

“Now tell us all about this war,
and what they killed each other for!”

“Why, that I cannot tell,” said he,
“but ‘twas a famous victory!”

Syorming the Dargai Heights

- The town of Dargai six kilometers west of Saragarhi is best remembered for one of the many battles there that occurred 18-20 October 1897 when despite heavy casualties the Gordon Highlanders and 2nd King Edward VII's Own Gurkha Rifles scaled the 300m high rocky outcrop against 8,000 Afridis after prior failed attacks.
- Four Victoria Crosses were awarded. The is immortalized in prose, verse and song.



(92nd) Gordon Highlanders
(1881–1994)
Now "The Highlanders"

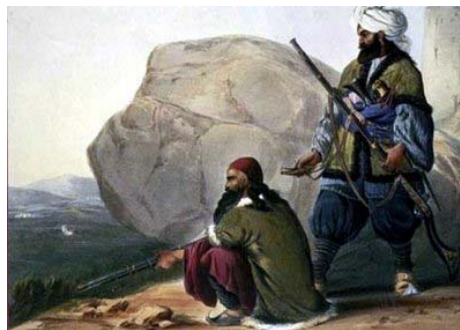


2nd King Edward VII's
Own Gurkha Rifles
(the Sirmoor Rifles)
Now 1st Bn, The Gurkha Rifles



Untamed people for an untamed land

- The Pashto-speaking people residing in the border region between the Hindu Kush in northeastern Afghanistan and the northern stretch of the Indus River in Pakistan have several names:
 - Pashtun (Pashto)
 - Pathan (Hindustani)
 - Afghan (Persian)
- Pashtun tradition claims descent from Israel's King Saul. Tribes trace male bloodlines from a common ancestor, and are divided into clans, subclans, and patriarchal families.
- About 36 million Pashtuns in some 60 tribes live today in Afghanistan (11 million) and Pakistan (25 million).



The “Grim” (British India’s North West Frontier)

- The North-West Frontier (present-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa) region of the British Indian Empire was a difficult area to conquer and to hold, whether strategically or militarily. As the western frontier between today’s Pakistan and Afghanistan, it remains so. The border (“the Durand Line”) divides Pashtuns in Pakistan from Pashtuns in Afghanistan.
- The two main gateways on the North West Frontier are the Khyber and Bolan Passes, traditional invasion routes to the Indian subcontinent. Russian expansion into Central Asia in the 19th Century made stability of the Frontier and control of Afghanistan cornerstones of British strategy. From 1849 until 1947, military history in the region was a succession of punitive expeditions against offending tribes, punctuated by three Anglo-Afghan Wars (1839–42; 1878–80; 1919) where the British tried to control Afghanistan. Other than many British officers learning soldiering, few ended well.
- “The largest and most serious outbreak of fighting on the North West Frontier during the colonial era was the Pathan Uprising of 1897–8. The revolt was actually a series of local insurrections involving over 200,000 fighters, including Afghan volunteers, and it required over 59,000 regular troops and 4,000 Imperial Service Troops to deal with it; the largest deployment in India since the Mutiny-Rebellion of 1857–8. Its outbreak proved such an unexpected and significant shock to the British that they conducted detailed enquiries after the event.”

Johnson, Robert A (2009). “The 1897 Revolt and Tirah Valley Operations from the Pashtun Perspective. Tribal Analysis Center, Williamsburg, VA.

Troubles on the Northwest Frontier - 1897

- In 1893–4, Sir Mortimer Durand negotiated a border between India and Afghanistan (the Durand line) with the Emir of Afghanistan. Insufficient attention was paid to traditional tribal lands.
- Simmering tensions resulted in an almost general rebellion among the tribes on India’s northwest frontier in 1897. The emir roused their jihadi spirit with news of Turkey’s easy victory against Greece.
 - In June, an Indian patrol was attacked in the Tochi Valley.
 - July saw fortified posts at Chakdara and Malakand suddenly attacked by normally peaceful Swatis under Mullah Mastan (“Mad Mullah”). This was the start of Winston Churchill’s “Malakand Uprising”.
 - In August, the Mohmands raided Shabkadar a few miles outside Peshawar.
 - In August the Orakzais started besieging fortified posts on the Samana Ridge, including Forts Gulistan and Lockhart.
 - Then Afridi Pashtuns (paid by the British to safeguard the Khyber Pass by maintaining a local regiment), rebelled and all Khyber forts fell.

Tirah Campaign, Tirah Valley, British India

10 June 1897 - 4 April 1898

Belligerents



British Empire (British Raj)
• Indian Army



Afridi
Orakzai tribesmen
Chamkani

Commanders and leaders

General Sir William Lockhart GCB KCSI
BG Sir William Penn Symons KCB
MG Arthur G Yeatman-Biggs CB

Gul Badshah

Units involved

Punjab Army Corps
• First Division
• Second Division

Afridi
Orakzais
Chamkanis

Strength

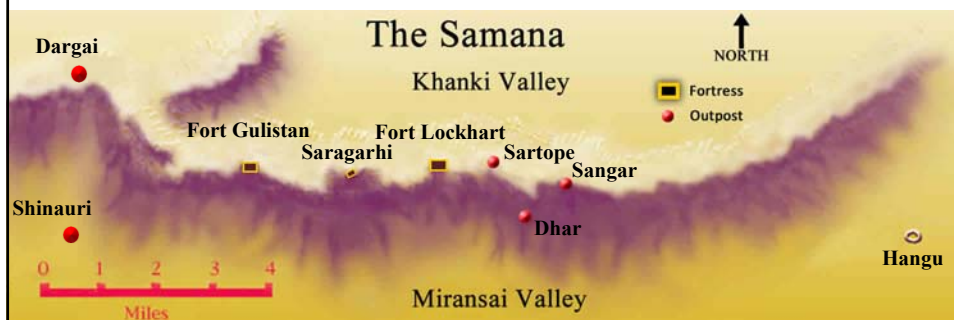
	British	Native	Total
Officers	1,010	491	1,501
Native	10,882	22,123	33,005
Civilians	-	-	376
Followers	-	-	19,558

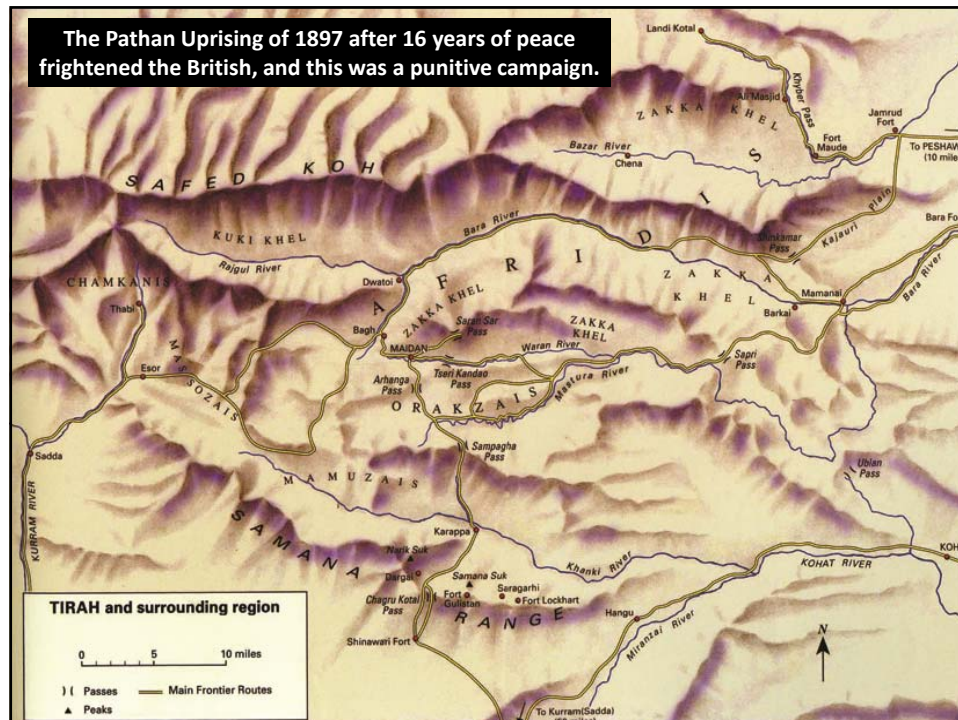
40,000 to 50,000 fighting strength (est.)

NOTE: Also included 8,000 horses, 18,384 mules, 1,440 hospital riding-ponies

Scoping the battlefield

- Sikh Emperor Maharaja Ranjit Singh constructed a series of fortifications along the Hindu Kush ranges during his Western campaign. The British took them over after the Sikh empire declined. They divided Sikh (British) and tribal territory.
- The Storming of Dargai Heights involved troops at nearby Forts Gulistan and Lockhart, as well as a logistics base at Shinauri (also spelled 'Shinawara').





The Tirah Campaign Plan

Objective Conduct a punitive raid on Tirah, summer home of the Afridis and Orakzais, which no European had ever before visited.

