

advance to be supported in succession by the 4th and 3rd Brigades.

At 6.30 A.M., the first shots were fired by the enemy, but the action did not really begin until 7.30 A.M., when the three mountain batteries of the 1st Division opened fire on the *sangars* from the first artillery position above mentioned. Their fire was effective, the range being 1,850 yards, and the enemy quickly evacuated the entrenchments which commanded the lower slopes of the pass, these being seized by the 2nd Brigade at 8 A.M. The three batteries of the 2nd Division, together with the rocket detachment, were now pushed on, and opened fire on the crest of the pass at a range of 2,200 yards. The fire of the guns was, however, soon masked by the rapid advance of the 2nd Brigade, which, with the 1st Battalion, Royal West Surrey Regiment (the Queen's) leading, reached the summit of the pass at 9.45 A.M. The artillery was again ordered up in support, No. 5 (Bombay) Mountain Battery in front. On reaching the crest, this battery did excellent service in assisting the infantry of the 2nd Brigade to dislodge the tribesmen from the heights they were holding on either flank, but while engaged on this duty I regret to report that Captain De Butts, Royal Artillery, commanding the battery, was mortally wounded. The heights on the north-east of the pass were eventually cleared by the 1st Battalion, Royal West Surrey Regiment, and the 3rd Sikhs, while those on the north-west were stormed by the 36th Sikhs, supported by six companies of the 2nd Battalion, King's Own Scottish Borderers. The last shots were fired at 11.30 A.M., and the 15th Sikhs were then sent on as an advance guard into the Mastura Valley, where I proposed to bivouac.

29. While the troops were moving down into the valley some slight resistance was met with, but this ceased as soon as the hills commanding the camping ground had been occupied by picquets.

The 1st Brigade remained on the Sampagha for the night, with a view to protecting transport animals and baggage.

30. The casualties during the action were—  
Captain F. R. McC. De Butts, Royal Artillery, killed.

Major R. T. Hanford-Flood, 1st Battalion, Royal West Surrey Regiment, slightly wounded.

Other ranks—Killed 1, wounded 3.

31. On October 30th the main column, with the exception of the 1st Brigade, which continued to hold the Sampagha Pass, remained in camp on the right bank of the Mastura stream. In the morning I made a reconnaissance of the Arhanga Pass, and issued orders for the attack on the following day. My great difficulty was the want of food, some corps having absolutely nothing in hand, and the steep and narrow track over the pass delaying the arrival of supplies. But by redistributing what there was, and making use of what could be collected in the neighbouring villages, each man was eventually provided with two days' rations. I therefore determined not to postpone the attack on the Arhanga Pass, as I was convinced that a protracted halt in the Mastura Valley, expedient as it might seem from a commissariat point of view, would not only encourage the Afridis and give them time to collect their fighting men, but also enable them to destroy, hide, or remove the forage and grain stored in their villages, and thus render our stay in Tirah a matter of extreme difficulty.

32. On October 31st the 4th Brigade crossed the Mastura stream at 6 A.M., and advanced towards the Arhanga Pass across a broken plain up to a low detached mound, in rear of which the brigade was massed at 8 A.M. Shortly after-

wards the three batteries of the 2nd Division opened fire from this mound, at a range of 1,300 yards, on the enemy's main position along the crest of the pass. Meanwhile the 2nd Brigade had moved up on the right, and the 3rd Brigade was disposed in *échelon* on the left, with the object of threatening the enemy's right and joining the central attack when ordered to do so. The 2nd Brigade began the action by a flank movement on the right up two rocky spurs and an intervening ravine, thus gaining the crest east of the pass; while the 4th Brigade attacked in the centre, supported by the 3rd Brigade. The 2nd Brigade's attack was led by the 2nd Battalion, Yorkshire Regiment and the Gurkha scouts, each gallantly racing up the steep slope, the summit of which was reached by both simultaneously at 10 A.M. The main attack was led by the 2nd Battalion, King's Own Scottish Borderers. Neither attack met with serious opposition, and shortly after 10 A.M. the pass was in our hands and all opposition had practically ceased.

The casualties were,—killed none, wounded two.

I may here mention that the road up the Arhanga Pass, though short, was the steepest and worst that had yet been encountered.

33. Immediately after the action I gave orders for the concentration of the force in Maidan, with the exception of the 1st Brigade, which I had to leave behind for the purpose of dominating the Mastura valley, and of guarding the line of communication between Tirah and Karappa.

34. During the period dealt with in this report, the troops under my command were subjected to much privation and fatigue, to great variations of temperature, to heavy losses in action, and to continual night alarms. No body of men could have shown a better spirit.

That a more formidable resistance was not offered in the passes leading respectively into Orakzai and Afridi Tirah, I attribute to the lesson taught those tribes at Dargai in the actions of October 18th and October 20th. They then learnt that their strongest positions could not avail them against the valour of British and Native troops.

35. In submitting this report, I desire to record my acknowledgments to the General Officer Commanding the Line of Communications, the General Officers Commanding Divisions and Brigades, the Chief of the Staff, and the Brigadier-Generals Commanding the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers, the Heads of Departments, especially those of Ordnance, Supply, and Transport, the officers of the Head-Quarters, Divisional, and Brigade Staffs, and the commanding and other officers, non-commissioned officers and men of the several corps under my command, all of whom have done their duty in a manner befitting Her Majesty's Army.

My recommendations for the recognition of the services of individual officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, subsequent to the action of October 20th, will be embodied in my final despatch on the termination of the present expedition.

I.—Return of Casualties in action at Chagru Kotal, on the 18th October, 1897.

2nd Battalion, King's Own Scottish Borderers.

Summary.

Officers—Killed nil, wounded 2, missing nil.  
Non-Commissioned Officers and Men—Killed 1, wounded 3, missing nil.

Nominal Return of Officers Wounded.  
Captain David Ramsay Sladen, slight, splinters, left cheek and forehead.