

Repugnant? The Repugnant Battles in the Service of Brigadier General Thomas Henry Somerset Conway, C.B., Madras Army, Honourable East India Company Forces, 1793-1837



This is an important early British India Honourable East India Company pair to the “Father of the Madras Army,” comprising a Second Mahratta War 1818 Order of the Bath and Fourth Mysore War 1799 Seringapatam medal awarded to Brigadier General Thomas Henry Somerset Conway, C.B., Madras Army, Honourable East India Company Forces.

The Most Honourable Order of the Bath, Companion, C.B., Military Division, breast badge in 22 carat gold and enamels, markers mark ‘TF HD’, date mark indistinct but probably 1815, complete with gold swiveling wide suspension and three pronged gold ribbon buckle, the gold crown centres are stated (when previously sold) to be period replacements, however we do question this, and believe they are indicative of the work of the unknown jeweler for whom the ‘TF HD’ mark represents, and who may well have hand cut his own centres. This insignia is of excellent quality, and the more pronounced gold crown centres reflect the level of high quality of the piece.

Honourable East India Company Medal for Seringapatam 1799 in Silver, 45 mm Soho Mint example, contained in an ornately

chased silver rimmed frame glazed with lunettes, the edge engraved in a contemporary style; (CORNET T.H.S. CONWAY, 2ND: REGT. L.C.), fitted with straight swivel-ring suspension, silver ribbon buckle and ornate ribbon bar inscribed ‘Seringapatam’. The form of mounting of the Seringapatam Medal is reflected in similar examples known with the ornately chased and foliated silver rimmed glazed frame, which suggest these fittings were obtained from the same jeweler, to allow officers to wear their awards of which they were justifiably proud. Expert opinion would contend that this is the work of Joseph Willmore of Birmingham. Joseph Willmore was the grandson of Thomas Willmore, an original member of the Birmingham Assay Office established 1773. Thomas’ first mark used 1773-1801 in partnership with James Alston, though working independently. Willmore was a buckle maker, Alston a button maker.

Condition: the first with some wear to integral suspension loop resulting in a slightly indistinct hallmark date - this conducive with wear, (once previously described with centres re-fixed and reverse triple-crown embellishment a later replacement) in our opinion this is largely correct though, overall Good Very Fine.

Provenance: ex Dix Noonan and Webb, 18 June 1997, 28 March 2002 and 24 October 2014.

Introduction

An obituary in 1837 would note: 'Few officers of the Indian army have been present at more battles, sieges, etc. than the late Brigadier Conway.' Brigadier Conway was a most distinguished soldier, and over his 44 years service would include from 1795 to 1799 involvement in the French Revolutionary Wars in the East Indies area. The invasion of Ceylon and at the siege of Colombo, the expedition to the Philippines in 1797, and the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War of 1798 to 1799. In 1799 he was present at the Battle of Malavilly, and various other skirmishes and affairs of out-posts, and in the same year he would take part in the siege and capture of Seringapatam. As a Light Cavalry man, he brought great distinction to himself for his exertions during General Dugald Campbell's campaign in the Ceded Districts of the Deccan during 1801 to 1802, when he was present at numerous different assaults and affairs during that service. During the First Mahratta War of 1803 to 1806, he placed a most conspicuous role. Still only a Lieutenant, Conway served under the command of Major General Sir Arthur Wellesley, Colonels Stevenson, Halliburton, and Lang, respectively. In 1815 Conway served with the army of reserve assembled on the Tombuddra, under the personal command of His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir T. Hislop, Commander-in-Chief. Subsequently in 1817 to 1818 he served in the campaign against Holkar and the Pindaries with the Army of the Deccan when under the personal command of Sir T. Hislop. In 1817 he was present in action at the Battle of Maheidpoor, and at the storming of Talnair. Conway was appointed a Companion of the Military Division of The Most Honourable Order of the Bath for his services during the Second Mahratta War of 1817 to 1818 as the Adjutant General to the Army of the Deccan, the award being published in the London Gazette on 14 October 1818, this award being earned by Conway when he was still a Captain! He would be promoted to Brigadier in February 1832.

Had Conway lived long enough, for his participation in the First and Second Mahratta Wars, he alone would have been entitled to the Army of India Medal with five clasps for Assye, Asseerghur, Argaum, Gawilghur and Maheidpoor. He died of cholera in 1837 and is buried in a tomb in St. George's Cathedral in Madras.

Repugnant? The Repugnant Battles?

All the battle honours awarded during Brigadier General Conway's 44 years of service have been rendered 'repugnant' by the Government of India. Certainly, a ruling government can pretty much do as it pleases to distort and remake their own history. Below is detailed another perspective on this action.

A soldier's life is always in the service of a government. They agree to fight wars for that government under oath or by contract and to go when, where, and against whom ever the government tells them they are going to fight. The soldiers may or may not agree with the governments decisions that cause them to go to war but with few exceptions in history it is off to war they go.

When it comes to the actual fighting these soldiers care little about how they got in the war they care only about survival and honourable officers along with caring about individual survival also care about the survival of the men under their command. In good military units the individual's survival extends to the men on either side of you in the line of battle. This means the historical outcome of a battle has nothing to do with how the men end up on the battlefield but has everything to do with their fighting for each other's survival through-out the course of the battle.

Governments can choose to recognize the success of military units by granting battle honours for victories that are determined to be significant. Sometimes the choices are controversial but not normally at the level of whether they should be fighting the war. Usually, the controversy is over the issues such as the size, length, or overall significance of the battle in the war.

For the individual soldiers who fought the battle the award of a battle honour is first and foremost a memorial to their sacrifice on the field of battle and serves to remember those who died. For the military units that receive the

battle honour it represents a mark on their record that they did their job on that day and individual soldiers are often remembered for their individual acts of bravery, compassion, or sacrifice for their fellow soldiers during the battle.

Once a government grants to a military unit a battle honour becomes the property of that unit and becomes a part of the unit history in perpetuity. The battle honour belongs directly to the soldiers who fought the battle and the in the future as part of the esprit-de-coup of units that fought the battle.

India has had many governments in its long history. The governments granting battle honours to regiments of the Indian Army include the East India Company, the British government, and the Indian government. There is no doubt that at the government level the history covered by these governments has had many opportunities for controversial policy decisions but that in no way impacts or changes the performance that individual soldiers doing their duty in the service of these governments in battles that these governments decided warranted a battle honour. In short battle honours do not belong to governments who issued them or to governments that may follow but belong to the soldiers who fought and died in the battle and to the military units that earned them.

The government of India has chosen to make repugnant certain battle honours earned by regiments of their army under the government of the East India Company and during British rule. No government has the right to make repugnant the service of any soldier, irrespective of changes in attitude toward decisions of past governments by any current government, by dishonouring a battle honour by designating it repugnant. As all the battle honours earned during his service are now classified repugnant the present Indian government has made repugnant the 44 years of service of Brigadier General Thomas Henry Somerset Conway, C.B., Madras Army, Honourable East India Company Forces simply because they do not like the politics of the governments that sent him to war.

Early Life

Thomas Henry Somerset Conway was born in 1779. He was appointed to be a Cadet for service with the Honourable East India Company Madras Army in the 1793 season, and arrived at Calcutta on the 5 January 1795, arriving at Madras on 5 October of that same year, having in that intermediate time been detained at Calcutta on duty. Since that period, except for about five months absence to the seacoast on sick certificate, in 1795, and a month on furlough in 1832, up until his death in service on 13 May 1837, he was never absent from his duty, nor had any other furloughs either to Europe or in India.

The French Revolutionary Wars, the Invasion of Ceylon and at the siege of Colombo



Honourable East India Company Medal for the Capture of Ceylon 1795-96, silver, 50 mm, fitted with silver loop for suspension. These medals were awarded to native Indian non-commissioned officers and men of the Bengal Artillery.

