

THE INDIAN MUTINY, 1857

GYA INDIA September 1857 - an account of a skirmish with rebels written by my gt gt grandfather Lieutenant George Frederick Tod Whitlock Commanding H.M.S. 84 Regiment.

“On the 6th inst I received orders from Captain Raffray Com. der the station, to have my men in readiness to move out by 2.30 oclock P.M. but owing to some detention we did not start until 4 oclock. We marched to BOOD GYA a distance of about 6 miles, on arrival at that place late in the evening, it was decided that we should halt until further information of the Movements of the enemy should be obtained. On Tuesday the 8th inst. about ¼ past 3 oclock A.M. hearing that the Mutineers were at a place called Luckipore some 10 miles to the east of BOOD GYA. We proceeded to meet them, our road was very indifferent for the movements of Troops, we having two rivers the Lalajune and Fulgoo to cross. The countryside being much cut up with water courses and rice fields. We crossed the Lelajune and Fulgoo at almost right angles and then followed the East Bank of the Fulgoo.

About 9 oclock a.m. our advanced guard consisting of Captain Raffray's Sowars discovered the enemy crossing the Fulgoo some distance in our front, where the river takes a sharp turn to the South. We instantly crossed the river to intercept them and found their main body drawn up in line about 800 yards to our front near the village of ETAWAH. We on landing had formed Column of Subdivisions a formation which appeared most applicable to our small number consisting of 37 Europeans and 163 Seiks. The ground in the immediate vicinity of the river was low and marshy and we kept to it as much as possible, hoping that the Cavalry would attack us on our own ground. That occupied by the enemy was dry and uncultivated, and most favorable for cavalry movements, and they contented themselves with showing a front to us in whichever direction we moved. Their intention was evidently not to attack. On perceiving this we moved towards them, and arrived at their camping ground. The enemy then shewing a strong line to our front with a troop on each of our flanks, Here we halted again, and a subdivision under Lieut Boyd Late 7 Bengal N.I. was sent to bring up our Elephants.

We then sent out a section to dislodge a small party who were greatly annoying us by the precision of their fire from behind some trees on our right here two Seiks were wounded. The enemy then collected their Videttes, Retired to form column of route, thus advanced guard, baggage Main body and rear guard and proceeded to Bood Gya. Our elephants having come up we placed the Europeans on them, and moved off in the direction parallel with the enemy with the hope of getting into Gya before them. They discovered our intention, and a large body of them came down upon us at the charge, and breaking into three parties took up three positions viz a small village on our proper front, another on our right an a tape of trees on our proper left. The river being in our rear and opened fire upon us. After having successfully checked us for about 2½ hours, they then drew off leaving a picquet to watch our movements.

We then crossed the river. Under this fire 4 of my detachment were wounded, 3 severely. We got into GYA between 3 and 4 oclock a.m. in the 9th inst. and found that the enemy had passed through 4 hours previously. The number of the enemy actually opposed to us could not have been less than 500 men, and by the accuracy of Their movements they must have all been drilled men.

The distance Marched by my men were thus - 8 miles on the 6th inst. to Bood Gya, halted 7th marched ½ past 3 oclock a.m on the 8th Inst to ETAWAH 10 miles where we met the enemy and then marched back 18 miles to Gya where we arrived between 3 and 4 oclock a.m. of the 9th inst, thus during 24 hours my men went over 24 miles of ground and without food or shelter from the sun.

In conclusion I would beg to bring the notice of the General Com the division, that my available force of 33 men is very inadequate for the protection of GYA, and in case of a disturbance in this place my small detachment would be perfectly useless.

I have the honor to be SIR
Your obedient servant”

The above item was sent in by Penny Mills of Chichester, whose family shows on the WHITLOCK22 chart. Her gggrandfather, George Frederick Tod Whitlock was born in Moulmein, Burmah (India) December 5, 1827. He was the son of Sir George Cornish Whitlock and Harriet Toller who were married in Bangalore, India February 19,1825. The family was from Ottery St. Mary, Devon and Sir George Cornish Whitlock served in India many times from 1817-1868. He was made a Lieutenant General in 1864.

George Frederick Tod Whitlock was age 30 when he wrote the above report. He later he married Laura Vellacott November 22, 1859 in Fremington, Devon. George F.T. Whitlock participated in the siege and capture of Lucknow and was a member of the Sangor Field Force during the occupation of Alumbagh. He retired from the forces in 1866 and settled in the Barnstaple area of Devon. He died in Chester July 13,1900 and was buried at Barnstaple.

Penny notes that there are detailed reports about the Battle of Banda 19th April 1858 in the *Madras Spectator* 11th May 1858 and *Madras Times* 28th March 1859. The latter describes the part the Sangor field force played in the conquest of Oude. Penny's ggggrandfather, Sir George Cornish Whitlock was the commander of this force.

Our thanks to Penny Mills for this interesting addition to our files.

SOURCE: X5800