in reply he sent a detailed despatch on the 13th as follows:

"Estimating that the troops to relieve the Bengal Division might commence movement from Dadar by the 10th February, and that they must be dependent for movement as far as Chaman upon the cart-train established, and working upon the stage system as far as Quetta, it is necessary to calculate upon twelve stages from the base to Quetta itself, from which point to Chaman is seven marches. No more than one hundred carts, each carrying six maunds, could be made available every second day for an organised movement of troops,—that is, a half battalion of native infantry or two companies of European infantry could be despatched every second day; and granting the most favourable conditions of weather, it is clear that the troops to relieve the Bengal Division could not be assembled at Kandahar before the end of March.



ACTION
AT
AHMAD KHEL
19th April 1880.

Position of British Force
after retirement of 19th B.L.
Enemy

W. & A. B. Johnston Limited Edinburgh & London

Approximate Scale. 2 inches = 1 mile



London, — John Murray.



THE TROOPS SELECTED

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CSL

Meanwhile, the Transport Department would have purchased a sufficiency of camels to equip the division to move forward, as well as the number necessary to equip a portion of the troops arriving in relief, as a movable column.

"The troops belonging to the Bengal Army, which I would propose to take forward at the end of March, may be taken at the following strength :

Brigade.	Regiment or Battery.	EUROPEANS, EFFECTIVE.			EUROPEANS, SICK.			NATIVE TROOPS.		FOLLOWERS. ¹		
		Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.	Total.	Officers.	Non-Commissioned Officers and Men.	Total.	Effective.	Sick.	Public.	Private.	Total.
ROYAL ARTILLERY.	A-B, Royal Horse Artil- lery	4	118	122	1	6	7	...	...	213	24	237
	G-4, Royal Artillery	4	134	138	1	9	10	...	...	223	25	248
	11-11, Royal Artillery	5	78	83	1	14	15	...	...	176	19	195
	Total	13	330	343	3	29	32	...	...	612	68	680
CAVALRY BRIGADE.	1st Punjab Cavalry	5	...	5	...	...	...	310	6	338	26	409
	2nd Punjab Cavalry	9	...	9	...	...	...	345	18	448	52	500
	19th Bengal Lancers	8	...	8	...	...	...	403	9	366	50	416
	Total	22	...	22	...	...	...	1,058	33	1,197	128	1,325
1ST INFANTRY BRIGADE.	2-60th Rifles	22	713	735	...	21	21	...	...	212	61	273
	15th Sikhs	3	...	3	2	...	2	690	17	212	22	234
	25th Punjab Infantry	7	...	7	...	...	...	702	31	260	24	284
	Total	32	713	745	2	21	23	1,392	48	684	107	791
2ND INFANTRY BRIGADE.	59th Regiment	23	758	781	...	10	10	...	...	511	50	561
	3rd Gurkhas	6	...	6	...	...	...	521	9	176	40	216
	2nd Sikhs	5	...	5	...	...	...	665	21	330	25	355
	Total	34	758	792	...	10	10	1,186	30	1,017	115	1,132
SAPPERS AND MINERS.	No. 4 Company, Sappers and Miners	3	7	10	...	...	...	105	7	134	15	149
	No. 10 Company, Sappers and Miners	1	5	6	1	...	1	99	5	127	14	141
	Total	4	12	16	1	...	1	204	12	261	29	290
RECAPITULATION OF BENGAL DIVISION.	Royal Artillery	13	330	343	3	29	32	...	...	612	68	680
	Cavalry	22	...	22	...	...	...	1,058	33	1,197	128	1,325
	1st Infantry Brigade	32	713	745	2	21	23	1,392	48	684	107	791
	2nd Infantry Brigade	34	758	792	...	10	10	1,186	30	1,017	115	1,132
	Sappers and Miners	4	12	16	1	...	1	204	12	261	29	290
	GRAND TOTAL	105	1,813	1,918	6	60	66	3,840	123	3,771	447	4,218

¹ Followers, including camel-drivers, may be estimated approximately.



“The transport allowed for their equipment would be given in strict accordance with the scale authorised in Quartermaster-General’s circular of September, 1879, surplus baggage of officers and the extra kit of troops and followers being returned to India by the Bolan route. Sick soldiers and followers will be despatched to India by the same route, preparatory to movement.

“The above force, comprising two brigades infantry, one brigade cavalry, one battery Royal Horse Artillery, one light field battery, and one mountain battery, with ordnance reserves for two months, would carry a sufficiency of European supplies for two months and native supplies for seven days, exclusive of wood, and grain for horses and cattle; two days’ supply of grain for horses would, however, be taken. At the season when it will have been found possible to effect the relief in contemplation, a sufficiency of forage will be procurable throughout the entire route, and due notice being given, it is considered possible to arrange for the laying in of supplies of grain, *atta*, and *ghi* at the various stages as far as the neighbourhood of Mukur, from which point to Ghazni the arrangements to be made for obtaining supplies must depend upon the attitude of the inhabitants; but a cultivated district is passed through and the requirements of the force could be met.

“The present condition of the fortifications at Ghazni is such that it is not necessary to take the 40-pounder guns with the force moving forward; indeed, the presence of the heavy battery during a movement in the direction of Ghazni and Kabul could only be an encumbrance, and I would, therefore, strongly recommend that this battery return to India: it should leave Kandahar early in February. The services of the 19th Punjab Infantry may also be dispensed with, and I would propose that this regiment escort the heavy battery from Quetta.

“In considering, as above, the arrangements to be



made for the movement of the Bengal troops under my command, in accordance with your telegram of the 10th instant from Calcutta, I have estimated that the troops to reach Kandahar in relief could not do so before the end of March. Should it, however, be possible to expedite the despatch of the troops under orders of movement from Bombay, I would urge the advisability of so doing, it being in my opinion in every respect desirable that the movement of the division to march from hence should commence, if possible, as early as the 21st March next."

In the course of the next few days instructions relative to the execution of this relief of the Bengal Division were issued to the Government of Bombay, and by General Stewart to Brigadier-General Phayre at Dadar. Arrangements had already been made by the Bombay Government for the relief of Phayre's brigade, and on the 15th January the Lieutenant-General was informed that the 5th, 16th, and 28th Bombay Infantry would reach Jacobabad for that purpose on the 25th of the same month.

Towards the end of January definite instructions were sent to General Stewart to hold all the troops under his command, which were originally drawn from the Bengal Presidency, in readiness to move in relief as a division, with the object of their returning to India either through the Bolan or *via* Ghazni; and he was informed that the following relieving corps would be at, or beyond, Jacobabad by the 17th February:

2nd Sind Horse (Major M. M. Carpendale).
Poona Horse (Colonel C. d'U. La Touche).
E-B, R.H.A. (Major G. F. Blackwood).
C2, R.A. (Major P. H. Greig).
2-7th Royal Fusiliers (Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. Daubeny).
66th Foot (Lieutenant-Colonel J. Galbraith).
4th Bombay Infantry (Colonel W. Bannerman).
10th Bombay Infantry (Colonel H. H. James).

