

*Extract of a dispatch from Governor the Hon. Fred. North,  
to the Rt. Hon. Lord Hobart, one of his Majesty's Prin-  
cipal Secretaries of State, dated Columbo, July 8, 1803.*

I enclose to you the deposition of a person stating himself to be an eye-witness of one of the most atrocious acts of perfidy and cruelty ever committed. Every particular of the narration may not be true, but it appears that Candi was attacked in the midst of a truce, by the first Adigaar, on the 23d (or rather believe on the 24th) ultimo; that Major Davie, commanding the garrison there, capitulated on the following day, and that after he left the fort all the English soldiers who accompanied him were treacherously murdered in cold blood. I cannot believe that Major Davie would have consented to evacuate on any terms less favourable than those stated in the deposition, viz. of being allowed to proceed with arms and ammunition, and without molestation, to Trincomalée, and that care should be taken of the sick whom he left behind; for the fort was rendered, in the opinion of most military men, tenable against any force that was likely to be brought against it, and large supplies of provisions had been sent thither, in addition to those which Lieutenant-Colonel Barbut declared to be sufficient for six months' consumption, two months ago. Lieutenant Huskisson was also on the road from Trincomalée (as Major Davie must have known) with 100 doolies, under an escort of 150 Malays; and when I heard of the breach of the truce, I ordered Lieutenant-Colonel Hunter to proceed from Trincomalée with 200 of his Majesty's 19th Regiment, and fifty Malays, to secure the evacuation, which (had it been delayed for a fortnight) would have been safely effected. But what I can still less account for, is, that Major Davie, having obtained such terms, should have consented to lay down his arms, when he must have felt that the person who insisted on such an infraction of agreement, could have no other design but that of murdering him and his men; and when he must, in common with all the army, have known that a corps of forty Europeans, in good health, and of 200 Malays, might cut their way through any army of Candians to any part of the island. Indeed Captain Mudge, late Commandant of Fort Macdowall, brought off his men in circumstances of as great difficulty; and a small detachment of twenty-two invalid Malays, fourteen convalescents of the 19th Regiment from Candi, and sixty Sepoys under Lieutenant Nixon, Ensign Grant, and Ensign Smellie, defended themselves in a miserable little fort of fascines at Dembadenia, for more than a week, against an immense multitude collected by the second Adigaar, after they had expended their ammunition, till they were relieved by a detachment of fifty Europeans and as many Sepoys, whom I sent under the command of Captain Blackall, of the 51st, to bring them down, in which he has succeeded without loss. Under the oppression of so dreadful a misfortune, it is satisfactory to me to state, that an opinion formed of a spirit of defection in his Majesty's Malay Regiment is perfectly unfounded; some individuals of that corps had, indeed, deserted from Candi, but the great majority, including all Officers of influence and respectability, were staunch to the end. Those who, after the English were separated from them, were forced into the Candian service, are certainly not blameable; and of those, five have already escaped and arrived here, who say, that all the others are ready to follow their example. The Princes of that nation, who are settled at Columbo, waited on me, as soon as the melancholy intelligence arrived, to assure me of their regret and indignation at hearing that any Malays had deserted, and of their invariable attachment to the British Government.

*Deposition of the Lascoryn arrived from Candi.*

Milihanage Joannes, of the Reformed Religion, being truly sworn, deposes, that the 6th of last month, he was sent, along with twelve other Lascoryns, by the Town Major to Candi; that he passed at Negumbo, where doolies were put under their charge, and that he arrived at Candi, after a route of about twelve days, and that the Lascoryns delivered up the doolies and other stores which were under their charge to the English Gentlemen. After remaining there three days,

they were ordered to return to Columbo with twelve doolies, in eleven of which were sick Europeans, and one which contained baggage. These doolies, with twelve European soldiers, as an escort, passed the river, and stopped upon the opposite side; that the same day he heard firing at Candi; that a great many doolies, upon hearing the firing, attempted to pass the river, but were stopped by a Malay sentry. Several Candians approached the place where the doolies and the sick were, and fired upon them, which were returned by the Europeans and twelve Malays who were posted there. They fired till their ammunition was expended, when the Malays jumped into the river, and the European Officer who commanded the detachment did the same. He does not know what became of all the European soldiers, of whom he only saw three cross the river, and one killed by the Candians. That the Lascars, who served the cannon at that post, threw the cannon into the river, and passed to Candi; and that he followed their example and escaped to Candi; that he does not know what became of the sick who were in the doolies.

He went first to the Mandore, where he had been before, but finding many Candians there, he got into the palace, and remained in the court where the Malay soldiers were. The firing continued until two o'clock, when a white flag was hoisted from the palace, and the firing ceased. That Major Davie, the Captain of Artillery, and an European Malay Officer, who spoke Malay, and two or three Malay native Officers, went to the Adigaar, and returned soon afterwards with an Ola from the Adigaar, which he himself read, importing that the whole might proceed to Trincomalée without receiving any molestation, and that the sick should be taken care of, and have medicine given to them until they were well, when they might either go to Columbo or stay in Candi. The garrison set out on Friday, with their arms and ammunition, at five in the evening to Alungantotte, where they remained all night, exposed to a very heavy rain, he, the deponent, being with them.

On Saturday morning Major Davie ordered a raft to be made to pass the river; several Candians came and demanded Mootoo Sawmy, who, they said, was not at Candi. They seized upon him, and carried him off. Mootoo Sawmy gave his sword to Major Davie. The Candians told Major Davie that it was unnecessary to make rafts, as next day a number of doneys would be procured, in which they might all pass. Next day, however, Sunday, no doneys came, and it was proposed to send some persons across the river to fasten a cord by which they might pass; that he, the deponent, swam across the river, and fastened a cord to the other side, after which he returned, but while he was doing so a Candian cut the cord he had fastened. Soon afterwards there came an order from the Adigaar to Major Davie, to make his men lay down their arms, and return to Candi, which, after some time, they did; that between Candi and Allungantotte, there is a village called Geventotte, where two cannons were placed, and where the Malays were ordered to separate from the rest, and proceed to Candi, which they all did, except four native officers, who remained with Major Davie. Soon afterwards all the prisoners were taken two by two, and delivered over to the Candians, who took them to a little distance, and cut their heads off; that they were likewise going to kill the women, but this was put a stop to by order of the Adigaar. Major Davie, and the Captain of Artillery, with the four Malay Officers who had followed their countrymen, were carried off, as he supposes, to the Adigaar. The Sepoys and Bengal Lascars were not put to death. A Malay servant of Captain Nouradin, whom he saw, told him that the two English Officers and the four Malays were with the Adigaar. Upon Monday he saw the two English Officers, and was told that they were to be carried to Hargaroonketti, where the King was. In the evening of that day the Adigaar collected all the effects which the English had left, and ordered the cannon to be fired without ball, as a mark of rejoicing. That having heard afterwards that the doolies, Lascoryns, &c. might return, he set out on Friday night, and came to Columbo yesterday evening, the 5th of July.

Taken down by me from the interpretation of Mr. Jonville and the Mahamodliar.  
Columbo, July 6, 1803.

ROBERT ARBUTHNOT,  
Chief Secretary to Government.  
(A true copy)  
Richard Plasket,  
Assistant to the Chief Secretary to Government.