

A VERY SCARCE 'JAVA' MILITARY GENERAL SERVICE 1793 HEIC OFFICER, ATTACHED TO THE 59TH FOOT, WOUNDED DURING THE ASSAULT ON FORT CORNELIS 1811 WHERE THE 59TH TOOK THE BRUNT OF THE CASUALTIES. ONE OF JUST 12 MGS MEDALS TO THE MADRAS SERVICE. ALSO ENTITLED TO THE ARMY OF INDIA MEDAL CLASP AVA



MILITARY GENERAL SERVICE 1793, CLASP, JAVA 'H. G. JOURDAN. LIEUT 10TH MADRAS N.I.'

Colonel Henry George Jourdan, 10th Madras Native Infantry was born in Spitalfields, London on 1st June 1784, his father being a weaver. He joined the Madras service as a Cadet in 1804 and was promoted Lieutenant on 17th July 1805 of the 10th Madras Native Infantry (MNI). Seconded to QMG Department in 1810, he was reported to be survey duty on the Borar Frontier 1809-10, in particular survey marches of the Poona Subsidiary Force through Country unexplored by troops. Rejoining the 10th NI in February 1811, he was selected to take part in the Java expedition. It seems the Imperial Regiments may have been under strength in Officers as five other Madras Officers were attached to British Regiments during the expedition, with Lieutenants Jourdan and Lowe were attached to the 59th Foot.

During the invasion of Java, the 59th Foot, along with the 14th Foot and a battalion of Bengal Volunteers formed part of the Right Brigade under Colonel Gibbs of the 59th. The 59th were conspicuous for their gallantry at the storming of Fort Cornelis, where they assaulted the enemy guns by the point of the bayonet but were attacked by an enemy column advancing on their left flank. The attack was driven off but not before the Regiment took a large number of casualties. Indeed during the battle the 59th Foot suffered a higher number of casualties than any other regiment; 5 Officers 44 OR's were killed and 11 Officers and 107 OR's were wounded, including Lieutenants Jourdan and Lowe of the Madras service. Only one of the wounded 59th Officers survived to claim the MGS medal

It is unknown whether Jourdan was back with the 59th for the Invasion of Palambang, however after the close of hostilities, Jourdan and a number of other particularly qualified Officers were to stay on in Java in various posts; Jourdan being appointed Resident at various

locations. In 1813 he is noted as Local Resident at Surakarta, was the first resident at Probolinggo in 1814 and is noted in the same position at Passourouang 1815/16. He seems to have been back with his regiment in 1817 and was brought to the favourable notice of the Madras Government for his service in Java, being recommended for advancement.

In 1819 was granted 3 years furlough to England and was promoted Captain 14th May 1821. He took part in the Burma War 1824-5, his regiment taking part in the Arakan Expedition as part of the 5th Infantry Brigade. The Colonel of the 10th MDI commanded this Brigade and in his absence, Captain Jourdan commanded the regiment during 1825. Of this particularly hard fought campaign it was said;

'The Arakan was a strange territory and no one had studied the difficulties of warfare in the fever infested jungles, made doubly dangerous by the monsoons, swamps and inundated rice fields checked any advance, while an unseen enemy dealt death from stockade and tree. It was probably the first jungle battle experience for the British and Indian armies.'

Promoted Major 24th May 1828 and Lt Colonel on 6th July 1833, he again commanded the Regiment in the absence of its Colonel between 1828 and 1835. Lt Colonel Jourdan retired from the Service on 16th February 1836. Promoted to the Honorary Rank of Colonel, 28th November 1854

Colonel Jourdan died at Westbourne Park on 10th November 1860 aged 77. During his entire service his regiment had been 10th MNI, a regiment that would later become the 10th Gurkha Rifles.

In the absence of locating a detailed biography or record of Service, the above has been pieced together from Army lists, reports etc but clearly needs more detailed research.

STORMING OF FORT CORNELIS

'Meester Cornelis (Fort Cornelis) measured 1 mile (1,600 m) in length by between 600 yards (550 m) and 800 yards (730 m) in breadth. Two hundred and eighty cannon were mounted on its walls and bastions. Its defenders were a mixed bag of Dutch, French and East Indies troops. Most of the locally raised East Indian troops were of doubtful loyalty and effectiveness, although there were some determined artillerymen from Celebes. The captured station at Weltevreden proved an ideal base from which the British could lay siege to Fort Cornelis. On 14 August the British completed a trail through the forests and pepper plantations to allow them to bring up heavy guns and munitions, and opened siege works on the north side of the Fort. For several days, there were exchanges of fire between the fort and the British batteries.

A sortie from the fort early on the morning of 22 August briefly seized three of the British batteries, until they were driven back by some of the Bengal Sepoys and the 69th Foot. The two sides then exchanged heavy fire, faltering on 23 August, but resuming on 24 August. The Franco-Dutch position worsened when a deserter helped General Rollo Gillespie to capture two of the redoubts by surprise. Gillespie, who was suffering from fever, collapsed, but recovered to storm a third redoubt. The French General Jauffret was taken prisoner. Two Dutch officers, Major Holsman and Major Muller, sacrificed themselves to blow up the redoubt's magazine.

