

Baker Street Elementary

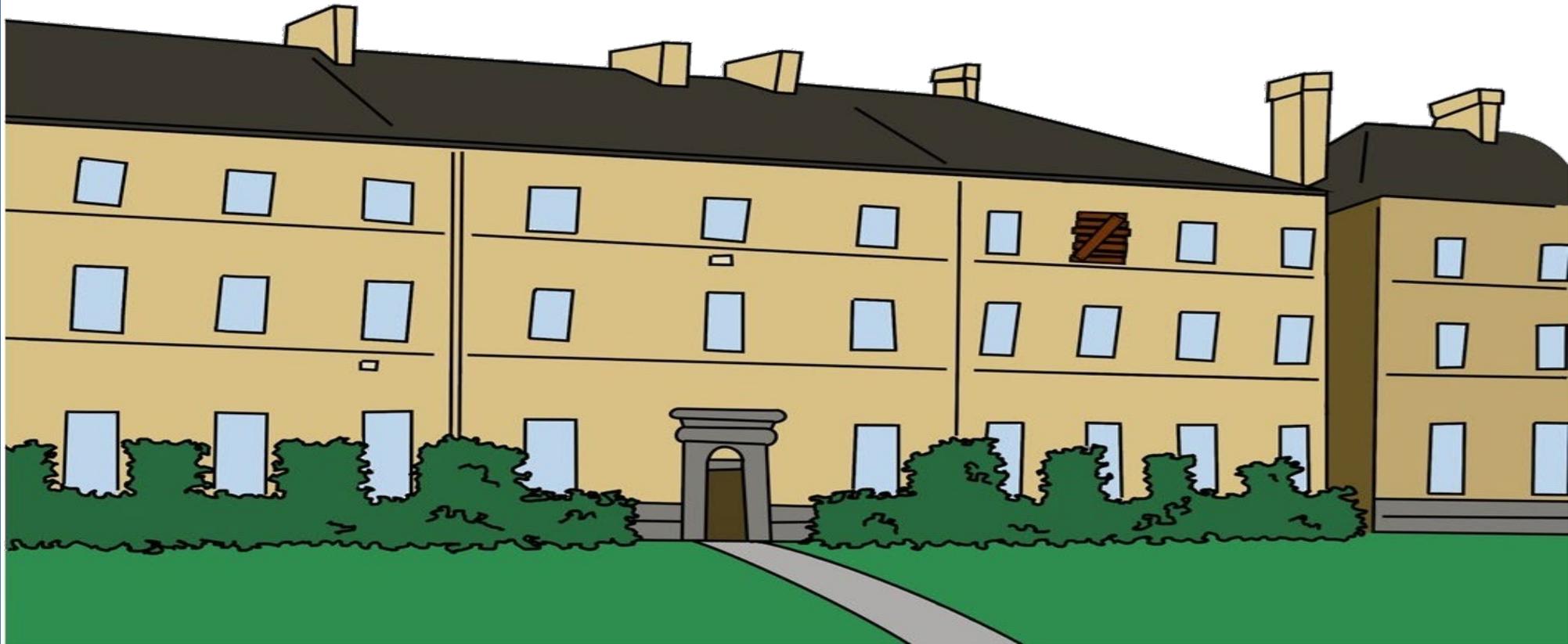
Presents

"The Life and Times in Victorian London"



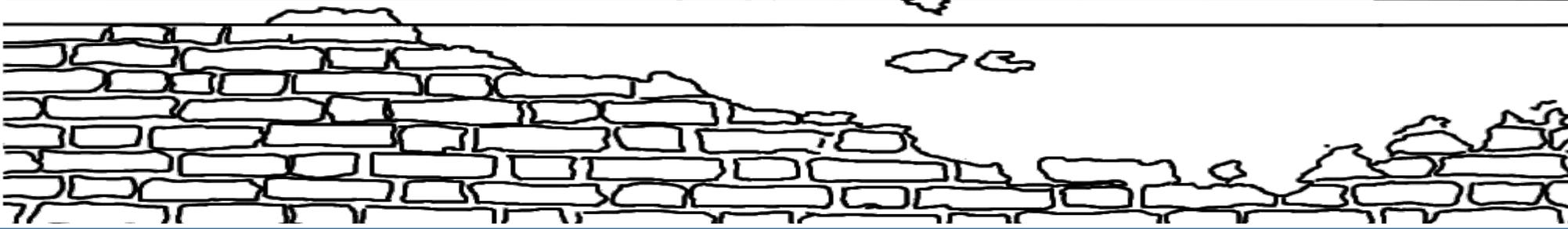
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The Life and Times in Victorian London
011 - The Second Anglo-Afghan War - January, 2022

