CHAPTER V
RAJA OF HARYANA (1798 - 1802)

In the middle of 1797, an account of a variety of factors, George Thomas thought about the establishment of an independent state of his own. Firstly, the sudden death of Appa Khandi Rao who committed suicide by drowning himself in the Jumna river in 1797, was a great blow to him. He was now left without any patron. Secondly, the attitude of Appa's successor, Vaman Rao, was not friendly towards Thomas. The relations between them began to deteriorate because Vaman Rao had begun to confiscate the territories of Thomas which were earlier given to him by Appa Khandi Rao. Thirdly, after his quarrel with Vaman Rao, Thomas had served under the command of Bapuji Sindhia. However, after serving for about a year, certain differences arose between them. Afterwards, Bapuji Sindhia not only dismissed Thomas but also resumed his territories (Panipat, Sonepat and Karnal) which were granted to him.

At that time Thomas's financial condition was also very poor. His troops were clamouring for payment. They were on the verge of mutiny. His revenues also decreased due to the loss of territories. After losing his territories, he had also become a private robber for maintaining himself. Like the Pindaris, he took to the profession of plundering
the towns and cities near the region of Delhi. Thomas and his troops temporarily hired themselves out to any chief that would sufficiently pay them. It is likely that Thomas's military success made him ambitious. And now he thought of carving out an independent sovereign state for himself for tackling his problems. The condition of northern India particularly in Punjab had deteriorated. These were favourable for the realisation of dream of Thomas.

In 1797-98, the Punjab had become a cockpit of struggle among the various powers of India as well as the foreign powers in India. The Punjab looked like a "jig-saw puzzle" consisting of the territories of various chiefs. These rulers were busy in mutual struggles for establishing their supremacy over the Punjab. There were: the twelve Sikh Misls; the Rajputs of Kangra in the north; the Gurkhas in the north-east; the Marathas in the south-east; the British in the east; and the Afghans in the north-west. Moreover, time and again the raids of Shah Zaman of Afghanistan had been disturbing the administration of Punjab.

Most of the Punjab (also the territories now in Haryana state) was held by the Sikh Misls from 1767 to 1799. There was no unity among these Sikh Misls. These were weakened due to the frequent raids of Shah Zaman as also due to their internal dissensions.
In the Malwa tract of Punjab (Cis-Satlej area) the greater part of this area was held by the chiefs of Phulkian Misl i.e. Patiala, Nabha and Jind. Among these the foremost was Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala. He was the son of Raja Amar Singh who was largely responsible for the greatness of Patiala house. But Raja Sahib Singh was a weak ruler.

The Rajputs of Kangra in the north particularly the Katoch Raja, Sansar Chand of Kangra, were dreaming of conquering Punjab territories. Besides, there were the Gurkhas of Nepal who were also seriously thinking of conquering Punjab under the leadership of Amar Singh Thapa. Then there were a number of Afghan and Pathan chiefs in the plains of Punjab such as Multan, Attock, Peshawar, Kashmir and Kasur. Among them, Nizam-ud-din of Kasur and Muzaffer Khan Sadozai of Multan were powerful chiefs. They also wanted to increase their power and territories.

But the aims and the dreams of these powers were shattered on account of the rise of Ranjit Singh of Sukarchakia Misl. The Mughal Emperor, Shah Alam II, was living under the protection of the powerful Maratha chief, Daulat Rao Sindhia. So, the weakness and divisions in the Punjab and absence of a strong authority proved a boon to George Thomas.

The administration of Punjab had collapsed. There was no law and order. The number of robbers increased and
the travelling for common people became unsafe. The life and property of the common man was unprotected. The economy of Punjab was shattered due to the continuous raids of lawless elements.

Taking opportunity of such conditions of northern India, Shah Zaman, the king of Afghanistan, began attacking the region of Punjab time and again during this period. Among these chiefs, some had their personal secret relations with Shah Zaman, and they often encouraged him to invade Indian territories. In Punjab, Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala was "in communication with Abdali's grandson, Shah Zaman, who was planning to re-establish Afghan dominion over Northern India."¹ In 1797-98, in the third and fourth invasion of Shah Zaman, Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala adopted the traditional policy of his house. At heart he was with the Shah; but was afraid to associate with him openly for fear of the Manjha Sikhs. ²

There was an exchange of a number of letters between Shah Zaman and Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala. Moreover, the agents of Shah Zaman were continuously visiting Patiala and Raja Sahib Singh promised them to support the Shah with money and material when he would pass through his region on his way to Delhi.

¹ Khushwant Singh, Ranjit Singh Maharaja of the Punjab, (Bombay, 1973), p. 28.
Ranjit Singh was able to establish his rule largely due to the disunity in Punjab. Many sardars of the Punjab were so weak that they could not resist the power of Ranjit Singh who even firmly repulsed other powers like the Rajputs of Kangra, the Gurkhas of Nepal, the Afghans and the Pathans. Later on he was also helped by Shah Zaman to occupy Lahore in the end of 18th century.

George Thomas who was wandering as a plunderer took the opportunity of such disturbed condition in the Punjab, and now selected the territory of Haryana, a lonely tract in the Punjab. Luckily for Thomas powers like the Afghans, the Pathans and the Gurkhas etc. were already beaten back by Ranjit Singh of Lahore. The other sardars were too weak. This situation proved favourable for the rise of Thomas in Haryana. George Thomas was also free from other powers like the Marathas who were busy in their own affairs and the British who were still far away from the Punjab territories. So political disunity in Punjab proved to be a great boon to George Thomas for creating his own independent state. Thomas was the only European military adventurer who established his own independent state. Not to speak of lesser military adventurers but the powerful and famous adventurers like Boigne, Perron, Raymond etc. could not achieve such opportunity in India as Thomas did. One reason can be that many military adventurers were already getting good salary in the service of many rulers. They, therefore, did not think on these lines.
Thus, in the beginning of 1798, after rehabilitating himself, George Thomas had "cast an acquisitive eye upon the district of Haryana." According to Francklin, the country of Hurrianah, which from the troubled state of the times, had for many years acknowledged no master, but became in turn the prey of each succeeding invader, appeared to him, as best adopted for the execution of his purpose.

Haryana was bounded in the north by the possessions of Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala; in the north-west by the country of Bhattis; in the west by Bikaner; to the south by Jaipur; to the south-east by Dadri; on the east by districts adjoining Delhi and in the north-east by Rohtak and Panipat. George Thomas in the next few years succeeded in establishing his rule. The territories conquered by him were oval in shape, extending to the north as far as river Chaggar, to the south by the town of Bahl, in the east to Meham and in the west to Badhara. But Bidwell warns,

3. C.G., op.cit., p. 44.
4. W.F., op.cit., p. 84.

In the Imperial Gazetteer the Haryana tract is described as follows:
A tract of country in the Punjab, lying between 28°30' and 30°N and 75°45' and 76°30'E, chiefly in the eastern half of Hisar district, but also comprising part of Rohtak district and of the states of Jind and Patiala. It is in shape in irregular oval, with its long axis lying north-west and south-east. On the north-west, south-west and south by the Bagar and Dhundauti, or Sawy tracts which are the continuation of the Bikaner desert; on the east by the Jumna river, on the north-east by the Nardak country.

Its boundaries were elastic, depending on whether Thomas was at home or away, or whether one of its outlying portions were in rebellion against him or not.  

The tract of Haryana measured, at that time, about 80 Kos from east to west, and the same distance from north to south. But the oval shape territory which was occupied by Thomas, extended from 15 to 24 kos in different directions.

The origin of word 'Haryana' is traced differently by various scholars. Sir Sarkar writes, "as soon as the first showers of the monsoon begin to fall, within four days a magical transformation takes place; one morning the face of the country is suddenly seen to be covered with a soft green carpet stretching upto the horizon, from the sprouting plants. Hence it has been called Hariana, or the Green country." Mr. Muni Lal writes, Haryana evoked yearnings in the common man to make the state as green (Hara) and lush as it was known to be once upon a time. It also brought back to mind the green forests (Haryalaban) which once adorned this part of the Indo-Gangetic plain. The average man revelled the thought that the state was the chariot (Ayana) of Lord Indra (Har).

8. W.F., *op.cit.*, p. 87 (Imperial Gazetteer mentioned its area 3,000 square miles* 
9. (i) Ibid, (ii) Sir Sarkar mentioned that Thomas's territories extended 32 to 48 miles in different directions.**

** J.N.S., *op.cit.*, vol. IV, p. 237, (iii) Mr. Bidwell writes that the area extending north-west from Jhajjar some 120 miles in length and 50 across. S.B., *op.cit.*, p.129.
Rahul Sanskrityayena, a reputed scholar mentioned about Haryana name which derives from a corrupt form of 'Haridhankya', a term used in ancient literature for this area. Dr. Buddha Prakash writes, "since this region was inhabited by the Abhiras during the post-Mahabharata period, it came to be called after their name: Abhirayana = Ahirayana = Hirana = Hariyana."

In the ancient times, Haryana had been well-forested and prosperous area which remained hunting ground for the kings. Later it witnessed the rise of tribal oligarchies and of a new spirit of independence which fueled large-scale resistance to monarchial rule. Since the 14th century, Hissar had been the local capital of Haryana. Later there were two significant battles of Panipat (1526 and 1556) which were responsible for the establishment of Mughal Empire in India. In the 18th century, after the decline of Mughal Empire, it again became an arena of struggle between various contending powers.

