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The Defences of Macao in 1794: A British Assessment

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THE DEFENCES OF MACAO IN 1794: A BRITISH ASSESSMENT

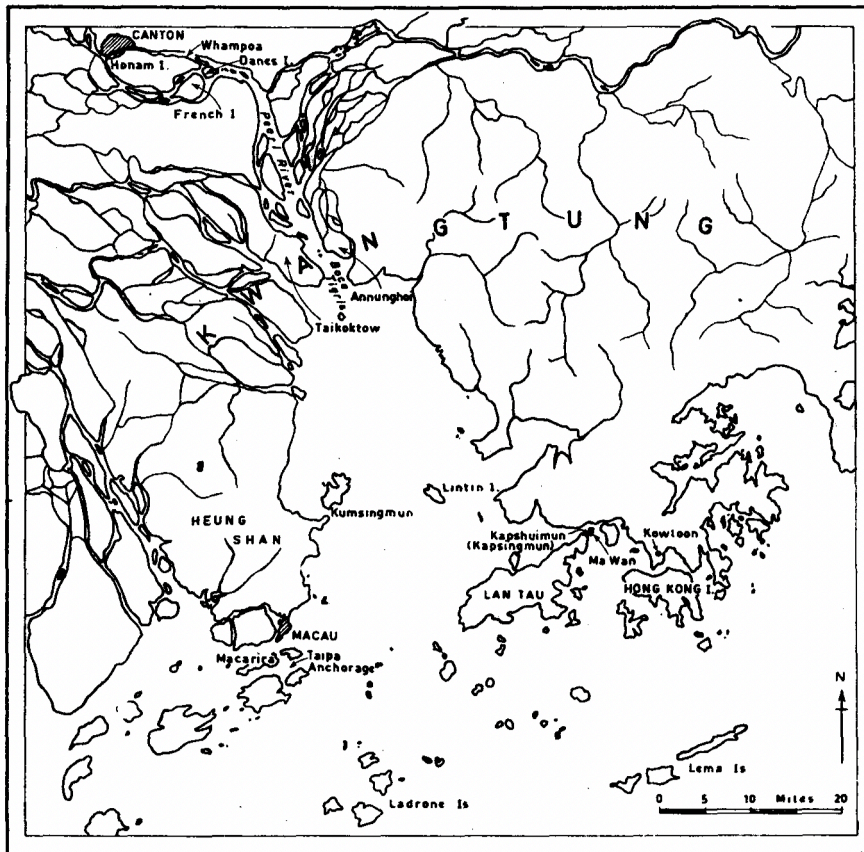
J. L. CRANMER-BYNG

"The Portuguese, who, as a nation, have been long really exanimated and dead in this part of the world, although their ghost still appears at Macao, hold that place upon such terms as render it equally useles and disgraceful to them. It is now chiefly supported by the English, and on the present footing of things there the Chinese can starve both it, and those who support it, whenever they please. If the Portuguese made a difficulty of parting with it to us on fair terms, it might easily be taken from them by a small force from Madras, and the compensation and irregularity be settled afterwards".

Thus wrote Lord Macartney in his Journal in January, 1794, while staying at Macao on the conclusion of his embassy to the Court of the Emperor Ch'ien-lung at Jehol and Peking during the previous year.¹ Macartney was not stating a personal opinion when he wrote that it could easily be captured by a small force from India. The feasibility of doing so was confirmed by a detailed report on the defences of Macao in 1794 made for Macartney by one of his suite, Lieutenant Henry William Parish of the Royal Artillery. Parish has received little notice for the part he played in the Macartney embassy though he was, in fact, a valuable member of the ambassador's staff as Macartney himself realized, and a footnote to the entry in his Journal for 5 September 1793, where he was describing the Great Wall of China, testifies: "Since the above hasty account was written I have been favoured with a plan, section and measurements and observations on this celebrated wall by Lieutenant Parish of the Royal Artillery, which from his approved skill and accuracy as an engineer and draftsman are to be considered as highly valuable and supersede everything that has been hitherto written on this subject."² John Barrow, who held the post of comptroller in Macartney's suite, also praised

1. J. L. Cranmer-Byng, *An Embassy to China*, Longmans, 1962, 211. This work contains the full text of the journal which Lord Macartney kept during his embassy to the Emperor Ch'ien-lung, from his arrival off the coast of South China in June, 1793, until his arrival in Macao on his homeward journey in January, 1794.
2. *Ibid.*, 112 footnote.

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MACAO, CANTON, HONG KONG AND THE PEARL RIVER MOUTH.