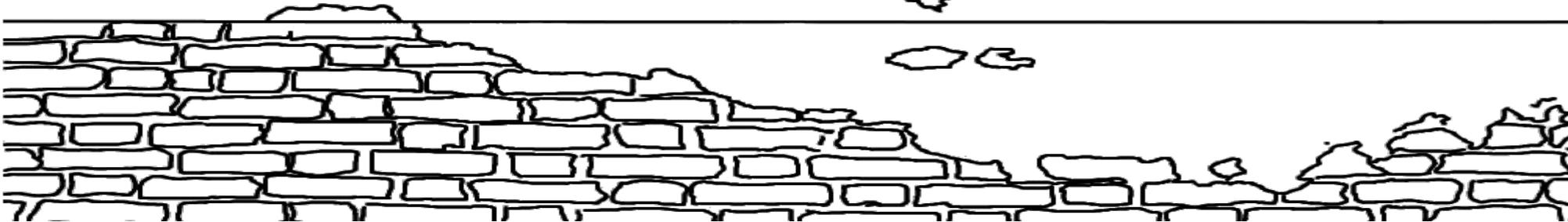




Welcome to topic # 011... today we will be looking at the Second Anglo-Afghan War.



When you are first introduced in A Study in Scarlet, you note your recent return from Afghanistan, where you were wounded in the battle at Maiwand in July, 1880.



This clash represented the worst disaster for the British during what was later referred to as the Second Anglo-Afghan War.



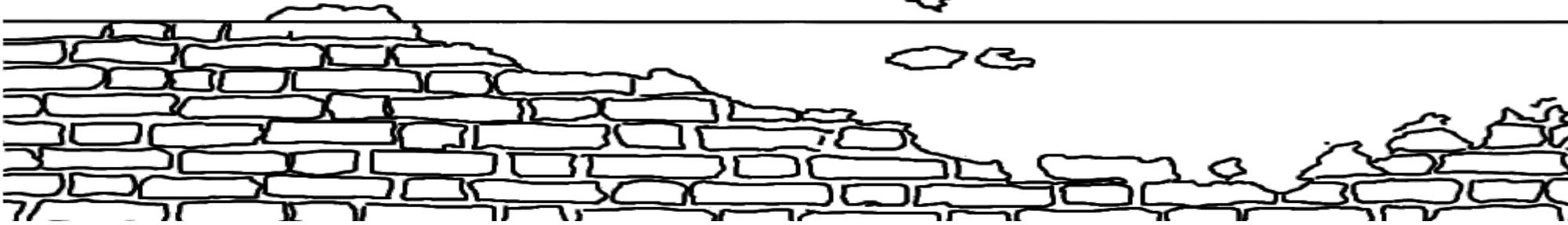
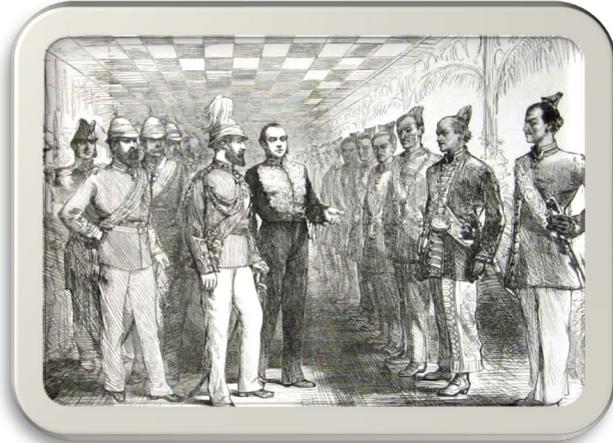
It played, however, no small part in the empire's final victory following Lord Roberts' march to Kandahar, creating a hero of this commander of the Kabul and Kandahar field forces.



