CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I

Geographical aspects of Khandesh

Khandesh, lying between 20° 3' and 22° 7' north latitude and 73° 42' and 76° 28' longitude with a total area of 20,099 square Km formed the 'most northern district' of the territories under the control of the sole Commissioner of Deccan in 1818 AD. Stretching nearly 256 Km along the Tapi and varying in breadth from 92 to 144 Km, Khandesh forms an upland basin, the most northerly section of the Deccan table-land.

Captain John Briggs, the then Political Agent of Khandesh (1818-1823) described Khandesh as 'bounded on the south by the range of Hills in which the forts of Kunhur, Unkye and Chandoor lie; on the north by the Satpoora Mountains; on the east by the districts of Aseer, Zeinabad, Edlabad, Baour, and Jamner, and on the west by the Hills and forests of Baglana'. From the north-east corner, as far as the Sindwa pass on the Agra road, the hill country belonged to Holkar. Further West, in Sahada, the Khandesh boundary skirts the base of the hills; then, including the Akrani territory, it moved north, right into the heart of the hills, to where, in a deep narrow channel, the Narmada forces its way through the Satpuda. From this to its north-west centre, the Narmada remained the northern boundary of the district. On the east and south-east, a row
of pillars and some convenient streams without any marked natural boundary, separated Khandesh from the central Provinces and Berar. To the south of the Ajanta, Satmala or Chandor marked the line between Khandesh and the Nizam's territory. On the south-west Laling, the Galna hills separated Khandesh from Nasik. Thence the frontier crossed the Sahyadries, and ran north-west along a well marked western spur of that range as far as the town and fort of Songad. From Songad the Tapi river and a line of masonry pillars carried the boundary north-east back to the Satpudas at the west end of the Akrani territory. Within these limits, except that in several places along the south boundary the Nizam's territory ran north of Ajanta, and that in the extreme south a group of 13 Khandesh villages lay isolated on the Deccan table-land, Khandesh was a compact district with none of its lands subject to any other jurisdiction during the early British regime.

An upland basin, draining into the Tapi with a gentle westerly slope, Khandesh includes most varied tract of country, wild hills and forests, rich gardens and groves, stretches of barren plain and low rolling rocky hills. From east to west, parallel with the Tapi, are three well marked belts of country, in the centre the rich Tapi valley, in the north the high and wild Satpudas, and in the south and south-west bare ridges and rich well watered valleys flanked by the Ajanta and Shyadri hills.
Central Belt

The Tapi banks are high and bare, and the land on both sides is seamed by tributary rivers and streams. Now and again from the north, spurs of the Satpudas stretch close to the river bank, and on the south rise some low barren hill ranges. With these exceptions, 'the long central plain is, for about 240 Kms from Barhanpur to Nandurbar, an unbroken stretch of deep alluvial soil.' The east and centre were rich and well tilled. The towns and villages were large and prosperous, surrounded by mango groves and gardens, and except when baked by the raging winds of the hot season, the fields were green with varied tillage. On both sides of the river cultivation was widespread. Southwards it stretches to the higher soils and barren hill sides, and north to the line of deep forest that clothes the base of the Satpudas. In the West, though the soil is no less rich, parts of Nandurbar, Shanada, and Taloda were overgrown with forest and brushwood, the climate was unhealthy, and the people were few and poor.

North Belt

North of the Tapi, the whole length of the rich alluvial plain is bounded by the steep southern face of the Satpudas, a belt of mountain land from 32 to 48 Kms broad. Much of this hill country, now with only a few scattered Bhil hamlets, was once well peopled. At every few miles in the forest of Pal Tappa are ruins of villages with remains of sugar and oil
Further west, Amba, in the wide valleys of the Aner and the Arunavati, was dotted with the brushwood-covered ruins of the temples, mosques, wells and upper-stories houses of what must once have been considerable towns. 'Though so much is deserted, in the north-west the cool waving Akrani uplands are well tilled and prosperous, peopled by Pavras, skilful and hardworking peasants whose homesteads, each in its plot fields, are sheltered by well kept may and moha (Bassia latifolia) groves'.

South Belt

South of the rich Tapi valley, the country is more varied than either in the centre or in the north. In the extreme east, the Purna valley, between the Hatti hills on the east and rolling broken ground on the west, stretches south, much of it was, from the fear of the wild beasts, waste or covered with brushwood. Further west, drained by the Vaghus, the Girna, and the Borji, wide stony thorny plains rise in low broad-topped basaltic ridges, or sink in rich valleys studded with mango groves and large prosperous villages. West of the Borai, the land, as it draws nearer Sahyadris, grows wilder and more picturesque. Ranges of quaintly cut hills, separated by the rich well watered valleys of the Panjhora, the kan, and the Borai, stretch far east across the Khandesh plain. The extreme
west is wild and hilly; the air though cool and pleasant, was, except in the hot season, laden with fever; the people were poor and unsettled; and the hill sides, bare in the east and well wooded in the west, yielded only scanty crops of coarse grain.

Down the western Sahyadri slopes the district stretched into the Dangs, a broken tract crossed by endless lines of petty hills, 'much of it forest, with deadly climate, a poor and wretched people, and the rudest tillage'.

Hills

There are four chief hill ranges within Khandesh limits -

(a) The Satpudas in the north
(b) The Hatti hills in the south-east
(c) The Ajanta or Satmala range in the south
(d) The Sahyadris in the west.

Satpuda Ranges

The Satpudas, a broad belt of mountain land, stretching in a wall-like line along the north bank of the Tapi, rises from the first range of hills, ridge behind ridge, to the central crest about 2000 feet high, and then slope gently to the Narmada. Among the peaks that rise from 3000 to 3800 feet, the Chirfere, in the east, Panch-Pandu and Mondhiamal looking down on Yaval, Tajain Vali commanding both the Tapi and Narmada valleys, Babkuvar further west, and in Akrani, Turanmal
takes its name from turan, Syzyphus rugosa, a large white berried shrub), the greatest hill in the range. This, once a seat of the rulers of Mandu, a long rather narrow table-land, 3300 feet high and about 41.6 Sq Km in area, rises, in north latitude 20° 52' and east longitude 74° 34', about 52 Km north of Sultanpur and 128 Km from Dhulia. The hill sides, of traps and basalt with red iron clay, were thickly studded with Kurvand, Carissa Corondas, and Turan, Syzyphus rugosa, bushes, and with wild mango, banian, and Jambal, Syzygium Jambolanum trees. The hill top stretches in small flat plateaus broken by irregular lines of hills from 100 to 150 feet high. Near the south-west corner there is large lake of beautiful and cool water, about a mile and six furlongs round 650 yards broad and 34 feet deep in the centre. In addition to the lake and its great dam are the remains of many temples and walls, all of them, accordingly to the local story, the work of the saint Gorakhnath. "Except Bhils and Pavras, of whom there are some scattered villages, the hill is without inhabitants." In the wet season (July - October), the rain is constant, and sometimes so heavy that for days it hides everything a few yards off. In the cold weather frosts are common. In the hot season (March - June), the lake, the neighbouring forests, and a strong steady south-west wind combine to make the climate delightful, with, during May, a mean temperature of about 77°.