During the 18th century, the plains of Haryana were the scene of many battles and contests between the Marathas, the Sikhs, the Bhattis and the Rajputs etc. In 1761, there was the historic battle between Ahmad Shah Abdali of

Afghanistan and the Marathas. In 1762, a part of this territory was seized by the Jat Ruler of Bharatpur. 16 Afterwards

the chiefs of the houses of Patiala, Nabha and Jind, alone carried their arms into the Hariana both for offensive and defensive measure against the Bhattis, the Rohillas, the Delhi officials and the French and British adventurers who cast their covetous eyes on Hariana and Malwa territories. 17

Then, this area was also havoced by a great famine of 1783 also known as the Chalisa because it occurred in the year 1840 of Bikrami Sammat. The inhabitants of Haryana were utterly ruined. Later this territory remained under the possession of George Thomas from 1797 to the end of 1801. He was its independent ruler till his decline effected by the combined powers of northern India. In 1803, the British took possessions of Haryana after defeating the Marathas.

The people of Haryana are, generally speaking, bold, fearless and war-like. As Francklin writes,

the natives of Harrianah for a succession of ages having been in a constant state of warfare, possess great personal bravery, they are expert in the use of arms, particularly in the exercise of the lance, sabre and the matchlock. 18

So, George Thomas who was wandering as a plunderer near the region of Delhi, decided to advance in this tract.

during the monsoon season of 1797. In this dry area the water was scarce, and the scheme of Thomas for marching in the rainy season was therefore quite right, despite the discomfort of marching in thick mud. But Thomas trained his troops in such a manner that they could easily tolerate all these difficulties.

He had about 3,000 troops with him. After looting and collecting tributes from many towns and villages, Thomas advanced towards the fort of Kanhori, the country of Bhattis. They gave a very serious resistance where Thomas had to face lot of difficulties. The Bhattis were brave, warlike and fond of plundering depredations. They were exactly suited to act as the retainers and plundering assistants of a bandit-army like that of George Thomas.

Early in 1798, Thomas attacked a band of 200 men in the fort of Kanhori. But, in the fort, Thomas met with unexpectedly strong resistance from his enemies. When Thomas was inspecting his troops, suddenly the defenders from one of the redoubts attacked him. It resulted in great disaster to Thomas who lost 300 men in this action. Then he had to retreat.

19. (i) C.G., op.cit., p. 44; (ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 137.
22. (i) W.F., op.cit., p. 85; (ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 140.
After losing the battle Thomas made another attempt to take possession of Kanhori. He began to strengthen his own camp by fortifying it. He also built a chain of many posts surrounding the Kanhori town. He further increased his force to face the enemy. After these preparations Thomas suddenly attacked the fort with his full force. There was a pitched battle. He suffered some initial reverses but soon recovered ground. His artillery fire was so accurate that the enemy fell into confusion and suffered lot of casualties. Ultimately the enemy had to flee away at night. Thomas became victorious, and occupied Kanhori town early in 1798.

The victory of Kanhori further encouraged Thomas to conquer other territories of Haryana. He now selected Hansi* as his capital. This town is situated about 90 miles northwest of Delhi and 15 miles from Hissar. After the decline of Mughal Empire, it became the battle ground for a number of powers. In the second half of 18th century, Hansi was attacked by the Rohillas and the Sikhs. At the time of Thomas's invasion it was held by Najaf Quli Khan, a Mughal noble.

(ii) Mr. Burgess writes that Thomas won this fort in Feb. 1798*, James Burgess, op.cit., p. 273.
(iii) Hutchinson, op.cit., p. 91.

Around April 1798, George Thomas made Hansi his headquarters. The town seemed to be in complete ruin. According to an Indian legend, "its sole inhabitants were a fakir, or holy mendicant, and two lions—emblems of its poverty and its deserted state." There were the numerous Muhammadan cemeteries in the town, and about 40,000 of the followers of the prophet had found a resting place within a short circuit of its walls.

George Thomas selected the town of Hansi for his capital because the town was situated on a hill and particularly suitable for defence. Here, he first built a strong fort for protection from enemy. He established peace in the region. He also took steps to re-habilitate the town. He promoted agriculture in this region.

24. H.A.C., op.cit., p.142 (The district had many tigers and a few lions, it being the only place in India, except Gujarat, where the latter species of fauna existed.)
25. Ibid.

* (i) Mr. Macfarlane writes that Panipat was the capital of George Thomas, but this statement of Macfarlane is incorrect.

(ii) Bhai Sewa Singh writes that Thomas's capital was at Georgegarh, but this statement is not correct.

** The name of this fort, mentioned by Mr. Hennessy was Georgegarh which resembles to the town of Georgegarh or Jehazgarh which Thomas established during his service to Appa Khandi Rao. (M.H., op.cit., p. 101).

*** The inhabitants increased to about 6,000. Thomas's rule guaranteed the protection of their lives and property.+++ 

+++ H.A.C., op.cit., p. 142.
Then he also took certain administrative steps to develop this town as well as the other districts by drawing up "a code for civil administration, and law, apportioning the revenue into moieties for civil and military, allotting the latter for salaries, administration expenses, and pay and pension for the troops. He built court-houses, established arsenals and munition factories, in which were manufactured arms, equipment, ammunition, powder, and even cannon, and actually struck rupees." In Hansi, Thomas set his men to improve the ruined houses, repair the gaps in the perimeter walls, clear out the wells, prepared an excellent barracks and stables. Moreover he had persuaded traders of all kinds, builders, smiths, carpenters, wheelwrights, foundry-men, armoures and doctors (hakims) to come to the city. He had to arrange shroffs and merchant bankers to handle the departments of payments and financial matters.

By these measures and hard labour, Thomas developed and repopulated this town. He in his memoirs writes,

Here I established my capital, rebuilt the walls of the city long since fallen into decay, and repaired the fortification. As it had been long deserted, at first I found difficulty in procuring inhabitants, but by degrees and gentle treatment, I selected between 5 and 6 thousand persons, to whom I allowed every lawful indulgences.

26. C.G., op.cit., p. 44.

(About striking of coins by Thomas, Mr. Bidwell writes "he may indeed, as he did have established a mint and issued his own rupee coinage, although we may wonder how a ruler so perpetually short of money obtained the precious metal. Nevertheless it must be admitted that in Hansi alone he achieved a feat of administration which commands our admiration." (S.B., op. cit., p. 131).
I established a mint, and coined my own rupees, which I made current in my army and country; as from the commencement of my career at Jujur, I had resolved to establish an independency, I employed workmen and artificers of all kinds, and I now judged that nothing but force of arms could maintain me in my authority, I therefore increased their numbers, cast my own artillery, commenced making muskets, matchlocks and powder, and in short, made the best preparations for carrying on an offensive and defensive war, till at length having gained a capital and country bordering on the Sikh territories, I wished to put myself in a capacity when a favourable opportunity should offer of attempting the conquest of the Punjab, and aspired to the honour of planting the British standard on the banks of Attock.  

Afterwards Thomas extended his territories up to the right bank of Jumna and into the southern part of Haryana. As a result of a few sharp raids in the region of Sikhs he called himself, 

dictator of all the countries belonging to the Sikhs South of the Sutlej.  

He also extended his territories up to the line of the Ghaggar river. But, the northern part of Haryana was not easy to conquer for it was occupied by the Phulkian chiefs, the Bhattis.

27. W.F., op.cit., pp. 93, 94.  
(It seems that Thomas got an idea at Jhajjar to establish his own independent state in Haryana where he could fulfil his dreams to conquer the Punjab up to the mounts of Indus. "This was to have been effected by a fleet of boats", writes Franklin, "Constructed from timber procured in the forests near the city of Ferosepoor on the banks of Sutludge river; of proceeding down that river with his army, and settling the countries he might subdue on his route." (W.F., op.cit., pp. 246, 247). 

etc. Capt. Bradshaw informed,

now an independent and powerful freebooter
(Thomas), ranges the country ling between
Delhi and Jaynagar* as far as the borders
of the desert. 29

George Thomas made a friendly settlement with Vaman
Rao, the Maratha chief, who was finding it increasingly
difficult to subdue the Irish adventurer. Vaman Rao
recognised George's claim on the town of Jhajjar, and the
latter assured him of his support in the collection of land
revenue and maintenance of law and order in his areas.

Then, Vaman Rao with the help of Thomas, launched a
great expedition against Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur (1778-
1803) in the state of Rajputana. Rajputana was a poor region
during the close of 18th century. Famines were frequent and
the sufferings of the people immense. Trade and commerce
decayed. With the fall of the Mughal Empire disorder
prevailed in Rajputana. It was subjected to numerous Maratha
attacks. They freely plundered it and forcibly exacted
enormous booty. The Marathas thus began to exercise some
vague and loose suzerainty over these states. The states of
Rajputana used to pay an annual tribute to Maratha chiefs.

29. F & P, 15th October 1798, Cons. No. 10; Capt. P. Bradshaw
to Earl of Morington, G.G., Farengarh, Sept. 29, 1798.
* Uptil the end of 16th century and in the early decades of 19th century, Jaipur was called 'Jainagar' or
'Jaynagar'. +

+ Ashim Kumar Roy, History of the Jaipur City,
(New Delhi, 1978), pp. 49, 50.
No sooner did George Thomas establish his independent kingdom in Haryana when an unexpected offer to fight against the Jaipur raja came. Pratap Singh of Jaipur refused to pay any revenue to Marathas.

The Maratha authorities decided to take action against the ruler of Jaipur. So, Lakwa Dada, who became supreme officer of Sindhia in northern India, called upon the heir of Appa, Vaman Rao, to take action against Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur. Moreover the Marathas instructed Vaman Rao that he would collect the contributions from Raja Pratap Singh and in return he would be rewarded six annas out of ten annas from the collected money and remaining amount to be divided among the troops.

