

## CHAPTER II.

## HISTORY.

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## Early history.

The tract now included in this district, together with parts of the district of Rohtak, are better known to history under the name of Hariána. The origin of the name is attributed by the people to a Rájá named Hari Chand, who is said, at some undefined period, to have come from Oudh, and peopled this part of the country. Others derive the name from the word *hari* (slain), in allusion to a tradition of a great slaughter of Khatriás by Paras Rám, on 21 different occasions, at a village a few miles to the west of Jínd. The Settlement Officer, Munshi Amín Chand, derives the name from *hariában*, the name of a wild plant, with which the country was formerly said to be overgrown. A more probable derivation is from *hara* (green), in allusion to the expanse of brushwood which once covered the greater part of the district, and even now covers large portions of it, giving at certain seasons of the year an aspect of greenness to the whole country. Of the period antecedent to the Muhammadan conquest of Hindustán, the nearest approach to history is to be found in certain vague traditions of the settlement in the district of various branches of the Royal Tunwár Rájput race of Dehli, followed, after the fall of that house, by fresh immigrations under Chauhán leaders. One thing is certain, that at the earliest period of which anything is known, the town of Hánsi was the centre of local authority, and the capital of Hariána. The Muhammadan rule was extended to Hánsi shortly after the fall of Dehli before Shaháb-ud-dín. The city of Hisár had not yet been founded, and Hánsi still continued for many years the seat of local administration. In the 14th century, however, the attention of the Emperor Firoz Sháh Tughlak was drawn to Hariána, and this monarch founded a new town, naming it after himself, Hisár Firoza, or the "fort of Firoz." An interesting account of this incident is given by Shams-i-Shiráz Afif, one of Sir H. Elliot's historians.\* "Sultán Firoz," we read, "passed several years after "his campaigns in Bengal (1352-53) in riding about Dehli, and "finding himself in the neighbourhood of Hisár Firoza, he "exerted himself actively and liberally in endeavouring to provide "for the needs of the country." The site of the future city was at this time occupied by two villages, called the Little and the

\* Shams-i-Shiráz says that "he (Firoz) conducted two streams into the city "from two rivers—one from the river Jamna, the other from the Satlaj. Both "these streams were conducted through the vicinity of Karnál, and after a length "of about 80 kos discharged their waters by one channel into the town." No traces remain of the canal from the Satlaj; and there is every reason to suppose that there is a mistake in the reading of Shams-i-Shiráz which mentions the Satlaj. See account of Ambála District, heading "Western Jamna Canal."

Large Larás. The neighbourhood of this village, "continues the "historian," "greatly pleased Sultán Firoz, and he thought it would "be well to build a city there; for it was very deficient in water, "and during the hot season travellers who came from Trák and "Khurásan had to pay as much as four *pitals* for a pitcher full. So "the Sultán resolved to build a city, being filled with hope that, "if he built a town for the benefit of Musalmáns, God would provide "it with water." Finding, however, when his city was completed, surrounded with a wall and ditch, and adorned with a palace "which had no equal," that his expectations with regard to water remained unfulfilled, he "resolved in his munificence to bring a supply of water thither,"—a resolve which resulted in the construction of the canal now known as that of the Western Jamna. The secret of Firoz Sháh's selection of Hisár Firoza as a favourite residence is probably to be found in his passion for sport, which found ample vent in the wild *jangals* with which the district was then clothed. In those days the Ghaggar, or Saraswati as it then was called, carried down a far larger volume of water into this part of the country than it does now, and it may be well believed that the country in its neighbourhood was a hunting ground of considerable excellence. Firoz Sháh's hunting expeditions extended beyond the Satlaj as far as Dipálpur (now in the Montgomery district), 130 miles to the north-west of Hisár. Another fact of some interest to be gleaned from the account of Shams-i-Shiráz is that in the 14th century the now deserted route across the wastes of Montgomery, Sirsa, and Hisár was much frequented by travellers between Dehli and Khurásán. Whatever amount of truth there may be in Shams-i-Shiráz's rather fulsome account of Firoz Sháh's treatment of Hariána, it is undoubted that, both by the construction of a canal and by giving to the industries of the country the incentive always afforded by the residence of a Court, that monarch did much to promote the welfare of the country. Besides Hisár, he also built the town of Fatehábád, in this district, naming it after his son, and conducted a small canal from the Ghaggar to supply it with water—a canal which is still in use.

An interesting account of Taimúr's march through Bhattiána and Hariána will be found in Elliot's *History of India*, III, 428ff, 92ff; Price's *Retrospect of Muhammadan History*, III, 247ff, and Brigg's *Ferishtah* I, 489ff.