Conway saw service with the Infantry from 1795 through into 1799 and was involved in the French Revolutionary Wars out in the East Indies area, being present in 1796 in command of a corps of European artificers formed for the siege of Colombo when involved in the Invasion of Ceylon which lasted from 21 July 1795 to 15 February 1796. The Dutch Republic had been a British ally during the French Revolutionary Wars but was overrun by the French Republic in the winter of 1794 and reformed into the client state of the Batavian Republic. The British government, working with the exiled Stadtholder William of Orange, ordered the seizure of Batavian assets

including colonies of the former Dutch Empire. Among the first territories to be attacked were those on the coast of the island of Ceylon, now Sri Lanka, with operations initially focused on the trading port at Trincomalee.

To achieve the seizure of the colony, the British government instructed Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras, to use the forces at his disposal to invade and capture the Batavian-held parts of the island. Prosecution of the campaign was given to Colonel James Stuart, supported by naval forces under Rear-Admiral Peter Ranier. Stuart called on Batavian governor Johan van Angelbeck to surrender the colony peacefully and many trading posts were taken without resistance, but Stuart's forces were opposed at Trincomalee in August 1795 and briefly at Colombo in February 1796. Following short sieges British forces were able to secure control of the Dutch colony, and Ceylon would remain a part of the British Empire for the next 153 years.

It was for the capture of Colombo that Conway found himself employed. In September 1795, Rainier took most of his squadron eastwards to operate against Batavia, leaving Captain Alan Gardner in command of the blockade of Colombo, the last remaining Batavian territory on the island. In January 1796, command of the East Indies was assumed by Sir Georg Keith Elphinstone, who ordered ships of the line HMS *Stately* and HMS *Arrogant* to assist Gardner. In February 1796 a final expedition was prepared against Ceylon, with instructions to seize Colombo and the surrounding area. Stuart again took command, supported by Gardner in HMS *Heroine* and the sloops HMS *Rattlesnake*, HMS *Echo* and HMS *Swift*, as well as five EIC ships. Stuart's force disembarked at Negombo, a Dutch fort abandoned the previous year, on 5 February and marched overland to Colombo, arriving without opposition on 14 February. The garrison was issued with a demand requiring their surrender or to expect an immediate assault, and storming parties were prepared, but on 15 February van Angelbeek agreed to capitulate, and Stuart took possession of the city peacefully.

Expedition to the Philippines in 1797

In 1797 Conway was appointed to the command of the light company of the 2nd Madras European Regiment for the planned Manilla Expedition. He was selected by General St. Leger who commanded the division of the expedition being collected at Penang, to act as Adjutant to the 3rd Battalion, and then returned with it to the coast. His regiment was then destined to garrison the Moluccas so Conway considering a transfer to the cavalry, as there was a prospect of a war with the Tippoo Sultan.

Service during the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War and Capture of Seringapatam 1799



Conway transferred as a Cornet into the 2nd Regiment of Madras Light Cavalry in 1798, and then went on to see service during the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War. In 1799 he was present at the Battle of Malavilly, and various other skirmishes and affairs of out-posts, and in the same year he was at the siege and capture of Seringapatam.

Illustration on the left is Lieutenant Henry Briggs (1805–1834), 2nd Madras Light Cavalry. This shows the extraordinary uniforms worn at this time.

Capture of Seringapatam 1799

Napoleon Bonaparte's landing in Ottoman Egypt in 1798 was intended to further the capture of the British possessions in India, and the Kingdom of Mysore was a key to that next step, as the ruler of Mysore, Tipu Sultan, sought France as an ally and his letter to Napoleon resulted in the following reply, "You have already been informed of my arrival on the borders of the Red Sea, with an innumerable and invincible army, full of the desire of releasing and relieving you from the iron yoke of England." Additionally, General Malartic, French Governor of Mauritius, issued the Malartic Proclamation seeking volunteers to assist Tipu. Horatio Nelson ended any possibility of help from Napoleon after the Battle of the Nile.

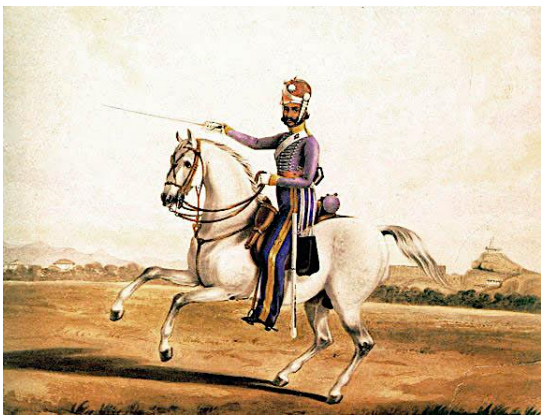
However, Lord Wellesley had already set in motion a response to prevent any alliance between Tipu Sultan and France.

The army appointed to invade the kingdom of Mysore consisted of 4381 European and 10,695 native infantry; 884 European and 1761 native cavalry, with 608 gunners; forming in all 18,319 fighting men, with 104 pieces of cannon, and 2483 lascars and pioneers. To these were added 10,157 infantry and 6000 horse belonging to the nizam, and which, under British command, now formed an effective body of troops. In the meantime, General Stuart, a veteran in Indian warfare, was advancing with 6420 men from Malabar to join and co-operate with the main army.

These three armies—one from Bombay and two British (one of which contained a division that was commanded by Colonel Arthur Wellesley, the future 1st Duke of Wellington)—marched into Mysore in 1799 and besieged the capital, Seringapatam, after some engagements with Tipu. On 8 March, a forward force managed to hold off an advance by Tipu at the Battle of Seedaseer.

On 27 March 1799, British troops arrived at Malavilly, and on approaching the ground of encampment the forces of Tipu were seen drawn up on a height a few miles off. The enemy attacked the advanced pickets, and a general action ensued, in which the 33rd Foot highly distinguished itself. A body of two thousand men moved forward in the best order towards the regiment, which held its fire until the enemy came within about 60 yards. Then, led by its lieutenant-colonel, Arthur Wellesley, it made a bayonet charge, forcing the approaching column to give way. This movement being supported by Major-General Floyd, who made a rapid charge with the cavalry, completed the disorder, and the enemy retreated before the whole of the British line, which immediately moved forward. While this attack was being made by the left wing, under Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley, with the Nizam's contingent, the 33rd, and Major-General Floyd's cavalry, Lieutenant-General Harris and the right wing had also been engaged. As the 12th Foot moved forward on the right wing, a large body of Mysorean cavalry formed a wedge, with an elephant with a howdah on its back in front and charged the regiment. The British line halted to receive the attack. Immediately afterwards, two other very large bodies of the enemy were spotted in two topos or woods, preparing to support the first charge. Lieutenant-General Harris, recognising the danger, placed himself in the regiment's rear, frequently repeating the words, "Steady, Twelfth!" "Steady, old Twelfth!" When the wedge approached within a hundred yards, the Mysoreans discharged their carbines and pistols, but without much effect. When the Mysoreans came within about 30 yards, the regiment fired a well-directed volley with its muskets, followed by a rapid firing by file, inflicting many casualties to the enemy, creating a rampart of killed and wounded men and horses lying along the front of the regiment. The British Army reached Seringapatam on 5 April, and commenced the siege, and on 4 May, in the Battle of Seringapatam, the forces broke through the defending walls. Tipu Sultan, rushing to the breach, was shot and killed. Conway was present throughout the campaign and was awarded the Honourable East India Company for Seringapatam in Silver.

Adjutant & Riding-Master 6th Regiment of Light Cavalry & Deccan Campaign



After the Mysore Campaign, Conway, who was promoted to Lieutenant on 4 September 1799, and was sent to Arcot and appointed adjutant to the 6th Madras Native Cavalry (6th Regiment of Madras Light Cavalry), a newly raised unit. He acted as riding-master, as well as adjutant, and performed the duties of cantonment adjutant and post-master of Arcot.

A painting showing a sower of the 6th Madras Light Cavalry, c. 1845.

Conway was reviewed with his regiment, and then marched to join General Dugald Campbell on field service during the campaign in the Ceded Districts during 1801 to 1802, this occurring within

eleven months from the date on which the first drafts joined the regiment.