Hattis

The Hatti hills, bounding the Purna valley on the east, ran north-west and south-east, and for about 32 Km passed through
the south-east corner of Khandesh. Rising gradually from the Tapi valley, in their first 32 Km they are rather low and tame. Further east, forming the northern frontier of Berar, they rise to nearly 4000 feet, and finally merge in the Nagpur hills. At first bare and rocky, as they near the southern limit of Khandesh, their sides were in places somewhat thickly covered with brushwood and timber, and gave shelter to wild beasts.

Satmalas

The Satmala also known as the Chandore or Ajanta range, breaking off sharply from the Sahyadris in the north west of Nasik, runs for about 80 Km east in a series of quaint basalt pinnacles and ridges. Near Manmad, after a gentle depression, it again rises about 600 feet above the plain, and forms a somewhat monotonous wall-like boundary between Khandesh and the Deccan. Though, except for about 24 Km in the west, not actually within its limits, the range skirts the south of Khandesh for about 128 Km. A few miles beyond Ajanta it turns south, merging into the highlands that form the southern frontier of Berar. As they are a narrow range, little more than the steep northern face of the Deccan table-land, the Satmalas contain few forest tracts. There sides, mostly bare or with a few scattered trees, had here and there, on the bank and in the beds of streams, timber and brushwood thickets large enough to shelter tigers and other wild animals. Besides the picturesqueness of its western peaks, the chief interests in the Satmala range are the
famous rock cut Buddhists temples and monasteries at Ajanta, Patna and Chandor. Within Khandesh limits, besides several foot-paths, two earth roads crossed the hills, one through the Ranjangaon or Outram pass near Chalisgaon, and the other by the Ajanta pass above Pardepur.

Sahyadris

The Sahyadris hills bound the south-west corner of Khandesh. Then, at the northern extremity of the range, they turn sharply to the east, leading the broad Tapi plain between them and the Satpoudas. Without any well marked peaks, many of Sahyadri ridges have curious and picturesque outlines. They are scattered one behind the other, chiefly running north-east and south-west but with many spurs starting eastwards nearly at right angles to the main range.

Except during the hot season, the climate was 'to all but Bhils, most hurtful'. Though with a good rainfall and in places with deep forest and valuable timber, the slopes of the Sahyadris are bare or have little more than a covering of brushwood. The only earth road that crossed the Sahyadri hills between Khandesh and the Konkan was by the Kundalibari pass, about 24 Km west of Nizampur.

Rivers

The main Rivers of Khandesh are -

(a) The Tapi, (b) Girma, (c) Bori, (d) Paujhara,
(e) Borai and (f) Narbada.
The Tapi

The chief feature of the district, the line to which almost its whole surface drains, is the TAPI. With a course including woodlings of about 720 Km, and a drainage area of about 73,000 Sq Km, the Tapi, flowing from the highlands of Central India, falls into the Gulf of Cambay, about 19 Km west of Surat. Of the whole of its course, about 290 Km or more than one-third, lie within Khandesh limits. For the first 240 Km the valley of the Tapi is flat and well tilled, and the banks, at almost every three-quarters of a mile, were crowned with villages. Then at Prakashna in the west of Shahada, the forest begins and villages and fields gradually grow fewer. 16 Km further west at Kukurmunda, and during the ten remaining miles, spurs from the Sahyaaris and Satpudas, stretching close to the river, form banks in places 200 feet high. 'West of this country is still a thick forest, full of wild beasts, and except for small clusters of Bhil huts, with no signs of inhabitants,'

Within Khandesh limits the Tapi was used neither for watering fields nor for boat traffic. The height of the river banks prevented successful irrigation. Though unsuited for boats, the Tapi has for years been used in carrying heavy timber from Vajpur, a Gaikwar forest tract westwards to the coast.

During its course through Khandesh, the Tapi receives
many tributaries from both sides. On the right bank are, beginning from the east, the Bhokar, the Suki, the Mora, the Harki, the Mauki, the Guli, the Aner, the Arunavati, the Gomi, the Gomati and Valer, and one on the left, the Purna, the Bhogavati, the Vagnur, the Girna, the Bori, the Panjhara, the Borai, the Amaravati, the Shiva, the Rangaval, and the Nesu. From the nearness of the Satpuda hills in whose southern slopes they all spring, the streams on the right bank are small, and of little use for irrigation or for other purposes. They have the peculiarity that near the hills and again for several kilometers before they fall into the Tapi their streams flow through out the year, while in a middle belt the water, during the fair season, passes underground leaving the bed perfectly dry.

The streams on the left bank draining much wider tracts of country are of greater size and consequence. Except the Purna and Vaghur, all the left bank streams have their sources among the Sahyadri hills. Of these there are four chief streams the Girna, Vaghur, Bori and Panjhara. The waters of these rivers were much used for irrigation.

The Narmada

The Narmada, for about 72 km, skirts the north-west corner of the district.

Irrigation

Irrigation was more extensively practised in Khandesh than in the Deccan or Southern Maratha country.
Save in Nizampur in the west where there was great scarcity, the district, was on the whole fairly supplied with surface water. Many of the chief streams flow during almost the whole year. Except the Tapi and the Purna whose banks are too high, from almost all of the western streams, irrigation was carried on to a considerable extent. Dams (baudharas) and wells had been built in great numbers especially in Pimpalner and Dhole.

Soil

All varieties of soil that come under each of the three orders, black (kali), red (mal) and stony (barad) are found in this district. The central belt of the wide Tapi valley, about half of the whole area, consists of either of a black alluvial clay highly retentive of moisture, or of a loam overlying a stratum of yellowish clay of good depth. On this deposit soil, which for richness cannot be surpassed, wheat was extensively grown. Skirting this rich tract along the base of Satpudas where the level is somewhat higher, the soil is inferior, and in the higher ridges almost disappears. Along the banks of the river, where the land is much cut by deep ravines, the soil is mixed or overlaid with lime nodules, and in some places the surface soil is entirely washed away, with exceptional patches or strips of a rich alluvial deposit. On the south-east, red soil, including brown and grey, predominates with patches of coarse black overlying trap, deteriorating towards the south-west, where it is found of less depth,
most of it light and friable, much mixed with gravel or lime nodules. Capt Briggs was of the view that 'the districts of Baglana and tracts along the banks of the Tapi upto the Satpura Hills are by far the most capable of improving and will eventually become the most productive portions of the province."

**Arable Waste**

Compared with other Bombay districts, Khandesh was remarkable for its large tracts of arable waste. The chief of these were Pal among the Satpudas to the north of Raver, Amba in Shirpur, Dhauli in Chopda, and Navapur and other tracts in Pimpalner. 'Once highly tilled, they are now covered with brushwood, and have become so unhealthy that, from September to February, hardly any one but Bhills and other forest tribes can live in them'.

**Hot Springs**

In Khandesh there are four hot springs, three, Unabdev, Sunabdev and Najhardev in Chopda, and fourth, Vedha in Shirpur.

