

CHAPTER XIX
PLACES OF INTEREST*

AKBARPUR (pargana Laharpur, tahsil Sitapur)

This is a considerable village, lying in Lat. 27° 40' N. and Long. 80° 56' E., on the unmetalled road running from Biswan to Laharpur, twelve miles from the former and four miles from the latter, and about seven miles north-east of Parsendi railway station on the Sitapur-Burhwal line of the North Eastern Railway.

Nothing is known about the early history of the place except that for generations it had been the seat of the Bahman Gaur Rajputs one of whom, Mahabali Singh, was involved in certain disturbances in the reign of Nawab Shuja-ud-daula and consequently lost his estate. It was restored to him on condition that he embraced Islam, which he did. At a short distance to the south of the village there is Surajkund, a masonry tank, with a few old temples on its banks. Fairs are held here on the tenth of the bright half of Jyaistha, on the full-moon day of Kartika, every *amawasya* and every Sunday, attracting a gathering of about 10,000 persons in the whole year. To the south, at a distance of about a mile, there is an unexplored site (covering about seven acres of land) which is about fifteen feet in elevation, where pieces of ancient red pottery have been found.

The village has a population of 1,585 and its lands (with a land revenue of Rs 7,667) cover 1,345 acres, of which 1,112 acres are cultivated. Irrigation is chiefly effected from canals, tanks and wells. Besides permanent shops catering to daily requirements, markets are held here bi-weekly on Tuesdays and Saturdays.

The place has a branch post-office, a junior high school, a primary school and a reading-room run by the Education Department.

ANT (pargana and tahsil Misrikh)

A large village lying in Lat. 27° 26' N. and Long. 80° 29' E., Ant is about four miles west of Misrikh, with which it is connected by a short unmetalled branch from the road running north-west to Pisawan and Chandra. To the south of the village, at a distance of about a mile, lies Pataunja with its dismantled fort which had been one of the chief strongholds of the Ahbans Rajputs till the time of their ejection by the Muslims under Bahadur Beg, about the year 1670 A. D.

*The figures of population in this chapter are based on the census of 1951 and those relating the cultivated area and the land revenue pertain to the *Fasli* year 1356 (year ending June, 1959).

BARAGAON (pargana Maholi, tahsil Misrikh)

Baragaon is a large market-place, lying in Lat. 27° 45' N. and Long. 80° 30' E., in the north of the pargana, on the Maholi-Hargaon metalled road which takes off from the national highway at Maholi.

An old place, besides a few mosques, it has an old tank known as Badesar, a big mound and a mediaeval temple. At the time of the annexation the village was held by Raja Lone Singh of Mitauli whose uncle (his *samadhi* is still there) used to reside here. After the events of 1857, the village was given in reward to Mirza Abbas Beg, an extra assistant commissioner in Avadh.

The population of the place numbers 1,905 and its lands, assessed to a revenue of Rs 4,718, cover 1,145 acres, the cultivated area being made up of 782 acres. The Sitapur branch of the Sarla canal, which runs on the west, is the chief source of irrigation. Markets are held here twice a week, on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and considerable trade, especially in cattle, is carried on. The village has a cattle pound, a primary school, a post-office and a State *Ayurvedic* dispensary.

BARI (pargana Bari, tahsil Sidhauri)

This large village lies in Lat. 27° 16' N. and Long. 80° 49' E., on the western border of the pargana, close to the river Sarayan which separates pargana Bari from pargana Gondk. Mau. The village is situated on the road running from Misrikh to Sidhauri about three miles south-west of the latter, the portion of the road east of the river Sarayan being metalled.

The place was once of considerable importance. A local account has it that it was founded by Mubarak Shah, a son of the emperor Humayun, who came to hunt in the Avadh jungles and built a *bari* or country house here from which the village took its name. But this appears to be incorrect as there was no son of Humayun who was named Mubarak Shah and because a place called Bari already existed as early as the first quarter of the eleventh century which became a sort of capital when Rajyajal, the last Gurjara Pratihara king, fled to it from his capital Kannuja after its destruction and his defeat at the hands of Mahmud Ghaznavi. If the two Baris are identical the present Bari may be said to be at least a thousand years old. There are, however, no relics of antiquity, and even the remains of an old fort, which were extant till about fifty-six years ago, have now disappeared. With Bari is associated the name of a sixteenth-century Hindi poet, Narottam Das, whose memorial exists here. It also is the place where a battle was fought between Maulvi Ahmad Ullah Shah and Right on April 18, 1858. After the annexation, Bari was made the headquarters of a tahsil, the offices being located in the old fort, but with the transference of the headquarters to Sidhauri, soon after