The Ceded Districts was an area in the Deccan. The campaign was conducted under forced marches, and Conway was present at the different assaults and affairs during that service. He was detached in command of a squadron of cavalry, and a few companies of infantry, to blockade the Polygar forts of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, Shaiklepoor and Warsapoor in the Cummun District, but finding it impossible to execute any orders, owing to the jungle running close to the wall, he took advantage of the gates being open to surprise the fort of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, by riding into it a little before day-light, at the head of a havildar's party of cavalry, supported by his squadron, and after some opposition, made the garrison prisoners. He marched again in a few hours and found the fort of Shaiklepoor evacuated. He then pursued his march during the night, about thirty miles, and having by surprise occupied an inaccessible breach in one of the bastions of Warsapoor, by a dismounted party, the garrison surrendered at daybreak.

Second edition:

After Mysore Captain Conway was appointed to the 6th Madras Native Cavalry, a newly raised corp. He acted as riding-master, as well as adjutant; performed the duties of cantonment adjutant and post-master of Arcot; was reviewed with his regiment, and marched to join Gen. Dugald Campbell on field service in the ceded districts, within eleven months from the date on which the first drafts joined the regiment.

In 1801-2, he shared in all the forced marches with Gen. Campbell in the Ceded Districts, and at the different assaults and affairs during that service. He was detached in command of a squadron of cavalry, and a few companies of infantry, to blockade the Polygar forts of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, Shaiklepoor and Warsapoor in the Cummun District, but finding it impossible to execute any orders, owing to the jungle running close up to the wall, he took advantage of the gates being open to surprise the fort of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, by riding into it a little before day-light, at the head of a havildar's party of cavalry, supported by his squadron, and after some opposition, made the garrison prisoners. He marched again in a few hours and found the fort of Shaiklepoor evacuated. He then pursued his march during the night, about thirty miles, and having by surprise occupied an inaccessible breach in one of the bastions of Warsapoor, by a dismounted party, the garrison surrendered at day-break.

See: IOR/F/4/126/2318

First Mahratta War

Conway then found himself heavily engaged during the First Mahratta War waged against the confederated Mahratta chiefs during 1803 to 1805, and part of 1806, when he served under the command of Major General Sir Arthur Wellesley, Colonels Stevenson, Halliburton, and Lang, respectively. During the initial operations in 1803 Conway was engaged in several affairs and skirmishes with the enemy and would continue to do so throughout the campaign. He was employed to reconnoitre the enemy's camp on 8 and 10 September 1803, and led as guide, the columns which made the night attack on Scindiah's camp, in the vicinity of Budnapoor (Boorhanpore, Burhanpore). He accompanied the storming party of Jaulnah and commanded the party which took possession of the town of Berhampore. He was present at the sieges of Jaulnah, Asseerghur, and Gwalghur, the battle of Argaum, and was with Colonel Stevenson's division on the flank of Sir Arthur Wellesley's division at the battle of Assaye in 1804. In addition, Conway was present with Captain Wallace's Division in 1804 at the sieges of Chandore, Galna, and the assault upon Jassalgaum. He was then appointed to the command of an extensive convoy from Madras to Aurungabad, consisting of young officers, recruits, remount horses, medical and military stores, clothing etc. for the armies in advance, and was joined at Hyderabad by ten thousand Brinjaries with rice. The timely arrival of this convoy enabled Colonels Wallace and Halliburton, with their respective divisions, to open the second campaign, and he was on this occasion honoured by the acknowledgements of the British Resident at the Court of Hyderabad. Conway also acted as brigade-major of the cavalry brigade with the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, and frequently acted during the campaign as secretary and brigade-major to Colonel Stevenson, who as noted commanded one of

the divisions. Sir Arthur Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington, would personally acknowledge Conway on more than one occasion.

Campaign against Rajah Mahopet Ram

Conway went on to take part in the campaign against Rajah Mahopet Ram, who had rebelled against the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1807, when he served with the forces under Colonel T.G. Montresor.

Adjutant-General of the Madras Army

In 1809 he was selected by Sir George Barlow to be adjutant-general of the Madras Army, having previously held the deputy adjutant generalship of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force for four years. Conway held the important position of adjutant-general of the army during the mutiny of Madras officers and did commendable management of the controversy. When the Marquess of Cornwallis died in 1805, Sir George Barlow was nominated provisional governor-general, and his passion for economy and retrenchment in that capacity has caused him to be known as the only governor-general who diminished the area of British territory; but his nomination was rejected by the home government, and Lord Minto was appointed. Subsequently, Barlow was created governor of Madras, where his want of tact caused a mutiny of the British officers of the Madras Army in 1809. The main cause of the discontent was the abolition of certain purchase contracts for camping equipment which involved some money being embezzled by the officers. In 1812 he was recalled, and lived in retirement until his death in Farnham, Surrey, in December 1846.

Conway was promoted to Captain on 27 January 1810. Conway would hold the appointment of adjutant-general of the Madras Army until his death in 1837.

Duties of the Adjutant General of the Army

The Adjutant General of the Army is one of the most important General Staff positions in the Army. The officer appointed to this responsibility heads the adjutant general's staff, an administrative branch that publishes all army orders; is responsible for army correspondence; and oversees personnel actions, records, decorations and awards, publications, postal service, recreational activities, and career guidance.

An adjutant general of the army is the officer who is responsible for providing personnel support that affects all Soldiers' overall welfare and well-being, while assisting commanders by accounting for and keeping Soldiers combat ready.

He is the principal advisor to the Commander-in Chief on all matters concerning human resource support for all assigned and attached personnel.

He is responsible for supervising all strength management/strength distribution actions of the army.

He is responsible for training, readiness, health and welfare of all Soldiers of the Army and for the readiness of the army to accomplish wartime missions.

Rifle and Light Infantry Corps

In 1812 he introduced into the army and organised, under the auspices of Sir Samuel Auchmuty, the Rifle and Light Infantry Corps - the value and utility of which arm of the service is sufficiently well known.

In 1815 Conway served with the army of reserve assembled on the Tombuddra, under the personal command of His Excellency Lieutenant General Sir T. Hislop, Commander-in-Chief.

Campaign against Holkar and the Pindaries with the Army of the Deccan

Subsequently in 1817 to 1818 he served in the campaign against Holkar and the Pindaries with the Army of the Deccan when under the personal command of Sir T. Hislop. In 1817 he was present in action at the Battle of Maheidpoor, and at the storming of Talnair.

Conway was appointed a Companion of the Military Division of The Most Honourable Order of the Bath for his services during the Second Mahratta War of 1817 to 1818 as the Adjutant General to the Army of the Deccan, the award being published in the London Gazette on 14 October 1818, this award being earned by Conway when he was still a Captain!

Entitled to unique Army of India Medal

Had Conway lived long enough, for his participation in the First and Second Mahratta Wars, he alone would have been entitled to the Army of India Medal with five clasps for Assye, Asseerghur, Argaum, Gawilghur and Maheidpoor.

The above-mentioned actions are only the principal actions in which Conway participated, and as his Obituary would note 'his pride as a man and soldier was gratified by many and most flattering testimonials of service in every part of his career, and from the most distinguished commanders of the day. By the Duke of Wellington (then Sir Arthur Wellesley) he was recommended to Lord William Bentinck (on the former leaving India), as an officer who had rendered him important services during the campaign. By the same eminent commander, he was thanked in general orders, besides receiving several personal acknowledgements of the approbation with which he viewed the gallantry of his conduct. He was thanked at the head of his detachment, after one of his brilliant exploits (the surprise of the Tippoo Reddy), by General Campbell, "for the spirit and decision with which he had drawn the maiden sword of the 6th Light Cavalry." He possessed private letters of acknowledgement from Sir John Abercrombie, Lord Hastings, and Sir John Malcolm. His name was recorded on several occasions on the minutes of Government, on which his name appears with the approbation of successive Governors and Commanders-in-Chief, and the Court of Directors; and on his deathbed, Sir Alexander Campbell left him, as the last legacy he bequeathed in this world, his high and valuable testimony to his services. On the 19 June 1819, he received the honorary distinction of the third class of the Order of the Bath.'

