

Isle of Wight October 1812.

Lt Col.
Henry
Worsley

Lieutenant General The Hon^{ble} Fred: St: John, having made application to me, to state my opinion of his conduct generally, during the time I served under his command and particularly in regard to the Battles of Delhy & Laswarrie.

I do myself the honor to state, that I was placed with the Corps to which I belonged (the 1st Batt: 15th Reg: of Native Infantry of Bengal) under the command, or observation of Lt: Gen: St: John then a Major Gen: on the Staff in Bengal during a considerable portion of the Years 1803 & 1804, And with pleasure now repeat, what I have frequently expressed to others, in time past, that I always felt pride and satisfaction when acting under Major Gen: St: John's command; and that the urbanity of his manners combined with the most correct, and consistent arrangements in the general conduct of his Command, and especially his perspicuous, and engaging deportment in the exercise of authority, and in communicating instruction on the Parade, appeared to me peculiarly calculated to inspire confidence, excite emulation, and promote with respect for authority, the reputation and welfare of the Public Service.

I consider my own capacity as an Officer to have improved under Major Gen: St: John's tuition, and the good order & discipline of the Troops, to have been strengthened and confirmed under His Command.

At the Battle of Delhy Major Gen: St: John commanded the left Wing of the Army; the Battalion to which I belonged (of which I had on that day the casual command in consequence of the Lt: Col: having been on the duty of Field-Officer of the day) was the flank corps on the left of the Right Wing, and the whole of the Infantry having formed in one line, opposed to the more extended front of the Enemy, the Battalion to which I belonged, was in immediate connection with the right flank corps of the left wing.

After the Enemy had given way in the front, a large body of their right Wing, consisting of Infantry with several Guns, and I think Cavalry also, appeared drawing round & closing in upon the left flank of our Army, with the view apparently of turning, & making an attack on our flank & Rear; on falling upon our Camp, Park & Baggage. On that occasion, the left Wing under Major Gen: St: John's command changed
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front to the left; as did likewise the Battalion under my command in consequence of the Brigadier (Col. Macdonald) having directed my attention to the movement of the Enemy on our left; and I had the gratification & pleasure of witnessing & participating in the successful, zealous & useful exertions of Major Gen. St. John on that day.

At the Battle of Laswarrie also Major Gen. St. John commanded the left Wing, & the Battalion to which I belonged (of which I had on that day also the temporary command) was, as at the Battle of Delhy the left flank Corps of the Right Wing, and the whole of the Infantry (as generally understood) having formed & moved in one column of Companies, the Right Wing leading with the Right in front, the Battalion to which I belonged, was of course the rear Corps of those belonging to the Right Wing, and the next in the Column of March to the leading Corps of the left Wing.

I had no opportunity of seeing the Major Gen., or of observing the operations of the Corps under His command on that day, until near the close of it my whole attention having been engaged by the Battalion I commanded and that immediately preceding it, in the Column of March.

After reaching a Nullah, or Water course full of Water on the Bank of which the ground was irregular and uneven, with patches of beds or high Grass interspersed, and along which the Troops moved under a Cannonade & Parallel to the front of the Enemy's right wing formed upon the Village of Maulpoor; the Column of March experienced some checks, or halts, differing, as to their continuance, in point of time. What the periods of the principal, & other incidental halts, or interruptions in the progress of the Column were, I cannot after the lapse of so many Years pretend to charge my memory: twice, however I think longer than might have been supposed necessary for passing any common obstacle in front. The idea which first occurred to me, was that the Commander in Chief had ordered a halt, whilst He might be more closely observing the Enemy's position, & again when a heavy firing was heard at the head of the Column. I conjectured that a partial

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attack had been ordered upon some Guns, or other point of the
 Enemy's right, in order to facilitate a general formation and
 attack by the whole. At one time the halt was sufficiently
 long. I recollect, for the Field pieces with the Battalion to
 which I belonged, to be unlimbered & several rounds fired,
 in reply to the Enemy's Cannonade, & again, I recollect, either
 from that, or a subsequent halt, the Battalion next in front of
 that I commanded inclined to the right, out of the uneven ground
 along the margin of the Nullah, & either formed in line or
 appeared to be in the act of doing so; but whilst I was
 engaged in causing a corresponding movement & drifting
 by the Battalion under my command, the preceding Battalion,
 abovementioned, being that by which my motions were
 constantly regulated, resumed the order of March under
 cover in some measure of the uneven ground along the
 Bank of the Nullah, & the Battalion under my command
 consequently did the same. Whilst moving in this manner
 in an irregular pace; that is at times rapidly to close up,
 then slow, to avoid crowding; with occasional checks, or
 stops, as in the case of Columns of March passing obstacles
 or impediments. two Staff Officers, Lt. Crump, I think, who
 perhaps was Adjutant of the Day with the ^{advanced} Picquets, which
 were at the head of the Column, as the advanced Guard; and
 Lt. Master of Brigade Wallace, came to me, separately, but
 nearly at the same time, & in very pressing terms, desired I
 would immediately form the Battalion into line & advance
 upon the Enemy, without further closing with, or attending
 to the Battalion in front; as the Enemy were resolutely
 opposing the 76th and head of the Column, which had suffered
 much. I consequently began forming the Battalion into
 line as quickly as possible, and as soon as I had drifted 5, or
 6 Companies on the Colours, I advanced towards the Enemy's
 position leaving the rear - most Companies to form up and
 join in succession.

