

The Indian Mutiny 1857

GYA INDIA September 1857 - an account of a skirmish with rebels written by my gt gt grandfather Lieutenant George F. A. 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 $\frac{1}{4}$ 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 country beside being much cut up with water courses and rice fields. We crossed the Lelajune and Fulgoo at almost right angles anf 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 oue 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 and a tape pf trees on our proper left. The river being in our rear and opened fire upon us. After having successfully checked us for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ 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 and 18 Seiks - 4 dangerously (1 since died) 10 severely, the rest slightly. 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ 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 to 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 $\frac{1}{2}$ lace my small detachment would be perfectly useless.

I have the honor to be SIR

Your obedient servant.

The Com.. Officer deems it his duty to put on record his opinion of the behaviour of the Officers and men of the Detachment under his command, consisting of Serg 1 Corpl 2 Lc 1 Ptes 37 of H.M.S. 84 Regiment under Lieut Whitl~~ick~~, and of 163 Rank & File of the Bengal Police Battalion when engaged with the Mutineers of the 5th irregular Cavalry on the 8th inst.

The detachment of 84th behaved as British Soldiers always do, They were steady cool and obedient under a heavy fire. They were exposed all day to a hot sun, and had nothing to eat or drink, yet the Com.. Officer heard not a murmur, they deserve and have his warmest thanks.

When the enemy came down to the charge on the banks of the river. The seiks were not so steady as could have been desired but it must be recollected that they are young soldiers, and have not been half drilled, with this exception the Com.. Officer was well pleased with them, more especially for their endurance, for they had nothing to eat, and were on their legs for fully 24 hours.

To Lieut Boyd of the Late 7 Bengal N.I. the Com.. Officer's thanks are especially due for he was ever ready to go anywhere and under any fire.

The Com.. Officer is also much indebted to Lieut McKinnon of H.M.S. 87 Fusiliers, who accompanied the force as a Volunteer, and made himself as useful as possible.

Captain Raffray much regrets that he had not the honor to lead the Detachment to Victory but he thinks that it is apparent to all that the enemy was so superior in numbers, the ground was so favorable for cavalry movements, that he could not have attacked further than he did without risking the annihilation of the entire Detachments. The Com.. Officer deeply regrets the number of wounded, amounting to 24 (one of whom a Private of the Bengal Police Battalion has since died) but under the circumstances he is deeply grateful to a Kind Providence that no further casualties occurred.

The thanks of the Com.. Officer are also due to the Medical Officers Drs Allen & Coates who accompanied the Force for their attention to the wounded.