Conway was appointed a Companion of the Military Division of The Most Honourable Order of the Bath for his services during the Second Mahratta War of 1817 to 1818 as the Adjutant General to the Army of the Deccan, the award being published in the London Gazette for 14 October 1818, this award being earned by Conway when he was still a Captain! He would be promoted to Major on 18 October 1818. Conway would be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on 5 March 1826, and to Brevet Colonel on 18 June 1831.

On 31 October 1828 Colonel Conway was deputed to the Madras Government on a special mission to Bengal, to enquire into the comparative state of the armies of the three Presidencies and returned from this duty on 2 April 1830. On 8 November 1831, he was appointed by Government to inspect and report upon the Silladar Horse of the Mysore Government, and to examine the accounts and arrears of pay due to them. On 3 February 1832 he was promoted to the local rank of Brigadier and appointed to the command of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force.

Conway died of cholera at Nakrykul on 13 May 1837. One of his obituary's would recall: 'The death of Brigadier Conway, "the father of the Madras Army," has created a strong sensation throughout the whole community. It took place on 13 May, from cholera, at Nakrykul, about fifty miles from the Kistnah, on his route to Hyderabad. 'Few officers of the Indian army have been present at more battles, sieges, etc. than the late Brigadier Conway.' One obituary noted.

Another one of his many obituaries would continue: 'Such a brief statement of the services and career of Brigadier Conway, C.B. The Madras army will long preserve, with affection and respect, the memory of an officer whose distinctions were gained in their ranks, and whose heart's desire was the honour and happiness of the army, at the head of which he so long held one of the most responsible offices. We need not attempt to add the feeble tribute of our praise to the memory of one who's worth as a man, and member of society, is the theme of every tongue, and whose military career has been marked by the approbation of the Duke of Wellington. A meeting of the friends of Brigadier Conway was held at the College Hall, on the 20 May, His Excellency Sir P. Maitland in the chair, when it was unanimously resolved, "That a subscription be entered into for the purpose of erecting a monument in the cathedral church of St. George in Madras, to the memory of Brigadier Conway, and of placing a tomb over his remains at Nackrykul." The sum immediately subscribed was Rs. 3,135. At a meeting at Trichinopoly, on the 24 May, Brigadier Fane in the chair, it was resolved, that a monument be placed over the place of interment of the late brigadier, and a full length portrait of him be placed in the Madras Club-house, and that his remains be removed to Madras. The latter proposition seems to meet with concurrence at the Presidency.'

Chennai Daily Photo

From : <http://chennaiamadras.blogspot.com/2009/11/soldiers-friend.html>

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

The Soldiers Friend



St Mary's Church, inside Fort St George, is packed with memorials to British officers long gone. In almost all cases, the inscriptions on their memorials are lengthy enough to provide several clues to the officer's career and accomplishments. One of the few exceptions to this rule is this statue on whose pedestal it just says, "Conway - Adjutant General - Obit 13th May 1837 / Erected by the Army and by the Public". That's most probably because there was quite simply too much to say about Thomas Henry Somerset Conway, who had served in India, "having never quitted the country", for the entire duration of his 44 years' service with the army.

It is also likely that he spent a vast majority of those years in Madras. A story tells of him, then a young Ensign beginning his career, looking out through a window of the Exchange House in Fort St George when he was tricked into believing that the House was on fire. Upon which Conway jumped out of the window and broke his leg, no doubt providing a lot of merriment to his brother Ensigns. From those early days in Madras, he went on to become the Adjutant General of Madras, a position he held for 28 years, under eight Commanders-in-Chief. During his service he covered almost every military campaign in south India, apart from seeing action in the Mahratta War and serving on the Military Finance Committee at Calcutta. Unlucky with promotions, he remained a rung lower than his contemporaries, a circumstance that some attributed to his unrelenting discipline and rigid integrity (it is said that he died without leaving behind a shilling - for a British officer in early 19th century

Madras, that's saying something!). Those qualities also gave him an unmatched understanding of "every thing relating to the dress, drill, appearance and discipline of an army".

Technically, he was the Brigadier at Hyderabad when he died. However, he hadn't yet formally assumed that post, for he died of cholera at Guntur, en route to taking charge at Hyderabad; which is why this statue (by Turnouth) credits him as Adjutant General. Though he was absolutely strict as a disciplinarian, unwilling to distinguish the human from the organization, he was held in high regard by the men who were under his command - and that's why, in small letters, right on top of the pedestal, it says "The Soldiers' Friend"!

The following obituary is from:

The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British and Foreign India, China, and Australasia. Vol. XXIV. New Series. September-December 1837. London: Wm. H. Allen and Co., Leadenhall Street. 1837. Asiatic Intelligence-Madras, October, page 71-73:

Madras.**LAW.**

SUPREME COURT, April 17.

The second criminal sessions for this year was opened by the Chief Justice. In the course of his charge to the grand jury, his Lordship drew their attention to the death of a gentleman (Mr. Lys) who had long been an officer of the Court (holding the appointment of coroner), and the circumstances leading to his death; and having addressed some observations to the jury, with reference to the case generally, and the ingredients necessary to constitute a charge against any person on that account, and the character of the charge itself, he dismissed them with observing, the Court would be ready to afford such further aid as should be required.

On the following day, the grand jury made a presentment, to the effect, "that George Lys, Esq., late coroner of Madras, came to his death in consequence of James Shell, an assistant apothecary, having, by great negligence and inattention, supplied, in the dispense department of the Hon. Company's Public Dispensary at Madras, the extract of belladonna, instead of the extract of sarsaparilla;" in consequence, the clerk of the Crown received instruction to prepare an indictment against the said James Shell for manslaughter.

The bill was subsequently presented, and found.

On the 20th, the trial took place, which terminated in a verdict of "*guilty*" being returned; but in consequence of the recommendation of the jury, the sentence passed upon James Shell was, "to be imprisoned for twelve calendar months."

MISCELLANEOUS.**BRIGADIER CONWAY.**

The death of Brigadier Conway, "the father of the Madras army," has created a strong sensation throughout the whole community. It took place on the 13th May, from cholera, at Nakrykul, about fifty miles from the Kistnah, on his route to Hyderabad.

It appears that the brigadier reached Bompechurlah, a station about twelve miles on this side of Nackrykul, on the 12th, and shortly after arriving at the bungalow, feeling, as he said, a little unwell, and as a timely precaution, he took eight grains of calomel; after which he ate a hearty breakfast. About the middle of the day, he complained of exhaustion, and lay down. He suffered severely from the effects of the medicine, during the day and night, but felt himself well enough to continue his journey the following morning (the 13th), and to ride the latter part of the march. He arrived at Nackrykul weak and exhausted, and received from the apothecary

attending him, a draft to stop the effects of the medicine. He breakfasted at ten with his party, and shortly after that meal was taken with spasms in his feet and hands and his stomach; these continued throughout the day. His attendants administered every relief in their power, by rubbing him on the different parts as they were attacked, and the apothecary from time to time administered ether, &c. About three o'clock a messenger was sent to Guntoor, about forty miles distant, for a medical man. The brigadier opposed this, saying that before the doctor could arrive, he should either be gone or much better. Until six o'clock in the evening, he continued sensible, occasionally dozing, but repeatedly awaking with the pain of the returning spasms. He did not speak during this time. At about six o'clock, he fell into a sleep, and only awoke again once before he breathed his last. He expired without a groan or a struggle about eight o'clock. By means of great exertions, his remains were consigned to the earth next day, about twelve o'clock.