He found the offer very attractive, but he did not have adequate disciplined and well-organised troops to undertake this expedition. So he turned to George Thomas. He sent a message to Thomas who was busy in his own affairs in Haryana. He offered Thomas a subsidy of about half a lakh of rupees a month for the invasion of Jaipur. Thomas who was always in need of money thought that it was an attractive offer. But on the other side,

his programme to invade the Punjab would be put back and there would be the risk, as omelettes could not be made without breaking eggs, of his army being

George Thomas also took with him an English officer, Lieutenant John Morris. The contribution of Vaman Rao was only 900 Maratha cavalry, a semi-regular battalion of infantry, 600 irregular men and 4 pieces of artillery. The army of Vaman Rao was about 4,000 men. The number of combined forces increased to about 1,000 horses, 3000 infantry and 18 pieces of artillery.

On the other side, the Raja of Jaipur had 18,000 infantry and 30,000 cavalry, but the troops were ill-disciplined. The rank and file of the Rajput troops were unhappy. The nobles were haughty, proud and vain towards their subordinates. However, the Jaipur artillery was numerous and well equipped.

Thomas met the forces of Vaman Rao in the town of Kanaund. Then the combined armies set out to invade Jaipur territory and marched through the south-west territory of Jaipur. The country through which they advanced was a great desert. It was open and sandy where no tree was to be seen.

35. (i) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 146.
(ii) C.G., op.cit., p. 45.
Grey writes that Thomas had 4,000 men.
36. (i) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 146.
37. (i) Ibid.
(ii) C.G., op.cit., p. 45.
38. (i) Ibid., p. 146.
(ii) M.H., op.cit., p. 107.
There were thorny acacias known in those regions as Babools. For their defence at night when they halted, George Thomas cut down the Babools and shaped these to make an abatis.  

Later on, they entered the Shekhawati district in the north side of the Kachchwa kingdom, and took the contribution of about two lacs of rupees from the inhabitants. No doubt some Jaipur army was posted in this region but it could not resist the raiders. Bhag Singh of Khandela and other nobles of the Shekhawati district who were not well-disposed to the ruler welcomed the forces of Vaman Rao and Thomas. These nobles helped the invaders against the raja of Jaipur.

Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur learning about the activities of the enemy marched towards the northward of his territory to repulse the raiders. He and his commander, Raja Koraji Khawas (also called Kodoji Khawas) with a large number of cavalry and infantry came to the plundered towns. The Jaipur army travelled in deep desert and halted near the forces of Vaman Rao and Thomas.

39. H.G. Keene, *The Great Anarchy*, pp. 74, 75. (It is striking to notice the resemblance of these tactics to those of the British in the Sudan campaigns of nearly ninety years later; C.G., *op.cit.*, p. 45.)


41. J.N.S., 'Two Rajput Feringi Battles...', *M.R.*, vol. LXIV, No. 1 to 6, July-Dec. 1943, p. 17 (Bhag Singh, the brother of Surajmal, the prince of Khundaila was joined by 500 men of Keeytri from Singhana and Fatehpur, and also invited George Thomas for his aid against the Raja of Jaipur)*

Seeing the arrival of Jaipur force, Vaman Rao decided to retreat. But Thomas rejected this proposal. He added that the retreat would prove to be a disaster. Moreover, the Irishman frightened Vaman Rao "into fighting by reminding him that he never could again expect to be employed by Sindhia, or any other chief under his authority, if he turned his back on the enemy now." He told Vaman Rao that if Daulat Rao heard about his retreat without any resistance he might not only dismiss him but confiscate all his estates too. So Vaman Rao agreed to fight against the Rajputs.

A battle took place between the forces of Thomas and Roraji Khawas in which Jaipur's 600 men were wounded or slain and Thomas suffered the loss of 100 men. Thomas was victorious and now he advanced towards Fatehpur through sandy desert. On the way they plundered the region of Jayanagar.

The winter was approaching and the process of advancing in the desert with military equipment was very difficult. Their army approached the walls of Fatehpur after long and arduous

42. W.F., op.cit., p. 110 (It appears that Vaman Rao wanted to negotiate with the Rajputs but Thomas did not like Rao's aim).
43. P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 64; Capt. P. Bradshaw, Assistant Resident with Sindhia to G.G., near Fatehgarh, 27th Feb. 1798, p. 93.
44. P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 213; P. Bradshaw to Sir John Shore, G.G., Fatehgarh, 7th March 1798, p. 266 (Jaynagar is an old name of Jaipur city).
journey. Now their first aim was to obtain water from the wells to replenish their reserves. But the enemy immediately shut the main gates of the fort and the walls of the town were also protected by armed troops. The enemy began to fill the wells of the town with sand.

When Thomas came to know about these activities of the enemy, he immediately attacked them near the walls of town. The enemy was defeated. Thomas captured the wells but found only one well open. It was protected and guarded by Thomas's 400 men. Vaman Rao and Thomas summoned the headman of the town and demanded ten lakh rupees from him. But it was impossible for him to raise such a big amount. He could only offer one lakh. They turned down the offer of headman and began to prepare for a fight. The plan of Thomas was to secure his rear with Futtahpore itself and to protect his flanks and front by the erection of barricades consisting of large thorn trees piled high one upon the other. It was the equivalent of the African Zareba but made more impenetrable by lashing the tree branches with ropes.

Next morning Thomas formed up his storming party and quickly took possession of the town for meeting Raja Pratap Singh in the battle. Thomas at once "put 400 men into the

45. W.F., op.cit., p. 111.
46. Ibid, p. 113.
47. Ibid, p. 110.
town; 100 of the Rohillas who specialised in defensive fighting and his 300 Hariana irregulars." Later on, he cleared the wells which were previously filled with sand by the enemy. Now he set all the labourers of the town to "digging a three-sided redoubt*, so sited that its open or rear face was closed and covered by the wells of Fatehpur, and emplacements for his guns so that when they were in the camp they could sweep all the approaches to the vital wells."

Thomas protected the entire perimeter of the redoubt by an abatis. The abatis made from the babool trees had grey, huge and very sharp thorns like bayonets. These were put in rows, some trees were kept on them and the butts roped together. This was an effective method to obstruct the enemy. According to Francklin, "it is remarkable that Mr. Thomas, who had read very little, shall from the resources of his own mind have adopted a mode of defence parallel with one related in the History of Modern Europe." Thus he made a strong base in the town in which his transport, stocks of food and forage and reserve ammunition could be safely placed.

48. (i) S.B., op.cit., p. 139.  
(ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p.149. (2 battalions of Infantry each 400 men, 8 guns and 90 irregular cavalry).

* Redoubt - a kind of trench. To dig trenches in loose sand is difficult. That is why in Fatehpur these trenches were protected with an abatis.

49. S.B., op.cit., p.139.


The abatis method was not perfect in the fortification. This method was a Canadian or an American method which had become a part of Indian technique. It was once applied by Gen. Abercromby of Britain at Ticonderoga in July 1758 against French in America.
After making his preparations Thomas, his troops set out from the camp before dawn leaving a message for Vaman Rao to follow him immediately with his Maratha cavalry in the morning. The enemy was alarmed by the advance of Thomas. The Rajputs knew about the attacking forms of European trained infantry from the battles of Patan and Merta. They sent about 7,000 men against Thomas and his party. Thomas attacked them with his full force. The Rajputs fled away and left behind their cattle and horses etc. The expedition was successful. Pleased with this action, Vaman Rao presented Thomas and his officers with gifts and other robes of honour.

Next day Raja Pratap Singh and his field commander, Roraji Khawas decided to attack Thomas. They encamped with their large force about 8 miles from Fatehpur. They had about 40,000 strong cavalry and infantry, and a large number of artillery with some heavy 24-pounder guns. Thomas advanced with about 2,000 troops among them 2 battalions of infantry, his cavalry, 200 Rohillas and 10 pieces of artillery.

Now the Jaipur army advanced towards the enemy camp in three "huge dense columns" which were divided into three wings. On the right wing, there was a mass of Rajput cavalry who advanced for attacking the camp in the rear. The left
wing had 4,000 Rohillas, 3,000 Naga Gosains and 6,000 irregular infantry. This advanced against the city of Fatehpur for capturing the water supply. The main battle group or central army of the Rajputs was composed of 10 battalions of regular infantry, 22 pieces of artillery and 1600 royal bodyguards (Silah-poosh) armed with matchlocks and sabres (also called sword-and-buckler-men). This main body of army was under the command of Gen. Roraji Khawas.

Thomas now made his plans to check its advance. He selected the ground for the battle very carefully. He chose a ridge on the direct route between the enemy camp and the town which helped in giving nice command and an excellent field of fire for his powerful artillery. On this ridge, Thomas "posed eleven infantry companies of his two remaining battalions and two batteries i.e. eight guns." He placed all his force under the command of an English officer, Lieutenant John Morris.

The Rajputs brought about six cannons near the city. The Rajput cavalry now advanced in close and compact order to attack Thomas's redoubts, but was repulsed by a hot fire. In this action the enemy lost its formation and fell in confusion. Thomas watched this scene carefully and he

54. (i) W.F., op.cit., p. 117.
   (ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 150.
55. (i) W.F., op.cit., p. 118.
   (ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 150.
56. S.B., op.cit., p. 141.
immediately brought some of his guns into action in close range of the enemy. There was a cross-fire which damaged the cavalry flanks of enemy. Thomas with his cavalry made a furious charge upon the Jaipur army. The commander of Jaipur army and his several troops were killed in this action.

Then the two grenadier companies advanced in their formation and fired continuous volleys upon the Rajput cavalry. This attack proved to be destructive for the Rajputs. Many were killed and wounded by Thomas's disciplined musketry and accurate close-range gun fire. At last the enemy had to retreat with considerable loss. They now retreated hoping to take possession of the town.

