

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY.

SECTION A.—PHYSICAL HISTORY.

Looking to the uniform character of the physical features of the district, its past physical history cannot have been other than an uneventful one.

Chapter II, A.
Physical History.

The tract of which the Hissár district forms a part was in all probability formed by alluvial deposits from the rivers Sutlej and Jumna and the minor streams of the Ghaggar or Saraswati and the Chautang. Of these the Sutlej and Jumna have retired westward and eastward respectively, while the other two have, owing to causes already noticed, sunk to very small dimensions.

Past changes in courses of rivers, &c.

The sandy hillocks of the Bagar or western part of the district owe their origin to the gradual deposit and accumulation of fine particles of sand carried eastward from the deserts of Bikánir and Rájputána by the westerly winds, which prevail in the district all through the year, and especially in May and June.

The part of the Punjab to the south of the stream of the Sutlej has perhaps more than any other portion of the province suffered from the famines which have from time to time scourged Northern India, and within the tract in question the Hissár district has borne not only the first burst but experienced the acutest stages of the distress. The district borders on the sandy deserts of the Rájputána and has to receive the first rush of starving immigrants therefrom. Though the opening of communications has perhaps obviated any danger of absolute and extended starvation, still the question of famine must from the above considerations occupy a position of much importance in the administration of the district.

Famines.

The first famine of which we have any authentic account is that of A. D. 1783, the *chálisa kál* or famine of *san chális* (Sambat 1840) 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

San chálisa.

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San chátisa.

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 Bikánir flocking into Hariána perished in the vain endeavour to reach Delhi and the Jumna. The price of the commonest food grains rose to five and six sérs 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 *Ashuj* (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 Bikánir, 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 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.

The famine of
1860-61.

In common with the whole of the tract between the Jumna and Sutlej the districts of Hissár and Sirsa were visited with severe famine in 1860-61.

The harvests of 1859-60 appear to have been poor from

	HISSAR.		SIRSA.	
	Jany. 1860.	Jany. 1861.	Jany. 1860.	Jany. 1861.
Ata	23	9	24	10
Barley	36	14	46	13
Bájra	32	10	35	11
Jowár	38	11	42	13
Gram	42	12	49	12

scanty rainfall, so that the local stock of grain had been much depleted before the year 1860-61. The summer, autumn and winter rains of that year were more scanty, even than in the previous year, and as a consequence both the kharíf and rabi harvests failed. The degree of

scarcity which prevailed may be judged from the marginal figures for prices in sérs per rupee at the towns of Hissár and Sirsa. Chapter II. A. Physical History.

The famine of 1860-61.

Large numbers of cattle died and many left the district in quest of places where fodder sufficient to preserve life might be found. Within the limits of the old Hissár district it is estimated that 192 persons and 38,000 cattle died of absolute starvation, while 21,400 souls and 47,500 cattle left the district.

Measures of relief were started in February 1861, when the kharif had failed and there were no prospects of a rabi. The relief given took the form of payment by way of wages for work done mostly out of Public Funds, and by way of charity to old and infirm persons, for the most part, out of sums raised by private subscription.

In the week ending February 16 the daily totals of persons employed on works in the Hissár district amounted to 11,021, and of those relieved gratuitously to 10,252; a month later the figures were 8,680 and 14,818 respectively; and for the last fortnight of April 12,123 and 40,377; the similar figures at the end of May were 18,985 and 60,161, the highest point reached.

In the early days of June rain fell and a demand for plough labourers at once sprang up. A pair of bullocks and a ploughman earned not less than Re. 1-0-0 to 1-4-0 per diem. The scarcity of plough cattle prevented full advantage being taken of the rainfall. The repletion of the village tanks at once stopped the relief work which their excavation had supplied, and this and the other causes reduced the daily totals of persons who received wages in the last fortnight of June from 10,585, the figure in the previous fortnight, to 8,451. The total cases gratuitously relieved in the same period were however 62,509, which rose to 75,139 for the first fortnight of July. The summer and autumn rains were good and relief operations gradually decreased in amount more or less continuously after July up to the end of September, in the last fortnight of which month only 3,040 persons were gratuitously relieved. During the first fortnight of October the daily totals of persons receiving wages amounted to only 3,719, and after this date relief operations ceased altogether. The daily totals of persons who received wages during the period of relief operations in the Hissár district alone amounted to 190,369, while the similar figures for the recipients of gratuitous relief were 658,870.

The detail of expenditure on famine relief in the districts

	From Famine Fund.	From District and Municipal Funds.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Hissár	8,308	19,791	28,099
Sirsa	6,342	9,727	16,069

of Hissár and Sirsa is given in the margin. In addition to these sums *takkávi* advances for the purchase of bullocks and seed grain

were made to the impoverished zamíndárs by Government and

Chapter II. A. by the Committee of the Famine Relief Fund raised by public subscription.

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The famine of 1860-61.

The Government advances amounted in the Hissár district to Rs. 38,000, and in Sirsa to Rs. 22,939.

Nearly 5,000 cultivators in the district received advances in this way, and they were, for the most part, duly repaid. With the help of these and the good summer, autumn and winter rains of 1861-62, as a general rule, good harvests were obtained in that year.

The balances of the land revenue demand in the two districts in the year 1860-61 amounted to Rs. 1,05,103, or 33 per cent. of the demand in Hissár, and Rs. 85,439, or 45 per cent. in Sirsa. The whole of these sums were remitted.

Famine of 1869-70.

The districts of Hissár and Sirsa again suffered, more perhaps than any other districts in the Cis-Sutlej tract, in the famine of 1869-70. The harvests of 1867 had been below average, the winter rains of 1867-68 were unusually heavy and appear to have had a prejudicial effect on those which should have come in the summer and autumn of 1868. On July 18th in the latter year there was a fairly general rainfall throughout the district, except in the Bhiwáni tahsíl. Ploughing operations at once commenced and the kharif was sown, but no more rain fell, and in September it became clear that there would be no kharif harvest, while the season for rabi sowings was fast slipping away; at the same time the difficulties of the situation were aggravated by the great scarcity of fodder for cattle which constitute a principal part of the wealth of a great portion of the population of the district. A considerable export of grain, chiefly *bájra*, was going on at the same time into the Bikánir territory where the prospects of famine were far greater even than in Hissár.

The degree of scarcity which prevailed in October 1868

	June.		October.	
	S.	C.	S.	C.
Wheat	20	10	11	8
Bajra	32	0	12	8
Jowár	37	0	14	0
Gram	33	8	14	8
Barley	38	0	13	6
Moth	38	0	13	9
Múng	33	0	12	8
	Md.			
Bhúsa (fodder) ...	3		30	0
			Md.	
Jowár stalks... ..	3		1	
Pala	3		1	

may be judged from a comparison of the prices prevailing in June and October 1868, which were as in the margin in sérs per rupee at Hissár. The distress took tangible shape in the district in the incursion in August of numbers of hungry immigrants from Bikánir on their way eastward in search of food and work. During the month of September relief operations began by the opening in various localities of poor-houses supported by voluntary subscriptions. In October famine relief works in the shape of tank excavation and road raising paid for from Public Funds were sanctioned and commenced, for the most part, in the Barwála tahsíl. By this time prospects were gloomy in the extreme. Both the kharif harvest and the grass crop had failed entirely, the latter more completely even than in 1860-61, and all hopes of a rabi had faded away. The

tanks had all dried up and wells in many places had become brackish and the inhabitants had no chance but to leave their villages and seek food and pasture elsewhere, while the numbers flocking in from Rájputána, where prospects were even more gloomy, added to the complications.

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Famine of 1869-70

Famine relief works were extended and the metalled road from Hissár to Hási and the raising of the *kacha* road from Hási to Bhiwáni were taken in hand in January 1869. In that month prices stood as follows in sérs per rupee at Hissár:—

	S.	C.
Wheat	9	6
Bájra	10	4
Jowár	10	8
Gram	13	8
Barley	12	8
Moth	10	8
Múng	10	8
Jowár (fodder)	30	0
Pala	30	0
Bhúsa	35	0

They shew how acute the prevalent scarcity was, but in spite of this a fairly large amount of export of gram had gone on into the neighbouring States of Rájputána, where dearth was even more pronounced, and this continued at all events during the first half of the year 1869, while the distress was daily deepening. The winter rains south of the Sutlej though giving a small and very temporary supply of fodder were too scanty to raise any hopes for the rabi of 1869, which failed entirely. Up to the 20th February Rs. 11,990 had been collected as subscriptions, and with an equivalent grant from Government this was found sufficient to carry on the charitable relief operations. In Hissár district up to this date 46 poor homes had been opened for the distribution of food and 106,808 men and 126,970 women and children had been relieved, the majority of these men being those who were too old and infirm to work. *Takkávi* advances were also given for the construction of *pucca* and *kacha* wells, by means of which cultivators were enabled to raise a small area of rabi crops in some parts of the district. Meanwhile cattle had died in large numbers and those that remained eked out the miserably scanty store of fodder with chopped *kíkar* leaves and other equally innutritious food which frequently brought on disease and increased the already excessive mortality. In March 1869, in spite of all the measures which had been taken to arrest the progress of the distress, it continued to increase. The daily total of destitute persons who received gratuitous relief from the Local Committee in Hissár amounted to 132,739, while the similar number of those employed on public works during the month was 61,399. This average was maintained in the subsequent month; but during May the distress increased rapidly.

Chapter II. A. The great heat withered up the grass and cattle began to die in numbers.

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Famine of 1869-70.