A reserve division was also warned and equipped by



TRANSPORT ESTIMATE

the Bombay Government in accordance with instructions on same date, consisting of:

<i>Jacobabad</i>	.	{	1st Sind Horse.
		{	1st Light Cavalry.
		{	3rd Light Cavalry.
<i>Sukkur</i>	.	.	3rd Bombay Infantry.
<i>Hyderabad</i>	.	{	F-2, R.A.
		{	24th Bombay Infantry.
<i>Karachi</i>	.	{	D-B., R.H.A.
		{	2-11th Foot (wing).
		{	2-15th Foot.
		{	9th Bombay Infantry.
		{	23rd Bombay Infantry.
<i>Bombay</i>	.	.	2-11th Foot (head-quarters and wing).

About the same time General Stewart's detailed estimate of transport necessary for the march of his division (including the heavy battery and the 19th Punjab Infantry, which the Government of India considered should accompany his column), was furnished as follows to the Quartermaster-General:

Military Equipment.

Ordnance Department	.	.	.	3,300	camels.
Engineers' Field Park	.	.	.	700	"
General Hospital	.	.	.	50	"
Supplies and Commissariat	.	.	.	150	"
Reserve	.	.	.	2,600	"
Total	.	.	.	<u>6,800</u>	"

In addition to the above, 500 mules were required for equipment, and from 500 to 1,000 mules as reserve.

The month of February opened with a few days of very severe weather; the Bolan pass was blocked with snow, and all movements were brought to a standstill. By the 7th, however, the road was reopened for traffic, and the forward movement of troops continued steadily all along the line throughout the month.

On the 10th February Lieutenant-General Stewart, in reply to enquiries as to the date on which he could



begin his march, intimated that he hoped to move by the 15th March, by which date a brigade of the Bombay Division would have reached Kandahar. He proposed to send a brigade by Maruf to Kalat-i-Ghilzai about the 1st March to transfer supplies from the Arghastan Valley to that of the Tarnak; the remainder of the division was to move by brigades from Kandahar to Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and the force would be assembled at Ghazni between the 10th and the 15th April.

The Lieutenant-General also communicated to the Bombay Government about this date his views as to the most suitable transport for the force moving towards Kandahar to relieve him. He considered that all transport in advance of the Khojak should be such as could be utilised in a forward movement beyond Kandahar, and for this purpose camels and mules only should be employed. If a sufficiency of such transport were kept up, it could work back to where the regular cart-train ended. Kala Abdulla was the most convenient changing station, and must remain so until the road over the Khojak was made fit for wheeled transport. The number of carts constituting a daily train which could be kept up was limited by the restricted amount of forage which could be collected in the Bolan during the winter months. Ponies, as procured from India, were, he considered, worthless for transport purposes. Pack-bullocks and donkeys, as well as hired camels, could advantageously be employed by the Commissariat Department as reserve transport, and every endeavour should be made to supplement Government transport by hired carriage. For the former attendants could with difficulty be procured at the scale of wages fixed, and any increase of pay was to be deprecated as affecting the position of the native soldier.

During this month some correspondence passed between Sir Donald Stewart and head-quarters regarding the lines of communication and the projected Harnai-Kandahar railway. The line had been completed to Sibi, the Harnai route had been selected for



THE HARNAI ROAD

its further extension, and a cart road had also been completed as far as Harnai. Writing on the 5th March, the Lieutenant-General strongly advocated the extension of this line from Gwal along the Surkhab drainage, by Nya Bazar to Kala Abdulla, but on further investigation it was found that the advantages of this route were doubtful, and a decision of the question was accordingly deferred.

Meanwhile the progress made with the Harnai road and railway pointed to an abandonment of the Bolan route at no distant date, and this prospect materially altered the conditions under which it had been proposed to erect shelter for the officers and establishments of the Transport Department at Sibi, and at the stages on the Bolan line. Sir Donald Stewart now considered that it would be sufficient to erect temporary roof-shelter under which transport officials could pitch their tents in the hot weather.

The question of transport for Sir Donald Stewart's division was one which continued to occupy the attention of the Lieutenant-General. The estimated requirements were increased by the necessity of carrying warm clothing for the troops; while 140 camels were needed for the transport of treasure, of which it was estimated that 1,371,000 rupees would be required. It was, however, found extremely difficult to purchase camels in the Kandahar district during March, a fact which appeared to arise from the severe weather of the preceding month, the high rate of hire given by the Commissariat Department, the long drought, which had necessitated the removal of camels by their owners to inaccessible districts where water was procurable, and the rise in the market value of these animals. The Director of Transport was accordingly requested, in view of the forward movement in contemplation, to use every endeavour to spare the camels belonging to the regimental equipment of corps which were under orders to move, and Sir D. Stewart wished that no more Government carriage should be despatched from



Kandahar, all necessary commissariat stores being brought forward on hired cattle.

On the 15th March the Assistant Quartermaster-General, Kandahar Field Force, communicated to the Director of Transport, in the following memorandum, the Lieutenant-General's views as to the systematising of this use of hired transport:

"There are three points along the line to which hired carriage may be drawn: (i) At the base, Sibi, the owners of Brahui camels will contract at fixed rates for the conveyance of loads to Quetta throughout the greater portion of the year, and although, as their experience extends, they may become willing to make journeys to Kandahar itself, it seems advisable to limit their operations to the portion of the line between the base and Quetta to which they are accustomed, and where they are more or less known; as the regular cart-train will work between Quetta and Kala Abdulla throughout the year, the entertainment of hired carriage at Quetta will only be necessary under exceptional circumstances, as at the present time, when a large number of troops and stores are being brought forward at once. (ii) Kala Abdulla, the stage at which the cart-train stops, becomes, therefore, the second point to which hired carriage should be drawn. At Kala Abdulla, Peshin carriage proper may be entertained for trips to Kandahar, and some carriage belonging to residents on this side of the Khojak can be procured, while, in a short time, the owners of camels in Shorawak may be expected to bring them forward for hire. A large portion of the carriage available at Kala Abdulla consists of donkeys. (iii) Kandahar is the third point at which hired carriage can be engaged, either for working forward towards Kalat-i-Ghilzai, or backwards towards Kala Abdulla, or for stocking the posts along the line of communication.

"The employment of hired carriage relieves troops from the arduous duty of furnishing escorts with convoys, and admits of the necessary rest being given



HIRED CARRIAGE

to camels belonging to the military equipment of troops, and to brigade and departmental reserve. The price which is already paid for hired carriage in consequence of the exceptional demands made on Government transport during the past year is, however, excessively high; and it must be remembered that in advocating the equipment of a large number of troops at Kandahar with field carriage, the intention has been to employ this transport in bringing forward supplies from the terminus of the cart-train, whenever the General Officer Commanding the troops may consider it possible to do so, while in arranging transport for treasure and warlike stores, which are placed under military escorts, it is always necessary to use Government camels.

“The pilfering which is liable to occur during the transfer of stores by hired transport can only be properly checked by the weighing of loads previous to despatch and upon receipt, a regular invoice being sent with each consignment. I am, however, to suggest that it is necessary to discontinue the despatch of stores at irregular intervals, whenever owners of carriage declare their willingness to start, and to arrange the entertainment of hired transport in accordance with a fixed time-table worked forward from the base. The control of carriage in this manner can be best arrived at by the employment of *caravan-bashis* and a regular weekly or bi-weekly despatch.

