



Major-General Thomas Anson, Haryana and the Revolt of 1857

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Abstract: *The Rebellion of 1857 was a turning point episode in the history of British India. It was by far the largest, most widespread, and dangerous threat to British rule in India in the nineteenth century. One of its most consequences was the abolition of the ruling East India Company and the transfer of administration of India to the British Crown. As a military crisis of truly massive proportions, the rebellion also inspired the structural transformation of both the British and Indian armies. At that time, the region of Haryana was an important region of India and played an important role in this revolt. But, with the reoccupation of Delhi, the situation came in the hands of the British. Although, the Indians lost their fate in the revolt but it remained a tool of inspiration in the whole freedom struggle of India.*

Key words: *Ambala, Anson, British, Revolt and 1857.*

Introduction:

The great uprising of 1857-58, the most marvellous and unforgettable event of modern times¹ may well be considered as an epoch-making happening and a turning point in the history of British India. The Rebellion of 1857 was a watershed event in the history of British India. It was by far the largest, most widespread, and dangerous threat to British rule in India in the nineteenth century.² As far as concerned Haryana, the region played an important role in the revolt of 1857. During the revolt, Major-General Thomas Anson had to visit to the various military stations which were situated in the region of Haryana and Ambala was one of them. The region of Haryana is situated around the capital of India, Delhi (previous to the colonial rule), so the area was very sensitive during the revolt.

Early Life of Anson:

Major-General Thomas Anson (13 October 1797- 27 May 1857) was the second son of Thomas Anson, 1st Viscount Anson, and his wife Anne Margaret, daughter of Thomas Coke, 1st Earl of Leicester of Holkham Hall, Norfolk. Thomas Anson, 1st Earl of Lichfield was his elder brother. He was educated at Eton College.³ Anson entered the Army in 1814 as an Ensign in the 3rd (Scots Fusiliers) Guards and served at an early age in the Napoleonic Wars and fought at the Battle of Waterloo. He later sat as a Member of Parliament (MP) for Great Yarmouth from 1818 to 1835, for Stoke-upon-Trent from 1836 to 1837, and for Staffordshire South from 1837 to 1853 and served as Storekeeper of the Ordnance under Lord Melbourne from 1835 to 1841 and as Clerk of the Ordnance under Melbourne in 1841 and under Lord John Russell from 1846 to 1852.⁴

In 1853 Anson was promoted to the rank of Major-General. The following year he was appointed to the command of



the Madras Army in 1854, and early in 1856 became Commander-in-Chief in India. He was Colonel of the 55th (Westmorland) Regiment of Foot from 12 December, 1856. Since Anson's prior military career consisted of a few months' active service as a subaltern in the Guards (admittedly including Waterloo), a decade on home service in London while also sitting in Parliament as an Member Parliament and 26 and a half years on half-pay, these appointments caused disgruntled comment in some quarters and were presented as an example of "Horse Guards Patronage" at its worst. His decision to accept the Madras appointment caused surprise in English political and social circles, where he was noted mainly for his gentlemanly ways, his good looks and attractive wife, and his skill at cards.⁵

II

There were many responsible factors for the spark of 1857 revolt. But, it is believed that the immediate cause of the revolt was the use of new greased cartridges. After the annexation of Punjab in 1849, the administrative responsibilities of the company increased briskly. Security of borders and internal security needed a greatly equipped army with new arms and ammunitions. The defence factory at Fort William, Calcutta, started the production of improved fire arm-Enfield rifle. It replaced the old-fashioned musket 'Brown Bess' which lacked in expediency in the new situation.⁶ First of all, Enfield rifles were supplied to the regiments at Dum-Dum, Ambala and Sialkot with new cartridges greased with 'cow's fat and lard'.⁷

