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JUDICIAL DEPARTMENT.

Justice BRANCH. ✓

Proceedings for *17 Feb* 1859.

Number of Proceedings.	Subject.	Date of Proceedings.	REMARKS.
201 1000	Services rendered by the Corps of Captain Rattray for the defence of Behar during the late disturbances of the rebels.	17. 2. 59	

बिहार सरकार
मुख्यमंडल सचिवालय विभाग
(बिहार राज्य अभिलेखागार निदेशालय)

REFERENCE TO FORMER CASES.

REFERENCE TO LATER CASES.

From E. A. SAMUELLS, Esq., Commissioner of the Patna Division, to the Secretary to the Government of Bengal,—(No. 177, dated the 25th January 1859.)

SIR,

Letter from Secretary to the Government of India, in the Military Department, with the Governor-General No. 582, of 30th October 1858, with the enclosures.

Letter to Secretary to the Government of India, from the Officiating Secretary to Government of India, Military Department, No. 612, dated 13th December 1858.

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 4946, of the 28th ultimo, forwarding for any remarks I may wish to offer, copy of the correspondence noted in the margin relative to the defence of Behar.

2. His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has drawn the attention of the Governor-General to the absence in Behar of any Police possessing Military organization, and to the disinclination of the Zemindars to co-operate with the Troops. He regrets that the Civil authorities in this Division did not apply to him in November 1857, for assistance in raising a body of Military Police, and he contrasts our conduct in this respect unfavorably with that of the authorities in Oude and other Districts in the North-Western Provinces.

3. A short statement of facts will, I believe, shew that this censure is undeserved.

4. The ordinary Police has never, I believe, been armed with firelocks even in the North-West. The experiment was made here last year. The Police of the Thannas near the Soane were furnished with matchlocks. The result was not encouraging. The Police of the Bikrum Thanna which was attacked at night by a party of Rebels inferior in number to themselves, fled at the first sally without staying to count their adversaries, and left their matchlocks and swords behind them. The subject of arming the ordinary Police was considered on several occasions by the Magistrates and myself, but was considered useless. Constantly occupied as they were in detective duties, serving processes, and like occupations which precluded the possibility of drilling them, it was felt that to put fire-arms into the hands of the ordinary Police, was simply to make a present of them to the Rebels.

5. What the Thanna Police obviously required was the support of a sufficient body of organized Military Police under European Officers, to enable them to carry on their ordinary duties in security, and to keep the country in their neighbourhood free from marauders, whether sepoys or villagers. To provide such a body was one of the first cares of the Civil Government after the mutinies commenced. Captain Rattray's Bengal Police Battalion was employed in the Sonthal Hills when the rebellion broke out. It immediately volunteered for service against the Rebels, and one wing was sent to Patna where it was employed under the orders of the Civil authorities. This Corps put down an emeute in the City of Patna in the beginning of July, covered the retreat of Captain Dunbar's Detachment in the end of that month, defended the fortified house at Arrah, participated in Major Eyre's victory at Jugdispoor, enabled us to re-occupy the stations of the Division which had been abandoned, held Dehree Ghat on the Trunk Road, punished Umur Sing when he ventured down from the Hills, and fought two very gallant actions, one against the 5th Irregular Cavalry near Gya, the other against two Companies of the 32nd Native Infantry at Dunehood.

6. Almost immediately after Major Eyre's victory at Jugdispoor, it will be recollected the exigencies of our position compelled the removal of all troops from the Shahabad district. For some three months after that period, the district of Shahabad was held by a detachment of 150 men of the Police Battalion in the north of the district divided between Arrah and Buxar, and I think three Companies, with a troop of horse, posted at Dehree Ghat, and in the neighbourhood of the Rhotas Hills 50 of the detachment in the north with the Magistrate were mounted on horses furnished by the Rajah of Doomraon, and were thus enabled to make up for their small numbers by celerity of movement. With this small force Mr. Wake, the Magistrate of Shahabad, scoured the district and punished disaffection or contumacy wherever it shewed itself with prompt severity. I doubt very much if any district in the North-west was restored to order with the same celerity as Shahabad.