“The owners of carriage are well known, and it can be arranged to let them understand through the *caravan-bashi* how many camels or donkeys will be required on each occasion, if regular notice of all despatches from the base is passed along the line. A *caravan-bashi* should accompany each batch of hired animals, and should be responsible for the stores entrusted to him, taking them over formally at the stage of departure and obtaining a receipt on delivery.

“The management of hired carriage and the control of its cost are matters which very materially affect arrangements connected with the supply and movement



of troops, and influence the market of the country; the Lieutenant-General is therefore anxious that these points receive close attention."

On the 9th March General Phayre, c.b., and staff, with head-quarters 1st Bombay Infantry, escorting 5-11, Royal Artillery, and ordnance stores, arrived at Kandahar; General Phayre was forthwith directed to assume command of the Kandahar garrison.

In the afternoon of Monday, 15th March, Lieutenant-General Sir Donald Stewart received the principal mullas and headmen of the city and surrounding villages in darbar. He addressed them at length, recapitulating the causes which had led to the occupation of Kandahar by the British, and pointing out the desire of the British Government to leave Afghanistan to be governed by Afghans, as proved by the establishment of Sardar Sher Ali Khan as Wali or Viceroy of Kandahar. He then proceeded to condemn the senseless and disgraceful outrages by fanatics on British officers and soldiers, attributing much of the blame for such deeds to the evil counsels of some of the mullas, and he concluded by warning his hearers that a continuance of such outrages would certainly be punished by measures which should be felt by the whole community, and which would ensure the severe punishment of all in any way connected with the wretched individuals who were thus made the tools of designing men not less guilty than themselves.

The General then dismissed the assemblage, informing them of his own approaching departure, and stating that the policy inaugurated by him under the orders of Government would certainly be continued by his successor as long as the people behaved with loyalty to the Sardar and the Government.

On the 13th March an attempt had been made by the inhabitants of some Tokhi Ghilzai villages to cut off a convoy of mules with *bhusa* between Takir in Mizan and Kalat-i-Ghilzai. On the 17th a force of the following strength, under Lieutenant-Colonel J.



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Galloway, 29th Bombay Infantry (2nd Baluchis), was despatched from Kalat-i-Ghilzai to seize the maliks concerned in this outrage:

2nd Punjab Cavalry, 1 officer and 60 sowars.

11-11, Royal Artillery (2 guns).

29th Bombay Infantry, 2 officers, 213 sepoy.

The cavalry detachment of Colonel Galloway's force, under Captain J. R. Campbell, accompanied by Major Briscoe, Political Officer, went on in advance, but did not succeed in capturing the head malik, Muhammad Ata, who, with a few followers, escaped to the hilly ground, where pursuit was impossible. A few shots were exchanged, and one of the cavalry horses was killed and another wounded. One or two of the malik's followers were reported to have been hit.

The force bivouacked on the 17th and 18th in Muhammad Ata's village, and reached Kalat-i-Ghilzai in two marches on the 20th, having secured Muhammad Ata's brother and property.

Meanwhile, with the arrival of detachments of the Bombay Division at Kandahar, the departure of General Stewart's force drew near. In view of this event the following letter was, on the 17th March, despatched from the Adjutant-General in India to the Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay Army:

"The move of the Bombay Division to Kandahar, and the projected advance from that place of the Bengal Division under Sir D. Stewart, render it necessary that some definite instructions should be issued in regard to the command and supply of the Bombay troops after Sir D. Stewart leaves. I have, therefore, the honour, by desire of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, to inform you that all questions of discipline, and all matters of supply, clothing and equipment, ammunition, medical services, etc., should, when the Bengal Division advances, be dealt with under Your Excellency's orders. All orders, however, regarding movements, tactical or strategical, of the Kandahar Force will continue to be issued by the



BOMBAY DIVISION STAFF

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Commander-in-Chief in India, to whom the usual returns will continue to be submitted. The Government of India have been informed that His Excellency considers that the supply of the troops should continue to be dealt with by the Bombay Government. A Brigadier-General to command the line of communications from Jacobabad to Kandahar has been recommended, and if the appointment is sanctioned, this officer will be responsible to the General Officer Commanding at Kandahar for forwarding all supplies, stores, etc., from the base of that place."

On the following day the staff and constitution of the 1st Bombay Division were published by the Bombay Government, Major-General J. M. Primrose, C.S.I., being in command, Brigadier-General R. Phayre, C.B., A.D.C., in command of the line of communications, and Brigadier-Generals G. R. S. Burrows and H. F. Brooke commanding brigades.

General Stewart intended to take with him food supplies for British soldiers for two months (except potatoes, of which the supply was for one month only); supplies for seven days for natives. The total weight of these supplies was estimated at 6,260 maunds (about 4,750 cwt.)

The date of Sir Donald Stewart's departure from Kandahar, originally fixed for the 15th March, was put off, owing to delays in the arrival of the Bombay troops and in the movements of drafts for Bengal regiments, until the end of the month.

One of the brigades of the force was to march by the alternative Khushk-i-Rud route to Kalat-i-Ghilzai, whilst the remainder followed the main road.

On the 29th March Brigadier-General R. Barter's brigade, composed as follows, began the march:

- 1st Punjab Cavalry.
- 11-11, R.A. (4 guns, mountain).
- 2-60th Rifles.
- 25th Punjab Infantry.
- Section B, Field Hospital.



STRENGTH OF THE FORCE

On the 30th and 31st respectively the Field Force head-quarters, with the Cavalry (General Palliser's) Brigade and the 2nd (Brigadier-General Hughes's) Brigade, left Mohmand, of the following strength:

Brigadier-General C. H. Palliser.	{	19th Bengal Lancers.
		A-B, R.H.A.
		6-11, R.A. (40-pr. elephant).
		19th Punjab Infantry.
Escort of Lieutenant-General Stewart.	{	Engineer Field Park.
		19th Bengal Lancers (1 troop).
		2-60th Rifles (1 company).
		25th Punjab Infantry (1 company).
Brigadier-General R. J. Hughes.	{	11-11, R.A. (2 guns, mountain).
		2nd Punjab Cavalry.
		G-4, R.A. (field).
		Ordnance Field Park.
		59th Foot.
		2nd Sikh Infantry.
		3rd Gurkhas.
		Section A, Field Hospital.

The strength of the force was¹:

British troops (including officers)	2,154
Native troops	5,095
Followers	7,273
Horses	1,942
Artillery mules	162
„ bullocks	547
„ elephants	13
Riding mules	162
Grasscutters' ponies	714
Transport camels	6,881
„ mules	789

General Barter's brigade moved by way of Tagak into the Khushk-i-Rud Valley, the remainder of the force by Jaldak to Kalat-i-Ghilzai, which was reached without incident on the 6th-7th of April.

Meanwhile, previous to his departure from Kanda-

¹ For a complete return of the division see Appendix XVII.