The village of Firoz is still in existence; it was one of the smaller forts founded by Firoz Sháh, and is some 12 miles from Sirsa. The position of Rajabpur and Ahroni is doubtful; but at Dasul, some 12 miles north of Tohána, there are remains of an old fort call Kol, which perhaps mark the site of Ahroni. The local tradition states that Taimúr marched from Fatehábád to Kol and attacked the Pachchádas of that place, driving them out with great loss, and forcing them to retreat to Tohána and take up a position on the banks of the Ghaggar between the villages of Himmatpur, Púri, and Udipur, where they were again attacked next day by Taimúr's troops. When Taimúr passed on to Kaithal, they resettled at Kol.

There is but little worthy of notice in the way of architectural remains of this period. Old mosques and other buildings are

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dotted about the country, especially near the town of Hisár, but none are of any archaeological interest. Two stone pillars erected by Firoz Sháh at Hisár and Fatehábád must be excepted. These pillars, respectively 30 and 20 feet high, are similar to the well-known monolith called the *lát* of Firoz Sháh, at Dehli, of which they are probably imitations (see Archaeological Survey Reports, V. 140-142). The pillar at Fatehábád bears an inscription which is said to be now quite illegible. There are some ancient inscriptions on the rocks of the hill above Tusham. Copies of them have been sent to General Cunningham, who finds the date of one of them to be about A.D. 43. They bear the same standard which characterises the coin of Ghalot Kacha, father of Chandra Gupta I, whose most probable date is 78 A.D. The body of the inscription is a record of a family of religious teachers or Acharjiyas, worshippers of Vishnu. (See Archaeological Survey Reports, V. 136 to 140).

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From the time of Firoz Sháh, Hisár long continued to be a city of some importance, and the head-quarters of a *Sarkár* or revenue division. In the time of Akbar, the *Sarkár* of Hisár Firoza embraced the whole of the present district, together with Sirsa, as far as the river Wár, and parts of the modern Rohtak district, and of territory now included in Bikáner to the west, and the protected Sikh States to the east. The following list and accompanying account of the *maháls* contained in this *Sarkár* is extracted from Beames' edition of Sir H. Elliot's Supplemental Glossary, pp. 132-55:—

## SARKAR HISAR FIROZA.

1, Agroha; 2, Ahroni; 3, Athkhera; 4, Bhangiwál; 5, Púnián; 6, Bharangi; 7, Barwála; 8, Bahttu; 9, Birwa; 10, Bhatner; 11, Tuhána; 12, Tusham; 13, Jínd; 14, Jamálpur; 15, Hisár; 16, Dhátrat; 17, Sirsa; 18, Sheorám; 19, Sidhmukh; 20, Swáni; 21, Shanzdeh Dehát; 22, Fatehábád; 23, Guhána; 24, Khanda; 25, Mihún; 26, Hánsi.

There are twenty-seven *maháls* in this *Sarkár* (Hisár being counted as two), and four *dastúrs*—Haveli Hisár Firoza, Guhána, Mahan, and Sirsa. There are, however, several *parganas* excluded from the *dastúr* list, for what reason does not appear.

Of these *maháls*, those which do not retain their old name in our territory are numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 18, 19, 21, and 24.

2. Ahroni is partly in Ratiya and partly in Fatehábád. The historians of Taimúr point out its position, by saying it is on the road from Fatehábád to Tuhána. The place was burnt and pillaged by the conqueror, merely because the inhabitants did not come out to pay their respects. Ahroni has now reverted to its original name of Alurwan, whereas in *Sarkár* Chanár Ahirwára, which derived its name from the same tribe, has now been corrupted into Ahrona.

3. Athkhera is under the Rája of Jínd, and is known now by the name of Kasonan.

4. Bhangiwál, so called from the tribe of Játs which inhabited it, is the old name of Darba, in which place the officers of the Rája of Bikáner built a fort, and thenceforward it came to be considered the chief town of a *pargana*.

5. Pánián, called also after a tribe of Játa, is in Bikáner, but is now included in another *pargana*.

6. Bharangi is also in Bikáner.

8. Bahttu is partly in Fatehábad and partly in Darba. Bahttu is in the former *pargana*. Subsequent history.

9. Birwa is in the protected Sikh territory.

10. Bhatner. The old town of Bhatner is in Bikáner, but part of the *pargana* is now included in Rániya.

15. Jínd gives name to one of the protected Sikh States.

14. Jamálpur is included in the late cession from Patiála. The old town of Jamálpur is near Tuhána.

16. Dhátrat was in Jínd, but is now in British territory.

18. Sheorám is in the Bágár country, in the *jágír* of Nawáb Amír Khán. Two-thirds of Sheorám are now in Luháru, the remainder in Dádri.

19. Sidhmukh is in Bikáner.

21. Shanzdeh Dehát or Kariát (*i.e.*, the sixteen villages) is included in Ratiya Tuhána, amongst the late cessions from Patiála. The *iláka* is generally known by the name of Garhi Ráo Ahmad. I have heard it stated that it is in Jínd, and not in Ratiya Tuhána.