Many immigrants from Bikánir again came into the district and the poor unable to buy grain supported themselves on the fruit of the *karil*, which is unwholesome when eaten in any quantities, and on the leaves of the *Jál* or *Pilu*.

But whether the jungle fruits were wholesome or not, they were the means of saving many lives; for in 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.

During the month of May 115,387 persons were gratuitously relieved, while 505,334 received wages on famine works in the Hissár district. During June and July no improvement took place on the situation. The Bikánir immigrants began to pass back through this district on their way homewards after a fruitless search for labour in the east, and on their way back they halted in large numbers in and around the town of Hissár.

At the end of June 1869 prices stood as follows :—

	S.	C.
Wheat	11	10
Barley	15	6
Gram	12	6
Jowár	8	0
Bájra	10	8
Moth	11	0
Múng	10	8
Jowár (fodder)	20	0
Bhúsa	20	0
Pala	20	0

The rainfall in June and July north of the Sutlej did not extend to the districts of Hissár and Sirsa, a few scanty showers fell in the latter half of July in Tahsils Hánsi and Bhiwáni, but were of no use for ploughing operations. The number of persons gratuitously relieved in Hissár during the month of July amounted to 169,189 and those employed on famine works numbered 54,423; so terrible was the scarcity of fodder that up to the 30th June 1869 152,801 head of cattle had died, of which no less than 44,061 were plough bullocks. These figures apply to the Hissár district. In Sirsa the Sikh Jats at great expense and trouble managed to keep the cattle alive. The Muhammadan Bhattis, on the other hand, slew and ate them, while the Bagri Jats let theirs lose on the country side.

In May *takkávi* advances to the extent of Rs. 80,000 for the purchase of seed grain and plough bullocks had been sanctioned and were distributed during the month of June. In addition to

this up to June 30th 1869 Rs. 76,687 had been advanced in a similar way for the construction of wells and irrigation cuts from the Ghaggar and Rs. 43,332 for the construction of wells and tanks for drinking purposes. The total sum which had been spent in Hissar district on famine relief and *takkavi* advances up to the end of June amounted to Rs. 3,05,763. The general health of the district up to date had been good and no authenticated case of death from starvation is said to have occurred.

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Famine of 1869-70.

During the first fortnight of August the state of matters was such as to give rise to the gravest apprehensions. In place of seasonable rain for kharif sowings and rabi ploughings, hot burning winds daily swept across the district, which, more especially in the southern part, withered up the small area of kharif crops which had been sown on the scanty rains of July.

It became clearly apparent that if, as appeared probable, the kharif harvest again failed totally as it had in 1868, the district would be plunged into a calamity, the direful consequences of which it was impossible to exaggerate. With a district in which thriftless Ranghars and Pachhadás abounded it was estimated that three-quarters of the total population would require relief.

The following extracts from letters of the Deputy Commissioner gives a graphic description of the state of the district in August :—

“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 Bikánir, Jaipur, 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.”

Under such circumstances matters were put in hand for a large extension of relief operations.

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On the 22nd and 23rd August rain fell over a considerable portion of the southern half of the Hissár district and enabled agricultural operations to be begun, but distress still continued to increase and during the whole month the daily totals of persons receiving gratuitous relief amounted to 272,116, while the number of those employed on famine works was 53,666.

Early in September a little rain fell but prices still rose, wheat selling at $8\frac{1}{2}$ sérs to the rupee. During the last week in August and the first week in September the daily totals of persons relieved amounted to 125,710 in the Hissár district, but about September 7th, the long delayed rain came at last, and the district in common with the rest of the Punjab, and especially the Cis-Sutlej portion thereof, was saved from a famine in which it is hard to see how the starving population could have been in any way adequately provided for. Owing however more especially to the presence of the Bikánir immigrants who remained in the district relief operations had to be continued some time longer. In the month of September the number of persons employed on works fell to 38,099, and that of those relieved gratuitously to 242,028. These figures of course represent the sum of the daily totals.

The subsequent gradations of scarcity can be judged from the marginal figures:—

	Persons employed on works.	Received gratuitous relief.
October 1869	32,886	190,402
November 1869	764	18,456

sent Rs. 35,500 during the famine. In the Sirsa district alone it is estimated that 148,590 head of cattle perished in the famine, and an equal number undoubtedly died in Hissár. On the whole the two districts lost altogether 300,000 cattle in 1868-69. The marginal figures show the amounts expended in the Hissár

DISTRICT.	Private subscription.	Donations.	Government equivalent.	Other Government grants.	Received from C. R. F.	Total.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
Hissár	16,042	...	16,642	9,229	35,500	78,613
Sirsa	538	8,742	6,013	683	18,500	34,373

Public Funds.	Private subscriptions.	Government equivalent.	Total.
Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
74,320	7,250	7,250	88,820

A final grant of Rs. 2,500 was received from the Central Relief Committee at Lahore on December 2nd, thus closing its account with the district to which it had sent Rs. 35,500 during the famine. In the Sirsa districts in gratuitous relief. Of these sums Rs. 16,000 and Rs. 649, respectively, were spent in giving pecuniary assistance and the rest in feeding destitute persons. In addition to these sums Rs. 88,820, as per margin, was expended in the Hissár district in the prosecution of famine relief works. As in 1860-61, so in the famine of 1869-70, large advances

of *takkávi* were made by Government to the impoverished zamín-dárs. The matter has been touched upon above.

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Physical History.
Famine of 1869-70.

The balances of land revenue which accrued in the districts of Hissár and Sirsa for the agricultural year 1868-69 amounted to Rs. 48,958 and Rs. 52,969, respectively, of which Rs. 7,698 and Rs. 12,383 were remitted. The famine has been dealt with at some length as the question is one which intimately concerns the administration of the district. Two points appear to stand out with great clearness, namely, that the first shock of famine will bring in a crowd of starving immigrants from Bikánir, and at the same time the greater scarcity which will prevail there will induce export of grain from this district. The question of fodder supply is only second in importance to that of food supply in this district in case of prolonged drought and consequent famine, and it is one with which it is far more difficult to cope. The introduction of railway communication through the length of the district has made a vast difference in the facilities for suddenly increasing the food stocks of the district, but unfortunately no scheme has as yet been elaborated for the wholesale importation of fodder. It is by efforts in this direction that a priceless boon can be conferred upon the district.

Scarcity prevailed in the district in 1877-78. The autumn rains of the former year failed. The total average fall all over the district for the months of June and July was 4·5 inches against a decennial average of 7·6 inches and the similar figures for the months August, September and October were 1·5 inches and 6·8. The kharíf of 1877 in consequence failed and there was little rabi in 1878. Prices stood as follows at Hissár:—

Scarcity of 1877-78.

	S.
Jowár	20
Bájra	17½
Moth	22
Múng	20
Wheat	13½
Barley	20
Gram	21

No relief works were opened either in Hissár or Sirsa, but a considerable number of persons left their homes to obtain work on the branches of the Sirhind Canal which were being newly excavated in Ferozepore.

The revenue demand in Hissár was fully collected in the years 1877-78 and 1878-79; in Sirsa, however, a sum of Rs. 3,799 was remitted in the former year and one of Rs. 6,328 suspended in the latter. *Takkávi* advances for the purchase of seed grain and bullocks were given to the extent of Rs. 17,000 and Rs. 10,000 in the two districts respectively.

Cattle as usual suffered severely from scarcity of fodder, no less than 55,532 are said to have died in the Sirsa district alone in 1877-78.

SECTION B.—POLITICAL.

Chapter II. B.

Political.

Early history.

A large portion of the tract now included in the 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 Rája named Hari Chand, who is said at some undefined period to have come from Oudh and people this part of the country. Others derive the name from the word *hari* (slain), in allusion to a tradition of great slaughter of Khatriás by Paras Rám, on 21 different occasions, at a village a few miles to the west of Jind. 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. If *hara* (green) is the correct derivation of the name, it is now scarcely applicable, but probably carries us back to a past in which the Saraswati was a large river scattering verdure and fertility round it and the rainfall greater than it is now. Of the period antecedent to the Muhammadan invasions there is practically nothing of the nature of history except vague local traditions and such inferences as can be gathered from the numerous ancient architectural remains scattered about the district.

If the results of archæological investigation can be trusted Hánsi with its fort is one of the most ancient towns in India and carries us back to a time long prior to the Musalmán conquest when the tract was the scene of a vigorous Hindu civilization, the results perhaps of the settlement of the Aryan invaders in the not distant Brahmarshidés, a tract between the Saraswati and the Ghaggar in the Karnál district. The numerous architectural remains of undoubted Hindu origin which are found built into the walls of Musalmán tombs and mosques in many parts of the district point to the conclusions indicated above.

Tunwars.

The earliest fact of an historical nature with which local tradition deals is an invasion of the Tunwar Rájput clan after it had established itself at Delhi under Anangpál I according to Sir H. Elliot in A.D. 736, and according to Tod in A.D. 792.

The leader of the invasion is said to have been Bijepál, a brother of Anangpál, who founded the present village of Bahúna and others in its neighbourhood. The tract was at that time probably divided into petty chieftainships which were merely nominally subject to the Delhi Rája.

Chauháns.

Meanwhile the Chauhán Rájputs of Ajmere and Sambhar were rising to importance. At some time in the 1st or 2nd century of the Christian era Ajepál, the progenitor of the Chauháns, is said to have founded Ajmere and his descendants gradually extended their power in that region, till in A.D. 685 Mánik Rai, the great Chauhán Rája, was lord of Ajmere and Sam-

bhar. In that year he was driven from the former place by one of the first Musalmán invasions, but he soon returned and recovered Ajmere and the Chauhán dominion continued to extend.