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har, Sir Donald Stewart, on the 29th March, sent the following telegram to the Viceroy at Calcutta:

"I am not in possession of the orders of Government, nor have I received the programme for field operations now being commenced; but I would point out that I am carrying forward from hence supplies for two months, and that I shall not require to draw more European supplies from India by Kabul or Kurram until the end of May. If it is intended that the division under my command move forward beyond Ghazni towards Kurram, supplies should be collected at some place in Kurram where the troops under my command may pass the remainder of the hot weather. By the information which I have received, no opposition is likely to be encountered at Ghazni which may not be easily overcome by the troops with which I am advancing. The movement of a column from Kabul to meet the division under my command will, in my opinion, increase the strain upon the country which the demands of this division for native supplies must entail. The collections of tribesmen under Muhammad Jan and Mushk-i-Alam have already drawn largely upon the supplies which are procurable in the neighbourhood of Ghazni, and the uncertainty which prevails throughout the country has doubtless prevented large areas from being cultivated this spring. It is only with difficulty that sufficient transport has been obtained to allow of the division under my command being moved with full equipment, and I am calculating on replacing casualties amongst baggage animals by purchases made at Ghazni. I submit for consideration that it is very desirable that no movement of troops belonging to Kabul or Kurram command should be made in advance of Kushi. I have this morning received a telegram from Sir F. Roberts that he only proposes to supply, for my division at Ghazni, tea, sugar, and possibly rum, and that for all other supplies I must depend upon the country.

"I hope it will be understood that I do not require any supplies to be advanced from Kabul to meet me;



and that if orders are given for my division to remain at Ghazni, I would at once establish communication with Kabul or Kurram as may be desired, sending my own transport to bring forward necessary supplies. I make this statement not with a view of disturbing any proposed plan of operations, but in order that there may be no misconception regarding the difficulty of feeding a large force at Ghazni during the present season."

On the 2nd April General Stewart wired further:

"I would recommend that a column be held in readiness at Kabul for movement. On arrival at Kalat-i-Ghilzai I shall be in a position to state with some precision the date on which I hope to reach Ghazni, by which date I think the column [from Kabul] should be at Shekhabad, as proposed by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief."

The Commander-in-Chief telegraphed on the 31st to Sir Donald Stewart in the following terms, but the communication never reached him, and he acted in the spirit of the instructions which had emanated from the Government of India:

"Government of India desire that you may be informed of the entire plan of operations, and of the political objects desired by Government, which are thus summed up in a telegram from the Military Department: 'The Government is anxious to withdraw, as soon as possible, the troops from Kabul and from all points beyond those to be occupied under the Treaty of Gandamak, except Kandahar. In order that this may be done, it is desirable to find a ruler for Kabul, which will be separated from Kandahar. Steps are being taken for this purpose; meanwhile, it is essential that we should make such a display of strength in Afghanistan as will show that we are masters of the situation and will overawe disaffection; but it is not desirable to spread our troops over a large tract of country or to send small columns to any place where they would encounter opposition and increase the hostile feeling against us. All that is necessary, from the



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political point of view, is for General Stewart to march to Ghazni, break up any opposition he may find there or in the neighbourhood, and open up direct communication with General Sir F. Roberts at Kabul. This he can do either by the direct route or by Kushi, as he may think to be most expedient, under such conditions as may exist when he is at Ghazni. It is undesirable that Sir D. Stewart's troops should remain for long at Ghazni, and it is therefore necessary that all military dispositions should be made with a view to enabling him to leave Ghazni as soon as he has put down any open opposition that he may find there. It is very desirable that the operations in Afghanistan should, as soon as possible, be brought under one head. Sir D. Stewart should, therefore, assume the supreme command as soon as he is in direct communication with Kabul. In the meantime he should be daily kept informed, both by the Foreign Department and the Military Department, of all news received from Kabul, and from any part of the Khyber or Kurram lines of communication, so that he may be constantly and fully made aware of the exact state of the situation at all points.

“With reference to foregoing, which will be your guide, you will, on reaching Ghazni, open communication with Kabul either by the direct route or by Kushi, as may be found expedient, and assume supreme command. General Roberts has reported to Government that he is unable to carry out the proposed move to Kushi, the object of which was to open up communication with Kurram, and to be ready at Kushi to support you should you call for aid; he has been told therefore that he must send a column along the Ghazni direct road, so as to open communication with you and support you by the time you reach Ghazni. There has never been any intention of sending any of the Kabul force to Ghazni unless you called on them to move up. It has been arranged that six months' supplies for 5,000 British and 10,000 native troops shall



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be collected in Kurram for any of your force withdrawn into the valley for the hot weather."

On the 7th April the Lieutenant-General telegraphed to the Government of India that he hoped to arrive at Ghazni on 21st April, and recommended that the column from Kabul should reach Shekhabad on the 20th April. Owing to unexpected difficulties about transport, he had not been able to take with him all the two months' supplies for British troops as intended, but arrangements had been made for the balance to be sent after him; he therefore proposed to ask General Roberts to despatch groceries and rum for British troops with the Shekhabad column from Kabul. General Stewart telegraphed to the same effect to General Roberts, asking him to send ten days' supplies of groceries, etc. for 2,200 Europeans.

On the 8th April the march of the Field Force was continued, 6-11, Royal Artillery, being transferred from Palliser's to Hughes's brigade, in order that the road might be prepared in advance for the heavy guns; two guns of 11-11 Mountain Battery joined General Palliser from Kalat-i-Ghilzai, and Nos. 4 and 10 Companies of Sappers.

General Barter's brigade and the Field Force headquarters with General Palliser's brigade advanced by the left and right bank of the Tarnak respectively, the 2nd Brigade following one march in rear of General Palliser. At Shahjui, which was reached on the 11th April, General Barter was only two miles from headquarters, and the two guns of 11-11, Royal Artillery, which had accompanied the latter from Kalat-i-Ghilzai, joined the head-quarters of the battery in the 1st Brigade.

On the 14th April the two leading brigades concentrated at Mukur, distant 155 miles from Kandahar and 74 miles from Kalat-i-Ghilzai; General Hughes's brigade still remained one march in rear. Since leaving Kalat-i-Ghilzai all the villages passed had been found deserted, and great difficulty was consequently experienced in collecting supplies for the natives and



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transport, although large foraging parties consisting generally of half the infantry of the force, taken from each unit, scoured the country on each side. On several occasions considerable bodies of hostile Afghans were seen by these parties hovering on the flanks of the column; on the 12th Sir Donald Stewart reported to Simla that opposition would probably be encountered within the next few days; and on the 15th a few shots were exchanged between the scouts on the right flank of the column and those of a large hostile force, said to be mostly Taraki and Suliman Khel Ghilzais. Similar incidents occurred on the 16th; on the 17th the main body halted at Jan Murad (Jamrad), where the whole force was concentrated and marched on together the next day. On this date (April 18th), a force estimated at from 8,000 to 10,000 Afghans was observed by scouts moving on a line parallel to General Stewart's advance, and distant some 8 or 10 miles from the right flank. Meanwhile, the difficulty in procuring supplies continued until Jan Murad was reached, where, thanks to the co-operation of the Hazaras, who were ready to help the British against their constant enemies, the Afghans, a large quantity of flour and grain was obtained.