The three redoubts were nevertheless the key to the defence, and their loss demoralised most of Janssens's East Indian troops. Many Dutch troops also defected, repudiating their allegiance to the French. The British stormed the fort at midnight on 25 August, capturing it after a bitter fight. The siege cost the British 630 casualties. The defenders' casualties were

heavier, but only those among officers were fully recorded. Forty of them were killed, sixty-three wounded and 230 captured, including two French generals. Nearly 5,000 men were captured, including three general officers, 34 field officers, 70 captains and 150 subaltern officers. 1,000 men were found dead in the fort, with more being killed in the subsequent pursuit. Janssens escaped to Buitenzorg with a few survivors from his army, but was forced to abandon the town when the British approached



MEESTER CORNELIS

Total British losses in the campaign after the fall of Fort Cornelis amounted to 141 killed, 733 wounded and 13 missing from the Army, and 15 killed, 45 wounded and three missing from the Navy; a total of 156 killed, 788 wounded and 16 missing by 27 August'

THE 10TH MADRAS NATIVE INFANTRY DURING JOURDAN'S SERVICE

'In the years following the Second Mahratta War 1/10 MNI served in a number of minor campaigns which called for remarkable speed and stamina in marching. In 1804 a detachment of 100 men served in a force under Wellesley which marched 60 miles (the last 42 in a single forced march of 14 hours) and then fought the successful Action at Munkaisir (4th February 1804) against freebooters. In 1808 detachments of 1/10 MNI were present in a force which marched 100 miles in 48 hours and routed the chief Bungush Khan and his 4,000 to 5,000 men in the Action at Amulnair (28th December 1808), a feat which earned special praise from the Governor General of India, and a share of prize money for the officers and men involved. The following year the whole Battalion was sent as part of a strong force to effect the Occupation of Seronge (1809-10), an expedition which involved a total march of some 1,000 miles to a latitude well north of Calcutta. In 1811-12 1/10 MNI spent about a year serving in the Campaign in Palcondah near the east coast, and at one stage had over 500 men sick with fever, as they were not acclimatised to this notoriously unhealthy part of India.

In March 1814 five companies of 1/10 MNI were part of a force sent to quell disturbances in the Zemindary of Kimedya, a service consisting of much hill and jungle work. In 1815 the Battalion moved north to garrison Cuttack so as to release Bengal Army units for service in the Nepal War. More service in jungle hills followed, including the Quelling of Hill

Zemindars in the Northern Circars (1817-18). At about the same time 1/10 MNI was involved peripherally in the Third Mahratta War or Pindarry Campaign, being called out during 1817-18 to oppose bands of marauding Pindarries (Mahratta freebooters) in Guntoor and Palnad (1817-18), and serving with a Field Force in the Southern Mahratta Country in 1819.

The First Burma War, 1824-26

In 1824 the First Burma War (Battle Honour 'AVA' awarded 1826) broke out, and 1/10 MNI (soon to become 10 MNI, a single-battalion Regiment once more) was selected for the campaign in Arracan (Arakan) on the Burmese coast. It willingly sailed from Madras to Chittagong, despite caste restrictions on crossing the 'kalo pani'. After the force had made a long march through difficult and malarial country, 170 men of the Regiment took part in an armed reconnaissance up the Koladyne or Arakan river, culminating in an attack on the Chumbilla or Chanballa Stockade (23rd February 1825).



THE ARMY MOVING THROUGH THE BURMESE JUNGLE

The Regiment then took part in the Storming of the hills before Arracan, the local capital (29th March 1825), and on the night of 31st March 1825 the City of Arracan itself was stormed by a force which included the Light and Grenadier Companies of the Regiment. In April-May 1825 10 MNI was in a force sent to take possession of Ramree Island and Mahattee, further south along the coast. So bad was the climate that at one time only 40% of the Regiment was fit for duty, and the Tenth's 151 deaths in the campaign were chiefly due to disease. For the unit's fortitude, and for repeatedly serving afloat in spite of caste restrictions, special rewards of rank and money were conferred on the Subadar-Major, senior Subadar and others. For his command of the brigade which included the Tenth, Lt Col Alexander Fair became the first officer of the Regiment to be awarded the CB (Commander of the Military Order of the Bath).

In 1835 the Regiment was sent by sea from Madras to quell disturbances in jungle areas of Goomsoor (Campaign in Goomsoor, 1835-36), as part of a force under command of Brigadier General H.G.A. Taylor (later General Sir Henry Taylor GCB), a former Adjutant of 10 MNI and its Colonel since 1828.'



A very scarce Military General Service medal, only 46 medals issued to soldiers of the HEIC, the vast majority to Bengal Regiments who supplied a large number of troops. Only 12 medals were issued to the Madras Service (all ranks), the Madras only supplying men on attachment or Staff.

Condition GVF, minor EK's, original ribbon. Also Awarded the Army of India medal, clasp AVA.