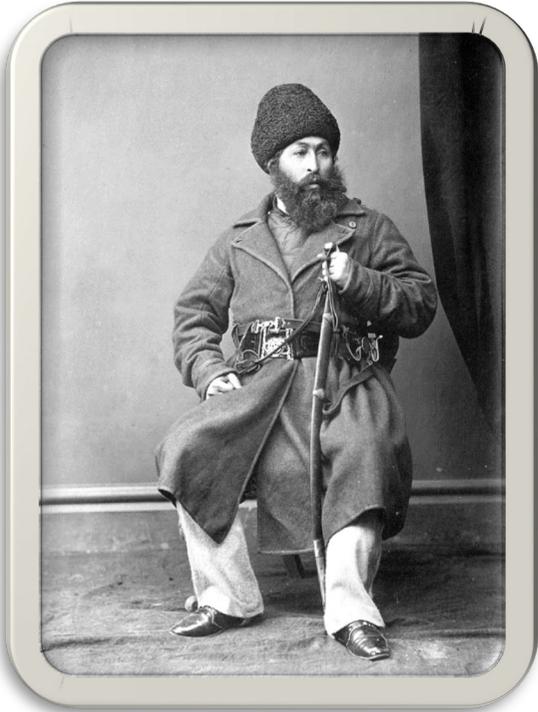
During the Victorian period, India played a pivotal role in Britain's foreign policy.



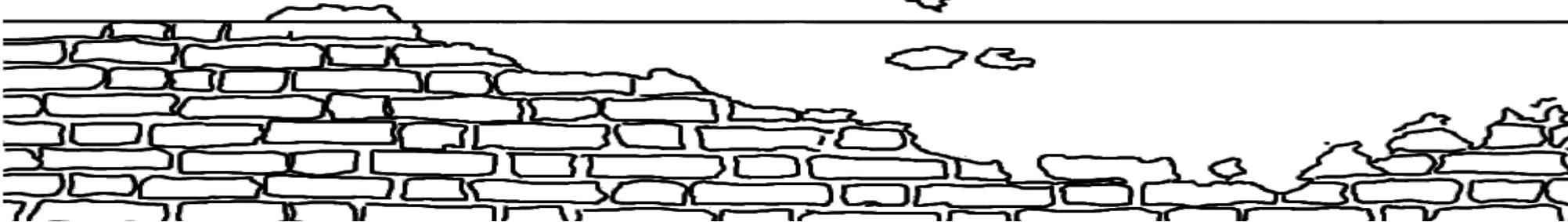
It was considered the most valuable possession in the British Empire, and major military efforts were employed to ensure its borders and prevent intrusion, particularly from the Russians.



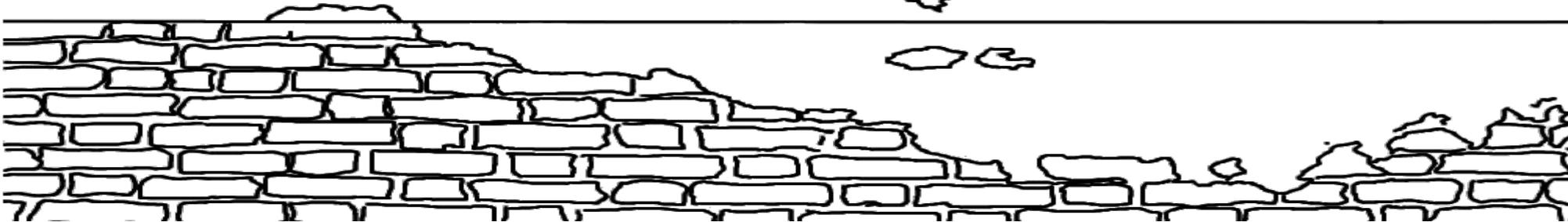
Afghanistan served as a buffer between the two powers, and as a result, the country's emir faced economic and political pressures from both sides in what was often referred to as "The Great Game."



