CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL LAKE'S BATTLES WITH HOLKAR,
THE SIEGE OF BHARATPUR AND PURSUIT OF HOLKAR
noise woke up the Marathas hastily saddled their horses and beat a hasty retreat. But the 9th Light Dragoons charged the retreating Marathas and moved many of them down. Other regiments followed in their steps. Yashwant Rao himself escaped with the skin of his teeth with a few followers. His horse was shot under him. He grabbed another one. He discarded all his finery and escaped looking like an ordinary sowar, in the direction of Mainpuri, south west of Farrukhabad. Lake's cavalry now took up the pursuit and Holkar's army suffered many casualties but the "vigilance of fear and habitual predatory precaution prevented his sustaining any serious loss." According to Thorn three thousand of Holkar's men were killed in action. The whole plain near Farrukhabad was covered with dead bodies. In contrast Lake's casualties were light. He lost two killed, twelve wounded and 75 horses were killed. These figures appear to be unrealistic since a large number of animals were killed.

Lake, however, gave up the chase after chasing the enemy for ten miles as his troops were tired. They had covered fifty eight miles and fought a battle in the previous 24 hours. This gave a chance to Holkar to shake the enemy off and re-organise his forces at Manipuri.

Thus, the first phase of Lake's campaign came to an end. During the period September to 17th November Lake had carefully planned every move and personally lead his troops. He devised tactics which were suitable to fight a mobile enemy like
Yashwant Rao. Yashwant Rao suffered defeats mainly due to his carelessness and neglect of his duties as a leader. Consequently, his army was shaken up and decimated as he suffered defeat after defeat at Delhi, Deeg, and Farukhabad. He had built up his image as a hero of the Indians when he defeated Monson and made him a laughing stock of all but now he was up against an experienced professional soldier who was determined to win. He changed his tactics and moved at great speed with lightly equipped troops. He shed all heavy baggage and guns. His infantry was detached from his cavalry and they fought separately at Deeg under Fraser. Thus better strategy and tactics won in the end.

However, Holkar was no weakling. His iron will was not broken nor did his morale suffer. He burnt down the cantonment of Mainpuri, created terror in the surrounding area and thus got his revenge. He reached Deeg by successive marches and joined his army there. The first task he undertook was to punish Harnath Singh for his cowardly behaviour in the battle at Deeg. He had him beaten up with sticks. Harnath Singh saved his life and begged for mercy. He was fined a sum of Rs. 6 lakhs. Next person to fall out of grace was Bhawani Shankar who suggested to Holkar to pay the arrears of pay to the army so that their morale is boosted up. The advice in itself was very sound but the strong-headed Holkar not only ignored the advice but removed Bhawani Shankar from his post as the Bakshi and appointed Jamgar Bhand in his place. Another General of Holkar,
Mirza Ashraf suggested that he should be allowed to form a force by selecting men from the three brigades and then give an offensive task. Holkar just laughed and humiliated him. Mirza Ashraf left Holkar’s service and went away.

Yashwant Rao now reestablished communication with Ranjit Singh Jat of Bharatpur. Previously he had dealt with him from a position of advantage. He had defeated Monson and was a victor. Now his position had changed. He was now dependent on Ranjit Singh for supplies. "From a Principal he was reduced to a state of dependency on the Raja of Bharatpur while the latter, on the contrary from an auxiliary, had now become a Principal.” Moreover, as he had given shelter to Holkar’s family and baggage, he had incurred the displeasure of the English. Nevertheless he assigned the fort of Deeg to Holkar and placed his Dewan Rai Singh and son Lachman Singh with two battalions under Holkar.

By the middle of November Holkar had lost all his forts in the Deccan including Chandor and Jalna. In the middle of September, Lt. Col. Wallace crossed the Godawari with his infantry followed by Lt. Col. Haliburton. Their cavalry soon joined them and the Peshwa also sent a contingent. Thus by the end of the month a brigade was formed. They now moved on to Lasalgaon, a small fort in Holkar’s charge, which surrendered on 8th October, after a tough battle in which the British lost 44 men. Wallace attacked Chandor on the 12th and captured it. Dhodap, another fort fell on the 14th and the Brigade arrived
at Jalna on 21st. The garrison surrendered on the 23rd and was allowed to march away with their arms and property. Thus Holkar's position was further weakened.

After the Battle of Deep, Monson instead of pursuing the enemy and capturing Deep fort, which he could have easily retired to Mathura to get supplies. This task could have easily been allotted to a couple of Regiments. But Monson, though physically brave, lacked brains and had no judgment as a commander. This gave an opportunity to Holkar to concentrate his forces at Deep on his withdrawal from Mainpuri.

The fort of Deep was in the possession of Ranjit Singh the Raja of Bharatpur. Earlier General Lake had concluded a treaty with Ranjit Singh which guaranteed the possession of territory which was held by Ranjit Singh. With the British as his friends he did not have to pay taxes to the Marathas, nor fear any loss of territory from the British. However, his sympathies were with Holkar. As indicated earlier he was in correspondence with Holkar and had given him Deep fort as shelter for his families and baggage. Thus he had violated the treaty of friendship and Lake now treated him as an enemy. His stronghold was the fort of Bharatpur. In the order of priorities, Deep had to be captured first in order to make Holkar homeless. The fort of Bharatpur had to be taken next to make an example of the Raja of Bharatpur to the other minor heads of state who were trying to be friendly with Holkar. In order to destroy Holkar, destruction of Ranjit Singh thus
became inescapable. Lake wrote to Wellesley on December 8, 1804, "I think the ingratitude, the treachery and villainous behaviour of the Bharatpur Raja merit every misfortune that can be heaped upon him. It is impossible to express the mildness of my conduct to the man."  

Lake left Mathura on 1st December, 1804, with the intention of laying siege to the fortress of Deeg and established a camp at Khierah Samu. He consolidated his position here for nine days during which Holkar once attacked Lake's reconnaissance column and killed one and wounded ten men. Lake opened up with his artillery to disperse Holkar's cavalry. Holkar is said to have suffered sixty killed which appears an exaggeration. Colonel Don soon arrived with a battering train from Agra. On 11th December Lake started his advance forming a hollow square of infantry. He deployed the cavalry on the flanks and threw out picquets on all sides to keep the enemy away from the main column. Although Holkar tried to break through them he did not succeed. Lake cleared a suitable position of all Holkar's men and settled down to lay a siege to the Deeg fort.

Lake detached a force under Colonel Don who took up a defensive position in a mango grove and established a forward base from which trenches were to be dug leading to the fort of the wall. A three hundred yard long trench was soon ready and a battery for mortars was constructed by the engineers and pioneers on the night of 13/14th December. Local protection
to the engineers was provided by the cavalry. Towards the evening of the 14th, volunteers from the King's Dragoon Regiments commenced the construction of another forward position in order to be able to reach Shah Burz by the mortars. This position was within 700 yards away from the fort walls and Holkar's men kept firing at the engineers. It took 48 hours to complete the task and by the night of the 16th, the mortars were in forward position. Lake opened up a brisk cannonade with six eighteen pounders, four twelve pounders and four mortars. The fire was returned from the fort by the Marathas. Lake's fire however was not producing the desired effect. Lake then decided to construct another firing position consisting of three eighteen pounders on the night of the 20th December and succeeded making a practicable beach.