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Parish's ability: "Lieutenant Parish, of the artillery, was a good officer and an excellent draughtsman in the engineer department, as his drawings of a section and view of the Great Wall of China and other subjects will testify, though generally they were taken by stealth."³

Parish prepared other reports for Macartney during the course of the embassy among which were reports concerning:⁴

The military strength and defences of Batavia [249]

The bay of Tourane in Indo-China together with the island of Callao. [362]

The order of parade of Chinese troops at Tientsin. [371]

The military posts on the route from Peking to Jehol. [371]

The Bocca Tigris, the narrow part at the entrance of the Pearl river which leads up to Canton. [371]

The possibility of making a settlement on the island of Cowhee (Ma-wan) off the north eastern tip of Lantao island [371]

In fact the Macartney embassy was conceived as a reconnaissance of the Chinese empire and places *en route* as well as a diplomatic mission, and it was undertaken somewhat in the spirit of an eighteenth century voyage of exploration such as Captain Cook's famous voyages of a few years earlier. It was no accident that among Macartney's encourage were two "natural philosophers", two artists, two botanists and two men with wide amateur interest in the natural sciences — Sir George Leonard Staunton and John Barrow.⁵ This side of Macartney's embassy has generally been overlooked and the story of his diplomatic mission given all the attention. However, the information about China which Macartney and the members of his embassy brought back to England was considerable, and this information may, I believe, have influenced the decisions of the Government in England at certain times subsequently. For instance, Britain twice sent troops from India for the defence of Macao — in 1802 and again in 1808, and the report written by Parish, together with the plan and chart which accompanied it, may well have persuaded the Government of the practicability of doing so.

The plan of Macao showing its fortifications which Parish used

3. *Ibid.*, 314.

4. These reports are preserved among the Macartney documents of the Wason Collection on China and the Chinese in the Library of Cornell University. The reference numbers of individual documents in this collection are shown in square brackets after each item.

5. Sir G. L. Staunton was a Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, and became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1787. For Staunton and Barrow see J. L. Cranmer-Byng, *op. cit.*, 307-9.

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to illustrate his report was not originally made by him. In his Journal for 20 June, 1793, Macartney recorded: "At six o'clock a.m. we came to an anchor off the Grand Ladrone in eleven fathoms of water, within view of several small islands. The city of Macao bearing several leagues N.W. of our berth. I sent Sir George Staunton, Mr. Maxwell and Captain Mackintosh on shore for intelligence." They returned on board ship two days later bringing with them not only current information but also a plan of Macao. Macartney explains in his Journal for 22 June how this was obtained:

"It is singular enough that, of the Europeans at Macao, none seemed better disposed to us than the Spanish agents Messieurs Agoti and Fuentes, who not only testified their goodwill by several services, but gave us an essential proof of their confidence by sending me a manuscript plan and chart of the city of Macao and the river of Canton, taken upon the spot by M. Agoti himself, the result of several years' observation and labour."⁶

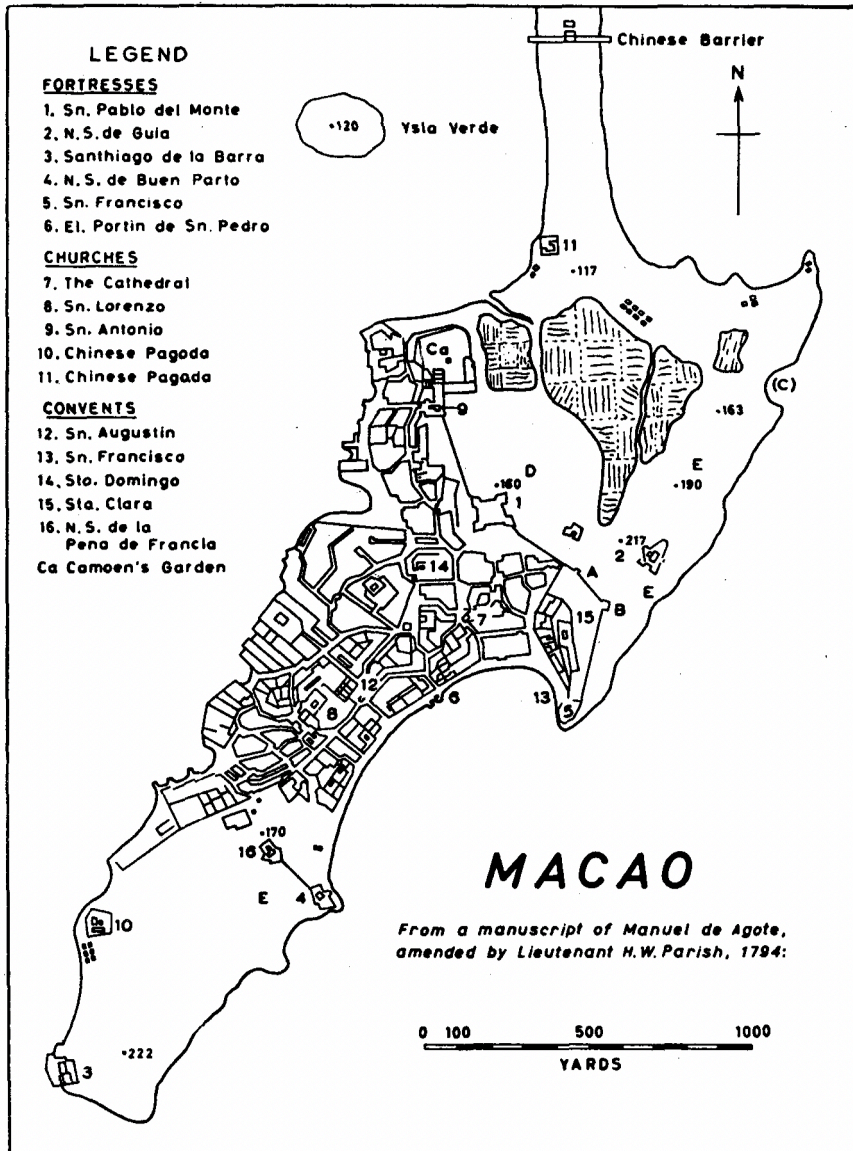
The copy of this plan made by Parish is endorsed:

"PLAN OF MACAO from a manuscript of Manuel de Agote taken in 1792."⁷

Here follows the full text of Parish's report on the defences of Macao; the spelling, punctuation and the use of capital letters have been modernized and made consistent.⁸

6. J. L. Cranmer-Byng, *op. cit.*, 63-4.
7. Preserved in the British Museum Add. MS. 19822, Article 2. Also under the same reference are plans made by Lieut. Parish from the manuscript plans and charts supplied by the Spanish agent, Agote, as follows: The inner passage from Macao to Canton (art. 3); the peninsula of Macao (Art. 4); the fortress of Macao (arts. 5 and 6). I am grateful to Mr. P. D. A. Harvey, Assistant Keeper of the Department of Manuscripts, for this information. Although it would have been possible to reproduce the plan of Macao made by Lieut. Parish photographically the details would have been too small to be easily legible. Instead the plan printed on page 136 has been made from a photocopy of the original by Mr. A. Shepherd of the Department of Geography and Geology in the University of Hong Kong. Part of the original has been omitted, and the figures giving the depth of the sea have also had to be omitted. The plan reproduced here should be compared with the one engraved in the folio volume of Sir G. L. Staunton's *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China . . .* (London, 1797) plate 11. This plan differs from the original somewhat. For instance it gives references to 37 places shown on the engraved plan instead of only the 16 shown in the manuscript, and it also omits the reference to the fact that Parish had copied it from a plan made by Manuel de Agote. The legend which Parish supplied for his plan is printed in the form of a note on page 149.
8. Macartney documents in the Wason Collection on China and the Chinese, Cornell University, document 371, pp. 45-54. I wish to thank the Director of Libraries, Cornell University, for permission to quote this document in full.

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Question. What number of troops is necessary to defend Macao?

Answer.	To defend Sn. Pablo del Monte ⁹ ..	500
	N.S. de Guia	250
	Santhiago de la Barra	120
	N.S. de Buen Parto	60
	Sn. Francisco	60
	El Portin [Fontin. Ed] de Sn. Pedro ..	20
	Total for the fortress	1010
	The point A	20
	The point B	50
	Total ¹⁰	1180

Or in round numbers 1200 men are requisite to garrison the works.

Question 2nd. If properly garrisoned what defence is it capable of making?

Answer. If the works only are manned it can hardly be defended against an enemy that has once landed in sufficient force and with cannon. A few days will probably make them masters of the place, but if an opposition be made in landing it may be done to great advantage. In this case, however, more works or more troops will be necessary, or both if the resistance is expected to be effectual.

In order to attack Macao in its present state and garrisoned as above it is necessary to be masters of the sea, to have an establishment of gun boats, and

9. The names of places in Macao mentioned in this document are given in a Spanish form since Parish was copying from a plan drawn by a Spaniard. In order to aid identification the modern Portuguese forms of these names are given below. The remains of most of these forts can still be seen in Macao today.

São Paulo do Monte ('St. Paul of the hill'); Nossa Senhora da Guia ('Our Lady the Guide'); Santiago da Barra ('St. James of the Bar'); Nossa Senhora do Bom Parto ('Our Lady of Good Birth'); Sao Francisco (St. Francis); Fortim de São Pedro, 'The Bulwark of St. Peter).

The main fort of Macao, the São Paulo do Monte, was begun by the Jesuits in 1616 and was subsequently taken over and completed by the Macao Government. The walls still stand. For a description of the Dutch attack on Macao in 1622 see C. R. Boxer, *Fidalgos in the Far East 1550-1770*, 76-83. For a handy account of the various forts see Major Acacio Cabreira Henriques, *Monumentos Nacionais Existentes na Provincia de Macau*, Macau, 1956, 23-33.