24. Khánda is in Jínd.

To these may be added 25, which is probably Maham in Rohtak. 26 is of course the modern Hánsi.

The modern *parganas* are—

1 Bahal.	3 Ratiya.
2 Rániya.	4 Darba.

Bahal was originally in Swáni, from which it was separated in A.D. 1758 by Jawáni Singh, a Rájput, who built a mud fort at Bahal, and maintained possession of a few neighbouring villages.

Rániya was in Bhatner. The old name of the village was Rajabpur. The Ráni of Ráo Anúp Singh, Rathaur, took up her abode here, built a mud fort, and changed the name of Rajabpur to Rániya, which it has since retained.

Ratiya is now included in one *pargana* with Tuhána. It was composed of villages from Ahroni, Jamálpur, and Shanzdeh Kariát.

Darba.—See Bhangiwál.

Another table, somewhat differing from Sir H. Elliot's, is given by the Settlement Officer, as showing the territorial division under the Muhmmadans. He does not say whence it was obtained, but it is reproduced, as it stands, the spelling only being modified, for the sake of uniformity.

No.	Name of <i>pargana</i> or <i>mahal</i> .	Name of tribe who owned the <i>mahals</i> .	Remarks showing the changes which have since taken place in these <i>mahals</i> .
1	Agroha	Jatu Rajputs and Jats	New in Fatehabad <i>taluk</i> jurisdiction.
2	Aharwan	Gujars and Jats	Do.
3	Bahttu	Jats	Do.
4	Fatehabad	Rajputs, Jat and Gujars	Do.
5	Hisar ( <i>alias</i> Habeli)	Do.	<i>Taluk</i> Hisar.
6	Barwas	Do.	Do.
7	Swari	Do. Jatu	Do.
8	Tuhana	Do.	Do.
9	Kairu	Do. do. and Jats	<i>Taluk</i> Bhiwand.
10	Hansal	Do. do.	<i>Taluk</i> Hansal.
11	Barwala	Sayads, Barias & Malukadaks	<i>Taluk</i> Barwala.
12	Tuhania	Pathans and Lehanies	Do.
13	Jamulpur	Tunwar Rajputs and Jats	Do.

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No.	Name of pargana or mahal.	Name of tribe who owned the mahal.	Remark showing the changes which have since taken place in these mahals.
14	Shamsudh Dehat (16 villages)	Tunwar Rajputs and Jats	Part of Barwala near Bahuna, Khari, Ratan and other villages.
15	Sirsa	Jocan Rajputs	In a separate district, Sirsa.
16	Dhaurat	Jats and Pathans	Do. Karnal.
17	Khanda	Jats	Do. Do.
18	Guhana	Jats, Sapsidars and Palasians	Do. Rohtak.
19	Mehun	Tunwar Rajputs and Jats	Some villages of this pargana now belong to Hisar and some to Rohtak district. Mehun Khas belongs to the latter district.
20	Bhyniwal (Bhangiwali ?)	Rajputs and Rathours	Some villages appertain to the Hisar and Sirsa districts, the principal portion to the Bikaner State.
21	Punian	Jats	In Bikaner.
22	Bharinj	Rathours, Rajputs and Jats	Do.
23	Bhatner	Do. do.	Do.
24	Sidrukhi	Rathours and Rajputs	Do.
25	Sheoram	Jats	Granted by the British to Nawab of Loharu.
26	Jind	Jatu Rajputs and Sayads	Belongs to the Raja of Jind.
27	Athkhara (8 villages)	Tunwar Rajputs and Jats	Do. to the Patiala State.

In the early years of the 18th century, we find Hisar under the rule of Nawab Shāhdād Khān of Kasūr (1707—1737). In his time the condition of the people and country is said to have been one of considerable prosperity. This, however, was not destined to last for long. In Sambat 1818 (A. D. 1761) Hariāna was held in *jāgīr* by Rukn-ul-daula, minister to Farrukhsheer, who made over the great part of it to Faujdār Khān, the Nawab of Farakhnagar in Gurgāon, during whose time the country was first ravaged by Nādir Shāh, and then distracted by the inroads of the Sikhs, who were at this time making themselves masters of a large tract south of the Satlaj. At the same time the Bhattis, a turbulent Rājput tribe, who have given the name of Bhattiāna to a large tract of country now mostly included in the Sirsa district, began to make themselves formidable to the north. The history of the latter portion of the century is one record of confusion and bloodshed. Hariāna was the battle-field on which met the Marāhtas from the south, the Sikhs from the east, and the Bhattis from the north. The whole was nominally subject to the Marāhta power, before which the Mughal empire of Dehli had melted away, but the real masters of the greater portion were the Sikhs and Bhattis.