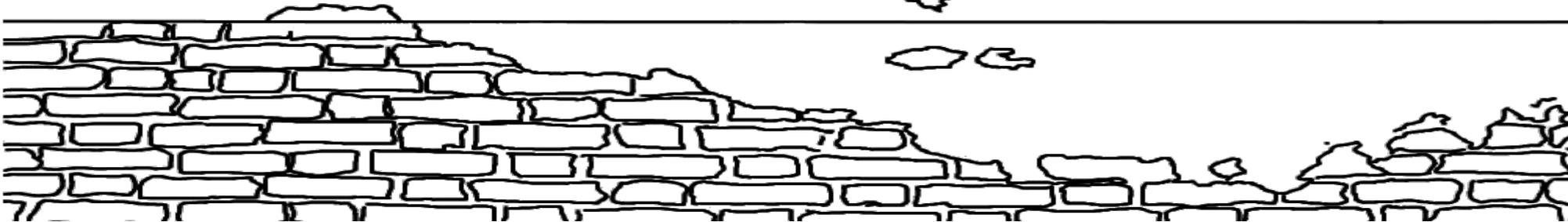
In 1877, Russia invaded Turkey and planned to attack the British in India by marching through Afghanistan.



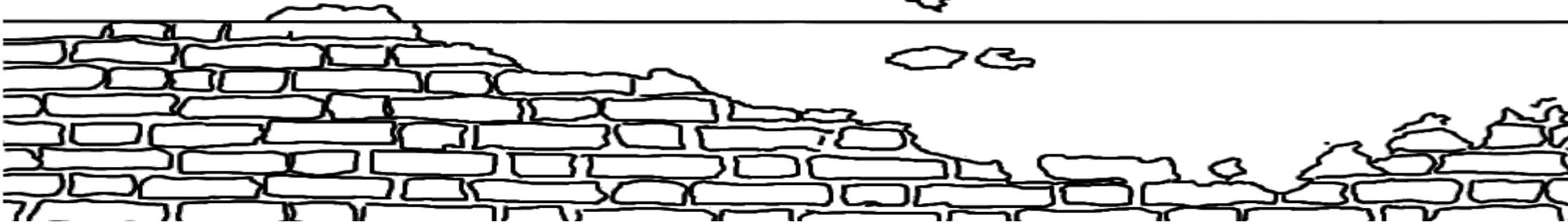
To use the country as a staging ground, the Tsar sent a diplomatic mission to Kabul to pressure the emir Sher Ali into allowing the establishment of an embassy there.



Because the British provided the emir with an annual pension to reject the advances of other countries, they were outraged by the betrayal...



*...and prepared to invade the country,
but only after they sent their own
diplomatic mission to the emir to
establish a British embassy in Kabul.*



Being caught in the middle between these two powerhouses, the emir order Afghan troops to rebuff the British mission at the border.



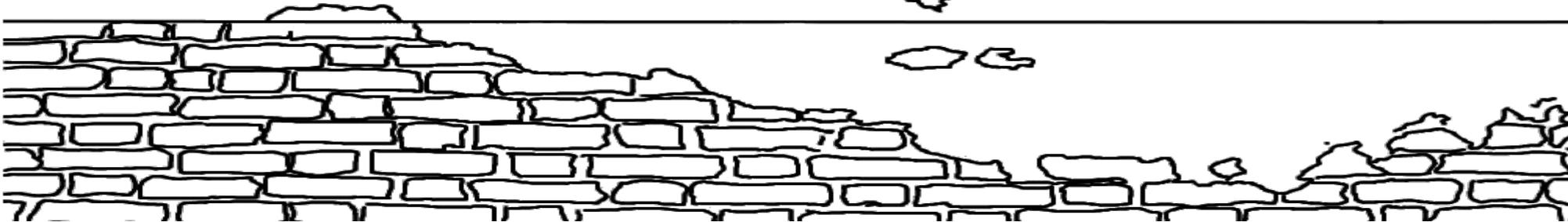
“SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS!”



In response, the British government warned the emir to accept their ambassador or suffer invasion.



When the emir didn't respond, British and Indian troops entered the country.