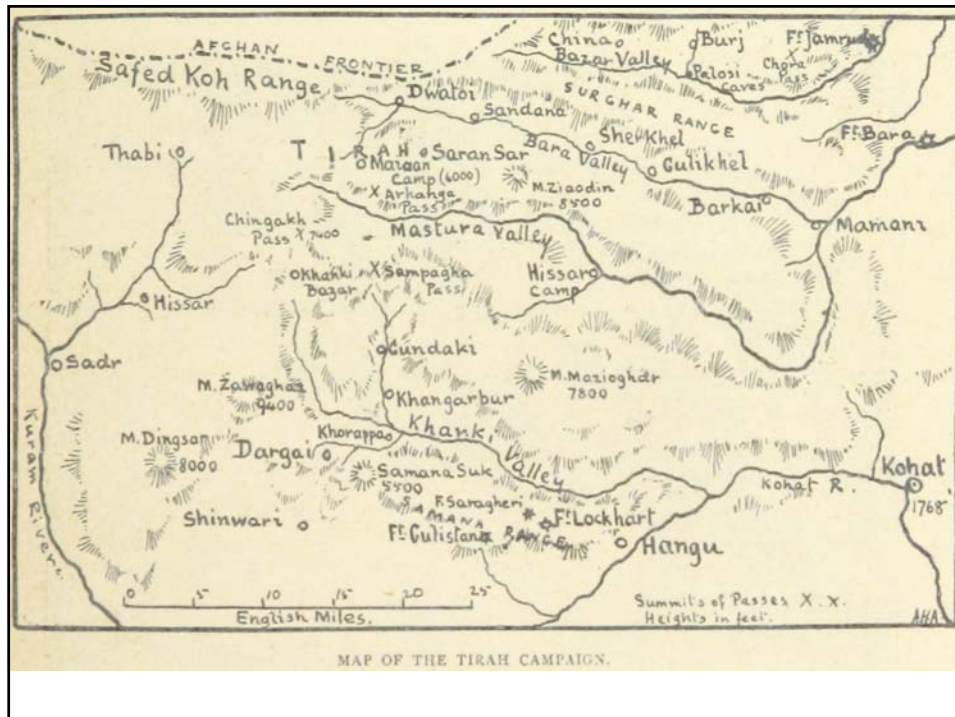
Plan of Attack Advance directly as one body on Tirah from the neighbourhood of the Samana range, under the personal command of Sir William Lockhart.

- ◆ Proceed from Kohat via Shinauri, Khorappa, and the Sampagha and Arhanga Passes, into Tirah.
- ◆ Up to the advanced base, Shinauri, the route lay inside British territory.
- ◆ The route would strike a blow at the very centre of the Orakzai country, cutting the defenders into two at once (an important achievement from a political point of view, for already there were waverers amongst them)
- ◆ The Tirah plateau, the hub and heart of the Afridi nation, could be reached in four or five easy marches.



Campaign Considerations

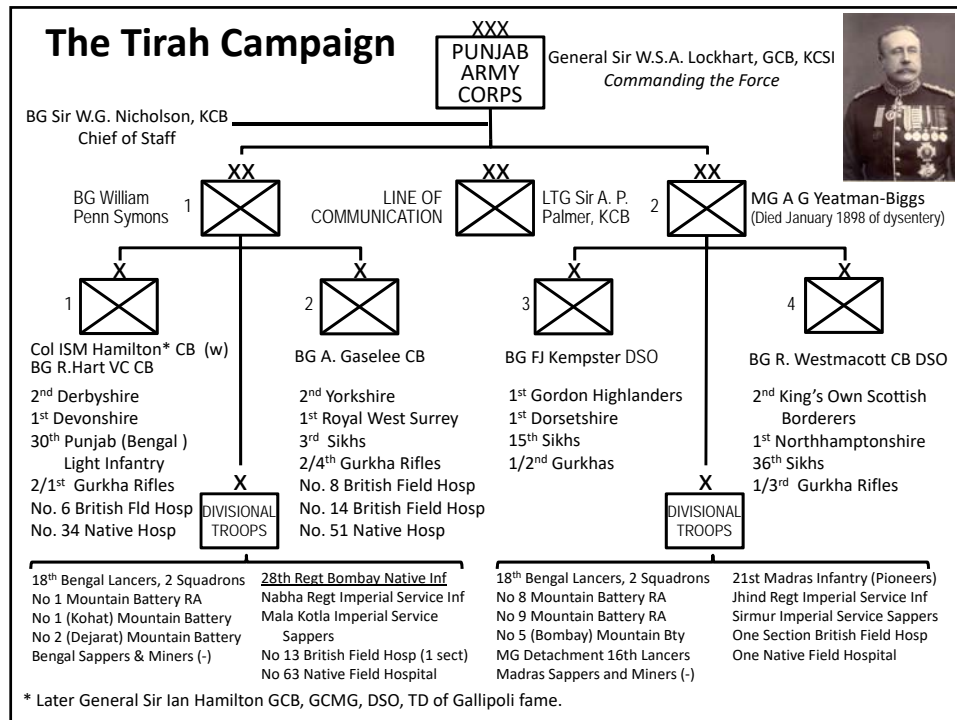
1. The stronger the force directly on the objective, the less formidable and obstinate the resistance likely to be met.
2. A considerable portion of the transport is of inferior quality, and imperfectly organised, while supervising staff is limited, so concentrating force is more efficient.
3. The whole countryside up the Khanki valley is hostile.
4. Terrain is difficult, with deep ravines and numerous heights, while existing roads and tracks are practically useless.
5. A single line of advance requires fewer forces to guard and maintain.
6. Having one rather than more lines of communications would require fewer sappers and pioneers to improve paths for laden animals and minimise time and effort required.
7. Single advance allows concentration of artillery and reserves.





The Tirah Expeditionary Force

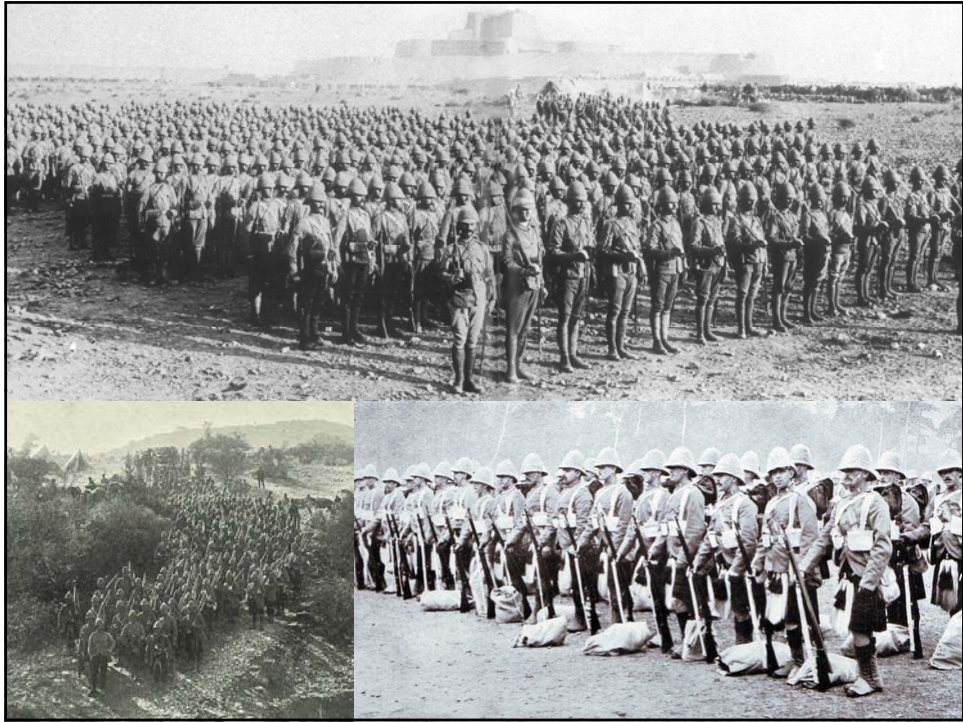
1. The main column consisted of two divisions each with two infantry brigades and divisional troops, to start from Korat and advance on Tirah from the neighbourhood of the Samana range.
2. A force would hold the line of communication from the main column back to the Samana range posts and to Kohat. It would consist of one mountain battery, two native cavalry regiments, and four native infantry battalions.
3. A mixed brigade called the Peshawar column would operate as required from Peshawar.
4. A force designated the "Kurram Movable Column" with support on the Hangu Parachinar line for employment as required.
5. A mixed brigade would be formed at Rawalpindi as a strategic reserve.