## The Bhattis.

The Bhattis at this period were a pastoral race, fierce and restless in their habits, and impatient of any control. They were little more than a band of robbers; but their boldness, the rapidity of their movements, and the savage character of their country, saved them from being crushed by their powerful neighbours of Patiala and Jind, whom they continually irritated by their raids. They lived for the most part in open villages, or wandered about with their flocks in search of pasture. A few towns, or rather fortified villages, were scattered through the waste, which the Bhatti tribes made their rendezvous on the approach of danger. These were Fatehābād, Sirsa, Rāniya and Abohar.\* Rāja Amar Singh, of

\* Griffin's "Rajas of the Panjab," p. 179.

Patiála, more than once invaded their country and stormed their strongholds, but the reluctant submission of the chiefs lasted scarcely a moment beyond the withdrawal of the Patiála troops; and after the death of Amar Singh in 1781 they completely recovered their independence, and retained it thenceforth, almost without interruption, until their final subjugation by British arms.

To complete the ruin inaugurated by these constant struggles, nature lent her aid in the great famine of 1783, known as the *Chálsea Kál* or famine of *san chális* (1840 of the *Sambat* era), by which the whole country was depopulated. The year previous had been dry and the harvest poor, but in 1783 it entirely failed. The country was depopulated, the peasants abandoning their villages, and dying by thousands of disease and want.\* In the neighbourhood of Hánsi only, the inhabitants held their own, but even here the smaller villages were deserted by their inhabitants, who took refuge in the larger villages, until the severity of the famine should be passed. In other parts of the district none remained who had the strength to fly. No reliable statistics of the mortality are extant, but there can be no doubt that the people suffered terribly. Some died helplessly in their villages, others fell exhausted on the way towards the south and east, where they thronged in search of food and employment. Nor was the mortality confined to the inhabitants of the district, for thousands of fugitives from Bikáner flocking into Hariána perished in the vain endeavour to reach Dehli and the Jamna. The price of the commonest food grains rose to five and six seers per rupee. Fodder for cattle failed utterly, and the greater part of the agricultural stock of the district perished. But for the berries found in the wild brushwood, the distress would have been even greater. Stories are told of parents devouring their children; and it is beyond a doubt that children were during this fatal year gladly sold to any one who would offer a few handfuls of grain as their price. The rains of the previous year had failed entirely, and this year too it was not until September that a drop fell. The heat of the summer was intense, and all through July and August the people looked in vain for relief. At last, in the month of *Asauj* (the latter part of September and beginning of October) copious rain fell here and throughout the province. There were not many left to turn the opportunity to account, and the few who were found in the district were for the most part immigrants from Bikáner, who had been unable, after crossing the border, to penetrate further eastward. These, however, seized upon the deserted fields and cultivated patches here and there. The result was a spring harvest in 1784 of more than ordinary excellence. The country gradually became re-peopled, but principally from the west, comparatively few of the original inhabitants returning to seek their old homes. Many who did return, found their fields cultivated by recent immigrants. In some cases the immigrants were ousted; in others they submitted to pay a quit rent to the former proprietors. The district has been re-colonized, but it cannot be said that the traces of the famine are yet lost. The

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The *san chálsea*  
famine.

\* Griffin's "Rájas of the Punjab," pp. 57 and 178.

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The *ann chullion*  
famine.

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present parched and dried up appearance of the country is popularly said to date from the disastrous effects of the drought of 1783; the fatal year is the era from which every social relation of the people dates. Few villages have a history which goes back uninterruptedly to a period before the famine, and there probably is not one which does not date its present form of tenure from the time when cultivation was resumed.

In 1795, the adventurer, George Thomas,\* took possession of Hānsi and Hisár. He was an Englishman of some tact and courage, who had come to India in 1781, and had wandered about the country, seeking his fortune for several years, till he was taken into the service of the celebrated Zebun Nisan Begam, more commonly known as the Begam Samru of Sardhāna. In 1782, for some misconduct, he was reduced in rank, and left her service in disgust for that of the Marahṭa Apa Khandi Ráo, a relative of Mádhóji Sindhia, and master of the Jhajjar, Dádri and Nárnol territory. Thomas raised troops for the Marahṭás, and instructed them, as well as he was able, in the European system of drill; and in return the district of Jhajjar was assigned to him as a military fief. He built a fort, which he named Georgegarh, a name which by the people was corrupted into Jaházgarh. When Báwa Ráo, nephew of Apa Khandi Ráo, succeeded his uncle, Thomas asserted his independence, seized Hānsi and Hisár, and began to encroach upon the neighbouring Sikh States. Before the close of 1799, he had extended his authority over all the Hisár, Hānsi and Sirsa territory, and a great part of Rohtak. Even the Bhattís paid him a nominal allegiance, though Thomas made no effort to interfere directly with the authority of the Bhatti chiefs over their respective clans. By this time, however, the adventurer, being compelled to resort to constant raids as the only means of supporting his numerous army, had made himself so obnoxious to the Sikh chieftains of the Cis-Satlej States that, unable themselves to reduce him, they at last in 1801 combined to send an embassy to the French General of Sindhia's army at Dehli, with a prayer for assistance against their common enemy. General Perron received the embassy with conspicuous cordiality. The increasing power of George Thomas had roused in him feelings at once of jealousy and alarm; and, rejoicing in the opportunity of suppressing a rival, whose power, if not checked in time, might eclipse his own, he furnished a force under one of his Lieutenants, Louis Bourquin, to act with the Sikh allies. At first Thomas gained a slight success, but on the arrival of reinforcements from Dehli, he was compelled to retire to Hānsi. Here he was surrounded, and after an obstinate defence, surrendered. Abandoning all his conquests, he retired into British territory, never again disturbing the peace of the Cis-Satlej States. These events occurred in 1802.