I wish to record my grateful thanks to Mr. J. M. Braga of Hong Kong for giving me the benefit of his close knowledge of the history of Macao while writing this article.

10. Parish appears to have added up the figures wrongly. The total should be 1080.

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to be able to land perhaps 3000 troops with cannon. Under these circumstances an invading army may land in the little bay marked C in the plan to the NE of the peninsula.¹¹ The water is shallow and the craft must be constructed accordingly. In their approach to the shore they will be opposed by the direct fire of six guns of N.S. de Guia, about nine or twenty pounders, which from their height cannot discover them, when near the shore, and by one heavy gun in flank from Sn. Francisco. By keeping to the north east as far as the depth of water will admit, the fire of the former may perhaps be wholly avoided, but the latter must be opposed by gun boats which, as it lies much exposed, *en barbette*¹² and low, may be done to advantage; by keeping in shore these boats may avoid the other guns of Sn. Francisco, and those of N.S. de Buen Parto will be too distant to be dreaded. The troops once landed may approach under cover of the hill to within a very short distance of the place. Coehorn and royal mortars¹³ may be advanced to within 150 yards, and infantry may be posted behind the frequent irregularities of the hills, by a constant fire of musketry to prevent the service of the guns. The besieged have four heavy cannon, perhaps 24 pounders, mounted upon two faces, which form a very obtuse angle, and which together make an extent of about 15 yards. These are supported by two lighter guns in small projections on each side, but the angle of the work once gained, these last become useless. Thus circumstanced, it might be hoped that a spirited

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11. For some reason it was not marked with a C in Parish's plan. In fact Parish is referring to the Bay of Cacilhas, where the small Dutch force had landed on 24 June 1622 at the beginning of their abortive attack on Macao. The C has been added in brackets to the plan reproduced on page.
 12. A barbette can be defined as 'an earthen terrace inside the parapet of a rampart, serving as a platform for heavy guns' (*Chambers's Twentieth Century Dictionary*). The artillery was able to fire over the top of the parapet.
 13. Baron van Menno Coehoorn (1641-1714) invented a small mortar used in the siege of Grave (1673); this developed into many types used since then, up to the "trench mortar" of the twentieth century. They were short, thick pieces of ordnance resting on a "bed", and changes of range were effected by increasing or reducing the charges.

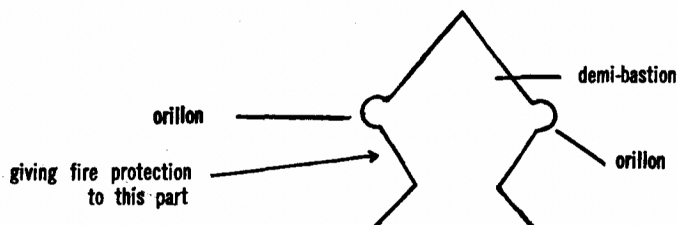
I am most grateful to Mr. T. H. McGuffie, the Honory Editor of the *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research* for supplying this note on a highly specialised subject and also for helping me with the other footnotes on siege-warfare terms in this article.

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attempt by escalade would succeed. The point within point blank range of the place, which to be attacked is not flanked, it has no ditch. The wall is low and it is not sufficiently large to contain musketry for its defence. It may be approached under cover within a very short distance, and the attack may be supported by a heavy fire of musketry and a number of small shells. If however this be thought hazardous, the ascent from the beach to the hill above it, though steep, is regular. Cannon and stores may be easily taken up it, sand bags may be filled on the spot, and a battery constructed within point blank range of the place, which would soon occasion a surrender. The battery must be secured by an *épaulement*¹⁴ from the fire of the Fort No. 1.

This work once possessed the besiegers became matters of its cannon. The enemy are easily driven from the points A and B and from the work No. 5. The batteries may now be strengthened, particularly with mortars, and advanced along the height, and a body of men with cannon may cross the plain and get under cover of the hill marked D, on which a battery may be constructed, protected as before by small mortars and infantry concealed behind the rocks upon the surface of the hill, which it must be observed are very large and frequent, as well as by the batteries on the heights first mentioned. A breach may be made in the salient angle of the south east bastion, which may be approached under cover of the hill within ten yards. Care, however, must be taken, previous to an attack, to dismount a gun extremely well covered by an *orillon*¹⁵ on the right flank of the north east

11. A semi-circular projection at the shoulder of a bastion intended to cover the guns and defenders on the flank and giving some degree of cover to a gun standing on the natural surface'.
15. Also, 'orillion'. 'A side-work of a battery, or earthwork to protect it from a flanking fire (*Chambers's*). A sketch will explain this better.