The build-up

Lockhart spent two months collecting the supplies equipment and troops required for the Tirah Expeditionary Force:

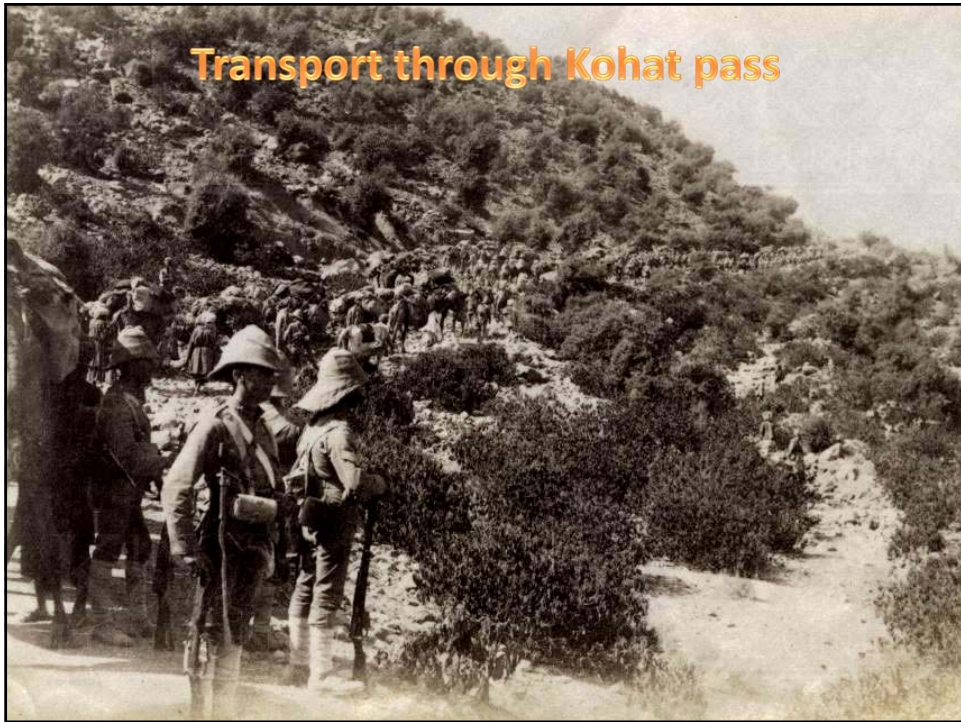
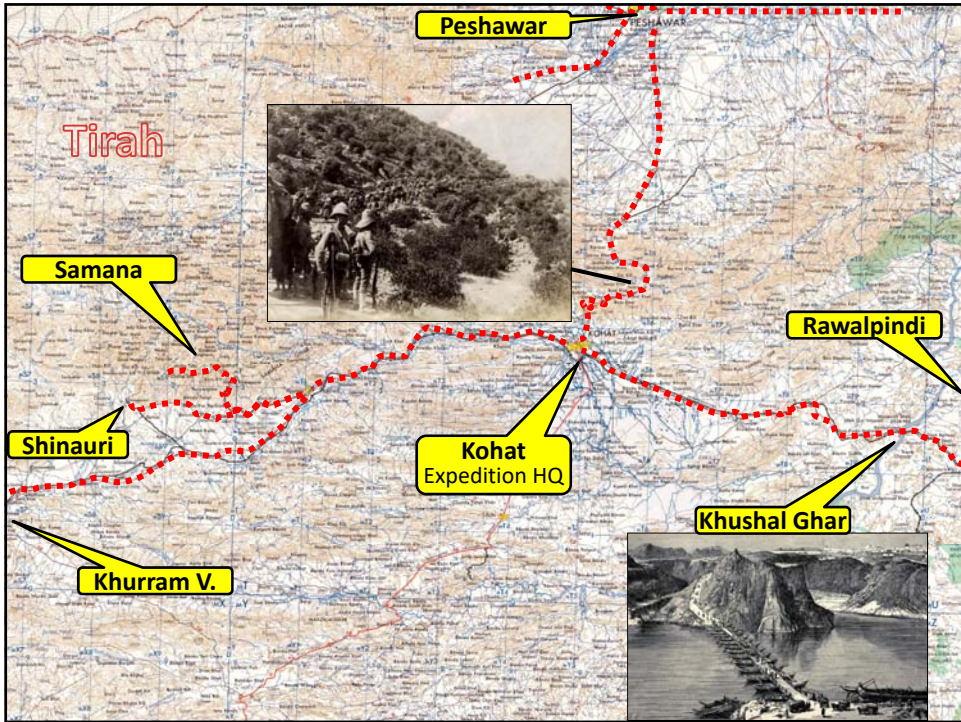
- Almost every day more troops would march in from Peshawar or Rawalpindi.
- The railway from Rawalpindi ends at Khushal Garh on the banks of the Indus River. For two months, trains were delivering between 1,500 -2,000 tons of stores daily, and this was duly transported to Kohat on carts, camels, mules, ponies and bullocks in an endless stream.
- Large, serious depots were also formed at Hangu, Kai, Shinauri and the Samana.
- Meanwhile in the hills leading to the Chagru Kotel, pioneers and sappers were at work scraping out a 6 foot wide track for troops and animals through the inhospitable territory.





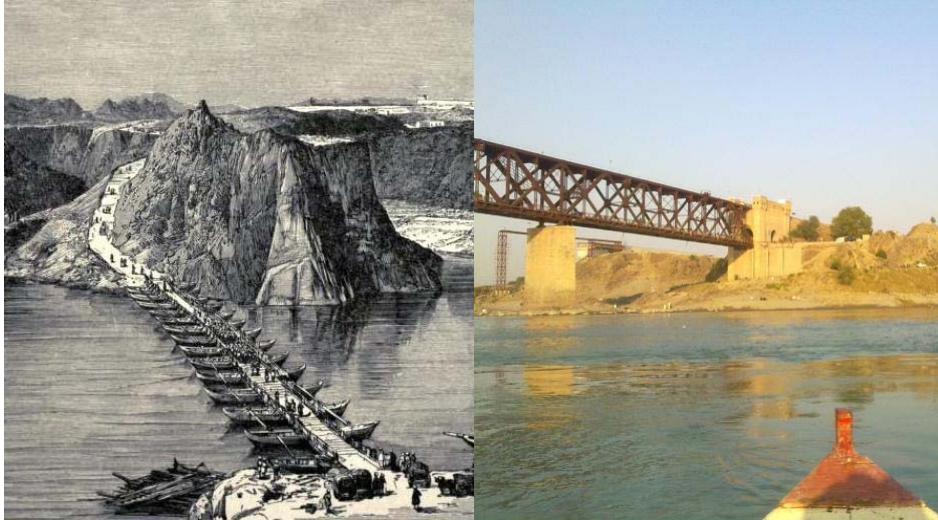
Gurkhas





End of the RR line – Khushal Garh

The bridge was completed in 1901 as Narrow Gauge (2'6") but upgraded to BG (5'6") in 1907 as part of the Khushalgarh-Kohat-Thal Railway.



Typical logistics specifics

- At Kohat, each man was issued with his kit which included
 - 2 blankets
 - 1 waterproof sheet
 - An extra pair of puttees
 - A woollen cardigan
 - A knitted head covering like a balaclava
 - A khaki jacket lined with serge
 - 100 rounds carried in a pouch
- Additional items such as reserve ammunition, great coats etc. were carried by pack animals in the baggage trains. Facilities were provided at Kohat for sharpening swords and bayonets.
- British soldiers at this time wore ankle boots and puttees - 9 feet long pieces of wool serge wrapped around the legs like a bandage. They were tied around the legs by pieces of cotton attached to the serge at the top and were said to protect against snake and insect bites.



Political attempts at a solution

- Political attempts to encourage the Afridi to respect their treaties were also heavily underway.
- But the uprisings seemingly out of nowhere, after sixteen years of peace, where even friendly tribes rebelled had badly shaken the British. Smaller punitive expeditions were sent against the Malakands and Mohmands, but Tirah was to be of a far greater scale.
- The message went out from the politicals to the Afridi:

In the past you have stated that ***no one*** on earth can enter into your country; that myth will now be dispelled for all time. We will no longer listen to you. We will enter your lands to demonstrate our power over you as rulers. When you have been defeated, you will accept the terms and conditions that we dictate.