The late brigadier was appointed cadet of infantry of the season 1793. He arrived at Calcutta on the 5th January, and at Madras the 5th October, 1795, having during that intermediate period been detained at Calcutta on duty. Since that period, with the exception of about five months' absence to the sea-coast on sick certificate, in 1795, and a month on furlough in 1832, he was never absent from his duty, nor had any furlough either to Europe or in India. He served in the infantry from 1795 to 1799. In 1796 he commanded a corps of European artificers formed for the siege of Colombo. In 1797 he commanded the light company of the 2d Madras European Regt., on the Manilla expedition, and was selected by Gen. St. Leger, who commanded the division of the expedition at Penang, to act as adjutant to the 3d battalion, and returned with it to the coast, with a view to his removal into the cavalry, there being a prospect of a war with Tippoo, and the European regiment being destined to garrison the Moluccas. After the Mysore campaign, he was sent to Arcot and appointed adjutant to the 6th Regt. L. C., a newly raised corps. He acted as riding-master, as well as adjutant; performed the duties of cantonment adjutant and post-master of Arcot; was reviewed with his regiment, and marched to join Gen. Dugald Campbell on field service in the ceded districts, within eleven months from the date on which the first drafts joined the regiment. In 1809, he was selected by Sir George Barlow to be adjutant-general of the army, having previously held the deputy adjutant generalship of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force for four years. In 1812, he introduced into the army and organized, under the auspices of Sir Sa-

muel Auchmuty, the Rifle and Light Infantry Corps—the value and utility of which arm of the service is sufficiently well known. In the war against the confederated Mahratta chieftains, in 1803, 4, 5, 6, he acted as brigade-major of the cavalry brigade with the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, and frequently acted during the campaign as secretary and brigade-major to Col. Stevenson commanding that force. On the 31st October 1828, Col. Conway was deputed by the Madras Government on a special mission to Bengal, to enquire into the comparative state of the armies of the three Presidencies, and returned on the 2d April 1830. On the 8th November 1831, he was appointed by Government to inspect and report upon the Silladar Horse of the Mysore Government, and to examine the accounts and arrears of pay due to them. On the 3d February, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier, and appointed to the command of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force.

The campaigns and expeditions on which Brigadier Conway was employed during his long and eventful period of service, may be thus summed up, *viz.* expedition to Ceylon in 1796, under Col. James Stuart; expedition to Manilla in 1797, under Major-gen. Sir James Craig; Mysore campaign, under Major-gen. Harris, in 1799; campaign in the Ceded Districts, under Major-gen. Dugald Campbell, in 1801-2; campaign against the confederated Mahratta chiefs in 1803-4-5, and part of 1806, under the command of Major-gen. Sir Arthur Wellesley, Colonels Stevenson, Halliburton, and Lang, respectively; campaign against Rajah Mahopet Ram, who had rebelled against the Nizam in 1807, under the command of Col. T. G. Montresor. In 1815, he served with the army of reserve assembled on the Tombuddra, under the personal command of his Exc. Lieut.-gen. Sir T. Hislop, commander-in-chief. In 1817-18, he served in the campaign against Holkar and the Pindaries with the army of the Deckan, under the personal command of Sir T. Hislop.

Few officers of the Indian army have been present at more battles, sieges, &c. than the late Brigadier Conway. In 1796 (Feb. 12), he was present at the battle of Colombo, in the siege of that place. In 1799, he was present at the battle of Malavilly and various other skirmishes and affairs of out-posts, and in the same year at the siege of Seringapatam. In 1801-2, he shared in all the forced marches with Gen. Campbell in the Ceded Districts, and at the different assaults and affairs during that service. He was detached in command of a squadron of cavalry, and a few companies of infantry, to blockade the Polygar forts of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, Shaiklepoor and Warsapoor in the Cummum District, but finding it impossible to execute

any orders, owing to the jungle running close up to the wall, he took advantage of the gates being open to surprise the fort of Tippoo Reddy Pillay, by riding into it a little before day-light, at the head of a havildar's party of cavalry, supported by his squadron, and after some opposition, made the garrison prisoners. He marched again in a few hours, and found the fort of Shaiklepoor evacuated. He then pursued his march during the night, about thirty miles, and having by surprise occupied an inaccessible breach in one of the bastions of Warsapoor, by a dismounted party, the garrison surrendered at day-break. In 1803, he was engaged in several affairs and skirmishes with the enemy at different periods of the campaign. He was employed to reconnoitre the enemy's camp on the 8th and 10th September, and led (as a guide) the columns which made the night attacks on Scindiah's camp, in the vicinity of Budnapoor. He accompanied the storming party of Jaulnah, and commanded the party which took possession of the town of Berhampore. He was present at the sieges of Jaulnah, Asseerghur, and Gwalghur—battle of Argaum—with Col. Stevenson's division on the flank of Sir Arthur Wellesley's division at the battle of Assaye. In 1804, he was present at the sieges of Chandore, Galna, and the assault upon Jasselgaum; commanded an extensive convoy from Madras to Aurungabad, consisting of young officers, recruits, remount horses, medical and military stores, clothing, &c. &c. for the armies in advance, and was joined at Hyderabad by ten thousand Brinjaries with rice—the timely arrival of this convoy enabled Cols. Wallace and Halliburton, with their respective divisions, to open the second campaign, and he was on this occasion honoured by the acknowledgments of the British Resident at the Court of Hyderabad. Finally, in 1817, he was present at the battle of Mahidpoor, and the storming of Talnair.

The above are the principal actions in which this highly distinguished officer was personally engaged. His pride as a man and as a soldier was gratified by many and most flattering testimonials of service in every part of his career, and from the most distinguished commanders of the day. By the Duke of Wellington (then Sir Arthur Wellesley) he was recommended to Lord William Bentinck (on the former leaving India), as an officer who had rendered him important services during the campaign. By the same eminent commander he was thanked in general orders, besides receiving several personal acknowledgments of the approbation with which he viewed the gallantry of his conduct. He was thanked at the head of his detachment, after one of his brilliant exploits (the surprise of Tippoo Reddy), by Gen. Campbell, "for the spirit and decision

with which he had drawn the maiden sword of the 6th Light Cavalry." He possessed private letters of acknowledgment from Sir John Abercrombie, Lord Hastings, and Sir John Malcolm. His name was recorded on several occasions on the minutes of Government, in which his name appears with the approbation of successive Governors and Commanders-in-chief, and of the Court of Directors; and on his death-bed Sir Alexander Campbell left him, as the last legacy he bequeathed in this world, his high and valuable testimony to his services. On the 19th June 1819, he received the honorary distinction of the third class of the Order of the Bath.

Such is a brief statement of the services and career of Brigadier Conway, C.B. The Madras army will long preserve, with affection and respect, the memory of an officer whose distinctions were gained in their ranks, and whose heart's desire was the honour and happiness of the army, at the head of which he so long held one of the most responsible offices. We need not attempt to add the feeble tribute of our praise to the memory of one whose worth as a man, and member of society, is the theme of every tongue, and whose military career has been marked by the approbation of the Duke of Wellington.

A meeting of the friends of Brigadier Conway was held at the College Hall, on the 20th May, his Exc. Sir P. Maitland in the chair, when it was unanimously resolved, "That a subscription be entered into for the purpose of erecting a monument in the cathedral church of St. George, in Madras, to the memory of Brigadier Conway, and of placing a tomb over his remains at Nackrykul."

The sum immediately subscribed was Rs. 3,135.

At a meeting at Trichinopoly, on the 24th May, Brigadier Fane in the chair, it was resolved, that a monument be placed over the place of interment of the late brigadier, and a full length portrait of him be placed in the Madras Club-house, and that his remains be removed to Madras. The latter proposition seems to meet with concurrence at the Presidency.

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

A general meeting of the Agricultural and Horticultural Society took place on the 14th April, when it was resolved, "That the application to Government for pecuniary assistance be renewed, with an intimation that unless their request be granted, the Society will be compelled to relinquish the Experimental Garden; and they entertain a sanguine hope that Madras will not be made an exception to the other presidencies."

A letter from Janoopra Kurta Tripli-

cane Ramasamy Moodelliar, dated Mysore, March 16, inclosed Rs. 500 as a donation to the Society.