With the remainder of the Dehli territory, Hisár passed nominally under British rule after the victories of Lord Lake over the Marahṭás in the following year. But the new owners of the country, either from ignorance of its value, or from sheer apathy, took no steps for many years even to define the borders of their

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\* Griffin's "Rájás of the Punjab," p. 81.

acquisitions. The strip of country extending from Bhiwáni, in a direct line to the north-west as far as the banks of the Satlaj, and now composing the districts of Hisár and Sirsa, was left a prey to the depredations of the Sikhs and Bhattís. The right of the British Government, indeed, was not allowed to lapse. A military outpost was maintained at Hánsi, and a series of native Governors, or *názims*, were appointed to the charge of Hariána, including Rohtak. The successive *názims* were Mirza Iliás Beg, Nawáb Muin-ud-dín Khán, Ahmad Bakhsh Khán of Luháru, and Abdul Samed of Dujána, who had his head-quarters at Rohtak. For five years confusion reigned supreme. The first *názim* was killed in a skirmish with the Bhattís. The second, the third and the fourth, after short incumbencies, successively resigned the hopeless task of Government. From 1808 to 1810, apparently, there was no Governor. Meanwhile a Nawáb Zabta Khán and Nawáb Khán Bahádar Khán, chiefs of the Bhattís, were masters of the situation, and at last proclaimed their independence. The former of the chiefs resided at Sirsa, the latter at Fatehábád, but they had spread their depredations in every direction. At last, in 1810, a force was sent under a British officer to restore order. Bahádar Khán was overpowered and expelled the country, while the tract of Fatehábád, which he had held in possession, was for the first time brought under the British Government.\* Zabta Khán gave himself up, swore fealty to the British Government, and was confirmed in his possession of Rániya and Sirsa. In 1818, however, raids were made upon Fatehábád, with the connivance of Zabta Khán, and again a British force was sent to restore order. This time Zabta Khán's estates were confiscated, and the whole territory, now known as the Sirsa district, came under British rule.

During these fifteen years, from 1803 to 1818, while the English had paid no attention whatever to the state of the border, the Sikh chiefs had not been idle. Seeing that the time would come when the British would appreciate the value of their acquisitions, they steadily laboured, by gradual encroachments, to manufacture the strongest possible claims to as large a portion as they could annex without opposition. The overthrow of the Bhattís in 1818 removed the last barrier to the inroads of Patialá; and at once all along the western border of Sirsa and Hisár, the encroachments grew more and more systematic. The notice of Government was drawn to the unsettled state of the border in 1818 and again a few years later, but it was not until 1835, when Sir C. Metcalfe was Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces, and Mr. William Fraser, Resident at Dehli, that it was determined to bring the matter to a settlement. The Collector of the district, Mr. Ross Bell, was selected for the duty, and certain principles were laid down for his guidance. These were, that whatever belonged to Patialá at the time of British conquest of Hariána in 1803 should be adjudged to that State, and whatever

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Griffin's "Rájás of the Panjab," p. 180.

† The following account of the disputes with Patialá is abridged from pages 80-196 of Griffin's "Rájás of the Panjab."