The assault was planned for the 23rd December 1804. Lake divided his army into three assaulting columns. The right column consisted of four companies of European regiments and five companies of 1/12 Native Regiment under command of Captain Kelly. His task was to attack and capture the high ground south of Shah Burz where the enemy guns were located. The left column also consisted of four companies of the European regiment and five companies of 1/12th Native Regiment under Major Railcliffe who was ordered to attack and capture enemy trenches and batteries on enemy's right. Thus both the flank positions were being neutralised. The main storming party consisted of the following:
Flank companies of H.M.'s 22nd, 76th and those of Company's European Regiment.

Flank Companies of 1/4th Native Regiments.

This force was commanded by Lt. Col. Macrae. His task was to assault through the breach.

The troops moved to their forward assembly areas on the night of the 23rd December. On this fateful night Haranath Singh was on patrol duty. According to Mohan Singh, "he was overcome by sleep and neglect of watchfulness." His men however were alert and opened heavy fire of cannon and musketry. Lake's artillery also opened up and under its cover Macrae advanced and by 2 a.m. on the 24th Shih Burj was captured. Hai Singh, the Diwan of Ranjit Singh, his son Lachhman Singh and Barvar Singh who could not stand up to the assaulting force escaped. While they were withdrawing towards Bharatpur, they were pursued by Lt. Col. Browne who fell on them with his cavalry. The garrison gave up the defence of the fort and on Christmas Day, Lake was in possession of it. He captured 100 guns out of which 16 were brass guns. The others were iron guns of varying calibres from 60 to 70 pounders. The smaller were 24 pounders and less. Lake captured the treasury which held Rs. 21 lakhs. Besides, large amount of grain was captured as the fort was well stocked for a siege.

The British casualties in this battle were 43 killed and 134 wounded, which included two officers killed and 13 wounded. The loss on Holkar's side must have been comparatively heavy.
but no details are available.

There is no doubt that Lake's victory at Deeg was remarkable. One must however bear in mind that Holkar's army was neither trained nor organised to stand a siege and had no experience of defensive warfare. They were mobile guerrilla warriors. This victory made General Lake overconfident and he now set out to capture the fort of Bharatpur using the same tactics. He was to learn at his cost that against a determined enemy, strong forts cannot be easily taken by set piece attacks and assaults.

General Lake succeeded in capturing the fort of Deeg. Holkar thus lost his base from which he operated. He lost a large number of guns, ammunition and cash. His prestige suffered very badly. He established a camp at Kumbher. He however, remained on the offensive. In one of the skirmishes with the English, the English suffered heavy losses.28 His army consisted of 10,000 cavalry with which he continued raiding and looting the area between Fatehpur and Mathura. However, his Sardars started deserting him one by one as there was no hope of getting any pay or loot. Murtaza Khan, Najibkhan, Shahidkhan and Harnath Singh took their families out of Bharatpur fort and marched away to Talchari. Harnath Singh levied Rs. 8,000/- as contribution from Hindaun and set out for Khushalgarh. This left the Raja of Bharatpur high and dry. As General Lake was preparing to attack Bharatpur, Rani Rani became apprehensive. He had incurred the displeasure of the British by siding with Holkar. He now
naturally expected Holkar to come to his rescue. He wrote to Holkar: "All these troubles have come down on my head for your sake, and you are now withdrawing to a distance, your troops have deserted you and my enemies are planning to capture my fort. If you consider this sort of act as proper for friendly relations and alliances in observing which, by God's grace, I have not been the least remiss—it does not matter. Be it so; but this sort of conduct is unworthy of the duties of a king and general." Yashwant Rao then replied thus: "Lack of pay makes soldiers withdraw their hearts from a master's service. If some money is paid from your treasury as aid for the expenses of my army, I shall not hesitate to fight for you to the death." Ranjit Singh saw the force of the argument and having no other alternative agreed to pay Rs. 25,000 a day as expenses for Holkar's army. Yashwant Rao kept his word and he recalled Harnath Singh and other Sardars and ordered them to rally to the aid of the Jat Raja.

Ranjit Singh was full of confidence about defending the fort which was practically impregnable. His own Jat Chiefs stood solidly behind him and vowed not to surrender the fort as long as they were alive. Even the women folk refused to move out to Jaipur or Jodhpur for safety and prepared to fight along side their men. Ranjit Singh's plan was twofold. He and his Jats would defend the fort and Yashwant Rao's army was to stay out and harass the enemy. They were to prevent reinforcements and supplies from reaching General Lake
from Agra and Kathura thus starving him out. Yashwant Rao was adept at this kind of predatory warfare. A new development took place at this siege. Seeing that the English were not invincible Daulatrao Shinde contacted Holkar and showed his willingness to join the fight. He was hoping to get some of his own territory back. But knowing his treacherous nature Holkar told him to start a front by attacking Ujjain, thus keeping him away from Bharatpur. Raghují Bhosle also tried to explore the possibility of joining Holkar. In October, 1804, Korkhan sent a Vakil to him asking for money and an army to fight the English. If he did not want to openly oppose the English, it was suggested that he should create a nuisance by demanding from the Company the restoration of Berar, thus diverting their attention and resources. However, as both Shinde and Bhosle were inspired by selfish motives, when they learnt that Holkar was defeated at Deeg, their ardour cooled off.

General Lake marched from Deeg on the 28th December, 1804, and established a camp near Bharatpur on 2nd January, 1805. At this stage, Ranjit Singh sent an envoy to Lake suggesting that the Fort should be left alone. Now that General Lake was a master of Hindustan he should show magnanimity towards Ranjit Singh and forgive him. General Lake flushed with recent victory at Deeg was in no mood to make peace with Ranjit Singh, whom he underestimated, as he was to learn later at a tremendous cost in men and material, not mentioning the
damage to his reputation as a General.

General Lake's army consisted of the following:

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<th>British</th>
<th>Indian</th>
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<td>H.M. 65th Regiment</td>
<td>H.M. 76th Regiment</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.M. 75th Regiment</td>
<td>1/12 Native Infantry</td>
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<td>H.M. 76th Regiment</td>
<td>2/12 Native Infantry</td>
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<tr>
<td>H.M. 76th Dragoons</td>
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<td>H.M. 8th Dragoons</td>
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The Fort of Bharatpur

In the beginning of the 19th Century, Bharatpur was a large fortified city, approximately thirty four miles west of Agra. It is situated at the confluence of the rivers Ruparel and Banaganra and is in low grounds. It was the capital of the Jat State with the same name. The fortress was founded in the early part of the 13th century. There were jungles in the surrounding areas which afforded cover. Water was available in plenty as there were a few lakes in the surrounding area. The waters of Ruparel were stored in the Motizheel Bund. The town itself was eight miles in circumference. There is a ridge of low, bare, flat rocks on the western side while the ground on other three sides is undulating but there are no commanding heights. The fortification consisted of a citadel and a continuous wall of thirty four lofty mud bastions semicircular in shape connected by curtain walls. The ramparts
were constructed out of a mixture of mud and cowdung which was laid layer upon layer and reinforced by large tree trunks. Such walls were adequate defence against the artillery shells of those days. There was a moat dug all round the perimeter wall which had steep banks. Water from the Banganga was blocked by Atan Bund and Atal Bund and then channelled into the moat around the fort. The outer wall possessed nine gates which were enclosed in semi circular outer walls.