THE REV. MR. THOMSON.

Several reports have lately reached us of some considerable fracas having occurred at a general meeting of the committee of the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts; and, though the discussion of the Society's transactions may generally be left with greater profit to its authorized managers, still, as the first blush of the present affair leads to a strong suspicion that a respectable missionary has been harshly and unjustly dealt by, it may not be without its value to show, that committees, having public objects in view, and supported by public contributions, are amenable to public censure when they allow the exercise of their possessed power to overstep the bounds of discretion and justice.

The subject leading to the commotion we have above noticed in the Society, has been the expulsion of the Rev. Mr. Thomson from the charge and superintendence of the Vepery schools. The movement party—for there is one in piety as well as politics—on the occasion, was composed of most of the lay members of the Society, fortified by the Rev. Mr. Tucker and the Rev. Mr. Cotterill, and the vanquished defenders of Mr. Thomson were all the remaining clergy of Madras. The question had already been warmly discussed in the sub-committee and the select committee, but without success, the forces here being equal; and ultimately it came to the last memorable debate before a general meeting of the committee, which may more properly be called of the subscribers. Here the wordy war was carried on *con amore*, and a very warm discussion engaged the party present from 10 A.M. to 8 P.M., ending in our lay friends carrying the day by a numerical majority. The world will be curious to hear what the Rev. Mr. Thomson's offences have been, that can have called down upon him this continued and persevering attack—we shall give them as they have been reported to us, in more than one quarter. One party accused him of not being sufficiently pious; another said he had not his heart in the business; a third cut him up for not distributing tracts in Vepery; again, a committee-man had called at the school at half-past four, and found him gone (the appointed hour for the school breaking up is four); he had taken fifteen days to prepare a report, which might have been completed in one; that our late Bishop had expressed himself to some person in terms of disapproval of Mr. Thomson;

The following tribute was published in:

The Asiatic Journal and Monthly Register for British India and its Dependencies. Vol. V., January-June 1818. London: Wm. H. Allen and Co., Leadenhall Street. 1837. Asiatic Intelligence-Madras, October, page 71-73:

To the Editor of the Asiatic Journal.

SIR,—As your very valuable miscellany is open to all subjects connected with our Indian empire, I beg you will permit me to trouble you with a sketch of the services and talents of a very meritorious officer, as a tribute of respect from his old friend,

A VETERAN.

April 6, 1818.

COLONEL CONWAY.

Since the conquest of the Mysore country, and the destruction of the tyrant Tippoo Sultan by the valour of the British forces under General Harris, our military affairs in the East-Indies have never been found to possess so high a degree of interest and importance as may with propriety be attached to them at the present moment. The powerful army which has been assembled under the personal command of the Governor General the Marquis of Hastings, and the imposing attitude which his Lordship has assumed in his recent military movements, have excited an unusual degree of interest in the mind of every one connected with Asiatic affairs. Under circumstances so likely to produce the most important results, it becomes an interesting speculation, and one of no trifling moment either in a military or a national point of view, to take a glance at the character and pretensions of those commanders and officers who it is probable will be engaged in these hostile operations; and who, it is to be hoped, will by their exertions add fresh laurels to the wreath already so deservedly acquired by our brave soldiers in that extensive and important portion of the British empire.

A consideration of this subject leads us immediately to a brief notice of the

character of the gentleman whose name appears at the head of this article, a name which will be found to shine as a bright star in that constellation of talents which has been engaged in rendering the most valuable services to the army and to the nation at large, and to which he has been enabled greatly to contribute by the possession of those rare endowments, which, though attained by few, are almost indispensable in the character of every military officer holding superior rank and authority in an army about to be called into actual service.

In the year 1809 Colonel Conway, who then held an inferior situation* on the staff establishment in the Madras army, was selected to fill the high and important appointment of Adjutant-General; a post of such high consideration and responsibility, in a military point of view, that it is very seldom bestowed on any one below the rank of a field officer. This honor conferred on an officer who could not boast a rank superior to that of a captain of cavalry served to mark in a most striking manner the opinion which was entertained of his character and talents by those who thought proper to place him in that high and honorable situation. Every person that knows Colonel Conway, will admit that he was perhaps, of all other men, the best calculated for the appointment of Adjutant-General in an army in the East-Indies; a situation which requires the possession of talents of a peculiar, yet varied description. The knowledge which he had attained of military tactics, the operations of the field, and particularly the duties pertaining to the staff of an army, were perhaps alone sufficient to point him out as an officer high-

* Deputy Adjutant General of the subsidiary force with the Nizam.

ly qualified to fill this post with honor to himself and advantage to the service. Whatever were the favourable presentiments which might have been formed by his friends on this occasion, they have all been fully realized by the active, energetic, and shining qualities which have constantly marked his career.

The happy talent which he possesses of discovering the peculiar *forte* of officers, and his practice of bringing them forward and giving that direction to their abilities most likely to tend to the good of the service, are circumstances which not a few meritorious individuals are ready to testify, many of whom may be said to owe their advancement to the skilful and discriminating judgment exercised by the Adjutant General. Such is the penetration which Colonel Conway so eminently possesses, that it is a fact too well known to be dilated on, that there was not, at the time the writer was in India, a single officer in the Madras army, of whose character and talents the colonel had not formed a correct and judicious estimate. Nor ought it to be omitted, that he never failed to raise from subordinate situations young men whom he found to possess latent talent, which would have been passed over unnoticed, from that modest demeanour which is so often its concomitant, had not his discriminating mind been ever ready to elicit and call it forth into action. It is a fact well known to the writer, that it was his constant practice to take by the hand young men who were perfectly unknown to him, and to put them forward into situations which he had discovered they were qualified to fill; as it was his rule to select for particular services officers whom he knew to possess appropriate abilities, in opposition to the weight of that rank and interest which is so often found to preponderate, to the exclusion of men of skill and enterprise, to the great injury of the service, and the serious deterioration of the military character.

Highly essential and important as these qualifications must be considered in a military point of view, and which Colonel Conway has the good fortune to possess in an eminent degree, still there is too much reason to believe that the service often suffers materially from a lamentable deficiency in regard to these impor-

tant requisites among the officers of the staff. But the talents of the Adjutant-General are by no means confined to the points already touched upon. His profound and general knowledge of the military art, both theoretical and practical, is such as to qualify him for the most high and important command. It is therefore a matter of regret with those who are acquainted with the service and the merits of the Adjutant-General, that, especially at the present juncture, it is not compatible with his official situation that he should be called to move in a sphere more exalted, and still more commensurate with his abilities.

If in any one particular that man may be said to excel who is found excellent in all, the writer might dilate upon the superior knowledge which Colonel Conway possesses in regard to every thing connected with that essential arm of our Indian defence, the "Light Cavalry;" nor could he omit to notice the great improvements introduced by him, not only in the cavalry regiments, but in the horse artillery, both of which branches of the army at Madras are proud to acknowledge the comforts which both officers and men have derived, and the superior effect which has been given to their operations in the field, by the judicious plans and alterations suggested by the Adj. General. The improvements which have been introduced by him in the arrangement of the army details, and the regulations which he has adopted in regard to the office which he so ably fills, are calculated to prove of the greatest advantage to the service. But there is one circumstance above all others which will cause the colonel to be long remembered in the ranks of our brave oriental defenders; and that is, the affability, kindness, and attention which he ever exercised towards the native troops, and the pains which he constantly took to win their affection and regard. Every one will acknowledge that, whether in a military or a political point of view, this is a quality of all others most important to be possessed by every officer in the East-India service, where the native auxiliary regiments necessarily form the greater part of the military establishment. After the observation just made, it will almost be superfluous to add, that, warm and steady

in his friendship, and unbounded in his attachment to the principles of *true honor*, Col. Conway is a man at all times easy of access; and that his frank, courteous and gentlemanly demeanor towards those officers and others who have public business to transact with him, forms a striking contrast to the conduct of some members of the staff, whose supercilious airs upon such occasions only tend to produce the smile of contempt from many a worthy and meritorious individual, whose lot it may be to dance attendance on persons who are far more their inferiors in ability than their superiors in rank.