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bastion. The work has no ditch and would probably be surrendered on a breach being made. At all events it could not withstand an assault. Whilst the attack is carrying on, it might be thought advisable to visit the south west end of the peninsula very frequently with gun boats, in order to draw the attention of the besieged that way.

Question 3rd. How is it supplied with water, from wells, cisterns or springs?

Answer. The houses in the town are principally supplied by wells, on the heights however there are many springs, of which the most copious that have been observed are those marked E in the plan. There appears to be no want of water on any part of the peninsula.

Question 4th. What number of troops are actually here at present, and how distinguished, i.e. how many infantry, how many artillery, how many Europeans, how many officers?

Answer. The establishment of the military is as follows.

Governor and Captain General	..	1
Commandant Serjeant Major	1
Maestre de Campo ¹⁶	1
Captain Major de Campo	1
Commandants of Fortresses	5
Lieutenants	4
Captains of Militia	2
Infantry and Artillery	150
Total Establishment	165

130 men are said to be in garrison at present, half artillery, and half infantry. Four guns have been observed from time to time to be exercised by beat of drum upon the batteries in the fort. These will require about 24 men, and it is probable that this number is the third part or nearly so of the artillery. A very few are Europeans, and these appear to be non-commissioned officers.

As to the militia they are at present unarmed

16. A Portuguese term used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to denote a rank equivalent to that of a Colonel-of-Foot.

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and undisciplined, but if they do not want to inclination, they may be very capable of doing garrison duty. The number of seculars exclusive of the aged and infants is 3411, of which perhaps 1500 may be considered as capable of bearing arms.

Question 5th. What is your general idea of the place, considered in a military light?

Answer.
With respect
to China

Macao may perhaps be considered as of great importance in a military light, whilst the trade to China is so much the object of Europe as it is at present, and has been for many years past. With respect to China itself it may be considered as a key to the southern provinces. A power possessed of Macao could make a descent upon the country if such a step should at any time be considered as within the efforts of foreign arms. They could interrupt or cut off the coast trade whenever they might wish to accomplish it, or it may be considered as a centre from whence naval expeditions might proceed to act offensively on the island of Chusan, or on the coast of China. If Macao were held by the English contrary to the wishes of the Chinese, it is probable that the attempt to suspend the trade that would follow on the part of China would very much increase the discontent of the southern provinces, which is said to be ever ready to show itself if occasion should offer. In this case Canton would easily fall into the hands of the English.¹⁷ The consequent increase of its trade and the equity of its Government, together with the security of their property, would give the inhabitants an interest in its continuing so, whilst their knowledge of the defence of rivers would enable them to withstand every effort of the Imperial arms to recover it. The possession of Macao and the seizure of the Bocca Tigris,¹⁸ must

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17. A very doubtful statement in view of subsequent events. In spite of a stoppage of trade during the Anglo-Chinese War of 1839-42 the people of Canton were continually hostile to foreigners, and this was the reason put forward by successive Governors-General of Kwangtung-Kwangsi after the Treaty of Nanking for not allowing the English to enter the city of Canton.
 18. The narrow entrance at the mouth of the Pearl river which connects Canton with the sea. The Chinese name was Hu-men, meaning 'tiger's mouth'. The Portuguese followed the Chinese name and called it Bocca do Tigre. This became corrupted into Bocca Tigris which is the usual Western name for the Hu-men.

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keep open their communication with the sea and secure their success at a small comparative expense. If on the contrary no such steps should be taken, perhaps the desire of gain, and the want of other employment, would induce the Chinese to enter upon a contraband trade, at least as advantageous as that carried on at present, although perhaps not quite so extensive; thus they would suffer no material disadvantage, whilst they waited an occasional change, from which they would have everything to hope. In short, with respect to China, it may be considered as an introduction into the country either as friends or enemies, under the great advantages of a strong situation, a constant and direct communication with the sea, and an inland navigation.

**with a view
to colonizing,
& the coast
trade.**

It may be considered as a centre for colonizing to any of the neighbouring coasts or islands, and for the extension and protection of the coast trade in these seas.

**With respect
to Europe.**

In the event of war with the different powers of Europe, Macao may be thought of the utmost consequence to England, as a refuge for their trade in these seas, as enabling them to cut off the trade of such powers with China, and as forming a centre of operation, from whence armaments may act against the Philippines¹⁹ or even further to the eastward, if a rupture with Spain should make this desirable.

As a harbour.

As a harbour it is capable of affording shelter and protection to the largest merchant ships all the year round.²⁰

19. The English captured Manila in 1762 but subsequently handed it back to Spain when the cost and the difficulties of administering it were realized. However, the idea of holding Manila was revived during the war against revolutionary France and in November, 1796, the Secret Committee of the Court of Directors of the East India Company sent orders to Sir John Shore, Governor-General of British India, to prepare for an expedition to Manila, and in August, 1797, the expedition was on the point of sailing from Madras under the command of Rear-Admiral Rainier when it was called off. See C. Northcote Parkinson, *War in the Eastern Seas 1793-1815*, 112-119.

