

snow-ploughs to cut through drifts when necessary, but their main duty was to steadily tramp down a track all the way, which in this manner hardened sufficiently to bear the weight of the mules, while men with torches were left at turns and dangerous places; for if once a mule left the track, it at once sank into the adjoining snow and had to be unladen and lifted again on to the beaten path. In this way the top of the pass was reached in the middle of heavy rain and sleet at 7 A.M. The descent on the north side is very steep, never less than 1:4 and often 1:3, and the track had to be tramped down in zigzags. The laden mules found it almost impossible to control their movements, especially as the rain, freezing on the snow, had made the top layer into a sheet of ice, and large numbers of them were constantly slipping off, and, so to speak, "tobogganing" straight down the mountain. General Gatacre in his report says he saw as many as twenty at a time solemnly sliding down on their haunches for distances varying from 100 to 200 feet or more, when they turned complete somersaults into the snow, whence they could not move till dug out; and, as it was impossible to load them again there, the bags or boxes carried by them were sent sliding down the mountain, guided by ropes from party to party of men stationed on the descent, while the animals, replaced without loads on the path, found their way down the beaten track.

The column reached Ziarat, on the north side of the pass, below the snow line, by nightfall. I may add that the pass became more and more dangerous from this time till the snow melted sufficiently to admit of a summer road being made above the snow-covered torrent by the Pioneers. The only passage, until the snow melted sufficiently to admit of this being done, was up and down the centre of the snow-covered torrent, and for about ten days in the spring this becomes very dangerous, owing to the liability to sink through into the water beneath and to the avalanches of snow from the adjoining cliffs. Probably the best time to cross this and other passes of this nature is on a fine day at the latter end of winter when the snow is hard.

21. In conclusion, I have the honor to submit the following list of names of the officers whose services I would wish to bring to the notice of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in India for his favourable consideration:

Major-General E. Stedman, C.B., joined the force in April as Second-in-Command and General of Communications. He was given immediate command of the troops in rear of the advance, from the base to Dir, where the advanced depot was situated; and had charge of all the supply, transport, ordnance, and medical arrangements by which the troops under him, and those of the advance force beyond Dir, were maintained. Up to this time I had had to deal directly with the Brigadiers behind me, and with the various heads of departments—a matter of extreme difficulty, as the telegraph line was often some distance in rear and was sometimes interrupted; so that the relief obtained when Major-General Stedman took up his duties was immediately apparent.

Major-General Stedman is an officer of wide experience and knowledge of field requirements; he possesses great powers of organization, and his forethought for the wants of the Force has been a marked feature of his administration of the departments on which the Force depended. His services have been conspicuous, and I confidently recommend him to the notice of His Excellency as an officer of exceptional ability and worthy of advancement.

Brigadier-General W. F. Gatacre, D.S.O., has commanded the 3rd Brigade, and is an officer of exceptional and inexhaustible energy. He conducted in a very able manner the action of the 17th April, and his advance from Miankileh across the Janbatai and Lowarai passes was an example of what troops can do when inspired by a leader ready to accept responsibility and devoted to his duty.

I commend Brigadier-General Gatacre to His Excellency's notice as an officer of great ability and exceptional power of inspiring troops under him with energy and devotion.

Brigadier-General H. G. Waterfield commanded the 2nd Brigade during the forcing of the Malakand Pass and in the action of the 7th April at the passage of the Swat River. On both occasions he exhibited a quick grasp of the situation, followed by determined action, which show him to be a commander of promise. He has sound judgment, and I found him a very valuable assistant in more than one difficult situation.

Brigadier-General A. G. Hammond, V.C., C.B., D.S.O., had charge of the line of communications up to the arrival of Major-General Stedman, C.B., and did good work under considerable difficulties. Afterwards he was appointed to command the 4th Brigade, and has exercised his command with ability and success.

Of the divisional staff I have first to bring to His Excellency's notice Brigadier-General B. Blood, C.B., my chief staff officer. I am deeply indebted to Brigadier-General Blood, who is an officer of exceptional ability, ever ready for active work in the field or for the larger questions of strategical importance. He has also been of invaluable assistance from his large former war experience and engineering knowledge. In conducting his arduous duties as Chief Staff Officer, he has exhibited tact, firmness, and courtesy to all, and I would especially bring him to His Excellency's notice as an officer whose advancement would be a benefit to the public service.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. S. Craigie, Assistant Adjutant-General, is an excellent staff officer. He possesses marked ability, together with a complete knowledge of both staff and regimental duties; he is active, a good rider, very hard-working, and always ready for anything that may be required of him; and his tact, patience, and temper are remarkable.

Lieutenant-Colonel G. H. C. Dyco, Assistant Quartermaster-General, is also an excellent staff officer; most able, energetic, and reliable. He is very active, a good rider, with great tact, and always cheerful and good tempered. He is remarkably quick and accurate in his work.

Captain J. E. Nixon, Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General, Intelligence Branch, is a very promising officer, with great energy and marked ability. He is of very active habits, takes great interest in his work as Intelligence Officer, and has done very good service in obtaining information about the country in advance of the Force.

Lieutenant W. R. Robertson, 3rd Dragoon Guards, Field Intelligence Officer, is a very active and intelligent officer of exceptional promise.

Colonel W. W. Murdoch, Colonel on the Staff, Commanding Royal Artillery, is an officer of large experience and knowledge of artillery matters. He carried out his duties to my entire satisfaction.

The campaign has been remarkable for an exceptional amount of engineering work, and in carrying it out the services of Colonel H. P. Leach, D.S.O., have been of very great value. He