Having offered this just tribute to the character of a man who is an honor and an ornament to his profession, the reader will feel less of surprise than regret at the circumstance of Colonel Conway, in common with every other man similarly gifted and endowed, having his enemies to contend with; and though we may exultingly adopt the lines of the poet, who observes that

Envy will merit as its shade pursue,
And, like the shadow, proves the substance true.

Still it could most cordially be wished that his enemies were those of a frank, open, and manly character, instead of the insidious and lurking class, who holding situations and having interest, and perhaps some degree of influence at "Head Quarters."

Possess the power too deeply to instil
The angry essence of their deadly will.

Persons of this description have, it is apprehended, been exercising illiberal and sinister arts to depreciate the reputation and talents of this gallant officer, and if possible to procure his removal from his elevated situation. Fortunately, however, their malignity has recoiled on themselves: his honorable employers, we are persuaded, are too well aware of the benefits which the service derives from the exertions of such a man as Col. Conway, to be induced by any invidious representations to remove him from a seat which he fills with such reputation and distinguished ability.

The degree of our astonishment that these machinations should have been put in practice against Col. Conway will be

somewhat abated, when we call to mind the jealousy and envy which exists in the East-Indies between certain officers of his Majesty's army and those of the Company's forces: nor is this officer the first by many who has had cause to complain of the effect of this mischievous and degrading spirit, its evil tendency is too obvious to require a single comment; it has, on more occasions than one, been productive of the worst consequences to those officers who have been so illiberal and imprudent as to imbibe it, while it has proved highly detrimental and injurious to the service in which they have been jointly engaged. Illustrative of the pernicious effect of this unmanly and ungenerous spirit is the following circumstance, which the writer recollects to have taken place at Madras a very few years ago. Certain officers of rank, belonging to the *Company's* service, suggested the propriety of convening a general meeting of the officers of both services then at the presidency, to consider of the erecting a monument to commemorate the victories of WELLINGTON. Colonel Conway, as on all occasions of a similar nature, was the foremost in promoting an object so congenial to a military spirit, and was supported by several highly respectable general officers of the same service. But certain officers of rank of his Majesty's service (and those too, very near the person of the commander-in-chief), whose duty it was to have checked the least symptoms of this jealous and illiberal temper on such an occasion, much to their discredit, fell into the same error, and accordingly represented to the officer commanding the army that the meeting was principally composed of officers of the *Company's* service, and prevailed on him to dissolve the meeting, under pretext that it had not been *regularly convened!* From this circumstance a stain has been cast on the Madras army for *not* doing that which it must have been their ardent wish and desire to have done, in honor of a warrior who imbibed the first principles of his profession when commanding a portion of their own body. On this occasion, one general officer in particular, holding a high command, distinguished himself by his intemperate and over-bearing conduct; but his courage was soon cooled

by the spirited and determined behaviour of Conway, who on this, as on all occasions, proved himself to be the friend of discipline and good order ; exemplifying, at the same time, by his conduct, the character of the gentleman, the man of honor, and the true soldier.

The Madras army is now in the field, and though no one can doubt the bravery of British troops under whatever circumstances they may be placed, yet the success of the commanding officer in his military operations must in a great measure, if not entirely, depend upon the advice and assistance which he receives from the officers of his staff. It is therefore of the first importance that these should be persons who have served in the country, possessing a knowledge of the language, habits, and manners of the natives, who are moreover well acquainted with the mode of conducting and every circumstance connected with an Indian campaign, together with a variety of important points of information, altogether of a peculiar and local description. The system of warfare, and much of the general plan of military operations, as carried on in the East-Indies, is extremely different from the practice in other parts

of the globe, and a commanding officer who has not been accustomed to the service requires in an especial manner the aid of practical and local knowledge and experience. Nor can it be expected that a general, however skilful and expert in directing the operations of two or three thousand men in one of our West-India Islands, should with the same facility wield a vastly superior force over an immense tract of country marked by circumstances of an altogether different character and description. Under these circumstances, the assistance to be derived from such a man as Conway must be a *desideratum* with any commanding officer appointed to watch over and promote the British interests in the East-Indies. In the formation and arrangements of his plans, the commanding officer will always find it to his interest to be guided by the advice and assistance of officers of rank in the Company's service ; and we heartily congratulate Sir Thomas Hislop that he is fortunate enough to have attached to his staff a man of such distinguished talents as the officer to whose high character the writer has found a peculiar pleasure in paying this honest tribute of applause.

DNW Footnote

C.B. London Gazette 14 October 1818. Awarded for services in the Mahratta War 1817-18.

Lieutenant-Colonel Conway was Adjutant General of the Army at the Battle of Maheidpore and was mentioned in General Orders of Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Hislop, dated Headquarters of the Army of the Deccan, Camp at Maheidpore, December 22nd, 1817, 'his important services during the action fought yesterday, can never be effaced from his [Hislop's] memory.'

Conway was again mentioned in General Orders by Sir Thomas Hislop after the operations against the fort at Talneir, 27 February 1818, 'The conduct of Lieutenant-Colonel Conway, Adjutant-General of the Army, and the increasing and energetic display of that officer's personal courage and able arrangements throughout the day, were such as his Excellency well knew, from former experience, that he should derive the greatest benefit from. Sir Thomas Hislop begs the Lieutenant-Colonel to accept of his warmest thanks for the great aid he has on the present occasion had from him.' At this action, the Killadar of Talneir surrendered in person to Lieutenant-Colonel Conway, but it transpired to be an act of treachery by the Killadar, whose Arabs then opened a murderous fire on the gallant band of troops who had gained entry into the fort. These Arabs were put to the sword without delay and the Killadar was hanged from one of the bastions as soon as the place fell.

Thomas Henry Somerset Conway was appointed Cornet, 2nd Regiment Light Cavalry, Madras Presidency, in 1798; Lieutenant, 4 September 1799; Captain, 27 January 1810; Major, 18 October 1818; Lieut.-Colonel, 5 March 1826; Brevet Colonel, 18 June 1831. He died of cholera at Nackry Kul on 13 May 1837.