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belonged to the Government which the English had superseded, should be adjudged to the latter. With regard to the district of Fatehábád and the portion of the Bhattí country conquered in 1810, and to the remaining portion of that country conquered in 1818, the same principle was to hold good, and the *status* of those years to be maintained, the Sikhs retaining all that they held in these two portions of country, respectively, prior to 1810 and 1818. Mr. Bell's report bears date 15th September, 1836. His conclusions may be summarized as follows:—Háriána, including the Bhattí territory (or Bhatiána) was made up of 19 districts, all of which were nominally subject to the Marahtás in 1803: Beri, Rohtak, Maham, Hánsi, Hisár, Agroha, Barwála, Siwáni, Bahal, Aharwán, Fatehábád, Sirsa, Rániya, Bhatner, Safidon, Dhátrat, Jamálpur, Tuhána and Kassuhán. Of these, the first 10 were considered by Mr. Bell to have passed into British possession from the Marahtás in 1803, and were at once adjudged to the English Government. Sirsa, Rániya and Fatehábád required subsequent reconquest from the Bhattís, and the question of the right to these was to be decided according to the status of 1810 and 1818. Bhatner never came under British rule, and was not included in the present controversy. It now forms an integral portion of Rájputána. Safidon and Dhátrat had been made over to Bhág Singh of Jínd by the Marahtás, and were accordingly adjudged to that State. Jamálpur, Tuhána and Kassuhán, together with the forts of Badriki and Kanhauri, alone remained for adjudication. Of districts affected by the conquest of 1803, Kassuhán originally belonged to Patiála. It was wrested from him by George Thomas in 1798, and from George Thomas in turn by General Perron in 1802; but on the cessation of hostilities, was again made over to Patiála. This tract was accordingly adjudged to Patiála. A strip of country adjoining Kassuhán, and known as the Gorakpur *iláka*, which had been in turn held by Thomas and Bourquin, and had in 1803 been made over to three chiefs by the British, was claimed by the Rája of Patiála, on the strength of four letters from General Perron ordering it to be made over to him. As, however, there was no evidence of a transfer of possession from Bourquin to Patiála, Mr. Bell rejected the claim. The forts of Badriki and Kanhauri were adjudged to Patiála, on the same grounds as the Kassuhán district. Jamálpur and Tuhána were in the possession of Patiála at the time of Mr. Bell's investigation, but it was clear that that State could not have acquired possession prior to 1809, for they were in the hands of the Marahtás in 1803, and the Bhattís held territory till 1809, which intervened between them and the Patiála frontier. These Mr. Bell adjudged to the English Government. Tuhána is included in the present Barwála *tahsil*.

There remained for consideration the effect of the reconquest of Fatehábád, Sirsa and Rániya in 1870 and 1818. In Fatehábád Mr. Bell found 25 villages in the possession of Patiála and 21 in possession of Kaithal. Rája Amar Singh of Patiála had conquered Fatehábád, Sirsa and Rániya from the Bhattís, but the famine of 1783 having completely devastated the country, the Bhattís recovered possession in 1784, and retained it until subdued by the British.

The possession of the Sikh chiefs in Fatehábád dated accordingly, from a period subsequent to the conquest in 1809, and the district was adjudged to the English Government. Sirsa, in the same manner, was in the possession of the Bhattís until 1818, and though in 1836 the whole was in the possession of the Sikh States of Patiála, Kaithal and Nábha, their claims were rejected, except as to four villages. In Rániya, the Sikh possession was ascertained to date from 1821, subsequent to the conquest of the Bhattís, and the claims of the Chiefs were absolutely rejected.

This decision having given to the British Government a tract more than a hundred miles long and from ten to twenty miles broad, a large part of it, including Sirsa, Rániya and Abohar, was separated from Hisar and formed into a new district, which was administered by an officer bearing the title of Superintendent of Bhattiána, subordinate to the Political Agent at Ambála. The Government, however, while accepting Mr. Bell's conclusions as generally correct, declared itself willing to take a liberal view of any doubtful points; and the Court of Directors at home, adopting a still more lenient line of argument, sent out directions which ultimately led to the re-opening of the whole question. The position taken by the Court of Directors was the less called for by reason of the fact that the Patiála and other Sikh Chiefs had forfeited by their conduct all claim to consideration. The Rája of Patiála had refused to acknowledge the right of Mr. Bell to make enquiries; he had forbidden the cultivators of the disputed villages to give any information as to the time when they were settled: he had thrown every obstacle in Mr. Bell's way, and had thwarted him to the best of his power. The fact was that the Chiefs, being in possession of the whole of the disputed land, could only lose by the enquiry, and they resolved to protract the struggle to the utmost. Mr. Bell, however, received orders to decide on such evidence as he could obtain. He did so, with the results already detailed. But the remonstrances of Patiála had their effect on the Government at home, and on 1st January, 1840, instructions were issued to Mr. Conolly to effect some sort of compromise, not in any way surrendering the principle which had been originally laid down, but pressing it against the Sikhs less rigorously. Mr. Conolly submitted his report in May of the same year. He proposed to give up the most valuable portions of the Hisar district, lying principally in the neighbourhood of the Ghaggar, and his proposals were accepted by the Government of the North-West Provinces. The following tabular statement shows the financial result of Mr. Conolly's decision as far as the Hisar district was concerned:—

	No.	Cultivation in acres.	Total area in acres.	Approximate annual value, in Rs.
Villages to be restored ...	119	99,403	272,415	90,000
Villages to be retained ...	147	68,788	255,623	60,000
Total ...	266	168,191	528,038	1,50,000