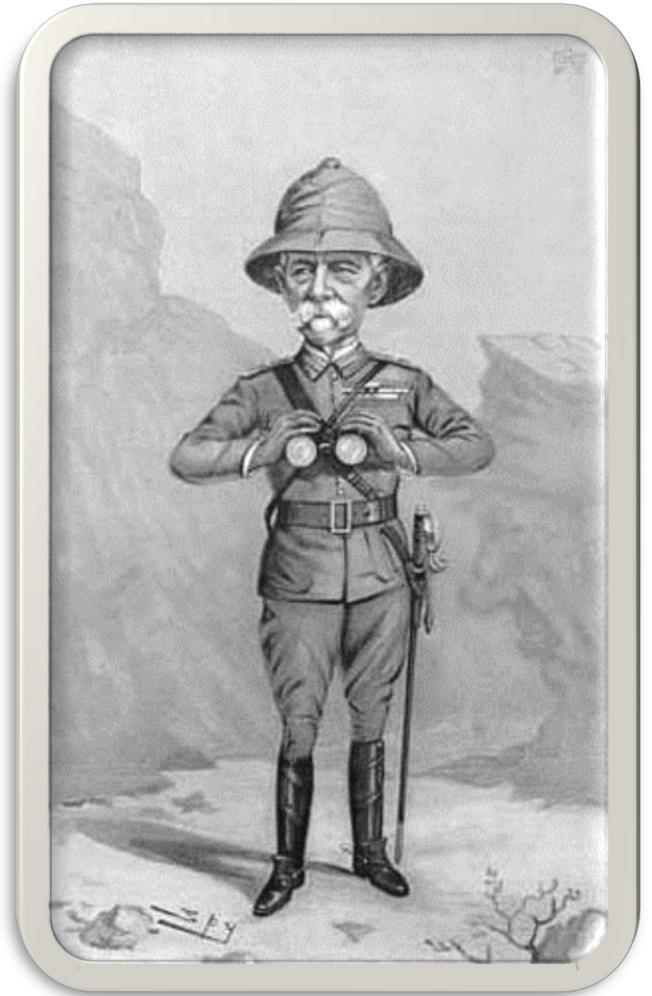
By May, 1879, Sher Ali's son Yakub Khan had replaced his father and now sued the British for peace, accepting their permanent embassy in Kabul.



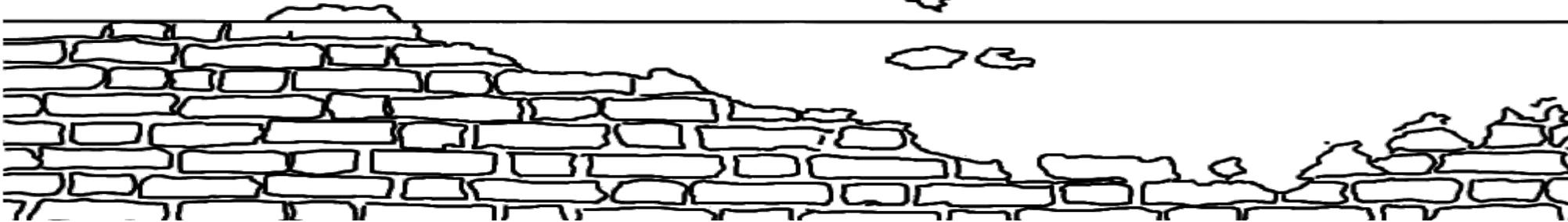
Unfortunately, when the ambassador and the rest of his men arrived, they were slaughtered, and Lord Roberts was ordered to advance on the city in response to the ambassador's assignation.



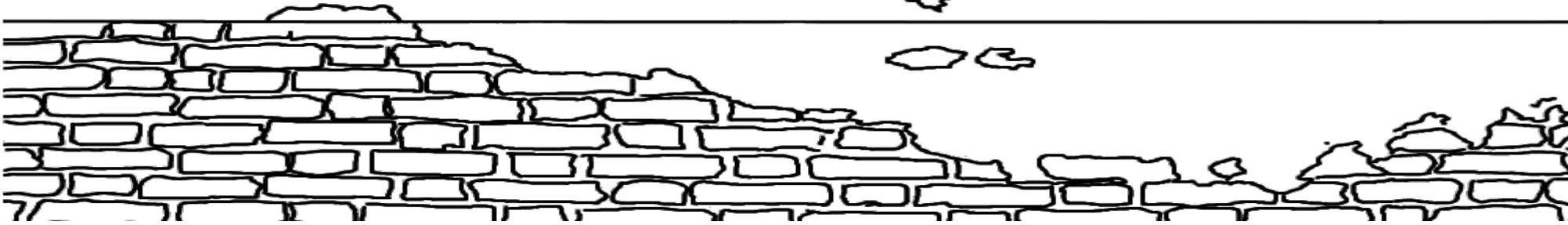
*Upon retaking Kabul in October,
he forced Yakub Khan to
abdicate and Roberts became the
city's governor.*



While the British negotiated with Abdur Rahman, a nephew of Sher Ali's and the soon-to-be emir in Kabul...