The direction of this movement was upon that face
 of the Village of Maulpoor, along which the Enemy's
 right Wing had been advanced.

The Enemy had by this time given way in most parts
 of their Line, & were moving in different directions in an about

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the Village of Maulpoor, in front of which two Guns in particular continued firing on the Battalion with Chain and Grape Shot until arrived within Musquet range, when I ordered the Battalion to halt, drop Fire a Volley & rush forward, though I do not pretend to say, the firing was actually confined to one round or Volley only, as was enjoined; & the Guns were abandoned by the Enemy.

Having reached the Village a considerable Body of the Enemy appeared condensing together, & moving off, Cavalry & Infantry mixed, in a solid mass & sudden manner to their left. I then moved the Battalion by its right, to an open & rather rising Ground, clear of the Village, on that face of it, from which the Enemy were proceeding, where having formed up the Battalion, it was wheeled into open Column (of half Companies, I think) & moved forward in pursuit of the Enemy.

Very soon, I think, after I had put the Battalion in motion as last mentioned, Major Gen^l: St. John at the head of some Troops, I conclude the leading Battalion of the Left Wing, & I think the 2^d of the 9th Native Infantry, commanded by Lt. Col. Aske bore up, & spoke to me. The Major General afterwards gave orders, as appeared necessary, and the Battalion under my command, returned to the Village of Maulpoor & remained in front of it during the Night, collecting the Wounded and drawing together Guns & Ammunition left on the Field by the Enemy.

H. Worsley,
Late Adj^t: Gen^l:
Bengal Army.

Note - With regard to the causes of ^{the} stops or impediments by which the leading Corps of the Column were affected, & by which the progress of the whole was consequently interrupted, I recollect to have frequently heard after

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the Action, that one material cause was H. M. 29th Light Dragoons crossing, or passing through the leading Battalion or Battalions of Native Infantry of the Right Wing, or otherwise pressing upon or clashing with the Native Troops at the head of the Column, in confined uneven Ground, on the skirts of the Nullah, whilst that Corps was passing up to the Front, & moving from the Left to the Right flank of the Column for the purpose of getting at the Enemy, or where the Ground & Nullah no longer admitted of their reaching the head of the Column by marching on its Left flank.

I have moreover seen it mentioned under the Signature of the Officer who commanded the front Battalion of Native Infantry in the Column that "the advance of the Column was much impeded by the interruption which the Guns met with in front of that Battalion, from the badness of the Ground, & the Banks of the Nullah"

The movement indicating formation into Line by the Battalion immediately preceding the Corps under my command, as mentioned in the foregoing Statement is corroborated & explained by the further Statement of the Officer abovementioned. Viz: "That He formed his Battalion (being the Corps next preceding the Battalion in my front) into Line in consequence of the Enemy's Cavalry having shewn an intention of charging, & that having done so, two, if not three Brigades of Guns opened on the Enemy's Cavalry."

That the Commander in Chief at the head of the Line was at that time smartly engaged at a battery of Guns, & Cannonades on the Right flank of the Enemy. That Gen^l Ware's Aid de Camp rode up

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rode up and ordered Him to wheel His Battalion into Column again & move forward without ^{the} Guns. That He did so, & advancing as quickly as possible soon observed the 76th and the advanced Guard at a great distance nearly engaged with the 2^d Battery of the Enemy's Guns, in which His Battalion speedily joined & N.B. It may be inferred I apprehend that the Brigade of Guns abovementioned, must have occupied space in the Column between the Battalion alluded to & the 76th Reg^t. The forming line & again breaking into Column of March by the leading Battalion of Native Infantry, explains the corresponding indication or movement of the Corps, which in the Column of March was between it, & the Battalion under my command.

In conclusion, of any part of the foregoing statement should appear foreign to the object of it, I beg leave to observe that the only means in my power of affording any information respecting the halt in general, or of the left wing under Major Gen^l St. John's command, at the Battle of Laswarrie is by describing which I have done to the best of my memory and belief, the movements &c. of the Battalion which I commanded on that occasion as the next in general column of March to the leading Corps of the Left Wing.

H. Worsley.

Col. Worsley
History of the Battles of
Tellic and Laswarrie.
Oct. 1812.