**Climate**

The Khandesh seasons are the rainy months from the middle of June to the middle of October, the cold months from the middle of October to the middle of February, and the hot months from the middle of February to the middle of June. From variety of height, position and character, the climate varies
greatly in different parts of the district. In the western
hills and forests, the rainfall from the south-west monsoon
is heavy, and in the Satpudas the supply is also considerable.
But over much of the centre and south the fall is scanty and
uncertain, and in few seasons it is in all parts sufficient.

The cold season, from middle of October to the middle of
February, is except on cloudy days, pleasant and bracing. From
middle of February to the middle of June, except the west, the
whole of Khandesh is subject to an extreme of dry heat. In the
Satpudas the heat is somewhat tempered by the forests, but
below the Satpudas, especially in the east, the Tapi valley
is the hottest part of the district, sometimes still and
stiffing, at other times with burning winds blowing is far into
the night with thermometer at from 105° to 115°. In the west
the upland valleys of Panjhora and other streams, not less than
1500 feet above the sea and several hundred feet above the level
of the plain, have even in the hottest season, cool and bracing
nights, and are hardly ever visited by hot winds.

As regards the general health of the people the hot weather
is the most healthy, and the cold weather the most unhealthy
season. In the beginning of the cold weather, the drying of the
ground breeds much malaria, and later on the great daily
extremes of heat and cold are very trying. Different parts of
the district vary greatly in healthiness. The east and centre,
though from the extreme dry heat of not weather and the sultry
camphor of the raining season trying to Europeans, are for
the natives generally healthy. On the other hand, except in
the hot season, the west especially the Pimpalner and Nandurbar
subdivisions, is deadly to Europeans and natives alike'. Even
the Bhils, until the beginning of the hot weather, suffered
severely from fever and ague, and so greatly did the climate
affect them, that the mamlatdars and other officials had from
time to time to be changed to more healthy stations.

Forests

Khandesh was one of the largest forest districts in the
Bombay Presidency. Its forests reserves 'stretching over
34 Kms or 22.3% of the entire area lie chiefly in the hilly
country in the west, along the Satpuda hills in the north,
and in the rough land near the south-east corner. Besides
these main ranges, Khandesh, except in the central plain, is
full of low hills unsuited for tillage, and bare even of
brushwood.'

The Khandesh forest reserves may be roughly brought under
three groups. In the north a series of forests stretching
along the line of the Satpuda as from Akrani in the extreme
north-west to Sarda in the east; in the South-east and south,
parts of the north slopes of the Satmalas and some outlying
low hill ranges and river banks; and in the west, the rough
hilly tracts, where at the northern extremity of the range of
Sahyadris sweep eastwards across the Khandesh plain. In the
north or Satpuda group, lying between the Tapi and the Narmada,
were seven forest reserves. Except scattered open plains or
bare patches, some of them of large extent, the whole of the hill range was one vast forest.  

Main Trees

Main trees of Khandesh were - Teak (Tectona grandis), Anjan (Hardwickia Binanta), Salai (Bos wellia thurifera), Khair (Acacia Catichu), Sandal, blackwood (Dalbergia latifolia) Tivas (Dalbergia Ujaineasis) Babhul (Acacia arabica), Mango, Moha, Charnimb, Ain (Terminalia tomentosa) etc.  

Wild Animals

The chief wild animal was the tiger (Wagh). 'In the disturbed times at the beginning of the present century large tracts passed from village into forest and tigers roamed and destroyed in the very heart of the district'. In 1832 wild beasts killed 500 human beings and 20,000 head of cattle. Their destruction was one of the most pressing necessities, and in May, June and July of that year (1322), as many as sixty tigers were killed.

Other wild animals found in Khandesh were Panthers, Leopards, Bear and Hog.

Birds

Of game birds there are among Rasores, Peafowl, Pavo cristatus, living in all woods and shady gardens, grey jungle-fowl, Gallus sonnerati, and Spur fowl.
Routes and Passes

Routes

The early rock-cut remains at Ajanta, Patna near Chalisgaon, Chandor and Nasik make it probable that, as far back as the second and first centuries before Christ trade routes between North and South India passed close to those places. In the third century the author of the Periplus (247 AD) mentions that trade crossed Khandesh from Broach to Paithan on the Godavari, and to Tagor ten days further east.24

During the Mohamdan period, the main routes were by the Barvan or Sukaldevi pass from Malwa to Khandesh. During the 17th and the first half of 18th centuries, when Burhampur was at the height of its power and Surat was the chief port of Western India, the bulk of the great traffic between the inland countries and the coast passed through Khandesh. The European travellers of 17 century describe the main route as passing from Surat east through Navapur, Nanaurbar, Dondaica, Sindkheda, Thalner, Chopda, Songir and Navi to Burhanpur.25 Second very important route lay from Surat to Navapur, and then struck south through Pimpulner, Nimpur and Patna pass to Golkunda.26

At the beginning of the British rule there were no made roads. 'The tracks were ill-appointed and deficient in everything but discomfort and danger. Few far between were the miserable hamlets, and the mountain passes were as rugged and impracticable as their fierce possessors.' 27 In 1826 the chief routes were from Daulia as a centre, 248 Km north by Songir and
Thalner, through the Sindva pass to Mandleeshwar and Nhow; north-east by Amalner, Chopda and Dhaulibari pass, 117 Km to Dhulkot; east by Parola, Brandole and Savda 165 Km to Burhanpur; South-east by Bhadseon and Pachora 134 Km to Ajanta; South by Mehunbara and the Gavtala pass to Aurangabad; south-west by Malegaon, Chandor, Nasik and the Thal pass, 236 K.M to Bhivandi, a route passable for every sort of laden cattle, and west by Pimpulner and Navapur to Surat. For many years the only one of these tracks on which money and labour were spent was the great Bombay-Agra trunk road by Thal pass, Nasik, Malegaon, Dhulia, Songir, Narmada, Daohari, Danivad and the Palsner or Sendra pass. In 1853-54 some progress was made in improving the cross roads of the district and about 160 Kms of fair weather roads were made at a cost of Rs 9380 (£ 933).²⁹

Passes

On 94 passes through the hilly country to the west, north and south of Khandaeh, 15 are in Sahyadris, 54 in Satpudas and 25 in the Satmalas. Of the 15 Sahyadri passes, 7 are in the range separating the Pimpalner sub-division from the Dangs and the Nasik district, and 9 are in the spurs that intersect the Pimpalner sub-division. Those leading into the Dang are Borjarbari, near Haypur, passable for half-laden cattle and Ghanmalbari, near Umbapata barely passable for carts. Those leading into the Nasik district are the Selbarighat, on the main line between Surat and Nasik, bridged for carts but with little traffic; Medalvadignat, a track for foot-passenger,
Mordara on old road from Surat to Malegaon, a fair pass and Mahudvadi passable for carts but in very bad order. Those in Pimpalner are Ghodighat near Champalla and one between Seri and Amli, passable for foot passengers; Kundalibagh, about 24 Km west of Nizampur, on the main road between Dnule and Surat, passable to carriages; Chulkhanabari and Thanepada on Nanarbar and Nizampur, with fair traffic, Mug or Tamborabari on the road between Bhanmanvel and Dahivel, Barely passable for cart; Ghatbari on the road between Ashtana and Nizampur; Yesarbari on the road from Sakri to Nizampur and Kalambhirbari, on the road between Sevali and Nizampur.