...Yakub Khan's brother Ayub Khan declared himself emir and advanced on Kandahar with 7,500 men.





Lt. Gen. J.M. Primrose, then in charge of Kandahar, sent 2,734 soldiers to stop their advance near Maiwand.



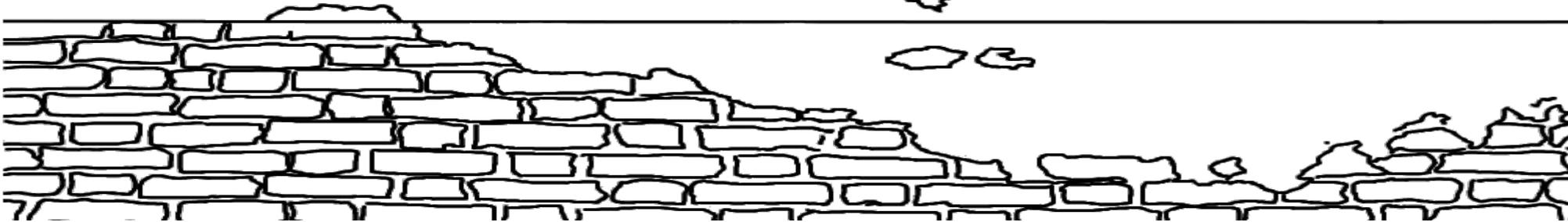
After more than four hours of intense fighting in severe heat, the British fell. Only 1,595 made it back to the Kandahar.



When word of the massacre and subsequent siege of Kandahar reached Kabul, Roberts was given command of 9,900 men...



...whom he raced through the country, reaching Kandahar, a distance of 313 miles, in 21 days.



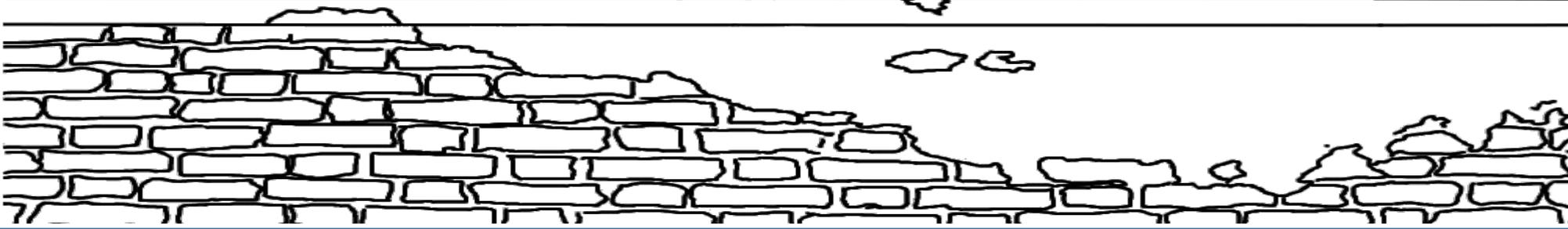
The soldiers battled heat during the day, freezing temperatures at night, and thirst for the entire march, but still arrived ready for a fight, and quickly defeated Ayub Khan and his army.