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Mr. Conolly reported also upon the Bhattiána or Sirsa frontier. Here he was inclined to give up forty or fifty villages; but the want of an accurate map prevented him from making definite proposals. The Mahárája of Patiála, though he had obtained so much, still, with characteristic obstinacy, held out, and asserted his right to the whole tract. On receiving, however, a peremptory warning that he must either accept what Mr. Conolly gave or nothing, he came to his senses, and consented to take over the villages assigned to him in Hisár, and was paid their revenue, less 20 per cent. for the cost of management, from the time they had been in English possession. This final transfer was made in 1842. The adjustment of the Bhattiána border was postponed, pending a survey of the country. This being completed, a report, based upon the scheme suggested by Mr. Conolly, was drawn up in 1842, recommending the restoration of 42 villages to Patiála. No action, however, was taken upon this report. The Rája again and again protested against what he considered a deprivation of territory. The Sikh War of 1846, followed by the transfer of the Political Agency to Lahore, and then the second Sikh War and the annexation of the Punjab, combined to postpone a settlement of the question, and it was not until 1856 that final orders were passed. In that and the preceding year the matter was taken up by Mr. G. Barnes, Commissioner of the Cis-Satlaj States, who proposed the restoration of 20 villages only, urging that the offer of 42 villages, made in accordance with Mr. Conolly's proposal, had been rejected by Patiála, and had fallen to the ground. The Punjab Government, however, supported by the Imperial authorities, decided that Mr. Ross Bell's decision having once been re-opened, and Mr. Conolly's award endorsed by the Government, it was necessary to abide by the latter. Government, accordingly, in July 1856, directed 41 villages to be given to the Rája, with arrears of revenue from 1843 to 1856. This arrangement, with the exception of the substitution of a few villages for others, was shortly afterwards carried out. Twenty-six villages were made over by the Superintendent of Bhattiána, and five villages, yielding a revenue equal to that of the remainder, were transferred by the Bhadaur Sardárs, who received as compensation an assignment on the revenues of Government villages. Thus ended this long dispute, memorable on account of its intricacy, and the magnitude of the interests at stake. The origin was in 1803 and its conclusion in 1856, every step being marked by importunity or obstinacy on one side and concession after concession upon the other. The pertinacity of the Sikh almost deserved success; and, if the English Government obtained far less than was its clear right, it could at least afford to be magnanimous.

Administrative  
arrangements

During the early years of British rule, the whole of Hariána was managed by a "Superintendent," under the orders of the Political Agent at Dehli, who was also Commissioner of the Dehli territory. The first separation of the Dehli territory into districts took place in 1819.\* By this arrangement the subdivisions of Hánsi and Hisár, together with Sirsa, Rohtak and

\* See Dehli Gazetteer.

Pánipat (now in Karnál), were included in one district, called the "northern" district (*Zila Shimáli*). In 1820, Hisár and Hási, together with Sirsa and the remainder of the present district, except Bhiwáni, were constituted into a separate jurisdiction, having its civil head-quarters at Hisár. Sirsa was detached in 1837, after Mr. Ross Bell's adjudication upon the frontier, and placed under a separate officer styled the Superintendent of Bhattiána. In 1861 the district of Hisár attained its present proportions by the addition of the Bhiwáni sub-division. Meanwhile the Dehli territory had been transferred to the Punjab, and divided into two divisions, having their head-quarters respectively at Dehli and Hisár. The Hisár division contained at first the districts of Hisár, Rohtak, Sirsa and Jhajjar. The last was, however, soon abolished, part being ceded to the Sikh States and the remainder absorbed into Rohtak.

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During the Mutiny, this district, as well as that of Sirsa, was for a time wholly lost to British rule. Up to this time a cantonment had been maintained at Hási; and in 1857, soon after the outbreak at Dehli, the troops stationed there, consisting principally of a force called the Hariána Light Infantry, threw off their allegiance, and all Europeans were either murdered or driven out as fugitives. Added to this, the Bhattís rose, under their hereditary chiefs, and their example was followed by the greater portion of the Muhammadan population. These wild tribes, reverting to their ancient habits on the removal of the strong hand of English rule, formed plundering bands and ravaged the country. Before the close of the summer, however, and before the fall of Dehli, a force of Punjab levies, under General Van Cortlandt, crossed the Satlaj, and, being joined by contingents from the chiefs of Bikáner and Patiála, fought and won several actions with the insurgents in Hisár, as well as in Sirsa and Rohtak, dispersed them utterly, and recovered the country to British rule. On the restoration of order, the civil and criminal courts were re-opened upon the Punjab system, and the district was administered by Punjab officers. In the following year, with the remainder of the Dehli territory, it was formally annexed to this province.

The Mutiny of 1857.

In 1860-61 Hisár suffered, in common with the neighbouring districts, from a terrible famine. Little information is available as to details; but it was reported that 192 human beings and 38,000 cattle died of starvation, and that 21,400 souls and 47,500 cattle fled the district. These numbers probably fall far short of the truth.