20. This statement, however, was qualified by a "memorandum" which Parish attached to the end of his report (see below). The process of the silting up of the inner harbour had begun a long time previously. The normal anchorage for large ships at this time was in the bay between the islands of Taipa and Dom João (also called Macarira).

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As a place of strength.

By inspecting the plan it will appear at how comparatively inconsiderable an expense Macao might be fortified to any required degree of strength. The height of the projecting points and their situation with respect to each other, afford an obvious defence against the landing of troops, and the position of the hills is well calculated to afford a mutual protection. The Portuguese appear to have fortified the principal points, but these require to be strengthened, and others remain to be occupied, to render the defences complete.

MEMORANDUM

In the observations on the advantages of the harbour of Macao, considered in a military view, references were had to the soundings as laid down in the chart, without adverting to those nearer to the Taypa,²¹ and off the harbour, by the examination of which it appears that there is no approach for very large ships, although perhaps, were they once there, they would have a sufficient depth of water. As it is, however, the advantages mentioned, so far as relates to the reception of large ships, do not obtain".

The answer to question five: "What is your general idea of the place, considered in a military light?", is of considerable interest in view of subsequent events, especially the war of 1839-42, though the role assigned by Parish to Macao was in fact to be played by Hong Kong which became the British naval and military base "for the extension and protection of the coast trade in these seas".

The sequel to this report occurred eight years later during the Napoleonic war when England and France were struggling for supremacy. The English Government came to the decision that the presence of French warships in the eastern seas was a threat to the independence of the Portuguese settlements of Goa and

21. The name of an island off Macao forming part of the Portuguese Colony. It was also spelt Typa or Tipa; the modern spelling is Taipa. In the plan of Macao published in the folio volume of Sir G. L. Staunton's account of the Macartney embassy (see footnote 7) Parish has marked a narrow strip of low-lying land between two parts of the island as 'broken ground over which the tide sometimes flows'. This channel was filled in early in the present century. The name of the island was traditionally used to denote the anchorage there. (See note 20).

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Macao. In 1801 certain instructions were sent to Lord Wellesley,²² the Governor-General of British India at that time, and to Vice-Admiral Rainier,²³ commanding the British naval forces in the Indian Ocean. How these orders affected Macao can be seen in a letter from the Governor-General to Sir William Clarke, Commanding the British troops at Goa,²⁴ dated Benares, 20 November, 1801. The letter contains nine numbered paragraphs, two of which are here reproduced. The spelling and use of capitals has been modernized and the abbreviations written out in full.²⁵

"5. The protection of Macao must principally depend upon the naval force in the China Seas. Several of His Majesty's ships have long since sailed for China for the purpose of affording protection to the homeward bound fleet. Vice-Admiral Rainier under the orders which he has received from the Admiralty will no doubt dispatch instructions to the commanders of those ships to employ them in guarding the settlement of Macao from the expected designs of the French, and with a view to add to the strength of the naval force to be employed in this service, I have directed the Asia and Dover Castle, two of the Company's Indiamen, to be completely armed and equipped and ordered to join the naval armament in the China Seas. A Company of European infantry and a small party of European artillery will be embarked on each of those ships for the purpose of acting as marines or gunners on board, or of serving on shore, as occasion may require.

6. I transmit, enclosed for your information

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22. Richard Wellesley, Lord Mornington, created Marquis Wellesley in 1799. He was appointed Governor-General of India in 1797 and served in that capacity from 1798-1805. One of his younger brothers, Lieut-Colonel Arthur Wellesley, had arrived in India in 1797, and was promoted Major-General in April, 1802.
23. Peter Rainier was appointed Commodore in 1794 and sent out to the East Indies Station. He was promoted Rear-Admiral in 1795 and Vice-Admiral in 1799. He served continuously on the East Indies Station from 1794 until 1804, during most of which period he was Commander-in-Chief of the station. See C. Northcote Parkinson, *op. cit.*, 65-262; 431, and also the frontispiece which is a reproduction of a portrait of Rainier by Devis.
24. By an agreement with the Portuguese authorities made in 1799 a small force had been sent to Goa to strengthen the defences against a possible French attack. See J. F. Judice Biker, *Supplemento a Coleção dos Tratados, Convencões Contratos e Actos Publicos celebrados entre Portugal e as mais Potencias desde 1640, coordenados pelo Visconde de Borges de Castro e continuados por . . .* Tomo XV, Lisboa, 1878, 141 and 213. Also José de Almada, *A Aliança Inglesa: Subsídios para o seu estudo. Compilados e anotados.* Lisboa, 1947, Vol. II pp. 7-14.
25. B.M. Add. MS. 13703, folios 23-8.