In the town the inhabitants had locked themselves into their houses. Thomas had already posted the Haryana infantry and 100 Rohillas57 who fortified themselves in the strongest and highest of the houses, and they could maintain themselves against any attack. The irregulars of Thomas also controlled the wells of the city. When the Rajput force of Rohillas attacked the wells, Thomas's forces repulsed them.

Now Thomas turned his attention towards the left wing of Rajput forces. He instantly took his force and attacked the enemy. On the other side, the Maratha cavalry fell upon the inner flank of the enemy. So in this vigorous counter-attack, Thomas was able to compell them to withdraw their

artillery and retire from the attack on the town. In this action the enemy abandoned two 24-pounders in the battlefield. Roraji Khawas gave proof of bad and inexperienced command by losing his two wings of army. But he again gave another proof of his incapacity and lack of good plan, when he made a simultaneous attack with all his divisions upon the forces of Thomas.

Now Roraji ordered his 6,000 royal troops from his central position to attack Thomas's forces. In reply Thomas commenced a heavy fire of grape shot from his guns. The result was that the enemy had to retreat with considerable loss. In the meantime, Thomas also brought his four disciplined regular companies in the battlefield.

The Rajput force was now further reinforced by the Rathor cavalry under the command of Thakur Ranjit Singh of Chomu. So, Roraji again advanced with his battalions but before they could attack they received a close-range fire from the infantry and Thomas's artillery fire on the ridge. This created a lot of confusion and disorder in the enemy camp. The Maratha cavalry soon came forward. According to Francklin,

After some delay Mr. Thomas procured a sufficient number of bullocks for one of his guns advanced with that and a battalion of infantry, against the enemy, while Mahratta horse, to wipe off the disgrace they had before suffered by their inactivity, joined in the pursuit.

60. W.F., op. cit., p. 120.
But this charge of Thomas did not bring any result to him.

Thomas tried to get the two 24-pounders which were left by the Rajputs in the battlefield during their earlier retreat. The Rathor cavalry also advanced to recover these two huge 24-pounders from George Thomas. The Rathor chief's attack was very furious, and it threw Thomas's army into disorder and confusion.

The situation became very critical for Thomas. He had now few troops and only a six-pounder gun with him. He immediately loaded up the muzzle of the gun and permitting the enemy to approach within 40 yards, he gave his fire, accompanied at the same time, by a volley of musketry, with such considerable effect, that great numbers of the enemy were instantly knocked down. The first effort, being followed by two other discharges, completely routed the enemy.

The brave Thakur of Chomu was severely wounded; Bahadur Singh and Pahar Singh (both of the Khangerot clan of Kachhwas) with many others were killed by the discharge of grape; but their guns were saved. The Rajput force retreated after carrying the wounded body of Chomu chief. Roraji and his troops did not face Thomas's volleys and remained aloof in this counter-attack.

63. W.F., op.cit., p. 121.
(Here, the Rajputs recovered these two 24-pounders which they had earlier abandoned in the sandy field during their attack against Thomas.)
On the side of Thomas, John Morris was wounded and many soldiers were killed. 65 The soldiers were exhausted due to continuous marching and fighting.

After the battle, Raja Pratap Singh returned to his state. Roraji thought of making peace with Vaman Rao and Thomas. He with his vakils came to their camp with an offer of Rs 50,000 66 and demanded of them to withdraw from Jaipur territory. No doubt Thomas agreed to accept this offer but Vaman Rao rejected it. He told Roraji that he was there as Sindhia's agent and wanted additional tribute. But Roraji refused and the negotiations broke down.

In the meanwhile, Raja Surat Singh of Bikaner (1787-1828) with his 5,000 troops 67 joined Roraji's forces and prepared to attack the enemy simultaneously. Vaman Rao received a message from Daulat Rao Sindhia through Gen Perron* to leave the Jaipur operation and return to his own territory. Thomas also decided to return to his own territory. He did not want to fight against the Rajputs any more. They, therefore, accepted the offer of Rs 50,000 and started their return march.

65. (i) W.F., op.cit., p. 122.  
(ii) H.G. Keene, The Great Anarchy, p. 76.  
In this attack the Rajput casualties were about 2,000 men and on the side of Thomas, John Morris was wounded and the total loss was of 300 men (H.A.C., op.cit., p.153; W.F., op.cit., p.122).


* Gen. Perron was appointed Governor of Hindustan and he came to northern India from south.
The Rajputs began to pursue the retreating army of Thomas and Vaman Rao. The pursuit remained continuous for two days. The enemy still followed in the rear and encamped within two kos. But Thomas successfully beat back the pursuers.

Thus the battle of Fatehpur ended. In this battle both sides lost a number of men. But it proved more disastrous to the Rajputs. They lost more men and property than that of the Marathas and Thomas. Ultimately they had to pay some tributes to Vaman Rao and Thomas. No doubt the Rajputs fought against their rivals with courage and bravery but their whole plans and attacks failed before the brilliant tactics and disciplined, Europeanised army of Thomas and Marathas. Thomas displayed his military skill, brilliant tactics, great energy and courage.

Regarding the Fatehpur operation, Mr. Bidwell writes, "it was highly professional, and professional soldiers will recognise that it was only an uncommonly able member of their craft who could have raised and trained the battalions who showed such cohesion and staying power for so long in the stress of heavy fighting and near-disaster." Thomas not

On this occasion, Roraji pursued the retreating army for 30 miles and gave it up when George Thomas had cleared off the Jaipur territory. (R.K. Saxena, Maratha Relations with The Major States of Rajputana, (1761-1818 AD), (New Delhi, 1973), p. 167.

69. S.B., op.cit., p. 146.
only got tribute but also became aware of Maratha character, their troops and leaders. He obtained experience of fighting in such a sandy, waterless and hot desert. His courage and bravery also impressed the Rajput chieftains.

After this long expedition to Jaipur, George Thomas turned his attention towards the Bikaner territory because its ruler Raja Surat Singh, had earlier helped the Rajput general, Roraji, against him. He now wanted to take revenge and plunder the territories of Bikaner. Thomas, therefore, with his morale high and excellent disciplined army advanced towards the Bikaner territory.

Thomas encamped with 3,000 troops near the fort of Jeitpur which was about a mile from Bikaner city. He attacked the fortified city of Jeitpur and fought against the troops of Raja Surat Singh. In this attack Thomas lost his 200 troops but he was able to collect some tribute from this city when he threatened to attack Bikaner city.

After the expeditions of Jaipur and Bikaner territories, Thomas began his return to Hansi, his capital in Haryana state, in the middle of Sept. 1798. He also looted many towns and villages which came through his route. Afterwards, he got the

71. *Ibid*.
possessions of Badli, south-east of Jhajjar, from Vaman and raised his force more than two battalions of infantry, 1000 horse and 20 pieces of cannons.\textsuperscript{73}

When Thomas reached Hansi he found certain political changes in the region of northern India. First of all Thomas heard that Lakwa Dada, a man of ability and a good soldier\textsuperscript{74}, had been dismissed by Daulat Rao Sindhia. Next the Maratha authorities and the Sikhs were busy in facing the fresh and dangerous threat from Shah Zaman, the king of Afghanistan, who was about to approach for raiding the plains of northern India. Gen. Perron was now living in Delhi as a commander-in-chief of Sindhia's forces. He was guarding the Maratha territories in northern India.

Taking advantage of such disturbed situation, Thomas tried to reassert his control over two important old frontier districts of Karnal and Panipat.* But he was strictly warned by Gen. Perron not to do so. Thomas did not dare to go against his wishes. But his restless energy and impetuous nature would not give him any peace. So in the cold weather of 1798, Thomas turned his attention towards the Sikh states

\textsuperscript{73} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{74} F & S, 14th Dec. 1798, Cons. No. 11; J. Collins to G.G., without date.

* Earlier these districts were given by Appa Khendi Rao to George Thomas, but later on these districts had been snatched away from Thomas by Bapu Sindhia.
on his northern frontier. He advanced to attack the region of Jind* which was under the possession of Raja Bhag Singh (1768-1819), one of the Phulkian chiefs.

There were several causes for this invasion. Raja Bhag Singh was alarmed at the growing power of Thomas so close to the frontier of his own state. The fear of Raja Bhag Singh was justified because Thomas was a man of very ambitious nature and perhaps wanted to subjugate the Sikh territories. In his memoirs, he himself pointed out that

At length, having gained a capital and country bordering on the Seik territories, I wished to put myself in a capacity when a favourable opportunity should offer of attempting the conquest of the Punjab, and aspired to the honour of planting the British standard on the banks of the Attock. 75

Griffin gives another reason of the invasion of Thomas upon the town of Jind. According to Griffin,

in 1797, he made overtures to the principal Sikh chiefs, inviting them to join him in a combined resistance to the Mahrattas, and in the conquest of Northern India; but they regarded him with suspicion, for his selfish aims were barely concealed, and they thought that to help him would only be to resign their own independence. 76

* The town of Jind was about 3/4 miles long and 1/2 miles broad. It was built almost from brick and surrounded by a mud wall. On the northern side, there was an old brick fort of no strength within the town. The mud wall contained four gates, the Safidowala to the east, the Ram Rai and Kathana to the South, and the Jhanjwals to the west. There were also many fruit gardens on all sides.+


75. W.F., *op. cit.*, pp. 93, 94.
76. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 76.
Seeing that "this was merely a clever method of bringing them under his sway, the Sikhs evaded compliance with the invitation. Having failed to coax, he planned to coerce them into submission." Mr. Sinha writes that 'the Sikh chiefs also refused to help him because they regarded the unscrupulous advanturer with suspicion and were not willing to further his schemes of ambition.'