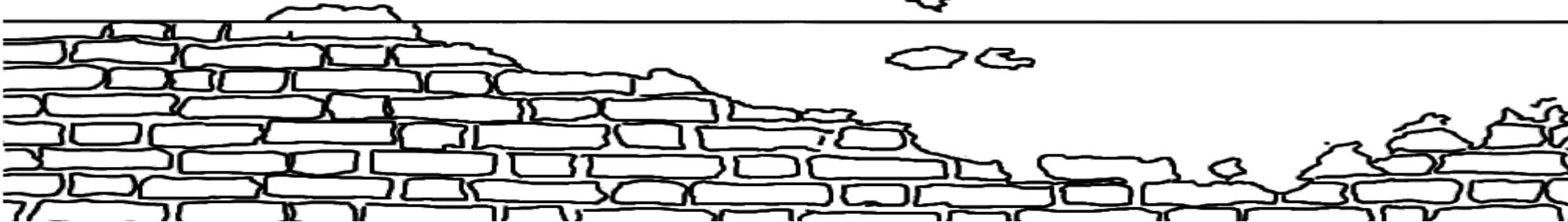
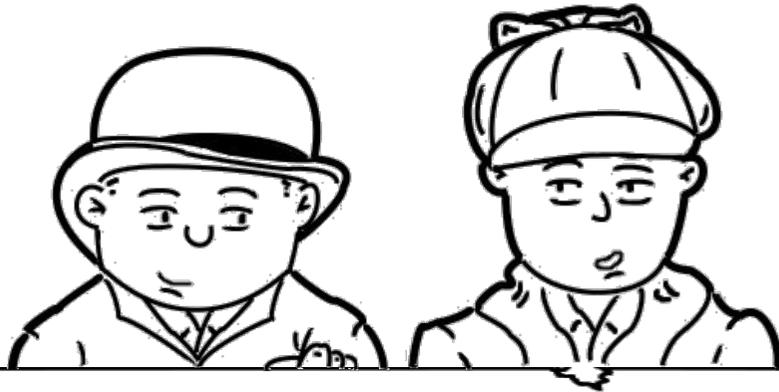
For his efforts, Roberts was advanced to Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath.



The Afghan people accepted Abdur Rahman as their ruler and the British withdrew from Kabul and Kandahar.



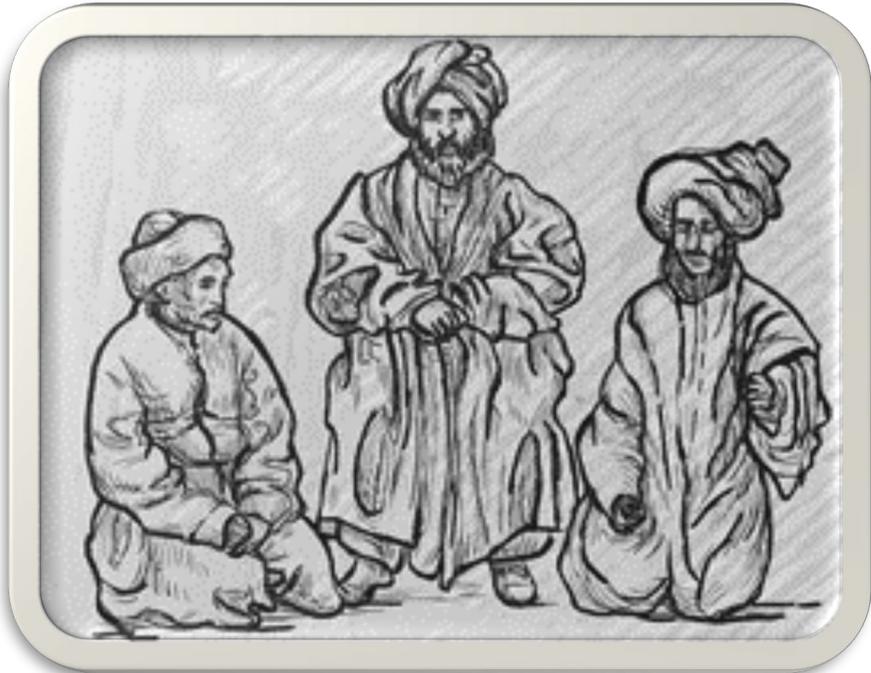
The new emir retained his control of foreign policy and continued to reject Russian influence as he had promised during negotiations with the British.