The citadel itself was built on a high ground within the city walls. It was on a height of 114 feet and dominated the surrounding area. There was another moat, 150 feet wide and fifty-nine feet deep. An 80 feet high stone wall was built around forty semi circular towers. Above this arose another stone wall 74 feet in height constructed on higher ground with 11 conical towers. Thus the total height of the citadel from the ground level was 173 feet. The walls were formidable and strong in construction. In the 16th century Bharatpur fort was a small mud fort but in 1773 Suraj Mal Jat rebuilt the fort.

The canal system was so cunningly constructed that in case of an emergency the whole of the surrounding area could be flooded by letting out the waters of Moti Jheel. Both the outer and inner moats could be filled with water at short notice. Lake who had underestimated not only the Jats but the fort as well, was not aware of this 'secret weapon'.

Thearrison consisted of 8,000 Jats who were good fighters. It was further reinforced by refugees from Holkar's army who
had retreated from Farukhabad. The morale of the garrison was high. There was a belief current among the population that as long as a crocodile does not drink up all the water from the moat, the fort was invincible.

Considering the strength of the fort, General Lake was ill-equipped for its conquest. He had six 18 pounders, four 8 inch and four 6\(\frac{1}{2}\) inch mortars. Soon the barrels of these guns were worn out. He then tried to use Holkar's guns which had been captured at Deep. However, Lake was aware of his weakness and his initial plan was to capture the fort by scaling the walls using a coup de main party but he was dissuaded. He therefore resolved to lay a siege and attack the fort in the conventional manner.

The First Assault

The first assault was scheduled for the 9th January, 1805. The artillery started firing 1st pounder shells on the south west front of the fortress near the Kumbher Gate and the two mortar batteries making use of the high trajectory opened up on the town. A breach was reported practicable on the 9th and the assault was planned. The force was divided in three columns. The first was commanded by Lt. Col. Maitland and consisted of the flank companies of the 22nd, 75th and 76th; the Company's European Regiments and a battalion of native infantry; the second consisted of 150 men of the European regiment and a battalion of native infantry. It was commanded by Lt. Col. Ryan, and the third was led by Lt. Col. Hawkes.
He had under him two companies of the 75th and a third battalion of native infantry. All these columns were thus mixed. They had a European element and an Indian battalion.

The task allotted to Ryan was to assault the Nimdah gate, Hawkes was to assault a position to the right of the breach and Maitland had the main task of penetrating through the breach between these two columns. Thus Ryan and Hawkes were operating on Maitland's flanks. (see Map 12). At eight o'clock the columns marched off. Unfortunately Colonel Maitland lost his way in the dark and had to make his way through swamps and water pools. Thus his column got mixed up with Ryan's column on the right and missed the breach altogether. This resulted in confusion and noise which alerted the Jats and they opened up with muskets and guns. The men on the bastions on both sides of the breach opened fire. This scattered the column, but a small party of 23 men of the 22nd reached their objective and established themselves in the breach. They had to wade through the moat which had water which came up to their breast. The Jats had inundated the area and the moat was filling up. The flank columns who were supposed to support the assault were delayed enroute. Being only 23 in number Lieutenant Manser who was with the advance platoon could not attack the enemy guns. He made his men take cover and went in search of the lost column of Maitland again recrossing the moat. Meanwhile Hawkes and Ryan converged on the breach having completed their task. Colonel Maitland also found
THE SIEGE OF BHARATPUR
JAN-FEB-1805

ENGLISH BASE CAMP
2 JAN TO 6 FEB 1805

MANGO GROVE

FORWARD GUNS

BHAHATPUR

FORTIFICATIONS

KUMBHAR GATE

FIRST GAP

SECOND BREACH

THIRD BREACH

COL MONSON'S ROUTE
21 FEB 1805

ENGLISH CAL 21 JAN

Yeshwantrao Holkar & Amirkhan's Cav. 21 Jan
his bearing and was preparing for the assault. However, the few men who had reached the breach lost heart. Two of their officers Lieutenant Sweetman and Lieutenant Creswell were wounded and there was no sign of either Manser or Maitland. So they withdrew from the breach and crossed the moat and came to the home bank. 36

Lt. Col. Maitland assaulted in the dark but he was killed immediately. Three other officers were killed and 20 were wounded. As the attack failed the troops started withdrawing. They were subjected to heavy fire from the ramparts of the city from all sides and forty three European soldiers and forty two Indian Sipahis fell dead. Over three hundred and seventy were wounded. Many wounded who were left behind were killed by the Jats who came out. Thus ended the first attack on Bharatpur. The Jats were extremely vigilant and fought back bravely repelling the attack. Akh Singh Purohit and Captain Sebastian of the garrison displayed great courage. 37

The assault failed mainly because Maitland lost his way at night in the marshy area, a mistake which anybody can make.

Second Assault

Lake now planned another assault choosing a spot more to the right so that troops would not have to negotiate their way through the marsh. He brought forward two 24 pounders and four 18 pounders and dug a battery position for them. As soon as they were ready, the guns opened up on 16th January and the walls got heavy punishment. Ranjit Singh's eldest
son Randhir was wounded during the firing. On the 17th Ranjit Singh's brother when he descended down the breach was shot dead by Captain Nelly.38

On 18th, Major General Smith with three battalions of sepoys belonging to Agra garrison and 100 convalescent Europeans joined Lake's army which was a welcome reinforcement. At this stage one of Holkar's Sardar, Ismail Beg deserted with 500 cavalrymen and joined the British side.

The artillery fire which never ceased caused a wide breach in the wall by the 21st, but the Jats would not allow a close recce of the area and they kept on firing at the enemy from the parapet of the fort. Lake now devised a ruse. He detailed a Havildar with few men who was briefed to act as if he was deserting Lake's army and joining the garrison. They were to make a dash towards the fort followed by blank fire from the British to give the impression that the deserter's were being fired at. They were to boldly approach the garrison and ask for shelter. Accordingly the Havildar's party acted the part and asked the men on the rampart to show them the way to the town. The ruse worked and the men were deceived. They guided the patrol to a gate which lead to the town. The Havildar while approaching the gate made a quick recce of the moat and came to the conclusion that the moat was neither very broad nor deep. This information was carried by/to the lines as the patrol galloped back after completing their task. However, as the recce was performed in a hurry from horse back the informa-
tion turned out to be inaccurate later, which ruined Lake's plan of assault. The patrol had a hurried glance at the breach and reported that the breach was easy to ascend. This information was also inaccurate as was proved later.

The assault was planned for the 21st. The breach was to be stormed by a storming party which consisted of 150 men of the 76th, 120 men of the 75th, 100 men of the 1st European Regiment and 50 men of 22nd Flankers led by Captain Lindsay. Lake kept his cavalry standing by, ready to attack Holkar's forces if they tried to interfere with the assault.

