

back to cover. This soldier has subsequently greatly distinguished himself during the withdrawal of Brigadier-General Kempster's column from the Waran Valley, and I propose in due course to recommend him for the Victoria Cross.

Lieutenant H. S. Pennell, 2nd Battalion, Derbyshire Regiment, who endeavoured to bring in Captain Smith's body, and only desisted on finding that Captain Smith was dead.

Captain C. E. de M. Norie, 1st Battalion, 2nd Gurkhas, who was conspicuously forward at the commencement of the action.

21. In recording my acknowledgements to Major-General Yeatman-Biggs, C.B., and Brigadier-General Kempster, D.S.O., for the success of the operations on October 20th, I think it necessary to point out that the advance was not conducted in the manner which I had intended, and, as I thought, had clearly indicated. The General Officer Commanding the 2nd Division restricted himself to a frontal attack on the Dargai heights, without employing a portion of the large force at his disposal to turn the enemy's rear by pushing on as rapidly as possible to the point of junction of the Narik Darra with the Uhagru defile. Undoubtedly the troops would have been under fire and might have suffered some loss in moving along the road below the heights; but if full advantage had been taken of the inequalities of the ground, I am of opinion that the loss would not have been heavy, and I feel confident that, as soon as their line of retreat was threatened, the tribesmen would have begun to disperse.

At the same time, I recognise that the enemy's defeat was rendered more complete and decisive by their being encouraged to hold on to the last, and the result of the action must be regarded as satisfactory, inasmuch as the movement of the troops, baggage, and supplies from Shinaori to Karappa, subsequent to the capture of the Dargai heights, was almost unmolested.

22. On the night of October 20th Dargai was held by the 1st Battalion, Dorsetshire Regiment and the 3rd Sikhs, supported by the 1st Battalion, Gordon Highlanders, while the remainder of the troops bivouacked on or near the Chagru Kotal.

23. At daybreak on the 21st the march of the 2nd Division to Karappa, or more properly to Khangarbur, on the left bank of the Khanki stream, was resumed, while, in order to avoid a block on the main road, I proceeded from Fort Lockhart to the same point *via* Fort Gulistan and the Talai spur, taking with me No. 9 Mountain Battery, Royal Artillery, the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, the 36th Sikhs, and No. 3 Company, Bombay Sappers and Miners. The track from the village of Talai down to its junction with the main road was so bad that none of the baggage of the troops accompanying me reached camp at Karappa until late the next day, that of the 36th Sikhs not arriving until mid-day on the 23rd.

24. The 4th Brigade and some of the divisional troops of the 2nd Division arrived at Karappa towards the evening of the 21st October, the remainder of the Division coming in the next day; but owing to the steepness and narrowness of the road, and the inferiority of a considerable proportion of the transport animals, several days elapsed before all the baggage of the division had come up. On October 24th the troops of the 1st Division began to move from Shinaori to Karappa, and by the evening of the 27th the main column, with its supplies and transport, had concentrated in readiness for a further advance. Advantage was taken of the halt at Karappa to improve the road from the Chagru Kotal, to complete the organisation of

the transport service, and to adjust the loads of the several classes of animals employed, namely, mules, ponies and donkeys.

25. And here I may mention that during the halt at Karappa, though every military precaution was taken, the camp was fired into every night, sometimes by large bodies of the enemy, and our foraging parties were pertinaciously opposed and followed up by the tribesmen. The losses from this cause were heavy, aggregating three British officers, twenty-five British soldiers, and twenty-one native ranks, killed or wounded. The names of the officers are given below:—

Lieutenant-Colonel R. C. Hadow, 15th Sikhs, severely wounded.

Captain F. F. Badcock, D.S.O., 1st Battalion, 5th Gurkhas, dangerously wounded.

Lieutenant G. D. Crocker, 2nd Battalion, Royal Munster Fusiliers, wounded.

26. On October 28th, in accordance with instructions issued on the previous evening, the force marched in two columns to Gundaki, the 1st Division across the plain and the 2nd Division up the bed of the Kandi Mishti stream, while a detached column, consisting of the 1st Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, and the 36th Sikhs, occupied the hills to the right of my line of advance. As the left column was threatened from the west, I also occupied three hills which commanded that flank with the 2nd Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment, a wing of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Gurkhas, and a wing of the 3rd Sikhs, respectively. This display of force led the enemy to believe that I intended to turn their right, which they at once began to strengthen, and during the night of the 28th the detachment of the 4th Gurkhas, which in the evening had been reduced to two companies, was continuously attacked at close quarters, suffering, however, but slight loss owing to the care taken in the day time to protect the position by *sangars*. The strong flanking parties which had pushed out enabled me to reconnoitre the Sampagha Pass, and having settled on my plan of action I directed the whole force to bivouac near Gundaki, and issued orders for the attack on the following day.

Our casualties on October 28th were—

Lieutenant-Colonel C. A. R. Sage, 2nd Battalion, 1st Gurkhas, severely wounded.

Other ranks—Killed 2, wounded 10.

27. Here it may be noted that, previous to my advance, on October 28th, I had to detach two battalions to strengthen the force on the line of communications. The 30th Punjab Infantry was detailed to hold the Dargai heights, and the 21st Madras Pioneers to form part of the Karappa garrison.

28. On October 29th, at 5 A.M., the 1st Brigade moved out of camp to cover the advance to the Sampagha. The 1st Battalion, Devonshire Regiment seized the village of Nazeno, thus protecting my right. Lieutenant-Colonel Yule quickly brushed away all opposition on that side. The 2nd Battalion, 1st Gurkhas, covered my left by occupying the village of Kandi Mishti, and met with no opposition. The 2nd Battalion, Derbyshire Regiment, advancing in the centre, occupied without resistance a low rocky hill stretching across the plateau between the Kandi Mishti and Sampagha ravines, which I had chosen as my first artillery position.

At 5.15 A.M., the 2nd Brigade, preceded by the Gurkha scouts, left camp with orders to enter the Sampagha ravine, and to advance by a path leading towards the enemy's position up a long bare spur, as soon as the guns should have sufficiently silenced the fire from the *sangars*; this