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the copy of my letter to the Chief Supercargo at Canton upon the subject of the protection of this settlement of Macao”.

The letter to the ‘Chief Supercargo’ at Canton²⁶ was also dated Benares, 20 November, 1801, and contained six numbered paragraphs. In this letter Wellesley stated, among other things, that he had written to the Viceroy of Goa requesting him to send instructions to the Governor of Macao directing him to discuss with the ‘Chief Supercargo’ and the British Naval Commander the best ways of defending Macao. Drummond was to warn the Governor of Macao that the French Government intended to occupy the Colony and to suggest that the Governor should place it in the best possible state of defence. In his letter Wellesley continued. “It is desirable that the Governor of Macao should admit a reinforcement to the Garrison of British Troops or a detachment of Sailors, trained to the use of Arms and the management of Artillery, if such a force can be spared from the Squadron”.²⁷

This letter reached the members of the Select Committee of Supercargoes at Canton on 22 January, 1802, and naturally caused them some anxiety as their letter of 20 March, addressed to the naval and military commanders of the force from India clearly shows.²⁸ To the Select Committee the main point was not prima-

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26. The supercargoes of the East India Company trading at Canton were governed since 1779 by a Select Committee, which usually consisted of three or four senior members, one of whom acted as President. At this time the President was James Andrew John Laurence Charles Drummond, second son of the Hon. William Drummond, who was the second son of the fourth Viscount Strathallan. Born on 24 March, 1767, James Drummond went out to Canton in the East India Company's service at an early age. When Lord Macartney stayed at Macao from January until March, 1794, on his way back to England, he stayed in the house rented at Macao by James Drummond, who lived there during the off season, which was approximately April until October. (see J. L. Cranmer-Byng, *op. cit.* 219). Drummond became President of the Select Committee in January 1802, a position which he held, with only short breaks, until he left Canton permanently in January, 1807. He then settled down in Scotland and served as M.P. for Perthshire from 1812 until 1824. He succeeded to the representation of his family in 1817, and to the peerage as Viscount Strathallan in 1824, when the act of attainder against his family was reversed by Act of Parliament and his family's honours were restored. He was subsequently a Representative Peer of Scotland for twenty-five years. He died on 19 June, 1851.
27. H. B. Morse, *The Chronicles of the East India Company Trading to China 1635-1834*, II, 382. Morse prints the full text of this letter between pages 381-3. The original is in the British Museum, Add. MS. 13707, folios 35-8.
28. Printed in Morse, *op. cit.*, II, 383-6.
These events occurred in the middle of the trading season, and the supercargoes of the East India Company were living at the British Factory, just outside the walls of Canton, and not at their residences at Macao. When the news of the arrival of the force from India reached the Select Committee, it replied that its President would come down to Macao to consult. Morse, *op. cit.*, 387.

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rily whether the authorities at Macao would admit the small force of infantry and artillery without the use of force, but what the reactions of the Governor-General of Kwangtung and Kwangsi were likely to be.²⁹ They pointed out that even if the Portuguese authorities at Macao consented to admit reinforcements to the garrison they might consider it necessary to obtain the sanction of the Chinese authorities at Canton, who would certainly refer the matter to the Emperor in Peking for decision. It would take at least two months before an answer to such a request could be received, and meanwhile the troops would have to remain on board the ships. In a further letter to the same officers dated Canton, 25 March, 1802, the select Committee also pointed out that "... if the Portuguese are sufficiently abject to require their permission, the same reasons which might induce the Chinese to exclude a French force would operate with them to give a decided negative to the reception of an English one".³⁰

On 18 March H.M.S. *Arrogant*, sixty-four guns, Captain Edward Oliver Osborn, had arrived off Lintin island³¹ with three East India Company ships under convoy — *Dover Castle*, *Asia* and *Rainier*, each of which carried a Company of European infantry and a proportion of European artillerymen to serve on board as marines and gunners, or to strengthen the garrison at Macao. Announcing his arrival in a letter to the President and Select Committee at Canton dated 18 March, 'Near Lintin Island', Captain Osborn added that his men needed fresh provisions urgently. 'The length of time we have been on the circuitous passage to China has exhausted all our fresh provisions, and the men are sickly and in great distress.' He then asked for some bullocks and greens to be sent to the *Arrogant* and added. 'I should not take the liberty but the scurvey is making havoc amongst us daily . . . and I do not wish to allow of any intercourse with the shore until I hear from you.'³²

The Select Committee wrote to the two commanding officers advising them first to have an interview with the Governor of

29. The Governor-General of the two Kwangs at this time was Chi-ch'ing a Manchu of the plain white banner and a member of the Gioro clan. He was appointed Governor-General in the first year of Chia-ch'ing (1796-7) and held this post until his death at Canton on 14 December, 1802. His biography can be found in *Ch'ing-shih kao, ch'uan* 349 p.2b, and in *Kuo-ch'ao ch'i-hsien lei-cheng, chuan* 35, p.27.

