

2. On arrival at Silchar on the 6th April, I found the 18th Bengal Infantry holding the frontier posts of Jirighat, Baladhan, and the Barak bridge.

From that time until the 15th April, in conjunction with Major Maxwell, Deputy Commissioner of Kachar, who afforded me most cordial and invaluable assistance, I was engaged in collecting carriage, storing rations, repairing bridges, and other subsidiary arrangements.

3. On the 8th April, as the 3rd Bengal Infantry, who were approaching Silchar, were suffering badly from cholera, I considered it prudent to push forward the detachments of 42nd, 43rd, and 44th Gurkha Rifles, as well as the Surma Valley Military Police, as a pioneer force to open up the road, construct shelters, &c.

4. The guns of the mountain battery arrived at Silchar on the afternoon of the 12th April, and left the following morning. The 1-2nd Gurkha Regiment and half the Pioneer Company of the Calcutta Volunteers arrived at Silchar on the 13th April, halted the 14th April, and marched out with me on the 15th April. My advanced party under Captain Cowley, 43rd Gurkha Rifles, had on the previous day surprised a party of Kukis engaged in cutting down the suspension bridge over the Irang river. After exchanging a few shots, the bridge was seized. The floating bridge had already been cut adrift.

5. On the 20th April I occupied a position two miles and a half east of the Kaopam valley with—

- 2 guns, No. 8 Mountain Battery.
- 100 rifles, 18th Bengal Infantry.
- 100 „ 42nd Gurkha Rifles.
- 283 „ 43rd Gurkha Rifles.
- 180 „ Surma Valley Military Police.

I held the Irang bridge with 100 rifles of the 18th Bengal Infantry and 100 rifles of the 44th.

6. On the 21st April, having reconnoitred towards the Kaopam ridge, I decided to occupy the Laimatak and the Kaopam valleys respectively with the above-mentioned details, while the 1-2nd Gurkha Regiment held the Irang bridge.

7. On the 23rd April, being anxious to visit the 1-2nd Gurkha Rifles at Kaopam, who were directed to halt as they were suffering very severely from cholera, I entrusted to Captain Boileau the task of forcing the Laimatak defile with the afore-mentioned details, 100 rifles of the 18th Bengal Infantry being told off to escort the commissariat convoy and reserve ammunition. Starting at 6 A.M., this operation was successfully carried out by 3 P.M., three stockades, as well as several positions being successfully turned without loss to ourselves. The enemy lost ten men, their commander, who was wounded, being taken prisoner. The same evening I occupied Naraing-aon, a village four miles from Bishenpur.

8. On the 25th April from Bishenpur the Foyging river and adjacent villages were reconnoitred.

9. On the 26th April the troops were served out with rations for the 27th, and in the afternoon the column moved on Foyging. Having failed to communicate with either General Collett or General Graham, I determined to

advance on Manipur at 3 A.M. the following morning.

10. On the 25th April, the 1-2nd Gurkhas, who had halted for a couple of days to shake off their attack of cholera, having come up, I advanced against Manipur. I occupied the gateways of the pat, secured the temple and magazine from being exploded, and drove the Manipuri incendiaries from the enclosure. I then received the copy of a letter in French addressed by General Collett to the General Officer Commanding the Tamu Column. I thereupon sent Lieutenant-Colonel Mitchell towards Kohima to communicate with him.

11. The Pioneer Company of the Calcutta Volunteers having left half their strength footsore at Silchar, and having been attacked with cholera, nevertheless did most useful work on the line of communications. The Surma Valley Light Horse did excellent service in carrying despatches, escorting officers, mails, &c.

12. The line of communications from Godamghat to Irang bridge was held by detachments of the 18th Bengal Infantry, and from the Irang bridge to Bishenpur by detachments of the Surma Valley Military Police, under Lieutenant-Colonel Browne. Signalling stations were opened at Silchar, Namota, Jirighat, Kalanaga, Nongba, and Laimatak ridge by Captain Thomson. A base hospital was established at Silchar, with cholera and rest hospitals at Dilkush, Godamghat, Kalanaga, and Nongba.

13. In conclusion, I wish to place on record my appreciation of the splendid behaviour of both officers and men of the Silchar Column under the most trying circumstances. Exposed throughout the march to the inclemencies of the season, to hardship, sickness, and privation, all answered cheerfully to the call of duty, and worked with a zeal and energy rarely surpassed.

Where the conduct of all was admirable, it is difficult to single out any particular officers or men with a view to bring forward their names for the favourable notice of His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief. I would, however, beg leave to mention specially the following in connection with the advance:—

Major H. St. P. Maxwell, Chief Political Officer.

Captain E. W. Dun, D.S.O., Assistant Quartermaster-General (Intelligence).

Captain St. G. L. Steele, 2nd Bengal Lancers, Brigade-Major.

Lieutenant H. W. Iles, Royal Artillery, Commanding division of guns of No. 8 (Bengal) Mountain Battery.

Captain J. W. Cowley, Commanding the 43rd Gurkha Rifles.

Lieutenant H. W. G. Cole, Commanding the Surma Valley Military Police.

Captain A. J. M. MacLaughlin, Commanding the detachment of the Surma Valley Light Horse.

Mr. D. J. Clancey, C.E., Executive Engineer, Silchar.

E. H. H. COLLEN,  
Secretary to the Government of India.

*India Office, August 11, 1891.*

THE accompanying General Order and Despatches regarding the operations of the detachment under the command of Lieutenant (now Major) C. J. W. Grant, in Manipur, in March and April last, have been received from the Government of India:—

Gurkha Rifles, 1 British officer, 2 native officers, 112 rifles, 19 followers; 1-2nd Gurkha Regiment, 9 British officers, 15 native officers, 708 rifles, 67 followers; Calcutta Volunteer Pioneers, 2 British officers, 2 native officers, 48 rifles, 2 followers; Surma Valley Military Police, 1 British officer, 5 native officers, 202 rifles, 13 followers. Total, 22 British officers, 42 native officers, 1,870 rifles, 212 followers.