H Hour was fixed at 3 p.m. when the artillery opened up. It was found that the Jats had erected a dam below the breach, thus increasing the depth and width of the water of the moat making the obstacle more difficult to cross. They also let in more water from the canal above. When Lake's forward troops reached the moat, they found that the temporary portable bridge which they were carrying were too short to bridge the water obstacle. So a party swam across and assaulted the breach but Colonel Macre who was in charge of the assault and commanded six battalions realised the futility of the attempt as his whole force could not swim across and assault. Ranjit Singh's artillery and small arms' fire from the parapet would have destroyed them before they could reach the breach. He, therefore, ordered a withdrawal. In the process, Ranjit Singh's men caused havoc among the British troops. They had 3 officers killed, fifteen wounded and 590 men were either killed or
wounded from the assaulting party whose total strength was approximately 6000. They suffered ten percent casualties and had nothing to show for it. The Jats had done it again. Their cunning in making use of the canal system to flood the moat and increasing the water level by damming the most further down, defeated the British plan. They did not bother to close the breach. The gap attracted the assaulting army like a moth to the flame and when they floundered on the bank of the moat the concentrated fire caught the enemy in the killing area. Thus Ranjit Singh displayed superior tactics and proved a better general than Lake.

Colonel Macrae lost control over his men once they started withdrawing. "The stormers retired in great confusion leaving a large number of wounded, and the scaling ladder and bridges in the hands of the enemy."41 "It deserves to be added that whilst the storming party was thus fruitlessly employed Holkar and Amirkhan (Mirkhan) had made a vigorous attempt upon the British camp, which was repelled only by the skillful use of the galloper guns."42 Thus Ranjit Singh got satisfaction.

Since Ranjit Singh was paying Rupee one in eight days to Holkar infantry and Rs.15/- per month to his cavalry,43 he expected results.

Mirkhan

As stated earlier Ranjit Singh had hired Holkar to harass Holkar British from outside and was paying Rs. 25,000/- a day towards expenses of the army. Holkar had sent word to his
Sariars to rally round. One of them was Mirkhan, who later became the Nawab of Tonk. Ranjit Singh, knowing the fighting ability of Mirkhan, had sent a message to Bundelkhand requesting him to come to Ranjit Singh's aid. He sent Rs. 6 lakhs as expenses for the army. Mirkhan responded and arrived with 25,000 Pindharis and 15,000 troopers. Yashwant Rao tried to get more money out of Ranjit Singh as daily subsidy for this force but Ranjit Singh replied "All these hard troubles are due to you. I have not derived as much benefit as was possible. It is better that you should remain content with the subsidy already fixed."

When General Lake got the news that Mirkhan was moving towards Bharatpur he sent an agent Muhammad Khan Afridi who offered a jahagir of 18 lakhs if Mirkhan agreed to stay away. It is to Mirkhan's credit that he refused the offer and crossed the Chambal at Jholpur and joined Holkar, who promptly paid him one lakh of rupees. Thus it will be noticed that Mirkhan was a capable soldier very much sought after by all parties. He had a good army with him. Yashwant Rao himself went to Fatehpur Sikri to receive Mirkhan. Ranjit Singh agreed to pay Rupees Ten lakhs to Mirkhan for the maintenance of the force. As Mirkhan was made much of, this set up rivalry between him and Holkar who had not struggled much to influence the battle. Mirkhan now boasted that with his gallant army he would bring victory to the Jats and Marathas.

As stated earlier, General Lake had formed up his cavalry
to meet any attack by Mirkhan and Holkar on his camp, while the troops were engaged in the assault. They were supported by galloper guns and field artillery. The force was drawn in two lines. The artillery opened up as "welcome to the newly arrived guests (Mirkhan) with the hospitable present of grape and cannon-balls." Mirkhan suggested to Holkar that their large force should surround the British cavalry from all sides but Holkar disagreed with these tactics and as a result when the British artillery opened up they suffered 50 casualties and fled.

However, on the 23rd the Maratha cavalry ambushed a supply convoy consisting of 12 thousand bullocks as they were moving from Mathura to Bharatpur bringing supplies to General Lake's army. The convoy was not adequately guarded. When Lake heard that a convoy was on its way, he despatched the First Regiment of Native Cavalry and 1/15 Regiment under Captain Walsh to reinforce the escort. Mirkhan fell on the convoy near Kumbher. The escort of 1400 men instead of driving away the marauders, took up a defensive position in a nearby village. A convoy of 12,000 bullocks must have stretched over a vast area and the infantry probably could not prevent looting by bands of Pindharis on horseback. While the Pindharis were looting the convoy Mirkhan and Bapu Shinde's cavalry attacked the British defensive position in the village and captured a part of it and some guns. As this battle was going on hardly two miles away from Lake's
main camp, he sent Lt. Col. Need with the 27th Dragoons and the 2nd Regiment of Native cavalry as reinforcements. Lt. Col. Need charged and scattered Mirkhan's hoardes and recovered the lost guns. According to Thorn, Mirkhan lost 600 troopers in this skirmish. This is probably exaggerated. He narrowly escaped by throwing away his distinguishing robes and mixing with the troopers who were on the retreat. The British lost eight sepoys killed and 36 wounded, 400 laden bullocks were driven away by the raiders.

Ranjit Singh was rather pleased with this offensive raid of Mirkhan and congratulated him. Thus he made true his boast to a certain extent.

Another bullock convoy was being marshalled in Agra. Lake sent a brigade consisting of 29 Light Dragoons, two regiments of native cavalry and three battalions of native infantry as escort for the convoy. This time the convoy was even larger, 50,000 bullocks were carrying not only grain but gun ammunition, stores and cash. Mirkhan, Bapu Shinde and Harnath Singh planned to ambush and loot this convoy. When Lake got report of the move of the Maratha cavalry and Pindharis, he set out with all the remaining cavalry and asked two brigades of infantry to follow him. Although Mirkhan's force was superior in strength, he avoided confrontation with Lake. His infantry could join up with him. Holkar soon joined Mirkhan. Actually Mirkhan had a different plan in mind. He knew that as soon as Lake comes to know that
Mirkhan intended to ambush the convoy he would set out with all available force. He proposed to Holkar that while Lake's attention was thus diverted, Holkar should attack Lake's base camp near Bharatpur. But either Holkar was afraid of Lake's artillery which was bound to react violently, if attacked or he wanted a share of the loot from the convoy, he did not agree with Mirkhan. Thus, there was difference of opinion between Mirkhan and Holkar about the strategy to be followed by them. When Mirkhan met Holkar near Mathura, he proposed that instead of the usual tactics of nibbling away at the convoy, the combined force should boldly attack and destroy the escort and loot the convoy; but Holkar imposed caution saying that the British were now alert and had formed a hollow square. To attack such a formation would be disastrous. The net result was that the convoy reached Lake's camp safely and in the skirmishes minor losses were suffered by either side. Holkar is said to have lost 125 horses. Here was a combination of a young daredevil Mirkhan and a cautious middle aged soldier who had lost his nerve due to previous defeats. There is no doubt that Holkar did not have his heart in this fight. Ranjit Singh was naturally disappointed with his performance and satirically remarked: "What a wonder, with such a strong force, you could not cut off the enemy! What will be your success in other things?"  