Satpuda Passes

Beginning from the west are - Amlibari, Savarbari, Singpurbari, Valheribari, Dhekatibari, Amnibari, Asambaghat, Chandseelighat, Buraka or Dodhabuvaghat, Namtea, Kardibari, Navegavghat, Turanmalghat, Vadali, Malapur, Barwan or Sukaldevi, Palasner or Sendwa (on the Bombay-Agra road, about 43 Km east of Barwan or Sukaldevi. In 1826 this was the high road to Khow, but so unhealthy that between August and December the Europeans preferred any other route). In Chopda, besides six foot-paths used more or less by the people in the plains and the Bhils of Aasavada and other places there are following passes - Kakvyaghat, Dhanlibari, Sirya Barda, Vaijapur and Umarthi. In Sarada, besides 20 mountain foot-paths mostly used by the Bhils were following main passes - Hindalbari, Bhilambari, Mangraul, Pal and Gangapur. Except Sendwa and some other passes, most of these passes were hardly passable for carts.
Satmala Passes

Satmala passes beginning from the east one the famous Ajanta, above Fardepur, about 48 Km south-east of Pachora - easily passable by carts, Haldiaghat, Janjaliaghat, Murdeshwar-ghat (foot-path); Jogesarighat, Nandrughat and Shenaraghath all passable for laden cattle; Sighaghat and Antrughat (Foot-paths); Kaladat and Asaghat (Footpaths), Mahisghat and Govtalaghath or Amba between Chalisgaon and Karmad (the old trade line on which at the hill foot, the ruined city of Patna stands. This track was originally made by Aurangzeb and later repaired by Lieutenant Outram when he settled the Bhils at Kannad); Nimghat, Outram or Ranjangavghat (16 Km south of Chalisgaon) and Junonyacaghath. Beyond in the extreme south are group of small passes.30(a)
II

Historical Sketch of Khandesh

The oldest Khandesh legends belong to the hill forts of Turanmal and Asirgad. The Mahabharat mentions Yuvanaśvamī, the ruler of Turanmal as fighting with the Pandavas and Asirgad as a place of worship of Ashveśṭhamā. According to local tradition, Asirgad was in about 1600 B.C., the headquarters of a Rajput chief whose ancestors came from Oudh.

In early times Khandesh, like the rest of Deccan, was probably under great vassals, Mahamandaleshvars and hereditary land holders, Paligars, settled at Asirgad in the east, Patna (near Chalisgaon) in the south, Nasik in the west and Laling in the centre, all under the control of the overlords of Tagar and Paithan.

The rock temples of Pitalkhora, Nasik and Ajanta show that in the second and first centuries before and during the first three centuries after Christ, Khandesh was under rulers who patronised Buddhism, some of whom lived at Paithan. The first dynasty of which distinct records remain are the Andhrabhṛtya or Shatavahans who ruled upto about 240 AD. At this time Khandesh was
on the highway of commerce between the coast trade
centre of Broach and Paithan and Togar. The goods were
carried in wagons, and though much of the country was
wild or desert, it was in places extremely populous.\textsuperscript{37}

Early in the fifth century (419 AD), Nasik was
governed by Virsen an Ahir King\textsuperscript{38}. Though, according to
Puranas Ahir independence lasted only sixty seven years,
the Ahirs are of considerable importance in Khandesh
history. Their chiefs for long held its leading forte\textsuperscript{39}
and the people still form one of the main elements in
population.

In the fifth, or early in the sixth century a
Yavan dynasty, the Vindhyashaktis or Vakatakas probably
under the Guptas held parts of Khandesh. The Chalukyas
under Pulakeshi (489 AD) established their power by end
of the 5th century\textsuperscript{40}. The next dynasty that has left
traces in Khandesh and Nasik was a race of Yadavs in the
later part of the eighth century\textsuperscript{41}. These Yadavs gave
place to the Rathods or Rashtrakutas who remained in
power till overthrown by the Chalukya Tailapa about
970 AD\textsuperscript{42}.

Of the local chiefs who at this time (800 - 1200
AD) ruled Khandesh, the record of two families, the Taks
of Asirgad and the Nikumbhavanshas of Patna remains. The standard bearers, Tak Rajputs of Asirgad, are several times mentioned by the poet Chand as fighting for Chittor against Musalmans invaders. The Nikumbhavanshas of Patna, probably at first under the Gaalukya, and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries under the Yadavs of Devgiri, ruled 1600 Khandesh villages from 1000 AD to 1216 AD.

After the fall of the Nikumbhavansha (1216 AD) Khandesh was probably under an officer of the Yadavs of Devgiri, by whom most of the old temples, ponds and wells, known as Hemadpanti or Gauli Raj, were built. At Asir, probably in the beginning of the thirteenth century, the Taks were driven out and their place taken by Chohans, who according to tradition came from Golkonda.

Khandesh under Delhi Governors (1295-1370 AD)

Ala-ud-din Khilji defeated Ram Dev, the Yadav ruler of Devgiri in 1295 AD and forced him to pay tribute. In 1312 AD, Ram Dev's son Shankal Dev, withholding his tribute, was defeated and slain, and Devgad made the centre of Musalmans rule.

In the disorders that followed Ala-ud-din's death (1316 AD) the Marathas revolted. These revolts were finally put down and under Muhammad Tughlak's (1325-1351 AD) strong rule, the Deccan was thoroughly subdued. In 1338, the
revolt of his nephew Kurshasip brought the emperor to Devgad, and its position and strength so pleased him that he decided to make it the capital of his Empire. But the disorders caused by his reckless cruelty prevented the scheme from succeeding. Under Mohammad Tughlak's Govt., Khandesh was part of the charge of an officer stationed at Ellichpur in Berar.

A few years later (1347 AD) Devgiri was seized by the rebel nobles and finally (1351 AD) passed into the hands of Hasan Gangu, the founder of the Bahmani dynasty. The power of the Bahmanis seems to have included, in the west, Ahmednagar and south Nasik, and in the east, part of Berar. Along the Chandor or Satmala hills there would seem to have been a line of independent chiefs at Galna, Antur, and Vairatgad. The east was under the powerful Asirgad chief, and west in hands of Raja of Baglan.

Under Farukias (1370 to 1600 AD)

Thus matters remained till, in 1370 AD, as a reward for timely help given to Emperor Feroz Tughlak in Gujarat hunting party, the districts of Thalner and Karanda, on the Gujarat - Khandesh border, were granted to Malik Raja Faruki, a young Arab of high family. After forcing Raja Bharji, the Baglan chief to pay yearly tribute to Delhi, Malik Raja sent presents to the Emperor. In reward
Malik, with the title of Khandesh Commander-in-Chief (Sipah salar) was raised to the command of 3000 horses. Soon he became very powerful. Before Malik Raja’s time, the state of Khandesh was very wretched. For years without any regular government, it had lately been visited by a famine, so severe, that not more than two or three thousand Bhils and Kolis survived. On death of Malik Raja (1599 AD) his son Malik Nasir captured Asirgad and built two cities Zeinabad and Burhanpur.