Ambala was the first station to feel the contagion of the mutiny in the North-Western India. It was a large cantonment

and was also one of three Musketry Depots to which the sepoys had come from different regiments in the Punjab and North-West Provinces for training of the use of the Enfield rifle.⁸ The news of greased cartridges reached to the Ambala Cantonment where the training process in the use of the Enfield rifle was going on. The decision of the panchayats⁹ had been communicated to the sepoys "to regard as outcastes and expel from all communion" anybody who used the greased cartridges. The message created disaffection among the sepoys against the British. The sepoys expressed their resentment and even communicated to the panchayats how the British made deliberate attempt to destroy their religion through the use of greased cartridges.¹⁰ Further fuel was added to the fire by faqirs and other interested persons.¹¹ Among the other interested persons, Charles Metcalfe held a British military officer responsible for spreading the news of greased cartridges at Meerut Cantonment as he was dismissed from the military service and had embraced Islam under the name of Abdullah Beg. In order to tell this fact, he went to the military cantonments at Ambala, Ludhiana, Ferozepur where he told the story of the greased cartridges through which the government intended to take their (sepoys) castes in such a malicious manner.¹²

III

The first spark of revolution ignited at Ambala on 10 May, 1857, where sepoys of Native Infantry revolted. Similar incidents took place at Meerut on the same day i.e. 10th May when sepoys revolted and reached Delhi to end the British rule.¹³ The news of uprising spread throughout the region of Haryana. The adjoining areas also revolted. Under



the leadership of Sadruddin, a Meo peasant of Pinaghwa, the sturdy and warlike Mewatis came out in large numbers and stood against the British regime and finally destroyed all the symbols of the British rule in the Mewat areas.¹⁴ Rao Tula Ram, his cousin Gopal Dev, along with Rao Kishan Singh, Rao Ram Lal, General Abdus Samad Khan and Muhammad Azim Beg made a confederation against British regime.¹⁵ It is important to tell that the princes, peasants and sepoy of Haryana fought against the Raj.¹⁶ The adjacent chieftains like Maharaja of Patiala, Raja of Jind and Raja of Nabha, some jagirdars and some local chiefs belonged to Haryana region did not raise their voice against the barbaric British Raj.¹⁷

In all the Cantonment of the country, the Indian sepoy had pledged not to use such greased cartridges and even complained to their officers about the matter. The officers, however, made all officers to pacify the sepoy but of no avail. Dr. N. Charles MacNamara, a medical officer, made a chemical examination of the cartridges and his negative report even failed to pacify the sepoy. All the verbal statements and practical examination did not bear any fruit and the situation remained the same. The Commander-in-Chief, General Anson bursted in anger: "I will never give into their beastly prejudices."¹⁸ The district authorities of Ambala realized the intensity of the situation as a 'small cloud like a man's hand which portended the approaching storm'.¹⁹ George Anson, Commander-in-Chief of the army visited Ambala in the middle of March 1857, where he was apprised of the situation.²⁰ No one took any notice of the seriousness of the situation. The sepoy working in the ordinance depot at Ambala were

blamed for not telling about the greased cartridges to their brethren in the Cantonment. They were forbid to use 'the lotahan and hookah', the water vessel and the pipe, which were token of Hindu brotherhood were withheld from them for they had touched the grease and became impure."²¹

The personal staff of General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief expressed the same views to their friends at Ambala where they were labelled with the opprobrious epithet of 'Christians' as a taunted manner. The situation became quite critical when the news was corroborated from many sources and angles. Among the personal staff of General Anson, Havildar Kashi Ram Tiwari and Naik Jeolal Dube, the non-commissioned officers, who were parts of the escort of General Anson, the same thing was happened with them what was happened in Ambala Cantonment, lotahan and hookah', the water vessel and the pipe, which were token of Hindu brotherhood were withheld from them for they had touched the grease and became impure and labelling with the opprobrious epithet of 'Christians'. When they returned to their lines and shared their indignations and alarm with their friends. Each man asked of his neighbour, of course, with a great show of reason, "If a subedar in the Commander-in-Chief's camp and on duty as his personal escort can taunt us with loss of caste, what kind of reception shall we meet on our return to our own corps."²² They met a senior musketry instructor, Capt. Martineau and expressed their sentiments with 'a tale of grief'. Capt. Martineau immediately informed Richard James Holwell Birch, an Assistant Adjutant General about the feelings of sepoy and the copies of the letters



exchanged with the sepoys.²³ Capt. was fully convinced that a 'conspiracy' was going on and reaching to maturity. Keeping the situation in view, the military headquarters became alert. General Anson came immediately to Ambala on 22 March, 1857 where he inspected the musketry depot and addressed the sepoys in a personal darbar. Kaye observed that such a darbar was held for the first time 'in the history of the Bengal army where the Commander-in-Chief of the army personally addressed the sepoy directly.'²⁴