Smaller punitive expeditions



Mohmand Field Force

7th August to 1st October 1897

1,500 men under
Colonel Edmond Elles



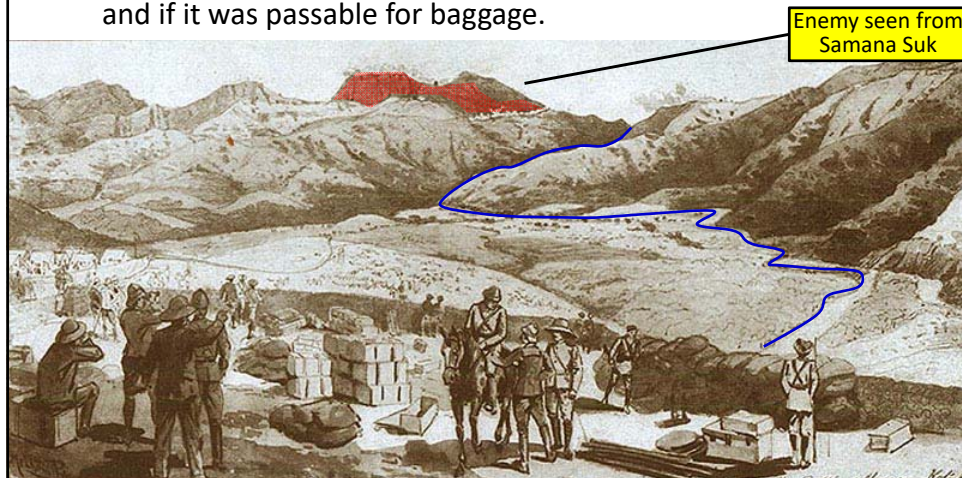
Malakand Rising

26th July 1897 to 22nd August 1897

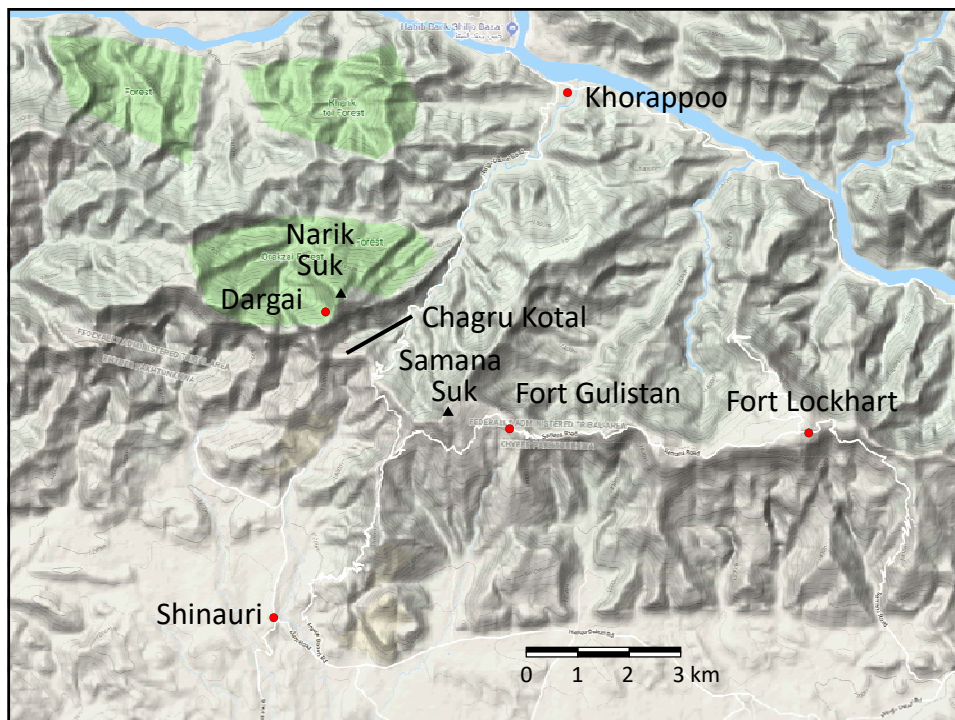
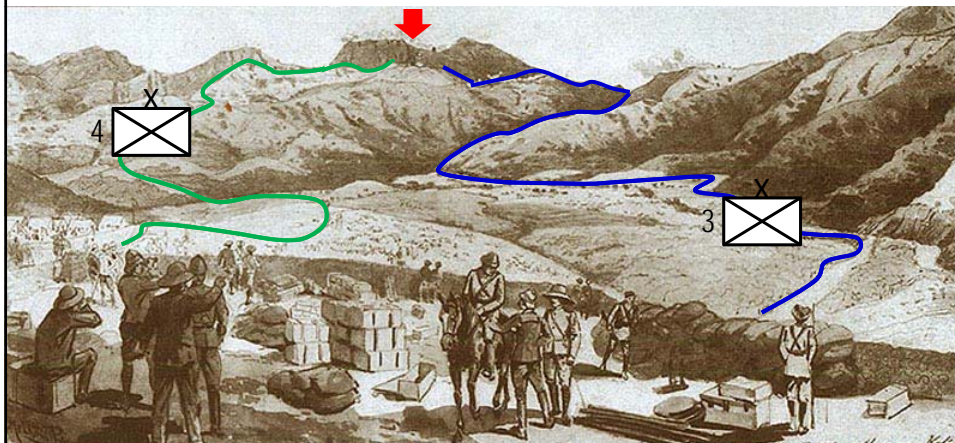
8,950 men under
Major-General Sir Bindon Blood KCB

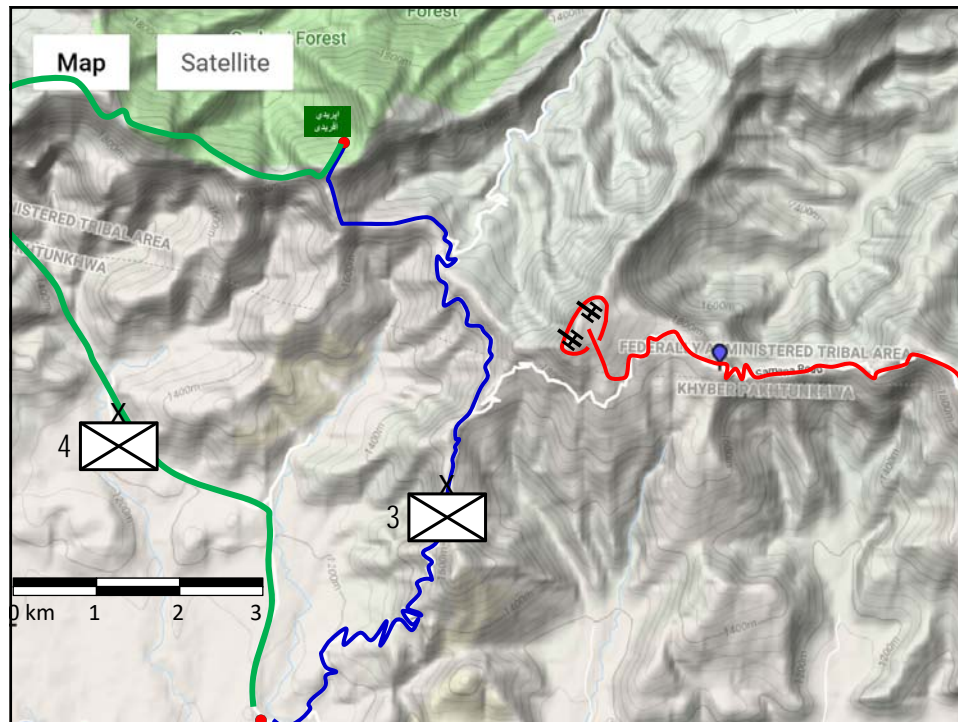


- Observation from Samana Suk revealed a buildup of Orakzais and Afridis on the heights near the village of Dargai which overlooked the intended route of march to the Khanki Valley.
- Sir William Lockhart ordered Yeatman-Biggs's 2nd Division at Shinauri to make a reconnaissance in force towards the Khanki Valley in order to ascertain if the road actually existed and if it was passable for baggage.



- The object of the reconnaissance was the summit of the hill, directly overlooking Shinauri, over two thousand feet high.
- Hearing of another path to the summit from the west, Gen. Yeatman-Biggs ordered his **4th Brigade** to assault the mountains **from the left** whilst the **3rd Brigade** went up the **Kohat-Khorappoo Road**. 2 batteries on Samana Suk supported.





Experience of the Westmacott's 4th Brigade

- Gen. Yeatman-Biggs was ill, so Gen. Sir Arthur Power-Palmer had acting division command. of the division. He accompanied 4th Brigade.
- At 0400 the 4th Brigade set off from Shinauri.
- From the plain the ascent appeared to be simple but, when they started to climb, they found that it was rugged and almost impassable. There was no semblance of road, and the men had to toil up the goat paths and sheep tracks. They pressed on.
- About 5 miles in, the mules and No. 8 Mountain Battery were sent back to Shinauri escorted by the Dorsets.
- At about 1200, they reached the Dargai ridge about fifteen hundred feet in elevation higher than the Shinauri Camp.



- On the near side it was almost a sheer precipice, and the only means of access to the top was up three steep waterways, which converged to the left of the position. It was only two hundred and fifty yards' range from the summit but, as soon as it was crossed, the steepness of the cliff afforded the assailants shelter from the enemy rifle fire.
- From this point the path zigzags up, until men in single file can reach the summit. The ridge then dips into the hollow plateau where the village lies, and then runs up two hundred feet to the cliff, making a descent of the better part of a mile. On the far side the hill slopes away to the Khanki Valley.
- In many places the men could only move in single file or at most two abreast, and progress was slow. Even though slow it was steady.
- Before long, the advance came under effective fire as it crept toward the sangars. But the two batteries on Samana Suk opened upon them, and enemy fire slackened somewhat.



- The climb was a severe one, indeed; the advance became worse and worse as they advanced and, at one place, a ridge between two spurs had to be crossed with barely a foot of purchase way, and a sheer drop on both sides.
- They advanced with the King's Own Scottish Borderers and Gurkhas were in front with the Northhamptons in support.
- At noon exactly, the Gurkhas reached a spot two hundred yards from the summit, where there was a 100 m wide beaten zone to cross if they were to advance further.
- The Gurkhas were ordered to carry the position, while the Borderers covered their advance.
- Bayonets fixed, the Gurkhas streamed across and, as they neared the summit, the enemy bolted. 13 Gurkhas and 6 Borderers were killed or died of wounds during the assault.
- The Gurkhas initially pursued; but they did not go far, as BG Westmacott, who had been with the advance guard throughout, recalled them. The ridge was secured by 1200.



- By 1400, after holding the summit for several hours, BG Westmacott, supposing that BG Kempster (3rd Brigade) could not make his way up, was about to withdraw his men; as large bodies of the enemy were seen, moving in a direction which threatened the left rear.
- At this time, BG Kempster's 3rd Brigade joined up on the captured ridge. They set about destroying the sangars and towers and Dargai Village was burned.
- The 3rd Brigade had experienced considerable resistance along the Kohat-Khorappa Road, and had lost two officers.
- The three generals had an extensive discussion on the expediency of evacuating the pass, which was then occupied.
- Their general opinion was that returning the 8 miles to Shinauri over a bad road was necessary.
- 4th Brigade filed off immediately and set off down the road.