On the morning of the 19th April the order of march of the 1st and 2nd Brigades was reversed, and the division left camp at Mashaki as follows:

19th Bengal Lancers	300 lances.	Advance guard, etc., under command of Brigadier-General Palliser.
A-B, Royal Horse Artillery	6 (9-pr.) guns.	
19th Punjab Infantry	470 rifles.	
Divisional Headquarters, escorted by	2-60th Rifles 63 25th Punjab Infantry 85 19th Bengal Lancers 50 lances.	
Nos. 4 and 10 Companies, Bengal Sappers and Miners	80 rifles.	Total: 350 lances, 689 rifles, and 6 guns.
59th Foot	436 "	
3rd Gurkha Regiment	289 "	
2nd Sikh Infantry	367 "	
G-4, Royal Artillery	6 (9-pr.) guns.	Main body, consisting of the 2nd Infantry Brigade, under Brigadier-General Hughes.
6-11, " "	2 (40-pr.) guns.	
	2 (6-3") howitzers.	
2nd Punjab Cavalry	349 sabres.	
		Total: 1,092 rifles, 349 sabres, and 10 guns.



ORDER OF MARCH

Field Hospitals	} Baggage and supply trains with detachments on the flanks.
Ordnance and Engineer Field Parks	.	.	.	.	.
Treasure	.	.	.	.	.
Commissariat	.	.	.	.	.
Baggage	} Rear guard, composed of the 1st Infantry Brigade, etc., under Brigadier- General Barter. Total: 1,393 rifles, 316 sabres, and 6 mountain guns.
2-60th Rifles	.	.	.	.	443 rifles.
15th Sikh Infantry	.	.	.	.	570 "
25th Punjab Infantry	.	.	.	.	380 "
11-11, Royal Artillery (Mountain Battery)	.	.	.	.	6 (7-pr.) guns.
1st Punjab Cavalry	.	.	.	.	316 sabres.

The length of the entire column when on the march was about 6 miles.

Divisional head-quarters and the 2nd Brigade had marched about 7 miles and were halting for a short rest, when the cavalry of the advance guard reported that bodies of the enemy were in position 3 miles ahead. The Lieutenant-General directed the battalions of the 2nd Infantry Brigade to form on the left of the road, in line with the horse artillery battery. The 2nd Punjab Cavalry passed to the right, the country on that side being flat and open as far as the Ghazni River, some 3 miles distant. The 19th Punjab Infantry, head-quarters escort, and companies of sappers followed in reserve. The three batteries were in column of route on the road. An order was sent to Brigadier-General Barter to bring up half his infantry, and to despatch two squadrons of the 1st Punjab Cavalry to join the cavalry, of which Brigadier-General Palliser assumed command.

The advance being resumed, half a squadron of 19th Bengal Lancers were sent to cover the left flank of the infantry brigade, which was in close proximity to a range of low hills. These hills ran parallel to the road for some distance, and then bent round to the eastward, the track passing through them. The enemy were found to be in position at this point, and their standards planted along the ridge on both sides of the road. Their right wing extended for some distance, flanking the line by which the division would advance.



When within a mile and a half of the enemy, the horse artillery and field batteries moved out and took up positions to shell the ridge in front, the 2nd Punjab Cavalry supplying the escort to the horse artillery, and one company of the 19th Punjab Infantry protecting G-4. The 2nd Infantry Brigade deployed in line of quarter columns to the left of the guns, facing the enemy's right wing. One and a half squadrons of the 19th Bengal Lancers were now on the left of the infantry, protecting that flank. The 2nd Punjab Cavalry (three squadrons) were on the right of the artillery, which had also special escorts of one squadron of the 19th Bengal Lancers, and one company of the 19th Punjab Infantry. The heavy guns unlimbered on a knoll close to the road, about 1,500 yards from the left of the field artillery. They were thus on the extreme left of the line. Between them and the 19th Bengal Lancers was a considerable gap. Behind the knoll were placed the equipment of the sapper companies, the infantry entrenching tools, etc. The troops detailed for the reserve were in rear of the left, while the Lieutenant-General placed himself on a slight elevation immediately behind the 19th Bengal Lancers.

At 9 o'clock, and before the intended attack of the position was developed, the crest of the range occupied by the enemy was observed to be swarming with men along a front of nearly 2 miles. Scarcely had the guns opened fire when from the enemy's centre rushed successive waves of swordsmen on foot, stretching out beyond either flank and seeming to envelop the troops. At the same time a large body of horse rode along the hills, threatening the left flank and rear. As the swordsmen on foot swept down on the infantry and guns, the Afghan horse poured along two ravines, which united at the foot of the hills, and in one mass charged the 19th Bengal Lancers before the latter could acquire sufficient speed to meet them fairly. The 19th were forced back in some confusion to their right rear, disordering the 3rd Gurkhas, who were the



left of the three battalions of infantry, which had now been formed into company squares. The enemy's mounted men having swept right through, disappeared on to the plain to the east. The 2nd Brigade then resumed the line formation and fired steady volleys.

Meantime the swordsmen on foot pressed their attack home with fanatical fury, and it became necessary to place the whole reserve in the fighting line. Half a battalion of the 19th Punjab Infantry and the Sapper companies were brought up on the left, and the other half battalion of the 19th, with the two companies of the Lieutenant-General's escort belonging to the 60th Rifles and 25th Punjab Infantry, were pushed in between the two batteries.

These were now firing case and reversed shrapnel at close ranges into the swarming Afghans, but neither this nor the heavy fire from the breechloaders of the infantry could stop the rush of the *ghazis*.

At this moment the situation was critical, and the 59th Foot received from a staff officer the order to retire from the depression in which they had formed. The Afghan horsemen, who were pushing round the left flank, were, however, checked by the firmness of the 3rd Gurkhas, while on the right the 2nd Punjab Cavalry charged and drove back the swordsmen on foot. The batteries of artillery, whose gallantry and discipline were highly commended by Sir D. Stewart, took up fresh positions, and the guns of G-4, Royal Artillery, being distributed in the infantry line, again opened fire. The 59th Foot, recovering from the confusion into which the two companies on the right had been thrown in obeying the order to refuse the right flank, poured a withering fire into the Afghans. In the centre the 2nd Sikhs gallantly maintained their position with unwavering steadiness.

A squadron of the 2nd Punjab Cavalry relieved the squadron of the 19th Bengal Lancers, acting as escort to the guns, and the other two squadrons of the former regiment relieved the Lancers on the left flank. Two



squadrons of the 1st Punjab Cavalry having come up, they were joined by the 19th Bengal Lancers, and the whole, under Brigadier-General Palliser, were pushed to the right towards the river.

Meantime the steady fire of the Sikhs and Gurkhas began to tell. Checked by the deadly effect of the rifles, which mowed them down by hundreds, the enemy slackened their attack and began to retire, creeping off along the high hills to the west, where they came under the well-directed fire of Major Tillard's heavy battery, which prevented any attack being made on the left rear and the baggage column. Once the fanatical onslaught of the enemy was quenched, their defeat rapidly became a rout, and by 9.45 a.m. the whole body was broken up and dispersed over the country. The "cease fire" was sounded at 10 o'clock, the engagement having then lasted one hour. Towards the close of the fighting a portion of Brigadier-General Barter's infantry came up and reinforced the right centre.