All the officers including General Anson made strenuous efforts to convince the sepoys and native officers that the allegations made were totally baseless and did not hurt the religious sentiments. Their speeches failed to convince the sepoys, who again tried to convince Captain Martineau that it was not merely a question of 'obedience or disobedience' but a matter of religion attached to their sentiments. All the sepoys, their relatives and even the villagers all over the country held common views that they would not use the greased cartridges without incurring the certainty of social degradation i.e. 'the loss of caste'.²⁵ Now the question before General Anson was how to resolve the crisis. He postponed the use of greased cartridges till the receipt of the special report from Meerut on the subject of the cartridges paper.²⁶ But Governor-General, Lord Canning disagreed with the proposal and directed that "any postponement of the target practice of the drill detachment will be a mistake. It would be a concession to unreasonable fears which would live like an admission that there was reason in them."²⁷ The cantonment authorities at Ambala were duly directed to continue

the target practice otherwise a message of lowering the British dignity would go in the given situation.²⁸

The Ambala Cantonment authorities tried to dispel the doubts about the use of cartridges. Some junior commissioned officers did not see any objection to their use and one of them came out in the open and started firing and showing the Indian sepoys of its use without any loss of caste and social degradation. Subedar Harbans Singh of the 36 Native Infantry, who came out to fire with the dreaded cartridges publically on 26 march, 1857 and saw no objection in doing so.²⁹ The house and property of that junior commissioned officers was burnt hardly twelve hours had elapse. Though the military officers did not favour the use of the cartridges but the military high command insisted upon the target practice.³⁰ This decision created suspicion among the sepoys again that their voices did not get proper attention. The sepoys burnt the government buildings and also destroyed the property without any fear. The officers realised it as retaliation due to their obstinacy. The entry of civil population was banned and patrolling was started in order to stop the assemblage of the sepoys' meeting with the civilians.³¹

The security in the cantonment area was tightened so that the situation could be made under control. The correspondence between the Commander-in-chief and the Governor-General recorded by the contemporary officials in their monographs show that the offenders could not be traced despite their high alert and strict vigilance. The Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, John Lawrence suggested the temporary abandonment of new cartridges otherwise situation might lead to grave situation.



He explicitly pointed out that entire regular army might face disaffection which would extend to the irregular army if not properly handled.³² In such a situation even punishment would not be effective because the sufferers would become object of sympathy and be looked upon 'as martyrs for their religion'. His suggestion was not given due consideration and the situation created great resentment among the sepoys and the civil population.³³ The higher British authorities did irresponsible behave towards their duty to make a decisive major about the use of new cartridges. In the words of K.C. Yadav, "As a matter of fact, the greatest breach of military discipline and faith was effected by the highest military authority of the land himself by forcing the sepoys at the Depot to use the cartridges, which, the authorities told, were not to be issued to any 'native sepoy'. Evidence in support of this has been furnished by Anson himself who said boastfully, "The new cartridges were supplied to the sepoys and the men of all grades unhesitatingly and cheerfully used the new cartridges".³⁴ The last part of his statement is quite contrary to what the evidence show. There were no cases, excepting a few in the whole of the Indian army, where the sepoys used the cartridges unhesitatingly and cheerfully.

The situation continued to deteriorate day by day. There were two companies 5th Native Infantry and 60th Native Infantry posted at the Ambala Cantonment. A sepoy of 5th Native Infantry, Sham Singh, became an informer when he informed Thomas Douglas Forsyth, Deputy Commissioner of Ambala district about the skirmishes among the people of both the communities i.e. Hindu and Muslims who

were united in the determination to resist what they looked upon as tampering with their religion and that there was 'clique' that held consultations which were not communicated to the sepoys.³⁵ It was further observed that the blood would be shed at Delhi or Ambala and that a general rising of the sepoys would take place sometime in the early fortnight of May.³⁶ A police official (the Bazar Kotwal) also confirmed "the existence of such a conspiracy though in a different way by deposing that a pandit had told him that according to Hindu astrological calculations, it was certain that blood would be shed within a week either in Delhi, Meerut, or Ambala."³⁷