Reasons for withdrawal from Dargai

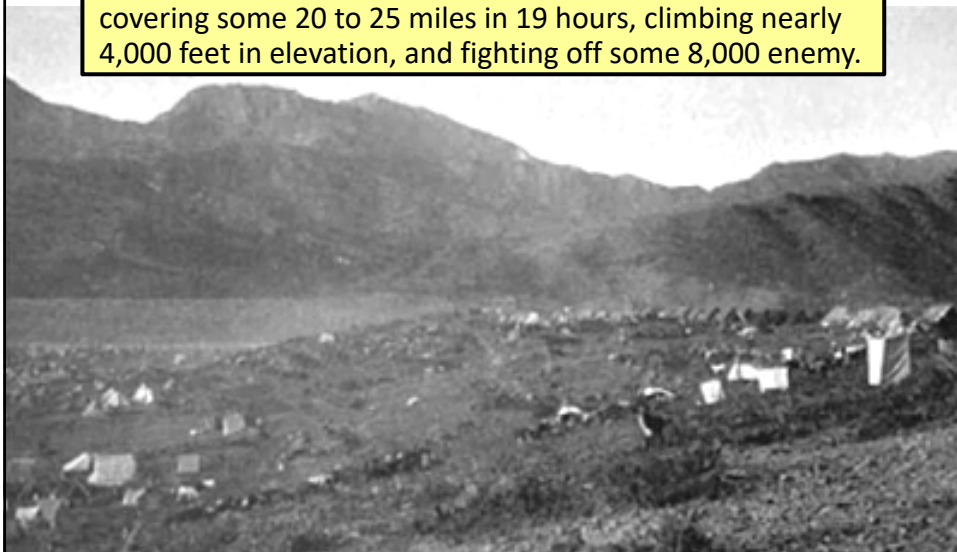
1. A full brigade was required to take and hold the Dargai Heights.
2. Picketing of the road would require half a brigade.
3. No commissariat arrangements had been made for the supply of a force on the plateau.
4. Not a drop of water was available. Dargai's water supply was 3 miles west at Khand Talao over mountainous roads held in force by the enemy.
5. If the Dargai heights were held, the enemy would mass their whole force against it; whereas, when the force withdrew, the tribesmen would be compelled to divide their force in order to watch the path from the south west, the road from the south east and the access from the Samana Ridge to the east.



Kempster's Withdrawal

- 3rd Brigade withdrew between 1600 and 1700, when the sun was rapidly sinking in the West.
- But the booming of the mountain guns all day had summoned thousands of tribesmen who hastened to the fight.
- BG Kempster organised a defense along the Chagru Ridge to cover the withdrawal. The mountain guns and steady volleys of the Gordons, 15th Sikhs, and two companies of Borderers covering the withdrawal kept thousands of enemy at bay and inflicted severe losses... at a cost of 10 KIA and 53 WIA.
- The Gordons took up positions around the open space to provide covering fire. This developed into a fire fight that caused the death of Major Jennings-Bramley and the wounding of 16 men. They were hard pressed but remained calm.
- The final rear-guard of one half-company commanded by Captain Kerr was rushed in a surprise attack. The enemy were only within a few yards of them when they managed to shoot the first six; the remaining tribesmen turned and fled.

- After passing from the ridge the retreat was unmolested for the remaining six long and weary miles to camp.

At 2300 the last of the rear-guard reached Shinauri after covering some 20 to 25 miles in 19 hours, climbing nearly 4,000 feet in elevation, and fighting off some 8,000 enemy.



Storming the Dargai Heights I		
Belligerents		
 British Empire (British Raj) • Indian Army	 Afridi Orakzai tribesmen	
Commanders and leaders		
Sir Arthur Power-Palmer, KCB, 2 nd Division BG FJ Kempster DSO, 3 rd Brigade BG R Westmacott CB DSO, 4 th Brigade	Gul Badshah and others	
Units involved		
3 rd Brigade: • 1 st Gordons • 1/2 nd Gurkhas • 15 th Sikhs • 1 st Dorsetshire	4 th Brigade: • 2 nd Scottish Borderers • 1/3 rd Gurkhas • 1 st Northhamptons	Afridi Orakzais
Strength and Casualties		
Approximately 6,000 3 rd Brigade: Estimated 15 KIA and 65 WIA (incl 10 KIA and 53 WIA in rear-guard) 4 th Brigade: Estimated 20 KIA and 50 WIA (Gurkhas, 13 KIA, 30 WIA and KOSB, 6 KIA and 16 WIA in assault on Dargai Heights)	8,000 (est.) Casualties unknown, but were extensive.	



Aftermath of the Recon-in-force

- The British hoped that the defeat would discourage the enemy from re-establishing themselves on the Dargai Heights. In fact reinforcements came from all over and the evening of the 19th found them established in greater strength than ever.
- Gen Lockhart intended that 2nd Division should resume work on the Chagru-Khorappa Road on the 19th, believing that this might discourage the enemy from re-occupying Dargai.
- However, unbeknownst to Sir William, Gen Yeatman-Biggs decided to give the exhausted troops a rest before the big push on the 20th.
- Sir William Lockhart at Fort Lockhart was not aware of this until too late to take action. If he had known, he could have had working parties covered by the 1st Division. As it was the enemy re-fortified their earlier positions on the 19th.

Later, failure to hold the Dargai Heights once they had been captured was **severely criticised** in parliament, the media and elsewhere in the military.

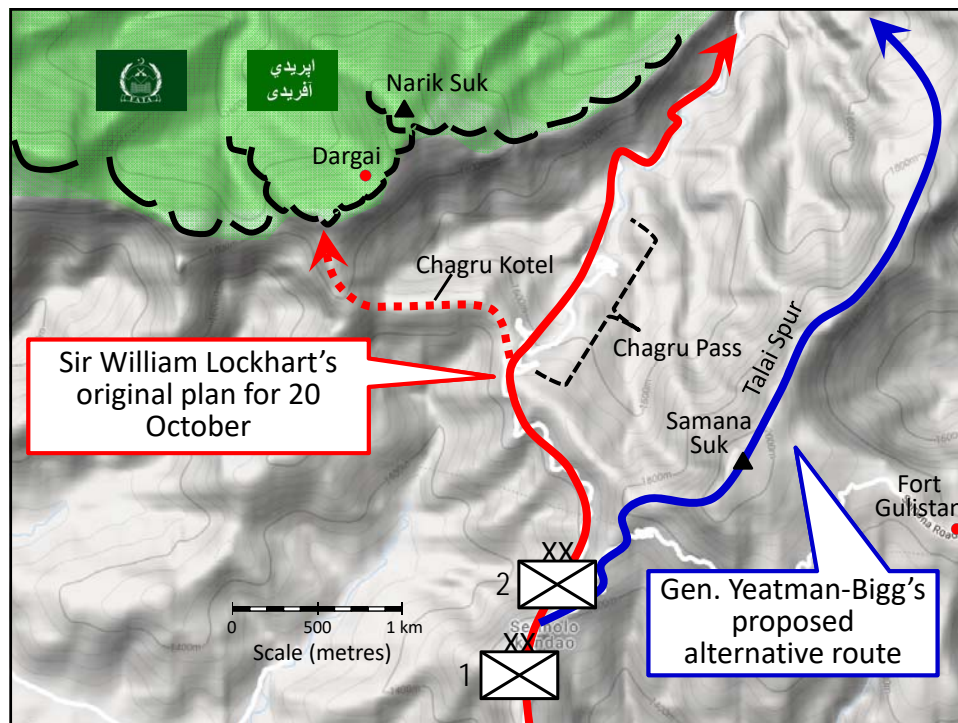
by those who weren't there.

Another long-standing dispute also arose

- Sir William Lockhart's had ordered the force to advance from Shinauri to the Khanki valley on the 20th with the 2nd Division followed by the 1st Division. The instructions were to move via the Chagru Kotel on the west side of the Chakru defile.
- Gen Yeatman-Biggs telegraphed the night before to say that as the Dargai Heights were again occupied in strength he proposed to march down the eastern side of the defile via the Samana Suk and the Talai Spur, bypassing the enemy on the commanding ground above the Western Road.

Recall that Yeatman-Biggs previously commanded the brigade in Kohat and was intimately familiar with the Samana Ridge.

- Sir William Lockhart disapproved the idea. He had info that the Talai Spur was at best a goat track, unfit for heavily laden animals. He felt that evading the tribesman would send the wrong message and probably encourage them to attack.