Doojgandoo, his grandson, about the year A.D. 800 successfully opposed the Musalmán invader Subaktagin and extended the Chauhán rule to Bhatner. Bisaldeo, a Chauhán King about the year A.D. 1000 had extended his authority over the Tunwar Rájás of Delhi, and they appear to have acknowledged him as their suzerain. The Chauháns in short at this period appear to have been paramount among the Rájput tribes as is shown by the fact that Bisaldeo headed a confederacy of them against the invading Musalmáns.

The tract included in the present Hissár district appears to have been on the frontiers of the Chauhán dominions, for local tradition tells, and is confirmed by the authorities quoted by Tod, that the frontier fortress of Asi or Hánsi was assigned probably as a fief to Anúráj, the son of Bisaldeo, about the year A.D. 1000. With the growing tide of Musalmán invasion we come to the first authentic history of the district.

According to one of Sir H. Elliot's historians, Masúd, the son of Mahmúd of Ghazni, made an unsuccessful attempt on the fort at Hánsi. In A.D. 1037 or, as would appear from Tod, in A.D. 1025, he laid siege to it for the second time, and after a desperate resistance succeeded in taking the place, which up to that time had been known as the virgin fort. The Chauháns under Teshtpál, the son of Anúráj, were driven forth and founded the Hara dynasty of Boondi.

It is not impossible that Hara which appears to have been a Chauhán name may supply a derivation for the name Hariána, which thus preserves the memory of Chauhán rule in this part. In A.D. 1043 Ferishtah tells us that the Delhi Rája, probably a Tunwar vassal of the Chauháns, recovered Hánsi, and it remained in their hands for over a century.

In A.D. 1173 the Tunwar dynasty of Delhi came to an end in the person of Anangpál II and the great Chauhán Rai Pathaura or Prithi Ráj ascended the throne of Delhi, and the tract comprised in the district appears to have been brought more directly under the Delhi Rája than before. Prithi Ráj made considerable additions to the fort at Hánsi, converting it into an important military stronghold, and a small building at Tosham known as his *kacheri* perhaps testifies to the reality of his rule. At this period Muhammad Ghori was beginning his invasions which were to finally subvert the ancient thrones of Hindustán.

In the year 1191 Muhammad Ghori (*Bin Sán*) was routed by Prithi Ráj at Naraini on the banks of the Sarsúti, probably in the Karnál district. He returned the next year. Prithi Ráj was utterly overthrown on the banks of the Saraswati and being

Musalmán invasions, Muhammad Ghori.

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sions, Muha m m a d
Ghori.

captured in his flight near Sirsa was put to death. Hamir, the immediate Chauhán ruler of Hánsi and the adjacent territory, was slain at the same time. As the fruits of his victory, Delhi, Ajmere, Hánsi and Sarsúti (Sirsa) fell into the hands of the conqueror, but he appears to have established no settled rule over the tract or country now included in the Hissár district. In the anarchy which prevailed, the Jatu clan of Rájputés, an offshoot of the Tunwars, who appear to have entered the district from Rájputána some time previously, spread in a south-erly direction, rendering probably no more than a nominal sub-mission to the Musalmán Kings of Delhi. The Musalmán power seems to have been gradually consolidated in this part, for we find that in 1254 or 1255 in the reign of Muazzam, a slave king, the district including Hánsi, Sirsa, Barwála and Jínd were in the fief or government of Ulagh Khan, a high official of the Delhi Court; and these places appear to have been garrisoned with Musalmán troops.

The Tughlaks.

On the fall of the Khilji dynasty after the murder of Mu-bárák Khilji by Khasru Khan, Sarsúti or Sirsa, which at that time, according to Wassaf, was one of the chief towns in Upper India, was among the first places to come into the hands of Ghiás-ud-dín, Tughlak, on his march from Dipálpur to Delhi to seize the throne, and it was during the ascendancy of the dynasty founded by him that the tract now included in the district came into prominence.

On the death of Muhammad Tughlak, his son Firoz marched from Mooltan to Delhi *via* Sirsa to secure the succession to the throne. On the way he founded the present town of Fatahabad in this district naming it after his son. Its primary object no doubt was to serve as a starting point for his hunting expeditions to which pastime he was passionately addicted. In order to supply the new town with water he dug a channel from the Ghaggar at Phulád, now in Patiála, to Fatahabad; it is still in existence under the name of the Joiya, and it has already been referred to in the account of the Ghaggar. The founding of the town of Hissár, or Hissár Firoza as it was then called, by Firoz Shah, is described in detail by Shams-i-Afúf, one of Sir H. Elliot's historians. The reason assigned for the building of the place was the deserted and arid character of the spot, which was on the direct road from Khurasán, Mooltan and the western Punjab across the wastes of Montgomery, Sirsa and Hissár to the capital of the empire at Delhi. The real reason, however, in all probability was that the place was admirably adapted as a starting part for the hunting expeditions in which the Sultán frequently indulged and which often extended as far as Dipálpur in Montgomery. At that time the Ghaggar or Saraswati brought down a much larger volume of water than now, and the district was no doubt an excellent hunting ground. However this may be, the town was built and included a fort and a palace for the Sultán. The materials of old Hindu temples were used in the construction, and a large quantity in all probability were brought from the site of the town of Agroha

which had probably lost much of its former importance. There appears to have been a fairly large Hindu town or village, or rather group of villages, in existence on or near the site of the new town which were called the great and little Laras. When the city was completed, surrounded with a wall and a ditch and adorned with a palace which had no "equal," it was found that there was no water-supply. The Sultán therefore "resolved in his munificence to bring a supply of water there," a resolve which resulted in the construction of the canal now known as that of the Western Jumna. Before the founding of Hissár the tract now in this district had been included in the *shikk* or division of Hánsi. Hissár was now, however, made the headquarters of a division which included the districts (*iktaát*) of Hánsi, Agroha, Fatahabad Sarsúti (Sirsa) and others. Firoz also built which is now the village of Firozabad Harni Khera, 12 miles from Sirsa, and is said to have supplied it with water by means of a canal which he conducted to the town from the Ghaggar or Kagar and which passed close to the town of Sarsúti. There is no such canal in existence now.

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Political.

The Tughlaks.

The year 1398 witnessed the invasion of Taimúr, more commonly known as Tamarlane. Having successfully accomplished the passage of the Sutlej he marched across the desert to Bhatner now in Bikánir territory, at that time one of the strongest places in Hindustán. The place fell into his hands after desperate fighting. Thence he marched eastward along the valley of the Ghaggar and encamped at a place called Kinára-i-hauz "bank of the tank or lake." This probably refers to one of the numerous lakes in the course of the Ghaggar. He thence proceeded *viâ* Firozabad to Sarsúti or Sirsa, the inhabitants of which fled on his approach; they were pursued and many of them slain as being hog-eaters.

Taimúr.

Thence Taimúr continued his march to Fatahabad where he encamped. Here again the inhabitants had fled on his approach, but many were pursued and slain.

From Fatahabad the invaders marched to a place called Ahrúni, which very possibly corresponds to Ahrwán, an Aráin village on the Joiya stream. The place was sacked and destroyed by fire, and the march was then resumed through the jungles of the Ghaggar valley to Tohána. On the march a detached party of Taimúr's troops attacked and defeated a tribe described by the native historians as Jats who were famous robbers. They were probably the predecessors of the present Pachhádás and are said by Taimúr in his autobiography to have been Musalmán in name, but it is scarcely possible that they had been converted at that date. The Jats retreated into the "Sugarcane Jungles," the mention of which suggests a much greater and continuous flow of water in the Ghaggar than is to be seen now when the cultivation of the sugarcane in that tract is unknown. On his march from Tohána towards Kaithal Taimúr again attacked and defeated the Jats near the present villages of Himmatpura, Purn Májra, and Udepur.

Chapter II. B.**Political.****Taimúr.**

The tract surrounding Hānsi and Hissár felt the full force of those intestine discords which rent the Delhi Empire in the concluding days of the Tughlak dynasty. In 1408 Hissár fell into the hands of the rebels, but was recovered by the royal army under the Emperor Muhammad Tughlak in person. In 1411, however, the district or tract of Hānsi came into the hands of Khizar Khan, who subsequently in 1414 ascended the throne of Delhi as the first of the Sayad dynasty. Sarsúti appears to have been a not unimportant place in the reign of Mubárak Shah Sayad; it is mentioned as being the rendezvous of the troops of the neighbouring districts for the expedition against the rebel fortress of Sirhind, it would therefore seem to have been certainly a military centre if not more. In the same reign in 1428 the fief of Hissár was conferred on Mahmúd Hassan as a reward for good service.

The Lodis.

During the feeble dynasty of the Lodis, Hissár or rather Hariána, continued to form a part of the Delhi Empire, but it is probable that the authority of the latter was not very strong at such a distance from the metropolis. We read of Hariána being granted as a fief to one Muhabbat Khan in the reign of Bahlol Lodi.

Bábar.

The town of Hissár Firoza appears to have been the quarters of an Imperial garrison at the time of Bábar's invasion, and it was a strategic centre in the operations prior to the battle of Pánipat in 1526. The army quartered there was in a position to operate effectually on the flank of Bábar's line of march from Sirhind southwards towards Delhi. On reaching the Ghaggar he learnt that the troops from Hissár were advancing against him; he accordingly despatched Prince Humáyún against them. The latter succeeded in defeating them, and his light troops pressing on made themselves masters of the town of Hissár which Bábar handed over to Humáyún as a reward for his success in this his first military expedition. During the reign of Sher Shah Sirsa continued to form a part of the empire; but because for a time the head-quarters of Rao Kaliyán Singh of Bikánir who had been driven out of his territories by the Jodhpur Rao. Sher Shah, however, defeated the latter at Ajmere and restored Rao Kaliyán Singh to his throne of Bikánir. On the renewed invasion of India by Humáyún in 1553, Hissár with the Punjab and the district of Sirhind fell without a struggle into the hand of the Mughals.