The rulers of the Faruki dynasty gradually became quite powerful and continued to rule Khandesh till 1599 AD. Bahadurkhan, the last Faruki ruler was defeated by the great Moghal Emperor Akbar and Khandesh became part of the Delhi empire in 1599 AD.

According to European travellers Fitch and Newberry, Khandesh was about this time (1589-1601 AD) wonderfully rich and well peopled, yielding in places great abundance of grain, cotton, wool, and sugar with great markets for dry fruits, yarn, prints, calicoes, lawns, brass-ware, arms and drugs. It formed a province 240 Kms (70 Kos) from east to west and 160 Kms from north to south. It was bounded on the north by Malwa, on the east by Berar, on the south by Galna, and on the west by Malwa to which the districts of Nandurbar, including Shahada and Taloda,
were handed over. It contained thirty-two sub-divisions yielding a yearly revenue of Rs 758850 (£ 75885). Besides these, the Nandurbar district, with seven sub-divisions and an area of 667,203 acres (859,604 bighas), yielded a large additional revenue of Rs 1254050 (£ 125,405) and furnished 500 cavalry and 6000 infantry. The winter was temperate, the air delightful, and the rivers and streams abundant. The thirty-two sub-divisions were all in high cultivations. The husbandmen, Kunbis, Bhils, and Gonds were dutiful subjects and very hard workers. The chief product was Indian millet, (Jvari), which in several places yielded three crops a year. Rice was excellent, the vegetables remarkably fine, betel leaf abundant, and flowers and fruit plentiful. Of manufactures, there were different kinds of fine and ordinary cotton cloths. Of cities there were: Burhanpur, a large city inhabited by 'people of all nations' abounding in handicrafts; Asir, a large city at the foot of the fort; Chopda, a large town well populated; Damburni a populous town; and Edlabad, a good town.

Under the Moghals - (1600 AD - 1760 AD)

On its conquest by Akbar, in honour of the prince Danyal who was chosen its governor, the name of the province was changed to Dandesh. Akbar called it Dandesh,
a compound of Danyal and Khandesh.° 'Dan-paisa (a copper coin also called after the same Prince) is still sometimes found, but this appellation appears to have died with its author.°

For the first thirty years, though without much regular fighting or open opposition, the district was unsettled and declining. In February 1609 AD, the English merchant Hawkins, travelling from Surat to Burhanpur, even with an escort of about sixty Pathans horse, was attacked by a troop of outlaws.

Soon after the beginning of Shah Jahan's reign (1629 - 1630 AD) Khandesh suffered from the twofold calamity of war and famine. The great losses due to revolt of Khan Jahan Lodi, formerly governor of Deccan were followed by a total failure of rain over the whole country from Ahmedabad to Danlatabad. Lands famed for their richness were utterly barren. 'Life was offered for a loaf but none would buy; rank for a cake; but none cared for it; the ever-bounteous hand was stretched out to beg, and the rich wandered in search of food'. Dog's flesh was sold and 'the pounded bones of the dead were mixed with flour'. The dying blocked the roads and those who survived fled. Food houses were opened at Burhanpur. The Emperor and the nobles made great remissions of revenue.
In 1634 Khandesh was made into Subhat and included part of Berar and the present district of Khandesh as far south as Galna. The districts of sultanpur and Nandurbar had formerly been joined to Malwa. The country south of Khandesh, as far as the Bhima, was made into a separate subha, of which Daulatabad was the head quarters. Both Governments were in 1636 united under Aurangzeb. Next year the Moghal power was more firmly established in Nasik and West Khandesh; Nasik, Trimbak, and several of the Chandor hill forts were taken, and the Beglan chief was forced to pay tribute. During the years of peace which followed, Shah Johan introduced into Khandesh Todar Mal's famous settlement. The land was measured, the produce of each bigha ascertained, and the proportion to be paid to government, settled for each field. This assessment, long known in Khandesh as tankha, continued the nominal standard till the introduction of British rule.

At this time and till the close of the seventeenth century, the presence of large bodies of troops, and of the courts of the emperor and many of his nobles, together with centering of trade along routes that led through Khandesh to Surat, greatly enriched the province. In 1660 AD it yielded the revenue of more than £2,700,000. According to Thevenots and Tavernier few parts of the Moghal Empire were so rich. The ways were
safely guarded and it was full of villages and well populated towns. 'Probably no part of India was richer in cotton, rice and indigo'. In many places were sugar-cane plantations with mills and furnaces to make sugar. At Burhanpur the 'cloth trade was as great as in any part of India'. The costly white cloths used by the rich as veils, scarfs, and Kerchiefs, were in special favour from the beautiful blending of silver and gold; prodigious quantities were sent to Persia, Turkey, Poland, Muscovy, Arabia and Grand Cairo.  

These reports of the great richness of Khandess probably really refer only to the well watered west and to the rich Tapi valley. Ogilby's (1670 AD) account that, though pleasant and fruitful near the Tapi, Khandesh was in most parts barren, unwholesome sandy, and dry, seems more likely to be correct. Even in the rich parts, according to Bernier, the ground was tilled almost by force and consequently very ill tilled, and the weavers were wretchedly poor.  

The middle of the seventeenth century was the time of Khandesh's highest prosperity. A few years later saw the 'beginning of the Maratha exactions', from which the district 'continued to suffer' till its conquest by the
Under Marathas (1750-1818 AD)

In 1670, after his second sack of Surat, Shivaji passed south through Khandesh, and a few months later sent an officer, Prataprao Gujar, and for the first time demanded the payment of chauth (one-fourth of the revenue), and plundered several large towns. Moropant Trimal took the important fortress of Salher in Baglan, commanding one of the chief roads into Gujarat. From this time the west was often disturbed by the Maratha and Moghal conflicts, and by the exactions of a free-booter named Khanderao Dabhade, who hostile alike to the Moghal and Marathas, managed to support himself among the western hills.

In 1675 AD, Shivaji plundered Khandesh, sacking and burning the great marts of Chopda and Dharangaon, two of the most flourishing places in the districts. His death in 1680 did little to restore peace. In 1684 AD Aurangzeb, entering Khandesh with a great army, after a fierce resistance gained the forts of Chandor, Galna, and Salher, and passed to the south. No sooner were the Moghals gone, than (1685 AD) Sambhaji overran and plundered the whole district, took Burhanpur and retired ravaging the country.
along the base of the Satmala hills towards Nasik. For twenty years the struggle went on. Forts were taken and retaken, and from time to time the Marathas spread over the country, burning and pillaging.

After Aurangzeb's death (1707 AD), disorder still further increased. In 1708 AD, Shahu, Shivaji's grandson, gaining liberty, raised a body of troops in the west of Khandesh and plundered the country from Surat to Burhanpur. In 1713 AD Hussain Ali Khan, the leading Delhi noble unsuccessfully tried to suppress Khanderao Dabhade, the Maratha leader who held the west of Khandesh. Shortly after he finding he was wanted at Delhi, made a treaty with the Marathas, ceding them the one-fourth (Chauth) and one-tenth (Sardeshmukhi) of the Khandesh revenues. But the Emperor refused to ratify this treaty and the war went on till, in 1720 AD, under the influence of Balaji Vishvanath, the terms were agreed to.