Ranjit Singh now came to the conclusion that Mirkhan and Holkar will not be able to act in collusion and they should
be given different tasks. So he proposed that Holkar should remain in the vicinity of Bharatpur and harass the enemy and Mirkhan should cross the Jamuna and devastate Rohilkhand so that Lake will be forced to detach a sizeable force for the pursuit of Mirkhan, thus relieving pressure on Bharatpur. This was a very sound strategic move. Mirkhan accordingly crossed the Jamuna on 7th February, 1805 and as correctly anticipated by Ranjit Singh, Lake despatched a force under General Smith in pursuit, which consisted of 8th, 27th and 29th Regiments of Light Dragoons and 1st, 3rd and 6th Regiment of Native cavalry supported by the Horse artillery. This force roamed all over Rohilkhand for a month and later joined Holkar in the third week of March. Mirkhan was always one or two stages ahead of the enemy, leading Major General Smith to a dance, levying contributions, plundering and burning villages. The forces met once on 1st March, 1805 near Afzalpur but Mirkhan soon broke contact. During this month Mirkhan suffered light casualties, some of his Sardars suffered wounds and a fairly large number left his service and went home but by his tactics, Mirkhan had kept occupied six regiments of cavalry, which was a good achievement. The campaign was a dismal failure. Guerilla tactics proved superior to stereotype pattern of warfare. The British troops had to put up with tremendous amount of hardships and never saw the enemy which must be very frustrating.

General Lake who had divided his force to pursue Mirkhan
now ordered reinforcements from Bombay. As he was thus occupied there was a lull in the siege and the garrison of Bharatpur got one clear month to reorganise themselves, repair the defences and the men were rested. Lake also spent this time in building up his logistics as seen earlier. He needed artillery ammunition and supplies prior to attacking the fort once again.

On the 10th of February Major General Jones arrived from Bombay with two brigades, which consisted of His Majesty's 86th Regiment and eight companies of 65th Regiment, four battalions of Native infantry (1/2, 1/3, 1/9 and 2/2 Regiments), a troop of Bombay Cavalry and 500 irregular horse. Now a sort of rivalry was set up between the Bombay army and Bengal army. As the Bengal army had failed so far to take Bharatpur, the Bombay army wanted to take on the task. But the Bengal army requested Lake that they should be given another chance. Lake agreed to the request and preparations started for another attack. Trenches were started and battery positions were being prepared 400 yards away from the wall of the fort. Secondly a mine was to be laid to blow up the wall. D day was set for 20th February, 1805.

After the failure of the second attack in January, Lake had issued a "General Order" acknowledging the gallantry and steadiness displayed by his army and encouraged them by saying that in a very few days they will succeed in capturing the fort. He shifted the camp to the south and reconnoitered
a suitable area for a breach in the wall. The morale of
the troops was further raised when Lake himself led his
cavalry against Mirkhan and Holkar and chased them away when
they tried to interfere with the supply convoys as described
earlier. These two attempts by the Marathas to loot the
convoy were foiled by the bold intervention of Lake's com-
manders who took offensive action and scattered the marauders.

Lake had arranged to prepare fascines, collected pon-
toons and built rafts to cross the moat. He was not going to
be caught by the trick of the Jats to use the water to their
advantage for a second time. Preparations were made for the
third attempt to capture Bharatpur.

Third Assault.

On the 20th the storming party was ordered to the forward
trenches which were parallel to the wall of the fort and
square to the objective. It was commanded by Lt. Col. Don,
an experienced soldier who had fought along side of Moneon
during the retreat and knew his men. The plan envisaged three
columns as before. The Bombay troops formed the bulk of the
two flank columns and the assaulting role was once again
allotted to the Bengal army. The 76th were to lead. The main
assault supported by 75th and three battalions of Native
infantry. On the 22nd Muhammad Khan and Abdul Khan two officers
of Holkar made two attempts and tried to break up the assault
but Lt. Wilson with the flank companies of 22nd counterattacked
and the Marathas withdrew. But the British force suffered losses and the dead were littered on the ground which is a demoralising sight for any attacking troops. The casualties on the Maratha side were also heavy. Mohan Singh writes: "On our side soldiers beyond count were slain and two guns were lost." The assault was however to go as per plan.

The Right flank column consisted of 200 men of the 86th Regiment and the 1/8th Bengal Infantry under the command of Lt. Col. Grant. His task was to attack the enemy trenches and gun positions which were outside the walls of the town. The left column consisted of 300 men of the 65th Regiment and two battalions of Bombay Sepoys. The task allotted to this force was to attack Bhim Narayan Gate.

The artillery had started firing from the 19th and the breach was reported practicable. It was confirmed that a mine, which had been laid for the purpose of blowing up the counterscarp, was ready for explosion. A hour was fixed at 3 p.m. on 22nd. The storming party had been in the trenches for 48 hours. They had been attacked twice on the 20th. They could see their own and the enemy dead strewn all over. The bridging party of 50 men equipped with fascines moved forward. Their task was to throw fascine bridges over the moat, take up firing positions and give covering fire to the assaulting troops who were to cross the moat and charge the breach. The enemy expected the attack and was prepared to give a hot reception. Ranjit Singh was personally directing the operation.
As the morale of the assaulting troops was low, they floundered. The right hand column consisting of fresh troops successfully charged the enemy guns. They drove the enemy away, captured eleven guns which Lt. Col. Grant later brought back with him when they were ordered to withdraw. The left hand column was not so lucky. The attack on Bhim Narayan Gate by Colonel Taylor was repulsed.

The worst fate was met by Lt. Colonel Don. His storming party consisted of detachments of 22nd, 75th and 76th Regiment followed by the 9th, 15th and 22nd Native infantry.

When they opened up artillery fire from the breach the men of 76th who were the attackers feared that their own mine would blow them to bits if they charged the beach, and refused to advance. In vain did Colonel Don urged and incited them but the British troops had lost their nerve. "The men, the famous invincible 76th would not look at the breach." The 22nd Regiment were put in support by two guns but they too would not charge. As they were milling around in this area they suffered heavy casualties from enemy fire which increased as the defenders saw that the attackers had lost heart. The defenders now blew up a mine which they had laid earlier. This was the last straw. Although fourteen young officers to the front trying to encourage the men to follow them, the assault was a failure and General Lake ordered a withdrawal.

In this attempt Lake lost 28 officers and 894 men. Fortynine European and 113 Indian soldiers were killed and 176
Europeans and 566 sepovs were wounded.61

"Lucky Lake's" luck had thus run out. But the bull headed General would not give up. A more intelligent General would have realised the futility of head on charges against the wall of Bharatpur so gallantly defended by the Jats. But Lake's reputation was at stake. He had been knighted only the previous year for the gallant victories in the battles of Delhi and Laswars. Lord Lake could not afford to be defeated by the Indians. He ignored the casualties incurred during the last two months. Nearly 2000 men were either killed or wounded. The troops were obviously demoralised. The British had lost their invincibility but Lake was not the man to use his discretion.

