

A SCARCE AFGHANISTAN, 1878 TO A PRIVATE IN THE 30TH BOMBAY NATIVE INFANTRY, OR 'JACOB'S RIFLES' WHO LIKELY TOOK PART AND SURVIVED THE BATTLE OF MAIWAND



AFGHANISTAN, 1878-80, NO CLASP 'PRIVATE GOHOOL SING 30TH REGT. BO: N.I.'

The 600 strong 30th Regiment, Bombay Native Infantry ('Jacob's Rifles') took part in the fighting at the Battle of Maiwand on 27 July 1880. Composed largely of Pathan recruits from the tribal borders of Afghanistan and north-west India, the men of Jacob's Rifles arrived at Maiwand hungry and thirsty in the blazing heat, and were split across various points in the line of battle, with two companies under Captain J. S. Iredell and Lieutenant D. Cole being moved into position on the far left of the line, five companies under the Command of Colonel W. G. Mainwaring taking their place to the immediate left of the 66th Foot over towards the right, and one company under Lieutenant Salmon held in reserve defending the baggage train.

Having never been tested in the heat of battle, the 30th Bombay N.I. were subjected to withering and well-directed Afghan artillery and rifle fire which took a heavy toll upon them, particularly to the exposed companies on the extreme left. As the battle grew in intensity and their position became overwhelmed, the companies on the left eventually suffered the loss of all of their officers, either killed or wounded, with command falling to an experienced Jemadar. Tired, hungry, short of ammunition, with red-hot gun barrels, and having already lost approximately 20% of their number by the early hours of the afternoon, their resolve finally faltered and they broke from the line, spreading confusion amongst the nearby Bombay Grenadiers, and ultimately leading to a more widespread and panicked general retreat, as the 66th and R.H.A. remarkably maintained an orderly 'fighting retreat' to provide some covering fire. Although a reasonable number of men from the 30th Bombay N.I. were able to survive the march to Kandahar, they suffered 241 dead, 32 wounded, or 46% casualty rate.

Although no lists of survivors exist, given the Regiment as a whole took part in the battle, it is far more likely than not that Private Gohool Sing took part and was able to escape after the battle of Maiwand.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Maiwand



Condition VF, light contact marks and small EK