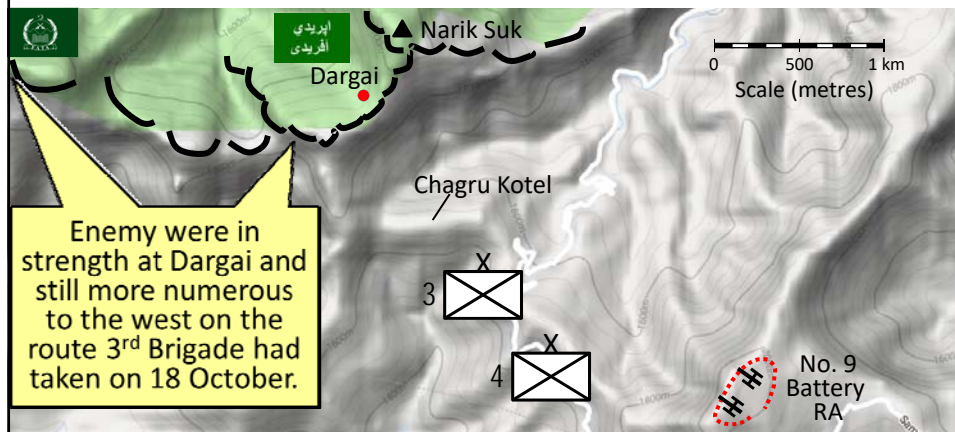


- Sir William Lockhart telegraphed that the original plan must be adhered to. He made two modifications:
 - Two infantry battalions and one artillery battery of 1st Division could be attached for the operation, and
 - The Northhamptons and No. 9 Mountain Battery would support from the Samana Suk.
- Lockhart apparently felt that the tribesman being engaged from the front would probably abandon their position on the heights without severe loss when the column pushed down the defile and threatened their rear via the Narik Suk.
- Gen Yeatman-Biggs, however, held that it would be dangerous to march men down the defile until the Heights overlooking it had been captured.

He **therefore ordered direct assault** on the Dargai Heights as soon as the leading 3rd Brigade reached Chagru Kotal at 0800.

Storming of the Dargai Heights, 20 October 1897

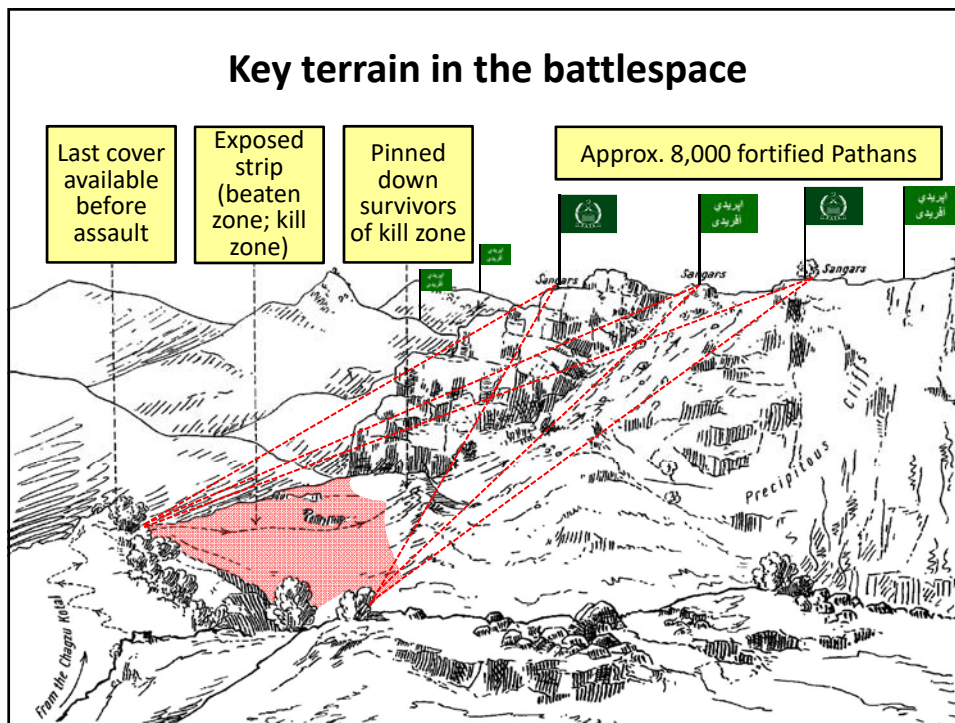
- 0430 The advance guard under Gen. Kempster left Shinauri.
- 0900 The whole of MG Yeatman-Biggs' division were massed on or near the Chagru Kotal. The Northhamptons and No. 9 Mountain Battery R.A. were on the Samana Suk, about 2,500 yards from the Dargai Heights.





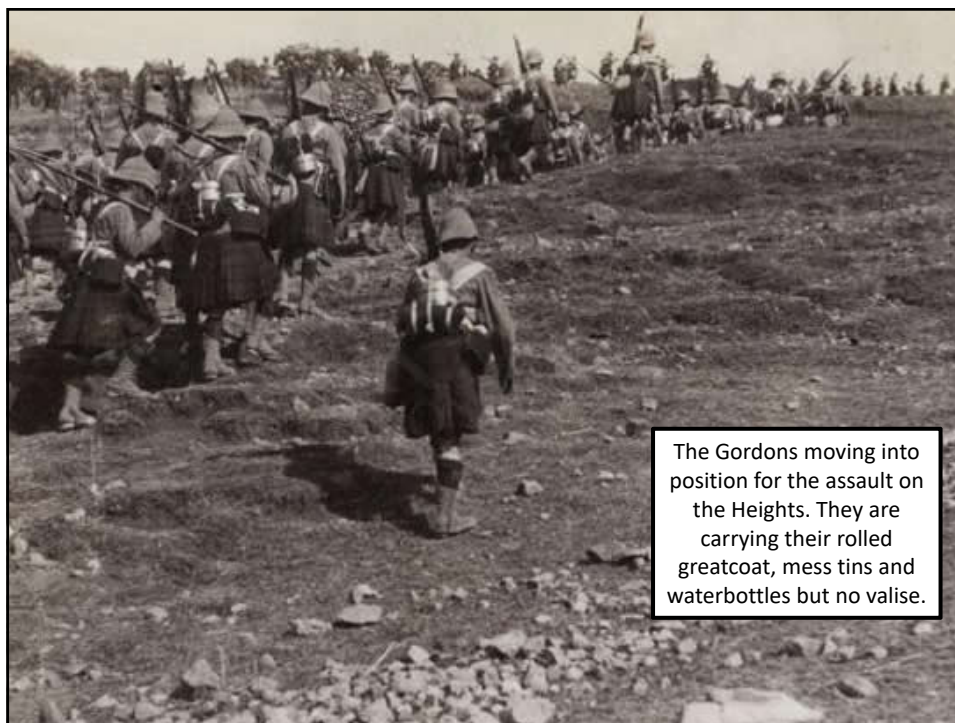
1200 – The assault begins

- By the time the Gurkhas reached the open zone about 500 yards from the enemy sangars, they faced a murderous fire from the cliffs above. A temporary halt was made under cover as the Dorset Regiment closed up on the Gurkhas.
- 2nd Gurkha CO LTC Travers decided to lead the left half wing across himself, while Major Judge led the right half wing.
 - Turning to LT Tillard (3rd Scouts) and his three captains, Travers asked if they were ready and then gave the signal to advance, rushing across to some dead ground where they were temporarily safe. About thirty men were lost.
 - Major Judge rose up to lead the right wing, but was immediately shot dead. Captain Robinson was mortally wounded. Nevertheless, the right wing of the Gurkhas crossed the beaten zone, also with heavy loss.
 - Subadar Kirpa Ram Thapa (2nd Gurkhas) though shot twice continued to effectively command his company.



- The Dorsets and Derbys attempted to follow individually and in small groups. Few reached the Gurkhas untouched.
 - Captain Arnold (Dorsetshire) was shot he rose to attack.
 - LT Hewitt led a group across the zone with just a bullet-graze on his elbow, only to find all ten men in his section had been shot down during the rush.
 - As each company charged in turn, their leading elements were slaughtered, but some troops made it to cover.
 - LT Henry Pennell (Derbyshire) carried Captain Smith under murderous fire to a place of safety, only to find Smith died.
 - Private Samuel Vickery of the Dorsets, made multiple and finally successful efforts to bring in a wounded comrade.
- Over 100 dead and wounded were lying in the beaten zone, were anyone who moved immediately became a target. Survivors of the crossing, many of themselves wounded, huddled where they could find safety.

- By 1500, many of the Gurkhas, Dorsets and Derbys had been suffering and enduring for three hours in the heat without water. Any exposure or movement brought down murderous fire from the cliffs and they could move no further.
- From the cliffs, the enemy shouted their defiance, waving their standards, beating their drums.
- At this point, Gen. Yeatman-Biggs realised that he must take drastic action.
 - The Gordon Highlanders and the 3rd Sikhs were ordered to assault *en masse*, not by isolated companies.
 - They were to follow three minutes of “mad minute” artillery and rifle fire on the Dargai Heights positions.
- Forming his battalion of Gordon Highlanders, LTC Henry Harding Mathias, CB, said, “Highlanders! The general says the position must be taken at all costs. The Gordons will take it!”





The Gordons in final position before the assault on the Heights.

Per Sir William Lockhart's Despatch

By 11:30 the force was in formation under cover in readiness to capture the heights, but when the 2nd Ghurkas, accompanied by the Ghurka scouts of the first battalion 3rd Ghurkas, made their first rush across the open, they were met by such a hot and well-aimed fire that all they could do was to hold on to the position they had reached without being able to advance farther.