The sepoys at Ambala had concerted to rise in open mutiny on 10 May, 1857 and the European officers were in the direct target of their attack, when they would collect in the new Church for prayer.³⁸ The Sunday prayer was to be held in the new Church as per scheduled of the programme but the prayer was held in the old Church which was in the centre of 9th lancers and British artillery camp. The European sepoys had come to know the native sepoys' activities and the programme was changed. So, the change in prayer schedule to old Church spoiled native sepoys' plan. Edward Cave-Brown, a contemporary military officer, throw ample light on the situation: "The Lancers and artillerymen, without horses and guns, with their officers and their facilities, all collected together at a distance from the remaining European troops and they, mostly on guards or in hospital would have been an easy prey; and a rush made on the Church in the midst of the service and the unsuspecting congregation would have been at the mercy; surrounded by at least 1,500



armed mutinous sepoy, they would probably have been shot down before they could offer any resistance or help could arrive.”³⁹ The very first plan of the sepoy failed but they were determined to rebel, “The troops seemed to have been quite determined to rebel. The first plan having proved abortive they rebelled haphazardly.”⁴⁰ Strangely, no official account of their actions is found anywhere in the Government paper, published and unpublished. A passing reference to them is made in a telegram and in a letter of the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala.⁴¹ However, a private letter of a British officer who was an eyewitness of this very incident, throws some light as:

“The sepoy of 60th Native Infantry revolted, openly at 9 a.m. on Sunday, 10 May, 1857 and first of all, they moved to regimental store of arms for seizing the arms and arresting some British officers immediately and they succeed to do these. The European officers who knew their plans surrounded the revolted Infantry with a large numbers of sepoy well equipped with the arms and ammunition. The sepoy of the Native Infantry regiment threatened the European forces to kill their officers if tried to attack them. All efforts were made to revolt and arrest the European officers at Ambala on 10 May, 1857 but their plan was leaked out by an Indian sepoy. In such situation, the sepoy of the 60th Native Infantry could not go ahead with their plan nor did the European officers attack them. The forces of both the sides failed to move in such a grim situation. No other alternate except of bargaining was left before the European officers and the bargaining started.”⁴² So, the former had no other alternative but to agree to the sepoy proposal,

otherwise a large-scale bloodshed could take place in such a tense situation.⁴³

On the same day, 5th Native Infantry also rose-up at 12 O’ clock (noon) although the 60th Native Infantry had not even fully quietened down. The situation, however, was worsened but the prompt action by the European army changed the situation. It is worthy to note that the situation remained tense as both the parties stood face to face but the 60th Native Infantry had upper hand as it had captivated some European officers on their parade grounds. In the evening, Sir Henry William Barnard, came in person and had to assure the sepoy that they would be pardoned unconditionally, if they free the European officers. All pledges and promises were made in order to silent the anguishes of the Indian sepoy.⁴⁴ Promises made by William Barnard to the sepoy were confirmed by the Commander-in-Chief, though much against his wish, when he arrived at Ambala on 16 May, 1857; he also pardoned two native regiments for their behaviour on the 10th May, 1857.⁴⁵ It cannot be said precisely that what their pledges and promises were made by William Barnard; some passing references in the government papers that ‘unconditional pardon’ was one of the pledge and ‘their arms were not taken’ was another.⁴⁶

The third incident of rebel (the first, rising of 60th Native Infantry and the second rising of 5th Native Infantry) bursted at the treasury at Ambala. Here, a detachment of the 5th Native Infantry was on duty, when they came to know about their brethren raised, they also rose up. But, quick action and again promptitude on the part of the British saved the situation.⁴⁷



The British military authorities kept their word despite many handicaps and troubles. John Lawrence suggested immediate disarming of the 5th Native Infantry and the 60th Native Infantry after the arrival of General Anson at Ambala on May 15, 1857. But, Anson did not think it proper to break the military word and preferred to be vehemently criticized his own countrymen.⁴⁸