Not long after (1720 AD) Chinkilich Khan, better known as Nizam-ul-mulk, who after the murder of Ferokshir had been appointed governor of Malwa revolted and crossing the Narmada at the head of 12,000 men, seized Burhanpur and Asirgad, and defeating the imperial forces, first at Burhanpur and then at Balapur in Borar, reduced and
annexed the whole of Khandesh and made himself almost supreme in the Deccan. After a war between him and the Marathas a treaty was made under which Khandesh was to be respected by the Marathas in their passage to and from Malwa, and nothing but the usual tribute was to be levied from the Deccan. This treaty remained in force till Nizam-ul-mulk's death in 1748 AD. Four years later, Salabat Jang, his son and successor, was attacked by the Marathas and obliged to surrender most of Khandesh, and after twelve years, (1760 AD), the Maratha victory was completed by the fall of Asirgad.76

In 1761 AD, after disaster of Panipat, the Peshwa was compelled by the Nizam to restore the lately added parts of Khandesh. But shortly after that Nizam was defeated by the Marathas and he was forced to restore the territory to the Peshwa and confirm his former cession.

After a short term of peace, dissensions broke out amongst the Marathas, and in the disputes between the Peshwa and his uncle Raghunathrao (1768-84 AD), Khandesh was often the scene of disorder and war.77

In 1779 AD (February 6 - 25) the English first appeared as a military power in Khandesh. Colonel Goddard,
On his march from Central India to Surat, found Khandesh most prosperous. The supply was abundant, and the people industrious, happy, and humane, did not fly from their villages, but voluntarily offered provisions and grain. For 128 Kms west of Burhanpur, the country was full of villages, fertile, prosperous, and well tilled.

In 1795 AD (13th March), after his defeat at Kharda, the Nizam, among other territory, ceded to the Peshwa his Khandesh possessions. From this, after making grants to the important Maratha Chiefs, especially to Holkar and Sindia, the part left to the Peshwa was formed into a separate charge, Subha. This included Galna, Khandesh proper, Newar, Bijagad, Pal Nemad and Hindia.

The disturbances which followed the death of Peshwa Madhavrao II (1796 AD) were two years later, increased by the disputes among the sons of Holkar's general Tukoji. The eldest legitimate son, Kashirao was supported by Sindia and Malharrao, the second son, by his illegitimate brothers Jaswant rao and Vithoba. When Malharrao was killed by Sindia, Jaswantrao broke into rebellion, and gathering a band of freebooters, laid waste Khandesh and drove Daulatrao Sindia's forces from Khandesh.
The new century (1800-1805 AD) had worse evils in store for Khandesh. War broke out between Holkar and Sindia. Sindia, advancing hurriedly from Poona, was met and defeated by Holkar (1802 AD). Before the year was over (October) the Sindia took his revenge by defeating Holkar. While Sindia marched on Indore, Jaswant rao Holkar, gathering his scattered forces, advanced against Poona. Passing through West Khandesh, without pity or favour, he utterly ruined and laid it waste.

Jaswantrao Holkar's success at Poona (1802 AD) forced the beaten Peshwa to seek British aid. The treaty of Bassein (31 December 1802 AD) was signed, and the English marching on Poona, made Holkar retire and re-seated Bajirao II as the Peshwa (13 May 1803 AD). Passing through east Khandesh on his way north, Holker ruined it as utterly as he had before ruined the west.

A few months later the battle of Assaye (23 September 1803 AD) broke the power of Sindia and of the Raja of Nagpur, and the English entering Khandesh took Burhanpur and Asirgad (21st October 1803 AD). After further defeat at Adjgaon (28 November 1803 AD) Sindia was forced to sue for peace. Under the terms of the treaty, parts of his lands in Khandesh were restored to Sindia and part given to the
Peshwa. War was continued against Holkar, and his share of Khandesh was occupied by the British troops. After a protracted struggle, Holkar, suing for peace, received back all his lands south of the Chambal (1806 AD).

Khandesh was now in a miserable plight. On the top of the ruin wrought by Holkar came a failure of rain. No harvest was reaped, the whole stock of cattle perished, and the people, dying or flying to Gujarat, left many parts of the district desolate. But the Bhils, who had before lived with the other inhabitants, and had, as village watchman, been great instruments of police, retired to the hills. Even after the famine the Bhils pillaged the rich plain villages. Against these Bhils 'no weapons were thought too cruel or too base'. At Kopargaon Balaji Lakshuman, tempting from the hills a large body of the Chandor Bhils surrounded and massacred them in 1804 AD. This teachery only made the Bhils fiercer, and the Maratha officers retaliated by most cruel massacres at Chalisgaon, Dharangaon and Antur. These savage punishments did little to restore order.

Unable to protect themselves, the chiefs and large landlords called in the aid of Arab mercenaries, and these foreigners, not less frugal than warlike, soon rose to power. Saving their pay and giving it out at interest
these Arabs became the chief money lenders of Khandesh, levying large sums both from their employers and from the general body of the people.  

Besides from the Bhils and Arab usurers, Khandesh suffered from the exactions of its fiscal officers, who farming the revenues for a year or for a short term of years, left no means untried in their efforts to wring money from the people.

In 1816 AD, a new enemy fell on Khandesh. The Pindaris, under the guidance of the Musalman Bhils of the eastern hills, entered through the Asirgad pass, and with no troops to harass them, plundered at leisure, causing more misery than either Bhils or Rabs. Their power was soon broken. In 1817, as part of Lord Hastings’ measures against the Pindaris, Lieutenant Davis, with a body of the Nizam’s Horse, dispersed and drove them from Khandesh.

III

British Occupation of Khandesh

The last great Maratha alliance against the English was completed. Peshwa Bajirao II declared war against the British on 5th November 1817. His army under Bapu Gokhale burnt the residency and attacked the small force under
Colonel Burr. Twenty days later Appasaheb Bhosle of Nagpur followed his example. After another twenty days, inspite of the opposition of Tulshibai, the mother of young prince, Holkar's ministers and generals resolved to support the Peshwa with an army of 26,000 men. Tulshibai, the queen mother, suspected of treachery, was seized and beheaded on the banks of Sipra, and the insurgent generals began their southward march. They were defeated at Mahidpur after a well fought battle on 21 December 1817 by the British force under Sir John Malcolm and Sir Thomas Mislop, then in pursuit of the Pendhari Chhuttu.

