

I particularly request that Major-General Gowan will bring to the notice of Government the ready and loyal conduct on this occasion of the Jheend Rajah, and the good service performed by his troops. I have already, through Colonel Dansford, commanding the Rajah's troops, expressed my acknowledgments to the Rajah for the ready assistance he afforded on this occasion, and from the commencement of our operations before Delhi; and also my satisfaction at the favorable report made by Lieutenant Hodson of the gallantry of his men.

I have, &c.

A. WILSON, Major-General.

No. 63

Lieutenant W. S. R. Hodson, Commanding Irregular Horse, to the Assistant Adjutant-General, Delhi Field Force.

SIR, *Camp, Delhi, August 25, 1857.*

I HAVE the honor to report the proceedings of the Cavalry Detachment* which left camp under my command on the night of the 14th and 15th instant, under verbal instructions from Major-General Wilson, commanding the field force.

2. My instructions were to watch a party of the enemy who had moved out from Delhi by the Nujfurgurh road, with the avowed purpose of threatening our communications with Soneput and the Grand Trunk Road, or of marching to attack Hansi and the Rajah of Jheend, to ascertain their precise object and direction, and to afford support to either Soneput or the Jheend Rajah as might be necessary. I was also to examine the state of the roads and country, with a view to the probable necessity of a larger force taking the field.

3. On reaching Boanuh by way of Azadpoor and the canal bank, I ascertained that the enemy had passed the 14th at Samplah, and were said to be moving towards Rhotuck. I therefore pushed on to Khurkowdeh, on the road from Boanuh to that town, reaching it about noon on the 15th.

4. Having been informed that a number of Irregular Cavalry men—whose homes were in the village—had arrived the day before from Delhi at Khurkowdeh, I took measures for securing the several entrances to it, and attempting their capture, sending a small party of the Guide Corps to surprise and arrest the leading man, named Besharut Ali, a Ressaldar of the 1st Irregular Cavalry. Both objects were accomplished, only two sowars having had time to effect their escape before the village was surrounded. I then entered the village with a party of dismounted sowars. From information received from the villagers, I was able to seize several of the mutineer sowars before they had time to arm. A large party, however, took refuge in the upper story of a house belonging to one of the Lumberdars of the village, and defended themselves desperately. They were eventually overpowered and destroyed, but not without considerable difficulty, and several casualties on our side, Lieutenant H. Gough and seven men being wounded. I subsequently caused those of the captured, who were proved on inquiry to have been in the service of Government and to have joined the rebels, to be executed.

5. During the afternoon of the 15th, the enemy broke up from Samplah and marched to Rhotuck, where they gave out that they were going to remain for two or three days. I marched after them on

the morning of the 16th, towards Rhotuck by Sussaineh, Hamioonpore, and Bhaloot. On reaching Bhaur—five miles short of Rhotuck—I ascertained that the rebels had suddenly marched early in the morning towards Medinha, on hearing of our movements. I therefore halted for the day, the rain being very heavy.

6. On the morning of the 17th, we moved on Rhotuck. On approaching the town, and riding on to reconnoitre with a small party, I found a large body of armed men drawn up at the Old Fort, in front of the place, accompanied by a few sowars. They immediately opened fire on us, and, as we withdrew to bring up the detachment, followed us up the road, firing and yelling in derision.

The instant the head of the column arrived, they were charged, dispersed, and driven into the town, leaving thirteen of their number dead. They subsequently turned out to be Rangurs, Kusasies, and other turbulent inhabitants of the town, headed by Babur Khan, the chief of the Rangurs.

7. After riding round Rhotuck and reconnoitring the surrounding country and the approaches to it, I encamped in the open space in rear of the cutcherry buildings at the junction of the road by which we had marched from Bhaur with the main road to Delli. Some of the zemindars and Hindoos of Rhotuck came out to me immediately afterwards, and, through their instrumentality, the detachment was amply provided with all necessary supplies. No further attempt was made to annoy us.

8. At about 7 o'clock the next morning, I received information that Babur Khan had gone during the night to the camp of the rebels on the Hansi road, and brought back 300 Rangur horsemen belonging to different Irregular Cavalry regiments, to assist him in an attack upon us. Three or four minutes afterwards, a large body of horsemen dashed up the roads from the town at speed, followed by a mass of foot men, armed with swords and matchlocks, certainly not less than 900 or 1000 in number. At the moment of the attack, a party of twenty-five Jheend horsemen, who had come from Gohana, on hearing from me of our approach, were crossing the road towards our camp, and found themselves suddenly charged by, and intermixed with, the enemy's horse.

They defended themselves with their carbines, and thus checked the attacking party, two of their number being wounded. The whole of the horses of the detachment having been kept saddled, no time was lost in turning out, and the instant the twenty leading men were on their horses, the enemy was charged and driven back in confusion towards the town, their flight being covered by the matchlock-men, who had occupied some buildings and compounds between the cutcherry and the town. Directly the whole of the detachment was ready and formed up, I sent what little baggage and followers we had to the rear under a sufficient escort, and prepared for a further attack. I formed the main body on the road in three lines, the Guides in front, sending a troop out to the right front under Lieutenant Wise, and one to the left under Lieutenant McDowell, ready to take the enemy in flank, should they again charge up the roads (of which there are three leading from the town to our position). These movements were covered by skirmishers, and by the excellent fire of the Jheend Horsemen armed with matchlocks, whom I desired to dismount and drive back by their fire any party of the enemy who might come from under shelter of the buildings. This service they performed exceedingly well and most cheerfully.

9. Finding that our ammunition was nearly exhausted after some time had elapsed, and that there appeared little chance of the enemy coming from

* European officers, 6; Guide Cavalry, 103 sabres; Hodson's Irregular Horse, 233 sabres; Jheend Horse, 25 sabres: total, 361 sabres.