Then, there was an immediate cause. Bakhtmal, a Persian scholar, writes that one Hasan Khan complained to George Thomas that he had been dispossessed of a village, Casohan, received by him from the Raja of Patiala as a jagir. Hasan Khan offered George Thomas Rs 7,000 if he would restore him his estates. Thomas took the money and seized the village. As the village was situated near the city of Jind, Bhag Singh felt alarmed and expressed his displeasure. This enraged Thomas, and he decided to attack the town of Jind.

In the winter of 1798, when most of Cis-Satlej chiefs had gone to Lahore and Amritsar to finalise their plans of meeting Shah Zaman's invasion, Thomas began his attack with

about 3,000 matchlock men and 1,000 cavalry. He occupied Bahadurgarh. In November 1798, leaving his camp at Bahadurgarh, Thomas suddenly surrounded the city of Jind. In the fort of Jind only 3,000 Sikh garrison were present. Raja Bhag Singh rushed from Lahore to Jind. Thomas attacked the fort of Jind but he miscalculated the strength of the forces of Jind. The troops of Bhag Singh offered him bold and tough resistance. Thomas had to retreat with the loss of 400 men and on the Sikh side only few troops were killed. But Thomas did not lose courage at this sudden and unexpected defeat. He again reorganised his troops a few miles away from the city and blocked the entire city supply.

When Raja of Patiala and other neighbouring Sikh chiefs heard about the siege of Jind by Thomas, they became much disturbed. They wanted to help the ruler of Jind. Meanwhile Shah Zaman attacked Punjab and there were rumours that he would be soon advancing towards Delhi. This created a great alarm in the minds of those Sikh chiefs whose territories lay on his way. Among them, Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala (1774-1813), a weak-minded man, was greatly confused and could not decide what to do.

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82. *W.F.*, op.cit., p. 137.
83. (i) *H.A.C.*, op.cit., p. 158.
   (ii) *W.F.*, op.cit., p. 137.
But other Sikh rulers, especially Lai Singh of Kaithal (1780-1818) came to the help of Jind ruler. They were keen to resist George Thomas. They assembled their forces and advanced for the relief of Jind. The Kaithal troops under the command of Sardars Sawan Singh, Saman Singh, Diwan Kamdayal, Bhika Singh and Mamu Khan; while Gurdit Singh of Ladwa* and Bhanga Singh** of Thanesar with his nephew Mehtab Singh*** approached Jind territory. Their total army now was about 35,000 troops.

Raja Bhag Singh of Jind again sought the help of Raja Sahib Singh. He warned that if Thomas took Jind then perhaps he would also attack Patiala territory and make himself the master of the country. Finally, he sent his minister Tara Singh to the aid of Bhag Singh. He came more to study the situation in Jind rather than to render any real help.


85. F & P., 24th December 1798, Cons. No. 28; News from Patiala, 24th Jamad. (Then Thomas had to fight against 3000 Sikhs and Zamindars).

* Gurait Singh of Ladwa:
He belonged to the Dallewalia misl. He took the possession of Ladwa in 1763.

** Bhanga Singh of Thanesar (1777-1815);
He was a famous and powerful chief among the Cis-Satlej chiefs. He was a great warrior.

*** Mehtab Singh of Thanesar:
He was a nephew of Bhanga Singh of Thanesar.

86. (i) Griffin, op. cit., p. 77. (ii) H.K.G., op. cit., vol.II, pp. 280, 281. (Dr. Gupta writes the name of Saman Singh as Shyama Singh).


88. F & P, 11th Jan. 1799, Cons.No.28; Patiala, 30th Jamad.
In the first week of December, Raja Bhag Singh again sent a message to Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala that he should immediately either advance himself or send his sister Bibi Sahib Kaur* with a strong force to help him. He also told that several chiefs had joined him at Kadela near Jind. 89 There was a danger of Shah Zaman's attack in the regions of Punjab** Then Bibi Sahib Kaur agreed to march against Thomas at Jind. 90 As there was a great danger to Jind by the repeated raids of George Thomas, Bibi Sahib Kaur marched to Jind with about 2000 troops.

On the way Sardar Baghel Singh Karora Singhia, Deep Singh of Bhadour and Heera Nand with 300 cavalry co-operated with Bibi Sahib Kaur. 91 As soon as this combined force came near the camp of Thomas, he attacked them with his heavy artillery fire. He attacked so accurately that the enemy had to flee away. Then he pursued the enemy, and set all their encampment on fire and looted them. After this incident Raja Lal Singh again called Raja Sahib Singh to Jind. Raja

* Bibi Sahib Kaur (1771-1801): She was a daughter of Raja Amur Singh of Patiala and sister of Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala. She was married to Sardar Jaimal Singh Kanheya in Bari Doab. She helped her brother in his state affairs. She was a bold and honest lady.


** Because on that occasion, there was a great danger of Shah Zaman's attack. But before his attack Thomas marched towards the Sikh territories.+


Sahib Singh of Ratiala after hesitation and delay joined them with an army of 10,000 and several pieces of artillery.92

After a few days Bibi Sahib Kaur attacked the garrison of Thomas. She took his two redoubts in this action.93 Thomas lost a number of his best troops. Now, his supplies ran short; the country people turned against him. Later on, finding himself outmatched, Thomas decided to raise the siege after three months of skirmish. So at the end of Feb. 1799, Thomas suddenly raised the siege of Jind and began to retreat to Hansi via Mehram.94 Raja Bhag Singh and other chiefs pursued him on the way; he was also harassed by the peasantry. The Sikhs plundered Thomas's villages in Hansi district. They also wanted to destroy his capital.

Mr. Banerjee writes that the allied army included 20,000 cavalry according to Patiala History; so far as from contemporary sources about the military strength of these chiefs, the collected army could not have numbered more than 12,000 in all.95
Mr. Griffin writes, "the force of the allies cannot have numbered less than 25,000 men, and is estimated, in some traditions, at 40,000".96

** Griffin, op.cit., p. 77.
(ii) W.F., op.cit., p. 138.
95. Griffin, op.cit., p. 77.
A fight took place at Harnauna⁹⁶ which was situated between Jind and Hansi. Thomas fell upon the Sikh camp with his 2,000 men⁹⁷ at Narnaund⁹⁸ town. He put them to rout in this action. They took flight in all directions after losing a large number of their men and sufficient baggage. Thomas took a rich booty, "tents, baggage, howdahs of their elephants, their bazaar, 1000 saddles and about 200 horses."⁹⁹ He also seized their elephants and artillery in this action.

The defeated and humiliated Sikhs came to Jind where they found the doors of the city closed by the orders of Bibi Sahib Kaur. She rebuked them for their weakness and cowardice. Now, she herself decided to fight against Thomas. Seeing her high spirit and courage, the Sikhs felt extremely ashamed. They now resolved either to conquer the European adventurer or to die in the battlefield.

Bibi Sahib Kaur along with other Sikh chiefs came to invade Thomas and they encamped at a short distance from the garrison of Thomas. They held a council of war to decide

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(i) Griffin, op.cit., p. 77.
(ii) W.F., op.cit., p. 138. (It was situated 12 miles south of Jind and about 35 miles north of Hansi).
⁹⁷. Griffin, op.cit., p. 77.
⁹⁸. (i) Ibid.
(ii) Sinha, Rise..., p. 170.
⁹⁹. W.F., op.cit., p. 139.
what type of war tactics they should adopt. As they were holding their council, they were invaded suddenly by the troops of Thomas. This attack, it is believed, was inspired by Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha. The Sikh chiefs could not forget their mutual hatred and petty jealousies even amidst serious danger from a common foe.* The Sikh force suffered heavily in the encounter.

As a result of struggle which lasted about three months both sides were exhausted. Finally, an agreement was signed in March 1799. According to this "it was at length agreed between the contending parties, that each should remain in possession of their several districts, as they stood before the siege of Jind." So the status quo was restored.

* Perhaps this incident occurred due to the conspiracy of Raja Jaswant Singh of Nabha who asked Thomas to attack the Patiala and Jind troops. His (Jaswant Singh's) troops remained inactive and aloof in this attack.* Mr. Griffin wrote, "the jealousies between the chiefs were so fierce that no disaster could happen without it being attributed to treachery; and, on this occasion, Patiala declared that Sirdar Jaswant Singh of Nabha had planned the night attack in concert with Thomas, to avenge a scornful speech of Bibi Sahib Kaur, who said that the Nabha soldiers, in comparison with those of Patiala, were no better than sweepers." In proof of this treachery, it was observed that, although the Jind and Patiala troops had suffered most severely in this night attack, the Nabha contingent had lost neither men nor baggage."+++

++ Bibi Sahib Kaur insulted Nabha soldiers when they had returned after the defeat from Narnaund.

++ Griffin, op.cit., pp. 77, 78.

100. (i) J.N.S., vol. IV, p. 240.
   (ii) Randhawa, op.cit., p. 90. (The author also writes the date of agreement in May 1799).
Thomas fought bravely and successfully against the Sikhs. He adopted many brilliant tactics and used his artillery in a very effective manner. His assault upon the Sikhs at Narnaud was very successful when he collected a large booty and killed a number of his enemies. The Sikhs suffered due to the sudden raid of Thomas and also due to their jealousy and treachery among themselves.

Among the Sikhs, Bibi Sahib Kaur gave tough resistance to Thomas. Thomas remarked that she was a very masculine and ugly individual, but a "better man than her brother." She did not lose courage, and she scolded them when they returned to Jind after defeat at Narnaund.

After the expedition of Jind, Thomas returned to Hansi where he began to increase his infantry as well as artillery. He manufactured some cannons of the brass metal. He paid his troops from the booty which he had brought from the invasion of Jind. Meanwhile, Thomas received an important offer from Ambaji Ingle*, a general of Sindhia, in the beginning of April 1799.