The war between the Holkars and the British was concluded by the Treaty of Mandasore (January 6, 1818). By this treaty the Holkar gave up his claim on all the territory of the Satpuda range, besides agreeing to several other conditions. The Treaty of Mandasore ceded to the British, Holkarshahi territory in Khandesh, which though, considerable, did not embrace the whole of Khandesh. The territory ceded to the British included Thalner, Sultanpur, Nandurbar, Raver, Adavad, Nyahlod, Utran, Galana, Chandwad, Ambad, Shergaon, Korhale, Depoor, Veral, Sidurghodalgaon, Mauze Adgaon, Wadzire, Kasaba Narsool, Kondapur, Koshti Chandanpur, Jambgaon, Antur, Dug and Gandrad. Of these Thalner, Sultanpur, Nandurbar, Raver, Adavad, Nyahlod, Utran and Galna
belonged to Khandesh while the rest belonged to Swaraj, that is Maratha country. Bajirao had a total of 19 forts and garrison outposts in Khandesh. Of these eleven were managed directly by the Peshwa while eight were left in charge of his Sardars. Bajirao's forts were Mulher, Salher, Bhamer, Mora, Aurangabad, Hargad, Nhava alias Ratangad, Pisola, Kanera, Dher and Kukurwadhe. Daulatrao Shinde was in charge of the four forts of Ashar, Burhanpur, Bhugaad and Kalibhint. These, however, did not form part of Khandesh proper. Holkars held the three forts of Galana, Laling and Shendave. The Garrison at Malegaon, with the fort, was under the charge of Rangrao Narayanrao Rajebahadur, and in 1818 of his successor, Gopalrao. In the province of Ganathadi included in Khandesh in 1818, the Peshwa had in all thirty five forts, of which six were held by his sardars. Hatgad was held by the Dhamdheres, Chandwad by Holkars, Songir, Ankai Thankai and Rajdher by the Vinchurkars. It will, therefore, be seen that though the Holkars had ceded their parts of Khandesh to the British, in January 1818, large tracts of Khandesh and the area in its vicinity was still under Bajirao.

Meanwhile, the Peshwa, defeated at Kirkee (November 5, 1817) and again at Ashta (February 19, 1818), and
despairing of aid either from Nagpur or Sindia, retired through Khandesh towards northern India. On 16 May 1818 at Dholkot near Asirgad, finding the Narbada fords guarded, he gave himself up to Sir John Malcolm. Sir Thomas Hislop with the headquarters and the 1st Division of the Deccan Army, began his march southward and after descending the Simrol Pass, proceeded by way of the Sendhwa Ghat towards the Valley of Tapi. He passed unopposed to Thalner.

Fort of Thalner

'Rising abruptly from the waters of the Tapti river, where it is now crossed by the Bombay-Agra road, before that road passes the Sendhwa Ghat, was the fort of Thalner, surrounded on the other three sides by a hollow way, varying in width from a hundred to a hundred and fifty yards. The walls rose to a height of sixty feet above the hollow, the interior having the same elevation. The entrance was on the eastern side, through five successive gates, communicating by intricate traverses. A winding ramp, with steps in some places, ascended through the gate to the rampart. The ground round the hollow way was intersected by ravines, round which clustered the houses forming the town of Thalner, about
350 yards from the fort. On the 27 February the First Division was approaching this place, which belonged to Holkar, and should have surrendered under the terms of the treaty of Mandsar. Here, on being summoned to surrender, the Commandant Tulsiram Mama, refused, and though warned that he would be treated as a rebel, continued to fire on the British troops. As the storemen of party of the flank companies of the Royal Scots and of the Madras European Regiment under Major Gordon, Royal Scots approached in the late evening. This storming party forced the first and second of the fire gateways. At the third gate Tulsiram gave himself up, and passing in led the party through the third and the fourth gates. At the fifth gate, a body of Arabs, after refusing for a while, opened the gate, and when a party of troops had entered, fell on them, among others cut down Major Gordon and Captain MacGregor of the Royal Scots. Hearing of this treachery the rest of the besieging force rushed in, and except one who escaped over the fortwall, put the whole garrison of 300 men to the sword. Tulsiram Mama, the Killadar was hanged from a tree on the flag staff tower the same evening.
The same evening, on 27th February 1818, Capt John Briggs, issued a proclamation to the public and warned the servants of the Holkar Government now in Khandera, that they should handover their charges to the British authority but they should suffer a fate similar to that of Tulshiram Mama, who 'placed himself and the garrison in the condition of rebels and subjected himself and his troops to the punishment of death.97

Both the fate of the Killedar of Thalner and Briggs' proclamation seem to have had the desirable effect. From Thalner, Sir Thomas Hislop marched to Betawad and found it abandoned by Daji Gopal, one of Trimbakji Dengale's retainers. At Betawad the force was divided, the Commander-in-Chief marching along the Bori and General Doveton keeping to the banks of the Girna. Amalner, yet another important place, was also surrendered by the Arabs to the English.98 Holkar's commandant at Chandvad (ie Chandor) gave up the fort without a struggle. At Galna, the Commandant and the garrison evacuated the fort even before the arrival of the British forces. The fort then was occupied by the British with Native Infantry.99
By end of 1818 except Sultanpur, Nandurbar, Advad and Raver, all Holkar's possessions south of the Satpudas were held by the British. In the following months (April 1819) Chalisgaon and three other Peshwa districts were in the British interests, taken by Mirfast Ali, the Jagirdar of Antugad and Songir and the country around surrendered to Lieutenant Rule. To the north-east were large bodies of Arabs who harassed the plain country. Mirfast Ali, supported by a battalion of Infantry two field guns and 500 horses, pressed forward, and clearing the country, placed it under the charge of Lieutenant Hodges, the Assistant Political Agent. Driven from east, the Arabs retired to the west and massed their troops in the neighbourhood of Sultanpur. To bring them to order Lieutenant Colonel MacGregor advanced on Sultanpur and Nandurbar. Major Innes moved from Galna to support him.¹⁰⁰

Defence of Songir

The town and fort of Songir in the Khandesh valley was taken on 13th April by a party of 3rd Native Infantry which made a forced march from Galna under Lieutenant Rule, who left in the fort, which had 11 guns and many wall pieces, a garrison of a havildar and 10 men, with 20 irregulars. Lieutenant Rule then returned to Galna. On 17th April 2,000 Arabs with scaling ladders attacked
the town and killed the irregulars in it, but were repulsed by the fire from the fort. A reinforcement of 15 regulars and 50 irregulars was sent from Galna, but the Arabs who were again approaching, retreated on the arrival of a body of Poona Horse.

Lieutenant Colonel Mac Dowell, who was conducting operations in Khandesh, established his camp near Malegaon on 15th May 1813.

The fort of Malegaon

The fort of Malegaon was a strong fort and town in possession of resolute Arabs, who had selected this as the strongest place for resistance in Khandesh. The fort of Malegaon was quadrangular in form, situated in a bend of the river Musam, which covered one face and half of the two adjoining. On the other side the town, approaching the river at its extremities, almost encompassed the remainder of the fort. The fort consisted of two lines of works, the interior of which was built of masonry, surrounded by a faussebraye 7 feet high and a ditch 25 feet deep and 16 feet wide. The outer line, flanked by towers, was built of mud and stone, and approached within a few yards of the town on one side and of the river on the other. The inner fort was 60 feet high, with a rampart 16 feet wide,
approached only through narrow covered staircases. Within were numbers of bomb-proofs. The garrison consisted of about 350 Arabs who had few guns.