7. This was done entirely by the Police unaided by a single Soldier, and it was the existence of this Police corps which enabled Sir James Outram to withdraw so many men from the Behar Division, to aid in the formation of the force with which he relieved Lucknow.

8. Nor was this the only Police corps we possessed previous to the month of November 1857. the Behar Station Guards commonly known as the Nujeebs under Major Nation, were at the commencement of the disturbances about 1,000 strong. The Companies at Arrah and Gya mutinied, but on the other hand the detachment at Mouza Herpore protected the station and Treasury against the Troopers of the 12th Irregular Cavalry, after the Europeans had left the district, and those at Chaprah behaved equally well,—100 men of this corps were employed under Mr. Assistant Lindsay in restoring order in the Gya and Patna districts in the month of August, and were entirely successful without any Military aid. In the same month a detachment was sent into the Sub-division of Nowada, entirely overrun by Rajwars, a tribe akin to the Goojurs of the North-west, and with the aid of the zemindars who raised their retainers and came forward most manfully the Rajwars were driven out, quiet restored, and the Deputy Magistrate enabled to return. Another party of this corps was employed in an endeavour to capture the notorious Rebel Joodur Sing, and though they did not succeed, showed no want of spirit, two of them having been shot dead, and the village having been destroyed. Not long after I joined this appointment a proposal was made to re-organize this corps which was shortly afterwards sanctioned; but the Commandant had considerable difficulties to contend against in procuring trustworthy recruits, and the re-organization did not proceed so rapidly as could have been desired.

9. It will be seen however, that in November the month mentioned by His Excellency, we were amply provided with Military Police. With the exception of the Rhotas Hills, where Umur Sing lurked with a few men, there was not a Rebel in arms in the Division. Azimghur had been retaken. Ghazeepore and Mirzapore were quiet, our arms were every where triumphant, and there appeared no reason to fear that the peace of the Southern portion of the Division would be again disturbed. There was therefore clearly no occasion at that time to apply to the Commander-in-Chief to assist in the formation of additional Police corps for service in Shahabad.

10. In the district of Sarun to the north of the Ganges indeed there appeared to be considerable danger, for Goruckpore was occupied by the Rebel Mohamud Hossein with a force of a 3 or 4,000, men. Here again we

were left in a great measure to our own resources. One of two Regiments*

* Application was made for Officers to be posted to these Goorka Regiments.

of Goorkhas which had been sent us from Nepal was posted at Sewan supported by Captain Sotheby's Naval Brigade and 100 Sikhs of the Bengal Police Battalion, and arrangements were immediately made for raising a Police levy from the tenants of the Hutwah Estate, the old Rajah of which had furnished guards for a considerable extent of frontier, and had evinced his loyalty in the most unmistakeable manner. This levy remained with Colonel Rowcroft until he entered Goruckpore, and proved most useful in furnishing guards, &c. It afterwards distinguished itself on two several occasions under the Command of Captain Miles, when the district of Sarun was invaded by a small body of Sepoys. On that occasion the levy and the Sikhs of the Police Battalion were the only troops actually engaged with the Rebels, and they rendered good service in driving them out.

11. In Chumparun a Christian levy was sanctioned, the men of which were to be drawn from the Christian Colony at Bettiah, but the community is small, and we were unable to complete a full company. The Rajah of Bettiah in this district had nominally some 1,500 men employed in our service, but the peace of the district has remained undisturbed, and neither they nor the levy have had an opportunity of distinguishing themselves.

12. In Tirhoot also the Magistrate was authorized to raise a levy, but the attempt was not successful, none except Rajpoots and Brahmins coming forward. The district has however proved itself a most loyal one, no plundering of any consequence having taken place when the European residents left it, and the inhabitants of Mozufferpore having on that occasion brick batted the Rebels out of the place, and paid the Nujeebs to remain staunch and do their duty.