Owing to the necessity for protecting the large parks and baggage, no pursuit was possible. The cavalry were therefore re-called, but not before the regiments on the right had been closely engaged.

The enemy lost very heavily; more than a thousand dead bodies lay thickly scattered on the ground in front of where the British line had stood. The numbers engaged on the Afghan side were probably about 15,000, the majority of whom were Ghilzais, but a large contingent of Alizai and other Duranis of Zamindawar had undoubtedly followed the British army from the neighbourhood of Kandahar and were forward in the fight. The total losses of the Afghans were probably about three thousand killed and wounded.

The casualties among the troops were slight, considering the fanatical onslaught of the enemy and consequently the close nature of the fighting. The artillery had one officer and two men wounded, also a *syce* killed. The 1st Punjab Cavalry (two squadrons)



CASUALTIES

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had 19 men wounded, 32 horses wounded, and 5 missing. The 2nd Punjab Cavalry had 3 men and 5 horses killed, 2 officers, 20 men, and 21 horses wounded, and 2 horses missing. The 19th Bengal Lancers had 5 men and 3 horses killed, 4 officers, 3 native officers, 41 men, and 15 horses wounded, and 6 horses missing. The 59th Foot had 1 man killed and 2 officers and 10 men wounded. The 2nd Sikhs had 1 man killed and 10 wounded, including a muleteer. The 3rd Gurkhas had only 3 followers wounded. The 19th Punjab Infantry had 3 wounded; the Sappers and Miners, 1 wounded.

In the head-quarters escort, the 2-60th Rifles had 3 killed and 1 wounded, and the 25th Punjab Infantry 3 wounded; of the infantry of Brigadier-General Barter's brigade, 1 man of the 60th Rifles was wounded.

The total losses were 17 killed and 124 wounded, including officers and followers. Eight cavalry horses were killed, 68 wounded, and 13 missing.

After a halt of two hours, during which the killed were buried and the wounded attended to, the advance was resumed in compact formation, and passing over the ground occupied by the enemy, the division completed its march of 17 miles to Nani, where it halted for the night.

Two days later, on the 21st April, the division encamped outside the city of Ghazni (223 miles from Kandahar), and halted there for the next four days. From the top of the Sher Dahan Pass, on the 22nd, heliographic communication was established with Major-General J. Ross, who had advanced from Kabul to Saidabad, in the Wardak Valley. A reconnaissance was also made of the country north-east of Ghazni, which revealed the presence of a large body of hostile Afghans occupying the villages of Arzu and Shalez. Accordingly at 3.30 a.m., on the 23rd April, while a wing of the 19th Punjab Infantry was despatched to guard the gates of Ghazni, the following force marched out of camp to disperse the enemy:



THE FORCES ENGAGED

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Cavalry, 6 squadrons.	{ 1st Punjab Cavalry . . . 322 sabres. 2nd Punjab Cavalry . . . 325 „	}	Under Briga- dier- General Palliser.
Artillery, 2 batteries.	{ A-B, R. H. A. 11-11, R. A. (Mountain Battery).		
	<hr/> 647		
Infantry Bri- gade, 4 bat- talions.	{ British . 2-60th Rifles . . 525 rifles.	}	Under Briga- dier- General Barter.
	{ 2nd Sikhs . . . 424 „		
	{ Native { 15th Sikhs . . . 578 „		
	{ 25th Punjab In- fantry . . . 458 „		
	Total . 1,985 „		

After marching some 3 miles from camp a ridge was ascended, from the top of which was seen, about 3,000 yards off, a great number of the enemy (about 6,000 strong) in a position between two villages, Arzu and Shalez, which were both strongly enclosed with mud walls and some half a mile apart.

About 5 a.m. the Royal Horse Artillery guns opened fire with common shell and those of the mountain battery with similar charges, the right half-battery of A-B shelling the village of Shalez, and the left half-battery and mountain guns laying on Arzu.

After a few rounds had been fired by both batteries, A-B advanced and took up a position from which the 9-prs. could fire at 1,800, 1,700, and 1,600 yards, shelling the villages with common shell, and from time to time firing shrapnel with time fuzes, as the enemy showed themselves; but the Afghans had capital cover in both villages. Simultaneously the mule battery 11-11, Royal Artillery, was advanced, firing at different ranges, but none at less than 1,400 yards.

By 8.30 a.m. it was evident that the cover in the villages was too good for the enemy to be much shaken by the fire, and Brigadier-General Palliser considered that the force with him was not sufficiently strong to attack the position. He communicated (by heliograph) accordingly with Sir Donald Stewart, and at the same time withdrew the batteries to their first positions.



Meanwhile, in the absence of the troops under Brigadier-General Palliser, the 2nd Brigade, under command of Brigadier-General Hughes, had got under arms and taken up a position to cover the camp, whilst the 19th Bengal Lancers were pushed forward about a mile as a connecting link with the troops engaged at Arzu and Shalez.

On receiving Brigadier-General Palliser's first report, Sir Donald Stewart promptly despatched the following troops :

59th Foot (half battalion),
3rd Gurkhas (6 companies),

to reinforce him. But even with this additional strength Brigadier-General Palliser did not consider himself justified in making the attack with the troops then at his disposal, and withdrew, as before mentioned, to a position on the ridge some 2,500 yards short of the villages held by the enemy.

Consequently Sir Donald Stewart himself advanced with the remainder of the troops under Brigadier-General Hughes, *viz.* :

19th Bengal Lancers,
G-4, R.A.,
59th Foot (half battalion),
19th Punjab Infantry (half battalion),

the protection of the camp being entrusted to Major Tillard, R.A., who had at his disposal—

6-11, R.A.,
Nos. 4 and 10 Companies, Sappers and Miners,
2 companies 3rd Gurkhas,

with the usual standing guards. At 11 a.m. the Lieutenant-General personally assumed command, and the troops were formed for attack; the disposition of the force being as follows :

Major H. de G. Warter was ordered to take his horse battery (A-B) to the right of General Barter's infantry brigade, and to open fire as soon as he could do so with good effect, taking ground to the right all



the time, so as to take the enemy in the front of the villages on their flank; the 1st Punjab Cavalry and 19th Bengal Lancers supported the horse artillery on the right flank against Shalez.

Sir John Campbell, on his arrival with G-4, was ordered to come into action on the left of Brigadier-General Hughes, supported by a company of the 59th Foot and a cavalry regiment (2nd Punjab) some little way to the left. At the same time 11-11, Royal Artillery, Major Harris's mule battery, was placed under Brigadier-General Hughes's orders in the centre of the 2nd Infantry Brigade.

Major Warter came into action several times, moving forward at intervals at a steady gallop, until he was within 800 yards of the flank, when his fire was very effective in scattering the enemy. Sir John Campbell's guns likewise opened fire on the left village (Arzu) at a range of about 1,720 yards, directing their shell on the enclosures in front and to the right and left of the village, with an occasional shell into the village itself.