The fort of Malegaon was in possession of Raje Bahadur family, descending from the famous Naro Shankar Raje Bahadur. The Arab settlement in Malegaon dates back to the days of Naro Shankar. He had invited several hundred Arabs to come and settle in the area, and had given them lands. The descendants of these Arabs who settled at Malegaon were called the Mawallid (Indian born). A few of them continued the profession of arms, but many entered into trade or the money-lending business. In Maligaon there were about 200 Mawallid families who lived in the town of Malegaon outside the fort. In May 1818 Gopal Rao Raje Bahadur, the dejure master of the fort was virtually a prisoner in the hands of the Arabs, mostly born in Arabia.

On 16th May 1818 Lieutenant Colonel Mac Dowell with more than 1000 men and 270 pioneers encamped before the town and called the Arabs numbering about 350 men to surrender. Briggs, the Political Agent and Lieutenant Colonel Mac Dowell also sent a proclamation (approved by Mountstuart Elphinstone, the Sole Commissioner) which
guaranteed to the Arabs their life and property if they agreed to lay down their arms and consented to be transported to Arabia at British cost. The Arabs refused. Then both the Commander of the British Detachment and the Political Agent decided not to parley any further and the army moved to siege. On the night of 18th the Arabs made a desperate sally in which the chief engineer of the siege, Lieutenant Davis was killed and Major Andrews, commanding the European regiment was severely wounded. The garrison received a reinforcement of 50 Arabs, and it was rumoured that Arabs were moving eastward to break through the siege and reinforce the garrison. On the 22nd, the besieging force was strengthened by 500 Hindustani Horse, and on the next day a body of infantry of the Russell Brigade, 450 strong under Lieutenant Hodges. The British troops launched attack on but they were beaten back. Briggs reported the continuation of the siege and heavy losses of the British. A breach was carried through the inner wall of the fort, and on the 27th a storming party was sent in. The garrison from the fort repulsed the party and Lieutenant Nattar of Engineers was killed. By 31st May, 'about 5,800 rounds of 18 and 12 pounders shots have been expended before this place', and an equal amount would be necessary, if the fort wall was
to be breached elsewhere. The tough resistance of the garrison was unexpected. It is graphically described in one sentence in contemporary, Marathi documents, 'Malegaon is still fighting'.

The long siege and determination of the British as well as their seemingly inexhaustible power, started having its effects on the garrison. Worst still, the proclamation itself was having its effect on the Arabs outside Malegaon, thereby diminishing the possibility of outside help. Jamadar Ahmed with 25 of his men from Parola accepted the conditions of the proclamation on 02 June 1818, while 3 Jamadars and 200 Arab followers from Nandurbar followed the suit on 7th June. Passports were issued to them for Surat for their eventual transportation to Arabia.

By 2nd June 1818, the garrison lost the town, occupied by Lieutenant Colonel Stewart and on 4th reinforcement from Ahmednagar (1st Battalion, 4th Bombay Infantry under Major Watson) strengthened the besiegers. On 5th June, the British mortar fire exploded two magazines in the fort, and a large breach was made in the eastern wall. Finally on 13th June the garrison asked for terms.

The battle of Malegaon was perhaps the longest single battle of the Third Anglo-Maratha War. The seize
had began on 17th May 1818 and lasted for almost a whole month. About 450 Arabs opposed 2,600 British troops with 36 guns, mortars and howitzers. The British fired about 8,000 projectiles and fired 35,500 pounds (16117 Kgs) of gunpowder. The Arabs lost 35 killed 60 wounded. The casualties on the British side were 5 officers killed, 8 wounded and 220 rank and file killed and wounded.\\Stat\\\\n
During the Malagaon siege, Major Jardine reduced Nandurbar and Kukurwunda, and marching on Taloda, by the promise of favourable terms, gained Taloda and Navapur and opened communication with Gujerat. After the fall of Malagaon, a body of troops was stationed at Songir, another at Parola, and a third one at Dharangaon. By the 1st July 1818, except some isolated spots, the whole district was in the British hands.

Lieutenant Hodges, the Assistant Pol Agent was despatched to Nasirabad. The whole country east of Aner and Bori as far as Mrjar, and a line drawn from Kujar to Saigaon, on the Girna and along. The Ranjhara to the hills was made over to him as a separate charge.

In the following year (9th April 1819) the fall of Asirgad put an end to the war. Except Sindra, Songir, Laling and others on important lines of communications which were garrisoned by armed police, most of the hill
forts were dismantled. The Headquarters of the regular troops were fixed at Malagaon, and Captain Briggs as Political Agent took up his residence at the central place of Dhulia.

At the time, on account of the maintenance of a body of horse, Sindia owed the British a considerable sum. To clear off the debt and meet future charges, it was arranged that Pachora, Yaval, Chopda and twelve villages in Lohara should be made over to the British. This territory was transferred to the British in 1820. After this transfer the depredations of Suryajirao Nimbalkar who held Yaval with a force of 3000 Karnatak soldiers, and of the Thokes Dhot held the strong town of Lasur in Chopda and were closely connected with the Bhils, were at once put down.

SOURCES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is largely based on the primary sources, both unpublished and published.

The Deccan Commissioner's Files preserved at the Pune Archives, Pune, throw a great deal of light on the Bhils of Khandesh up to 1826 AD. These Files are grouped in two sets, viz., Deccan Commissioner's Inward and Deccan Commissioner's Outward. The Inward Files contain the letters sent by the Political Agents/Collectors to
the Commissioner. Those containing the Bhils of Khandesh are found in the Files No. 170 to 209. These letters, obviously are not arranged subjectwise, but are arranged chronologically. Therefore, the reading of these letters become unintelligible unless read along with the Deccan Commissioner's Outward Files which begin with volume 401. The Outward Files contain replies to the letters in the Inward, or originate the replies that are to be found therein. Most of the revenue, judicial and political matters concerning the collectorates are covered by these files.

The despatch from the Court of Directors, London to the Governor in Council Bombay dated 21 July 1824 and Robertson's Report to Chaplin dated 10 March 1825 contain vital information about the Khandesh Bhils. The former is a critical review of the Bhil Policy from 1818 to 1824 by the Court of Directors. The queries raised therein have been explained/clarified by Robertson in the latter. The Robertson's Report (found in the Satara Residency File 55) is attached as Appendix 'A'.

Along the published primary sources, the Poona Residency Correspondence in thirteen volumes, may be considered as very useful for understanding the British attitude and policy towards the Marathas. Besides these, the selections from the Peshwa Duftar edited by Prof. C.S. Sardesai, particularly Vol No. 41, through a flood of light on the period under study. The selections from the
Records of the East India Company, (in 4 Volumes) are also of great help.

The official reports written by Briggs, Chaplin, Graham, Rose, Wingate, Mansfield are very important among the published primary documents.

The Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, 1880 is also quite useful.
NOTES

CHAPTER I


2. Briggs to Elp., 22.12.1818, DCF 174, p


4. Ibid, p. 3.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid, p.4.
10. Ibid, p. 10.


16. Ibid, p. 15

17. Ibid.

18. Ibid, p. 16.


22. Mr. Chaplin's Report, 30.8.1822, DCF


24. Mr. Grindla's Pariplus, pp. 125, 126, quoted in Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, p. 32.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

34. Gazetteer of the Bombay Presidency, op. cit., p. 239.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., p. 239.
39. Ibid., p. 240.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
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