IV

As earlier discussed, as soon as the sepoy came to know about the real facts of new cartridges that cow's fat and lard is used in the manufacture of cartridges, they started to organize themselves to take some collective action against the British officials because these cartridges were objectionable on religious grounds. When British officials forced the sepoys to use these cartridges, a general revolt of the sepoys took place. As far as Ambala was concerned, plans had matured quite long before the outbreak of the Mutiny as sepoy Sham Singh of 5th Native Infantry told Forsyth (Deputy Commissioner of Ambala) towards the end of April 1857, "The great body of the sepoys were in highly indignant and excited state under the apprehension that they were all to be compelled to use the offensive cartridge; and that they had resolved that whenever such an order be issued every bungalow in the station should be in flames. He further exposed a conspiracy giving the details thus: Two native infantry corps were to seize the magazines; the Light Cavalry to seize the guns; the heel ropes of the horses of the Her Majesty's 9th Lancers were to be cut and the horses let loose; and a general rise and massacre to ensue."⁴⁹

The Ambala sepoys also had contacts with their counterparts in other

Cantonments. Captain Martineau informed the higher authorities telling them plainly in March 1857 that a widespread conspiracy by the sepoys along with civilians had been prepared. Sham Singh, an informer, again informed Forsyth, the Deputy Commissioner, Ambala that Hindus were uniting with the sepoys and a general rising of the sepoys would take place in the second week of May and they (sepoys) had planned to shed blood of the Europeans at Delhi, Ambala, and Meerut etc. Uprisings of the sepoys at Ambala and Meerut on the same day (10 May, 1857) further confirm that the sepoy leaders had prepared their plans in advance. Both uprisings on the same day cannot be said a matter of chance or coincidence. The sepoy leaders were well known that the plan might be leaked out so they did not share the plan with all the sepoys. It was a work to keep strictly secret and the sepoy leaders also did the same and the plan was shared with a few top leaders only. The final part of the plan was involved going to Delhi after completely destroying the Europeans at the two stations.⁵⁰ At Meerut, the sepoys succeed but at Ambala, the British were too alert to check the activities of sepoys and the sepoys failed to translate their plans into action.⁵¹

The region under Haryana was constituted of 'the region direct under the British control', 'princely States' and 'jagirs'. There were in all ten princely States in Haryana region: seven in lower region- Jhajjar, Bahadurgarh (or Dadri), Farrukhnagar, Ballabgarh, Pataudi, Dujana and Loharu; three in upper region- Buria, Kalsia and Jind. Besides these, there were about 11 jagirs- Kunjpura, Arnaui, Karnal, Shahabad, Dhanaura, Tangaur, Jharauli, Shamgarh,



Panipat, Shahzadpur, Mustafabad.⁵² All these states and jagirs were either created by or existed on the sympathies of the British and in 1857 revolt mostly, all these princes and jagirdars helped the British by sending their army and in others ways also. But the common people in their (princes and jagirdars) territories rose and asked their respective princes or jagirdars to lead them in accordance with the command of Emperor Bahadur Shah.⁵³

At this time the condition of these princes and jagirdars was not so strong that they can resist the rising of local masses. This led them to assume the leadership but at the same time, they also made efforts to please the British. This was, infact, the worst feature of the Uprising as: "They (princes and jagirdars) wanted to please both the sides, at least so long as they were not sure which side was likely to win. The masses turned to the feudal nobility, which in most of the cases betrayed them."⁵⁴

As soon as, the people of Haryana came to know the outbreak of the revolt at Meerut and Delhi, they also revolted against the British. Almost all the classes excepting the nobility (loyals) supported the rebellion. Surprisingly even such sections of the Haryana population that derived maximum benefits from the British rule did not support the British during their hour of need.⁵⁵ The mafidars, jagirdars behaved rudely with the British officials: "In the District of Rohtak, for instance, about 59 mafidars who were granted rent free tenures and other privileges by the British Government expressed their sympathies for the rebels".⁵⁶ Jagirdars also behaved the same, "Similarly, jagirdars of Thanesar 'misbehaved', when asked to

assist the British authorities by supplying information regarding the rebels' movements. They did not give anything. If somebody supplied information, says the Deputy Commissioner of Thanesar, 'for the fear of loss of his Jagir,' it was all to deceive them."⁵⁷ The wealth bankers of the region also showed disloyalty, "The attitude of the mahajans of Jagadhari gave a rude shock to the Deputy Commissioner of Ambala. To quote his own words: - on this occasion the wealthy bankers of Jagadhari displayed a spirit of disloyalty ... unworthy of a class who owe all their property to fostering care and protection of the British Government."⁵⁸