Certain changes took place in the political affairs of the Marathas. Daulat Rao Sindhia had suspended Lakwa Dad.

102. C.G., op.cit., p. 47.

Ambaji Ingle (d. 1809):
He was Sindhia's officer who governed Cobe in 1784. He took viceroyalty of Northern India in 1799. Later he became Daulat Rao Sindhia's deputy. He died on 4th May, 1809. (P.R.C., vol. X, No.287; Lt. R. Close, Resident to Daulat Rao Sindhia, to G.C., Camp at Dhuni, 6th May, 1809).
from the post of Commander-in-chief. He was forced to retire to his jagir in Ajmer. Lakwa had revolted against Sindhia in Mewatty country in the beginning of 1799. He became an ally of Jaswant Rao Holkar who was very rapidly increasing his power in Central India. At Ajmer, he was creating trouble for Ingle.

Ambaji Ingle, the Maratha governor of Mewar from 1791-99, had to face the opposition of Lakwa Dada in his region. Impressed by Thomas's military ability and skill, he thought of securing his help and cooperation against Lakwa who was in open revolt. He had secured the fort of Hamirgarh. So he offered Rs 50,000 per month to Thomas and settled the other terms with him.

104. (i) P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 132; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 9th April, 1799, p. 177.
(ii) F & S, 18th April 1799, Cons. No. 19; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 15th April, 1799.
Ambaji instructed Thomas to proceed to Ajmer soon.
(iii) P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 134; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 19th April, 1799, p. 179. (In this present situation, Col. J. Collin's letters indicate the power and position of George Thomas. Col. Collins wrote, "if Thomas refuses to help Ambaji in the Sindhia affairs I do not think Ambaji and Perron would strong against the Lakwa's party without the assistance of Thomas's troops."*

*P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 134; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 19th April, 1799, p. 179 (An intelligence of private agent at Delhi).

105. P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 128; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 30th March, 1799, p. 172 (Col. Skinner mentioned that Thomas was hired by Ambaji for a salary of 30,000 or 40,000 rupees per month).


Thomas gladly accepted the invitation of Ambaji. Ambaji had full faith in Thomas's courage and bravery. After receiving this offer, Thomas prepared his army to advance into Mewar. Moreover Thomas had also an old personal grudge against Lakwa Dada who wanted to dismiss him. He thought that he could collect sufficient money to pay his troops.

However, Thomas had his difficulties. The monsoon was about to break out, and his troops wanted to stay at home. Thomas was also facing a trouble from his troops over the question of *batxa.* It is also likely that Lakwa's agents were encouraging his troops to revolt against him. Thomas through his spies received a timely warning about the plan of some of his soldiers who had decided either to seize him or to murder him in cold blood. Thomas was alarmed.

Thomas faced the situation boldly. Mr. Bidwell writes,

> A great believer in taking all bulls immediately by the horns he called up his bodyguard and riding over the lines of the disaffected battalion he challenged the conspirators. 107.

Then, he turned into a full range against the ringleaders of the conspiracy and instantly one of them was blown from the mouth of a cannon. By this prompt and bold measure he crushed the revolt of soldiers.

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* It was a special allowance paid to the troops for long absenbe from their homes in a distant place. 107. S.B., op.cit., p. 151.
Then he advanced towards Chitor. In the meantime, Bala Rao Ingle and Bapuji Sindhia marched from Kotah in the middle of April 1799. They arrived at Chitor via Hamirgarh on about 20th April, 1799. Afterwards they encamped at village Gosunda on the bank of Beroch. On the other side, Lakwa Dada immediately raised the siege of fort of Hamirgarh and marched towards Chittorgarh. Then Lakwa pursuing his army reached the opposite bank of the river (Beroch) in the last week of April, 1799. Lakwa wanted a decisive action with Bala Rao before Thomas could join him. He was also reinforced by a considerable force from the Udaipur Raja.

The camp of Bala Rao was surrounded by the troops of Lakwa, and Bala Rao was avoiding any major action till he got reinforcements from George Thomas. Meanwhile Bala Rao started peace negotiations with Lakwa which were rejected by the latter. Then, at this point, Lakwa attempted to obstruct

108. F & S, May 10, 1799, Cons. No. 9; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, dated April 28, 1799 (Thomas was also accompanied by Ambaji and Col. Sutherland to fight against Lakwa in Ajmer and Rewar).
109. Ibid.
111. K.S. Gupta, Mewar And The Maratha Relations (1735-1818 AD), (Delhi, 1971), p. 149.
113. Ibid.
114. Ibid.
116. Ibid.
the union of Nana and Bala Rao, but got little success. In the prevailing situation, Bala Rao went back to Agra while Lakwa advanced from Chitor to Udaipur.

Col. Sutherland with his army joined Thomas, and both of them planned to enter the Mewar city. Earlier, they plundered Deogarh, 68 miles north and north-east of Udaipur; Amet, 50 miles north and north-east of Udaipur; Koshithal and Lusain, and had realized a large sum of money from the Chundawat Sardars. Ambaji's son, Bhau Ingle, joined by George Thomas's disciplined corps had reduced several baronial forts near the city of Shahpura in Udaipur territories.

Ambaji ordered George Thomas to join the forces of Nana Ganesh. Thomas, Col. Sutherland, the Diwans of Nana Ganesh.
and Ambaji and other neighbouring chiefs advanced towards
the camp of Lakwa Dada. In the meantime Lakwa seized six
guns from Nana. But he failed to bring Nana for a large
action before Thomas could join him. At this point, Durjan-
sal of Kotah with his 5,000 force also tried to obstruct the
passage of Thomas, but he failed. Later, Ambaji and Gen.
Perron again tried to negotiate with Lakwa, and they even
directed Thomas to withdraw his troops from the vicinity of
Lakwa. But these negotiations did not succeed.

On 15th July 1799, Lakwa Dada again suddenly attacked
Nana and Thomas's troops with his large body of troops.
Thomas had also brought only 150 cavalry, 300 Rohillas, six
battalions of trained infantry and 22 guns.

122. P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 151; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh,
22nd June 1799, p. 191. (At that time, Begam Samru gave
her two mahals and promised another three to Gen. Perron.
J. Collins, from the information of an agent at Khatowly,
write: 'George Thomas had addressed a strong remonstance
to Mr. Perron on the subject of his hostile design against
Begam Samru.' Perhaps Thomas became angry due to the non­
cooperation of Begam Samru's troops.
(On this occasion, Kamgar Khan and Thomas could not
join Nana).
127. (i) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 163 (Compton mentioned Thomas's
force not more than 2400 men).
(ii) W.F., op.cit., p. 155.
Thus, from 15th to 20th July, they were wavering between negotiations* and fighting. Gen. Perron thought George Thomas should be reinforced by more troops who were now serving under Col. Sutherland near Jaipur. But the troops of Lakwa burst the gates of Shahpura, and laid the entire town in ruins.

Later on 9th August 1799, five thousand men from Lakwa's army carried by assault one of batteries of Nana Ganesh, killing and wounding eight hundred of his men, and capturing the commandants of the two defending battalions (Buneed Singh and Bakhtawar Singh) and five pieces of cannon* with their munition cards and much baggage. Thomas was prevented from assisting the battery of Nana by the overflow of a streamland. After this defeat agents of Ambaji had

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* Ambaji put terms to Lakwa that he should evacuate Mewar district and relinquish half of the revenue collected from the Shahpur city (F & P, Consul. 15th Aug, 1799, Cons.No. 4; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 4th Aug. 1799, L.No.62).


130. Tod, op.cit., vol. I, p. 360n (Tod puts its year 1800 which seems to be incorrect). (Lakwa, at that time put the Shahpura Raja in possession of the important fortress and district of Jehajpur, which, although the Rana consented to it, covertly receiving from the Raja two lakhs of rupees, disgusted the nobles with Lakwa).

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132. Ibid.

(It is said that later on Ambaji took the possession of one of the enemy's redoubts on the north side of this nullah and garrisoned it with 3 battalions of infantry, 1000 Gosains and 6 guns+ W.F., op.cit., p. 156.)
to retreat 20 miles away. Then Lakwa mobilised his large army to face the forces of Thomas by endless marching through dense forests and muddy roads and flooded streams. It was raining for the last eight days. This proved to be helpful for Ambaji and Thomas to regroup.

Thomas made a plan to make a sudden attack on Lakwa. He advanced with his full force and came within the lines of enemy. He at once attacked the troops of Lakwa. There was confusion and chaos in the camp of Lakwa. A number of his men were killed by the powerful force of Thomas but the stream separating his two camps helped to avert his defeat. Thomas had nearly caught Lakwa but he escaped under the cover of darkness.

Some difficulties came in the way of Thomas who was running short of money and ammunition. He appealed to Ambaji for some help, but he did not give him any satisfactory answer largely because at that time he was also facing similar difficulty. Ambaji immediately requested Gen. Perron to help his force. He even advanced four lakh of rupees as subsidy to Gen. Perron, and therefore, Gen. Perron sent four of his battalions towards Ajmer en route to Jaipur city. But, Perron's forces could not advance because certain disturbances aroise in Ambaji's camp after 4 days.

In the meantime, Lakwa Dada left Mewar and he collected the contributions about 60,000 from Shahpura's chief. On that occasion, Thomas came to Singhana town, 82 miles from Jaipur, where he had collected the ammunition and sufficient money. Later on, he invested a fort 45 miles to the north-east of that place. He punished its chief, Agaji Mehta, who incited the country people to rise against Ambaji. Afterwards, he also attacked Lakwa's forces near Mewar in which both sides lost many troops. At that time, Gen. Perron was also closely watching the activities of Lakwa Dada. On the other side, Ambaji's troops got Jhajjar which was in the possession of George Thomas.