Akbar.

Hissár was in the reign of Akbar a place of considerable importance; it was the head-quarter of the revenue division or "sirkár" of Hissár Firoza, itself a sub-division of the metropolitan Subah, or province of Delhi. The latter embraced the whole of the present district inclusive of the Sirsa tahsil and parts of the modern Rohtak district and of territory now included in Bikánir and in the Sikh States to the east.

The following list and accompanying account of the *maháls* contained in this *sirkár* is extracted from Beame's edition of Sir H. Elliot's Supplemental Glossary, pages 132—55.

Sirkár Hissár Firoza.

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1, Agroha; 2, Ahroni; 3, Athkhera; 4, Bhangiwál; 5, Punián; 6, Bharangi; 7, Barwála; 8, Bhattu; 9, Birwa; 10, Bhatner; 11, Tohána; 12, Tosham; 13, Jínd; 14, Jamálpur; 15, Hissár; 16, Dhatrat; 17, Sirsa; 18, Sheorám; 19, Sidhmukh; 20, Swani; 21, Shanzdeh Dehát; 22, Fatahabad; 23 Gohána; 24, Khanda; 25, Mihun; 26, Hánsi.

There are twenty-seven *maháls* in this *sirkár* (Hissár being counted as two) and four *dastúrs*, Haveli Hissár Firoza, Gohána, Mahan, and Sirsa. There are, however, several *parganas* excluded from the *dastúr* list, for what reason does not appear. Of these *maháls* those which did not retain their old name in our territory are numbers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 21 and 24.

2. Ahroni is partly in Ratia and partly in Fatahabad. The historians of Taimúr point out its position, by saying it is on the road from Fatahabad to Tohána. 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 Ahurwán, whereas in *Sirkár Chanar Ahirwára*, which derived its name from the same tribe, has now been corrupted into Ahrora.

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 Jats which inhabited it, is the old name of Darba, in which place the officers of the Rája of Bikánir built a fort and thenceforward it came to be considered the chief town of a *pargana*.

5. Punián, called also after a tribe of Jats, is in Bikánir, but is now included in another *pargana*.

6. Bharangi is also in Bikánir.

8. Bhattu is partly in Fatababad and partly in Darba, Bhattu Khás is in the former *pargana*.

9. Birwa is in protected Sikh territory.

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

13. 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 Tohána.

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

18. Sheorám is in the Bagar country, in the Jágír of Nawáb Amír Khan. Two-thirds of Sheorám are now in Loháru, the remainder in Dádri.

19. Sidhmukh is in Bikánir.

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

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. Ratia. |
| 2. Rania. | | 4. Darba. |

Bahal was originally in Swani, 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.

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

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

Darba—see Bhangiwál.

Disintegration of
the empire.

We hear nothing much of the tract included in the district, during the reigns of the succeeding Mughal Emperors up to the death of Aurangzeb in 1707, when we find that Nawáb Shahdád Khan, a Pathán of Kasúr, was Názim of the Sirkár of Hissár. His tenure of office continued till 1738, and thus witnessed the series of sanguinary struggles for the succession to the Imperial throne, which resulted in the accession of Muhammad Shah in 1719. During the rule of the Nawáb the district appears to have enjoyed a fair measure of peace and prosperity, the last which it was destined to see for a long time.

Shahdád Khan was followed by Nawábs Kamgar Khan, Faujdár Khan and Aolia Khan of Farukhnagar in the Gurgáon district, who ruled from 1738 to 1760 successively.

It was during this period that the invasion of Nádar Shah in 1739 shook the Imperial throne to its foundation. With the accession of Ahmad Shah in 1748 the disintegration of the empire advanced apace, and the present Hissár district became the scene of a sort of triangular duel between the sturdy Sikhs of the north-east, the marauding Bhattís of the north and north-west and the Musalmáns of the south. In 1731, Ala Singh, the founder of the Patiála State, had begun a struggle with the Bhatti Chiefs of Bhatner and Fatahabad, which lasted for his lifetime. The Bhattís 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

Bhattís.

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 Fatahabad, Sirsa, Rania and Abohar.

Ala Singh's struggle with the Bhattis, the chief of whom was Muhammad Amin Khan, dragged on for 10 years without any very definite result. In 1754 the Sikh Chief with his son Lal Singh overran the Mahals of Tohana, Jamalpur, Dharsul and Shikarpur, which at the time belonged to the Bhatti Chiefs Muhammad Amin Khan and Muhammad Hassan Khan. The latter solicited the aid of the Imperial Governor or Nazim of Hissar and he sent reinforcement, but the Bhattis were defeated in an engagement at Akalgarh now in Patiala territory, and this was followed up by a successful night surprise on the Bhatti camp, and Muhammad Amin therefore fled to Hissar. He there received a fresh reinforcement of Imperial troops, with whose aid he again faced the Sikhs in 1757. The combined forces of Bhattis and Imperialists were overthrown in the battle of Dharsul and the Hissar Governor himself slain. The Sikhs on this occasion appear to have penetrated as far as Hissar itself, which they sacked, and in 1761 they treated the fortified town of Tohana in a similar manner. In consequence of the anarchy which had set in throughout the district the Imperial Wazir Najib-ud-daula himself proceeded to Hissar and, probably, as a counterpoise to the Sikhs, appointed Nawab Amin Khan, the Bhatti Chief of Rania, to be Nazim of Hissar. This measure, however, failed to stem the tide of Sikh depredations and in the course of the next five or six years Gajpat Singh and Amar Singh, Maharaja of Patiala, succeeded in making themselves masters of the Mahals of Jind, Safidon, Kasuhan and Tohana. In 1768 Nazir Khan, a Rohilla Chief, was deputed by Wazir Najib-ud-daula to proceed to Hariana and endeavour to stop the invading Sikhs; he was, however, defeated and slain at Miran near Barnala in Patiala, and shortly afterwards in 1771 Amar Singh obtained possession of the fort of Bhatinda. The next two Nawabs of Hissar were Taj Muhammad Khan, a Biloch, and Najab Ali Khan, but they were not successful in putting matters on any more satisfactory footing than before. The power of Sikhs increased daily, and in the winter of 1774 Maharaja Amar Singh with Nanun Mal, his famous Minister, laid siege to Bighar, a stronghold of the Pachhadás near Fatahabad. The Bhatti Chiefs endeavoured to relieve the place but met with a sharp reverse and the fort fell. The Raja then took Fatahabad and Sirsa and invested Rania held by the Bhatti Muhammad Amin Khan.

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Bhattis.

The Sikhs.

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The Sikhs.

The Delhi authorities again made a vain attempt to maintain their power and a strong army under Rahím Dád Khan, a Rohilla Chief and Governor of Hánsi, was sent to oppose the Sikhs. His first operations were directed against Gajpat Singh, the Rája of Jínd. Amar Singh sent a force under Nánun Mal to his assistance. The combined armies succeeded in totally overthrowing the Imperial army at Jínd and Rahím Dád Khan was himself slain. As a consequence of the victory the district of Gohána and a part of Rehtak fell into the hands of Rája Gajpat Singh, and Amar Singh possessed himself of Hánsi, Hissár, and Tohána. Meanwhile Rania fell and the whole of the Sirsa pargana passed into his hands. He erected or rather restored an old fort on the hill of Tosham and built another on the old mound of Agroha and a residence for himself at Hissár. The district now became the scene of an interminable struggle between Sikhs, Bhattís, Pachhádés and the Jatu Rájputés, and a large part of it lay an uninhabited waste.

In 1781 a last attempt was made by the Delhi Government to restore something like order in the district. Najaf Ali Khan with Rája Jai Singh proceeded to the district with an army, but an arrangement was made with the Sikhs by the treaty of Jínd under which the parganas of Hánsi, Hissár, Rohtak, Meham and Tosham were reserved to the empire, the remaining territory which the Sikhs had annexed they were allowed to retain, and Fatahabad and Sirsa were made over to the Bhattís. Rája Jai Singh was appointed Názim of Hissár.

The "chálisa" famine of 1783, which has been already described, more than sufficed to complete the final ruin of the district, and stronger than the Imperial armies compelled the Sikhs to retire into their own territories.

George Thomas.

The last noteworthy actor in the history of the district before the advent of the British power was the adventurer George Thomas. He was an Englishman of some tact and courage who had come to India as a sailor in 1781. After entering native service in South India he travelled up to Delhi, and there entered the service of the celebrated Zehan Nissa Begam, better known as the Begam Samroo of Sardhána. In 1782 he was forced by intrigues to leave her service and entered that of Apa Khandi Ráo, a Mahratta Chief, a relative of Maharája Sindia, and at that time in possession of the Jhajjar, Dádri and Narnaul territory. Thomas raised troops for his master and received a fief in Jhajjar and Rohtak for their support. He rendered good service to Apa Khandi Ráo and his son and successor Wamun Ráo, service which appears to have been ill-requited.