At 2 p.m. the Dorsetshire Regiment was ordered to storm the enemy's intrenchments, but though a few men were able to get across the fire-swept zone, an advance beyond the line held by the 2nd Ghurkas was reported by the commanding officer to be impracticable owing to the large number of tribesmen lining the edge of the Dargai plateau, and the steepness of the slope leading up to it.

The General officer commanding the second division accordingly ordered Brigadier-General Kempster to move up the Gordon Highlanders and the 3rd Sikhs, the former regiment being replaced on the lower spur which it had hitherto occupied by the Jhind Imperial Service Infantry.

"The Gordon Highlanders went straight up the hill without check or hesitation. Headed by their pipers, and led by Lieutenant-Colonel Mathias, C.B., with Major Macbean on his right and Lieutenant A.F. Gordon on his left, this splendid battalion marched across the open. It dashed through a murderous fire, and in forty minutes had won the heights, leaving 3 officers and 30 men killed or wounded on its way. The first rush of the Gordon Highlanders was deserving of the highest praise, for they had just undergone a very severe climb and had reached a point beyond which other troops had been unable to advance for over three hours.

"The first rush was followed at short intervals by a second and a third, each led by officers, and as the leading companies went up the path for the final assault the remainder of the troops, among whom the 3rd Sikhs were conspicuous, streamed on in support. But few of the enemy waited for the bayonet, many of them being shot down as they fled in confusion. The position was won at 3:15."

Comments

- As Sir William noted in his despatch, LTC Mathias left the attack, with MAJ Macbean leading the right wing and LT Gordon the left. Previous attacks had been made by smaller groups organised in companies and sections. The Gordons' tactics were to charge as a battalion.
- Lieutenant Arthur Basil Tillard of the 3rd Gurkha Scouts (awarded a DSO) had been trapped in the position for three hours. He described the arrival of the Gordons:



'The scene makes me shake with excitement even now. The Gordons, pipers playing and men cheering, never stopped or wavered although many of them were down. It was one wild continuous rush of men all eager to get to the enemy. The sight was magnificent and the excitement so intense that I for one, although I was shouting at the top of my voice, felt the tears springing up into my eyes and could not keep them back.'

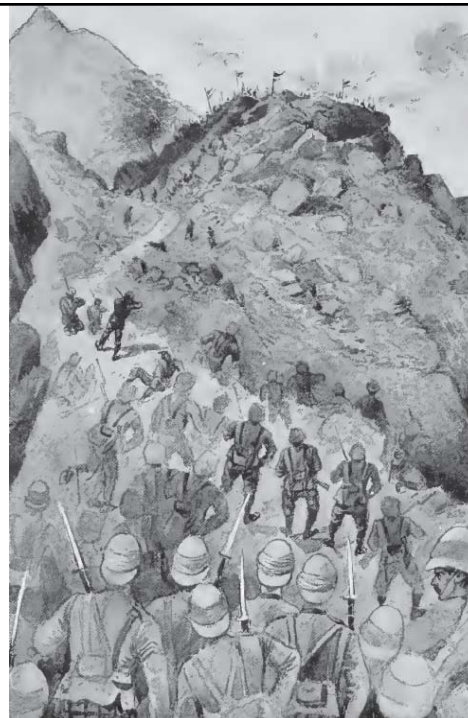
- As with previous charges across the open space, the tribesmen poured down a withering fire on the Gordons.
- Lieutenant Lamont died immediately, along with two men.
- Major Macbean was badly wounded and lay where he fell.
- Four more officers were wounded, including Lt Dingwall, shot four times. PVT Lawson picked up LT Dingwall and rushed him to safety. He returned to rescue PVT McMillan, though twice wounded himself.
- Headed in their memorable rush by their five bagpipers, four of whom fell wounded. Lance-Corporal Milne, leader of the pipers was shot in the chest hit the moment he played the first note. Piper George Findlater was one of the first onto the strip was shot through both legs (breaking an ankle) after a few yards; unable to walk he propped himself up against the boulder and continued to pipe the Gordons across playing "*The Haughs O' Cromdale*".






Final Assault

- Inspired by the Gordon's charge, the troops who had been pinned down for three hours, stood and joined the charge. They reached the foot of the wall where a zig-zag path worked up the cliff.
- The charge up the path was a mad scramble with men of the Gordons, Sikhs and Gurkhas vying for the honour of getting up there first.
- The enemy was so disheartened they fled even before the soldiers reached the summit and were shot down from behind as they fled.
- The Gordons' casualties were harsh for the few minutes of exposure: one officer and two men killed, 6 officers and 35 men wounded.
- Gurkhas lost four KIA and 51 WIA.





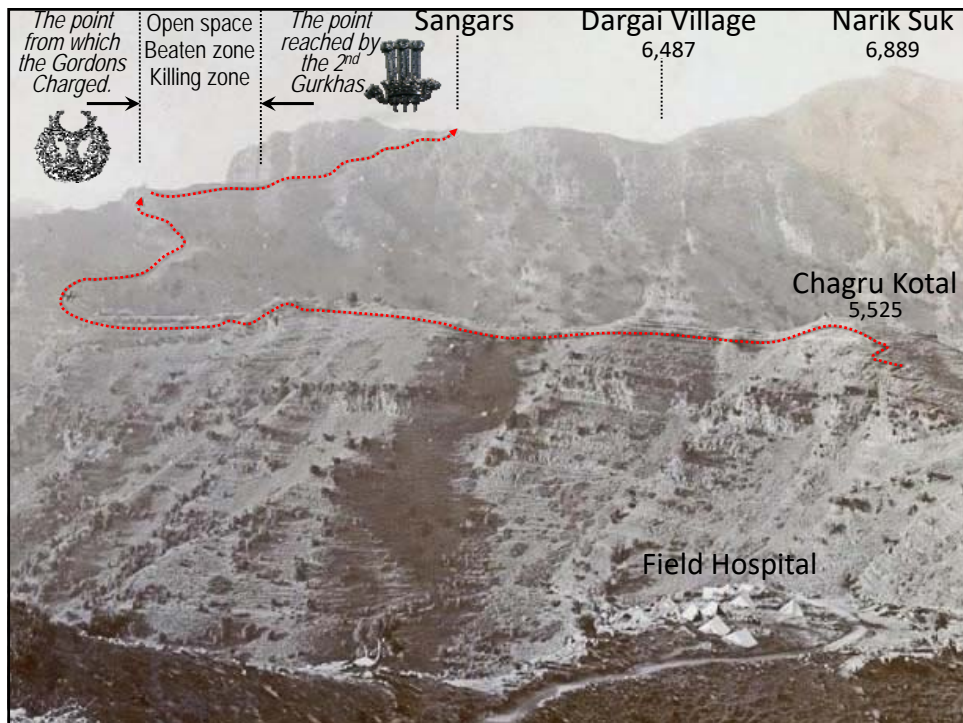
92ND REGIMENT OF FOOT
'GORDON HIGHLANDERS'

As the Gordons rested after the last stiff fight, LTC Mathis, no longer young at 47, was somewhat short of breath and said to Colour-Sgt Mackie alongside whom he found himself:-

“Stiff climb, aye, Mackie? Not quite-so young-as I was-you know.”

“Never mind, sarr!” answered the sergeant giving his CO a slap on the back which almost knocked out his remaining wind,

“Never mind, sarr! Ye’re gaun verra strong for an auld man!”





Storming the Dargai Heights II

Belligerents



British Empire (British Raj)
• Indian Army



Afridi
Orakzai tribesmen

Commanders and leaders

MG A G Yeatman-Biggs, 2nd Division
BG FJ Kempster DSO, 3rd Brigade
BG R Westmacott CB DSO, 4th Brigade

Gul Badshah

Units involved

3rd Brigade:
• 1st Gordons
• 1/2nd Gurkhas
• 15th Sikhs
• 1st Dorsetshire

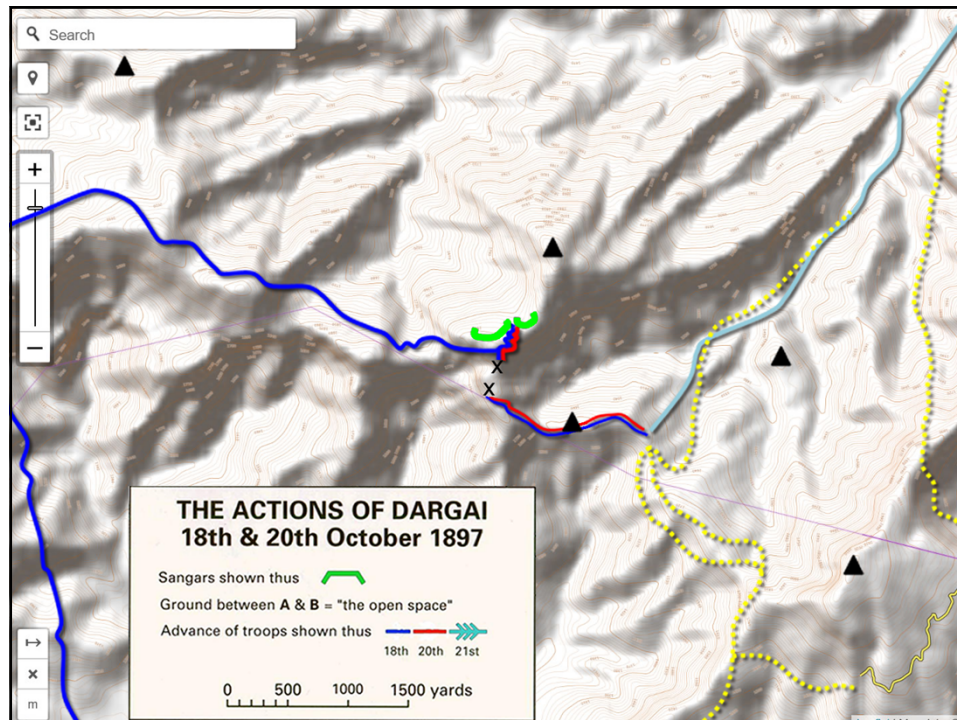
Attachments:
• 1st Derbyshire
• 1/3rd Gurkhas
• 1st Northhamptons
• Division Troops

Afridi
Orakzais

Casualties


	KIA	WIA	Total
Gurkhas	20	51	71
Gordons	3	41	44
Dorsets	9	40	49
Derbys	4	8	12
Sikhs	3	20	23
Total	39	160	199

8,000 to 10,000 fighting strength (est.)
Casualties unknown, but were extensive.