| MADRAS PRESIDENCY. | | | | | | 32—33 | | | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------|--------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NAMES. | Cadet. | Cornet, Ensign or Second Lieutenant. | Lieutenant. | Captain. | Major. | Lieut.-Colonel. | Colonel. | Major-General. | Lieut.-General. | Date of Resignation, Retirement, or Death. |
| | | | | | | | | | | |
| Colebrooke, James | " | | April 1, 1793 | May 7, 1800 | April 8, 1808 | Jan. 5, 1814 | | | | Died Jan. 18, 1816, at Fort St. George. |
| Cawthorne, William | " | June 6, 1791 | | | | | | | | Killed — 1793, before Pondicherry. |
| Cox, Sir John, Bart. | " | June 15, 1791 | June 6, 1793 | June 17, 1800 | | | | | | Not to be traced. |
| Cevill, James | " | June 27, 1791 | June 12, 1793 | June 17, 1800 | | | | | | Died April 7, 1803. |
| Campbell, James | " | July 14, 1791 | Oct. 23, 1793 | Aug. 14, 1800 | May 27, 1809 | | | | | Retired April 8, 1812. |
| Chambers, William | 1790 | July 30, 1791 | Feb. 17, 1793 | June 8, 1801 | | | | | | Died Sep. 12, 1804. |
| Coghlan, Thomas | " | Aug. 21, 1791 | May 15, 1791 | Apr. 20, 1801 | | | | | | Not to be traced. |
| Campbell, Archibald | " | Sep. 9, 1791 | Aug. 6, 1794 | | | | | | | Not to be traced. |
| Campbell, Dugald | " | Sep. 12, 1791 | Aug. 6, 1794 | | | | | | | Died May 16, 1799. |
| Coupland, Joseph | 1791 | Sep. 27, 1791 | Aug. 6, 1791 | | | | | | | Retired March — 1801. |
| Culmore, E.W.—engineers .. | " | | June 4, 1792 | | | | | | | Died 1796. |
| Caldwell, Sir J. L. (K.C.B.)—engineers | 1788 | | Dec. 2, 1792 | Aug. 12, 1802 | Jan. 1, 1806 | Sep. 26, 1811 | | Jan. 10, 1837 | | |
| Castle, William—engineers | 1791 | May 1, 1793 | Sep. 9, 1793 | | | | | | | Died Aug. 24, 1801. |
| Cotgrave, John—engineers .. | " | June 23, 1793 | June 1, 1796 | Jan. 1, 1806 | May 9, 1821 | | | | | Died April 13, 1825, at Madras. |
| Caruthers, John—engineers .. | " | | | | | | | | | Struck off, Dec. 17, 1799. |
| Campbell, John | " | Oct. 19, 1768 | Sep. 7, 1770 | July 13, 1779 | | | | | | Pensioned 1787. Died Feb. 22, 1808. |
| Capper, Francis | " | Apr. 17, 1778 | Jan. 11, 1782 | Aug. 6, 1794 | Oct. 4, 1798 | June 17, 1800 | | | | Lost Mar. 14, 1809, in the "Lady Jane Dundas." |
| Collins, Edward Henry | 1793 | | July 29, 1795 | | | | | | | Killed at the siege of Pondicherry, Sep. 5, 1795. |
| Cleghorne, J. R.—engineers .. | " | | Sep. 13, 1794 | Jan. 1, 1806 | Brevet, 1819 | | | | | † Died June 6, 1825, on board the "Portland," passage to England. |
| Conway, T. H. S. (C.B.)—cavalry | 1798 | | Sep. 4, 1799 | Jan. 27, 1810 | Oct. 18, 1818 | Mar. 5, 1826 | Brevet, June 18, 1831 | | | Died May 13, 1837, at Nackry Kul. |
| Cookesley, Thos.—artillery .. | " | Jan. 8, 1796 | Apr. 14, 1798 | | | | | | | Killed May 2, 1799. |
| Custance, George | " | Dec. 27, 1795 | Jan. 8, 1796 | Sep. 21, 1804 | Sep. 11, 1809 | | | | | Died June 24, 1814, at Samaleottah. |
| | | | | | | | | | | Died Nov. 25, 1799. |

Cadet 1798 (Correct date 1893)
 Lieutenant 4 September 1799
 Captain 27 January 1810
 Major 18 October 1810
 Lieutenant Colonel 5 March 1826
 Brevet Colonel 18 June 1831
 Died 13 May 1837 at Nackry Kul

Thomas Henry Somerset Conway was appointed Cornet, 2nd Regiment Light Cavalry, Madras Presidency, in 1798; Lieutenant, 4 September 1799; Captain, 27 January 1810; Major, 18 October 1818; Lieut.-Colonel, 5 March 1826; Brevet Colonel, 18 June 1831. He died of cholera at Nackry Kul on 13 May 1837.

General Orders by Commander-in-Chief

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------|
| Surname | Conway |
| First Names | Thos. Somerset C. |
| Rank | Lieut.-Col. |
| Regiment | 6th Light Cavalry |
| Charge | False Statement |
| Place | Bangalore |
| Alleged Crime Month | Oct |
| Alleged Crime Year | 1832 |
| Finding | Not Guilty |
| Outcome | Confirmed |
| Trial Day | 1 |
| Court Martial Month | Oct |
| Court Martial Year | 1834 |
| IOR Reference | L/MIL/17/3/417 p.10072 |

Commanders-in-Chief, Madras Army during Brigadier General Conway's Service

- Colonel John Braithwaite (1792–1796)
- Major-General Alured Clarke (1796–1797)
- Major-General George Harris (1797–1800)
- Major-General John Braithwaite (1800–1801)
- Major-General James Stuart (1801–1804)
- Major-General John Cradock (1804–1807)
- Lieutenant-General Hay McDowall (1807–1810)
- Major-General Sir Samuel Auchmuty (1810–1813)
- Lieutenant-General Sir John Abercromby (1813)
- Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Hislop (1814–1820)
- Lieutenant-General Sir Alexander Campbell (1820–1825)
- Lieutenant-General Sir George Walker (1825–1831)
- Lieutenant-General Sir Robert O'Callaghan (1831–1836)
- Lieutenant-General Sir Peregrine Maitland (1836–1838)

Biographical Family details for Thomas Henry Somerset Conway

Born 1779 in Surrey, England. Son of [father unknown] and [mother unknown], [sibling(s) unknown].

Husband of Ann Jemima Miver — married 1 Mar 1807 in Hussain Sagur, Madras, India

Husband of Georgiana Lys — married 17 Aug 1836 in Madras, India

Father of Fanny Sophia Conway, Anne Jemima Clarissa Conway, Isabella Elizabeth Conway and Thomas Barlow Auohimely Conway

Died about 13 May 1837 in Madras, India

Graves and monuments

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Surname | CONWAY |
| Given Names | T H S |
| Degrees/ Honours | CB |
| Deceased Rank | Brig |
| Deceased Occupation | Madras Army |
| Death Date | 13 May 1837 |
| Age | 58 yrs |
| Inscription | T.H.S. Conway, Brigadier, CB, died while en route to assume Command of Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, after 40 years in the public service, 20 of which as Adjutant General Madras Army, 13 May 1837, aged 58 years |
| Church/ Cemetery | <u>Nekarikallu, Narasaraopeta taluk</u> |

Biography

Thomas was born in 1779. He passed away about 1837.

Dictionary of Indian Biography (Buckland)

Entry: Brigadier General entered the East India Company's military service in 1793, reached Madras, 1795 : in the expedition to Ceylon, 1796 : in that to Manilla, 1797 : in several campaigns : in Mysore, 1799 : in the Ceded

Districts, 1801-2 : Mahratta war, 1803-6 : under Sir T. Hislop, 1815 : in the Pindari war, 1817-8 : Adjutant- General of the Madras Army, from 1809 : C.B., 1819 : employed on a military mission to Bengal, 1828-30 : appointed to command the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force : died of cholera, May 14, 1837.

Sources

British Library India Office Records THS Conway

"India Marriages, 1792-1948 ," database, FamilySearch (<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:FGV3-SXS : 10 February 2018>), Thomas Henry Conway and Georgina Lys, 17 Aug 1836; citing Madras, Madras, India; index based upon data collected by the Genealogical Society of Utah, Salt Lake City; FHL microfilm 521,842.

Dutta, Manas. "UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIAL COMPLEXITIES OF THE MADRAS ARMY, 1807-1860." *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*, vol. 71, Indian History Congress, 2010, pp. 732-44, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44147542>.

Anne Jemima Clarissa Conway family tree

Born in India on 21 Jun 1816 to Thomas Henry Somerset (Brigadier) Conway and Ann Jemima Miver. Anne Jemima Clarissa Conway married Lt. Col. Matthew Stewart Poole and had 5 children. She passed away on 1851.

Parents

Thomas Henry Somerset (Brigadier) Conway

1779 - 1837

Ann Jemima Miver

1787 - 1834

Spouse(s)

Lt. Col. Matthew Stewart Poole

1802 - 1855

Children

Eliza Sophia Poole

1850 - 1940

Lt. Col. Matthew Conway Poole

1841 - 1885

William Stewart Poole

1842 - 1871

Anne Frances Ashton Poole

1838 - 1871

Frances Isabella Poole

1845 - 1926

Success of Major General Dugald Campbell in quelling the disturbances in the Ceded District

Reference: IOR/F/4/126/2318

Description: Success of Major General Dugald Campbell in quelling the disturbances in the Ceded Districts of Kurnool, Cuddapah, Bellary and Anantapur. Subsequent distribution of his forces into temporary cantonments.

Date: Jan 1801-Oct 1802

Related material: Madras Mil 17 Aug 1803, draft 167/1802-03, E/4/891 pp 271-73

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Language: English