Intrigues again forced him to quit his position and he then conceived and carried out the project of setting up his authority over the tract of Hariána which, owing to the series of events narrated above, had been reduced to little more than an uninhabited waste. He first reduced the fortified village of Kanhaura, now in Patiála, and then established his head-quarters

at Hānsi, which he re-fortified, and inaugurated a rough form of Government over the surrounding country. His authority was quickly extended over the tracts of Hissār Tosham and Barwāla and several refractory villages were sacked. He established a post at Kasuhan in Patiāla and subsequently raided into the Shekawati country of Jaipur. In 1798 he made a rapid marauding expedition into Bikānir and collected a large quantity of plunder. In the latter part of the year he laid siege to Jind, but the place was relieved by the united forces of Patiāla, Nābha and Jind, and Thomas retreated to Meham; thence after a night march he made a sudden attack on the Sikhs who were encamped at Narnaund and completely routed them. After the famine of 1783 Muhammad Amīn Khan, the Bhatti Chief of Rania, had recovered the whole of the Ghaggar valley from Bhatner to Fatahabad, and on his death his dominions were divided between his two sons Khan Bahādur Khan, who took Fatahabad, and Kamar-ud-dīn Khan, to whom was assigned Sirsa and Rania.

In 1799 Thomas undertook at the invitation of Kamar-ud-dīn Khan a marauding expedition through Budlāda and the Bhatti country into Bikānir in the course of which he realized a considerable sum of money as blackmail. In the same year he went to the assistance of Ambaji Anglia, who was at that time engaged against Lakwa Duda, then in revolt against Sindia. He then undertook a marauding expedition into Sikh territory which was to be the cause of his ruin. He penetrated as far as Bansur, but there overawed by a large assembly of Sikh contingents he returned through Kaithal, Jind, Sonapat and Panipat, to Georgegarh, where he erected a fort now known as Jehazgarh in the Rohtak district, Jehaz being the native corruption for George. Disturbances in the Hānsi territory recalled him thither in the beginning of 1800. Meanwhile, Thomas' growing power was a cause of jealousy and apprehension to Sindia, and his General Perron. Negotiations were entered into with Thomas with a view to the latter subjecting himself unreservedly to the authority of Sindia. This Thomas declined to do so that when the Sikh Chiefs asked for Perron's assistance in destroying Thomas, they received a favourable hearing. Negotiations, having for their object the curtailment of Thomas' power were re-opened without any result. Perron then resolved to attack Thomas, and for this purpose despatched his lieutenant Bourquin with a force which included the future Colonel James Skinner. After rapid marching and counter-marching on the part of Thomas a most sanguinary battle without any definite result took place at Barce near Georgegarh. After the battle Thomas lay for some time encamped at Barce, but subsequently made a rapid retreat to Hānsi, whither he was followed by Bourquin. After a desperate fight the town was carried by storm and Thomas retreated into the fort. Negotiations were shortly opened and Thomas surrendered on favourable terms. He abandoned all his conquests and retired into British territory. Bourquin stayed some time in the district for the purpose of

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restoring order; he is said to have rebuilt the towns of Tohána and Hissár. In 1802 he left Mirza Iliás Beg, Mughal of Hánsi, as Názim of the district nominally, on behalf of the Mahrattas, and himself returned to Aligarh.

Annexation.

Meanwhile the treaty of Bassein in the same year led to the second Mahratta War in which the British with their allies were engaged in a life and death struggle with the Mahratta Chiefs Sindia and Bhonsla. The battles of Laswarí and Argaom in November 1803 led on the 30th December to the signature of the treaty of Sarji Anjangaon by which Sindia agreed to cede to the British Government and its allies all his territories between the Jumna and Ganges and also all those to the north of the Native States of Jaipur and Jodhpur. The latter included the present districts of Gurgoán, Rohtak, Hissár, and by the partition treaty of Poona dated five months later, these together with other territory were assigned to the British Government.

Condition of the tract.

The condition of the tract contained within the present district at the time when it came into the hands of the British may be inferred from the above sketch of its previous history. By far the larger part of it was uninhabited waste. In the whole of the present Sirsa tahsíl there were only 11 inhabited villages, all on the Ghaggar, belonging to Musalmán Bhattís, Jóiyas, Tunwars and Chauháns with a few Ráins. There was not a single village in the Bagar tract south of the Ghaggar, nor in the Rohi to its north. The latter formed part of a huge expanse of desert stretching right up to the Sutlej and the confines of the Málwa country where a few villages were to be found.

In the tract within the four present southern tahsils of the district a few villages were to be found along the Ghaggar valley, but in the remainder of the tract the population had left the smaller villages and concentrated into the larger ones which were more capable of defence against the forays of Bhattís, Sikhs, and Pachhádás, which were however more frequent in the Sirsa tract. They were known as "dhár" or "katak," and will be found fully described in para. 25 of Wilson's Settlement Report of Sirsa. The villages along the Western Jumna Canal appear to have maintained their existence through the troublous time, in which only those whose inhabitants could wield the sword as well drive the plough, survived. In short, when the district came under what was at first only nominal British rule, it was a complete desert in the north-west, while towards the south it was sparsely dotted with large village communities which had managed to hold their own in some sort against human foes and natural adversities.

Early rule. British

Although the territory included in the present district had been formally ceded by treaty in 1803, yet the hold of the Mahrattas in the country had been, to say the least, of a very slight and doubtful character, and for many years the authority of the British was little more than nominal, and no steps were taken to define its boundaries.

In 1803 a Military fort was established at Hānsi, and Mirza Iliás Beg, Mughal of Hānsi, was appointed Názim of the district of Hariána and Rohtak by General Ochterlony. The Bhattís under Khan Bahádur Khan of Fatahabad and Nawáb Zabta Khan of Rania continued their raids as of yore. Mirza Iliás Beg marched against them with the Hissár garrison, but was defeated and slain at Fatahabad. He was followed in quick succession by three Názims Nawáb Muni-ud-din Khan, Ahmad Bakhsh Khan of Loháru and Abdul Samad of Dujána; confusion reigned supreme and the Názims quickly resigned their uncomfortable position. From 1808 to 1810 there appears to have been no Governor at all.

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Early British rule.

At last in 1810 the Hon'ble Edward Gardiner was deputed with a body of troops to restore order in Hariána. The British force contained a troop of cavalry commanded by the famous Colonel James Skinner. The first operation was the capture of the town of Bhiwáni, the garrison of which opposed the British advance. A British officer, named Bull, was killed in the attack, and lies buried at Bhiwáni. The force then proceeded *viâ* Hānsi and Hissár to Fatahabad, where the Bhatti Khan Bahádur Khan was defeated and expelled the country, his territories being taken under direct British rule. At Sirsa Nawáb Zabta Khan gave in his submission and was left in possession of his territories. The civil head-quarters were fixed at Hānsi, and Mr. Gardiner held charge of the district for some six years.

Nawáb Zabta Khan continued to encourage raids, and in consequence a British force was sent against him in 1818 and all his territories were confiscated. The whole of the present Sirsa tahsíl was then for the first time brought directly under British rule.

At the time of the mutiny nearly the whole area at present within the district was divided between the Districts of Hissár and Bhattiána. The present Sirsa tahsíl was wholly in the latter, and the other tahsils, with the exception of the town of Bhiwáni and a few villages around it, were in the former.

The Mutiny.

In May 1857 detachments of the Hariána Light Infantry and the 14th Irregular Cavalry were stationed at Hissár, Hānsi and Sirsa, the head-quarters being at the former place, where Major Stafford was in command. The Civil Officer at Hissár at the time was Mr. John Wedderburn, Magistrate and Collector, who had lately joined from home. As soon as news of the outbreak at Delhi and the capture of that city by the mutineers was received, Mr. Wedderburn had the treasure removed to the building used as the residence of the Superintendent of the Cattle Farm, where it was likely to be more secure and capable of defence than in the Government Treasury at the *kacheri*. An additional troop of cavalry was obtained from the Nawáb of Dádri and the custom's peons were called in and placed as sentries at the city gates.

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Up to this time there appears to have been no suspicion of the fidelity of the native troops, though disturbances in the villages appear to have been anticipated. Meanwhile, however, the storm was brewing. It broke at Hānsi on the morning of the 29th May at 11 A.M. when the troops stationed there revolted. Major Stafford and some others who had received intimation from one of the native officers and a loyal Banya, named Morári, managed to escape, but the rest of the Europeans and Christians were massacred and their bungalows set on fire.

Meanwhile a rebel sowár was despatched to Hissár, and on his arrival at 2 P.M. the troops stationed there revolted. Lieutenant Barwell, the Officer Commanding, on going out to enquire the reason of the disturbance, was shot by one of the Treasury guard and the mutineers went off to the Jail to release the convicts. A body of them then galloped on to the *kacheri* where the Collector was engaged as usual; seeing what had happened, he at once bravely set off towards the city to guard the treasure, but was murdered by some of the rebel sowárs.

Two of the English clerks, Messrs. Jefferies and Smith, succeeded in escaping into the Bir. After the murder of the Collector the uproar became universal. The native troops, the Dádri sowárs and the custom's peons all joined in, the convicts in the Jail were released, and the houses of the Europeans were set on fire, while two ladies, Mrs. Jefferies and Mrs. Smith, with their children, were cruelly murdered by their servants. Mrs. Barwell and Mrs. Wedderburn, with their children, were residing at the house of the Superintendent of the Cattle Farm, and they and their children were there massacred by the mutinous troops, while Mr. David Thompson, the Tahsildár of Hissár, was murdered by his chaprassis. In all 23 Europeans and Christians were murdered: 12 at Hissár and 11 at Hānsi. The massacre formed one of the darkest episodes of the mutiny.

