

Captain J. Cook, with two companies of the 27th Native Infantry, was sent to the top of the pass to examine and secure the road leading in from the left, and to check any enemy who might hold the high hill on the left.

41. These dispositions had not been completed when two shots were fired from above the water gorge, to the right of Brigadier-General Tytler's position. These he believes to have been signal shots to notify to the tribes that he was beginning to move. Brigadier-General Tytler was on the point of marching off; he at once sent a company of the 17th Foot, under Captain J. H. Gamble, up the gorge, with orders to drive back any enemy and rejoin the column further on, under protection of the flanking parties. This was carried out without casualties, a considerable number of Afridis being driven back.

42. The column commenced its march at 8.30 A.M.; the road was winding and steep, and very difficult for mules; the distance to the top was about a mile and a quarter, and the ascent about 1,000 feet. The path was mostly covered overhead with foliage. The column had hardly started when a lively fusillade was commenced upon it from the high hill to the left, and from behind rocks on its sides; but owing to the distance and the road being hidden by trees it proved harmless. But as the column neared the top of the pass they became more exposed, and the flanking parties on its right fired across the valley, but, owing to the distance, with little effect. General Tytler had sent Major A. A. A. Kinloch, Deputy Assistant-Quartermaster-General, to the top of the pass to see his orders carried out.

43. At this time Captain Cook had, with the bulk of his men, gone some distance along the road to the left to examine and secure the pass. Seeing the Afridis on the top of the steep mountain becoming troublesome, he directed Lieutenant H. P. Leach, R.E., with his half company of Sappers (who had just reached the crest), along with a party of the 27th Native Infantry, under Lieutenant G. A. Williams, to take the summit of the hill. This was gallantly carried, the advance of the Sappers and the 27th Native Infantry being covered by the fire of the troops on the crest. In this operation one sapper was shot through the arm. The mountain was then occupied, and held by a detachment of the 27th Native Infantry until the whole force had passed. Meanwhile the advance guard, guns, and the different corps, each as compact as possible, baggage-animals in the centre, were pushed down the pass at a steady pace. General Tytler and his staff remained with the rear of the column to superintend the advance, and did not reach the top of the pass till 9.45 A.M.

44. Before this time the rear-guard, consisting of one company of Europeans and one company of the 27th Native Infantry, under Captain W. Lonsdale, 17th Foot, had become hotly engaged, and were reinforced by Captain Gamble's company of the 17th Regiment, which had now descended from the hills.

The enemy could be seen from the crest of the hills moving about the camp ground, and General Tytler directed some marksmen of the 17th Regiment to open fire upon them at 1,600 yards, which had the effect of checking their advance and making them seek cover. The rear-guard, nevertheless, had much trouble in keeping back the enemy, owing to the dense forest and the difficulty in seeing them; and it was eleven o'clock before they reached the summit of the pass.

45. Brigadier-General Tytler now directed Captain Lonsdale, commanding the rear-guard, with one company of the 17th Regiment and two

companies of the 27th Native Infantry, to hold the crest of the pass until the flanking parties were withdrawn, and then to follow the column. He himself, escorted by a company of the 17th Regiment and a detachment of the 45th Sikhs, proceeded down the pass to overtake the main body. The hills on the flank were everywhere guarded by flanking parties of the 45th Sikhs, who had been very judiciously posted by Lieutenant M'Rae of that regiment. Nevertheless, the main body had been more or less molested in several places.

46. About three miles below the pass the road narrows into a hollow pass about five or six feet broad, with high perpendicular walls of rock on each side, the water of the stream being there frozen into thick masses of ice, which was found difficult for the mules. The entrance as well as the outlet of this pass were commanded from the heights by Sikh flanking parties. Nevertheless, a deep and narrow gorge from the right enabled the enemy, estimated at about 100 men, to creep down unperceived and occupy a sheltered position about 200 yards from the outlet. As the 17th Regiment and the 27th Native Infantry successively emerged in some confusion, they were met by a heavy fire from these men. One man of the 17th was shot through the leg, also a man of the 27th Native Infantry; and the man of the 17th, who had been wounded the previous evening, was shot dead in his doolie.

47. Lieutenant R. J. G. Creed, with half a company of the 17th Regiment, moved up the hill to dislodge the enemy, but so dangerous did the position appear to General Tytler, that he left his Orderly Officer, Captain G. W. Rogers, 4th Goorkhas, with a force of 30 Sikhs, to hold the position till the rear-guard should have passed. The enemy, as he anticipated, returned, but were kept in check by the fire of Captain Rogers' party.

48. About four miles from the top of the pass, the valley opens out into a plain, with cultivated land, owned by the friendly Shinwaris. There the column halted for the rear-guard, which shortly came in. They had had a continuous skirmish with the enemy from the top of the pass to the mouth of the gorge, where Captain Rogers had been left, the enemy seizing post after post of the rear-guard and flanking parties as soon as they were abandoned. But after reaching the cultivation all opposition ceased.

49. At this place the troops were mustered, and Brigadier-General Tytler had the satisfaction to learn that no man and no property whatever were missing, and that the casualties only amounted to one man killed and seven men wounded. I regret to add that one of the wounded, Private Thomas Bashford, 17th Regiment, died of his wound the following day.

Several officers and men had narrow escapes, having been hit in the clothing. General Tytler attributes the small number of casualties in some measure to the heavy tree jungle, which gave cover and rendered aiming difficult.

50. Brigadier-General Tytler resumed his march from this spot at 2 P.M., and for some distance followed the stream through well cultivated land, and passed several villages* strong fortified, the headmen of which came out to pay their respects to the officer commanding the advanced guard.

After some miles the column emerged on waterless grassy plains, such as are common near Dakka. After darkness set in, the grass was set on fire along the road by the advanced guard, to show the way to the column. Dakka was reached by the

* Villages of Shoolgurrie.