Fourth Assault

He formed the troops on parade and addressed them. He censured the European troops for their cowardice and misconduct. This was more in sorrow than in anger. The rulers of India could not afford to show cowardice in front of Natives. He called for volunteers for a storming party. The attack was to be launched once again the next day the 21st. Young Templeton of the 76 volunteered to lead the charge trying to retrieve the honour of his Regiment for which he was prepared to lose his life.

Had the attack been launched by night or even at first light it would have had a chance. But the unthinking Lake
fixed the H hour again at 3 p.m. in broad daylight when the enemy would be able to open with every available weapon. To make matters worse, the command was changed and Brigadier Monson, the gallant soldier without brains was placed in charge of the assault. A man without imagination who knew only how to charge like a boar was placed in charge. A commander who had been routed only a few months ago, could not have inspired much confidence in his soldiers. Fresh troops were now detailed. The assault was to be made by the 1st European, 65th, 85th Foot and three Battalions of Native infantry. The 76th was left out of battle. Maximum artillery support was arranged. Every available gun was brought to bear on the walls of Bharatpur.

"In vain—again, however, forlorn hopes struggled up the glacis, in vain sepoy and soldier vied with each other for the place of honour while staff officers shouted and regimental officers died, in trying to lead the rank and file to impossible feats. Down the rubble slopes of the steep breaches, over the masses of corruption that were once smartly accoutred British soldiers and the debris of shot and shell in the ruins, half a source of cannon belched grape and canister and scrap iron, till close on a thousand of the stormers lay piled high, a horror and an offence in the sinking sun. "

General Lake's stupidity had cost thirty four officers and 947 rank and file, killed or wounded. An unforgivable carnage!
The four assaults had cost the British 103 officers and 3100 men. The siege guns were worn out and the artillery ammunition was finished. General Lake was thus forced to give up the siege and establish a blockade hoping to starve the garrison out. As the garrison was stocked for months, there was very little chance of its surrender. For the British this was loss of face. General Lake's activities were restricted to taking out forays against Mirkhan and Holkar who harried his columns but kept out of reach when attacked. The situation was thus hopeless and summer was approaching. It would have been suicidal to keep the army out in the open during summer. The supply position was getting worse.

At this stage Ranjit Singh showed greater acumen. He had the British in a tight corner but prolonging the operation would be fruitless. He showed great statesmanship and sent out feelers for a peace treaty. General Lake who was riding a high horse earlier had turned down a similar attempt in January but now after four assaults and sufferings a loss of 3100 men he had sobered down. Bharatpur was impregnable and a peace treaty was a face saver. Ranjit Singh agreed to give up the extra territories which he had been given by the British, which they in turn had taken from Shinde. He agreed to pay Rupees twenty lakhs towards cost of the war. Considering that he had already paid a similar amount to Mirkhan and Holkar without any tangible results, this was not too much for an honourable settlement. When Ranjit Singh heard in the
middle of the siege that Lake had been raised to a peerage, he had the magnanimity becoming to a real King, to send out a messenger to congratulate General Lake, now Lord Lake. Throughout the campaign Ranjit Singh in his dealings with Mirkhan, Holkar and Lake had shown qualities which would rank him as a great general and a statesman.

Having thus come to terms with the Raja of Bharatpur, Lake was now free to chase Holkar. Had Lake been a strategist, he would have made peace with Ranjit Singh in January itself and weaned him away from Holkar but he was only a soldier, not a statesman. Lord Wellesley who was known for his grand strategy blundered and allowed Lake to strike his head against the walls of Bharatpur not once but four times.

Although most of the soldier historians have praised Lake for his doggedness and dour courage, P.E. Roberts is quite severe in his criticism. He writes: "Between January 9 and February 21, Lord Lake launched four separate storming attacks, all of which were repulsed with terrible loss. It was an appalling blunder, and unpardonable because it was unnecessary."

Arthur Wellesley, loath as he must have been to criticize his late Commander-in-Chief could not restrain himself from saying: "They must have blundered that siege terribly, for it is certain that with adequate means every place can be taken." Lake's impetuous temper which would brook no delay was one of the main causes for the defeat. Had he paused to think coolly he would have realised the futility of the attempt.
Fortesoue has summed up General Lake as follows: "One of Britain's greatest fighting generals. But here the praise of Lake must end. The siege of Bharatpur stands out as a sad example of his impatience and his love for rough and ready methods, but the dispatch of Monson's detachment on its ill-omened march to the south remains a still greater blot upon his fame."

To Lord Wellesley, Lake's failure came as a terrible and culminating blow. He wrote to Lake: "I fear that we have despised the place and enemy so much as to render both formidable."65

**Analysis of the Siege of Bharatpur**

The siege of Bharatpur was lifted on the 10th April, 1805, when Ranjit Singh concluded a treaty with the British. He renounced his alliance with the Marathas and he got back his claims which were agreed upon with the English in the previous treaty. However he lost the fort of Deeg. One of his sons was to stay as hostage with the commanding officer of the British forces in suburbs of Agra and Delhi.66 Lake was also ordered by Wellesley in March, 1805 not to resume the assaults on Bharatpur and risk more failures.67 But there can be no doubt that "Bharatpur continued for long to be a taunt and reproach" to the British in upper India. Throughout the length and breadth of India went the story that the 'invincible' British had been hurled back four times from the mud walls of Bharatpur. This gave hope to the Indian princes. If the Jats could do it may...
be the Rajputs, Marathas, Bundellas and Rohillas also could stand up to the 'Angrez'. Ranjit Singh true to his Indian tradition, built an immense new tower to his walls to celebrate the victory and he put all the skulls of the British dead in it. Thus Bharatpur remained as a blot on the career of Lake. "Bharatpur" was a word to conjure with in the habitations of disaffected princes and nobles throughout the country, and it required the reversal of the result of the siege, twenty years later, to deprive that word of its efficacy and its sting.

The aggressive policy of Wellesley lead to his recall from India in July 1805 by the Court of Directors. The former policy had cost the Company nearly £2 million. Pitt, the Prime Minister thought that Lord Wellesley "had acted most imprudently and illegally, and that he could not be suffered to remain in the Government."

From a purely military point of view the siege operations failed due to inadequacy of artillery and engineering equipment. The planning was faulty in that the same pattern was repeated time and again. The attacks were by day, thus surprise was lost every time even before the assault started. As the assaults were in broad day light, the Jats could concentrate aimed artillery and small arms fire from commanding heights of the towers and rampart walls. After the first two failures their morale was sky high while the British soldier realised that he had no chance of success. Sheer bravery is
no good against aimed artillery fire.

The major share of the blame goes to Lord Lake who displayed bullheaded tenacity and nothing else. The easy conquest of Deeg went to his head. He did not realise that at Bharatpur the Jats were fighting for their very freedom. They were led by their king Ranjit Singh who proved a great tactician. Another factor which counted was the fact that the families were inside the fort. The Jat was fighting not only for his political freedom but he was fighting to save his wife and children. Had the families gone to Jaipur or Jodhpur, they may not have held out so long. The Jats knew the area well and they understood the intricate canal system which brought water to the moat. Ranjit Singh showed great tactical acumen by putting a bund and blocking the water thus increasing the width and depth of the moat, in the area where the second assault was planned on 21st January. Although Holkar's contribution was not material, it must be remembered that Mirkhan responded to Holkar's call. His performance was certainly of a great nuisance value. He succeeded in forcing Lake to detach Major General Smith with six cavalry regiments who were led on a wild goose chase by Mirkhan. Thus, Ranjit Singh got his money's worth. Here was a good combination of guerrilla warfare and siege warfare.