Thirteen persons, including Mr. Taylor, the Superintendent of the Cattle Farm, and Mr. Waghams, the Civil Surgeon, escaped, in most cases with the assistance of natives whose fidelity formed a bright contrast to the general disloyalty of the district. On the morning of May 30th, a person named Muhammad Azím, an assistant patrol on the customs line, who styled himself "Shahzada," entered Hissár with the intention of putting himself at the head of the revolt in the district. He stayed a few days and then went off towards Delhi to procure assistance from the Emperor.

At Sirsa the effervescence began as soon as the news of the mutiny at Meerut on the 11th May and the subsequent capture of Delhi by the mutineers reached the town. The Banyas began to leave the place, and the doubtful expedient of entrusting the defence of the place to the Bhatti Nawáb of Rania was resorted to. The news of the outbreak at Hissár reached the European residents of Sirsa a few hours before it was conveyed to the native troops. They at once took to flight. Captain Robertson,

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the Superintendent of Bhattiána, went with his family by Dabwáli and Bhatinda to Ferozepore, which they reached in safety, while the remaining Europeans, some 17 in number, many of them women and children, started for Sohuwála, under the leadership of Mr. Donald, Assistant Superintendent, and being joined there by Mr. Bowles, Customs Patrol, reached Rori after some trouble from the inhabitants of Thiraj and other villages who threatened them as they passed. At Rori the party took refuge in the small mud fort, and were compelled by the disaffected attitude of the townspeople to shut the gate and stand sentries. They could not procure food from the town and were prevented from getting water from the well outside. But in the darkness of the night, Bába Jánki Dás, a fakir of the place, brought them supplies of water and flour and passed them through the aperture under the fort gates. The party was thus enabled to hold out until the arrival of some Patiála troops, who escorted them to a place of safety in Patiála territory. They were hospitably treated by the Patiála authorities until the restoration of order enabled them to return to Sirsa. The only Europeans left at Sirsa were Captain Hilliard, the Officer Commanding the Detachment, and his brother-in-law, Mr. Fell, Assistant Patrol. These gentlemen were not in Sirsa when the others left it. They had gone out with some troops towards Jodhka to suppress some local disturbance, and were brought back to Sirsa by their men. The mutineers refused to obey Captain Hilliard's orders, but supplied him with money and allowed him and Mr. Fell to depart unmolested. They were, however, treacherously murdered by the Muhammadan inhabitants of Chatryán, a small village beyond Sohuwála. The mutineers, when left to themselves, plundered the treasury of some Rs. 8,000, but without much other violence marched off to join their comrades at Hánsi. The Hindu inhabitants of the town of Sirsa fled in dismay chiefly to Bikáner territory, and the Muhammadan population of the surrounding villages rose *en masse* and began to plunder the town and the neighbouring Hindu villages. The Tahsildár of Sirsa, the Revenue Sarishtadár and the Kotwáli Muharrir were murdered, and the records of the District Office were torn and scattered about, but most of them were afterwards recovered and comparatively few of them were altogether destroyed. The destruction of property was most wanton. Whatever the insurgents were unable to carry away they burned or broke to pieces and for a time the most violent portion of the population had it all its own way.

The Ranghars and Pachádás of Hissár and the Bhattis of Sirsa at once took advantage of the subversion of British rule to revert to their old predatory habits and the district was at once plunged into utter anarchy and confusion.

At this time General Van Cortlandt was Deputy Commissioner of Ferozepore and had, at the beginning of the disturbances in May, raised, by order of Government, a levy of Sikhs. On the 1st June intelligence was received at Ferozepore

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of the events which had transpired at Hissár and Sirsa. On the 8th June the General marched towards Sirsa with a force of 550 men with two guns and he was accompanied by Captain Robertson as Political Officer. At Malaut a reinforcement of some 120 men was received. The first encounter with the rebels took place at Odhán on June 17th, when some 5,000 Bhattís attacked the advancing force but were decisively routed. On the 18th the village of Chhatyán, where Captain Hilliard and his brother-in-law Mr. Fell had been treacherously murdered, was burnt to the ground. On the 19th a force of rebel Bhattís and Pachadas was again encountered at Khaireka on the bank of the Ghaggar and almost annihilated with a loss to the British force of 6 killed and 32 wounded. On the 20th Sirsa was reached when the Bikáner contingent of 800 men and 2 guns, loyally sent to our aid by the Rájá of Bikáner, marched in as a reinforcement. The civil organization of the district was at once re-established, and in a short time things reverted to their former state.

Meanwhile, on June 21st, a force of 400 Bikáner horse and two guns, under Lieutenant Pearse, was sent on to garrison Hissár which was threatened by the insurgent Ranghars of Mángali, a village which took a leading part in the insurrection.

On the 8th July, after restoring order at Sirsa and leaving Mr. Oliver there as Superintendent of Bhattiána, General Van Cortlandt marched via Fatahabad for Hissár, which he reached on the 17th, having halted six days at Fatahabad to receive the submission of the revolted Pachadás.

From Hissár a Tahsildár, Ahmad Nabi Khán, and a few sowárs were despatched to restore the civil power at Hánsi. On the 20th the Ranghars of Jamálpur, a village which was the leader in the revolt, attacked Hánsi but were repulsed by the Tahsildár and his garrison. Reinforcements joined at Hissár, and on the 8th the force marched to Hánsi, leaving a garrison at Hissár.

Meanwhile the Shahzáda returned from Delhi with reinforcements for the rebels amounting to 1,500 cavalry, 500 infantry and 3 guns, and the insurgent Ranghars of Mángali, aided by some men from Jamálpur, made an attack on Hissár but were decisively repulsed by the garrison aided by some reinforcements from Hánsi. On September 2nd the Jamálpur rebels made an attack on the Tahsíl at Toshám where they killed Nand Lal Tahsildár, Piyare Lal Thánadár and Khizán Singh Kánúngo. On the 6th General Van Cortlandt burnt the village of Hájimpur near Hánsi, which was a stronghold of the rebels, and on the 11th an attack was made on the village of Mángali which was carried by storm and burnt. This was followed up on the 13th by the capture and burning of the village of Jamálpur which was defended by the rebel Ranghars and the Delhi troops under the Shahzáda.

This practically concluded the Military operations in the district and thereafter it began gradually to settle down, but

the Hariána Field Force was not finally broken up till May 1st, 1858. After order had been restored 133 persons were hanged in the Hissár District for the part which they had taken in the revolt, and 3 others were sentenced to transportation for life, of whom 2 were subsequently pardoned. The proprietary rights in 7 villages were forfeited, among them being Mángali and Jamálpur, while fines were levied on as many more. At the same time many Mafi grants and pecuniary rewards were given to those who had rendered conspicuous service.

The attitude of the various classes of the population at this trying period is worthy of notice. The inhabitants of the towns and the Bagri villagers were, with rare exceptions, incapable of combining for mutual defence, and their only resource was flight. They made no attempt to interfere with their neighbours but on the slightest threat of danger they fled with their valuables, leaving their heavier goods a prey to the first body of plunderers however insignificant. The Musalmáns of the Ghaggar valley and of the district generally, finding the forces of order non-existent, rose to plunder their weaker and less spirited neighbours.

The Raughars of the district, especially those who were Musalmáns, threw themselves heart and soul into the revolt. Large numbers of them had been serving in the native regiments which had mutined in other districts and many of these returning to their villages helped to fan the flame of insurrection. The rebels however could never make any stand against disciplined force and their numbers alone rendered them formidable, and after their defeats any insurrectionary movements on their part subsided.

The Játs, Sikh and Dewális, maintained a strictly defensive attitude and were both strong enough and energetic enough to maintain themselves against the attacks of the insurgents. The inferior police officials and customs peons either deserted their officers or actively combined for plunder, but the native officials of the district seem to have on the whole remained at their posts as long as could be expected while several distinguished themselves by their fidelity.

The neighbouring States of Patiála and Bikáner sent considerable bodies of troops to aid the authorities, and though their services were not of a very valuable kind, still the fact showed a feeling of loyalty on the part of these States which should never be forgotten. They also afforded a ready refuge to fugitives and treated them with hospitality.

The District of Hissár is unusually full of antiquities in the shape of mounds and architectural remains. They all point to the conclusion that lying, as it did, on the main high road to Hindustan, *viz.*, from Mooltan *via* Sirsa or Sarsuti to Delhi, it was at one time the scene of a high standard of civilization. Pre-Musalmán architectural remains are for the most part found built into the walls of Musalmán buildings, principally those

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erected by Feroz Shah and his predecessors, and the comparatively high standard of artistic and mechanical skill which they display seems to show that ancient Hindu civilization in this tract was of no mean order.

The Hissár Fort and the residence of the Superintendent, Government Cattle Farm, is, perhaps, one of the most striking antiquities in Hissár itself. It contains a mosque now used as a farm godown; pillars found in it are said to be of Jaina or Hindu origin and like many more of the emperor's building materials were probably brought from Agroha. There is also a brown sandstone pillar or "lát" in the fort ascribed to Feroz Shah. The only inscription on it is in Sanskrit at the top of the lower stone of the pillar; the letters are cut at the junction of the stones so that the pillar would appear to be an ancient Hindu one, which was re-cut and erected by Feroz Shah. Feroz Shah's palace inside the fort is now used as the residence of the Superintendent of the Government Cattle Farm. The only portions of the original buildings which are left are the *taikhánas*, an extensive series of colonnades with groined roof supported on old pillars.