The famine of 1860-61.

The district of Hisár suffered more than any other in the whole province from the famine of 1869-70. Situated on the border of the Bikáner desert, it shares many of its characteristics. Thus distress was felt here very early, and as early as August, 1868, foreigners from the neighbouring independent States came in for food and work. Relief works were sanctioned in October, 1868, when the accounts were already gloomy in the extreme. The *khariif* and grass crop had both entirely failed; the latter more completely than even in 1860-61. The tanks had all dried up, the

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wells in many places had become brackish, and the inhabitants had no choice but to leave their villages and seek food and pasture elsewhere; while the numbers of people flocking in from Rájputána, where affairs were still more gloomy, added to the complication. Government sanctioned advances, first of Rs. 30,000 and then without limit; and private subscriptions were collected to the amount of Rs. 10,000, which was supplemented by a similar grant from Government. In January the local subscriptions, with the Government equivalent, were found sufficient to meet actual requirements. Relief-houses were established, where the infirm received food, cooked or uncooked, and public works were in progress, giving employment to all able-bodied persons who required it. Up to the 20th of February, 106,808 men and 126,970 women and children had received relief, and 80 poor-houses were then open at which food was distributed. During the month of March above 110,000 persons were relieved and about 33,000 were employed, and this average was maintained during the following month; but during May the distress fast increased, the great heat withering up the grass, and the cattle beginning to die in great numbers. Many immigrants from Bikáner again came into the district, and the poor, unable to buy grain, supported themselves on the fruit of the *karil* which was unwholesome when eaten in any quantities, and the berries of the *jál* or *pítá*. But whether the jungle fruits were wholesome or not, they were the means of saving many lives; for this year of famine, the crop of wild fruit was larger than had been ever before remembered, and during the month of June gave food to many thousand people. But the condition of Hisár, in July, became critical in the extreme. The fruit of the *ber*, which had been the chief support of so many, was now exhausted, while the number of immigrants had largely increased, a stream passing through daily from the south, others returning from the neighbourhood of Déhli to their homes. The people were losing heart, fodder was almost unprocurable, and wheat rose to 11 or 12 seers the rupee. The rain, which fell so generally during the latter part of July, did very temporary good to Hisár. The weekly number relieved had risen on the 17th of July to 40,000, and the mortality was so severe among the cattle that 118,338 had already died. The state of affairs in August will be seen from the following extract from a letter from the Deputy Commissioner:—

“The district is exposed to the first shock of the immigration of the starving population of the Rájputána States. Considering then that, being always poor, we have no resources left unused; that there will have been no harvest for two years; that for all practical purposes cattle no longer exist in the district; and that we are being inundated by a flood of paupers from Bikáner, Jaipúr, and other States, the calculation which gives three-quarters of the people of the district as the number which will have to be fed by Government, if they are not to starve, does not seem incorrect. Indeed, in saying that one-fourth of the population can do without aid, it is only on the supposition that the canal authorities will afford a reasonable supply of water to the district. It appears then that, in case the *kharif* fails, there will be some 350,000 people to whom relief must be given. It is in vain to expect that every exertion possible can prevent a fearful mortality. The people are so reduced by

starvation and want that their bodies are almost rotten; the least blow brings on a festering sore. To use physical force to such is impossible. Many of them are so wild with hunger, and others wish to get more than their share by scrambling, that orders to keep quiet and to wait till the turn of each person comes are quite unheeded, and as soon as the food is brought, a general rush takes place, and the people shove and scramble like so many wild beasts."

Early in September a little rain fell, but prices still rose, wheat selling at 8½ seers per rupee; and during the last week of August and the first of September 125,710 persons received relief. But about the 7th of September the abundant rain, so long withheld, fell at last. The worst was now over. The immigrants began to move homewards; the number receiving relief fell to 35,939 during the last week of October, and a final grant of Rs. 4,500 on the 29th of November closed the accounts of the Central Relief Committee with this district, to which it had sent during the year Rs. 35,500. It is said that 300,000 cattle died during this famine in the two districts of Sirsa and Hisar.

The record of district officers before the year 1867 is not forthcoming. Since then the following officers have held charge of the district:—

Colonel T. F. Forster, 1867-80; Mr. M. Macauliffe, 1880-81; Major W. G. Parker, March to October 1881; Mr. Ogilvie, October 1881, to date.

Some conception of the development of the district since it came into our hands may be gathered from Table No. II, which gives some of the leading statistics for five-yearly periods, so far as they are available; while most of the other tables appended to this work give comparative figures for the last few years. In the case of Table No. II, it is probable that the figures are not always strictly comparable, their basis not being the same in all cases from one period to another. But the figures may be accepted as showing in general terms the nature and extent of the advance made.

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