General Lake made the mistake of getting embroiled in the battle. His judgement went astray as he was in a constant blaze of excitement. He made hurried and ill prepared attempts
ignoring the inadequacy of siege train and water crossing expedients. A monotonous pattern of three columns, one right, one left and one centre was repeated time and again with obstinacy which amounted to mere stupidity in the fourth assault having lost a thousand men only the previous day. The fact that the troops refused to attack was a danger signal which was ignored by Lake. It is a surprise that in spite of such tactical bungling he was allowed to stay in India as Commander-in-Chief, instead of being retired. As Mill observes: "Neither Lake's experience and education nor temperament qualified him for directing the operations of the siege." 72

Comparatively Ranjit Singh exhibited great skill and determination as a statesman and a general. He never lost the support of his officers and soldiers. Akhe Singh Purohit, Baldeo Singh, Dula Ram Thakur, Balha Faujdar, Nur Mohammed and Shyam Lal Katthu deserve special mention. The Jats of Bharatpur put up a long and brave defence that has earned for them an imperishable epic fame in the annals of India. 73 Ranjit Singh, the Jat Raja of Bharatpur, is a legend even today. He lived up to the glorious tradition of his race.

The Last Phase

Yashwant Rao Holkar did not give a very good account of himself in the siege of Bharatpur. Mohan Singh writes: "Holkar's men were seen to have no heart in their work." 74 One of the reasons may be that he did not have adequate funds to
pay the army. He kept pressing Ranjit Singh for money until at last Ranjit Singh replied: "Where have I any money now? I have already paid you 14 lakhs of rupees; and solely from your residing in their district, the trouble has reached such an extent. Go wherever you deem proper, whatever fate has in store for me will happen." As he was fighting outside his own territory, Malwa, he was not interested in the outcome of the war. This is obvious from the fact that even in the midst of operations he celebrated Holi on 14th March by inviting musicians and dancing girls to his camp. His leaders took their cue from their master. The performance of soldiers like Ganpat Rao, Kushaba Bakshi and Jamdar Bhand was below standard.

However, in spite of everything he had suffered heavy casualties and his army had been decimated by death and desertion. He had entered Hindustan with a force of 92,000 men consisting of 66,000 cavalry, 7,000 artillery, 19,000 infantry and 90 guns. But when he left Bharatpur in April, 1805, he had only 35,000 cavalry, 7,000 infantry and 35 guns. The strength was drastically reduced since Mirkhan left Holkar and went away with his army. He and Ambaji Ingle caused a lot of anxiety to the British by their raids in Bundelkhand, as described earlier.

A new development was now taking place. Shinde marched to Bundelkhand with a view to forming an anti-British coalition with Holkar. As Malcolm could not control Shinde, the
the Governor General recalled him and replaced him with Webbe who died in November, 1804. His assistant Jenkins could not handle Daulat Rao. Ambaji Ingle had now openly repudiated his recent alliance and joined the Marathas and Daulatrao who had lost all his income and could not pay his large army, wanted to follow suit. The evil genius Sarjarao Chatge again became active and joined Holkar. The Pindharis attacked and looted the Resident's camp at Saugor.

Holkar now left the battlefield and reached Hindaun. He sent word to his Sardars and one by one Jamdev Bhand, Harnath Singh, Nafib Khan joined up but Bhawani Shankar and Murtaza joined Lake's army as they were insulted by Holkar earlier and orders had been sent for their arrest. Lord Lake gave a quick response and welcomed them by giving each a present of a Khiltat of five pieces, a sarpech, a pearl necklace, an elephant and two horses. Thus ended the rivalry between Harnath and Bhawani Shankar. Holkar now lost a true friend and adviser.

Holkar marched from Hindaun to Sabalgrad where he met Daulatrao Shinde. "Where the best brains and arms of the Maratha nation then assembled in a grand concourse for concerting measures towards undoing the recent British successes. Even the Chhatrapati of Satara was represented there by his intrepid brother Chatar Singh." When Jenkins, the acting resident tried to threaten Shinde, he was placed under arrest. He thus stayed restrained for four months from June to
September. Lord Lake reacted sharply to this, what he termed as, "Unholy alliance". He wrote to the Governor General, "There is no vile act these people are not equal to, that inhuman monster Holkar's chief delight is butchering all Europeans and by all accounts Sarjerao Chatte's disposition towards us is precisely the same." Lake should have remembered that he had caused the death of 4,000 men of his own army in the last two months.

Thus Wellesley's system of subsidiary alliances backfired and failed in establishing peace and order under British supremacy. Although the Maratha power was crumbling and could not have held out much longer, Lord Wellesley unduly precipitated matters. Although he claimed that he had controlled the causes of the internal warfare in India, "these claims," says P.E. Roberts, "revealed a blindness which looks almost wilful and which lay in the assumption that the Indian Powers entirely acquiesced and that the future was secure. The truth was that in the hearts of the Maratha Chiefs all possible benefits were outweighed by the fact that their power to plunder and destroy others was taken away from them." Thus "from the accursed day Lord Wellesley set foot in India till the day of his departure he has exhibited a constant scene of rapacity, oppression, cruelty and fraud, which goaded the whole country into a state of revolt." "Engaged in wars from the south to the north, he had broken the power of prince after prince, completed a gigantic revolution and
seated the company on the throne of the great Mughal." He incurred lavish expenditure of public money in schemes of conquest and extension of empire."30 The army was in arrears of pay for five months and Cornwallis who replaced Wellesley had to take out a sum of Rs. 25 lacs out of the cash meant for China.

After the death of Cornwallis on 5th October, 1805, Sir George Barlow took over as acting Governor General. He reinstated Malcolm who wrote in Lord Lake's name a strong letter to Shinde, demanding the immediate release of the Resident Jenkins and threatening a war in case of non-compliance. Daulat Rao who was not prepared to lose more by fighting the English tried to appease them by dismissing Sarjerao and appointing Munshi Kamalnayan as his Vakil to negotiate with the British when Lord Wellesley charged him with the fact that Bapuji Shinde and Sadasiv Bhau had joined Holkar, he replied that they had joined him just to get some subsistence for their armies.

Lord Lake after concluding a treaty with Ranjit Singh now set out with his army to meet Holkar in the field. He was aware that Shinde had joined Holkar. However, as the army approached Sabalgad the Marathas retreated south west towards Kota. The strength of the Coalition army was now 12,000 Cavalry, 12,000 Pindharis, 5,000 infantry and 140 guns. As the rains had started, Lake did not want to commit the mistake of starting an offensive in inclement weather. He therefore
positioned a strong force at Tonk Rampura under Major General Jones and himself stationed the Bengal army between Agra and Mathura. Bundelkhand was reinforced by sending a force there.

