

The conduct of these officers and men* in entering the village several times in the dark, in face of a heavy fire directed upon them at close quarters, seems deserving of the highest recognition, and I have consequently made a special communication to you on the subject. Brigadier-General Jeffreys has also commended the gallant conduct of his Deputy-Assistant Adjutant-General,† Major E. O. F. Hamilton, 1st Battalion, the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment, and finally he has praised the courage and resolution of Lieutenant W. L. S. Churchill, 4th Hussars, the correspondent of the Pioneer newspaper with the force, who made himself useful at a critical moment.

30. On the 17th September the troops of the 2nd Brigade rested, and timely arrangements were made for bringing up supplies of ammunition and food and for sending the wounded down the line. On the 18th, Brigadier-General Jeffreys resumed the punishment of the Mamunds, attacking and destroying the strongly fortified village of Damadolah, with a loss of two sepoy killed and six wounded. On this occasion the enemy lost many killed and wounded, and some 300 loads of their grain and other supplies were carried off for the use of our troops. On the 19th, Brigadier-General Jeffreys seized and destroyed the group of villages called Hazarnao without opposition. On the 20th he captured and burned Umra Khan's strong village of Zagai, some seven miles from camp, with the loss of two British Officers, nine other British ranks, and two sepoy wounded. On the 22nd he took and destroyed the fortified village of Dag, with the loss of one sepoy killed and two wounded. On this day I arrived at Inayat Kila from Nawagai.

31. While the events above described were occurring in South Bajaur, nothing of special interest happened at Nawagai until the 19th September. The Hadda Mullah's gathering was reported to be increasing, and some men belonging to it fired ineffectually at our evening patrols on the 15th and 16th from the ravines near the mouth of the Bedmanai Pass. The country was regularly reconnoitred in various directions, and the cavalry under Major S. B. Beatson, 11th Bengal Lancers, accompanied by Captain Stanton, D.S.O., Royal Artillery, Deputy-Assistant Quartermaster-General for Intelligence, penetrated on the 15th as far as Ato Khel, five or six miles north of the Nahakki (or Nakki) Pass, over which the Mohmand Field Force, under Major-General Elles, C.B., was daily expected to appear. On the afternoon of the 17th some 1,500 men of the Hadda Mullah's gathering appeared close under the hills at the mouth of the Bedmanai Pass, about seven miles from camp, and I turned out part of the brigade to meet them if they should advance. Nothing happened, however, as the enemy remained where they were, too far off for me to reach them without being benighted in the ravines afterwards. On the 18th, Captain Norie, Superintendent of Signalling, with my force, opened heliographic communication with a detachment of Major-General Elles' force, which had arrived at the top of the Nahakki Pass.

32. At 5.30 p.m., on the 19th, about 2,000 of the Hadda Mullah's men appeared at the mouth of the Bedmanai Pass, and seemed to be engaged for an hour or so in some kind of dance. Ultimately, about dusk, they commenced to move towards our camp, and soon afterwards I was informed by the son of the Khan of Nawagai that they meant to

attack us before morning. Accordingly, at about 11 p.m., some 150 men, chiefly swordsmen, made a rush at the portion of the camp defended by the 1st Battalion, Queen's West Surrey Regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel J. S. Collins, who easily repulsed them, when, after trying other parts of the camp in a half-hearted way for a few minutes, they drew off and commenced skirmishing with the Khan of Nawagai's men, who were on outpost duty about a mile off, finally disappearing about 12.30 a.m. Our losses in the affair were, one British soldier killed, and one severely wounded, besides several horses and transport animals killed or wounded. We were afterwards informed that about 1,200 men advanced against our camp on this occasion, but that the warm manner in which their first line was received stopped the rest.

33. On the 20th, I received a message from Major-General Elles, C.B., saying that he would meet me at 10 a.m. next day at Lakarai with his 1st Brigade, under Brigadier-General Westmacott, C.B., D.S.O., to concert arrangements for further joint action. To this I replied that I would place my 3rd Brigade at his disposal with a view to his attacking the Hadda Mullah's gathering as soon as possible, and that I intended to join my 2nd Brigade at Inayat Kila in the Mamund Valley on the 22nd. In the afternoon I made a reconnaissance in force towards Kuz Chinarai, at the mouth of the Bedmanai Pass, whereupon the enemy appeared at the adjoining mouth of the Mittai Valley in considerable force; but as they remained at such a distance that I could not deal with them without being benighted during my return to camp, I did not attack them. Ultimately when I retired they advanced at a very respectful distance, and when last seen before dark they were about two miles from camp. On this occasion also I was warned by the Khan of Nawagai that the enemy meant to attack before morning, and I was informed, besides, that some fresh contingents had joined him.

34. Accordingly, at about 9 p.m., we were vigorously attacked by a force probably not less than 3,000 strong, with about 100 Martini-Henry and several Lee-Metford rifles, besides many other firearms.

The attack was well carried out by rushes of swordsmen covered by a smart fire of small-arms; and the firing, with rushes at intervals, sometimes against three sides of the camp at the same time, went on till about 2 a.m., when the enemy drew off. They were nowhere to be seen at daylight when I sent the cavalry out in pursuit.

The steadiness of the troops during this somewhat trying action was quite perfect, and the safety of the camp was never in the slightest degree doubtful, although the enemy's swordsmen were so determined that many of them were shot down close to the entrenchment. The fire discipline of the infantry was shown to be excellent, especially that of the 1st Battalion, Queen's, under Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, who are in all respects an example of what a battalion of infantry should be. The star shell fired by the mountain battery were most useful, and shrapnel and case were also fired at different times with great effect, all under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel W. Aitken, C.B., Commanding the Royal Artillery with my force. In short, the affair was a most satisfactory one, as proving the admirable discipline, confidence, and steady shooting of our troops, as well as the efficiency of the simple defensive arrangements which had been made.

35. I regret to have to report that Brigadier-

* Of whom six were killed and 18 wounded on this occasion, out of a total strength of 54.

† The remainder of Brigadier-General Jeffreys' staff was with the main body when it got separated from him.