30. Printed in Morse, op. cit., II, 386-7.

31. A small island in the estuary of the Pearl River between Macao and the part of Kwangtung which is now the Castle Peak peninsula of the Colony of Hong Kong. Lintin was used as an anchorage for opium depôt-ships by British and other opium smugglers from about 1821 onwards.

32. Printed in Morse, op. cit., II, 380.

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Macao José Manuel Pinto³³ and to obtain his consent to the landing of troops for its defence. Captain Edward Osborn, 'Commanding His Majesty's Naval Forces in China' and Lieut.-Col. Robert Hamilton, 'Commanding His Majesty's and the Honourable Company's Troops on Foreign Service' then went ashore at Macao, but failed to obtain any definite reply from the Governor. The ships, with the troops on board, remained at anchor off Lintin and a difficult situation faced both the English and Portuguese authorities. Either the Governor would have to admit the British troops and face the consequent reactions of the Chinese authorities at Canton, or the British Commanders and the Select Committee would have to make the decision to use force in order to carry out the mission. Luckily just as the situation became critical a Spanish frigate arrived at Macao on 29 April with the news that in October, 1801, the preliminaries of peace between England and France, and their allies, had been signed.³⁴ On 10 May the Committee received official news of the signing of the preliminaries of peace. Since the agreement stated that the possessions of the Queen of Portugal were to remain in Portuguese hands there was no need for the British force to stay near Macao. After waiting for the change in the monsoon the ships finally sailed for India on 2 July, 1802.

Looking back to this incident from the present it may appear to have been an ill-conceived scheme. From a political and diplomatic point of view this may be true, but from a military point of view it was by no means a leap in the dark; it was a perfectly feasible operation. Thanks to the plan of Macao made by the Spanish agent, Manuel de Agote, and the report on the defences of Macao prepared by Lieutenant Henry Parish, the English authorities had a very clear idea of the problems involved in both capturing and defending Macao. They knew in advance how many men and guns were required to defend Macao adequately against a possible French attack and exactly at what points in the defences they should be employed. The only other thing necessary was the co-operation of the Governor of Macao to ensure that the troops would be admitted peacefully. This actually happened six years later when a second British force was permitted

33. José Manuel Pinto, Governor of Macao from 1793 until 1797, and again from 1800 until 1803. In January, 1794, he received Lord Macartney at Macao who described him as '... a well-bred reasonable man of about forty years old, and has the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel in the Portuguese service'. J. L. Cranmer-Byng., *op. cit.*, 219.

34. See Ribeiro Villas, *Historia Colonial*, II, 308. The Treaty of Amiens was finally concluded in March 1802. War broke out again between France and England in May 1803.

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to land in Macao, and remained there for three months. But that is another episode, and it would require a separate article in order to give an adequate account of what happened in 1808.³⁵

A NOTE ON THE PLAN OF MACAO SHOWING FORTIFICATIONS ca. 1794

This plan is based on the one made by Lieut. H. W. Parish in 1794, which in turn was modified from a plan compiled by the Spanish agent in Macao, Manuel de Agote, 'the result of several years' observation and labour'.

Parish's original plan contained soundings and other information on navigation and topography too small for inclusion on this reduced scale. It also marked some features to the north, west and east not shown on the above plan. These can be seen on the plan reproduced in Staunton's folio volume to his *Authentic Account* (See footnote 7 above).

Figures indicated on the plan thus: '160' are Parish's own spot heights for elevations in feet above mean sea level. In a note beneath the legend of his plan Parish wrote:

"N.B. The works are altered a little from the original and the heights of several points above the level of the sea are added. These are expressed in feet by red figures.

H. W. PARISH
Royal Artillery".

The original letters and figures were superimposed in red ink but some of these have faded so badly that they have hardly appeared on the photograph of the plan.

The capital letters refer to strategic features mentioned in Parish's report (see pp. 138-141).

The large figures have been taken from Parish's plan. The figure allotted to Camoen's Garden could not be deciphered and has been replaced by the letters Ca.

35. A British naval and military force under the command of Rear-Admiral William O'Brien Drury arrived off Macao on 11 September, 1808. The disembarkation of troops began on 15 September. Re-embarkation was carried out between 15-24 December, 1808. For a short account of this episode from the British records see C. Northcote Parkinson, *op. cit.* 317-34. For the Portuguese point of view see *Memoria dos Feitos Macaenses Contra os Piratas da China: e da Entrada Violenta dos Inglezes na Cidade de Macao*, by Jose Ignacio Andrade, 2nd ed. Lisbon, 1835, 95-143.