* Perhaps his name was Agurji Mehta, who later became a minister of Mewar.
138. Ibid.

Thomas's parganas as well as the fort of Jhajjar had been taken by Sindhia's troops. Thomas was already busy in the expedition of Mewar. So, this action was a serious injury to his nature. But later on Ambaji restored the Parganas as well as the fort to Thomas' family.

Later on, from some districts of Mewar, Thomas had collected about 4 lakhs of rupees for his expenses. Meanwhile several hundred horses and foot had deserted from the camps of Nana Ganesa and George Thomas. It appears that Lakwa made some secret understanding with Sindhia. It then resulted in the desertation of the troops from the allies of Ambaji Ingle.

Later on, Ambaji came to an agreement with Gen. Perron by which they should co-operate and enjoy equal status. Moreover, Gen. Perron gave assurance to Ambaji that Mewar shall remain under his authority. On the other side, Gen. Perron also started secret negotiations with Lakwa who was jealous of Gen. Perron's power. Thus, Dr. Gupta writes, "had Perron not violated the agreement signed with Ambaji, Thomas could have collected still larger amount for his master."

Now, the two Maratha chiefs (Gen. Perron and Lakwa) met at Muazzamabad* to settle their differences amicably on the 27th October, 1799 and a compromise took place on the following terms:

139. W.F., op.cit., p. 159.
* It is situated between Kishangarh and Jaipur.
143. F & C, 17th Dec. 1799, Cons. No. 12; From J. Collins to G.G., dated 31st Oct. 1799, L. No. 83 (In this meeting, Lakwa Dada and Jaggo Bapu interviewed Gen. Perron and Ambaji Ingle. Vakils of Jaipur also assured their matters to pay tributes to Daulat Rao Sindhia. This conference lasted an hour. Ibid.)
i. Lakwa Dacia's authority as Sindhia's deputy in Hindustan was restored. He was also given the detachment of Gen. Perron's army (two battalions) which was commanded by Col. Sutherland.

ii. Gen. Perron got the command of the forts of Delhi, Agra and Aligarh.

iii. Ambaji was to remain in undisputed possession of all his former districts (Gwalior etc.) but relinquished Mewar and every pargana taken from the party of the widows. Further, he would discharge Thomas from his service after this month.  

Due to a "rapid rearrangement of pieces on the Maratha chess-board", Ambaji was ordered to abandon Mewar. After his withdrawal from Mewar, Ambaji ordered Thomas to proceed towards Raja of Datia in Bundelkhand where a revolt had taken place. But Thomas ignored the order of Ambaji, and therefore, the agreement of Thomas with Ambaji came to an end from 2nd November, 1799. Later on, Thomas left Mewar and went towards Bikaner region. Ambaji himself also retired to Kotah where he remained till January 1800.

144. P.R.C., vol. VIII, No. 185; J. Collins to G.G., Camp near Jaipur, 5th Nov., 1799, p. 125. (It appears that Thomas left the service of Ambaji from this agreement but Ambaji again brought Thomas to his service*)


146. w.r., op. cit., p. 162.
On the other side, Gen. Perron thought that Thomas was a dangerous enemy and an actual threat to his authority in northern India. So, he instructed Raja Pratap Singh to immediately intercept and attack Thomas if he tried to cross through his (Pratap Singh's) territories on his return to Haryana. But Raja Pratap Singh had no intention to come in conflict with Thomas. While Thomas was in Raja Pratap Singh's territory he attacked a strong fort of Surajgarh and extracted 50,000 rupees from its Qiladar.

Thus in the battle of Mewar Thomas remained victorious throughout. He even defeated Lakwa Dada on many occasions. He also collected sufficient contributions from the regions of Mewar. Though Lakwa attempted several times to win over Thomas, yet he remained faithful to his master, Ambaji Ingle. Thomas proved to be true, honest and loyal to his master but "his fidelity to Ambaji was rewarded by treachery on the part of that peculiar person, who became so envious of his employee's success that he incited Sindhi's General, Perron, to invade Jhajjhar in Thomas's absence." Moreover, Ambaji also wanted to secure the whole of plunder from him.

After the Mewar expedition, George Thomas advanced towards Bikaner territory to settle the matter of dishonoured bills which were previously given to him by the Raja of Bikaner.


Mr. Francklin writes that Thomas had collected about two lakh rupees from these regions (W.F., op. cit., p.161).

To meet his water requirements he made use of mussacks.*

Fortunately, on the way, Thomas was received by an unexpected ally i.e. the Muslim Bhattis who lived to the north of Haryana. They were on bad terms with the Raja of Bikaner and as such they approached Thomas. On hearing of Thomas's plans, they offered him $40,000 to return one of Raja's forts** to them.

* These mussacks were made of goat skins and contained sufficient water.


i. On this occasion, George Thomas also established his authority over the Jhaggar valley.

ii. Earlier, in 1799, the Bhattis attacked the state of Maharaja Surat Singh of Bikaner but they were defeated by its ruler at Bigor near Dabli where the ruler built a fort Fatehgarh. Afterwards, the Bhattis allied with George Thomas and some Thakurs took this fort from its ruler. But it was recovered by Maharaja Surat Singh. During this attack, Zabita Khan was the Bhatti chief who had about 7,000 men and 2,000 force of Bhatner Bhattis.+


** Raja had erected this fort 9 miles south-west of their capital (Bhatner). In the fort, the Raja kept a garrison of cavalry which took the cattles and other equipments of the Bhattis who were much annoyed from them.
Thomas accepted this offer gladly and marched to Bikaner. He came near the city of Bhatner during the night. On the morning, he opened fire upon its occupants who had vacated the fort with its garrison. He captured the fort and handed over to the Bhattis. On his arrival at Bikaner, the Raja made peace with Thomas, and also cleared his previous dues (i.e. dishonoured bills) after paying a suitable money. After this great triumph, Thomas returned to Hens i where he celebrated Christmas.

In the meantime, some disturbances arose in the territories of Cis-Satlej Sikh states in the end of 1799. Thomas, restless in spirit, and always in need of contributions, broke the truce* with the Cis-Satlej chiefs and ravaged their territories in the beginning of 1800. The situation was favourable for Thomas. There was mutual infighting among the Sikh chiefs. The Marathas were also keen to establish their authority in the region. The immediate pretext was the imprisonment of Bibi Sahib Kaur by Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala. Possibly she invited his help. Col. Collins writes, "it is not unlikely that Mr. Thomas might have been invited to cooperate with her party." 151

* The truce was earlier signed between Thomas and the Cis-Satlej chiefs after the Jind expedition on March 1799.

Bibi Sahib Kaur, who played an important role in Sikh history, was gifted with unusual courage, wisdom and valour. She was a good politician and she wanted unity among the Phulkian chiefs. She had greatly helped her brother in the battle of Jind (1799) when he was unable to face the attack.

After the Jind expedition, the growing influence of Bibi Sahib Kaur over her brother, Raja Sahib Singh, aroused much jealousy in the mind of Raja Sahib Singh's wife, Rani Aus Kaur* and some other Sikh chiefs. These persons began to poison the ear of weak-minded Sahib Singh against his sister Bibi Sahib Kaur. So, early in 1799, when Bibi Sahib Kaur was busy in the affairs of Jind, Rani Aus Kaur took the opportunity along with Sahib Singh's court officials to estrange her husband from Bibi Sahib Kaur. A series of charges was levelled against her.

The first charge against the Bibi was that she had herself kept the female elephant given by the Raja of Nahan as a reward for the services rendered in restoring order in his state. As Rani Sahib Kaur had performed all the work at Nahan, she pleaded her right to keep the present.152

* Rani Aus Kaur (d. 1923): She was a daughter of Sardar Gurdas Singh of Chathawala. She was married to Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala in 1792. She was a clever, active and a brave lady.

The Raja demanded this female elephant but Bibi had refused his demand. The second was that she did not respect his brother, and that she was not happy with the newly born son of Rani Aus Kaur, the wife of Raja Sahib Singh. The other important element of discord was that she had built in 1795 a fort near Sunam, in her jagir "without her brother's permission, and had changed the name of the village of Shirian* to Ubhowal, which it still retains."*154

The struggle between the Raja of Patiala and his sister, Sahib Kaur, lasted for a few days. She was ultimately imprisoned by her brother in the fort of Ubhowal. The news of her imprisonment reached George Thomas.

Later on, in the middle of January 1800, "having made the necessary preparations and obtained from Kaithal and Jind a promise of neutrality during his absence," 156

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*Gianiji mentioned that fort Bharia was built in 1797.

154. Griffin, op.cit., p. 79.
Thomas advanced towards Patiala and invaded the Sikh territories. The first engagement with the Sikh forces took place at Dirba, about 35 miles south of Patiala. Afterwards, Thomas's forces marched towards Ubhowal where Bibi was besieged by her brother. When Raja Sahib Singh heard about the approach of Thomas, he at once raised the siege and encamped in the fort of Sunam, 43 miles south-west of Patiala. Thomas pursued him and encamped near Sunam. But Raja Sahib Singh did not want to fight against Thomas. So, he opened peace negotiations with his sister. Thomas evacuated the territories of Patiala raja and marched towards the Bhatti region.

After settling the affairs between Raja Sahib Singh and his sister, Thomas advanced towards the city of Bhatner*.

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159. W.F., op.cit., p. 194 (On that occasion, the Patiala chief had 1,500 cavalry and 1,000 infantry).

