

**OPENING OF THE MEERUT
AND UMBALLA SECTION OF
THE DELHI RAILWAY, ON THE
14TH OF NOVEMBER, 1868**

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Opening of the Meerut and Umballa Section of the Delhi Railway, on the 14th of November, 1868 by John Lawrence

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JOHN LAWRENCE

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OPENING OF THE MEERUT AND UMBALLA SECTION

OF

THE DELHI RAILWAY,

On the 14th of November, 1866.

BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY,
THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN LAWRENCE, BART.

G.C.B., G.C.S.I., ETC., ETC.

LONDON:

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1869.

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INDIA OFFICE, S.W.

15th January, 1869.

SIR,

At the request of the Government of India, I am directed by the Duke of Argyll to transmit, for the information of the Directors of the Sunde Railway Company, a copy of a Resolution, passed by the Government of India, on the occasion of the opening of the Umballa Section of the Delhi Railway.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) M. E. GRANT DUFF.

W. P. Andrew, Esq.

Nos. 1308—99 R.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA,

Public Works Department—Railway.

FORT WILLIAM, *December 3rd, 1868.*

DELHI RAILWAY,

Official Opening of the Meerut-Umballa Section.

RESOLUTION.

On the 14th ultimo the Viceroy and Governor-general of India inaugurated, on the invitation of the Agent for the Delhi and Punjab lines of the Sunde Railway Company, the opening of the Section of the Delhi Railway between Meerut and Umballa, expected to be in a fit state for public traffic in a few weeks.

2. Attended by the Company's officials, the local, civil, and military authorities, and a large number of the residents of Umballa, and others, also by the Maharajah of Puttialla, the Rajas of Jheend and Nabha, and the Nawab of Mulair Kotla, and other Cis-Sutlej chiefs, the Viceroy proceeded by special train to Saharunpoor, stopping to inspect the large bridges over the Markunda and Jumna rivers. At Saharunpoor the train was met by resi-

dents of that station, of Meerut, and of Delhi. After a brief stoppage, His Excellency returned to Umballa, and, on arrival, was present at a public entertainment given by the Agent of the Company.

3. The Viceroy availed himself of the occasion to express his satisfaction at the steady progress towards completion of the system of railways undertaken by the Scinde Company, and his appreciation of the labours of those by whom the construction of the Delhi line had been so far, and so rapidly advanced. The Viceroy particularized the Agent, Major-General Saunders Abbott, the Chief Engineer, Mr. Harrison, on whom for a long time had devolved the arduous and responsible duties of Agent, the Contractors, especially their able managing partner, Mr. Charles Hensley, and the Government Consulting Engineer, Lieut.-Col. Drummond, of the Royal Engineers. His Excellency paid a passing tribute to the memory of Mr. Henry Stone, an Engineer of repute, who lost his life last year by an accident to the works.

4. It was with peculiar gratification that Sir John Lawrence presided at the official opening of this extension far into the Punjab of the Grand Trunk Railway of Upper India, to the important military station of Umballa. And the prospect which the present state of the works holds out of the early establishment of an unbroken line of iron road, 1,341 miles in length, between Lahore, the capital of that distant frontier province and the metropolis of the empire on the sea-board, enhanced His Excellency's gratification.

5. The Governor-general in Council now desires to record the cordial acknowledgments of the Government of India of the good service rendered to the State by the gentlemen already mentioned, and to add, that the persevering and successful labours of members of their respective staff, though necessarily not particularized, are also fully appreciated.

ORDER.

Ordered that this Resolution be communicated to the Government of the Punjab and North-Western provinces, and to the Secretary of State for India.

Also that it be published in the Supplement of the "Gazette of India."

(Signed) C. H. DICKENS, Col., R. A.,
Secretary to the Government of India.

OPENING OF THE MEERUT AND UMBALLA SECTION OF THE DELHI RAILWAY, ON THE 14TH NOVEMBER, 1868.

(Compiled from the Indian Newspapers.)

Saturday, the 14th was a grand day at Umballa. It was that fixed for the opening of the railway to Meerut, by His Excellency the Viceroy. The section thus opened is not completely finished, but in order to secure for the line of which it forms part the distinguished sponsorship of Sir John Lawrence, it was determined, with His Excellency's sanction, that the formal inauguration should take place on His Excellency's arrival at Umballa, on his return from Simla, *en route* to Calcutta; the line to continue closed to traffic after the ceremony, until, if necessary, the 1st January, 1869.

The Umballa Railway Station, on the morning of the 14th, accordingly presented a very lively and striking scene. The building, both internally and externally, was decorated with flags and evergreens. A guard of honour, consisting of the 21st Hussars, a wing of the 106th Foot, and two batteries of Horse

Artillery, was drawn up in front of the building, the Hussars forming a street up to the station main entrance, on either side of which two or more companies of the 106th Foot were formed up in line, the bands of both corps flanking the entrance, and the batteries of artillery being posted one on each flank of the commencement of the street of Hussars. The programme, as given in the invitations issued by Major-General Abbott, the agent to the Railway Company, was an excursion by train to Saharunpore, beyond the Jumna, the train starting at a quarter past seven a m., regaining Umballa by noon, when His Excellency and the company would sit down to breakfast in a large durbar-tent pitched close to the station.

About 7 a.m. the platform and approaches to the station had become thronged with the "rank and fashion" of Umballa and other Punjab stations. The ladies mustered in considerable strength, and, what with silks and muslins of brightest colours, and gold-bedecked uniforms of blue and scarlet, the scene was a somewhat brilliant one. There were also several native chiefs, each with a suit of followers; present amongst them being the chiefs of Puttiala, Narbah, Jheend, and Molair Kotla. Colonel Taylor, Commissioner of the Umballa Division, received these chiefs as they arrived at the station; they had

waiting rooms set apart for their special use, and they proceeded in the train to Saharanpore. They were not, however, present at the breakfast, the Viceroy having graciously relieved them from further attendance on the return of the train to Umballa.

At about half-past seven o'clock, a small cloud of dust in the distance, and the rattling of the swords and scabbards of the cavalry escort, announced the advent of the Viceroy. His Excellency was in an open carriage drawn by four greys, and was accompanied by Sir Richard Temple and the vice-regal staff. The Guard of Honour now gave the Royal salute, the two bands playing the British National Anthem, and the guns thundering forth the Royal "twenty-one." His Excellency, acknowledging the salute, alighted and entered the station, and in a few minutes afterwards the whole party were being borne along at moderate railway speed in the direction of Saharanpore, a distance of fifty-eight miles from Umballa. The course of the line is almost due south, and runs through a naturally fertile and almost perfectly level country. It crosses a number of nullahs, which, though now dry, exhibit in ordinary years, in the rainy season, large volumes of rapidly-rushing water. It also crosses the Western and Eastern Jumna Canals, and the great Jumna