13. The inhabitants of Sarun and Chumparun, I may observe, behaved almost equally well. It is important to note this, because I perceive the Commander-in-Chief is evidently under the impression that the whole Province of Behar, or at least the whole Patna Division, was a signally rebellious one, whereas the rebellion against the authority of Government has been confined to one district, that of Shahabad. There were disturbances in Gya and parts of Patna upon the abandonment of Gya it is true, but these were merely the result of the belief on the part of the people that we had abdicated our rule and that every man must be prepared to hold his own, by the strong hand. The small band which returned to Gya was gladly welcomed, and the district sunk into peace the moment it was known that the Civil power was restored.

14. I think it was in December that Colonel Michell was appointed to command at Sasseram, and the Bengal Police Battalion was then, by the orders of the Governor-General, placed under the Military authorities—no time was lost in endeavouring in some measure to supply its place. The Sasseram levy, foot and horse, was immediately raised, and Colonel Michell procured for us the services of a very excellent Officer Serjeant Nolan of the Public Works Department. This levy has been of the greatest use in the south of Shahabad, and has enabled us to hold many posts there which otherwise we must have abandoned. It was only in one pergunnah however of Shahabad that it could be recruited, the pergunnah Chynepore, for the whole of the northern portion of the district was filled with sepoy villages and from that neighbourhood we should have obtained nothing but traitors. The numbers of the levy therefore have always been more limited than we

could have wished, but the local authorities I think are entitled to some credit for having raised a trustworthy levy at all in such a district.

15. An effort was made to raise a levy in Behar also, but it failed, the Magistrate being unable to procure men of the description required, and a corps of European mounted Police was subsequently substituted, a corps I may remark which has since done notable good service.

16. If it be asked why the Police did not protect the country in the neighbourhood of Jugdispoor during Sir Edward Lugard's campaign, and at a subsequent period, the answer is that they were fully employed in the southern portion of the district, a large portion of which they most efficiently protected, furnishing garrisons for Rhotas and Dehree Ghat, and assisting in keeping the Trunk Road open—our most efficient Police corps (Captain Rattray's) was during the greater part of this time at the disposal of the Military authorities, and would no doubt have been used against the Rebels to the north, if they could have been so with any prospect of success, and without detriment to our interests in the south. When we first heard of Kooer Sing's march upon Azimghur, I strongly recommended you will remember that Captain Rattray's corps should be sent to the North of the district to oppose him if he attempted to cross into Shahabad, only 100 men of the corps were granted, but they proved the means of saving the remnant of Captain LeGrould's ill-fated Detachment.

17. Captain Rattray was it is true left by Sir E. Lugard at Jugdispoor and retired from it, but I apprehend if His Excellency had been in possession of all the facts of the case he would have been perfectly satisfied that it was impossible for Captain Rattray to hold the place, and that the attempt to do so would probably have led to the destruction of his detachment without in any way advantaging us. The only spot he could have occupied at Jugdispoor was the square round which Kooer Sing's houses were built, but these houses had been in a great measure destroyed, no entrenchment or other defensive preparations had been made, a large ruined town extended to the walls on two sides, thick tops of trees and jungles on the others. Captain Rattray was left with one day's provisions, without guns and with 400 men to resist the attack of the whole Rebel force, consisting of some 8 or 900 return sepoys and 3 or 400 armed Rajpoots. He had no means of procuring food or of entrenching himself, for the country in the neighbourhood was deserted and he had no prospect of relief, for there was only a weak detachment of European Infantry left at Arrah. The Sikhs moreover were not well pleased at being left in the jungle, while the whole of their European comrades were sent into quarters, and did not hesitate to express their dissatisfaction. The Rebels on hearing of Sir E. Lugard's movement towards Dinapore, had returned in haste from the Soane and were in full march upon Jugdispoor.

18. Under these circumstances I confess it seems to me that Captain Rattray had no option but to fall back upon Arrah, and I do not think Sir Edward Lugard expressed to him at the time any displeasure at his having done so.