The most interesting relic of antiquity in Hissár is perhaps the *barahdari* in the Gujari Mahál outside the fort. The Mahál was apparently an outlying portion of the latter and tradition says was built by Feroz Shah as a residence for a Gujari mistress. The only portions of it now left are the *barahdari*, a bastion on which an English bungalow has been built, and a portion of the north wall adjoining the bastion. The walls of the *barahdari* are thick and sloping with 12 doorways each with a window over it. Inside are 4 old pillars of undoubted Hindu or Jain origin which support a roof of domes. The inner side of the jambs of the doorways are covered with what are evidently Hindu carvings. Below the building are three *taikhánas*, two of which are merely rooms, while the central one contains a small *haus* or tank filled with pipes and was evidently used as a bath. There appears to be no doubt that the building was erected with the materials of a pre-existing Hindu temple. The place had fallen into ruin, but is now being restored under the others of Government.

Another interesting relic is the Jaháj or Jaház. It was apparently once a Jain temple, which was subsequently converted into a mosque. It was used as a residence by George Thomas, whose Christian name, corrupted by the natives into Jaháj, gave its present name to the place. It is now used as an office by the Canal Department.

There is an interesting and handsome group of tombs on the Hánsi road east of Hissár. They are adorned with blue encaustic tiles, and the inscriptions on them appear to show that they are the tombs of officers slain in Humayun's campaign in Gujrat in 1535.

The mosque and tomb of Bahlol Shah is about one mile east of Hissár on the Hánsi road. It was built in 1694 A. D.

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on what was probably the site of an old temple. The place is now called Dana Sher. Sher Bahlol is said to have been a fakir who foretold to Ghiyas-ud-din Tughlaq that he would one day be king.

Another interesting relic is the tomb of the *chalis hafiz* on the road to Fatahabad to the north of the town. It is said to be the sepulchre of 40 fakirs who lived in the time of Tughlaqs.

There are numerous other mosques and tombs in and around the town of Hissár which are interesting to the antiquarian, but perhaps scarcely merit a description here. On the whole the town and its neighbourhood are remarkably full of antiquities. At Hánsi the antiquity which is most worthy of notice is the fort. The principal events in its history have already been touched upon. It is now a mound of earth measuring 370 yards from north to south and 345 yards from east to west. Some of the curtain wall on the north side is left and is in places 52 feet high and 37 thick. The fort was almost entirely dismantled after the mutiny and its materials sold but the gateway and guard-house are still standing. Inside the fort are a godown of modern erection, two wells and an enclosure containing two mosques and the tomb of Sayad Niamat-ullah, who was killed in Muhammad bin Sam's attack on Hánsi.

The fort appears to be built upon a mound consisting mostly of large sized bricks, the remains of a former Hindu city; and many of the materials which have been used in the erection of buildings in the fort and in Hánsi generally are of undoubted Hindu origin as shown by the carvings on them, and belonged probably to a large palace or temple. The enclosure and tomb of Niamat-ullah was probably erected soon after Muhammad Ghori's conquest of Hánsi, and Hindu materials appear to have been freely used in its construction.

The mosque and tomb of the four Qutbs are an interesting relic situated on the west side of the town. The place consists of three enclosures, in one of which is the mosque with a tank built in 1491 by one Abu Bakr Jawáni. The second enclosure contains the graves of Qutb Jamál-ud-din and his three successors. The domed edifice in which the graves are situated is of modern erection, as also are 2 pavilions on either side. Jamál-ud-din is said to have accompanied Muhammad Ghori in his attack on Hánsi, but subsequently abandoned worldly cares, and as a follower of Baba Farid Shakar Ganj of Pakpattan made the study and practice of religion his sole occupation. He was succeeded by three other Qutbs—Barhan-ud-din, Manawar-ud-din and Nur-ud-din. The enclosure also contains the beautiful tomb of Ali Tajjar, a disciple of Qutb-ud-din, and chief farmer or purveyor to Sultán Jamal-ud-din. It is said by archæological authorities to be one of the best built tombs in the Punjab. The third enclosure contains the graves of the four Diwáns or successors of the Qutbs. They are under four cupolas supported by ten pillars.

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A mound and mosque 3 miles from Hānsi is known as Shahid Ganj. Tradition says that 1,50,000 Musalmāns were slaughtered there. It is probably the scene of Masūd's defeat on his first attempt to take Hānsi. The mosque walls contain carved bricks, which are probably of Hindu origin. The town of Hānsi contains in addition to the above two mosques which were originally built in the 13th and 14th centuries.

Two interesting antiquities are to be seen in the neighbourhood of Toshām. One is a *barahdari* on a small hill near the town, which is popularly called Prithvi Rāj's Kacheri. The other is a Sanscrit inscription on a rock on the face of the hill to the west of the town. It does not appear to have been as yet satisfactorily translated. It seems to refer to a Scythian King Tushāra who appears to have conquered the Gupta Ghalotkacha who reigned from about A. D. 50 to A. D. 79, and is referred to in the inscription. There appears to be evidence to show that the Toshām hills was a monastery of Buddhist monks or *bekhus*. The date of the inscription is said to be A. D. 162-224. There are several sacred *kunds* or reservoirs on the hill; one of them, the Paudurith, is considered so sacred that some of the neighbouring villages deposit the ashes of their dead in it instead of taking them to the Ganges.

Fatahabad contains a "lāt" or pillar erected by Feroz Shah and bearing an inscription in Persian giving an account of the Tughlaq family. The pillar appears to have been originally an Hindū one bearing an inscription in Sanscrit.

There are also two or three Musalmān mosques in the town which contain sculptured stones which originally belonged in all probability to a Hindū temple. The mound at Agroha is one of the most interesting relics of antiquity in the district. It undoubtedly covers the site and remains of a large Hindū city. Excavations made in 1889 brought to light fragments of sculpture and images. Bricks of all sizes and coins have been found there. In one place the walls of a substantial house have been laid bare, while a large depression near the mound, in which excellent crops are now raised, is evidently the site of an ancient tank.

The Sirsa Tahsil contains many interesting antiquities the principal one of which is perhaps the fort mound at Sirsa itself. It is said to be one of the oldest places in Northern India, and from the relics found in the mound it is clear that it was once the site of a flourishing Hindū town. The Sirsa Tahsil, and especially that part of it which lies in the Ghaggar valley, is studded thickly with mounds which are undoubtedly the sites of ancient villages and towns, and show clearly that the tract was once the seat of a thriving Hindū civilization. There are several Musalmān tombs and also mosques and Hindū temples round the town of Sirsa.

A large amount of information concerning the antiquities of the Hissār District can be obtained from a list of archaeological objects of interest in the Punjab compiled by Mr. C. J. Rodgers, M. R. A. S., of the Archaeological Survey.

SECTION C.—ADMINISTRATIVE SUB-DIVISIONS PRIOR TO BRITISH RULE.

The divisions of the district under the rule of Akbar Chapter II. C.
have already been noticed.

Immediately previous to the British conquest Hariána was Administrative
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divided into 19 districts, all of which were nominally subject to the Mahrattás in 1803, viz., Beri, Rohtak, Mahm, Bhatner, Safidon, Dhatrat, Kassuhan, Hánsi, Hissár, Agroha, Barwala, Siwani, Bahal, Ahrwan, Fatahabad, Sirsa, Rania, Jamálpur, Tohána. Of these the last 12 were wholly or partially within the limits of the present district.

In 1810, the date of the first actual establishment of the First constitution
of the district.
British authority in this part, the whole of the Delhi territory ceded by the Mahrattás was subject to the Resident of Delhi, and was divided into two districts—Delhi directly under the Resident, and the outlying districts, including Hánsi, Hissár, Sirsa, Rohtak, Pániapat and Rewári under the immediate charge of an assistant to the Resident. In 1819 the Delhi territory was Subsequent
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divided into three districts—the Central which included Delhi, the Southern including Rewári, and the North-Western including Pániapat, Hánsi, Hissár, Sirsa and Rohtak. In 1820 the latter was again sub-divided into a Northern and a Western District, of which the latter included Bhiwáni, Hánsi, Hissár, Sirsa, the head-quarters being at Hánsi. In 1824 Rohtak, which had previously been in the Western District, was constituted into a separate district, to which Bhiwáni was transferred.

During the 15 years from 1803 to 1818 while the English Boundary disputes.
had paid no attention whatever to the state of their border, the chiefs of the neighbouring Sikh States had not been idle.

Prior to the famine of 1783 Sikh colonists had pushed into the Hariána of Hissár, the Rohi of Sirsa and along the valley of the Ghaggar. That calamity had driven them back for a time, but the forward movement soon began again and with enhanced speed after the nominal annexation of the tract by the British, for the Sikhs understood clearly that the tract though at that time depopulated and void of cultivation would, with the establishment of a settled government in its vicinity, become increasingly valuable, and in anticipation of this they were careful to take all steps necessary for manufacturing the strongest claims to as large a portion of the unoccupied and debatable tract as possible.

The final overthrow of the Bhattis in 1818 removed the last barrier to their encroachments. In 1821, passing over the belt of waste land, the Patialá Chief erected an outpost at Gudah, 16 miles to the north of Sirsa, and next year Sikh troops were stationed at the place and colonists from Patialá territory were induced to take up land for cultivation in the waste. In 1827 the Sikh Chiefs took possession of Abohar and the tract around it.

The notice of Government was drawn to the unsettled state of the border in 1818 and again a few years later by the District

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officers, but no definite action was taken. In 1819 an attempt was made to establish a sort of Military colony, especially in the Ghaggar tract, by giving revenue-free grants of waste land to the officers and men of the cavalry regiments, disbanded after the Pindhari wars. The attempt to stop encroachments in this way was only partially successful, as the grantees or sukhlabars, as they were called, did not in many cases take up their grants for many years. Most of them were natives of the Doab and did not relish the idea of settling in a wild and desert country, and even now most of their descendants are non-residents.