* The country of the Bhattis was bounded east by the districts of Haryana, north by the Punjab and river Satlej, west by the desert and south by the Bikaner. Its parts extended along with the banks of river Ghaggar from Fatehabad to Bhatner. Bhatner was the capital of Bhatti tribe which previously was destroyed by Timur in 1398. It is situated about 130 miles from Bikaner and 100 miles north-west from Hisar. It is also bounded 200 miles from Delhi and about 40 south of Bhatinda. So, it's one side touches with the Lakhya jungle near Bhatinda. There were number of important towns like Fatehabad, Rania, Sirsa etc. in this region. Bhattis were of the Muhammadan religion. About 600 years ago, they came from Jaisalmer and settled in this region called Bhatti region. Most of them lived on plunder.++

++ W.T., op.cit., pp. 163, 164, 166, 170, 171 etc.
where he collected large booty. On his return to his territories Thomas plundered and burnt the town of Fatehabad and annexed it into Haryana. 161

After the expedition of Fatehabad, Thomas besieged the fort of Sirsa 162 which belonged to the Muslim Bhattis. A large number of Bhattis came to face the raid of Thomas.* But he defeated these Bhattis and plundered its regions in about February 1800.

161. (i) Cunningham, op.cit., p. 111.
(ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 169.
(iii) S.N. Rao, op.cit., p. 28.

It is said that Fatehabad was under the sovereignty of the Patiala chief at that time. Then, the Patiala chief sent 1,000 cavalry to help his men against the enemy in this region. (N.F., op.cit., p. 174).

Fatehabad is situated 35 miles from Hansi and 30 miles from north-west of Hisser.

162. F & S, April 24, 1800, Cons. No. 66; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 22nd Feb. 1800, L. No. 100, Col. Collins writes that Sirsa fort belonged to the Pathan and situated in the district of Ballogestan (Rajasthan).

It was an ancient town situated about 30 miles to westward of Fatehabad. Its original name was Sarsuti. The Muhammadan powers took its possession and later it fell to Bhattis.+

+ Gazetteer of Hissar District, 1892, (P.J. Fagan), (Lahore, 1893), pp. 6, 32.

* i. It seems to be that there were about 20,000 Bhattis in the field at that time. (David Ross, op.cit., p.303).

ii. During these raids Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur asked Thomas for two battalions of native infantry. He further indicated to Thomas that he would assign 4 parganas for the payment of these corps. But these terms could not be settled between them. (F & S, April 24, 1800, Cons. No. 66; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 22nd February, 1800, L. No. 100).
Afterwards the successful expedition of Bhatty territory, Thomas advanced towards the other Rajputana territories (i.e. Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Karwar, etc.) where he collected considerable contributions from its inhabitants.* These regions were very rich in resources. The chiefs of these regions had considerable infantry, cavalry and artillery. They had also employed a large number of the European military adventurers. In about June 1800, Thomas took considerable money from these territories. Then he defeated a large number of peasants in the village of Seesana where 700 men of the enemy were killed and wounded. 163 No doubt Thomas also lost many men but he captured the village. He took sufficient contributions in this region and later paid to his troops.

After collecting money from these Rajputana regions, Thomas now came in the territory of Saharanpur which was under the possession of Shambunath Mahajan**, one of Lekwa's

* During his raids in the Rajputana territories, Thomas again invited by Ambaji Ingle to return to his service towards Datia without delay. He even offered 50,000 rupees per month and an advance of one lakh to Thomas. + It appears that Thomas did not join Ambaji's service because he was already busy in the Rajputana and Bhatty expeditions.
  163. W.F., op.cit., pp. 188, 189. (Compton writes it as Safidon which seems to be wrong., Compton, op.cit., p. 169).

** Shambunath Mahajan was a Diwan of Imam Bakhsh Khan, the district officer of Saharanpur under Lekwa Dada, the Maratha Governor of the Upper Doab. He was first Tehsilder of this district.
collectors. Shambunath was in a confused state. He was on bad terms with Gen. Perron, who had come to Doab to punish him. Thomas took some contributions from the upper part of Doab and returned to Hansi. Afterwards, Gen. Perron also went to Delhi, and Shambunath again began to recovery of his resign districts.\footnote{164
P.R.C., vol.IX, No. 19A; Extract of letter of J. Collins to G.G., dated 20th of Safer, 13th July, 1800.}

Later on Shambunath demanded Thomas's help but without success.\footnote{165
P.R.C., vol. IX, No. 236; J. Collins to G.G., Fatehgarh, 10th Aug. 1800, p. 405.} Meanwhile, Gen. Perron's forces defeated Shambunath\footnote{166
Ibid.} who fled towards Buria.\footnote{167
Ibid.}

Thomas again came in Punjab where he obtained contributions in the districts of late Bhag Singh of Buria.\footnote{168
W.F., op.cit., p. 191. Bhag Singh of Buria who died in 1785 had 120 villages in Buria state* in Ambala district. *Griffin, op.cit., p. 46n.} Meanwhile, Thomas received an intelligence that there was a revolt in his districts, Sorani, Jamelpur, Bullhalli and Bhuweul where zamindars plundered merchants of these places.\footnote{169
Ibid.}

He immediately returned to his territories and stormed Bullhalli which he completely blocked by erecting a chain of redoubts. He also cut the supply of rebels. The condition of the rebels became very critical and they attacked Thomas's forces, but retreated with considerable loss.\footnote{170
Ibid, pp. 192, 193.} Ultimately Thomas was successful in suppressing the rebellion.
Thomas turned towards the town of Bhiwani, whose inhabitants helped the rebels. Bhiwani was attacked and plundered in which the rebels lost 150 men and their 5000 cattles were captured by Thomas's cavalry. These inhabitants agreed to pay him R$ 30,000 as well as the fort also. Thomas took this contribution and again came to Sirsa city in the month of July 1800 where he increased his army, ammunition and other stores. He now wanted to invade the Punjab particularly Raja Sahib Singh of Patiala who by his treacherous conduct broke the earlier treaty and had helped the Bhattis against Thomas.

About this time there were rumours of the invasion of Shah Zaman. Alarmed by this, Wellesley, the British Governor-General of India, wanted to prevent this attack through the help of chiefs in India. He immediately wrote to Daulat Rao Sindhia that he should send a confidential agent to all the principal chiefs of northern India "for the purpose of persuading them to unite in opposing the invasion of Shah Zaman and of reconciling them to the interests of the British Government." They sent Mir Yusuf Ali Khan to the Sikh chiefs to secure their help and cooperation in meeting this threat.

172. Ibid, p. 194; (ii) H.A.C., op.cit., p. 171.
Mir Yusuf Ali Khan, in the course of his journey in the end of June 1800, arrived at Sirsa where he met George Thomas. Thomas treated him "with kindness and provided him with an escort to Jind the principal city of Raja Bhag Singh."  

Thomas now began to make military preparations for his grand design - the conquest of Punjab. He wanted to conquer Lahore, the capital. The contemplated advancement of George Thomas towards Lahore represents that he wanted to rule over the entire regions of northern India. As Mr. Keene writes,

he (Thomas) was now occupied in no less a scheme than the conquest of the entire Punjab, from which enterprise he records that he had intended to return, like another Nearchus, by way of the Indus, to lay his conquests at the feet of George the third of England. But the national foes of that monarch were soon to abridge the career of his enterprising subject, the Raja of Hansi.

Mr. Humbledy writes that Thomas came with a body of 5,000 men and 60 pieces of artillery. He was now opposed by the youthful Maharaja Ranjit Singh; but the issue was adverse to the Sikhs. Nor was it surprising that Gen. Thomas with

175. Ibid., p. 25.
176. RG, 16th Oct. 1800, Cons. No. 12; J. Collins to G.O., Fathgaharh, 16th July, 1800, L. No. 120.
In RG, vol.IX, No.19, page 34 printed its date 26 July 1800, which appears to be incorrect.
* He was one of the great officers in the army of Alexander the great. He was a native of Crete.
a well disciplined army of 5,000 men, and sixty guns should defeat a young chief of twenty-two years of age'.

Thomas opened communication with the Calcutta Government through a friend, Capt. H.V. White, to whom he entrusted the offer of any service that might be desired by Governor-General. His aim was that if directed to advance he would occupy the Punjab, placing himself under the orders of the British Commander-in-chief. In this plan, he added, he had nothing in view but the welfare of his king and his country: "I shall be sorry", he wrote,

\[
to \text{ see my conquests fall to the Marhattas, I wish to give them to my King, and to serve him the remainder of my days, and this I can only do as a soldier in this part of the world}.\]

Moreover, he also mentioned that

I have no other design in view than the glory of my king and country, and do not wish to see my conquests fall to those at enmity with them.

Thomas believed that French were planning a blow against the British Government in India. About the intention of Thomas towards the French, Mr. Edwardes writes, "for symbolic images, Thomas had the kind of unreasoning hatred that is often to be found among the illiterate. He

(Mr. Keene mentioned his name, E.V. White* Keene, \textit{Hindustan Under Free Lances, 1770-1820}, p. 93).
had been told often enough, when he was a sailor in the English service, that the French were England's most bitter enemies." 183 But, in spite of Thomas's loyalty to the British and his own hatred of the French, Lord Wellesley (1760-1842) refused to communicate with him. George Thomas's dream was to conquer Punjab and plant the British flag there. He had the necessary military skill and stamina to achieve this grand aim. But, on account of, a number of adverse circumstances, he failed in this attempt.

No sooner did he start his march, he learnt that T'erron was contemplating an attack on Jhajjar. He abandoned his "long cherished idea of hoisting the British flag on Lahore fort" and immediately returned to his territory. Had he not been deterred, "the British flag would have shadowed Lahore nearly fifty years before it actually did so." 184