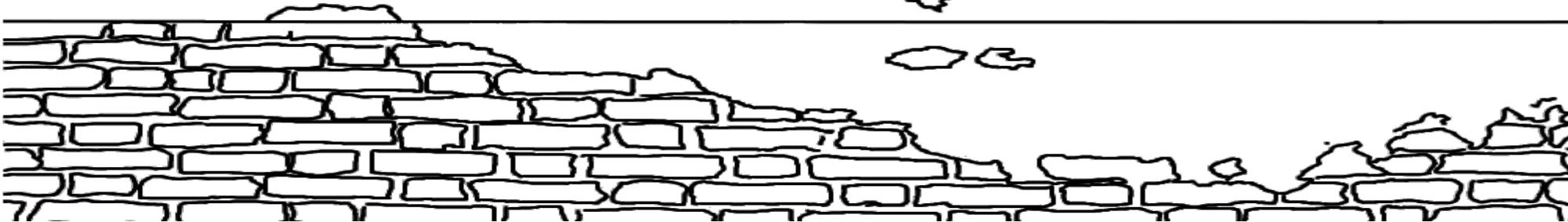
While it might be argued that in the end, the war created a more stable country to the north...



...little territorial shift occurred as a result and the final political situation remained as it had under Sher Ali, making this one of the most controversial conflicts in the region.



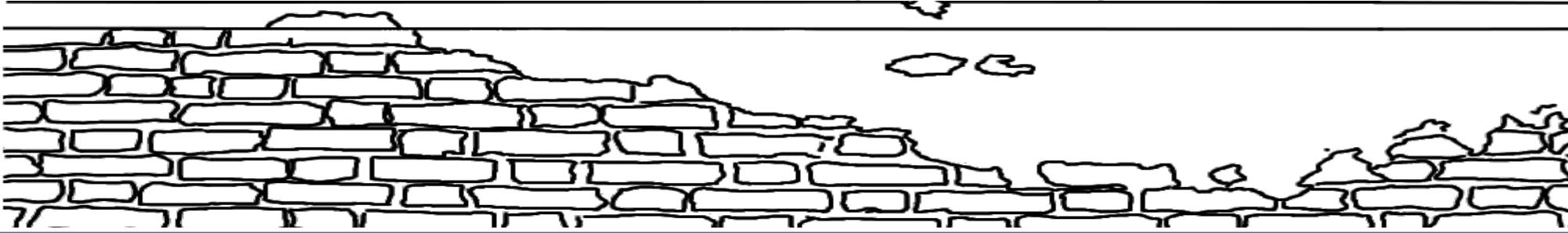
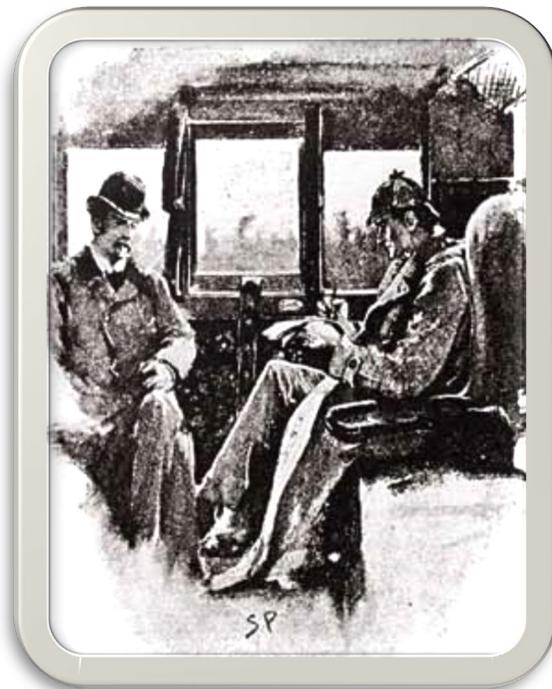
The press coverage of the war, including the defeat at Maiwand and Lord Roberts' subsequent victories, made both well-known back in Britain.



My reference to my own involvement in the battle at Maiwand would have recalled the dire circumstances of the conflict...



*...and marked me as a man with
the courage and resilience to
serve as your associate.*



*So we have completed
topic 11 in our series...*

*Yes, but we'll be back
with another topic
soon...*



References for this topic:

- 1) Doyle, Arthur Conan; Ryan, Robert (2012-12-13). The Complete Sherlock Holmes. Kindle Edition.
- 2) <http://www.garenewing.co.uk/angloafghanwar/sitestuff/faq.php>
- 3) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Great_Game
- 4) <http://www.historynet.com/second-afghan-war.htm>



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"The Life and Times in Victorian London"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

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RUSTY MASON

&

STEVE MASON