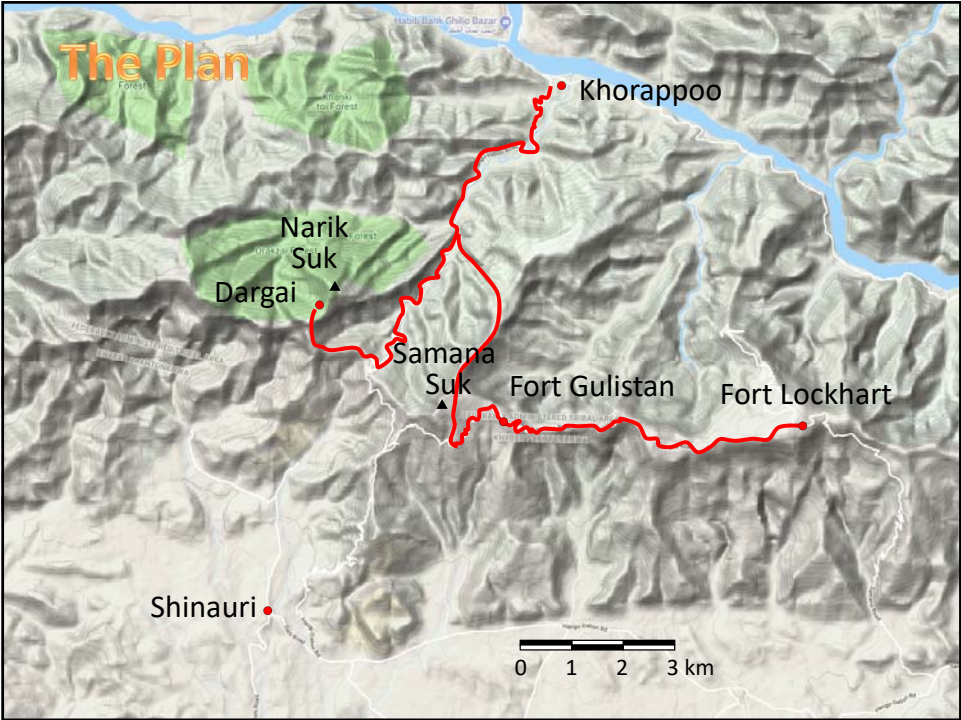
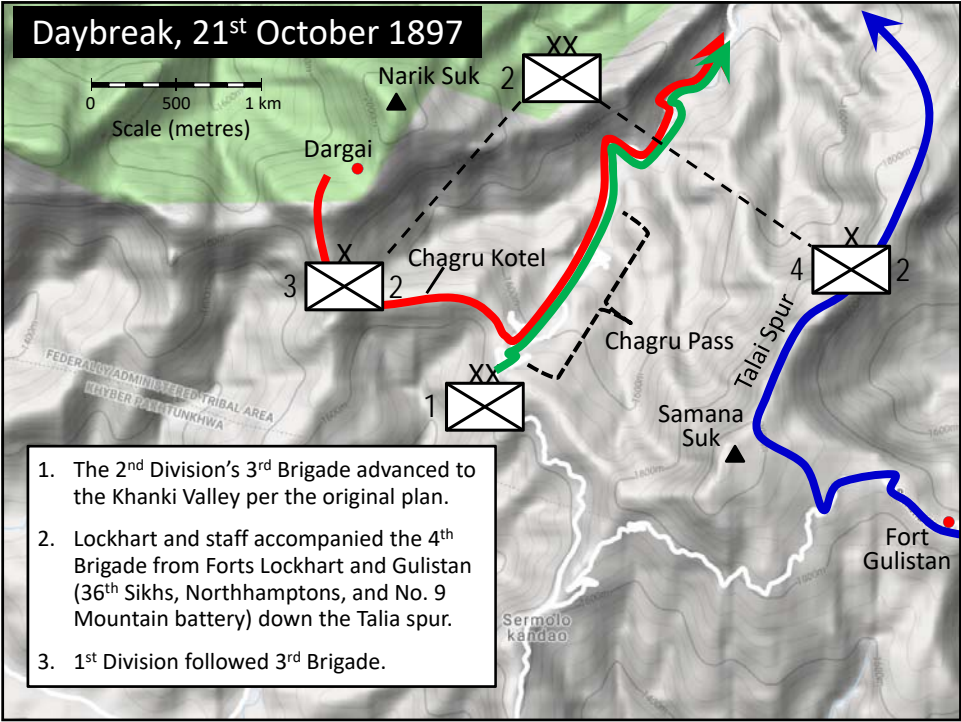
- Surviving corporals in the Gordons together with corporals (naiks) of the 1/2nd Gurkhas.
- After the Heights were captured for the second time, the 2nd Gurkhas and the Dorsets were ordered to remain on guard at Dargai in case there was any sign of the tribesmen returning.
- The Gordons volunteered to carry away the dead and wounded Gurkhas. This act of kindness, along with the joint effort in the actual assault cemented a bond between the regiments that had already formed during the Afghan War of 1879-80 when they had served alongside each other at Kandahar.





Victoria Crosses at Dargai

	<p>LT Henry S. Pennell Derbyshire Regiment</p> <p>When Captain W. E. G. Smith, of the Derbyshire Regiment, was shot, Lieutenant Pennell, under a hail of bullets, ran to him and twice attempted to carry him into shelter. Only when he found that CPT Smith had died did he desisted from any further attempts</p>		<p>PVT Edward Lawson Gordon Highlanders</p> <p>Under a terrific fire from the enemy Lawson carried the severely wounded LT Dingwall from an open spot to a safer position. Afterwards he acted in a similarly manner to rescue PVT McMillan, though himself wounded in two places</p>
<p>Piper George Findlater Gordon Highlanders</p> <p>Shot through both legs with a broken ankle, Findlater sat up, under a terrific fire, and continued playing the bagpipes in order to encourage his comrades in the charge. Decorated at Netley Hospital by Her late Majesty Queen Victoria.</p>		<p>PVT Samuel Vickery Dorsetshire Regiment</p> <p>Vickery ran back down the slope, under a very severe fire, to the help of a wounded soldier whom he carried back to shelter. Later on, when with BG Kempster's column in the Waran Valley, he became separated from his company and was attacked by three of the enemy and killed them all.</p>	

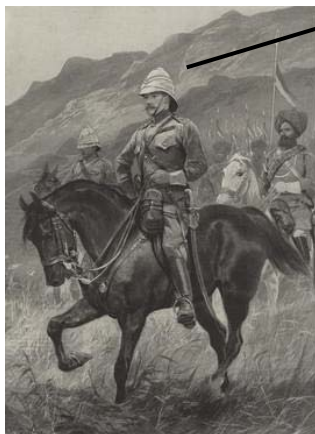


- Khorappoo was deemed indefensible as it was overlooked by high mountains, so the column moved on for 2½ km to an open plain across from the fortified city of Khangarbur, 13 miles from Shinauri.
- Khangarbur was full of Afridis who opened fire on the leading open fire on the leading 4th Brigade (Westmacott). No. 8 Mountain Battery, R.A., placed accurate fire on the village and, aided by a bayonet charge, the enemy decided to vacate to the north.
- The force assembled at Khangarbur numbered 6,800 British ranks, 10,280 native ranks, 17,000 followers, and upwards of 25,000 animals.

Daily requirements of this multitude in food along amounted to 240,000 pounds (~110.000 kg) of stuff at a moderate estimate.

- Both the 1st and 2nd Divisions were assembled in Khangarbur.
- The next planned action was to seize the Sampagha Pass on the 28th or 29th of October.

On 22 October, Sir William Lockhart had the Gordons paraded and addressed them:



General Sir William Stephen Alexander Lockhart, GCB KCSI
2 Sep 1841 – 18 Mar 1900

"Your records testify to many a gallant action performed by you, and you have now added to them another which may worthily rank beside those that have gone before.

"There is more hard work ahead for us all, and I am confident you will do your share of a well when the time comes to call upon you for a fresh effort."

Sir William then thanked Col Mathias personally, the assembled officers for gallant leadership, and the men, and the parade was dismissed.

