

**PERSONAL ADVENTURES
DURING THE INDIAN
REBELLION IN ROHILCUND,
FUTTEHGHUR, AND OUDE**

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Personal Adventures During the Indian Rebellion in Rohilcund, Futtehghur, and Oude by
William Edwards

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WILLIAM EDWARDS

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PERSONAL ADVENTURES

DURING THE

INDIAN REBELLION

IN

ROHILCUND, FUTTEHGHUR, AND OUDE.

BY WILLIAM EDWARDS, ESQ., B.C.S.,

JUDGE OF BEMARIS, AND LATE MAGISTRATE AND COLLECTOR
OF BUDAON IN ROHILCUND.

SECOND EDITION.

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CALIFORNIA

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—
1858.

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P R E F A C E.

THE following Narrative, drawn up as opportunity offered, under circumstances of great personal danger and considerable anxiety, was transmitted to my family in England, the day after I had providentially succeeded with my companions in escaping into Cawnpore, and joining the force under the late General Havelock. From that time until April last, when, from the failure of my health, I was forced to leave India, I had no opportunity of reverting to the subject of my escape.

Since my return, last month, I have had leisure to look the Diary over, and have been

induced to offer it for publication, under the impression that, at a time like the present, when public attention is so much occupied with the Indian Rebellion, the events it relates, although of a purely personal nature, may not be without interest.

W. EDWARDS,

Bengal Civil Service,

Judge of Benares.

June 24, 1858.

PERSONAL ADVENTURES

DURING THE

INDIAN REBELLION IN ROHILCUND,
FUTTEGHUR, AND OUDE.

KUSSOURAH, LEFT BANK OF THE RAMGUNGAH, ABOUT
TWELVE MILES N.E. OF FUTTEGHUR, JULY 27TH,
1857.

This day, for the first time since the first of June, I have writing materials at my disposal. I shall therefore endeavour to record, as correctly as I can from memory, a narrative of the events that have occurred to me since that sad day, the first of June, when it pleased God that I should become a wanderer and a fugitive. I must premise that shortly after the outbreak and massacre at Meerut, about the 19th May, so far as I can recollect, the spirit of disorder began to show itself in the Budaon district in Rohilcund, of

which I was magistrate and collector—the infection having spread from the tracts on the right bank of the Ganges, which were by that time in open rebellion. Bands of marauders sprang up, as it were by magic, and commenced plundering on the roads, and sacking and burning villages.

I became alarmed for the safety of my wife and child, and despatched them to a place of security, Nynce Tal, which station they reached safely; but they did not start one moment too soon, for they passed through Bareilly, after that station had been deserted by all the European ladies and children, and just the day week before the mutiny and massacre occurred there. Since the 28th of May I have heard nothing of them, and it is now very doubtful whether I may ever do so, or see them again in this world.

As soon as the disturbance began I doubled the police force in my district, horse and foot, on my own responsibility; but notwithstanding my endeavours to maintain the peace, the disorders daily increased. In the Etah district across the Ganges, immediately opposite to Budson, they had reached a most alarming height; all our communications had been cut off with Agra, Calcutta, and the South; the runners

being unable to convey the mails along the chief lines of road. In the district of Moradabad, immediately adjoining Budaon to the north, the sepoy of the regiment broke open the jail and let out a great number of the prisoners.

I was informed of this fact by a short note from Campbell, the joint magistrate, telling me to look out for myself, as among the liberated convicts, was a notorious villain, Nujjoo Khan*, who was under sentence of transportation for life for an attempt to murder Court, joint magistrate of Budaon, and in which he very nearly succeeded, having maimed him for life. I had succeeded in apprehending this miscreant, who had eluded our police force for more than two years, and in bringing him to justice; he was consequently highly exasperated with me, and, as Campbell informed me, had started at once towards my station with the intention of murdering me.

This intelligence did not tend much to improve my position, which already was by no means a pleasant one. I was the sole European officer in charge of the district, with a lawless population of nearly 1,100,000 souls. The entire

* Nujjoo Khan has since become a rebel leader of note, and his capture has just been reported by the force now at Moradabad in Rohilkund under Brigadier Jones.

management and responsibility rested on me; for my sole assistant was a Mohammedan deputy-collector, who only joined the station early in the month, and I could, of course, devolve no duty upon him. The nearest European officers were at Bareilly, some thirty miles distant from Budaon.

On Monday, the 25th of May, I received certain information that the Mohammedans of the town of Budaon, who were on that day assembled for prayers on occasion of the Ede festival, were to rise at noon and create a riot, which would probably have resulted in the plunder and destruction of the place. I at once summoned the most influential inhabitants of that persuasion to meet me at my house. They immediately came, many of them very fierce and insolent, and all in a most excited state. Soon after they were seated, and I had commenced talking with them, I saw Wuzeer Singh, a Sikh peon, and one of my personal guards, come up quietly behind me, with my revolver in his belt and my gun in his hand, and station himself immediately behind my chair. In the tumult and excitement, and where all were armed, his entrance was unnoticed, but his quiet and determined demeanour made me for the first