Major Harris's mountain guns formed part of the direct attack and advanced with the fighting line, which was formed for attack and moved forward at 11.40 a.m. These guns came into action at different ranges from 1,400 to 900 yards, when the position was rushed and the enemy fled from the villages closely followed by the infantry, who were again accompanied by Harris's and Campbell's batteries. Major Warter was ordered to detach half a battery to join the cavalry on the right in pursuit, and was supported by detachments of the 1st Punjab Cavalry and 19th Bengal Lancers, as well as by a company of the 2nd Sikhs, who kept up with the battery in a wonderful manner. Sir John Campbell had meantime detached two guns to join the cavalry on the left, which did good service by their fire on the retreating bodies of the enemy.

The enemy's loss was estimated at 400 men, the British casualties being two killed and eight wounded.



The Kandahar force proceeded on its march two days later, but, just after leaving Ghazni, the following orders were on the 24th April communicated to Sir Donald Stewart from Simla :

“As soon as Sir D. Stewart has opened up communication with General Ross, he is to proceed to Kabul and assume supreme command. He should take no steps for the withdrawal of the Ghazni force by the Kurram until he has had an opportunity of personally acquainting himself with the state of things at Kabul, and until the results of the present gathering of the sardars and tribes have declared themselves. The wall of Ghazni should be breached, and a plan made of the place as it stands.”

In reply to the above, the Lieutenant-General despatched two messages to Head-quarters on the 24th and 25th, respectively, as follows :

To the Quartermaster-General, Simla.

“In reply to His Excellency’s telegram from Simla, dated 20th, I propose to place the Kandahar Division for the present at the head of the Logar Valley between Charkh and Purak, proceeding myself with General Ross’s force to Kabul. 6-11, Royal Artillery, the heavy battery, will go to Kabul. All information tends to prove that Muhammad Jan is now doing his utmost to rouse the tribes in this neighbourhood to attack the Paiwar Kotal. Such an attack is not at all probable, but it is probable that we shall be attacked when we go to Ali Khel, and that General Watson will meet with considerable opposition on the Shutargardan.”

To the Adjutant-General, India.

“His Excellency’s telegram of the 20th from Simla reached me too late to admit of my breaching the walls of Ghazni. As, however, the defences of Ghazni are contemptible, I do not think the matter is important. I brought away with me two field guns said to have been left at Ghazni after the last occupation,



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"In accordance with the orders of His Excellency, I proceed to Kabul from Saidabad with General Ross's force."

The Field Force encamped on the 25th April at Shashgao, where General Stewart was visited by Major-General J. Hills, C.B., V.C., who, with four other officers and an escort of 3rd Punjab Cavalry, rode over from General Ross's camp at Saidabad. Continuing the march on the following days, the Sajawan Pass was reconnoitred by Captain Broome, 2nd Punjab Cavalry, on the 27th, who reported it unsuitable for the passage of laden animals. On the 28th the Field Force headquarters with General Hughes's and Palliser's brigades marched to Saidabad, and General Barter's brigade to Shekhabad (265½ miles from Kandahar), and reconnaissances were made from each of these camps to the Zamburak Pass and the Tangi Wardak defile respectively. The latter proved impassable to wheeled artillery. On the same date Lieutenant-General Sir Donald Stewart handed over the command of the Ghazni Field Force to Brigadier-General Hughes, whose brigade was henceforward commanded by Colonel R. Lacy of the 59th Foot; the Lieutenant-General himself joined General Ross's camp at Shekhabad, with a view to proceeding to Kabul to assume supreme command of the British forces in Afghanistan.

The following message was despatched by General Stewart to Army Head-quarters on the 28th:

"The following is distribution of Ghazni Field Force: To-day General Barter's brigade is at Shekhabad, General Hughes's and Palliser's at Saidabad. The constitution of these brigades is unchanged, except that 6-11, Royal Artillery (heavy), has joined General Ross's column, and will proceed with them to Kabul. I start for Kabul to-morrow (29th) with General Ross, reaching there on 2nd May. General Hughes commands the Field Force temporarily, and has been instructed to have the roads from Shekhabad and Saidabad to the Logar Valley reconnoitred and made



practicable; when this is done, both columns will march simultaneously, effecting a junction in the Logar Valley at Amir Kala. The Field Force will then proceed to about Purak and Charkh, and be located there till further orders. Advantage will be taken of the halt to reconnoitre thoroughly in all directions, and furnish opportunity for survey work. General Hughes has been requested, when possible, to move a portion of the troops under his command to a post in a more northerly direction, so as to open and maintain communication with Kabul." On the 29th the Zamburak Kotal was again reconnoitred and the road over it improved the following day.

On the 30th April General Barter's brigade moved from Shekhabad by the Tangi Wardak defile to Amir Kala, whither it was followed on the 1st and 2nd May by General Palliser's and Colonel Lacy's (late Hughes's) brigades, from Saidabad *via* the Zamburak Pass. The former included the horse artillery battery, which was man-handled down the incline; with the latter proceeded the other battery on the following day, the track having been further improved meanwhile, consequently less difficulty was experienced. General Barter marched on the latter date to Barak-i-Barak, and there the division again concentrated on the 3rd May. One reconnaissance was sent out under Lieutenant-Colonel C. S. Maclean, 1st Punjab Cavalry, to the Altimur Pass, and a rough survey of the country made up to the watershed; and a second under Captain G. M. Abbott, 19th Bengal Lancers, towards Hisarak. The road to the latter place was also diligently pushed forward during the next few days, and on the 8th May the head-quarters of the division, with General Palliser's and Colonel Lacy's brigades, were established there. General Barter's brigade on the same day marched to Yusuf Kala, where he pitched his camp 2 or 3 miles from the mouth of the Charkh Valley, and separated by a low ridge from the Logar Valley. Communication was established with Hisarak by a



GENERAL STEWART BECOMES G.O.C.C. 365

road across the Logar River and Valley. Supplies were brought in freely during this period, and no hostility was shown by the inhabitants beyond one or two shots being fired at reconnoitring parties.

Meanwhile, on the 5th May, Lieutenant-General Stewart assumed command of the forces in Afghanistan, and on the 13th the fact was notified in the following General Order:

General Orders by His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, dated
Head-quarters, Simla, 13th May, 1880.

"In continuation of G.O.C.C., dated 13th March, 1880 (p. 144), it is notified that Lieutenant-General Sir Donald Stewart, K.C.B., having arrived at Kabul, has, as senior officer, assumed command of the troops there and on the line of communication.

"2. With the sanction of Government, the whole force under the command of Sir D. Stewart, K.C.B., will be called '*The Northern Afghanistan Field Force*,' and will consist of:

"I.—The 1st and 2nd Divisions of what has been heretofore known as '*The Kabul Field Force*,' which will become the 1st and 2nd Divisions, respectively, of '*The Northern Afghanistan Field Force*,' and remain under the immediate command of Lieutenant-General Sir F. Roberts, K.C.B., C.I.E., V.C. ;

"II.—'*The Ghazni Field Force*,' which will become the 3rd Division of '*The Northern Afghanistan Field Force*';

"III.—'*The Khyber Line Force*,' which will keep its present name; and

"IV.—Should the forces touch, '*The Kurram Force*,' which will retain its present designation."