The Grand Trunk Road was a major road to link the Punjab to Delhi. The rebellion got the success and they hold their control over the Grand Trunk Road. The people of this region like Ladwa, Pehowa, Kaithal, Pundri, Asandh and other parganas rose up. They got success in expelling the revenue and police officials, the loyalists had to surrender before them. The local masses also destroyed all identities of the British rule in their localities.⁵⁹ But Mr. Barnes, the Commissioner and his district officers nobly and successfully exerted themselves to put down all discontent and crime and to show that they still had power and the means to keep it.⁶⁰ Therefore, they had to make a prompt appeal to the chiefs of Patiala, Jind, Kunjpura and Karnal to help them to retain their hold at least over the Grand Trunk Road, if not the whole district.⁶¹ The chiefs did not want to lose any opportunity for their good fortune and they obeyed British at once. Also, the feudal chiefs were ordered to furnish their quotas of horse and foot and asked to submit the revenue.⁶² The Maharaja of Patiala, on 15 May, 1857, came to



Thanesar with 1500 men and 4 guns. The Raja of Jind, on 17 May, 1857, sent 400 men. Kunjpura and Karnal chiefs also helped the British with 350 and 150 men respectively. With these troops, the British authorities got success to control the Grand Trunk Road and main towns situated on it.⁶³ The Maharaja of Patiala made a very strenuous effort to control the situation and lastly his men got the success to hold Karnal, Thanesar and Ambala and they kept the road open from Karnal to Philaur. The chief (the Mandal Nawab) of Karnal, Ahmad Ali Khan, who had sent his men for the help of British and they provided a good job to keep the Grand Trunk Road open, later on, he was rewarded with Rs. 10,000 in open darbar and his jagir was inherited to his heirs.⁶⁴

V

Captain McNeile, the Deputy Commissioner of Thanesar got difficulty when 5th Native infantry aroused to rebel. This made him to oblige the force of Patiala to keep them (the sepoys of the native Infantry) in check. On 14th July, 1857, the 5th native Infantry was disarmed, this set the Deputy Commissioner at liberty, and from that time he made his head-quarters at Karnal.⁶⁵ Mr. Levien, the Assistant Commissioner was removed at Shahabad and Lieutenant Parson was sent from time to time to condense chaotic villages, especially towards Kaithal, or to watch the fords and ferries of the river Jamna.⁶⁶ Captain McNeile had, at first destroyed the stamp papers; it was done in the anticipation of a visit from the Delhi Mutineers. Then, he sent his treasure to Ambala. The jail was fortified and the jagirdars were asked to be ready to help. There was a rumour that that the Ranghars from Hissar fixed the 31 May to attack on Thanesar jail, to rescue their

fellow-clan from the jail. Captain McNeile had made every preparation to repel them, but it did not take place. Now, the Ranghar prisoners were immediately and secretly removed to Ambala to be beyond hope of rescue. On June 9th the Maharaja of Patiala was come to know that the Jalandhar mutineers might be attacked to his own capital. It compelled him to draw off his forces from Thanesar; but as soon as he learnt that they had passed by, his troops were sent back to Thanesar, much to the relief of Captain McNeile.⁶⁷

The British authorities knew the gravity of the situation at Ambala and took immediate action to keep the situation in their hand. John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, made the arrangements to keep check on the civil rebellion. But, he was worried about the Ambala troops. He had requested General Anson, the Commander-in-Chief to disarm the Ambala troops at once. General Anson reached Ambala on 15 March to check out the situation, and when he took the matter in hand, he came to a decision that it was not wise to disarm the troops.⁶⁸ He devised another plan which involved dividing the troops into small detachments and dispatching them to far off places. General Anson was at Shimla when the news of massacre at Delhi reached to him on the 12th May. This news was conveyed to him by Captain Barnard, aide-de-camp to Sir Henry Barnard, commanding the Sirhind Division.⁶⁹ The General left Shimla on 14th May for Delhi and reached Ambala on the 15th May, a distant of about eighty miles. But the troops from the hills did not reach Ambala till the 16th of May, the day after the Chief's arrival.⁷⁰ Before leaving Ambala, General Anson was with



much diligence and forethought making preparation for the defence of Ambala. He pushed forward the first body of his troops towards Delhi, and the rest of the force followed as soon as they could get equipment. A detachment of his troops, when reached Karnal, marched to Panipat, a city of Mohomedan, where the Raja of Jind had already reached with eight hundred men. For the safety of Ambala, a trench was thrown round the church as a place of refuge and four companies of Europeans and some of the troops of Patiala raja were left to guard the Church.⁷¹