The following account of the dispute with Patiála is abridged from pages 163—180 of Griffin's Rájás of the Punjab. It was not till 1835, when Sir C. Metcalfe was Lieutenant-Governor of the North-Western Provinces, and Mr. William Fraser, Resident at Delhi, 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 Patiála at the time of British conquest of Hariána in 1803 should be adjudged to that State, and whatever belonged to the Government which the English had superseded should be adjudged to the latter. With regard to the district of Fatahábad and the portion of the Bhatti 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: Hariána, including the Bhatti territory (or Bhatiána) was made up of 19 districts, all of which were nominally subject to the Mahrattás in 1803: Beri, Rohtak, Maham, Hánsi, Hissár, Agroha, Barwála Siwani, Báhal, Aharwán, Fatahábad, Sirsa, Rania, Bhatner, Safidon, Dhatrat, Jamálpur, Tohána and Kassuhán. Of these the first 10 were considered by Mr. Bell to have passed into British possession from the Mahrattás in 1803, and were at once adjudged to the English Government. Sirsa, Rania and Fatahábad 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 Dhatrat had been made over to Bhág Singh of Jínd by the Mahrattás, and were accordingly adjudged to that State. Jamálpur, Tohána and Kassuhán, together with the forts of Badriki and Kankauri, 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 Gorakhpur 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 Badrikri and Kanhauri were adjudged to Patiála on the same grounds as the Kassuhán district. Jamálpur and Tobána 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 Mahrattás 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. Tobána is included in the present Barwála tahsíl.

There remained for consideration the effect of the reconquest of Fatahábad, Sirsa and Rania in 1810 and 1818. In Fatahábad Mr. Bell found 25 villages in the possession of Patiála and 21 in possession of Kaithal. Rája Amar Singh of Patiála had conquered Fatahábad, Sirsa and Rania 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 Fatahábad 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 Rania 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, Rania and Abohar, was separated from Hissár and formed into a new district, which was administered by an officer bearing the title of Superintendent of Bhatiána, subordinate to the Political Agent at Umballa. 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

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decide on such evidence as he could obtain. He did so, with the results already detailed. But the remonstrances of Patiala 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 Hissár district, lying principally in the neighbourhood of the Ghaggar, and his proposals were accepted by the

	No.	Cultiva- tion in acres.	Total area in acres.	Approx- imate annual value in rupees.
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

Government of the North-Western Provinces. The marginal tabular statement shows the financial result of Mr. Conolly's decision as far as the Hissár district was concerned. Mr.

Conolly, reported also upon the Bhattiána or Sirsa frontier. Here he was inclined to give up 40 or 50 villages; but the want of an accurate map prevented him from making definite proposals. The Maharája of Patiala, 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 Hissár, 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 Patiala. 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-Sutlej 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 Patiala, 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 sub-

stitution of a few villages for others, was shortly afterwards carried out. Twenty-six villages were made over by the Superintendent of Bhatiana, and five villages, yielding a revenue equal to that of 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.

Encroachments were also attempted from the Bikánir side. Within ten years after the British annexation, Bagri Jats of the Bahniwál clan from Bikánir had fully occupied the sandy tract south of the Ghaggar now in Sirsa tahsil, and the Rája of Bikánir laid claim to this territory. In 1828, however, Mr. E. Trevelyan, who had been deputed to settle the dispute, decided that it had not belonged to Bikánir, but had been successively under the Delhi Government and in the hands of the Bhattís. This tract, consisting then of 40 villages, was finally declared to be British territory, and the claims of the Bikánir Rája to the Tibi villages between Bhatner and Ránia was rejected.

In 1837 the tract of country included in the former Sirsa tahsil with other territory subsequently ceded to Patiala was separated from Hissár and created into a separate jurisdiction called Bhatiana, which was placed under a separate Superintendent. In 1838 the pargana of Darba including the sandy tract now in the Sirsa tahsil to the south of the Ghaggar, was transferred from Hissár to Bhatiana. In 1847 the small pargana of Rori, confiscated from the Rája of Nábha for lukewarmness in the Sutlej campaign was confiscated and attached to the tract.

In 1858 the districts of Bhatiana and Hissár with the rest of the Delhi territory were transferred to the Punjab and the district of Bhatiana was henceforth known as that of Sirsa.

In 1861 24 villages of the Mehám Bhiwáni tahsil of Rohtak were transferred to the Hissár district; 18 including the town of Bhiwáni, to the present Bhiwáni tahsil and 6 to Hási. In addition to this, 5 villages confiscated from the Nawáb of Jhajjar for misconduct in the mutiny, were in the same year added to the Bhiwáni tahsil, and 12 villages received from the Mahárája of Jínd in exchange for certain villages in the Thánesar (Karnál) district were added to the Barwála tahsil. The Tili villages, 42 in number, were also made over to Bikánir in recognition of mutiny services.

In November 1884 the Sirsa district was abolished and the whole of the Sirsa tahsil, consisting of 199 villages and 126 villages of the Dabwáli tahsil, were added to the Hissár district and form the present Sirsa tahsil. With effect from March 1st 1889, 15 villages forming a detached block of British territory, and

Chapter II. C

Administrative
sub-divisions
prior to British
rule.

Boundary disputes.

Constitution of
Bhatiana.

Chapter II. C. known as the Budláda iláka were transferred from the Kaithal
 Administrative sub-divisions tahsíl of the Karnál District and added to the Fatahábad
 prior to British rule. tahsíl of the Hissár District. No transfer of territory to or
 from the district have taken place since that date.

Constitution of Bhatiana. The Barwála tahsíl containing 139 villages was abolished
 of with effect from January 1st, 1891, and its area was distributed
 between the three contiguous tahsils, 13 villages going to Hánsi,
 24 to Hissár and 102 to Fatahábad. At the same time 13
 villages were transferred from the Hissár to the Bhiwáni
 tahsíl and a sub-tahsíl was established at Tohána in Fatahá-
 bad.

Development of the district since annexation. Some conception of the development of the district since
 it came into our hands can be gathered from the figures of
 Table II, which gives periodical statistics 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 comparing
 the figures it must be borne in mind that the area of the
 district was considerably increased by the inclusion of a part of
 the Sirsa district in November 1884. This is not the place for a
 detailed discussion of the development which has taken place ;
 the work as a whole will, it is hoped, fulfil that object, but the
 main outlines of the development may be sketched here.

The short account of the history of the district which has
 been given above has shown the political and economic condi-
 tion of the tract when it came into our hands. The whole of it,
 and perhaps more especially the portion now included in the
 Sirsa tahsíl had been reduced to an uninhabited waste by the
 famine of 1783 and by the struggles of contending armies and
 predatory bands. With the pacification and political settlement
 of the district under British rule an immense stream of immigration
 from the surrounding Native States forthwith set in and
 has continued especially in Sirsa to within recent years.

The advent of settled Government witnessed an immediate
 increase in cultivation, slow at first but gradually increasing in
 speed and extent. The circumstances, and manner in which this
 increase took place will be dealt with under Chapter III. The
 distinct definition given to landed rights by the regular
 settlement of 1842 in the four southern tahsils and by that of
 1852-64 in Sirsa and the greater security conferred on those
 rights by the establishment of a regular judicial organization
 encouraged, it is needless to say this spread of cultivation. Put-
 ting aside the unreasonably harsh assessments of the early days
 of our rule, the increase in land revenue and the enhanced value
 of land indicate the extent to which the district has developed.
 The increase of cattle, a most important element in the rustic
 wealth of the district, is a measure of its increased material
 prosperity.

Many of the inhabitants have not yet forgotten the tradi-
 tions of raids and foray and cattle-lifting is still very common in
 the district ; but as a whole the population is orderly and well
 behaved. Education is at a low ebb so far as the rural areas are
 concerned, while local self-government, that Western exotic which

it is sought to plant in the barren soil of Oriental indifference, shows a very feeble growth.

Chapter II, C.

Administrative sub-divisions prior to British rule.

The following is a list of the officers who have held charge of the district from 1867 to date :—

Name of District Officer.	From	To	Name of District Officer.	From	To	Development of the district since annexation.
Col. F. F. Forster ...	1867	1880	Mr. M. W. Fenton ...	31-7-86	14-8-86	Development of the district since annexation. List of District Officers.
Mr. M. Macauliffe ...	1880	1881	Lt. C. S. B. Martindale	15-8-86	15-8-86	
Major W. J. Parker ...	March '81	Oct. '81	Mr. A. Anderson ...	16-8-86	14-7-88	
Mr. Ogilvie ...	Oct. '81	Sept. '83	Mr. J. G. M. Rennie ...	15-7-88	12-10-88	
Captain C. F. Massy ...	9-9-83	9-11-83	Mr. A. Anderson ...	13-10-88	31-5-90	
Mr. G. M. Ogilvie ...	10-11-83	27-8-85	Lt. F. P. Young ...	1-6-90	22-7-90	
Mr. A. H. Diack... ..	28-8-85	10-10-85	Mr. A. Anderson ...	23-7-90	14-11-90	
Mr. G. M. Ogilvie ...	11-10-85	20-10-85	Captain C. G. Parsons,	15-11-90	8-4-01	
Col. L. J. H. Grey, C.S. I.	21-10-85	10-3-86	Mr. P. J. Fagan ...	9-4-01	23-7-01	
Mr. F. C. Channing ...	11-3-86	30-7-86	Captain C. G. Parsons,	24-7-01	to date	

The record of District Officers before the year 1867 is not forthcoming.