19. On his arrival in Arrah ascertaining that the services of his corps were considered to be again at my disposal, I ordered him over to the right bank of the Soane, where Joodur Sing and his followers, who had separated from the main body of the Rebels were ravaging the country. In the course of a week he had not only cleared the Patna and Behar Districts, (an operation on which the Madras Rifles under Captain

Young also aided) but had inflicted on the Rebels such a severe defeat that they never ventured to show themselves in Behar again, during the whole of the remainder of the campaign.

20. So far therefore from our having been backward in the employment of Police corps in this division, it may safely be contended that there are few divisions in which the Police have performed more brilliant services.

21. The Commander-in-Chief has erred also in supposing that the Zemindars in this part of the country have shewn less alacrity in aiding the Government than their brotheren in the North-west or in Oude. I have already mentioned the services of the Zemindars in the Sub-Division of Nowada, who unaided for some weeks by any European, succeeded in driving the Rajwars back into their jungles, and restoring peace in that part of the country. I have alluded also to the Rajahs of Hutwa in Sarun and of Bettiah in Chumparun, both of whom kept on foot large bodies of men and expended considerable sums of money in our service. The amount so spent by the Rajah of Hutwa did not I believe fall short of 50,000 Rupees. In addition to these Zemindars the Government is aware that the Rajah of Deo in Behar came forward with his retainers early in the rebellion and offered us valuable assistance against the Rebels in Palamow; that the Rajah of Doomraon, though he fled at first on hearing that Kooer Sing had proclaimed himself at Arrah, and had afterwards a most difficult part to play on account of the large number of Sepoys families on his Estate, has since rendered us all the assistance in his power; that the Zemindars of Chundergurh and Tendooah in Shahabad, joined Colonel Michell with their retainers and have garrisoned various points in South Shahabad during the year, and that many other Zemindars have shown their loyalty according to their means and opportunities. In the Northern portion of Shahabad the population being in a great measure a sepoy one, and a large portion of the country forming the hereditary estate of Kooer Sing, it was not to be expected that we should obtain any active assistance, but even here numerous landlords and farmers have shewn their preference for our rule by submitting to have their houses and property destroyed, and by risking their lives rather than desert our cause. Several of them have been brutally murdered for their fidelity to us, and not less than 20,000 people are credibly reported to have fled to the neighbouring districts under our rule, from that portion of the district of Shahabad which was left in the possession of the Rebels.

22. There is one other point in His Excellency's Despatch, and it is one of some importance to me on which I may be permitted to point out that His Excellency's Despatch is open to misconception. It might be inferred from His Excellency's remark that Sir E. Lugard "was unable to form the posts as prescribed under Sir Colin Campbell's orders, because of the urgent call for reinforcements for Patna by the Commissioner," that it was at my request that Sir Lugard's troops were brought over to Dinapore, and that the Rebels were left in possession of the central portion of the Shahabad District. I do not presume to judge of the necessity which may have existed in a Military point of view, for the withdrawal of Sir E. Lugard's force, but the Lieutenant-Governor is aware that it was a subject of grievous disappointment to me, and that as a political measure I was throughout strongly opposed to it. I certainly suggested, when the Rebels on their return moved towards Behar with the avowed intention of plundering that District and Patna, that Sir E. Lugard should move to Urwal on

the Soane, where it seemed to me he would have been in a position to protect whichever of the three districts of Patna, Behar or Shahabad might be attacked by the Rebels, but nothing was further from my wish than that the troops should move into quarters at Dinapore. I hope it will be understood that I merely desire to set myself right on this point, and have no intention whatsoever of cavilling at the measures which were actually taken.

23. In conclusion, I would observe that the fortification of the Than-nas will, I have no doubt, have an excellent effect in inspiring confidence in the Police, and ennobling small parties of Police corps to hold their ground in the neighbourhood of superior bodies of Rebels. If the 1st Bengal Police Battalion be again transferred to the Civil authority, and relieved from the task of garrisoning Rhotas and Dehree Ghat, we shall require on troops of the line in the district beyond what it may be prudent to maintain as garrisons in the Forts of Arrah and Buxar.

बिहार सरकार

मंत्रिमंडल सचिवालय विभाग

(बिहार राज्य अभिलेखागार निदेशालय)

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17 Feb/59
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