On the 16th May Major-General James Hills, C.B., V.C., was appointed to command the 3rd Division, Northern Afghanistan Field Force (late Ghazni Field Force), and joined the camp at Hisarak on the same date.



CHAPTER XII

THE OPERATIONS OF THE 1st DIVISION, KABUL FIELD FORCE,
FROM JANUARY TO APRIL, 1880.

WE must now return to the events at Kabul, which had hitherto been the chief centre of operations during the campaign. The opening of the new year found the Field Force there under Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Roberts enjoying the results of their recent success. The defeat of the Afghans had dispersed the combination of hostile tribes in a manner more effectual than weeks of desultory operations such as those which had preceded it. The news of the British victory had spread over the country, the clansmen round Kabul were subdued, at least for the time, and the military position of the British forces in Afghanistan was apparently assured.

On the 7th January a detailed despatch from the Indian Government to the Secretary of State reviewed the situation and outlined the proposed course of military and political action in the immediate future. After commenting on the failure of the attempt to establish at Kabul a powerful and friendly ruler of a united Afghanistan in the person of Yakub Khan, the despatch draws the conclusion that the only course to be pursued was the dismemberment of the country into the separate provinces of Kabul, Kandahar, and Herat, and the arrangements of such a plan are discussed. It is not, however, necessary to consider these proposals at length, since they were afterwards subjected to important modification.

About the same date as this despatch a scheme of military operations for the ensuing spring was



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submitted by the Commander-in-Chief to the Government of India, through the Military Department. It suggested the march of Sir Donald Stewart's division by Ghazni to Kabul, as described in the last chapter; it also proposed operations from Kabul towards Kohistan and Bamian, and from the Khyber against the Ghilzais in the Laghman Valley, and the advance of a force from Kurram over the Shutargardan to Kabul. In the event of the tribesmen again renewing hostilities against Kabul in the spring, it would thus be possible within a very short time to assemble a large force from all the above-named quarters at the capital.

Meanwhile, however, reinforcements were required to replace casualties and invalids. Recommendations were put forward by the Commander-in-Chief to improve the recruiting for the Native Army, and proposals were also urged for the accumulation of stores of all sorts at Kabul before the beginning of the hot weather.

The latter question was one of much importance. As already stated, the lack of forage at the capital had necessitated the 12th Bengal Cavalry and 14th Bengal Lancers being sent to Jalalabad and Gandamak respectively; and at the same time all spare transport animals at Kabul were sent down the line, some to Peshawar, to be fitted with saddles, and others to work on the Khyber line until again required at Kabul. On the 6th January 1,000 of these transport animals left Sherpur with a convoy of sick and wounded, accompanied by Colonel C. M. MacGregor, who was to meet General Bright and confer with him on the disposition of the troops from Jamrud to Lataband.

On the 1st of the month Kabul was visited by several leading men of the Hazara tribe, who were well disposed to the British, and had held Ghazni in our interest until the 20th December, when it was seized by the Afghan tribesmen. During the same week a number of the Kohistani chiefs also came to the capital, as well as some headmen from Logar and several chiefs of the Ghilzais, amongst their number being the



influential Padshah Khan. The opportunity was therefore taken of holding a darbar, which took place under the presidency of Sir Frederick Roberts on the 9th January, and at which Sardar Shahibaz Khan was installed as Governor of Kohistan, and the intentions of the British were explained by the General.

On the 10th January General Roberts was asked to state his views as to operations to be undertaken in the coming spring, and he replied on the 13th in detail as follows:

“With reference to your telegram of the 10th instant to report, for the information of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief, my proposals as to operations to be undertaken in Kohistan and Bamian in the spring, I have the honour to state that, as soon as the severe weather is over, it is my intention to move the force from Sherpur, which from its great extent requires a large garrison, to the Siah Sang hill.

“The force will then be distributed between the Siah Sang (in an entrenched camp) and the Bala Hissar, where commissariat and ordnance stores, etc., will be duly protected.

“These two forces should consist of not less than a division of infantry, and should comprise:

Two British infantry regiments,
Five native infantry regiments,

as well as—

Two Bengal cavalry regiments,
One battery horse or field artillery,
Four mountain guns,
One company Sappers and Miners;

also sufficient gunners to work the heavy Afghan guns which will be in position.

“This force will be sufficient to protect Kabul and to ensure the tranquillity of the surrounding country, as well as to act as an immediate reserve to the troops employed in the direction of Bamian, Ghazni, or elsewhere.



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“For such field operations a force of the following strength should be at my disposal :

Two British infantry regiments,
Five native infantry regiments,
A brigade of cavalry,
One battery horse or field artillery,
One heavy battery,
Eight mountain guns,
Three companies Sappers and Miners.

“To bring the force now at Kabul up to the above strength I shall require :

One heavy battery,
A detachment of garrison gunners,
Two regiments native infantry.

* * * * *

“I annex a statement showing the posts which I consider should be maintained between Jamrud and Lataband, to enable me to take the field without anxiety for my communications with India by the Khyber route.

“This has been drawn up in consultation with General Bright, who, in lieu of a wing of native infantry at Dakka and 600 men at Ali Masjid, would prefer to have a regiment at the former, and 800 men at the latter, post.

“My object is to render each post strong enough to resist attack, and to form three small compact movable columns at Gandamak, Jalalabad, and Landi Kotal, respectively, as I consider that the safety of the line will be better secured in this manner than by posts of greater strength without movable columns.

“To admit of these posts being held, and movable columns being formed, General Bright's force will have to be increased by :

Two regiments British infantry,
Four regiments native infantry,
Two mountain guns ;



and the total increase to the Kabul Field Force, as it stood on the 1st instant, will be :

One heavy battery,
Some garrison gunners (for Afghan guns of position),
Two mountain guns,
Two regiments British infantry,
Six regiments native infantry.

“If mountain guns can be sent, one field battery now in the Khyber can well be spared.

“I am addressing the Adjutant-General regarding the strength of the different regiments at Kabul, also about ammunition supplies.

“I desire in this letter to suggest, for His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief's consideration, the advisability of letting the 10th, 12th, and 14th regiments of Bengal Cavalry proceed now to the nearest trans-Indus point where grass is plentiful, as the horses are done up and require rest. These regiments would then be fit for service by the end of March, the duty between Lataband and Basawal being taken meanwhile by other corps.

“If these proposals meet with the Commander-in-Chief's approval, I trust His Excellency will urge upon Government the desirability of increasing General Bright's force as I have recommended, without delay, in order that the districts of Laghman and Hisarak may be visited as soon as possible. The Khans of those districts have never yet felt the British power, and will assuredly break out and again disturb our communications on the first signs of disaffection in Kabul.

“On the other hand, if now dealt with, they will give us no anxiety in future; and when the season advances, we shall probably be able to place the majority of our troops in cooler and healthier localities than Jalalabad and other stations of low elevation.

“In conclusion, I think that the increase to the present Kabul garrison of the battery of heavy artillery and two native infantry regiments should be deferred

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