There was a difference of opinion in the Maratha camp about the strategy to be followed. While Holkar and Sarjerao Chatrg were in favour of an all out war against the English, the response of Daulatrao was lukewarm. Ambaji Ingle advised both the Chiefs that the English should be left alone. He had a personal interest in this suggestion. He wanted to take possession of Mewad State. The Raja of Mewad secretly sought the aid of General Lake to drive the Marathas out. Disputes developed between Holkar and Ambaji Ingle who saved himself by paying approximately 30 lakhs to Holkar. When Yeshwant Rao realised that Shinde and Ingle would not co-operate with him he left Mewad, arrived at Ajmer and after extracting money from Jamdar Bhand left for Narnaul. He now planned to go to Punjab and seek the aid of the Sikhs and even the Shah of Afghanistan to destroy the English. On 29th November 1805 he wrote to his cousin: "I have met the Sikh princes of Patiala and other places. They are ready to join in my plans of resisting the British. I have also received friendly approaches from Ranjit Singh of Lahore and the Shah of Afghanistan. In order to concert further measures I crossed the Sutlej on the 13th and arrived near Amritsar and Lahore. I am sanguine of getting the support of the Sikhs. Shinde's withdrawal from the concert is a severe loss. He fell a pray to temporary
selfish gain and ruined the state. I am still hoping to recover the lost position. 23

The last remark refers to Daulatrao Shinde, who had extracted Rs. 1,60,000 from Mewad territory with the help of Sadashiv Rao. He made peace with the English by releasing Jenkins from arrest and signed a fresh Treaty at Mustafapur on 21st November, 1805. One of its conditions was that Sarjerao Ghatee should not be employed. He played a double game and also wrote a letter to Holkar who was in Punjab, expressing satisfaction at the latter's meeting with Ranjit Singh. He wrote, "Please try to bring him (Ranjit Singh) to our side. I am in all matters with you." 24 But this was nothing but 'Daulatrao Shinde’s vanity to pose as the greatest power in Hindustan.'

Yeshwant Rao had crossed the Sutlaj with 12,000 horse, 2,000 or 3,000 infantry and 30 guns. 25 Although General Jones from Tonk Rampura and Colonel Bell from Rewari made attempts to intercept him, they failed. Najabat Alikhan, Ahmad Bangash Khan and Samand Khan were in the party of Colonel Ball. Lake himself arrived in Delhi on the 25th October, 1805 and set out in pursuit of Holkar with five regiments of cavalry and four battalions of infantry. 26 He crossed the Sutlaj in pursuit of Holkar. This was the first time when the British crossed over into the Punjab. Ranjit Singh was now on the horns of a dilemma. A meeting of the Khalsa chiefs was held and it was resolved that no aid would be given to Holkar. According to
Sardessai, Ranjit Singh paid a secret visit to General Lake and concluded an agreement with him. Thus although outwardly he had shown friendship with Holkar, in order to prevent him looting the territory he was not prepared to fight the English.

Holkar soon realised that the game was up. He could not fight the English single handed and the Marathas, Sikhs and Jats had deserted him. As a last resort he sent a Vakil to Shikarpur to contact Shah Shuya, the King of Kabul, but there was no response. Yeshwant Rao once complained to Bharmal Holkar, "Everyone is trying to save his own skin." Holkar was now advised by his Sardar to come to terms with the British. Ranjit Singh acted as the intermediary and sent his envoy Fateh Singh to British camp along with Balram Seth, the Vakil of Holkar. The terms of the treaty were settled and on 24th December, 1805 and the treaty of Rajghat was signed. When Holkar tried to raise objections and started delaying tactics, General Lake threatened to attack and marched down the left bank of Beas to Govindwala Ghat on 6th January, 1806. At last Holkar signed the treaty and it was presented to Lake with great ceremony in the presence of several Sikh Chiefs and Colonel Malcolm, when a royal gun salute was fired.

Thus Holkar was forced to end his struggle against the foreign power. Although the soldiers were happy because the war was over, Holkar and Mirkhan were sullen. The details of the treaty are enclosed as Appendix C. The salient features were that Holkar should renounce all claims to areas north of
Chambal and all claims on Poona and Bundelkhand. He agreed not to employ any Europeans in his service and never to admit Barjerao Chatre in his service. He was to return to Kalwa along a prescribed route without causing any damage to any British territory or that of their allies. The Company's government agreed not to interfere in Holkar's territory south of Chambal and restore the forts and districts of the Holkar family in the Deccan excepting Chandor, its dependencies and the districts of Amber and Sheogaon. Later, Sir George Barlow amended the treaty and restored to Yashwant Rao, Tonk, Rampura and all the territory north of Bundi Hills, thus ditching the Raja of Bundi who had rendered help to Konson during the retreat. "The Treatv of Rajeshar rang down the curtain on the Anglo Holkar conflict." 89

A letter written by Yashwant Rao Holkar to Vyankoji Bhosle dated 15th February, 1806 is very interesting. 90 He writes: "I shall soon come to the north of the Narmada bank. The Maratha state had been cramped by foreigners. In order to prevent this, without caring for my land or property, I assemble an army, incurred crores of rupees as debts, and fought the British day and night for the last two and a half years. I contacted Daulatrao Shinde and hoping that the Marathas would side with me, I sent you letters. I came to Punjab and persuaded the Sikhs to join our cause. I was being followed by the English, who were 25 to 30 kos behind me all the time. They opened up negotiations from Patiala. I was hoping that
now Shinde would advance on Delhi along with the other Rajas, but he was ill-advised by selfish subordinates and came to terms with the English and remained in Mewad. As previously, there was unity among us we had unitary rule but now everyone is for himself. You did not join, only assurances were sent. Even if you had sent troops to Bengal it would have served the purpose. Nobody is interested in fighting for the Hindu Dharma. It is not that only I would have benefitted and others would have lost. So I was forced to sign a treaty with the British."

Thus ended the 2nd Anglo-Maratha war which accelerated the process of decline and fall of Maratha supremacy.
NOTES

(1) Thorn, Memoirs of the War in India, p. 394.
(2) Wacai Holkar - 155 a. Qanungo: Jasawant Rao Holkar.--
(3) Thorn, op.cit., p. 289.
(5) Thorn, op.cit., p. 396.
(6) Waqai Holkar, Qanungo, op.cit., p. 218.
(7) Thorn, op.cit., p. 397.
(9) Qanungo, op.cit., p. 520.
(11) Thorn, op.cit., p. 390.
(12) Ibid., p. 598.
(13) Qanungo, op.cit., p. 224.
(14) Thorn, op.cit., p. 403.
(17) Thorn, op.cit., pp. 405-06.
(18) Martin, op.cit., p. 258.
(19) Duff Grant, op.cit., p. 258.
(20) Thorn, op.cit., p. 407.
(21) Ibid., p. 409.
(22) Owen, op.cit., p. 501.
(23) Canunso, op.cit., p. 229.
(25) Ibid., p. 413.
(26) Ibid., p. 412.
(27) Pearse, op.cit., p. 381.
(28) Selection from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 41, 37.
(30) Ibid.
(31) Selection from Peshwa Daftar, Vol. 41, 37.
(33) Thorn, Memoir of the War in India, p. 415.
(34) Canunso, op.cit., p. 233.
(35) Malleson, Colonel J.B., The Decisive Battles of India, p. 312.
  Thorn, op.cit., p. 418.
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