

الوثيقة

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بدولة البحرين

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consult them over the issue. They advised him not to meet Suleiman Bin Tauq but to resist him and fight him. But Shaikh Salman was sincere and openhearted. He did not think that meeting the leader of the column imposed any caution on him. So he advanced towards him with his entourage consisting of eminent people. When they reached the place he ordered them to be arrested. He asked the people of Zubara to surrender to him the city or else he would put to death their Amir and the other prominent people with him. So they surrendered the town to him and he entered the town without a fight. He ordered Shaikh Slaman Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, his brother Shaikh Abdul-lah Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, his cousin Shaikh Abdullah Bin Khalifa Al Khalifa and the elite of Zubara (among them Mohammed Bin Saqr Al Moawada, Abdul Jalil Bin Yasin and Abdul Rahman Al Zawawi) to proceed to Dir'iyya to meet Imam Saud Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud. When they reached Dir'iyya the Imam honoured them and ordered the Al Khalifa to remain with him in Dir'iyya while he permitted the rest to return to Zubara. The Al Khalifa heads confided to their friends by sending a secret message to their sons and brothers to do all in their power to recover their homeland. When they reached Zubara they informed the people concerned of this testament. The eldest son was Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman who was also the ablest of them and then Shaikh Abdul Rahman Bin Rashid Al Fadhil. The Utoob gathered to hold consultations and decided to send Shaikh Abdul Rahman to Muscat to seek help and support from the Sultan of Oman (Syed Saeed Bin Sultan Bin Ahmed). We leave Abdul Rahman here holding on to his oars in his boat AL JABIRI heading towards Muscat propelled by the winds while we cast a glance at the situation prevailing in Oman.

THE SITUATION IN OMAN

The condition of AL BU SAEED was no happier than of the Utoob. In 1222 H. Mutlaq Bin Mohammed Al Motairi,

properties held in India and Qais to have the interior of Oman. But Sultan Saeed was able to unify the Sultanate under his rule subsequently. However, Bahrain remained under the suzerainty of Muscat. When conditions improved for the princes of Sultan, their treatment of Aal Khalifa and the Utoob generally deteriorated. So they migrated to Zubara from Bahrain waiting for a suitable opportunity to recover Bahrain.

IMAM SAUD'S CONQUEST OF BAHRAIN

In 1223 news came from Muscat of the death of Shaikh Mohammed Bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, so Al Khalifa contacted Imam Saud Al Kabir Bin Abdul Aziz Al Saud and came to an understanding with him for the retrieval of Bahrain with his support. He equipped them with money, weapons and men under the command of Ibrahim Bin Ofaisan. The Utoob rode their ships bound for Bahrain. Ibn Ofaisan and his troops accompanied them. After the victory was achieved, Ibn Ofaisan refused to hand over the country to them as per the agreement with Imam Saud. He asked them to go to Imam Saud and bring his written order. Salman was sore at this and returned to Zubara with his men. He sent a messenger to Saud asking him to order his troops out of Bahrain as agreed to earlier. While they waited for a reply a secret column under Suleiman Bin Saif Bin Tauq established a camp near the waterpoint at Helwan near Zubara. This incident has been described by Abdul Jalil Tabatabai in his poem in praise of Imam Saud Bin Abdul Aziz in which he says:

Since they came to Helwan
They established righteousness
Ibn Khalifa issued to them his orders
Then he had to repent and regret

Suleiman Bin Tauq sent a messenger to Zubara asking to see Shaikh Salman and the leading members of his people to

raised their swords over their heads. When they saw the dead body of Sultan they ransacked Al Badri but did not kill anyone else.

Some of Sultan's companions who were wounded were carried by the Shiwihiyyeen from the boat AL BADRI to their town LINGA where they were landed. When they told the people of LINGA what had befallen them they were downcast. They arranged a burial for the Sultan and offered prayers for him. The people of the boat informed the people of Qishm of Sultan's death. The news aroused their anger and grief but they had to content themselves by uttering the exclamation of the forbearing, 'We belong to God and to him we return'.

When the condoling ships reached Muscat the people of Oman wondered how oddly strange it was! (How did a bustard kill an eagle? The Jawasim replied) (If it were a bustard it would have avoided the eagle.)

A calamity descended on his son Saeed who was not yet a major. His father's supporters gathered together and announced their loyalty to him as the Sultan of Oman and its dependencies in succession to his father. This pledge of loyalty was not welcome to his uncle, Qais Bin Ahmed who considered himself more eligible for the throne than Saeed who had not even come of age. Qais was the governor of Sohar functioning on behalf of his brother in that capacity. He advanced to Matrah and occupied it. Then he marched on Muscat and occupied it thus encircling Saeed and his supporters in their forts. The biggest supporter of Saeed was Isa Bin Saleh Al-Harathi who was his greatest army commander. The force laying the siege contacted this commander and paid to him considerable sums of money and coaxed him in public interest to withdraw in the face of Qais. The huge amount was enough to lure the commander and make him change his loyalty. Qais came to know of the change and asked him to try and arrange a truce between him and his cousin. A truce was promptly signed on the basis of Saeed keeping Muscat and its adjacent areas, the properties held in Africa and its adjacent areas, the

three boats of the Shawihiyyin had a number of people whereas there were only a few slaves and a few free men in the boat AL Badri of Sultan as stated before.

The Shiwihiyyin shouted asking who were the people in the boat AL BADRI and to whom did the boat belong? Sultan himself replied to them that it belonged to him, Sultan Bin Imam. The meaning of his words was equivocal, i.e., one who crossed swords with him never recovered. They said we have been searching for Sultan. He said, slacken the sails on your ship. 'God willing we shall go to war after the morning prayers. They did accordingly. He ordered the crew of Al Badri to lay their sails and they carried out the orders.

They waited for the morning.

Some friends of Sultan suggested to him to quit the AL BADRI and get into one of its small boats so that they could transfer themselves to the ship. They said the ship was not far from them and if the morning dawned on them they would be exposed making an approach to it. He replied: 'God forbid that I should run away from fighting and abandon my men'.

When the day dawned Sultan offered his prayers and there-after his men prayed. He said to his companions: 'Take the boat closer to their boats.'

When they got close to each other, fighting between them erupted. The Shiwihiyyeen threw small lances at him and shoved the long ones which he used to chop off with his sword and roar at them like a lion. In this manner they continued to throw and poke the lances at him and his colleagues and he used to blunt and chop them. Several of his opponents were thus killed.

While some wanted to flee some played dirty and shot at Sultan with a gun. The shot entered his mouth and claimed his life.

On his death his companions raised a lament. The opponents, thereupon surrounded the AL BADRI and