The Commander-in-Chief, General Anson sent Lieutenant Hadson,

of the 1st Bengal fusiliers, to Karnal. He was to hoist a temporary regiment and to maintain communication between Karnal and Meerut with the Jind sowars. It was almost impossible to raise a new regiment at a time of revolt. But, Hadson did it. When he reached Karnal, he offered to take a few sowars and made an attempt to reach Meerut. The offer was accepted by the Commander-in-Chief. General had sketched a plan of operation, which, he now forwarded to General Hewitt. It was as follows: the Chief was to advance with the attacking army, which consisted of three brigades, two from Ambala and one from Meerut, thus organized:⁷²

1 st Umballa (Ambala) Brigade:- Brigadier Halifax, 75 th Queen's Regiment.	75 th Queen's.
	1 st Bengal Europeans.
	2 Squadrons 9 th Lancers.
	1 Troop Horse Artillery.
2 nd Umballa (Ambala) Brigade:- Brigadier Jones, 60 th Royall Rifles.	2 nd Bengal Europeans.
	60 th Native Infantry.
	2 Squadrons 9 th Lancers.
	1 Squadron 4 th Bengal Lancers.
Meerut Brigade:- Brigadier A. Wilson, Royal Artillery.	1 Troop Horse Artillery.
	Wing, 60 th Royal Rifles.
	2 Squadrons Carabineers.
	1 Field Artillery.
	Native Sappers.
	120 Artillerymen (seige).

The strength of the force consisted of 3000 Europeans, 1000 native troops, and 22 field guns. The Ambala brigades were to march so that they

might be concentrated at Karnal on the 30th of May, and affect a junction at Baghput with the Meerut force, from which point the united brigades would



advance against Delhi.⁷³ General Anson conveyed his plan to General Hewitt and left Ambala on 24th May and reached Karnal in the morning of 25th May. Here, he was stricken with cholera and after a few hours he took his last breath.⁷⁴ The death of General Anson, as he was stricken with cholera was not agreed by Professor K.C. Yadav. He stated, "I have elsewhere questioned the truth of the contention of the historians that General Anson had died of cholera at Karnal. The rebel army in Delhi took a serious view of the development in the Thanesar district. In the third week of May, they despatched a movable column to undo the work of the Thanesar authorities, and also to check the British advance to Delhi. Although no writer of the Uprising mentions this fact, a contemporary Indian named Tajuddin, a well informed man from the Punjab has stated clearly that this column fought a pitched battle with the British forces around Panipat, near Karnal and killed a large number of their men, including their Commander-

in-Chief, General Anson. In utter haste, under the heavy pressure of the Indian column, the retreating British forces buried the old General without military honours."⁷⁵ After the death of General Anson, the command of the Field Force devolved on Major-General Sir Henry Barnard. On assuming the command, he continued to push forward.⁷⁶

Conclusion:

In the revolt of 1857, the region of Haryana played an important role. Anson, the then Commander-in-Chief played a crucial role in the region. He organised all affairs very well and in a disciplined way. With the help of local officials, he could succeed to control the situation. Although, he died before the ending of the revolt yet he had managed the system in a defensive manner. It is another matter that how much success, he achieved to suppress the rebellions but it has to accept that a considerable success had been got till his death.

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9 The panchayatras had come into existence in the various depots of army personnel to discuss about the use of cartridges.

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11 Ibid.

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13 Mittal, S.C., (1986), "Haryana: A historical Perspective", Atlantic Publishers & Distributers, New Delhi, pp. 46-47.

14 For detail see, Yadav, K.C., (1977), "The Reovlt of 1857 in Haryana", Atlantic Publishers, Delhi, pp. 56-58.

15 Ibid., pp. 59-60.

16 Ibid., pp. 60-68.

17 All these were rewarded by the British see, ibid, pp.120-122.

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